Understanding African American students' perceptions of the campus climate at a predominantly white college: a study of student affairs administrators.

Susan T. Costa

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CAMPUS CLIMATE AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE: A STUDY OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

A Dissertation Presented

by

SUSAN T. COSTA

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 1997

School of Education
UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CAMPUS CLIMATE AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE: A STUDY OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

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SUSAN T. COSTA

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CAMPUS CLIMATE AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE: A STUDY OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

MAY 1997

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Higher education institutions have a responsibility to educate all. Yet, significant proportions of blacks are not being successfully reached. This, coupled with changing demographics, is forcing educators to be concerned about the future. Under-representation exists in faculty and administrative ranks as well as with students.

The hostile climate for black students on predominantly white campuses has been cited as a major concern and barrier to success. Black student alienation has been attributed to a number of variables, but the root of the problem is often traced to the campus climate. It is clear that the environment has a substantial impact on a student's level of satisfaction and can make a difference in whether a student leaves or persists.

As the shapers of the climate and the experts on students, student affairs administrators play a key role in campus climate. With this major responsibility, one must ask how much of an understanding of black students' problems and experiences do these administrators have?
Through the process of in-depth interviewing, the study examined the perception and the level of understanding of student affairs administrators of the campus climate for black students at Easton College, a predominantly white institution. Administrators are grouped into three groups for comparative purposes: those who are knowledgeable about black students, those who know little about black students, and those who are black. It also includes the perceptions of black students who attend the college.

Results of the study indicate that the climate at Easton College is hostile and unwelcoming to its black students. While all the administrators are aware of the hostile climate, the level of knowledge and specificity differed among the three groups.

Easton College is doing little to create a learning environment that promotes appreciation. Social and cultural isolation is prevalent. Care and support is limited because of insufficient knowledge and inadequate exposure to black culture. To improve the climate for black students, a number of recommendations are made.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The issue of black students on predominantly white campuses is a common and recurring problem in higher education today. Published books, research studies and annual conferences have been titled accordingly, indicating the attention to the problem. The interpretation encompasses more than a few words. Black students on white campuses are a problem for institutions and black students alike. Closer examination reveals that the problem is complex, having many facets and links between the individual student, blacks as a group and the institution. For years, educators have attempted to address the problems of the student. Today educators are acknowledging the fact that not all the problems lie with the student, but significant problems lie within the institution itself.

The shift from identifying and addressing the problems of the student to identifying and addressing the problems of the institution has proven to be perplexing for most colleges and universities. No longer can educators assume that students will adapt to the institution's structure, and environment. They must now look at how they can be more accommodating and inclusive of their black students, but this task has become a major challenge.

It would be very difficult today to visit any college campus and not find some mention or visible sign of achieving diversity. Educators are becoming involved in the diversity movement and are making honest attempts and efforts to make their campuses more representative of the many cultures encompassed in their populations. To be more effective serious changes in many facets of an institution must be considered (Green, 1989).
Representation in the number of students in attendance, faculty and staff employed on its rosters, depictions in course material and curriculum, and a number of other ways are keeping educators busy at attempting to achieve diversity. More often than not, there is a difference of opinion about what diversity means (Levine, 1991). Many on the same campus have differing opinions about what it means to be diverse or even if it is a legitimate goal of an institution (Hill, 1991).

In many ways diversity and the diversity movement has the appearance of being a new concept to hit American campuses. Its new packaging wrapped in terms such as diversity, multiculturalism, and pluralism, might appear to some to be a new development prompting change in education. This is not the case. If the packaging were removed, one would see immediately that the diversity movement has been around for a significant period of time and has evolved and developed over the years (McLaughlin, 1991). A search through history would indicate that the issues present in today's diversity movement were present as early as the World War II era (Thomas, 1981).

It was not until after World War II that blacks were allowed to attend white colleges and universities. Until that time ninety percent of blacks attended historically black institutions. Although some progress was made at this time, it was minimal. Significant changes in black enrollment did not occur again until the 1960's, after the Civil Rights Movement, when greater numbers of blacks were recruited into white institutions (Mingle, 1981). Throughout the sixties and into the seventies, rapid increases in black student enrollment brought new hope to Black America. Blacks were beginning to gain access to an education that could mean access to "the gateway to success" in American society. There were finally greater and growing
numbers of blacks attending American colleges and universities and black studies programs were growing across the country. Attempts were made to add black faculty and administrators to institutions’ ranks. With integration came problems. It was immediately evident that black students were not as well prepared academically as their white peers. The acknowledgment of other needs and differences also became apparent. White institutions made attempts to address these issues while blacks made demands for equity (Peterson, et al 1978).

By the middle eighties, the momentum that had lasted for about twenty years began to slow. No longer could educators say they were increasing their numbers. No longer was the gap narrowing between black and white students entering college. No longer were educators applying the same efforts to make black students part of their communities (Green, 1989). Higher education became comfortable and complacent with the progress it had made in the earlier years. As a result, progress deteriorated (Blake, 1987).

Educators have again begun to pay closer attention to recruiting and retaining black students, as well as other diverse groups. The realization that too few blacks are entering college with even fewer successfully graduating has become a legitimate concern. Examination of the drop-out rate among black students indicates that blacks are dropping out of white institutions at a much higher rate than whites (Wilson & Justiz, 1988). Compounding the problem is the significant number of black students who are attending community colleges and not transferring to four year institutions where they may attain a bachelor’s degree. These factors point to a bleak outlook for blacks in higher education (Thomas and Hirsch, 1989).
Purpose and Significance

Higher education has a responsibility to educate all, yet significant proportions of blacks are not being reached successfully. This, coupled with changing demographics, is forcing higher education educators to be concerned about the future. Under representation exists in the faculty and administrative ranks, as well as with students. That the same can be said for many other professions outside of education, may also be an indication of the crisis in education. These factors point to the immediate need to do a better job in the midst of significant resistance, conflict and controversy surrounding any attempts for change or to better accommodate the underrepresented.

The hostile climate for black students on predominantly white campuses has been cited as a major concern and barrier to success (Allen, 1988). Black student alienation has been attributed to a number of variables but the root of the problem is often traced to the campus climate (National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities [NAICU], 1991). Many studies have shown that minority students on white campuses continually find hostile climates that fail to welcome, include or acknowledge them, and that do not allow them to achieve academically at an optimum level. Some basic psychological needs are restricted (Wright, 1987). It is clear that the environment has a substantial impact on a student's level of satisfaction and can make a difference on whether students leave or persist (Allen, 1985). Black students will not thrive in a climate they perceive as hostile or unsupportive (Fleming, 1984).

There is a significant amount of information and studies about the problems of black students and the barriers that they are confronted with. A representational voice of the student and her perceptions is not commonly found in these studies. To understand the students' experience it is important
and necessary to speak directly with the student to learn about her perceptions (Martinez & Sedlacek, 1982; National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, 1991). The more recent literature on achieving diversity and developing multicultural organizations is beginning to address the importance of the student voice and the student perspective of the college experience and climate.

As the shapers of the climate (Green, 1989; Manning, 1992) and the experts on students (Delworth, Hanson & Associates, 1980), student affairs administrators play a key role in campus climate. Student development, student service, program development, delivery and management are the charge of student affairs administrators. With this major responsibility, one must ask how much of an understanding of black students' problems and experiences do these administrators have?

This study is being conducted because it is important that each college or university take a comprehensive approach to making their campuses more inclusive and responsive to black students. Too often the problem of black students is assumed to be too overwhelming and complex, but these attitudes cause educators to apply bandaid solutions and experimental programs without a full understanding or without a true organizational approach. There has been some literature about strategies to use in approaching diversity and suggestions on how to assess one's institution in reference to diversity implementation. But few institution's actually approach diversity initiatives in an objective and coordinated manner.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perception of student affairs administrators of the campus climate for black students at Easton College, a pseudonym for the college actually involved in the study. It will include perceptions of six black students attending Easton along with the
perceptions of six administrators. The study will examine the level of understanding that administrators have of their black students' experiences and examine how these perceptions compare to the perceptions of the students.

The data from this study will provide a link and comparison between the black student's experience on campus, particularly in reference to the social climate and the college's perception. Since climate is the result of perception (NAICUI, 1991), an examination of not only the perceptions of the student but the perceptions of the people who play a critical role in campus climate through close and direct contact with students through service delivery and upholding policy will provide valuable insight to Easton. Very often the policies and services appear to be in place but the perceptions of those responsible for implementation may be in conflict. It is this kind of information that educators must consider to understand their current situation, where they can claim success and where improvements must be made.

It is my intention that this information will be meaningful, insightful and useful to campus leaders who truly are interested in understanding the climate of their campuses before considering creating changes that will have a positive impact on their black students.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 marked the beginning of significant progress by higher education institutions in enrolling black students. This progress continued until the mid seventies then became stagnant and in some cases it slowed. Although educators have continued their efforts to address the problem through a variety of programs and policies designed to recruit and retain minorities, sustained success has not been accomplished (Green, 1989). There are more blacks in college and universities than ever; however, there remains a growing gap between white and black students who participate in higher education. Blacks are still enrolling at much lower percentages than whites. They continue to drop out at significantly higher proportions (Vital Signs, 1993).

Campuses across the country are grappling with diversity and multiculturalism and seeking ways to deal with it. One of the problems of creating multicultural campuses is that there is no unified vision of what a multicultural campus would mean (Pope, 1993). Gamson (1991) gathered, from interviewing several chief student affairs officers about what it means to be a multicultural campus, that they were not sure what it means.

Sue (1991) describes multiculturalism through an organizational perspective that discusses an institution's commitment to representation in its actions as well as words, its sensitivity to the environment which includes its policies, practices and goals, and how it responds to the commitment to change.

In a report by The Visiting Committee on Minority Life and Education At Brown University [VCMLEBU], (1986) the theme focuses on pluralism
which goes beyond diversity and multiculturalism. Pluralism, described as a social condition, encompasses the affirmation and benefits of others’ experiences and contributions and denounces racism, intolerance, injustices and every form of insensitivity. In the report, the transition from diversity to pluralism is explained through the changes in values and expectations of minority and majority populations.

The decreased representation of blacks and other minorities in higher education and the reality of the changing demographics has caused educators to begin to refocus attention to the current crisis. The mere presence of diverse ethnic groups has raised more questions than it has answered (Levine, 1991). Universities have invited minority students to attend but have not embraced their experience (Green, 1989; Smith, 1989; VCMLEBU, 1986) and have paid little attention to the interpersonal aspects of race relations (Crosson, 1988; Hurtado, 1992; Peterson, et al, 1978).

Keeping students enrolled in higher education has proven to be more difficult than enrolling them (Lang and Ford, 1992). The high attrition rate has caused educators to be concerned and to examine the barriers to success that minority students are confronted with (Smith, 1989). The areas of general concerns have been defined as: "academic preparedness, the availability of financial aid and the prevailing campus climate" (Mulder, 1991, p. 31). The prevailing campus climate, often described as hostile, is the area of concern and centrality of this study.

The focus of problems and change has usually been placed on the black student. Failures were blamed on their incompetencies. Today, educators are looking toward changes within their institutions that will mean greater success for its diverse students by better meeting their needs (Smith, 1989).
Climate: The Importance of Perceptions

Pounds' (1987) chapter in Wright's book *Meeting the Needs of Today’s Minority Students* specifically addresses the problems and needs of black students on predominantly white campuses. She explains the importance of having a thorough understanding of the black student's perception of college and lists some of the issues that educators should be aware of. These include: social adjustment, financial aid needs, developmental growth, the living and learning environment, and the development of black talent.

Pounds (1987) includes two questions that student affairs personnel often ask. How does the black student experience differ from the white student experience? And, what impact do those differences have on student programming? Pounds provides the following differences: 1. Black students come from diverse, cultural, social and economic backgrounds which is usually not acknowledged or appreciated on campus. 2. They come to college academically under prepared and financially disadvantaged. 3. They are less satisfied and involved with campus life. 4. Black students are usually unaffected or negatively affected by their college environments. 5. Black students feel alienated and isolated on white campuses.

Understanding the experience of black students requires a knowledge of these differences. Campus climate comes into focus as a major concern when discussing the experience of black students and the differences that exist between the experiences of black and white students. Campus climate and experience are intertwined and cannot be separated.

"Campus climate has saliency because it mirrors quality of life factors that affect the academic performance, developmental growth and socialization of minority students in the academy (Nayman, Renick and Dye, 1992, p. 173)."
The campus climate contributes to the recruitment, satisfaction and persistence of minority students. How students feel about the climate impacts on the retention of minority students (Crosson, 1988). To ensure diversity, campuses must not only enroll, but retain black students by being receptive and responsive to their needs. However, many campuses have several distressing environmental issues. Henley, Powell and Poats (1992) describe some of these as: racial tension and violence, the perception of hostility as a result of acts of incivility; the lack of culturally enriching activities and/or cultural awareness; feelings of personal isolation and the perception of insensitivity to the needs of underrepresented groups; the lack of faculty involvement as role models and mentors...; and accusations of political correctness (p. 4).

There is the perception that administrators, staff and faculty, as well as students are insensitive to the needs of black students and other minority students. A key ingredient to ensuring a healthy climate is the involvement of individuals who are caring and sensitive to the needs of students (Henley, Powell and Poats, 1992). An institutional response to changing the climate first involves the response of those who represent the institution. In order to respond effectively, an understanding of climate perceptions is necessary.

In their paper on understanding campus climate, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities [NAICU] (1991) describes campus climate as:

...the total effect of the environment - institutional and community that influences the experience of those who work and study at the college or university. It can be hospitable or distant, supportive or threatening, understanding or ignorant, good-spirited or resentful. In fact, it can be all of these things at the same time and more (p. 2).
The NAICU (1991) emphasizes the experience and perceptions of minority students and the need they express for a more hospitable campus. The paper offers a framework to help administrators understand the campus environment, an approach to take in collecting the information needed to monitor change in the climate (p. 7). They also define climate as perception—about how it feels to be in that community and not simply what happens. The importance of perception is a point often misunderstood about the black student experience. This issue also points to the importance of listening to students to learn more about how the climate feels to them.

The NAICU (1991) provides a series of questions for top level administrators about campus policies that help focus on central issues about campus climate. It also describes the importance of talking directly to students to understand their experiences. A protocol for interviews is provided. Shaw (1991) shares the view of the importance of speaking directly to students, as the clients we are attempting to serve, to ascertain what is needed and what is lacking. Black students need to have a voice for institutions to understand their experiences.

According to Martinez and Sedlacek (1982), "one way to assess the environment is to examine the perceptions of the people within that environment (p. 4)." In their study they examined subgroup differences in perception of social sanctions as a function of sex and race. In studying incoming freshmen at the University of Maryland, they confirmed that college students are not a homogeneous group, nor are minorities. They found considerable differences between subgroups in psychosocial norms and expectancies. Black students tended to view social norms as liberal, while white students saw the climate as conservative.
Martinez and Sedlacek define the social climate by the socially agreed upon norms for acceptable behavior. They state the application of this concept to a college population helps them to understand the students' world and allows them to see the campus through the students' eyes.

Hurtado (1993) conducted a study of institutional climate for Latino students which has important implications for all ethnic minorities, including black students. She conceptualizes the climate as the product of four dimensions, each affecting a student's psychological response to the environment. Hurtado discusses the four dimensions which include: the historical, the structural, the perceptual and the behavioral. Her study focuses on the structural, perceptual and behavioral aspects of the environment that shape the climate for diversity.

The structural refers to institutional characteristics, such as size, selectivity and racial composition, which shapes social interaction and individuals' attitudes and is significantly related to racial tension. The behavioral dimension refers to the interpersonal aspects of race relations on campuses which have become a growing concern, particularly of campuses with racial incidents. The perceptual dimension is the individual's view of the institution's level of response to diversity issues. Perceptions of the climate vary with racial and ethnic groups which will also vary from individual to individual and across institutions. Even students within the same racial or ethnic group may have substantially different views.

Much of the research on campus climate and race concludes that ethnic and racial groups hold differing perceptions of the climate. Moreover, their perceptions differ from those of whites. To effectively manage and shape campus climate, it is necessary to understand and appreciate that there are differences in perceptions. Differences may even exist within groups.
Hurtado’s (1993) approach to studying climate is indicative of the research and definition of climate in the literature. There are several definitions of climate. Stating that there is no common definition in higher education literature for climate, Peterson, Cameron, Mets, Jones, and Ettington (1986) illustrate the interchangeable use of culture, climate and environment.

Originating from organizational literature, climate is the most recent addition, its concepts rooted in cognitive psychology and social psychology. According to Peterson, et al, the climate construct arises from individual’s perception and interpretations of psychologically clustered events. The perceptions become reality, and it is the aggregate of these perceptions that make up an organization’s climate. The psychologically clustered events are those in an organization that occur with enough similarity for individuals to construct meaning and to develop attitudes about them (p. 19). When individuals share this attitude the organization possesses a climate. There must be agreement among individuals’ perceptions for there to be organizational climate (Crosson, 1988).

Peterson, et al (1986) describes how organizational literature has included three approaches to studying climate. First, they include an organizational approach that describes the characteristics that distinguishes one organization from another and where climate is independent of the individual and not psychologically rooted. The approach has been criticized because it becomes all inclusive to the point that everything is climate. The second identifies an organization through four characteristics, one of which is climate (however it is independent of the other three characteristics). The approach does depend on the individual’s perceptions to define climate but it remains an attribute of the organization. Criticism with this approach has
been that it is not clear if climate is an individual or an organization variable. The third approach is grounded in the perceptions of the individual and differentiates psychological climate and organizational climate. It has shown individual differences as well as organizational differences, and how different climates can exist within the same organization making organizational attributes insufficient to account for climate. This approach addresses climate psychologically, as a filtering process that an individual uses to make sense of the environment.

According to Peterson, et al, consensus has begun to emerge in the definition of climate in the more recent organizational research. This third approach based on individual perceptions and qualitative information, which describes events and attributes, has become common.

As is true in organizational literature, there are no common definitions of climate in higher education literature (Peterson, et al, 1986). Of the various approaches describing climate, many are anecdotal accounts of a particular college or university. The academic organizational climate has three primary sources: administrators, faculty and students.

Peterson, et al, discuss the differences in higher education between climate and environment. Climate has an effect on one's attitude and sense of well being while environment has an effect on one's behavior. In other words, climate may induce feelings of anxiety, stress or alienation and environment may encourage a student to take advantage of campus facilities. According to Peterson, et al, the environment has more tangible variables while climate describes what one feels.

Peterson, et al (1986) describes climate as personalistic and the perception of the individual. What is important is how the individual perceives the environment and not how others choose to describe it.
This is particularly important in understanding how perceptions and views of the climate will differ from group to group and the problems that emerge when any group or individual's perceptions are not acknowledged.

In the American Council on Education's, *Minorities on Campus: A Handbook for Enhancing Diversity*, Green's (1989) chapter on campus climate makes an important contribution to the literature. In addition to a description and definition of climate, she provides a good explanation of the campus climate problem on today's campuses along with strategies for different constituents to attempt to change the climate. Green stresses the importance of having all members of the community sensitive to climate issues. She explains the problems of apathy and the significant difference in perception between the population of white students, faculty and administrators, who do not see the environment the same as minorities. As everyone's responsibility, Green offers that faculty, staff, administrators and students of all races be sensitized to the perceptions and feelings of others. This is imperative if such problems are to be faced and confronted.

As indicated by Peterson, et al (1986), different climates can exist in the same organization as a result of different perceptions of climate and how it is felt. Perhaps in no instance is this more true than in the case of differences by race and ethnicity. To understand the differences in campus climate perceptions by race, several theoretical frameworks are useful. These theories include symbolic racism, inter-group attitudes or dominant ideology, racial identity development of individuals and as applied to group interactions and reference group theory. An explanation of each follows.
Symbolic Racism

What has caused black and white students to become increasingly isolated from each other? Some call what is happening on campuses "the new racism" (Farrell, 1990, January; Magner, 1989, April; McClelland & Auster, 1990; Ryujin and Abitia, 1992). Researchers Sears, Kinder, Hough and McConahay have studied this new racism which they term "symbolic racism." McConahay & Hough (1976) describe it as the new form of anti-black feelings, attitudes and behaviors perceived to be emerging among American white suburbanites.

The concept of symbolic racism emerged in 1969 after white suburban reactions to the Los Angeles mayoral campaign (Kinder, 1986) and a deterioration in race relations after what seemed to be reasonable progress toward integration. Sears, Kinder and McConahay have conducted numerous studies on symbolic racism.

McConahay and Hough (1976) offer the following definition:

Symbolic racism is the expression in terms of abstract ideological symbols and symbolic behaviors of the feelings that blacks are violating cherished values and making illegitimate demands for changes in the racial status quo (p. 38).

In their study of northern white suburbanites, they posit that the attitudes, behaviors and opinions of symbolic racism have three elements: 1. The expression of feelings that blacks are becoming too demanding in striving for justice and equality while not playing by the rules of earlier generations. 2. There are no personal connections or references to judgments. It was not whites who were personally threatened but their values. 3. Symbolic racism is expressed in symbols. Welfare, black mayors, affirmative action, etc. symbolize the unfair advantage or demands of blacks at the expense of the values that have made this nation great (p. 38).
Kinder (1986) defines symbolic racism as:

... a blend of anti-black affect and the kind of traditional American values embodied in the Protestant Ethic. Symbolic racism represents a form of resistance to change in the racial status quo based on moral feelings that blacks violate such traditional American values as individualism and self-reliance, the work ethic, obedience, and discipline (p. 53).

There is one difference between McConahay's and Kinder's concepts. McConahay posits that symbolic racists are convinced that discrimination no longer exists and blacks have abundant opportunities. Kinder does not share this belief (Kinder, 1986). Aside from this notion they share common elements, the most important being the joining of racial prejudice and traditional American values. “Symbolic racism is neither racism, pure and simple, nor traditional values, pure and simple, but rather the blending of the two (Kinder, 1986, p.154).”

**Intergroup Attitudes**

The second theory which may be applied to an understanding of racial differences in campus climate is Jackman and Muha's intergroup attitudes. Jackman & Muha (1984) argue that:

Dominant social groups routinely develop ideologies that legitimize and justify the status quo and the well-educated members of these dominant groups are the most sophisticated practitioners of their group's ideology (p. 751).

Jackman and Muha claim that the educated are ahead of their peers in defending their interests.

The dominant group ideology is one that, according to Jackman and Muha:

... flows naturally from their side of experience as they seek to impose a sense of order on the pattern of social relations and to persuade both
themselves and their subordinates that the current organization of relationships is appropriate and equitable (p. 759).

This perspective includes a set of norms and values that maintain the needs of the status quo and a specific attitude toward subordinate groups that explains their position. According to Jackman and Muha, these attitudes of dominance are not necessarily negative but they are an important part of the dominant group's need to control social relationships that benefit them. It can vary according to whether subordinates are compliant or resistant. In this framework, discrimination and inequality are justified by the distinct qualities of each group and by the agreement that different qualities are suited for different roles. As long as subordinates do not challenge this relationship, it works well. Disharmony occurs when subordinates become discontent and challenge the dominants, forcing them to become defensive and adversarial, refusing to make any concessions or as few as possible (Jackman & Muha, 1984).

The dominant group strategy is to take a stance that draws on the group distinction belief and "divert attention from group grievances and undercut their legitimacy by fostering individualism as a guiding normative principle" (Jackman & Muha, 1984, p. 760). Thus the emphasis is taken away from the group and put on the individual. The distinction is a subtle one, yet it protects the privilege of the dominants. The problem is that subordinates are already at a disadvantage and individualism is more of an obstacle and does not promote any advantage toward equality. This premise is similar to that of meritocracy.

Dominant ideology does not respond to group demands and accordingly does not address social problems posed by groups. It conflicts with the rights of the individual and free access to any idea, job, or advantage
that may be of interest to that individual. The rights of groups are illegitimate. The more resistance, the more subtle and sophisticated the defense becomes.

Jackman and Muha make an interesting link between education and dominant ideology. They posit that educational institutions are well suited for promoting ideology and the well educated have been exposed to dominance. The structure and values of institutions are undemocratic and based on dominance. Similarly, others posit that higher education teaches and fosters dominance (Green, 1989; Diner, 1989; Magner, 1989; Moses, 1990).

Jackman and Muha state that as a microcosm of society, educational institutions establish knowledge and expertise as a basis for authority. Those who know more have authority based on their individual achievement. This strengthens the faith in individualism. They further state that the structure of institutions is important to socialization and shaping how people think. The role of education in this process is one that teaches those with an advanced education to acquire a sensitivity to complexities that equips them to protect their interests in a complex society. This sophisticated ideology is their protection against challenge which usually goes unnoticed. It is seen as a complex social problem with no easy solutions. Like symbolic racism this ideology rejects programs that address past inequities because they violate individualism and meritocracy.

Racial Identity Development Theory

There is a connection between racial identity development and the environment. According to Helms (1989) "social environments are the result, at least in part, of the racial identity characteristics of the people in the environment (p. 232)." Helms posits that group interactions can be classified
according to racial identity theory and the climate can be derived from the combination of participants' racial identity stages.

Hardiman and Jackson (1992) posit the difficulty in understanding group differences as merely cultural. It is important to recognize how social oppression and its manifestations, in this case racism, impacts on a student's worldview, self-concept, self-esteem and behavior for both whites, who benefit from the oppression as dominants, and blacks, the victims of oppression. Racial identity theory helps to clarify the intersection of social diversity and social justice at the individual level of personal belief, attitudes and behavior. Racial identity is defined by Hardiman and Jackson as, "a sense of self in the context of one's racial group membership, which includes all aspects of that group's culture (p. 22)."

Helms (1984) provides stages of racial consciousness for both blacks and whites. Cross (cited in Helms, 1984) proposed four stages of nigrescence ("Negro to black conversion experience") or black self-actualization where blacks move from denial of their race to a stage where they accept their blackness. The stages involve simultaneous beliefs, emotions and behavioral styles directed toward blacks and blackness as well as whites and whiteness. They are characterized by different racial identity attitudes, each having a distinctive cognitive, conative and affective element. A summary follows:

1. Preencounter - a person views and thinks of the world from a Euro-American frame of reference as he or she thinks, acts, and behaves in ways that devalue blackness and idealize whiteness.
2. Encounter - a person begins to abandon the old world view as a consequence of a startling experience he or she has had.
3. Immersion-Emersion - the person idealizes blackness but the degree to which he or she internalizes positive attitudes is minimal. At
this stage a person is usually immersed in black experiences and has a
tendency to denigrate whites.

4. Internalization - when a person achieves a feeling of inner security
with blackness because the person can transcend experiences of
oppression and is confident and proud of his or her racial identity and
heritage. (Helms, 1984; Helms & Parham, 1985)

Helms (1984) also provides a five stage white racial consciousness
development theory that takes into account perceptions and evaluations of
both races. The stages are summarized as follows:

1. Contact - a person becomes aware that black people exist but
remains curious and naive, and may have a tendency to ignore
differences. (people are people) This person is probably unaware of
himself or herself as a racial being.

2. Disintegration - a person is forced to acknowledge that he or she is
white. Feelings of guilt and depression occur as the person becomes
aware that racism exists.

3. Reintegration - the person becomes hostile toward blacks and
positively biased toward whites. He or she may be overtly or covertly
anti-black and tend to minimize cross-racial similarities and negatively
evaluate perceived differences of blacks.

4. Pseudo-Independent - an intellectual acceptance and curiosity about
blacks and whites and an interest in racial group similarities and
differences. The person might have limited black interactions.

5. Autonomy - when the person moves beyond being knowledgeable
but fully accepts racial similarities and differences. Members of either
racial group are accepted as individuals and opportunities for cross
racial interaction is sought after. This person values cultural diversity. (Helms, 1984)

Hardiman and Jackson (1992) have synthesized models of black and white racial identity development. Their model also identifies five stages of consciousness and describes how racism affects the development of group identity for both blacks and whites as they experience a persistent racist environment. A summary of the stages in this model are:

1. Naive - when there is little or no awareness of race.
2. Acceptance - the acceptance of an ideology of racial dominance and subordination or the belief in the superiority of dominants and the inferiority of subordinates or targets.
3. Resistance - members of both dominant or target groups begin to understand and recognize racism and its complex and multiple manifestations at the individual or institutional, conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional levels.
4. Redefinition - the person comes to terms with what their racial group means to them. Whites develop a new racial identity and define themselves in a way that is not dependent on racism. Blacks define themselves in ways that are independent of the strengths or weaknesses of whites or the white dominant culture. A shift occurs away from a concern of interactions with dominants toward a primary contact with other blacks in the same stage. It is students at this stage who are labeled separatist or self-segregating.
5. Internalization - the person begins to integrate some of the newly defined values, beliefs and behaviors into all aspects of life and they begin to occur naturally.

(Hardiman & Jackson, 1992)
Racial Identity Theory and Group Interaction

In her book *Black and White Racial Identity: Theory, Research and Practice*, Helms (1990) has also used racial identity theory to study group interaction. According to Helms, theoretical discussions about how combinations of individual characteristics form group climate when race is involved are rare. She posits that, "if it is true that a group's climate is determined by the accumulation of the intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics of its members, then it ought to be possible to use racial identity theory with some elaboration to explain group dynamics... (p. 187)."

The following assumptions about group interactions are made by Helms. The combinations of group members' stages of racial identity rather than race per se influence the quality of the group process. She also assumes that one's role as a majority or minority in a group acts interactively with racial identity stages to influence the group's communication process. Also, there are several types of relationships that characterize the group process that can be complex in groups because of the multiplicity of ways which the group is structured according to the collection of individuals. The climate or cohesiveness of the group is determined by how attractive the group is to participants and whether or not it will shape their attitudes and behaviors.

To generalize racial identity theory to groups, Helms (1990) uses three dimensions of interactions. They include: structural factors, racial climate and leader characteristics. Each may have implications for interventions, research and theory and an explanation follows.

The group structure refers to the qualities of the group that give it character. These qualities include the format or kind of group, proportions of different racial groups represented, and the variety of racial identity stages within the group. Racial identity issues can become problematic to a group
and can contribute to a group's demise or dysfunctionality if issues are not effectively addressed (Helms, 1990). It is easier for racially homogeneous groups to manage racial identity issues than it is for racially mixed groups. The members of the group, as well as the leader, may have an effect on the climate of that group. For example, if a group is racially mixed, the climate is reflective of the combination of stages. The number of blacks relative to whites has an influence on the character of the group.

Individuals of similar stages band together therefore, the numbers of people at a particular stage can influence the direction of a group. The stages of identity in a group shape the tone, direction and negotiation of power (Helms, 1990).

The racial climate refers to how a group resolves intra and interracial conflicts and how it encourages positive racial identity development as a group. The racial climate is influenced by perceptions of power, group racial norms and racial identity coalitions. Psychological power within a group refers to the individual's perceptions that they are able to control the resources of the group in such a way that is beneficial to themselves. This power can result from the number of people represented or from the attitude of the people in one's group and also from how one perceives his or her ability to influence the norms of the group (Helms, 1990).

According to Helms, it has been commonly found that whites are most comfortable in racially heterogeneous groups where the white to black proportion is 70% to 30%. With blacks, the desired proportion is 50% to 50%. Blacks and whites adapt differently, where whites are accustomed to limited interaction with blacks. Blacks desire equality to feel power while whites desire superiority to feel power. It could be expected that whites at lower stages of identity would experience greater conflict when the percentage of
blacks surpasses 30% and blacks at higher stages to experience conflict when
the percentage of whites to blacks exceeds 50%. Conflict may also occur
when the stages of identity are incompatible. Moreover, it is not so much the
identity development of individuals that structures the climate of a group but
the stage of identity of the subgroup or coalition within a larger group. Each
group will adopt norms which the largest proportion of its members are
comfortable with (Helms, 1990). This can be particularly problematic for
minorities.

Minorities or anyone who comes to the group without the same norm,
must either try to influence the majority to modify the norm, shift to the
direction of the majority, or leave the group. The majority is, at the same
time, attempting to influence the minority toward the group norm in support
of the norm being correct. Little active influence on a minority is needed to
acquire conformity. The mere numbers of the majority with similar
viewpoints is a powerful influence (Helms, 1990).

For a minority to influence the majority is far more complex. It often
means that rejecting the norms of the group places one in minority status
regardless of whether the person is black or white. This dynamic is also
influenced by racial identity, therefore, according to Helms, there are few
circumstances which promote healthy racial identity development given the
prevailing societal racism. Helms posits that some combinations will only
strengthen unhealthy attitudes.

Coalitions and alliances are formed and held together by shared racial
identity worldviews. Shared worldviews imply shared attitudes, beliefs and
perceptions which include stereotypes. Coalitions are not formed based on
racial similarities (where whites unite with whites and blacks unite with
blacks) but on racial identity development (Helms, 1990).
Helms posits that racial identity coalitions structured around stages of racial identity development interact with psychological power and minority/majority status. White members will accept black members as long as their numbers do not exceed the numerical level of psychological comfort and the blacks' expression of their racial identity does not threaten their own racial identity. In other words, white individuals in the early Contact or more advanced Pseudo-Independent and Autonomy stages would probably be more receptive to black coalition members than whites in other stages of white identity. Where black entry into white coalitions is possible, blacks at the less advanced Preencounter, Encounter or more advanced Internalization stages should be tolerant. The dynamics of the coalition however, will be determined by the racial identity stage that is predominant (Helms, 1990).

Coalitions can be in harmony or conflict with one another, which will influence group cohesiveness. They may also be of a numerical as well as a psychological minority or majority status. Majority status coalitions will usually have the most power in a group regardless of the number of members. Minority status members must decide whether or not they can influence the norms of the group. If they can, they will remain and participate or they may try to disrupt the group. The other choice is to leave. The decision depends on which stages of racial identity are represented with various coalitions and how large or psychologically powerful the various coalitions are perceived to be by their members (Helms, 1990).

The dynamics of some groups are managed by a group leader. The leader's qualifications are determined by outside forces (e.g. management). In more spontaneous groups, leaders evolve from the consensus of group members and are perceived as capable of minimizing the level of discomfort to its members. The combinations and types of racial identity coalitions in a
group as well as the racial identity characteristics of the group leader(s) influence the process and outcome of the group. The main task of the group leader is to increase group harmony by uniting the coalitions (Helms, 1990). Student affairs administrators, for example, by virtue of their responsibilities, may be considered group leaders on campus.

The group leader's level of racial identity development will determine how successfully he or she can manage the task of uniting coalitions. To be effective, the group leader must be sensitive to the racial identity issues within each coalition and be able to intervene appropriately to defuse the discomfort of the situation. The viability of a group experiencing racial identity conflict depends on how the group leader facilitates conflict. Successful group leaders must not only be capable of recognizing racial identity related issues in a group, but also to take action toward resolving the issues while avoiding giving the appearance of joining either coalition (Helms, 1990).

The leader's level of skill in accomplishing this may depend on his or her own stage of racial identity development. According to Helm's, group process literature indicates that most group leaders are not very successful in negotiating conflict around racial issues. What typically happens, especially in mixed race groups is that racial issues are either denied, avoided, debated or minimized and the group leader either consciously or accidentally joins one of the coalitions. When this happens, the balance of group power is shifted in the direction of that coalition and it becomes the majority status coalition. What follows is, majority and minority coalitions members will engage in strategies appropriate to their stage of identity to secure personal power in the group (Helms, 1990).
Coalitions can be in harmony or conflict, individually or collectively with the group leader or with one another. How the group leader negotiates can be crucial to the groups' survival and the group leader's stage of racial identity can influence how the leader directs the group. The type of relationship the leader has with the coalition is influenced by the stage of identity of the group as well as the leader (Helms, 1990). Thus, a discussion of relationship types is helpful.

Helms (1990) provides an explanation of parallel, regressive, crossed and progressive relationships between group leaders and coalitions. In groups, the leader and the coalition members will most likely express similar racial identity stages differently because of their different role expectations. In a parallel relationship the group leader and the coalition share the same or similar racial identity stage. This means that neither the leader nor the coalition can function beyond the stage that defines their worldview.

Regressive relationships characterize a coalition whose racial identity stage is more advanced than its leader. The coalition usually resists the leader and tries to influence the leader with a view that he or she has no knowledge of. Tension may exist in these relationships.

Crossed relationships exists when the coalition and the leader have conceptually opposite stages of racial identity and worldview. These relationships may be contentious and combative.

Progressive relationships characterize a group whose leader is more developmentally advanced than the coalition and is able to create movement and energy in the group. Although movement may not always be pleasant for the group, the leader will attempt to move the coalition beyond its current stage (Helm, 1990).
Reference Group Theory

Reference group theory along with an understanding of the racial identity stages may be useful in analyzing the separation of black students. Some black students are criticized by other black students for their interactions with white students. Others claim to choose self-segregation. The reference group that one chooses may be guided according to where a student is in terms of racial identity consciousness, as indicated by Helms (1984) and Hardiman and Jackson (1992).

Reference group theory according to Sherif (1969) is indispensable in dealing with the relations of individuals to groups in a poorly integrated environment. Predominantly white campuses may be a good example of such an environment. The individual, the subgroup, and the social structure may be effected by the reference group.

The reference group would be the group to which an individual aspires but may not be the person’s membership group. In other words, a black student who may be operating on the acceptance stage may choose to interact with whites as his reference group. The problem occurs when the student is rejected by other black students who may be at Helm’s Immersion/Emersion stage, proud of their blackness but anti-white, or students at Hardiman and Jackson’s Redefinition stage where they have a need to create a new reference group consisting of blacks only. The student who chose a white reference group, according to reference group theory, can be subjected to marginality, or may get caught between the attraction to the reference group and the black membership group.

According to Murton and Kitt (1969), it is dysfunctional when one is not fully accepted by the reference group, yet loses acceptance of one’s own group because of the outgroup orientation by the group one belongs to. In
other words, it may be dysfunctional for a black student who is not accepted by whites yet is shunned by blacks because of the desire to interact with whites. Moreover, if the interaction with the reference group is functional, or if a black student, as an individual, is fully accepted by whites, this can be dysfunctional to the solidarity of black students as a subgroup. White acceptance can be interpreted as group defection.

It is this social group arrangement that makes it difficult for black students who want to have better interactions with whites. The difference in the degree of satisfaction and the small numbers in a group create consequences for a member attempting socialization with non-members. This nonconformity to the group can result in group alienation. It is also a threat to the group and creates hostility (Murton & Kitt, 1969).

Black students may often be caught in a quandary with their adjustment and interactions with either black or white students. Smedley, Myers and Harrel (1993) studied minority student adjustment and how they are affected by minority-status stressors. Minority-status stressors are described as the unique stressors that only minorities are confronted with that interfere with the student’s integration into the campus community. Among these stressors are interpersonal tensions including contact within and between racial and ethnic groups. Smedley, et al found that minority students evidenced interpersonal tensions not only between themselves and white students and faculty but pressure within their own racial and ethnic groups for loyalty and solidarity which became more salient. The study showed that stressors were greater for black students than other minority groups. It also indicates the pressures of black students and forced relationships with other blacks and the limitations on the choice of interacting with other whites on campus.
Racism and Differential Perceptions of Campus Climate

The NAICU (1991) found that in studying climate there are dominant themes and discernible conditions that predominate on many campuses. They include: *ignorance* on the part of whites about ethnic groups and insensitivity about their circumstances, feelings and needs; *isolation and alienation* of minority groups from the larger campus community; *stereotyping* by whites about minority group attributes and behavior; the *separation/integration dilemma* of students of color; *bewilderment, confusion and sometimes resentment* and anger on the part of white students over what they perceive as the excessive sensitivity of minority students (p. 19).

These themes and conditions clearly illustrate differences in perceptions and the lack of understanding and interaction between students on campuses today. There seems to be a growing distance and polarization between racial and ethnic groups. While it is important to understand the black student view of the climate, juxtaposing the majority view helps to highlight the root of the conflict and misunderstanding.

Many (Green, 1989, April; Magner, 1989, April; Mangan, 1989, April; NAICU, 1991; Spitzberg & Thorndike, 1992) cite the lack of experience of white students coming from homogeneous communities as a problem in interacting with blacks. According to West, (1993) 86% of white suburban Americans live in neighborhoods that are less than 1% black. When many white students come to college they are coming in contact with blacks for the first time.

Spitzberg and Thorndike (1992) visited and studied campuses across the country to study community on campuses and found that in reference to racism "misunderstanding and insensitivity appear to be common sources of
behavior labeled racist (p. 33)." They attributed the misunderstanding and the insensitivity to the lack of experience and education about difference. They further state that misunderstandings occur on both sides and across races and the racism that arises results from the greater contact that happens on campuses. They found that what constitutes racism is an area of disagreement that frequently creates anger. Their findings were consistent with those of the NAICU (1991).

The NAICU (1991) also suggests that we are sometimes too quick to label behavior as "racist" where difficulties naturally arise when people of different backgrounds interact. What appears as tension may be the confusion that many students from homogeneous backgrounds bring to college.

One of the things that Helms (1985) points to is that, as the dominant race, whites can choose environments that allow them to remain fixed at a particular state of racial consciousness. They have greater choice of how and whether their racial identity will develop, but they most often choose to remain at stages that cause the least amount of psychological discomfort for themselves (Helms, 1990). This sheds light on the campus climate where there is inadequate interaction between blacks and whites. The lack of interaction does not enhance racial identity development.

Many campuses have witnessed a rise in racial incidents. Although the acts of overt racism seem to be growing of late, their numbers are relatively small. Racism is present on every campus but it is the subtle forms of racism that are often difficult to identify and remedy. And, more often than not, the problems with racism on college campuses are subtle (Green, 1989; Magner, 1989, April; McClelland and Auster, 1990). These subtle or difficult to identify forms of racism are described by both symbolic racism
and dominant ideology. In both ideologies, expressions of racism are subtly disguised and sophisticated. Why black and white students differ in perceptions is important to the understanding of climate and the conflicts that result.

Although there is extensive research on minorities, and extensive studies on campus climate, there are, according to Hurtado (1992), few empirical studies that focus specifically on campus racial climates. Yet, when discussing blacks or other minorities and climate, very often the discussion is about racial climate.

The popular press has been more attentive to racial tensions on campus than scholarly literature. In fact, it is where the voice of the student is more often found.

In a series of articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education (1989, April) educators, scholars and students from across the country were interviewed about campus climate. The interviews reflect the polarization of perceptions between blacks and whites on campuses and the dominant themes cited earlier by the NAICU (1991). They also reflect the increasing distance and isolation between blacks and whites. Quotes from the interviews will illustrate the differences in perceptions of the climate that exists on predominantly white campuses.

Magner's (1989, April) interviews with students identifies a number of factors that contribute to the polarization. The problem of the indifference of whites toward racism and racial issues is said to contribute to the isolation that blacks feel on white campuses. Blacks feel that whites would like to ignore the issue of racism and take no responsibility for it while whites see blacks as having unfair advantages.
Magner states that some refer to the subtle racism present on many campuses as "the new racism." Says a professor, "racism is becoming more subtle. It's no longer acceptable to be overtly racist. Now prejudice can be expressed in different ways. People can say, 'I don't like busing, affirmative action, or welfare.' But what they're actually saying is 'I don't like the people who benefit from those programs.' In their minds, those people are black people (Magner, April, 1989, p. A30)." These attitudes characterize symbolic racism where anti-black and unfair advantage feelings are symbolized because it is unacceptable to outwardly express these feelings and attitudes.

Both symbolic racism and dominant ideology, reflected in the quote above, are difficult to detect. Although subtle and sophisticated they may be as damaging and destructive as traditional racism. Most think racism should be blatant, exhibiting behavior such as slurs and taunts. This thinking often makes racism invisible, and only recognized by blacks who are seen to be complaining for no apparent reason (McClelland & Auster, 1990). They are seen as looking for special privileges that they are undeserving of, which is a violation of individualism. This is how the status quo is maintained and change is resisted. It also adds to the distance between racial groups.

Other Chronicle of Higher Education articles (Collison, 1989, April; DeLoughry, 1989, April; Green, 1989, April; Magnan, 1989, April) include interviews with students, both black and white, from four different campuses across the country. Students were asked questions about student isolation, insensitivity and racism on campus. Reactions across campuses were similar where white students find black students to be separatist and too focused on race and racial issues. Stated by a white faculty member, "White indifference is encouraged by the tendency of black students to view anything that
happens to them through a racial lens. There is a sense of overkill (Magner, April 1989, p. A29)." This highlights the difficulty.

Many white students expressed their resentment of unfair advantages through "special treatment." "Everything is straightened out. Everybody is equal now. Sometimes I think black students just want to use the past as a crutch (Collison, April, 1989, p. A28)." As symbolic racism and dominant ideology would suggest, white students believe that racism is a thing of the past and rights and values should be based on individualism.

Black students expressed resentment toward whites about stereotyping, their indifference and lack of understanding of the problems of blacks. "Everything is not equal. If everything was equal there wouldn't be a need for a black organization. I can't think of any other organization that would meet the needs of black students on a predominantly white campus (Collison, April, 1989, p. A28,29)."

There appears to be a degree of antagonism on white campuses that poses a difficult problem to overcome. The antagonism and indifference has been attributed to ignorance (Collison, 1989, April; Magner, 1989, April; Spitzberg & Thorndike, 1992). The differences and disagreements that create distance are causing serious problems on predominantly white campuses, particularly for blacks and other minorities. The distance creates a barrier for blacks which is invisible to whites who see segregation as self-segregation, while blacks are feeling alienated and isolated. The friendly climate that whites see is one that makes blacks feel shunned (McClelland & Auster, 1990).

Hardiman & Jackson (1992) attribute racial identity development to the campus climate in the following manner. Most black and white college students enter college at the acceptance stage and experience the resistance stage during their college years. It is at the acceptance stage for whites that
whiteness is taken for granted and thus are more subtly racists in perpetrating dominant beliefs and actions. They are unable to see themselves as racist or actively prejudiced. Excluding or avoiding blacks because they are different or patronizing and being overly friendly is the behavior of students at this stage. It is also at the acceptance stage where affirmative action is viewed as reverse discrimination because of blacks receiving unfair opportunities. Stereotypes of blacks and other ethnic groups are found in this stage.

For black students at this stage, they might believe that other blacks need to work harder to gain what whites have or that whites are smarter and may avoid interaction with other blacks. Students at this stage reject and devalue being black and adopt a white worldview. These students might also believe that there is no race problem (Hardiman & Jackson, 1992).

This is a confusing and painful stage for both black and white students and filled with contradictions. It is why students are so badly shaken by racial incidents on campus. Contractions arise through interactions with people, social events, information presented in classes, the media, and racial incidents on campus. These events and the emotions they elicit cause the student to exit the acceptance stage and move to the resistance stage (Hardiman & Jackson, 1990).

It is at the resistance stage where whites have a conscious awareness that racism exists but if the resistance is passive, little action is taken to change behavior. Students may feel that racial problems are too big and nothing can be done. If they are in active resistance, they feel a sense of ownership of racism. This is where feelings of anger, shame or guilt may be elicited and powerful emotions may arise. Some express this emotion by
distancing themselves as an oppressive dominant from whites and gravitating toward blacks (Hardiman & Jackson, 1990).

For blacks, it is a stage of questioning and a desire to learn more about racism. The first to be questioned are values and morals of the white culture and other blacks who collude with white dominants. Anger, pain and rage are common expressions at this stage. Hardiman and Jackson have found many black students at this stage so consumed with racism that they have been unable to concentrate on their studies. Challenging and confronting whites, especially those in authority, is typical behavior.

Education, age, gender, and social/familial upbringing and other life experiences have a direct impact on how a person views himself or herself and others as racial beings (Yang, 1992). This might indicate greater tolerance from administrators, staff and faculty. Using Helm’s model in her qualitative study on campus climate and white racial identity and development, Yang (1992) found white faculty and administrators had higher levels of racial identity attitudes (Pseudo-independent and Autonomy) than students and staff members. Yang found a substantial number of students and staff respondents in the reintegration stage. She found that they had limited interaction with blacks and as a result harbored negative perceptions and the belief that blacks dwell too much on past problems. Yang found the respondents' views to be similar to the tenets of symbolic racism. The belief that discrimination is a thing of the past and blacks have gained equality, that blacks are too demanding in trying to get to places where they are not wanted, and the belief that black demands are unfair and undeserved appeared in interviews.

This study demonstrates how symbolic racism, dominant ideology and racial identity development can influence and characterize the campus, its
climate, and individuals. The meritocracy tenet of the dominant ideology concept appeared through the contact stage when respondents indicated a view of race as invisible and that "people are people" and all should be rewarded on personal merit rather than group membership. A problem with this stage is that the invisibility of race creates a taboo in discussing race and racism on campus (Yang, 1992).

Ryujin and Abitia (1992) used Helm and Parham's model to measure racial attitudes toward self. They included black and white college students and found highly significant differences. Contrary to the common notion that black students have low self-esteem they found no evidence of this. They did find that black students were high on the Immersion-Emersion scale signifying an acceptance and interest in one's heritage and culture. They also found anger which they attribute to the students' response to the renewed racism on campus. "Such racism is not causing blacks to reject their racial heritage, but is creating anger at those who question the legitimacy of minority students (p. 8)." Again the tenets of symbolic racism and dominant ideology, which questions the validity of the demands and challenges of black students for justice and equality, are present.

Mitchell and Dell (1992) have also used racial identity development to understand the dynamics of what is happening on campuses. They state that not enough is known about how racial identity attitudes affect student experience and how they make decisions and function on campus. These issues are important to student involvement, which has a significant impact on perceptions of the campus, satisfaction and retention. Accordingly, Mitchell and Dell studied the effect that racial attitude has on student participation. They found that the types of involvement that students chose
were significantly related to their racial identity. This study may also have important implications for student interaction or lack of interaction.

**Racial Separation on Campus**

Most black students interviewed by the Chronicle of Higher Education (1989, April) reported little overt racism but a great deal of separation between black and white students. The issue of separation has become a controversial one on many campuses. The literature suggests that black and white students on white campuses rarely interact outside the classroom. Black students in dining halls and black organizations have become very visible. Some black students say they segregate by choice. "The problem may not be minority students who isolate themselves but nonminority students who avoid contact (Smith, 1989, p. 23)." On the other hand, there are also black students who receive negative reactions from other black students for interacting with white students.

McClelland and Auster (1990) found that self-segregation was more a defensive response by blacks than a voluntary one. Blacks expressed more of a willingness to associate with whites at an intimate level than whites with blacks. As stated by the authors, the tensions are driven underground, never discussed, and become an "invisible" problem. This comes at a disadvantage to black students unable to discuss their discomfort, exclusion or alienation in an open manner. Others blame colleges for not creating opportunities for students to discuss race (Green, 1989; Hurtado, 1992; Peterson, et al, 1978; Spitzberg and Thorndike, 1992; Yang, 1992).

The hostility, insensitivity and misunderstanding pose a significant threat and barrier to the promotion of cultural diversity and racial harmony.
On many campuses the racial climate is not healthy. There is agreement in the literature that campus climate needs to change. This effort will involve everyone on campus. The notion of changing the climate is a difficult one to envision and sometimes it seems impossible with the current attitudes on today's campuses. An important aspect of the climate and improving diversity is race relations (Hurtado, 1992; McClelland & Auster, 1990; Sedlacek, 1987). Institutions must acknowledge that racism exists, talk about it and teach it.

Improving minority student participation involves making our campuses more welcoming and less alienating so that students can experience a more positive "comfort level" as they become full members of the campus community.

Alienation and Isolation of Black Students

How minority students fare in the institutional environment is an important issue and one that has achieved greater campus attention. Alienation of minority students is a common theme in the literature on diversity and black students on white campuses. The problem of minority students not feeling a part of campus communities or not adjusting to the campus climate is a barrier that creates feelings of alienation for students.

There is a significant body of literature on how minority students experience the campus environment and much of it involves black students (Allen, 1985, 1988; Hughes, 1987; Mallincrkrodt, 1988; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Steward, Jackson, & Jackson, 1990; Suen, 1983). This literature provides inconsistent findings with respect to the black student experience and feelings of alienation, suggesting that black students' experiences are not homogeneous though they share many commonalities (Brown, 1994). As a
result, student's experiences may not always be generalized (Allen, 1985; Cheatham, 1986; Cuyjet, 1986; McEwen, Roper, Bryant and Langa, 1990; Smith, 1989; Wright, 1986). The inconsistent finding may be indicative of the many variables involved in the alienation of black students. In a study by Steward, Jackson & Bartell (1993), they found that black students showed significant variances in alienation. Eighty five percent of black student alienation remained unexplained.

Burbach and Thompson (1973) describe alienation as a multidimensional concept with components such as "powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social isolation, thought by many to be a dominant theme in the life of today's college student (1973, p. 273)." This statement holds true today. The concept is still present and describes the life of students on college campuses, in particular blacks and other minority students.

Suen (1983) describes three dimensions of alienation as meaninglessness, powerlessness, and social estrangement. Meaninglessness is defined as a sense of loss referring to one's purpose and meaning in a university. Powerlessness is a feeling of lack of control over one's own life in the university. Social estrangement is the feeling of loneliness. Smith (1989) refers to alienation as a lack of fit or incongruence that occurs when a student views himself or herself at odds with the institution.

Reviewing the literature on black student alienation, campus climate or other related topics indicates social estrangement is a common variable that regularly appears. The black to white student ratio alone without accompanying issues would indicate difficulties.

A classic study by Tinto (1975) considered the influences of academic and social integration. He found that the greater the integration of the
student to the institution, the greater the commitment to the goal of completing the college career. This means that a student's persistence could be determined by the quality of interaction in the social and academic systems in a college or university. Tinto used a multivariate model in his study including student interactions as a variable. Allen (1985) used a similar model which includes interactions such as campus race relations, relations with faculty, and the type of social support systems on campus. Another variable in Tinto's study is student attitudes about self, race, and achievement which is related to academic success for the black student (Allen, 1985).

Variables such as commitment to completing a degree, quality and type of interactions, support and self-esteem are important indicators of the degree of alienation or belonging. Many studies have drawn from and expanded Tinto's findings. Academic integration and social integration are sometimes discussed interdependently and at times independent of each other (Griffin, 1992). Griffin gives special attention to these two variables while demonstrating how they are treated in the literature on black students. Variables such as student/faculty interactions and academic assistance are explained with academic integration. Student/student interaction, social isolation, satisfaction with college life, social support and self esteem are discussed with social integration.

Alienation and attrition are clearly connected. Alienation can be a symptom of any student but Suen (1983) and others (Allen, 1981; Steward, Jackson and Jackson, 1990) found that black students consistently showed higher levels of alienation than white students. Using the University Alienation Scale, designed to measure meaninglessness, powerlessness, and social estrangement, Suen measured alienation of black and white college students from a university environment. He found that black students scored
higher on all dimensions of alienation and were twice as likely as white students to drop out. The most important factor in Suen's study was the significantly higher level of social estrangement, or loneliness found in black students. These variables were related to attrition from college for black students but not for white students. White students were more likely to drop out because of academic factors. Loneliness in black students was attributed to the low numbers of black students on campus.

Loo and Rolison (1986), on the other hand, found that black and white students considered dropping out at equal proportions. After interviewing minority students (Chicano, Black, and Asian) and white students, they, like Suen, found that white students' reasons for dropping out differed from those of minority students. Loo and Rolison found that white students considered leaving for academic reasons while minority students were as often influenced by alienation or a lack of support as they are by academic factors. This research also demonstrates the heightened alienation felt by minority students, in this case, due to the cultural domination and ethnic isolation. The distinction between the alienation and academic satisfaction is demonstrated. Academic achievement and support, although important, does not negate the feelings of alienation for minority students (Hurtado, 1993). "Unlike white students, minority students' retention rates may be just as much a function of sociocultural alienation as of academic factors (Loo and Rolison, 1986, p. 72)."

Wright (1987) discusses the role that acculturation, or integration into campus social networks, plays in the student's developmental process but yet is not included in many developmental theories. According to Wright, the amount of experience a student has in white majority settings is significant for a minority student's adjustment to a campus environment which is usually a different frame of reference for the student. Many minority
students' experiences differ from white students' particularly because of cultural assimilation.

Cultural alienation can also indicate differing interactional styles of black and minority students when interacting in all white situations as opposed to all black or same ethnic group situations (Loo & Rolison, 1986; Steward, Jackson & Jackson, 1990). Loo and Rolison found that minority students did not feel comfortable or supported by the university. The low representation of minority students and the lack of appropriate activities created a need for "ethnic clustering" to ensure comfort and support. Sociocultural stress has also been found to play a significant role in the adaptation of minority freshmen to predominantly white institutions (Smedley, Myers & Harrel, 1993).

Academically successful students are prone to the same psychosocial problems as any other black (Loo and Rolison, 1986) or minority student (Hurtado, 1993). Steward, Jackson and Jackson (1990) studied successful black students, who were in their senior year and expecting to graduate within one year. They found differing interactional styles in black students when the students were in an all white situation (when they were the only black) than when in an all black situation. These students expressed a desire to be in an all white situation more than all black situations and a desire for affection when in an all white situation. As discussed earlier, similar finding resulted in McClelland and Auster's (1990) study where black students desired intimacy from white students.

The students studied by Steward, Jackson and Jackson (1990) perceived the value of white interaction and the need for receiving pertinent information and help with academic endeavors necessary for success. Smedley, Myers & Harrel (1993) report similar findings. To graduate and
achieve good grades, information and help from students and faculty, who were often white, were necessary. Though academically successful and ready to graduate, these students were found to be loners and found it necessary to be isolated in order to be successful. Like Loo and Rolison (1986), Steward, Jackson and Jackson found that relationships with other black students had little influence on feelings of alienation from the campus in general.

Social support is a factor in preventing students from dropping out. Involvement in the campus community can be increased by the availability of social support (Tinto, 1975). Students may differ in the types and amount of social support that they require. Social support varies and could include student clubs and organizations, black and/or white faculty and/or student interactions, university facilities and services, etc.

Mallinckrodt (1988) found that black students and white students differed on types of involvement. He posits that social support and social interaction are associated with the use of support facilities used by students and linked to retention. Social support helps students cope with the stress of adjusting to college and the lack of it may add to feelings of loneliness and alienation. In a study that surveyed black and white students’ perceptions of social support, Mallinckrodt found that social support from the campus community was crucial for black students while family support was more important for white students. He further states that groups who provide strong peer support are the most effective way to help students adjust.

Whether black students find it more difficult to take advantage of what college has to offer, particularly opportunities that stimulate learning and development, was recently studied by DeSousa and King (1994). According to DeSousa and King, although institutions are responsible for providing opportunities, students are responsible for investing the time and effort to
take advantage of those opportunities. This study looked at the degree of involvement and effort that black and white students expended in a range of activities such as: library usage, student union usage, club and organization membership.

Black students scored significantly higher in amount of effort and demonstrated more involvement than their white counterparts. DeSousa and King challenge the assumption that black students are less involved on predominantly white institutions than white students. They posit that most previous studies were conducted in the seventies and eighties when campuses were less conducive to black student involvement.

They recommend the important next step is to understand the involvement and to be aware of the institutional and environmental characteristics that affect the quality of involvement of their students. Talking to students about their involvement and the quality of their experiences will provide a better base of understanding for those trying to enhance the success of black students on predominantly white campuses (DeSousa and King, 1994).

Although all students may have difficulty adjusting to college, black students have specific problems that are unique. Allen (1988) examined the relationships between student outcomes, characteristics and experiences and found that many black students must create their own social and cultural networks because they are excluded from the wider university. He found that of all the problems that black students are confronted with, those arising from isolation and alienation and the lack of support are among the most serious.

Allen (1988) stresses how crucial interpersonal relationships are in determining how individual and institutional characteristics influence a black
student's experience. Interpersonal relationships form the bridge between the individual and the institution and together will determine student outcomes. How a student perceives the college setting will influence the college experience.

In many cases, universities are ignorant or unresponsive to the special needs of black students which complicates their adjustment. According to Allen, the exclusion from social networks and unsatisfactory relationships causes black students to experience many psychosocial difficulties resulting in feelings of alienation and withdrawal behavior. In Allen's study of 700 black students, the most commonly reported difficulties were; academic problems, problems of cultural adjustment, feelings of social isolation and problems with racism (Allen, 1988).

Pounds (1987) noted that arriving on a campus can be a culture shock because they are entering a white learning environment and living with whites for the first time. Blacks more than likely come with an "historical experience of mistrust or uncertainty of whites (Pounds, 1987, p.26)." The social adjustment for black students entering white colleges is a difficult one and for many not usually successful (Fleming, 1984).

Willie and McCord (1972) found black students were often disappointed when entering college with expectations of unbiased interactions with intelligent, educated people. Their unmet expectations led to anger and hostility and the need to separate and isolate themselves from whites for protection (Fleming, 1984). A need for validation, support and companionship forces black students who may have little in common to bond with each other. Pounds (1987) also discusses the forced relationships between black students. This is no basis for healthy relationships and contributes to alienation and isolation.
Gibbs (1974) studied black student adjustment to predominantly white college environments and identified four modes of adaptation: affirmation, assimilation, separation and withdrawal. She found that more than half of the students she studied withdrew or exhibited “apathy, depression, feelings of hopelessness, alienation and depersonalization, culminating in the student’s wish to avoid contact with the conflict-producing situation (p. 732).” Many of these students had feelings of inadequacy. The second most likely mode she found was separation, characterized by anger, hostility and conflicts with interpersonal relationships.

Similarly, Madrazo-Peterson and Rodrigues (1978) found that minority students on predominantly white campuses showed unexpected levels of stress created by the social isolation that they experienced. Many had experienced racism, prejudice and discrimination in their classrooms, residences and in the local communities, which led to feelings of anger, frustration and helplessness. The common response was the withdrawal from whites and association only with other minorities. Madrazo-Peterson and Rodrigues found this withdrawal from whites led to the feelings of isolation among minority students.

In a more recent study, Nottingham, Rosen and Parks (1992) while studying the psychological well-being among African American students attending predominantly white institutions and predominantly African American institutions found no significant differences between the two groups on total alienation, meaninglessness and powerlessness. They did find that students attending predominantly white institutions experienced greater psychosocial stress due to social estrangement or loneliness. More feelings of isolation, fewer opportunities to date and form meaningful relationships, and more experiences of racism were reported.
A different approach was taken by Thompson and Fretz (1991) as they demonstrated the importance and necessity of social bonding and group cohesiveness. They studied communal value orientation of black students on predominantly white campuses which refers to the importance of bonding and group cohesiveness. The amount of orientation can differ among blacks depending on the amount of identification that one has with black culture reflecting the development of racial identity.

Thompson and Fretz (1991) hypothesized that black students adapt to white institutions according to three bicultural variable strategies. The first happens when a student learns to cope by drawing on the support of other blacks on campus and in the surrounding community rather than becoming isolated and withdrawn. The second strategy is one which the student learns about Anglocentric stimuli but is still able to maintain stimuli that is uniquely relevant to blacks. The third influences how a student adapts through interacting with the dominant culture in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition, particularly in a classroom setting. The study supported the hypothesis that black student adjustment could be predicted according to these variables which include cultural frames of reference of the black student experience. The study also highlights the importance of racial identity development to black student adjustment at predominantly white institutions.

In a controversial report in the *Journal of Student Development*, Taylor (1986) stated that there are few black students who are alienated, depressed or angry. He argues that today's black students have a new attitude. They are not politically or racially aware and do not have a clear understanding or acceptance of themselves or their racial identity. Black students on white campuses, according to Taylor, are comfortable. "They have no sweat, no
tears, no fight, no hostility and surely no anger - just acceptance (p. 201)." He argues that higher education institutions should be concerned about these attitudes.

Taylor's report was refuted by others (Cheatham, 1986; Cuyjet, 1986; Wright, 1986) who all state that Taylor has over generalized black students and has failed to recognize and acknowledge that black students are not a homogeneous group. As indicated earlier, studies of black students and alienation show a variety of variables contributing to alienation, with inconsistent findings.

In an unrelated article, Allen (1985) attributes this to the fact that most studies of black students are cross-race comparisons. This was also reflected in Griffin's (1992) literature review in which he acknowledged few studies are done solely on black students. Allen (1985) posits that within-race studies will "offer fertile possibilities for increased understanding of black student outcomes on predominantly white campuses (p. 135)." There is considerable diversity among black students on white campuses (McEwen, Roper, Bryant, and Langa, 1990) and, according to Allen, researchers have been slow to study this diversity and to assess the consequences. In a recent publication, Debunking the Myth - Stories of African American University Students (Brown, 1994), the diversity of students and student experiences are demonstrated through the stories of twelve different students attending predominantly white institutions.

Cheatham (1986) points to the error in using a single theoretical model (racial identity) as Taylor has. Wright (1986) states that Taylor is "blaming the victim." She argues that Taylor is remiss in not acknowledging that university officials, student affairs in particular, are responsible for the campus climate and how black students react to this climate.
Student Affairs and Campus Climate

The responsibility that student services plays in campus climate is often stated in the literature. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA] (1987) states in their fiftieth anniversary perspective that:

The beliefs and knowledge of student affairs staff influence the manner in which they work with individuals and groups, the ways in which policies are made, and the content of programs and services. Knowledge about human growth and development and how environments shape student behavior also influence the role of student affairs. Therefore, student affairs staff should be expected to be experts on students and their environments.

In their handbook for student service professionals, Delworth, Hanson and Associates (1980) provide a history of the philosophy and direction of the field of student services. The field grew out of changes in faculty interest where there was little interest in students' activity outside the classroom in the early 1900's. As a result, some university presidents began to appoint persons to be responsible for student matters. The initial charge was to resolve student problems and to administer campus discipline. The field grew and became more recognized and developed with the demands put on higher education after World War II and the tremendous growth in enrollment.

From its beginning, student affairs has been concerned with the development of the student as a person and not only his intellectual training (Delworth, Hanson & Associates, 1980; NASPA, 1987). In the 1960's, behavioral scientists began to study college student behavior and student affairs began to move from a "services" approach to a more developmental approach. Educators were encouraged to take greater responsibility in the human development of their students. This new emphasis prompted student
affairs administrators to realign their divisions into two major areas: student development and student services management (Delworth, Hanson & Associates, 1980). The area of student development stresses education and consultation and might include areas such as: orientation, student activities, academic advising, counseling and health services, career planning and special programs. The area of services management stresses administration and service delivery and includes areas such as: financial aid, campus security, residential living, student union, admissions, and registration.

When the enrollment of black students dramatically increased in the late sixties and seventies, it was student affairs who experienced the greatest impact (Peterson, et al, 1978). Black students on white campuses added burdens to student affairs administrators who had to deal with the problems that black students brought with them but also the problems of the tensions that their presence created.

The field of student affairs continues to become more specialized and practitioners will continue to take on roles of consulting, administering and instructing. Regardless of role, student development specialists will share the responsibility of humanizing and personalizing each student's education. This includes black students. According to Delworth, Hanson & Associates (1980), recognizing that students' problems are often inseparable from the institution's problems, practitioners should expect to help change the student's environment and to collaborate with others in bringing about necessary changes in the environment. It is this background that explains the expectations of student affairs in shaping campus climate.

As student development experts, student affairs administrators should be equipped with knowledge of the barriers and problems that confront black students at white institutions. This translates into understanding the
experience of being a black student on a white campus. Administrators must recognize that these problems are the institution's problems as much as the students'. Student affairs administrators are expected to be instrumental in changing the environment. Their work and direct contact with all students, staff and other administrators position them in key areas of the institution where they may effect changes that involve an awareness and inclusiveness of black students, thus producing healthier campus climates.

The literature is clear about the responsibility of student affairs for campus climate (Ebbers & Henry, 1990; Green, 1989; Hughes, 1987; Manning, 1992; McEwen & Roper, 1994; Richardson & Skinner, 1991; Wright, 1987). Although there is clarity about the responsibility of shaping the climate, specifics about the sensitivity of student services practitioners to the prevailing campus climate is not as clear. Most of what is included concerns the content of graduate programs and the broad area of multicultural training.

In her article on creating multicultural environments, Manning (1992) states that "student affairs departments shape, manage and influence significant aspects of the university environment . . . Student affairs staff can directly influence the formation of a multicultural environment, build an inclusive environment, and transform institutional structures. As such, their impact on the process of multiculturalism is particularly important to all participants in the institution (p. 367)."

In the American Council on Education's *Minorities on Campus Handbook*, Green (1989) expresses agreement that student affairs personnel play a special role in improving the climate, yet, she does not see this task as theirs alone. Their personal contact with students requires sensitivity to climate and according to Green should be included in performance
evaluations and recognized for progress in creating positive climates for minority students.

There is literature on the preparation of student affairs practitioners and the importance of understanding the diversity of college students. Most of this literature, however, pertains to counselors. Examination of the literature indicates that the field of counseling is far ahead of the student affairs field in terms of multicultural training and staff development.

Wright (1987) addresses the limited understanding and attention to the needs of minority students in student development models. This concern is shared by McEwen, Roper, Bryant and Langa (1990). According to Wright, few models characterize the culture-specific aspects of development and presume that all students experience developmental factors similarly. Student affairs practitioners, particularly because of their charge of student development needs, must have an understanding of cultural factors as they relate to black student development. Conclusions are often inaccurately reached when using traditional theories with black students (McEwen, et al, 1990). Wright suggests that practitioners admit to their own naiveté as a first step toward increasing their own knowledge rather than taking on a patronizing, "we know best" attitude. McEwen, et al state that "student affairs professionals can work with black students neither meaningfully nor successfully without understanding their philosophical assumptions and their life experiences (p.434)."

Hughes (1987) reports the results of a study of black students' views about student affairs. In an effort to examine black students' perceptions about their personal adjustment on predominantly white campuses, Hughes focuses on campus environment as it relates to cultural sensitivity and the developmental needs of black students.
The study found that black women took greater advantage of student services than black men; significant because of the lower matriculation and graduation rate of black men. Hughes (1987) raises the possibility that the infrequent use of services by black men may be an indication of their vulnerability. Hughes found that student development personnel should be aware that student affairs environments are not perceived as relevant and accessible. Also, black students at predominantly white campuses experience frustration with the lack of preparedness of white university personnel to provide services in response to their needs.

McEwen and Roper (1994) make suggestions from the literature for multicultural knowledge and experience for student affairs master's degree preparation programs. Although the article centers on preparation programs for students entering the field, it stresses the importance of knowledge for practitioners already in the field. Cultural knowledge and understanding is relevant for those involved with staff development and also the development and delivery of programs and services for culturally diverse students. The article includes twelve areas of importance for study and experience. Among these twelve areas are human development theory which includes an understanding of race, ethnicity and racial identity and increased exposure and awareness of racial and ethnic groups, study and assessment of the college environment, including the racial climate, and conditions that promote or hinder students of color.

McEwen and Roper (1994) list three reasons for the value of multicultural content and experience both in preparation programs and staff development. First, is the ethical responsibility of the student affairs profession. Second, research demonstrates that most graduate students and student affairs practitioners have little knowledge and experience in
multiculturalism. Third, it is the responsibility of student affairs professionals to respond more effectively and knowledgeably to diverse student groups (p. 49).

Ebbers and Henry (1990) in their paper argue for the importance of a prominent role for student affairs to increase cultural competence of staff. The paper stresses the role of student affairs in promoting diversity and awareness and, therefore, should evaluate the cultural competence of campus programs and personnel. Cultural competence is defined as the effectiveness of working with someone of a different race, ethnicity or culture. Student affairs must not only expand their own understanding, awareness, and acceptance but that of students and other staff as well. This entails an emphasis on the meaning and nature of groups, the difference in perspectives of reality and cross-cultural communication as a beginning toward developing cultural competence. Before any cultural competence can be achieved, an environment that fosters help and learning must be achieved which will produce a climate of trust, mutual effort and cultural competence.

If the situation is such that student affairs administrators carry a large responsibility for shaping and managing the climate, yet the campus climate is a barrier to black students, it becomes evident that these administrators may not be accomplishing what is expected of them. As indicated earlier, white students view the campus climate as friendly and inviting while blacks see it as hostile and unwelcoming. The question of whether or not administrators understand the perception of black students remains. To manipulate and shape the climate to make it more negotiable for black students, there must be an understanding of how it is perceived with the problems it presents before change can be effected. As it is necessary to talk to students to understand and assess their experiences, it becomes necessary
to talk to and assess the level of understanding that administrators have of black student experiences.

Student affairs administrators are the representatives and executives of the institution, therefore, their perspectives are reflective of the institution. They are the people who often operate with discretionary funding generated from student fees, the authority and responsibility for program content and working directly with all constituents on campus. They are responsible for providing security, physical or otherwise, as they feed, house, manage the social calendar, provide employment and other forms of financial aid, provide and teach leadership and training to students and many other areas that build campus life. They resolve, mediate and manage conflicts between students and also between the student and the institution. With this amount of influence should come an awareness that is regularly assessed and monitored.

There are two important models in the literature which share similarities about institutional change toward multiculturalism (Manning, 1992; Richardson & Skinner, 1992). Both models demonstrate the importance of the role that student affairs plays in this development.

Manning's (1992) model, the Cultural Environment Transitions Model, suggests that universities progress through various stages on their way towards multiculturalism. The model illustrates the university transition from monoculturalism to multiculturalism. The progression through the steps of the model include initiatives that student affairs practitioners must put into place to accomplish the transition. The starting point is recognition of the climate for people from diverse cultures confronted with a hostile environment. Before reaching Step II of the model, which few institutions have accomplished, a critical mass of understanding and awareness is
necessary for inclusive practices by white administrators before social justice and egalitarianism can become institutionalized and systemic. The management of conflict, and accumulation of cultural knowledge, and a reaction to the demands of change are areas where student affairs educators play a significant role, according to Manning.

Richardson and Skinner (1990, 1991) describe a model that is broader than Manning's and goes beyond the expectations and campus climate responsibility of student affairs educators. They report on a study involving minority achievement at ten predominantly white institutions. The study examined the success that these institutions achieved in graduating minority students in order to learn more about the barriers that minorities are confronted with while attending predominantly white institutions.

They describe a model in which institutions adapt their environments to create greater diversity in their student representation while maintaining their standards of achievement. In this model the three stages that an institution moves through are reactive, strategic, and adaptive. Stage one is described as an institution's reaction to pressure to improve participation through interventions such as recruitment, financial aid and special admissions. There is little systemic planning at this stage. The second or strategic stage involves more comprehensive interventions that are more long term and systemic. These efforts are planned to make minority students feel more comfortable and achieve greater success. Interventions are designed to change students so they become better matches for the institutional environment and also to change the environment to make it easier for diverse students to negotiate. The first and second stage interventions are usually done by student affairs administrators.
According to Richardson and Skinner (1990), student affairs administrators have the responsibility for expanding diversity and dealing with the problems that develop as a result of diversity. In their study, it was student affairs professionals who took the responsibility for the social environment in regards to curbing cultural isolation and the negative effects of racism. As front line administrators working to increase diversity and achievement, they have also been the most successful in diversifying their staffs. The study found these diverse student affairs people are aware of the problems of assuming that students must do all the adapting.

Institutions enter the third, adaptive stage of the model when leaders recognize that student affairs efforts must be augmented by faculty involvement and changes in academic practices. Attention is shifted from race and ethnicity to student need and intervention programs and services become more mainstream. Richardson and Skinner (1990) state that few institutions have reached the adaptation stage.

As indicated by Richardson and Skinner (1990), institutions that are successful in graduating minority students progress through stages that have involved the implementation of interventions and initiatives directed by student affairs administrators. Lessons may be learned from these successful institutions studied by Richardson and Skinner. Success of progressing through stages one and two were reached through the efforts of student affairs administrators and interventions.

If all institutions can strive and successfully reach stage two, student affairs administrators must be knowledgeable, aware and sensitive to the needs and experiences of black students. Institutions must assess their administrators and administrators must ask themselves and their staffs how much they understand before they can measure or consider how effective and
involved they are in enhancing and effecting, or perhaps, hindering change. If institutions are sincere about change, this cannot be accomplished by administrators who are not on top of the issues of black students.

Theoretical Framework

To develop an understanding of the black student experience on white campuses, literature from several topics was examined. These varied topics and theories as explained in the literature review will form the framework and direction for this study. The situation concerning the declining enrollments of black students begs examination and awareness of the problems and barriers that black students are confronted with. The assumption that there are several problematic areas for black students on white campuses is basic. What must be established from the outset is what it is like for black students on white campuses. In this study, the campus is Easton College. What is it that makes their experiences normal or unique, positive or negative? The literature has indicated, and it is expected, that the students in this study will portray different experiences. This has been demonstrated by Brown (1994), Allen (1988) and others. It is also expected that although multiple perspectives may be found, some basic commonalties will become evident through the students' stories. What is important and necessary is to have an understanding of the students' experiences.

While the student voice is critical, it does not have an impact on the organization if it is not heard. Therefore, it is necessary to see if this rich data is comparable to the awareness of administrators. The juxtaposition of the student voice with administrators' views of students' experiences are important to this study. To make this comparison, an examination and understanding of the themes that describe and characterize how black
students feel about the climate on predominantly white campuses must be made clear. What are the pieces that are directly related to the institution and its climate and environment? How a student describes the fit with the campus through the campus community and interactions, involvement, support and level of comfort and the degree to which students may become alienated begins to describe some of the major themes.

Here are the themes or "theoretical propositions" that will guide question wording, probes and data analysis and coding (Yin, 1984):

Racial Identity

There will be individual issues that may have an effect on students' perceptions and responses. When discussing the campus climate for black students, the issue of race and racism cannot be avoided. Racial identity theory explains how race means different things to different people based on how they have developed racially. An examination of background issues, types and lengths of interaction, experience and exposure to those of a different race and the opportunity to examine the meaning and impact of one's race and how one feels about those of another race is necessary before any assumptions of racial identity can be made. These assumptions may also be applied to the administrators in the study. The content of responses to various questions and situations may allow for appraisal of racial identity development.

How one behaves and handles life experiences is influenced by racial development. This will help to explain the experience of students and their perceptions, as well as the perceptions that administrators hold of black students. Racial identity theory can be very useful in explaining the dynamics and phenomena that takes place on a campus. Life experience,
education, and age, affect a person's development and racial identity (Yang, 1992).

A student's ignorance of his or her oppression does not mean that a problem does not exist. This could be a very common situation of young people on campus. A look at racial identity development indicates that early stages indicate a lack of identity to race as a difference and early stages are most often found in young and inexperienced individuals (Hardiman & Jackson, 1992; Helms, 1984; and Yang, 1992).

The types and choices of group interactions of black students may also be explained through racial identity. As stated by Helms (1990), groups are often formed by racial identity and not race per se. Reference group theory and racial identity applied to group interaction will inform this study of the dynamics of how black students make choices about who they choose to interact with and the responses that these interactions elicit from other students both black and white.

Hardiman and Jackson (1992) state that the value of racial identity theory is its usefulness in providing an explanation and understanding of what is happening on today's campuses between the races. Whether administrators have any understanding of students' racial identity development is of interest. I am interested in how they attribute differences in racial awareness, acceptance, indifference and racism to students, as well as others on campus.

There are other individual characteristics to be considered. How a student is achieving academically will also have an effect on the experience. Though the literature does show correlation between academic success such as GPA and campus involvement and satisfaction, students who are academically successful nevertheless express feeling lonely and alienated
As the literature indicates, academic success is no guarantee that a student will not be alienated from the campus community.

Interaction With Whites

The extent to which students feel or attempt to become part of the campus community is a direct reflection of perceptions. How and with whom black students interact is an area that I intent to examine with the students. Understanding the interaction, or lack of it, with whites on campus is crucial to understanding the black student experience. The literature is clear that black student interaction with white students and faculty is not good. It is less clear about the interaction with administrators but the assumption of poor interaction is present (Hughes, 1987). A probe of the relationships that students have with whites on campus will take place. Both student relationships and their relationships with administrators and faculty will be examined.

Interaction With Blacks

The relationships and interactions that black students have with other black students will be examined. The type and quality of relationships that they have with other black students has significance to the experience on a white campus. As indicated by Pounds (1987) these relationships might demonstrate the type of bonding developed out of necessity and survival, which may not be healthy.
Perceived Attitudes and Behavior of Whites

A problematic issue for black students is the lack of sensitivity and understanding of their experience on the part of whites (NAICU, 1991), therefore, an understanding of what accounts for these perceptions is helpful and important. The sensitivity level and tolerance that whites have will be addressed through an examination of perceptions and whether or not they differ. These differences play a major role in the distance between blacks and whites on campus and keeps blacks from the mainstream of the dominant community on campuses (McClelland and Auster, 1990).

Stereotyping, indifference and any degree of insensitivity that students experience may be tied to the tenets of symbolic racism and dominant ideology. Theoretical implications may be made if black students are feeling this from other students or faculty and administrators.

Social Support

Closely related to black student interactions will be the social support systems that students feel are available to them and which they utilize. As one of the main tasks of student affairs administrators, the management and provision of support services, knowledge of where and from whom students seek support is important. Support for students may vary from other students, black and/or white, student clubs and organizations, or services provided by the university such as counseling, multicultural student services, athletics, career services, student activities, etc. How students view the university support services, in terms of usefulness, perception of friendliness and if they meet any of the needs of black students is a relevant question to students as well as administrators.
Students' Perceptions of Student Affairs

Not only does the literature say that student affairs personnel need to understand black students needs and experiences, but it says black students believe that student affairs people, along with other students, do not understand (Hughes, 1987; Wright, 1987). This leaves them with no one or few to turn to, only exacerbating the feelings of alienation that already exist. Students must feel student affairs personnel understand or are at least trying to understand. This can lead to better utilization of services, which leads to increased retention (Hughes, 1987).

Alienation

The hostile campus climate which prevails on most campuses for black students is the main cause of feelings of alienation and isolation (Allen 1988). Allen, who has studied a number of psychosocial issues of black students on white campuses, has found alienation and isolation to be the most serious of problems. Although all students do not experience alienation, many do (Allen, 1988; Fleming, 1984).

To understand the alienation, it will be important to know whether social estrangement or loneliness is present. How the number of black students at Easton is interpreted by black students is of interest. As indicated by Hurtado (1993) the structure of the institution, which includes the racial representation of races, shapes social interaction and attitudes and may contribute to racial tensions. Whether this condition presents any problems or negative connotations about the institution's commitment from the student's perspective is of interest. How do the students feel about what the institution is doing to address or resolve it? This perception also reflects a dimension of the climate (Hurtado, 1993).
There are several dimensions of alienation and many variables from which it has been studied. It effects the black student experience. To comprehend the black student experience an understanding of alienation, how it is manifested, what it is attributed to and how it contributes to the experience, success and satisfaction of black students needs examination.

Separation and Segregation

Existing in conjunction with alienation are issues of separation and segregation of racial groups on today's campuses. The separation of black students from the white community and the segregation, usually interpreted as self-segregation by both blacks and whites, have more to do with alienation than self-imposed separation and segregation (Smith, 1989; McClelland & Auster, 1990). What black students attribute the separation to, from their personal points of view, and an explanation of why they perceive others to separate may provide crucial insight to this growing problem.

These theories form the framework from which to build an understanding of the aspects of climate for black students. The literature suggests the necessity for understanding the perceptions of climate for racial and ethnic groups if any attempt at change is to be effective. Conversation with students is said to be the best method for staying informed of the issues and feelings with which to be concerned. This would indicate the need for good communication, trust and caring between administrators and students.

The themes described in the literature, coupled with the points gleaned from students' stories, are what I want to pursue with administrators. Administrators should be aware of important, or particularly problematic, issues to black students. As their prime responsibility, they cannot do their jobs well or effectively without dealing with the problems of students and
seeking solutions. As stated by NASPA (1987), their main and original mission is to attend to the problems of the students. They are the experts and therefore, should understand and react to the black student experience.

If many of these themes reveal positive results and experiences of black students, the interest will be in what is happening at Easton that makes black students comfortable and welcomed. How may some of its endeavors be explained and duplicated at other white campuses?

With respect to the administrators' perspectives, how administrators view black student involvement, alienation and the campus separation issue needs to be questioned. To what do they attribute the separation of racial groups?

In contrast, an examination of administrator's perceptions about the numbers of black students will be probed to explore the level of sensitivity, attention and commitment. Responses by administrators may provide an accurate reflection of the institution's commitment and efforts toward its black students.

If student affairs administrators are aware and recognize any antagonism that black students receive, this may indicate their own level of sensitivity and awareness. Conversely, the attitudes and beliefs of administrators in response to these areas of concern may exhibit a lack of awareness or insensitivity. Do they reflect any of the tenets of symbolic racism or dominant ideology such as indications toward meritocracy or individualists beliefs? An important question for administrators is how important is it for black and white students to interact and how regularly.

My personal observation is that some of these elements have been missing. Initiatives, policies, services and programs are continually devised but rarely are student input or perceptions considered. Administrators who
are responsible for decision making and setting policy on diversity issues do not consult administrators lower in the hierarchy. Generally, lower level administrators have greater contact, connection and communication with students. On the other hand, all administrators, and not only those responsible for working directly with students in the delivery of services and student development, must be knowledgeable and understanding of the issues that are crucial to the quality of the experience for blacks on their campuses. Of interest will be the frequency and quality of communication between administrators and black students.

The literature contains numerous strategies and recommendations for achieving diversity and improving campus climate. These strategies go beyond the basic attempt of increasing enrollment, but involve pertinent social and academic issues. Many of these social issues are related to student affairs. The models for achieving multiculturalism indicate the role and the expectation of student services. Although Richardson and Skinner (1990) indicate three stages necessary to achieve diversity, clearly stages I and II, reactive and strategic, are the responsibility of student affairs. If institutions can at least accomplish these stages, then Stage III, the adaptive stage, is more promising and attainable. If student affairs interventions promote change in students and campus environments, an understanding of how they interface is crucial.

There has not been much progress at many institutions. Strategies and initiatives at many colleges and universities have not changed the climate. If awareness and understanding are key elements for student affairs to accomplish this stage, perhaps it is the missing link. The literature asks, and research supports, the necessity of understanding the perceptions of black students, the next step to understanding the climate is to examine the
perceptions of administrators and their level of understanding. Perhaps this is the step toward asking the right questions to achieve diversity.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The hostile campus climate is known to be a major barrier to success and satisfaction for black students attending predominantly white institutions. For most institutions, to achieve diversity is to make their campuses more inclusive. Campus climate is perception, therefore to understand how the climate feels to black students, an understanding of their perceptions is necessary. "The primary way a researcher can investigate an educational organization, institution, or process is through the experience of the individual people, the "others" who make up the organization or carry out the process (Siedman, 1991, p.4)."

The study involved an in-depth examination of climate perceptions of two groups on campus, black students and student affairs administrators. The assumption is that student affairs administrators are experts on students (NASPA, 1987) and responsible for the delivery of services and the development of students (Delworth, Hanson & Associates, 1980). Accordingly, these administrators should understand the problems that the climate presents to students and how these students perceive the climate. This may not be the case when it comes to the problems and perceptions of black students. Since most attempts at making black students feel more welcome and comfortable on white campuses have been unsuccessful, and the need for student affairs administrators to be aware and understanding of the black student experience has been stressed, an examination of perceptions has provided useful data.

Probing students about their collegiate experience and asking student affairs administrators to describe their perceptions of this experience has helped to explain some of the problems that exist. The focus of this research
was to examine to what extent administrators understand how black students feel on campus and are aware of the issues black students face.

**Rationale For Qualitative Research**

The study used qualitative methods to develop and administer in-depth interviews. The subjects involved two subgroups from Easton College. The first group consisted of black students. The second and primary group consisted of administrators from the Student Affairs Division at Easton College.

That the black student experience is not the same as the white norm has already been established, and according to Manning (1992) qualitative research methods give meaning and knowledge about those who vary from the norm and add to the "richness and complexity of campus life (p. 133)."

The purpose of interviewing the students was to gather detailed descriptive data, in their own words, about the experience of being a black student at Easton, a predominantly white college. The students' perceptions of the campus climate were gleaned from the details of their stories. These data included details about issues that were problematic to students as outlined in the theoretical framework.

Administrators were interviewed to gather detailed descriptive data, also in their own words, about what their perceptions were of the campus climate for black students at Easton. Because student affairs administrators are key players in shaping the climate and the need to understand the issues of students is crucial for effective service delivery and the development of students, an exploration of their perspectives through in-depth interviews was a central piece of this study. I probed their awareness of the issues that students described in my interviews with them.
The process of interviewing provided more than could be provided by questionnaires and surveys which impose predetermined limits (Kuh & Andreas, 1991). Results from qualitative studies and interviews, particularly with administrators, had the potential to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about student life and student experiences.

A qualitative study using open ended interviews provided the opportunity for both students and administrators to give an unqualified assessment of campus life (Manning, 1992). The data collected from the interviews were from the perspective of the students and the administrators.

Examining the perceptions of each provided insight to the relations between the students and the institution and how welcomed, comfortable and involved they feel at Easton. Indications of the effectiveness of services and policies were also provided through the data from the administrators' stories.

Because climate varies from campus to campus, making generalizations from these data is difficult. However, valuable information about Easton was gained by examining climate and perceptions. As indicated by Manning (1992), it turned out that for both administrators and students this was the first time they were asked about their perceptions and had never been asked to put their feelings into words. These data provided more informed and a more knowledgeable perspective from which to understand the students' personal view and the administrators who represent the institution.

As Kuh & Andreas (1991) suggest, accurate descriptions derived from qualitative methods may help administrators better understand the behavior of not only the students but also of themselves. A thorough understanding of
the experience was necessary to first identify and assess problems and understand what was happening (Kuh and Andreas, 1991).

Some of the administrators may have been surprised by how well they understood the black student experience. Others admitted how little they actually knew. The examination of both perspectives, student and administrator, revealed the multiple realities that exist between the two groups on the same campus (Kuh & Andreas, 1991). This inductive approach was used in an attempt to raise questions that have not been earlier thought of or asked. This study did not attempt to test anything but to gain a better understanding of the climate for black students, how well administrators understand the climate and how it effects the experience for these students (Palys, 1992).

The Setting

The study took place at Easton College, a small Catholic college located in southern New England. Easton College is a private selective college of 3600 students and 312 faculty. It's fourteen to one ratio of student to faculty is one that the college prides itself on. The student/faculty contact is said to be high with a great amount of faculty/staff interaction. Many of its faculty serve in administrative roles (Easton College Admissions Bulletin). Of it's 3600 students, only about 2% are black with the same 2% of black faculty and administrators combined. The majority of its black students attend on a full scholarship.

Easton also prides itself on its student success rate. With 96% of its freshmen completing the first year, its rate is one of the highest in the nation. The graduation rate is 93%, the twelfth highest in the nation (Easton College
Admissions Bulletin). The graduation rate of its black students is as high as the general student rate.

In its publications, Easton speaks of its community as one that is involving. At Easton "students feel welcome and comfortable from the moment they set foot on campus, becoming part of a college family that reaches out to its members in countless ways, from . . . supporting the special cultural interests of African American, Hispanic and international students (Easton College Admissions Bulletin, p. 8)."

The Sample

One of the strategies that Patton (1990) describes is maximum variation sampling. This strategy, according to Patton, provides heterogeneity to a small sample. The common patterns that emerged from the stories of students with great variation were of "particular interest and value in capturing the core experience and central, shaped aspects" of life at Easton (p. 172). Siedman (1991) states, "In my experience maximum variation sampling provides the most effective basic strategy for selecting participants for interview studies (p. 43)."

The goal was to achieve a purposeful sample of both black students and administrators where "information-rich cases" and a great deal about issues of central importance was learned (Patton, 1990). "Gatekeepers" were asked to nominate participants from both groups. Gatekeepers are described by Bogdan and Taylor (1975) as the "people who have the power to grant access (p. 31)" to potential participants.

Entry to the college was obtained through an acquaintance that I have at the college. My colleague who works at the college agreed to assist me with gaining access. As the Dean of New Students, she had the ability to
grant me initial access to some of the key gatekeepers at the college who included administrators and student leaders. It was through these gatekeepers that access, to both students and administrators, was sought.

According to Siedman (1991) it is best to establish access to participants through peers and this was first and foremost attempted. Student access was first attempted through students and administrators through administrators.

The Students

As is typical with qualitative studies, this study focused in-depth on a small sample. Of the student group, six students who could provide detailed stories of their campus life at Easton College were selected. These students were selected from the black population on campus. Gatekeepers among the black student population were asked to nominate participants. These people were student leaders, the Dean of Multicultural Student Affairs and the Director of the Martin Luther King Program, which is the program that recruits and provides scholarships to Easton's black students. These are the people who had the most contact with and know the students best, and were very helpful in gaining access.

They were asked to nominate people who vary in the following characteristics: gender, involvement in campus life, GPA, those who might have different experiences, and who have completed at least one full academic year at Easton. This method was followed to achieve a purposeful sample where "information-rich cases" and a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research was learned (Patton, 1990).

The collection and analysis of data for a small sample with variety will yield two types of findings; first, detailed descriptions of each student's experience which will be useful for documenting uniqueness and second,
important shared patterns of experiences that are significant because they emerged from heterogeneity (Patton, 1990). The literature is clear on the variety of perceptions of campus climate that may be possible within the same racial or ethnic group. This strategy did describe the variation in experiences while it also revealed similar and shared elements.

The underlying goal of this sample was information-rich stories, where much could be learned. It was one of these stories that prompted the selection of Easton as a site. During an earlier pilot study, a student from Easton participated. Rob, a fictitious name, was interviewed three times for ninety minutes each session. Rob's story provided a thick description and valuable detail of his experience on campus. He was the sixth student story used in this study. Informative and provocative, his story was especially enlightening because it illustrated many of the issues found in the literature yet it had other unique aspects. Rob was interviewed again to account for the two year lapse since the original interview and also to duplicate the interview format used for the other five students.

The Administrators

The administrators were also selected by using purposeful sampling strategies yielding rich information. Although "there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry," (Patton, 1990, p. 184) six administrators were sought. As with the student selection, gatekeepers were asked to nominate participants from the administrative ranks. The Vice President for Student Affairs was deemed a gatekeeper. Due to their close contact with the student population and other administrators, the Dean of Multicultural Affairs and the Director of the Martin Luther King Program as well as student leaders, were asked to nominate administrators.
Multiple methods and strategies were used to select the administrator sample. The method and strategy used was based on a combination of Patton's (1990) critical, typical and negative cases and also chain sampling. This approach was used to locate key informants who would provide rich information.

Critical cases are those who according to Patton (1990) can dramatically make a point or in this case may know a lot about black students. To chain sample for critical cases, the Vice President for Student Affairs was asked to inform me of who, in his opinion, knew a lot about black students. The same was asked of the Deans of New Students and Multicultural Affairs and the Director of the Martin Luther King Program and student informants. The names which were common to each list were the people I sought to be potential participants. This list was not long and included people who were faculty members. After eliminating faculty, there were two people who were obvious choices for critical cases. Their names appeared more often than others and they served as full time administrators.

It was important to include administrators who were typical or average or who were not deemed to be those who knew a lot about black students. According to Patton (1990), including typical case administrators would give me a basis to compare and illustrate the more aware and knowledgeable administrators. Patton states that these administrators illustrate what is typical but they do not make generalizations of all administrators. Since the purpose of this study was to examine the level of understanding and awareness of administrators of the black student experience, typical administrators who could portray the typical perspective provided an important aspect to the study. It was assumed that not all administrators would be very knowledgeable about black student issues.
The typical case administrators were selected through the same process as the critical case administrators. The Deans of Multicultural Student Affairs and New Students, the Director of the Martin Luther King Program and the students were asked to list potential participants according to Patton's definition. Since the critical cases were identified, they were asked for nominations of typical cases. This list was not as common as the critical case list. It was longer and not as precise as the critical case list. The Vice President for Student Affairs's name was the most common and I felt it important to include him as a potential participant because of his position in Student Affairs and at the college. A second participant was also selected and agreed to participate.

During my initial meeting with the Vice President, he was very cooperative and agreed to be interviewed. He provided me with names for potential participants. At that introductory meeting, I scheduled a meeting to begin the interviewing. It was clear that he would be a good participant for the administrator sample. I did not explain that he would be a typical case.

When I arrived for our scheduled appointment, he was not available and there seemed to be a misunderstanding of our scheduled date and time. Another meeting was scheduled. The day before we were to meet, his secretary called me to inform me that the Vice President was unable to meet me. We rescheduled our meeting. Again, the meeting was canceled. Shortly after, I received a phone call from an administrative assistant to another Vice President who was inquiring about my study. She explained that the Vice President for Student Affairs was leery about participating and wanted to be sure that the college approved. I fully explained the details of my study, the contacts that I had already made and the relationship and access made through my colleague. The next day the woman called back and said that I
should proceed with my study at Easton. She advised me to reschedule my appointment with the Vice President of Student Affairs. At this point, it was clear to me that the Vice President for Student Affairs was not comfortable being interviewed. Nor was I comfortable interviewing him. I did not reschedule an appointment with him. I opted to seek another male administrator from the Housing Office instead.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress the importance of negative cases. In this study, negative cases are those who are black and are outside the range of critical or typical. Use of negative cases are to clarify differences in perspective according to race. It should not be, and was not assumed that all black administrators share a common perspective or that all know a lot about black student issues. There was little choice in selecting the negative case administrators. There are only three black administrators, and one is a personal friend.

This process produced the six desired participants to be interviewed. Access was facilitated by my friend and colleague, the Dean of New Students, who helped with an introduction and recommendation to the selected individuals. She also spoke with the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Vice President who was asked to inquire about my study.

Contact and Informed Consent Procedures

A list of nine potential students was generated based on the aforementioned process. The Dean of Multicultural Affairs and Rob called the students to inform them that they may be contacted by me to request their participation in the study. With the administrators, the introduction was made by my colleague. Making use of a block of free time that I had while on campus, I took it upon myself to visit the Housing Office to meet the man
who I was considering to replace the Vice President for Student Affairs as the second typical case participant. My visit was successful and he agreed to participate. During that visit, I scheduled a date and time to begin the interviews.

With the other participants, once an introduction was made, I made contact in order to begin to build the relationship before the interviews began (Siedman, 1991). The explanation of the study was better done by me than a third party. This also better facilitated any questions that my potential participants had. A contact visit was made with all to begin the foundation of the relationship. This enlightened me to the type of interview I could expect or if a potential participant was not good to interview. With some of the students, I called them on the phone and spoke with them about their major, number of years at Easton, involvement in activities, and their ability to meet with me for at least two meetings. If these students seemed to be appropriate for my sample, I scheduled an interview time with them. All of the students selected, with the exception of one, became participants. The one student not used as a participant was excluded because the interview did not meet my standards. As the interviewer, I felt my questions may have been leading. This student was not articulate and did not provide enough data with each question to give me a good feel for his perspective. As a result, I may have asked questions that could be considered beyond the realm of follow up.

The purpose of the contact meeting with administrators was to present the nature of the study in a very broad context and to be clear about what was expected of the study. I anticipated apprehension and skepticism about participation from white administrators who may have felt they were not knowledgeable or who may have been embarrassed about their ignorance, particularly because the researcher was African American. Extreme caution
and diplomacy without pressure was essential in these situations. Participants were always told the truth. I felt it was important to inform participants that I was not necessarily interested in Easton, in particular, or them as individuals, but that my interest was broader and concerns all predominantly white institutions and all student affairs administrators. As suggested by Bogdan and Taylor (1975), a general explanation sufficed. Some of the participants wanted more information but their questions were out of curiosity about the study and not a requirement for their consent. As explained, the Vice President was an exception. It helped to explain my status not only as a doctoral student, but also as a student affairs professional with a commitment to the field.

It was made clear to the Vice President, Dean and Director that the study may produce ideas and information that may be of interest and value to them. It was also made clear that anonymity and protection of participants was my obligation as the researcher. All participants were assured of their anonymity and that I was bound to confidentiality (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975).

Contact also began the process of informed consent (Siedman, 1991), a necessary piece of this study. The participants were told of informed and written consent and were asked to read and sign an informed consent form.

Once a list of potential participants was collated the contact visits helped me to identify who was suitable for the study based on purposeful sampling (Siedman, 1991). The contact visit also established what it was like to schedule interviews, how much free time was available, places and dates to meet, etc. Interview scheduling began at the contact visits and at the convenience of the participant.
Data Collection

Interviews were used to gather information for this study. The format was in-depth and open-ended interviews which allowed for the gathering of primary data.

The interviews were semi-structured and based on pilot interviews previously conducted. These pilot interviews provided the foundation of familiarity on which to base the student interviews (Brown, 1994). The structure of the student interviews focused on three parts. The first and briefest part focused on the background of the student's life and history and included issues such as early experiences with family, school, friends, and their neighborhood. Perceptions of the participants differed based on a number of issues. An understanding of the student's history and background facilitated a better understanding of the student's perceptions. The interviews began with the students being asked to describe their background before coming to Easton. A brief period of time was spent on this information. The second and third parts focused on the details of the experience and the meaning they made of the experience which clarified the intellectual and emotional connections to the participant's life (Siedman, p. 12-13).

For most of the participants, two interviews of approximately one hour each were conducted for each student except, Kristen and Aswad. As noted earlier, Aswad's interview was disregarded. Questions for the study were drawn from the questions used during the pilot study and the content of Rob's interview data, and from the literature. Interviews were conducted within three days to one week of each other whenever possible. This helped to develop a relationship between me and the student and to make a connection between the interviews (Siedman, 1991).
The next series of questions involved the experience at Easton.

Questions included:

• What is it like to be a black student at Easton?
• Describe how your experience is different from other black students at Easton.
• How is it similar?
✓ • How do you describe your interactions with other black students on campus?
• How would you describe the differences, if there are any, between your experience and that of white students?
✓ • How would you describe your interactions with white students on campus.
• What or who are your support systems on campus?
• What does Easton do to make black students feel welcome on campus?
• How would you describe the sensitivity of whites to the experience of blacks at Easton.
• How receptive are whites to the presence of blacks at Easton?
✓ • What are you involved with on campus?
✓ • How would you describe the social life for black students on campus?

Probing questions needed to be asked following these questions to ensure that information was thorough and focused. This method allowed students to tell their stories about life on campus which provided an understanding of the experience and the meaning they made of that experience.
Interviews with administrators provided information on what they perceived black students’ experiences to be like. The interviews with administrators were similar to the student interviews for purposes of comparison. The first part was to learn about the background and history of the administrator. Questions examined: family background, school and college experience, neighborhood dynamics, extent of contact with blacks and other minorities, and length and nature of experience in student affairs/higher education and Easton. As with the students, it was important to understand the nature of the background of the administrators to understand the nature of their perceptions. There were variables in the backgrounds that skewed or highlighted perspectives. For example, a white administrator who has had contact with blacks will have a better understanding than an administrator who has little or no contact.

Background questions included:

- Tell me about your family background and what it was like growing up.
- What was school like?
- What was the racial composition of your school? Your neighborhood?
- How much contact did you have with people of other races?
- How important is race to you? - Your own and that of others?
- Do you think our society places too much emphasis on race? Please explain.
- Tell me about your college experience?
- To what extent did you experience multicultural people during your college years?
- How did your interest in the higher education field develop?
- How long have you been involved in higher education?
- What did you think your purpose was as a higher education administrator when you first entered the field? And now?
- What were your personal goals/aspirations when you first entered the field?
- Have your goals changed?

The next part of the interview delved into the administrator's description of the experience for blacks at Easton. Questions asked followed as closely as possible those asked of students.

Questions asked of administrators included:
- How would you describe the experience for black students on this campus?
- To what degree do you think black students feel welcome on this campus?
- How do you think black students perceive the climate at Easton?
- How would you describe the interaction between black and white students at Easton?
- How sincere is the college's commitment to diversity?
- Many campuses are experiencing problems of separation between black and white students; what is the situation on this campus? What would you attribute separation to?
- How would you characterize the sensitivity level of whites to the experiences and problems of black students?
- What are the support systems for black students on campus?
- What percentage of Easton's black students are here through special admissions?
• How would you describe the level of involvement of black students within the campus community?

• To what extent do you think black students utilize the services available to them?

• What are the black student organizations on campus? How prominent are they?

• What are the relationships among black students like?

• What is your opinion about the number and percentage of black students at Easton?

• How do you think the black student success rate at Easton compares to the success rate of white students?

• How would you explain the differences between what black students experience at Easton and what white students experience?

• To what degree do the services at Easton meet the needs of black students?

As with the students, probing questions were needed to follow up on some of these questions to ensure thorough and focused information. Two interviews for approximately one hour were held with administrators.

Managing Data

In conducting qualitative studies, it was very important to be organized from the beginning of the study. Organization began from the moment the lists of potential participants were submitted by gatekeepers. The information provided about each potential participant was documented. As contact was made with each person, notes were taken on those who might be more suitable to be interviewed and the reasons for the choice as they related to the study. Siedman (1991) suggests the use of "participant
information forms" which were used throughout the study. He cites two purposes for the form: "to facilitate communication between the interviewer and the participants; and to record basic data about the participant that will inform the final choice of participants and the reporting on the data later in the study (p. 39)." Basic information such as the participant's address and telephone number, optimal times and times to avoid calling, and best times and places to schedule interviews were recorded.

Upon choosing participants, phone calls were made to confirm the schedule of interviews. This information was placed in the file of each participant and a general schedule of interviews with all participants was created to avoid confusion and conflict. The written consent form was copied and placed in the participant's file. A general file was kept on the study tracking progress, decisions, problems and other issues that pertain to the process (Siedman, 1991).

All interviews were tape recorded. There is general, but not unanimous, agreement in the literature that tape recording interviews is the best method to recording data. There are obvious benefits to taped interviews and there are some drawbacks.

Taped interviews are the most reliable means to putting the spoken words of the participant into written text for the study. "The participant's thoughts become embodied in their words (Siedman, 1991, p. 87)." Patton (1990) states that no matter how well the interview is conducted or how carefully questions are worded, it means nothing if the actual words of the participant are not captured. "The raw data of interviews are the actual quotations spoken by interviewees. There is no substitute for these data
the purpose of each interview is to record as fully and fairly as possible that particular interviewee's perspective (Patton, 1990, p. 348)."

Taping also allowed me to be more attentive.

Taping interviews allows for the original raw data to always be available. The opportunity to return to the tape to check for accuracy or clarification is assured. Participants may also feel assured that their words will be reported responsibly (Siedman, 1991). According to Merriam, (1988) the malfunctioning of equipment and the possibility that participants may be uneasy with being recorded should be considered when taping interviews. Patton (1990) also stresses how critical it is to produce high quality recordings, particularly for transcription. He makes several suggestions that will ensure quality tapes which were followed for this study. Using, checking and double checking a good working recorder, choosing a place that was quiet with no distractions, and taking safeguards to check voice and volume during the interview were precautions taken to guard against losing any data due to poor quality, malfunctioning or interruptions.

Both Patton, (1990) and Siedman (1991) agree that participants may initially be wary of the tape recorder, but wariness often subsides after a short period of time. The interviews proceeded for a long enough period of time to develop rapport and enough trust to enable participants to become accustomed to the recorder (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). One hundred twenty minute tapes were used which made it unnecessary to turn over, avoiding distractions, unless an interview ran beyond one hour. Long playing tapes also helped to time and signal the end of the designated hour.

Upon completing each interview, tapes were copied with copies and originals kept in separate locations for safekeeping. Tapes were carefully
labeled with participant's name, date, time, and interview sequence number for easy retrieval.

Note taking was still necessary even with use of a tape recorder. As the interview proceeded, new questions arose and areas which needed to be probed. Important points or questions were also noted for later analysis (Patton, 1990). Working notes helped to keep me from interrupting the interviews by keeping track of questions or probes that needed to be asked later in the interview. Nonverbal expressions were noted during the interview. The participants' gestures helped to understand the meaning of what was being said during data analysis (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975).

Taking notes after the interview was also critical. As soon as possible after the interview, the tapes were reviewed. Areas of uncertainty or vagueness were noted and questions which needed to be followed up at a later time were noted. Observations about the interview were also noted. Patton (1990) states that this is "a critical time of reflection and elaboration (p. 353)." Patton also states that this is when analysis begins and when the interview experience is still fresh and when insights might occur that may otherwise be lost.

Tapes from interviews were transcribed verbatim. Transcriptions began as soon as possible after the interviews. The use of a professional transcriber was used for all of the interviews. All transcriptions were done on computer file which proved to be labor efficient when writing reports for each participant. Patton's (1990) recommendation of several copies of each transcript was followed. One for safekeeping and three for different types of analysis.
Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was a multi-case (Yin, 1984) or cross-case analysis (Patton, 1990). It began with individual case studies for each participant. It was important that the nature of the experiences of the students at Easton be understood before any intensive analysis of administrators began. To examine the level of understanding that an administrator had developed, the experience of black students had to have meaning.

Variations in individuals was of importance in this study for both students and administrators. The student variations indicated the variety of experiences of black students. The same may be said of administrators. Analyzing the differences between the critical, typical, and negative case administrators was an important aspect of the cross-case analysis (Patton, 1990). The similarities of questions asked of the students and administrators during the interviews allowed for easier analysis across cases.

There is general agreement in the literature that there are no real rules for analyzing qualitative data. "We have few agreed-on canons for qualitative data analysis in the sense of rules for drawing conclusions and verifying their sturdiness (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 16)." Miles and Huberman further state that most researchers view qualitative data analysis as an art that requires an intuitive approach. Patton (1990) offers that "there are no absolute rules except to do the very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study (p. 372)."

Although there are no rules, there are guidelines to assist in data analysis. Yin (1984) posits that analysis is one of the least developed yet most difficult aspects of doing case studies. He stresses the importance of having a
general strategy of analysis from the beginning. Of the two general strategies that Yin offers, the most preferred is the "theoretical propositions" that prompted the study, which are reflected in the research questions, the literature review and new insights. Due to the scholarly nature of this dissertation, the analysis was guided by the theoretical framework (Patton, 1990).

Although the analysis was ongoing throughout the collection of data, it became more intense when all the data was collected and transcribed. The verbatim transcripts provided the raw data from the interviews from all participants. Yin (1984) calls this material the case study database. From this came a large amount of data which were reduced and consolidated. The transcripts were studied and reduced. This involved reading the transcripts several times and marking sections of the text that were interesting and important. As explained by Siedman (1991) much of this was based on my judgment as the researcher. This was the beginning of the process of making meaning and interpreting the material.

This judgment was based on my experience with the subject of black students on white campuses as well as how I internalized the material. It was important to stay focused on my interest on the topic, referring back to the proposal to remind myself of the original research questions. It was also important to be careful to not carry any bias in judging what was important (Siedman, 1991), particularly around such a sensitive and complex race related topic. Marshall (1981) would argue this point. She states that,

My bias is something I appreciate, it's part of me as a researcher. And while it is important for me and for others to recognize my bias, it really is what I can give as a researcher, it is my contribution, and it's coherent and it's felt and it has all these other qualities which make me value it more than a detached attempt to be objective. I work from a
particular position; I appreciate other positions, and I feel that each has its own integrity and its own validity (p. 399).

It was difficult to reduce data and eliminate passages that were not central to the subject matter. As suggested by Siedman (1991) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), it is best to err on the side of inclusion when reducing text. It is easier to eliminate it at a later time than to delete something of importance too early in the process. The combination of the knowledge that I have developed about the black student experience, my own personal experience of being a black student on a predominantly white campus and my professional experience of working with students gave me confidence that I could read and study the transcripts and make good inductive judgments about what was interesting and what was significant.

The interview data was not only reduced and consolidated but shaped to a form where it was ready to be shared (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The next step and part of reducing the text was to craft a profile for each participant (Siedman, 1991). This was easier done with the student interviews because they related directly to their own stories and experiences. This technique was not as easily accomplished with the administrators' interviews as they reflected on the experiences of students more than their own experiences of working with these students. Administrators' interviews were better crafted into vignettes which Siedman (1991) describes as shorter narratives which usually cover limited aspects of the experience. To expect the administrators' stories to be as full as the students' who are speaking of their own experiences was not realistic. Both student and administrators profiles and vignettes were crafted in their own words. The stories also became mine because as the interviewer and researcher, I crafted the stories according to how I reacted to what had been said (Siedman, 1991).
The suggested methods for analyzing qualitative data in the literature tends to be similar. Reading through the data several times and marking in the right hand margin notes, comments, observations and questions was a common suggestion (Brown, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 1990; Siedman, 1991). Merriam states that "at this stage the researcher is virtually holding a conversation with the data, asking questions of it, making comments, and so on (p. 131)."

While doing this, I also began the process of placing tentative labels in the left margin. Passages that seemed to follow a particular theme, subject or category were labeled. It was important that these labels remained tentative because categories and connections changed and developed as readings continued (Siedman, 1991). While labeling the text, a separate running list of major themes and ideas were kept. The list allowed me to begin an outline or system of classification for sorting data. It began with patterns of regularities or things that frequently appeared and could be placed in categories (Merriam, 1988).

Once passages were labeled and themes and categories became clear, I designed a matrix table which allowed me to list the frequency of each category or theme by participants. Separate tables were done for the students and for the administrators. Down the left side column were listed the themes which emerged from the transcripts. Across the top were the participants names. I then physically went through each transcript and listed on the table and in the appropriate cell the page numbers of the passages as they appeared for each participant. This was done for each participant and each theme.

After the matrix was completed, I then went back to the transcript and while referring to the table, I cut and pasted the passages from all the
participants by theme. For example, under the theme "interaction between black and white students," I cut and pasted all of the passages from all of the participants' transcripts. This was done for each theme. The data was now organized by theme for all of the participants, but in large volumes.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) call this labeling technique "unitizing." They suggest placing these units of information on index cards. I chose to list them on a matrix table, then cutting and pasting by unit. Only a code for the name of the participants was needed. The matrix listed the page numbers of the passages and could easily be identified if I needed to refer back to the transcript when it was necessary to check the full context.

Once units of information were cut and pasted into categories, they needed to be fleshed out. Miles and Huberman (1984) define categories as organized units of data which can be easily retrieved. Merriam (1988) describes it as the process of analysis which involves "the development of conceptual categories, typologies, or theories that interpret the data for the reader (p.133)" but at a higher level than the categories used to earlier organize the data and craft the narrative. The categories, according to Merriam (1988), are concepts indicated by the data, but are not the data itself.

The next step involved reading the passages in each category to determine if the contents are essentially similar (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). If a passage did not seem similar, it was cut and put aside but not disregarded. This procedure continued for each category. Passages that did not appear to be similar were either set aside or placed under new categories. At this point certain categories has a substantial number of passages and I, as the analyst, felt pressed to begin the process of memo writing which lead to the delineating properties of each category and devising rules (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
This process revealed excerpts from participants' experiences that connected to each other and to passages from other participants. Particular attention was given to each of the themes discussed in the literature review and theoretical framework. The possibility of new and unexpected themes that may have emerged remained a possibility and some were identified.

Results of the study are reported with emphasis on the research questions that address what it is like to be a black student on a white campus. Also, the results of the level of understanding that administrators have of how the experience for black students were illuminated with attention to a comparison between the students and the administrators. Comparisons were made among administrators who were perceived to know a lot about black students, typical administrators, and black administrators. These stories demonstrate the level of understanding and misunderstanding between students and administrators and illuminate the perpetuation of problems and the intentional or unintentional lack of attention by the institution.

The following chapters present the analysis of the students' perceptions and the administrators' perceptions which are followed by a final analysis chapter which compares the two perspectives.
Before any comparison between the students and administrators can be made, a clear understanding of the students' perspective is necessary. This data analysis will begin with the student perception of what it is like at Easton for black students. How it feels to be a black student on a predominantly white campus such as Easton will be described by each of the participants in this chapter. An explanation of the types and quality of interactions that the students experience, between black and white students as well as among black students will be provided. In addition, students' connections to the institution, its services and programs will also be discussed.

**The Students**

**Rita**

When interviewed, Rita was a senior psychology major with a 2.7 GPA. From a small, predominantly white town, Rita has two brothers who are much older and from her father's previous marriage. She notes that her parents are still married and living together. Her father is a professional photographer, who spends most of his time in a photo lab and her mother is an accountant for the Department of Science at a large university. Her parents made a conscious effort to leave the large city in which they had been living before Rita was born to move to the suburbs where they could raise Rita.

Rita and her next door neighbors are two of the very few black families in her town. Her friends, for all of her life before coming to Easton, were
mostly white. It was not until she went to high school that she came in contact with blacks, other than her neighbors, who were from neighboring towns. Rita continued to have mostly white friends.

After leaving home, Rita came to Easton with the expressed desire to interact with blacks and to not make friends mainly with whites as she had done in high school. Though she had two black friends, they, like Rita, also interacted mainly with whites. Her early experience with blacks was not good. She did not like the blacks in her high school setting and was ridiculed for her choice to hang around with whites and accused of wanting to be white. While her relationships with white friends were positive, Rita longed for more black friends and interactions.

Rita's experience is a clear indication of how reference group choices can influence socialization. It was this teasing that prompted Rita to choose "not to hang out with white folks when I go to college." She understands and appreciates the racial differences and states that she is more accustomed to a white environment than other black students. She also finds herself less "militant" about issues than other black students.

I think I'm a little bit more used to being in the white environment than a lot of other black students that come here. They didn't grow up in the kind of town that I lived in. I think it kind of makes it better for me because I'm more used to it. Then, on the other hand, it just makes me tired of it because all of my life, that's been the situation that I've been in. Now, there are other students that come from other backgrounds. They've had more black people to be around. Actually there are some people up here who are the only black people in the town where they grew up. They have different perspectives. Like things that might not bother me as much just because I'm use to it, might bother other people or visa versa.

In regards to her reference group, she has made the desired change and now mainly interacts with blacks, yet she still manages to maintain friendships with white and Asian students. Rita understands how her past
experience and exposure has molded her current attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

Rob

Rob was first interviewed just after he completed his sophomore year, then again just after he completed his senior year and graduated from Easton. Academically, Rob stated that he did very well at Easton but did not divulge his final GPA. He has been accepted and plans to attend graduate school to pursue a Masters in Social Work from Boston University.

The oldest of five children, Rob was raised by his mother for most of his life while his father was in prison. While living in one of the city's housing projects, Rob grew up in a predominantly black neighborhood. His elementary school experience was very positive, and very diverse with emphasis on teaching about race and racial issues.

What I think [elementary school] failed to do is it brought us up in a world of idealism and what things could be like, but it didn't present it like it existed. I don't think it prepared us for the real world as much as it could because I came out of [elementary school] kind of blind. I was extremely patriotic. I was idealistic. Everybody was human. We were all friends and my interpretation of things was, as soon as I get out of school, things would continue to be like that.

In junior high school, though there was a good racial mix, Rob was in a high level academic track and interacted with all white students. Rob remembers criticizing the other black students for "the way they acted and the things they did." He calls this his assimilation period. "I started dressing like white kids. I stopped wearing socks and rolling my pants up with little penny loafers. Again, I mean, a lot of times, people adapt to their environment. I wish I could go back and slap myself for that."
When Rob went to high school he had not changed until he had a teacher who Rob recalls being extremely racist and sexist. It was this teacher and his father's release from prison that started "inner turmoil" where he began to question things. Rob remembers how difficult it was to have his father around after living with only his mother. He also remembers how his father questioned his beliefs and his values. They spent lots of time together reading and discussing issues such as race, religion, slavery, the Vietnam War, etc.

... while he was still in prison I was a hard core Baptist at the time. He started questioning my Christianity and that's where I think was probably the first time a set of my values which I held very important to me, religion and stuff like that was annihilated. ... What I did at that point, I trashed every single value that I held dear to me; everything except family. I was a loner, I hung by myself because I realized I was reading through different things.

Shawn

Shawn is a senior management major. He began his studies at Easton as a biology major. "It wasn't working too good. I wasn't working too well, so I jumped to management and ever since then it's just been good. I'm digging myself out of a big hole. Just because of science and all that stuff, but as far as business goes, I consider myself a pretty good student." Shawn did not state what his GPA was.

The youngest of three children, Shawn's parents are both professionals. His mother is a registered nurse and his father a middle school teacher. Shawn's brother is studying for his doctorate at an Ivy League school and his sister is also attending graduate school.

The neighborhood where Shawn grew up was a predominantly white section of the city where they were one of only three black families. Shawn remembers his elementary and junior high school experiences as fun. He also
remembers the black teachers in middle school. "... I had a couple of black teachers and I just loved it. I thought that was just great. You know, you do feel a lot more comfortable in that setting. I think."

When I was a kid all my life I played ice hockey. That's something most black people don't play. So, this is where you start to notice big differences in the way people perceive you. I'm out there and people are just like, "what are you doing here, you're black. Why aren't you playing basketball?" I was asked that. I've been told that. At times, coaches would give me a hard time. You know, when I was younger, I didn't notice it of course. When I got older, I mean it was just obvious. ... On the ice, I've been called nigger to get me mad.

It bothers me about that much. (He demonstrates a small measurement between his fingers.) It doesn't really bother me cause I was actually a decent player and I think a lot of people were jealous of my skills. I was just a lot better and that's the only way they knew how to retaliate by calling me that. I don't let stuff like that really bother me. But as far as me standing out big time, that was it.

You know and the only time I really felt comfortable is when -- I was fortunate to play one year of high school hockey with my brother and I felt really comfortable with that. That's cause I wasn't the only one there. It just felt a lot better.

Shawn's high school experience was similar to his middle school experience. Although the school was predominantly white, there were black students from other parts of the city. According to Shawn, the school was "very cliquey." "People were trying to find their groups." The black students had their clique but Shawn did not belong to that group. He chose to be with his friends in the marching band. "... my friends tended to be white because that was the way I grew up."

Kristin

Kristin is one of the youngest participants in the study, only beginning her sophomore year when she was interviewed. When I asked Kristin how she was doing academically, she responded that she could be doing better but would not divulge her GPA. During that year, she planned to be less
involved in student activities because she needed to concentrate more on her studies. She mentioned having tutors and using the Learning Center which to me indicated that she may have had academic difficulties during her first year at Easton.

Kristin and her sister were raised by their mother and the three of them have lived together since her parents divorced when she was three years old. Her mother has a male companion who has always been a father figure to Kristin. They lived in the heart of the city until Kristin's early teens, then moved to the suburbs. Kristin's mother is the Director of Personnel in a state department office in the city. Her sister is two years younger than Kristin.

The neighborhood elementary school where Kristin attended was predominantly black. She did not like her elementary school experience and while evasive, stated that she and her sister were "teased a lot about personal things and just different things like that."

Middle and high school years were spent at schools in the suburbs where her grandmother lived and the family spent most of their time. These schools, unlike elementary, were predominantly white. The neighborhood where she moved to was well integrated; a community where everyone knew everyone.

Kristin and her sister were inseparable. "She was like my shadow."

When we went to the suburbs and then we started hanging around with the white people, it seemed the black people were kind of teasing us because we were hanging around with white people, but we didn't want to be part of the black people because they were roughnecks. They were too into violence. We didn't want any part of that.

It wasn't a big deal as far as race. We got along with whomever. My mother always taught that everybody is equal they're your sisters and brothers, you should love them the same. So, I think that's part of the reason maybe why the transition from [the city to the
suburbs] wasn't that much of a deal because we were taught and raised to love everybody and everyone's the same.

As a Baptist, church and religion has always been important in Kristin's life. Her church community is predominantly black and Kristin spent a great deal of time in church. Her summers were spent in Vacation Bible School.

Since coming to Easton, Kristin has become part of the small group of black students who socialize with each other. She has noticed the difference between the white students at her former high school and the white students at Easton, particularly in the classroom. In several instances during the interview, Kristin mentioned feeling intimidated in class.

As far as in classes, the teacher is always saying that there's never a dumb question. But I would feel like if I were to ask a question and it was a wrong question, they would just be like "she's blah blah blah" that kind of intimidation. Or just as far as just the students staring at you, that's good enough intimidation for me.

Angie

A sophomore with a double major in Political Science and History, Angie has a 2.7 GPA. Growing up in a racially mixed city neighborhood, Angie grew up with both parents at home, which Angie deliberately notes, and her sister and brother. Both siblings are also attending college. Her ethnic culture is important to Angie.

I'm a Cape Verden, so I grew up with a Cape Verden cultural background. Whereas, a lot of people would just grow up Americanized. We grew up with a strong sense of our Cape Verden culture. We speak Creole in the house. I've been to Cape Verde twice so a lot of people in my family always go back to Cape Verde. My parents were both born in Cape Verde.

Not only was Angie's neighborhood one with mixed cultures, but the neighborhood was well integrated and friendly toward each other. Angie
attended a public elementary school that racially represented her neighborhood. Her middle school was Catholic and also racially mixed. She describes her Catholic high school as similar to Easton, in that it was predominantly white with very few black students.

At Easton, Angie is very active. She is a member of all of the multicultural or change organizations and served as the President of the student chapter of the NAACP at the time of the interview. Angie is also involved in athletics at Easton. Though Angie has many problems with the campus life at Easton, such as the lack of social activities for black students, the indifference and poor interaction between blacks and whites, and the lack of representation of students of color in student leadership roles, she very much likes residence living and dorm life.

Christopher

Christopher was a senior Finance and Management double major when interviewed, with a 3.3 GPA. He grew up in Kenya and came to visit an uncle who is a priest in the area, then stayed to attend Easton.

The oldest of five children, Christopher has two brothers and two sisters and a very large extended family which according to Christopher is very common and very important in Africa. Christopher grew up in the city when he was young then his father moved the family to the country where he worked for a sugar company. In the city the diversity he experienced was amongst many different tribes. Country living was different and is predominantly one tribe, aside from small groups of people from other tribes who come to work for the company. According to Christopher, the tribes that he has lived amongst share a similar culture because most migrated to Kenya from the Sudan and some from Uganda. When migration took place, the
location was dependent on the hostility of neighboring tribes who may have been forced to keep moving until they were accepted in a particular neighborhood.

People in Christopher's tribe are basically fishermen who were originally from the Lake Victoria area and did a lot of fishing to sustain themselves. Christopher's background does not involve any emphasis on racial diversity. As he explained,

Well, the thing is, a lot of people have asked me this. How we treat and how we look at white people over there. The thing is, we don't really have such a thing. We don't look at people as white or black or we don't really have terms as coloreds or anything.

The other day, I was talking to Rob and he asked me about, I think the racial diversity or something, about how we look at white people over there. It was funny, cause I referred to white people as colored and he said -- (Christopher laughing) because we don't really have it that way. We have Indians who are mainly business men around in most of Kenya. We'll call them Indians but, it's not as emphasized as here.

In Kenya, Christopher attended eight years of primary school which he compared to elementary school in the United States. He later attended four years of high school. After high school, students proceed on but not before taking a national exam. How well you do on the exam determines where you will continue your education and what will be studied. According to Christopher, there is a significant difference between college and university in Kenya, where a college education is "lesser than a university." If a student is selected to attend one of four state universities, the program of study is selected for you according to how well you do. This is the reason why Christopher chose to come to the states to study.

He is very determined to do well with his studies mainly because of his debt to his father who sold a home to finance Christopher's first year tuition at Easton. Christopher did not receive a Martin Luther Scholarship
until his sophomore year. Selection of students of color who are not American for the scholarship remains a controversy. One of the first things that Christopher intends to do when he completes his studies is to earn enough money to repay his father.

Of the participants, most attended predominantly white high schools, but their backgrounds are very different. Only Shawn and Rita grew up in predominantly white neighborhoods. Both have always lived in neighborhoods where they were the only or one of a few black families in the neighborhood. White friends, throughout their lives, are common for both. While both attended predominantly white high schools, there was more diversity with a larger population of blacks than their elementary, middle or neighborhoods. Neither were accustomed to being around large groups of blacks. Increased exposure to blacks did not change the nature of interactions with blacks for either Shawn or Rita. Both continued to interact mainly with whites.

Rob, Angie and Kristin grew up in mixed neighborhoods and attended elementary schools with a racial mix. Rob and Angie enjoyed the diverse interactions of their elementary and middle schools. Both appreciated the diversity and experience of being in mixed company. Kristin, on the other hand, moved to avoid the predominantly black setting.

Christopher's experience is also unique, in that he grew up in Kenya and left Africa to come to Easton College. His perception of race in Africa is very different than the American race perception. According to Christopher, he did not view people as black and white until coming to the United States. Although he is beginning to, a result of his being here and his experience of
being at Easton, he still finds it difficult and he is adjusting his thinking as his interview clearly indicates.

To try to comment on Christopher's racial identity development in reference to his background would not be applicable because Christopher's racial group membership and beliefs are developmentally different and may not fit the racial identity models. These models focus on black American identity. Christopher's view as a black student is, nonetheless, useful in the context of his group membership and socialization at Easton. Caution will be exercised in attempting to analyze Christopher's racial identity development. Rather, descriptions of how his views are similar or contrary to those of other participants.

In addition to this general overview of the backgrounds of the student participants, further background information and an explanation of individual perceptions and how each student's racial identity development may influence the experience at Easton follows.

**Racial Identity Development Within A Predominantly White Context**

Reading the stories of these students and analyzing the experiences and perceptions, racial identity development becomes very useful in explaining the dynamics of Easton. The interactions, or lack there of, between the black and white students as well as the interactions of black students may be understood and explained as developmental. Racial identity development helps to explain the processes that black and white students are experiencing and how the stage of racial consciousness impacts on the college experience. It also helps to explain how the sense of group identity is developed in a predominantly and undoubtedly racist environment.
The stages of racial identity in the presented models demonstrate the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of students at differing stages of identity development. For purposes of this analysis, both Helms' (1984) and Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) model for blacks and whites will be applied. The Hardiman and Jackson model is particularly helpful in explaining the racial dynamics on college campuses.

According to Helms (1989), different environments represent different sets of beliefs about race and race relations. Students may come from a home and family or a high school that holds and demonstrates certain beliefs about race, then enter an institution, such as Easton, that represents a different set of beliefs and attitudes. This seemed to be a common theme expressed by many of the student participants. They unanimously discussed white student's lack of exposure to blacks. According to all participants, they found that many of the white students were coming into contact with blacks for the first time. As explained by Hardiman and Jackson (1992) these white students are likely to be in stage two, the acceptance stage, of their racial identity development.

As the dominant culture in America, whites can easily choose environments where it is not necessary to confront their whiteness. This is the case with white suburbanites, and a large portion of the population at Easton. Their suburban environment allows them to remain fixated in their racial identity development where they do not interact with blacks. Their first interaction may be on the campus of Easton. This may also be the first challenge of their racial attitudes which can be a positive or negative result (Helms, 1984).

According to Hardiman and Jackson (1992), many young people who enter college may very likely be entering college at the acceptance stage. At this stage, an ideology of racial dominance and subordination is absorbed and
touches upon all facets of life. Unless white students experience interaction with blacks on campus, and this is unlikely with the small numbers at Easton, many may remain at this stage.

Angie, Kristin, Rita, and Shawn spoke of coming from a predominantly white school environment and expecting to be prepared for the transition to Easton, but all were surprised to find the attitudes different than those they had left behind due to the white students' lack of exposure. As expressed by Kristin:

A lot of the students stare. The first week when I was here, eating dinner, going up in line, a lot of them stare at you. I wasn't used to that because I pretty much came from this kind of environment and it was fine. I was never insulted or was never downgraded or mistreated or anything in that kind of a sense. It was different coming here.

Angie is also bothered by the lack of exposure and the indifference of her white peers.

My high school was like all white kids, but I didn't really feel it as much as I feel it here. I think because all the white kids who come here, they're from the suburbs and where they come from, there were no black people and they're just ignorant of the whole situation. They don't know anything about black people. They don't want to know anything about black people. They really don't seem to care and they think you're here as tokens. It seems like unless you play a sport here, they don't seem to acknowledge you at all. So, just the feeling of coming to Easton is just weird. I didn't think it would bother me when I came here from high school, but it bothers me now.

Indicative of Shawn's racial identity stage, he is less likely to be angry about white student ignorance.

They are just so blind to anything that's going on around here and it's not necessarily their fault, because that's the way they were raised, that's the way they grew up.

Rita's experience at Easton, compared to her high school experience and relationships has been very different.
I've had a few close white friends on this campus, not very many. So, of course, they've been fine with the black students here. Some people couldn't care less, like whether we are here or not. Then there are others that really don't want us here and make it obvious.

Rob, who comes from a more diverse background, stated.

I think for the most part, they really just weren't aware. Again, I think they had an opportunity to be aware, but I think that they didn't want to at some point except they just come from a background, a lot of them, not to generalize because you have white students who come from cities, you have white students who dealt with black students. There are some who said quite frankly, "I've never seen a black person before." Their only perception of black people is where the media comes into effect...

**Racial Identity Development of the Students**

**Shawn**

Shawn provides a good example of Helm's (1993) explanation of how racial identity development may be multi-dimensional. This should not be confused with an individual being simultaneously on more than one stage as was the case with Rita, Kristin and Rob, albeit with differences in degrees.

Shawn, for the most part, strongly demonstrates his development in the acceptance stage but in regards to social activity related to music, he exhibits the behavior of the resistance stage. In other words, Shawn takes a European perspective to his experience at Easton. However, in reference to social events on campus, an area that is very important to all student participants, Shawn's approach is clearly Afrocentric. In regards to music, dancing and partying, Shawn is able to use an Afrocentric lens in identifying the socialization problem at Easton. His description and attitude exhibited white denigration and black validation, but only in regards to partying and choice of music. He also did acknowledge recognition of the absence of
blacks in the Western Civilization course content as did the other students, indicative of resistance.

Shawn does not see race. In most cases for him, race is "no big deal". This also results in Shawn not acknowledging racism and at times excusing it. "... in the classroom when it comes to touchy subjects like [Civil Rights], I think they kind of watch their back, 'okay can I say this?' you know without offending anybody. I think it's just ignorance and them not knowing that it's alright to say black. You know it's no big deal."

In general, Shawn is not phased with being in the minority. He is not affected by environment and being one of the few blacks.

I'll say socially wise, the way I grew up, it [being a black student on a white campus] wasn't any big thing to me. It wasn't like "oh wow, I'm the only black person", cause that's the way I grew up. Like I said, my whole area was predominantly white. Most of my friends were white. So it didn't really strike me as anything.

Shawn is as concerned with the lack of diversity in the whites as the racial diversity and low number of students of color. When I asked him to describe the diversity among the students of color, he described them according to the scholarship they were on. He looks at the recruitment of blacks and increasing the black population as his responsibility and his reason for being there. Throughout the interview and several times he mentioned this responsibility as his and other black students'.

Shawn's interactions are different than the other students. While all the participants have both black and white friends, Shawn, for the most part, prefers interactions with white and does not strongly relate and identify with the black students. He sees himself as different and fortunate because he is able to interact with both.
Involvement in student activities differs for Shawn. With very little to no involvement in the multicultural organizations or causes, Shawn is very involved in areas of student activities where blacks rarely participate.

Validation is sought from whites and Shawn finds it important to "fit in" and be accepted. Again he views himself as fortunate because he was able to find white students who are like him, accept him, and with whom he fits in.

They [black students] feel comfortable over here and the white people feel comfortable over here. I happen to feel comfortable -- I could care less you know. Yeah, I'm lucky that I'm like that, but I mean, yeah. That's just the way I am. I can go either way.

Yet, his reference group is important to him. He indicates discomfort of being viewed as an "oreo" and black students not understanding or accepting him. This was a repeated concern of Shawn's.

Interestingly, Shawn's language and choice of pronouns did not indicate any sense of belonging to the black student group. He consistently referred to the black students as "they" and seldom "we" unless he was referring to social gatherings. Throughout his interview, black student issues and concerns were described in "they" terms and Shawn did not involve himself. This was not the case with any of the other participants, all of whom spoke in terms of "we" when discussing the black students at Easton. The inferiority of blacks surfaced as Shawn discussed his experience with black professors and was seemingly surprised that "they have actually been really great teachers!"

Kristin

Kristin's perceptions of the climate are described through attitudes, beliefs and behavior of a person on stage two and three, acceptance and
resistance. At times, Kristin is unaware of the racism and oppression on campus. Yet, she is accustomed to a white environment. She is clearly cognizant that she is being judged by a set of standards which she must live up to. This may explain the intimidation that she feels in class and her reluctance to ask questions or seek help for fear of the negative appearance she may create.

On several occasions, Kristin mentioned the discomfort that she feels, particularly in the classroom. The staring that takes place in the cafeteria and in the classroom makes her very uncomfortable. She is overly conscious about not saying or doing the wrong thing in the presence of her white peers, indicative of feelings of their racial dominance and disapproval.

She has tried to continue her early teachings of trying to see people as people, all equal and deserving of love. She sees herself as different from the other black students because she has white friends, yet each participant spoke of having white friends, some to lesser degrees than others.

Angie

Angie is painfully aware and vocal about the racism and inequities at Easton. She observes it in the behavior of the other students, the institution's policies and in numerous other ways. In the resistance stage, she vehemently questions and points to issues and concerns that create difficulties for black students. Angie clearly acknowledges the existence of racism and the negative effects on students and the institution.

Her hostility towards whites is reflected in the pain and anger of her feelings and expressions towards issues and the general climate. Her feelings toward the Western Civilization program content, presentation and portrayal is a good example.
They don't understand and everybody says that the Western Civ is suppose to be just a spread of the European Culture or whatever. It's suppose to be like the better man society, but when you really think about what you learn in Western Civ, if somebody asked me what I thought about Western Civ, every time when I look at it, I look at the Europeans and every time they went to a certain place, they took it over by force. So I think it's just the robbing of people's culture by the Europeans coming in forcefully taking over cause they didn't give anybody a chance. They didn't want to learn anything about anybody else. They just took over. There's not one place where they went in peacefully in history, so I don't even want to hear that this is a spreading of their culture, cause people didn't want to learn that culture.

In her interview she demonstrated a subtle hostility and denigration of whites. She has given careful thought and consideration to her feelings about the whiteness of the campus. While Angie denigrates whites, she maintains strong friendships with white students on campus. She separates her hostilities from those who are her friends.

Like all of the students, Angie is bothered by the values and moral codes of some of the white students on campus particularly related to drinking and socialization. Her criticism is assigned to students as well as institutional policies regarding alcohol.

She has a problem with the services at the campus, and those in authority. Angie does not find the services or the administrators useful or effective. As a student leader, she is resentful and critical of the use and assignment of office space for student clubs and the lack of understanding of the mission and purpose of each minority organization. She finds that assigning the five or so multicultural organizations to a single office inappropriate.

The policy of selecting students for student leadership roles is clearly hopeless to Angie. She feels that running for a student government office, being selected to an elite ambassador's club or as an Orientation Leader is a
useless feat for a student of color because the chances of being selected or elected are slim. Similarly, events sponsored by the university or its organizations will not appeal to students of color because sponsors are generally white and only interested in what appeals to other white students.

Angie also supports and has suggested segregated programs such as freshman orientation for black students because she feels the current orientation does not address the needs of black students. She was also responsible for calling meetings of the black students to discuss areas of conflict and disagreement in an effort to maintain and strengthen unity among the black students.

The assumption that she knows everything about blacks or what she and others are often expected to explain and educate about blacks causes resentment in Angie. She notes the double set of standards created because of the situational visibility of black students, such as, the only one in the classroom or the black students sitting together in the cafeteria.

Rita

In regards to Rita's reference group, she has made her desired change and now mainly interacts with blacks. Yet, she still manages to maintain friendships with white and Asian students. Rita understands how her past experience and exposure has molded her current attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

Rita's involvement in some of the organizations on campus reflects the resistance stage. Her involvement moves beyond reference group membership and identifies more with challenging racism and discrimination. As an executive and a leader, she has clear goals about what should be accomplished to reach equity and some of the problems of reaching these
goals. She has also been able to identify with other racial groups as indicated by her involvement in the Asian Student Group, yet she has maintained her allegiance to black student groups and issues.

While Rita describes some of the black students as more militant than she, she has tried to learn more about racism through her interactions with these students. She is aware and acknowledges that there are black students who are ignorant of their oppression and they have regular interactions with white students and she explains that these are the black students who are the happiest at Easton. What Rita is describing is the benefit of being in the acceptance stage. The pain that she feels as a result of her awareness of racism and oppression is not experienced when in acceptance.

Her exit from the acceptance stage and into the resistance stage is demonstrated by her rejection of white friends and her awareness of the ways in which she has played host to her oppressors (Hardiman and Jackson, 1992). She recognizes the subtle and unintentional racism in her white peers and its manifestations. She also expresses it in her mistrust of the administrators and how she second guesses their motives.

... you have other people that are just the opposite extreme, who just so much want to understand the black experience and "I know how you feel" and "no, you don't, don't try," and that kind of gets in the way. That's more patronizing, which is even more annoying than people that out and out don't like you.

I tend not to trust a lot of the administrators as far as I can throw them. ... I mean there are people that they like all the athletes, they play favoritism for and then there are other people they just don't care and I think unless you're making a lot of noise, they will let you fall by the wayside and really not care.

Rita is aware of the institution's responsibility for the separation it creates while blaming the black student. She verbalizes the things that the institution does that she sees as racist and fosters separation among students.
and also the lack of commitment in recruiting students and hiring more black faculty.

Rita has been committed and finds it important to implement the Black Studies Program at Easton. As an agent of change, she has been one of the few black students who has worked long and hard, her entire four years at Easton, to promote the program. She actively works and seeks to stop or stifle the barriers in the Easton environment.

The sense of personal power, often sought by students experiencing the redefinition stage, is probably indicative of Rita's relentless work toward the Black Studies Program implementation. This has been her way of resisting the system. She knows that she and her group have been able to make the system respond. Exerting power and identifying with other oppressed groups while maintaining strong ties with blacks are also indicators of redefinition in Rita' development. She, like many others, is experiencing two stages simultaneously, though she is predominantly in the resistance stage.

Rob

In the most highly developed stage of racial identity in the student sample, Rob exhibits attitudes, beliefs and behaviors indicative of the resistance stage. He is simultaneously experiencing the redefinition stage. This is not surprising given Rob's background, early exposure and knowledge, and challenge to his identity at a young age. Rob's racial identity was challenged very early and probably before most people of Rob's age. His depiction of his years from early elementary and being taught about race when young, making the transition to junior high school and identifying and
judging through a western or European perspective provides clear indications of Rob's acceptance stage.

Rob's dad's challenge may have been the startling event described in Helm's model, that caused Rob to exit stage two, encounter, and enter stage three, immersion. Or, if applied to Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) model, Rob would be exiting stage two, acceptance and entering stage three, resistance.

This is obviously when Rob began to become more aware of racism and its manifestations. He began to vehemently question and challenge some of his earlier values as his worldview began to change and his pain and anger grew. For a short time during his developmental transition, Rob was passive but soon became actively resistant. Rob became very good at recognizing racism in intentional and unintentional forms. He freely described his anger and hostility while at Easton toward both whites as racists and blacks who do not speak up or fight against racism.

This might be my arrogance, except I do feel that I'm different than a lot of the other students. One thing is, I do care and I mean straight up, I'm not afraid. There isn't anything anybody can say or anything they can do to intimidate me or have me sit down if I don't agree with it. I'm going to be considerate, I may even be polite except, I'm going to challenge it if it makes no sense. I see a lot of other black students, either they don't care, or they feel intimidated.

Rob expresses his pain and anger in an intellectual manner with his own philosophy and useful metaphors to describe the racial climate at Easton as he sees it. At times these emotions have consumed much of Rob and have become a major focus during his years at Easton. Rob's intense involvement with challenging the Western Civilization program and many of the multicultural and change organizations were part of his development and his way of creating change.
He began to question any white friendships. Casual acquaintances and passing hellos became questionable to Rob and he eventually stopped all interactions with whites. This was Rob's way of ending what he viewed as the collusion with victimization.

I was just making sure that these students weren't going to use me to make themselves feel more comfortable, as far as "I know black students, Rob is a great guy, you know, me and Rob are like this (he demonstrates by holding two fingers closely together). I'm not racist, you know me and Rob go way back. " I wasn't going to let them use me like that. If you're going to get to know me, you're going to know the entire package, with the black experience, Cape Verdean experience, his anger, his frustrations, his happiness.

These attitudes and behaviors are all indications of the resistance stage. Rob sought power by fighting the system. As his way of seeking personal and social power, he resisted, questioned and challenged anything that he disagreed with. His interview repeatedly refers to the institution's questionable policies, administrative attitudes, lack of commitment and understanding. Rob clearly has spent a great deal of time and energy in defining "who am I?" (Hardiman and Jackson, 1992).

Attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of the redefinition stage are also quite evident in Rob's story and experience. My original interview with Rob, (two years prior) as compared to this current interview provided strong indications of Rob's development and transition to redefinition. His hostile tone and anger has subsided significantly. He is no longer adamant about denigrating whites. Rob is not as concerned with the nature of his interactions with whites or with the quality of interactions with blacks who think the same as he or who may be at a similar level of racial consciousness. He became concerned with renaming or redefining his life and what is important to him.

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People in the redefinition stage usually seek a reference group comprised of blacks also experiencing redefinition. This limits interaction with other blacks. By Rob's own admission, this alliance was formed and eventually became detrimental to the unity and bonding of the black students at Easton. What Rob may or may not realize is the role that he played as a leader of that group and how his actions impacted and influenced the group. These dynamics will later be discussed under Group Racial Identity and Interactions.

Indicative of redefining himself, Rob has found new definition and pride in his culture and heritage in a deeper and broader sense. His appreciation of his Cape Verdean culture and the combination of his African-American background has given Rob a renewed sense of pride and appreciation for the differences and commonalities of both.

According to Hardiman and Jackson (1992), there are not many college students who experience the redefinition stage. This level of development in college years is not common, yet with Rob's early teachings and his activism at Easton, his experience is by no means common.

Christopher

What is interesting about Christopher's experience is that he grew up in Kenya and comes to Easton with a background that is very different than that of all of the other black students. As an African, Christopher's perspectives of race and racism are very different than his black peers. Interestingly enough, he has become very aware of how his foreign nationality has given him a different experience based on his acceptance by white people as a foreigner and his awareness of the difference in how he is viewed compared to native blacks.
Christopher's story is information rich in that he is able to assess the experience as a black but from a different perspective. He is able to see the problems confronting him as well as the problems confronting African-Americans, knowing they are not the same. Racial identification plays a large role in Christopher's perspective of his experience, his being differently developed than his peers. Christopher clearly sees and understands the cognitive, conative and affective results of experiences of black students. This is displayed in his explanations of the students' attitude and lack of significant success in Western Civ. The lack of identity that students feel toward these areas of study are known to Christopher. He is aware of the detriment they may cause if one is not successful in passing or completing the program.

On the reverse side, Christopher is able to express the ignorance that Americans have of the African culture and education and information that provides American students, both black and white with positive images of Africa and its people.

I don't blame them, because it's hardly anything that's taught about -- either the focus is on America, Greek civilization and Civ [Western Civilization] and Rome. There's not too much in the curriculum about Africa so it's hard to teach them. The funny thing is that in the school systems back home, we learn about everything. We learn about Africans, then we learn about all the Continents. So, I know some of the things I'll study in Civ about Greece, I already knew. It struck my strange that this is a place where education is suppose to be pretty good and yet it was lacking.

Christopher, in discussing the black student experience, does so in such a way that he is able to describe the experience from his perspective while both including himself and placing himself outside of the experience. He explains the situation as though he fully understands it and can relate to it yet he removes himself from it.
Although he does not see people as black and white, he is more comfortable with black students and knows he is a "brother" even though he has good relations with whites. He also expresses similar phenomena from his homeland of being able to be as good as the whites in Africa.

I'll say, what's similar between my experience and their experience, is that, I guess I also feel in a way, I have to prove myself, say academic wise. I have to work very hard in a way so it doesn't seem that -- how do you say this, because back home we use to say -- this is from even colonial times, we always saw the white man as being very smart and in a way probably that was posted by -- they didn't give us the -- they didn't think we could do analytical stuff -- so they gave us the skills to do manual work, and from that we, I guess we grew to believe that they were smarter then us in a way. But now, a lot of Africans tried to prove they're just as smart. So I guess that's what I'm trying to do too in a way without realizing it. I'm trying to prove I can be just as good as they are.

Christopher was able to discuss all of the major issues that are central to black students. Coming from a different background, his experience becomes much like that of other black students with the same commonalties. He has nuances and differences, but all students do.

Racial identity helps to describe the student's sense of self as a member of a black racial group and also how a student views whites as members of a different group. The racial identity stage(s) that each of these students are experiencing is determined by their range of experience, their personal beliefs and how they identify themselves. As the range of experience, beliefs and the student's self-identity changes, so will the racial identity stage. The stage impacts how a student will react to the environment, their interaction with other blacks as well as the interaction with whites, etc. How the student believes and behaves is impacted by racial identity development. Different
stages will elicit different interpretations and perceptions of the same environment.

The stories of the students revealed their perceptions of campus climate at Easton and how they interpreted their experiences. The different themes that emerged, the perceptions of and attributions for some of the issues differed with some students, while there was general or unanimous agreement on others. The analysis of the data will continue with the students' perceptions of their interactions among students at Easton.

Student Interactions

Interaction of Black and White Students

Most of the students find the white student population to be generally friendly. Greetings are freely and frequently exchanged. According to Angie, the problems seem to appear below the surface level.

At first yeah, it is [friendly]. But then again, they're friendly to everybody. You really have to be here for a while to start feeling the tension but, yeah, they're friendly. Everybody's always like hi, hi, hi. You know you don't even know them and they're like hi. A lot of times a lot of students, like the Q Club always tries to be helpful. They are in charge. So they really try to -- they overdo it sometimes. They really try to help everybody, you know. It's all just a front. I think it's all just a front, cause you really have to be here to see how they really are.

Below the surface, the black and white student interaction is very limited. While some students may come together to work on a common cause or interest, the quality of overall interaction is poor. Even a student participant who most easily interacts with white students is not happy with the quality of student exchange.

I guess it kind of annoys me because I think the administration, the purpose of bringing the minorities here is to kind of get a different perspective, but to get everybody together, it's not happening. I don't
know if it's just cause there's not enough or if people are just set in their ways and they just don't want to come together or something like that. So, it kind of ticks me off that it's like that. —Shawn

Rob for several years was more cautious of being open to greeting students. He was more concerned with the quality and in-depth relationships with students and would put white students "to the test."

When you go to a place like Easton College, which is a very western, very Catholic, it goes beyond words, students don't need to say anything. They can say hi, except they're going out of their way to say hi. They're making a conscious effort because they're not sure how to deal with you, which to me, it took the humanism out of it. It took the sincerity out because it was a conscious thought, "should I say hello, shouldn't I" and you could tell as they looked at you, "how do I deal with this person?" So you feel alienated because you know you're not part of the mainstream there. So I had a hard time dealing with it. At first, I'd be like, "hello, hello" and then I was like "no! bump it!"

All in all, to tie it all up, I was very defensive of white students, but at the same time, I wasn't so blinded to rob them of their humanity. If they were willing to listen, if they're willing to communicate and talk, then we could have a workable relationship. Except if they are going to be superficial about things and if they just want a token negro to be their friend or if they don't even want to deal with you, then I'm not going to deal with that. I'm not going to take the initiative.

Christopher, on the other hand, came to Easton open to making friends and uninhibitedly and regularly approached students in an attempt to make friends. Unlike Rob, Christopher was not conditioned to "keeping his guard up." There are a set of norms at Easton which Christopher was not aware or accustomed to.

When I came here initially, say in the cafeteria, I would -- like back home you can go up to a person and just start talking to them. But that doesn't really happen here and I noticed that after I was here for a few weeks. I will go up to anybody and just start talking to them and after a while, I realize that, that doesn't happen here, cause like in the cafeteria, I will see a girl sitting by herself or a boy or whatever. I'll put my tray aside, starting talking to them, introduce myself and start talking to them. Then most of them were surprised. Especially now that I think about it, if it was a white person and they'd never dealt or met an African-American or an African and here's one who is just
coming or sitting down talking to him. They're like "what's up here?" So, after a while I stopped doing that, cause I realized, I made some people uncomfortable. I found that a little bit strange, but I understand, I guess, where they're coming from.

The racial identity development of both black and white students has an effect on the interactions of students. As explained by Hardiman and Jackson (1992), the acceptance stage of development may be either active or passive. Whites in passive acceptance take their whiteness for granted and tend to be more subtly racist and hold beliefs about white dominance and superiority, yet are unable to see themselves as racists. Typical behavior and beliefs of whites in passive acceptance is the stereotype of all black males being basketball players, or the ignoring or avoidance of blacks because they are different or perceived to be strange and not quite right. As expressed by many of the students, but clearly stated by Christopher, "The thing is, none of the white students go out of their way to get to know you", and Shawn, "I think they like the idea that there's some differences here, but I don't think they act upon it very well. Like I said, I don't think they go out of their way to try to make it known that they want to be your friend or something like that." The students also unanimously discussed the stereotype of the black male as basketball player and the visibility and patronization of the basketball players while other students, particularly black women, are rarely noticed or acknowledged by white students.

Students in the active acceptance stage exhibit the same attitudes and beliefs but differ behaviorally. This was expressed by the participants particularly in reference to statements from white students in class and in articles in the student newspaper where student writers chastised black students for self-segregating and complaining about the racial conditions on campus. It has been suggested that if they do not like it, they can leave
because this is the way it is and it was known before the arrival of black students. This attitude may easily be interpreted as the superiority of the dominant culture and the participants clearly felt this.

All of the students felt a lack of sensitivity and indifference of their white counterparts. Angie described what many of the participants had experienced.

This kid was like, he didn't think it was fair that just because we were black, we get a scholarship to come here. He was, like we come here and we complain about how the school is, cause it's so segregated. He was like basically "you knew how it was before you came here, why should we have to change to please you now that you're here. You made the decision to come here, so live with it." You know and that's it. After that he just doesn't care if we're happy, if we're unhappy--basically he doesn't care about anything. That was the general attitude that a lot of people gave. They don't really care if we're happy or we're not. We're here but we knew what it was like. They say so we shouldn't complain. We should just sit back and get along with everybody.

Participants did acknowledge the white students who were more aware and sensitive to their experience. Their descriptions depict students in stage three or the resistance stage also manifested by either passiveness or activeness. The difference in the student descriptions is that students seemingly in stage two, acceptance, were described en masse and encompassed the greater of the white student population. Students seemingly in stage three, resistance, were described as individuals or acquaintances and very much the exception to the rule. This was the case as described by all of the participants who were able to articulate the differences they saw and were aware of select, specific individuals or small groups.

Brian, he would go to all the activities of the Afro-American organizations. He was like a member of almost all the organizations. There are a few white students you'll find like that, who -- I don't know whether I'd say empathize or sympathize, and having awareness of what the black experience is like. For the majority of the campus, they
don't. I guess they just don't care, in that, I can't really say they just
don't care. It's probably that they don't really have an opportunity to
probably get to know an African-American and talk to them in depth
and get to know them. - Christopher

... you'd have some white students who came from different
backgrounds, from poor backgrounds or who were more intellectual,
who were able to challenge things, and they'd have a hard time, white
students who are consciously aware, who are activist. They had a hard
time except for the average everyday person in this case, white person,
who just walks around without challenging why things are or without
being intellectually stimulated by questions and of observation by just
walking the world without looking at things and "why is it like this or
why am I like this?" - Rob

They're just clueless as to what's going on. A lot of them, I can't knock
them all. A lot of the people have joined some of the groups. I
remember one kid named Jim, he was really active in the NAACP
group that we had. So I mean, there were people who are really active
in certain things. My roommates are active in things... They don't
look at things like "oh you know, I'm going to be the only white person
there". I like people like that, but I think a lot of the people would feel
uncomfortable. -Shawn

... some of them do understand and care about how we're treated on
campus. So, there's a lot of white students and other minority students
who care a great deal. They go out of their way to come over to the
back of the cafeteria and sit down with us or whatever. - Kristin

Some of them they want to know --like we have a Black Studies
Program and there are a whole bunch of white students who wanted
the Black Studies Program because they want to learn about what it is
like being black or being of a different culture. They understand that
they're coming from a closed-minded society where all they know is
being white and they want to learn about other things. They join the
clubs. Most of them who join the clubs are there whenever there's
something for a black cause, they will help out with that. Or
sometimes they will just even become your friend. - Angie

Residence Halls Interaction

The area that has been good for interaction, bonding and building
healthy relationships is the residence halls. Students who have experienced
living with students of other races have tended to have very positive relationships with roommates, where healthy learning and understanding has developed.

Angie has experienced such relationships in her living environment.

I'm friends with some of the whites, but if I make a friendship with them, it's usually not in the classroom. When I came here last year, I had two white roommates and met people through them, because we're still friends. Or people who I know now cause they live next door to me. So I usually meet them in the dorm or if I happen to have a class with them.

... I like the dorm. You basically get along with everybody on your floor. Your floor gets to know you. I'm basically friends with everyone in my dorm. You know, a lot of girls are -- you know, a lot of stuff they don't understand like -- they don't understand the hair thing -- "Angie, how come you wear a shower cap when you take a shower?" Like that part, I mean, they get over it. After a while the questions stop coming, so. It's alright though. There's no bad feeling about it.

Kristin has also made friends through the living situation in the residence halls.

In my freshman year I lived in Holmes and that dorm only had maybe five black girls. So I was the only black person on my floor, my section of the floor. So all those girls I pretty much know and they're all white. A lot of them I still have contact with. We still call each other and get together.

Rob, skeptical about quality relationships with white students, had a positive experience with a roommate.

I've met truly intellectual students. Intellectual means that you aren't afraid to learn. You're not afraid of somebody challenging you. That's the meaning of being educated, enlightened. It doesn't mean just having all these facts in your head. It means being able to learn from anybody at any time and I met some white students who were like that, one who was my roommate, became one of my very best friends, who came from a very sheltered background except this kid, I swear to God, was a genius. I've never met anybody like him. He was very opened. We talked and he said "Rob, I don't understand", but then the more we had talked, he was able to see it. He was like
"yeah, now I see" you know, I can understand why there might be this problem ... He just saw that and again, I think if people open their minds up, then we can solve problems.

Christopher was appreciative of his living experience at Easton.

... I guess they try to put together the blacks scholars, cause they know, it could be hard for them to live with anyone else. Well they could live with somebody else, but it would be better for them to live together. Then other than that, if you're not an MLK -- like I lived with two Irish kids which I think was good for me since I was coming into a foreign place and they helped me learn a lot. Now I appreciate having done that, in that, if I had lived with two African-Americans, then I would have only seen one side of the story, experience wise. By living with them, I experienced both worlds, so I liked that.

As reported by Shawn:

... I'm trying to look for someone that has something in common with me or some kind of common ground that we stand on. I think everybody wants to do that and I just found myself really fortunate. My roommates, those are like the five people that I actually found that aren't of color that are almost like me.

It's the most amazing thing. They were my next door neighbors and the guy that lives across the hall. That's what I'm saying when you come here, you have to try to fit in with somebody, you know find someone that is like you. I did find that, which is fortunate, but I just think it's a little more difficult then everybody else for me to find someone to fit in with. If that makes sense.

Classroom Interaction

Living in close proximity has perhaps been the most positive type of interaction. The same may not be said about classroom interaction. Angie explains, "In classes here you don't really have to work with the students directly. You just go to class, take notes and leave. So unless I have to work with a student directly, I won't get to know them or anything."

While black and white students attend classes together regularly, there is little effect on any bonding or relationship-building as a result of sharing a common class or learning experience. As indicated by Angie, the
opportunity to collaborate on projects works well while the project is in progress, however, upon completion, the relationship ceases.

... I had to do a class presentation and that was my whole year assignment and I had to work with another white girl. That was my only interaction with her. Cause now, we've done the presentation and I say hi when I see her and that's it. But I saw this girl almost every day all semester. Usually when you're working for something, you have to work together.

Christopher expressed a second hand view of the classroom interaction.

... Unless they've met on another level. They would have had to have met in class or whatever. If they had to do a project together or something like that's probably the only time. There was a girl Chrissie, she was complaining at one time -- or she raised the view that -- when we had the discussion about blacks and predominantly white campuses. She raised the view that, it strikes her strange that sometimes she'll get to know some white people in her classes, but then in class, they'll say hi to you, you'll know each other, but then after class if you meet them outside, it's like you never met before. After the semester is over, it's like you two never met before. I find that true in a way. I don't know what you can really attribute it to -- probably, it's just a relationship where they kind of use each other for whatever business they have at the time and then go back their separate ways.

Even though Kristin describes her relationships with white students favorably, the classroom dynamics for her are very different.

... I remember recently, I didn't go to a Civ class one day and the next day we had a quiz and I needed someone's notes. So I went to my friend that I work with in Financial Aid and her roommate knew someone who was in my Civ class so I went to go get her notes, but it seemed like she didn't want to give them to me. I don't know if it was because I'm black or anything like that, but there's sort of a reluctance to help you out.

Christopher states that there is little opportunity for classroom interaction. In fact, voluntary interaction or black students seeking help from
other students, who happen to be white, is perceived by the black students as an act of inferiority.

So it's really hard to say if you're having a problem in the class to really get help from anyone in the class. The thing is, none of the white students go out of their way to get to know you. The black students also have pride in themselves. They're like "why should we go out of our way to try to get to know them". They probably feel that, if I try to get academic help from them, they will think we're inferior to them or whatever.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Angie.

I think the only time that a black student really is interacting with a white student or any other student as far as school work are projects. Unless they need help as far as tutoring or something like that. They pretty much either do it by themselves or have another minority help them. I think that's just from my experience.

**Black Student Relations**

Speaking with student participants about the relationships and interactions among the black students, several themes became apparent. All of the students expressed the need that they get along. In contrast, they also described the strains and conflicts that have arisen. This was true of the basketball players. Though the conflict tended to be more among the black males and the basketball players, it was also true of the black females.

The students spoke with pride about the group cohesiveness, and many described the group "as a family." They also expressed that they were "forced" together because of the smallness of the group on campus and the need to support each other.

... Easton College being small where you're forced to deal with each other, creates an environment where you're able to make really good long lasting friends. That was the best thing I got out of it. If I got anything out of Easton College, it would be the ability to organize, work and create change. I had knowledge of that and having really good friends. Because of this situation we're in, we are in what I consider to be in an oppressive environment. I mean from my studies
and my understanding, my perception of the world. To be somewhat oppressive and people who share that, it brings you together and friends that you'll go all the way down to the end of the world with. That was the benefit. -Rob

I think we [blacks] all tend to like being with each other -- like little things that we can all do together that no one else understands. Even private jokes that we'll share, that white people will be in the room and not get because they haven't had some of the experiences that we've had. I think for the most part, we have more similarities then we do differences.

For the most part, we're kind of like a family. We do get along. I mean there are problems that people have. I mean you're never going to find a group of people that all get along together. But for the most part, with the majority of us being on the Martin Luther King Scholarship, that kind of forces us to go to certain functions and things that are all together. We all get to know each other. The fact that there are so few of us, makes you want to get to know each other better. You don't want to have too many problems with each other, because there's not many of us around. We will try to get along. -Rita

While the students could talk with pride about the closeness between them, the conflict (and the perception it portrayed) was of concern to them also.

It's not as bad anymore cause we've talked about it and some things have been let out into the open. But still yeah, it's still a problem. It upsets the Dean. It upsets a lot of students because they're so few of us here. You can walk by different people and they won't even acknowledge you. You can be the only two black people in the room and because that one doesn't like you or you don't like that one, you won't speak to each other. You won't get along with each other and I think the white kids see that. Then a lot of times I think I don't understand how we should try to better our atmosphere in the white community or here at school and we can't even get along with each other. So how's that going to look to them, "they can't even get along with each other, how you think they're going to get along with us?"

-Angie

A variety of reasons for the conflicts and disagreements were given by the students. The reasons varied with the students' level of racial identity. Students who are on lower stages tended to blame the students and their personalities for the conflicts. Others, such as Angie, were concerned with
how the black student relations appeared to whites on campus. Rob, who of all the student participants, is the furthest along in his racial identity stage, attributed the conflicts to the everyday environment and being a black student at Easton.

...Yet when you have a very small amount of people, with all the stresses involved as far as class, as far as not being able to have really good relationships, as far as just dealing quite frankly with white students and the way they may look at you or little things you see here and there, these are all stress factors, you know and you're going to take it out on the people who you associate with most and that's what caused a division. There are a lot of things. If you have a larger black student population, I think there would still be problems, because I don't think they'd be as intense. -Rob

Shawn, indicative of his racial identity, did not attribute it to anything more than personal conflicts among the students.

They get along well but then of course there's a lot of problems sometimes, a lot of back stabbing that goes on. We had a meeting last year or something like that and a lot of that was going on, a lot of back stabbing, a lot of he said, she said stuff. But as far as I can see, they seem to get along really well. They do a little talking behind their backs and stuff like that.

The relations between the basketball players and the MLK scholars were commented on by all the students. The separation between the two groups has caused resentment. Gender played a role in the perceptions about the problems among black student interactions and the relationships with the basketball players.

I think one of the biggest problems that we'll have is it kind of tends to be the black students and the basketball players. A lot of people's attitudes are they are two separate groups. From my understanding, it wasn't always like that. One of the Deans here now, she was a student here, when she was in college. She was saying that the basketball players were really great friends with all the black students mixed together. But now, for the most part, it's like the ball players are by themselves, and we're by ourselves. That's about the only division and even that tends to more between the basketball

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players and the black guys on campus. Most of the black girls get along with both groups.

Well the basketball players are really busy a lot of times. So when we have functions and things, they're always invited, they don't always come, which tends to give people attitudes of well you know, "they just think they're too good or whatever" and they're not black anymore. Then a lot of the white students on campus don't see them as black. We're just regular black students and they can ignore us or think whatever they want to about black people. The ball players, oh they're different, they're special or whatever. I think a lot of the black guys think that any black girl on this campus if you date one basketball player, then the rest of the black guys on this campus just automatically assume "oh she's one of those that only dates ball players", and you no longer have a chance with anybody else on campus. There are girls who are like that, that will only date ball players but the majority of people, but that's the attitude a lot of black guys on campus will have.

-Rita

What really became big that year was there was a split with the girls because of their involvement with the basketball players. That caused a lot of friction. It became a big breakdown, you know where the girls competed amongst each other for the ball players, a lot of the guys getting angry at the ball players for playing them and getting angry at the girls for allowing themselves to get used. So, I look back at it now, and I see now, there were a lot of things that contributed to the break at the social level in terms of relationships and in terms of the political level. And again, we are such a small community, that isn't that good because you lose ground. The year that we were doing so many things.

-Rob

Both the males and the females commented on the friction between the women students.

... we're suppose to be like a family on campus and we're suppose to open up to them [freshmen] and make them feel welcomed. But we can't do that if they're being hostile and giving people dirty looks. That's not good. ... it's just the females. Just the females. -Kristin

It's more females. Actually on the whole, it's mainly just females. The males, we all get along. It's so funny, because with the black males here, if you have a problem with somebody, you bring it out and you talk about it or do whatever you want about it. You won't have any grudges or anything, we're all cool with each other, if I can
use that. We all talk to each other. When I talk of cliques, it's mainly the women. -Christopher

Dating

There is little dating going on between the black males and the black females, another drawback to the small number in the black community. The students unanimously agreed that dating at Easton was not an option to them. Dating off campus was the standard.

There really isn't very much [dating among the black students]. I mean, there's always going to be some people dating or whatever. I can name probably about four couples that are the only folks on campus. We're around each other so much and we're so much like family, that it would be kind of hard if a relationship doesn't work out or you have all of the same friends. So running into each other all the time is going to be kind of difficult. If you go out with one black person on campus and you can't just start dating somebody else cause like I said, we are all friends once again and if I was dating this person and then the next day, we broke up, so a week later, I'm dating his friend, it doesn't look right. Its makes it really difficult for dating on campus. -Rita

There are [some who date] but I think they tend to date off campus, only because we all get along so good and it's like a family. You treat them like your brothers and your sisters, so they pretty much date off campus. -Kristin

Dating, lets see. I don't think there's too much dating going on or -- no there's a little I guess. Yeah, there's a little bit. If anybody's dating anybody, it's usually people from outside of the school. When I got here freshman year, I dated a person on campus, but I don't see too much dating going on. Like I said, when people start dating here, that's kind of when all this stuff starts going on.

So I think people just want to stay out of trouble and they say "listen, it's just not worth it for me to go out with somebody on this campus, because this stuff just starts flying all over." I don't think people feel comfortable dating within the little group that we have. I think. I don't think they feel too comfortable and I really don't know. I can only think of maybe four or five people that were dating that I know of. -Shawn
The area where the students dramatically differed was interracial dating. The women discussed it as a serious concern and one that caused them, as women, problems with their quality of life and already slim chances of dating. Both Angie and Rita gave their view about the interracial dating on campus.

It's the animosity in the woman. The girls don't get along with each other but they have one common value. A lot of them don't like interracial dating and a lot of the guys here especially on the basketball team, go out with white kids and they always go out to the white parties. They can go to the bars no problem and a lot of the girls just don't like it. -Angie

[There are interracial relationships on campus] unfortunately, but that's mostly with the ball players. That's one thing that drives a lot of the woman on this campus crazy, myself including. It's because, most black women that I know won't date white men and that's the case for the majority of us on this campus too, but a lot of black men have no problem with it. Which kind of bothers us a lot because, I mean, there are so many white women around here that are available to them. They just figure okay, since we're not necessarily dating most of them and like I said, it could be kind of awkward. And it will be, "well why not then? You're not dating us, so why not date some of the white girls?" I don't know, some of the things that bother me most are the reasons they say they're dating white girls, that are just really really pathetic. I mean, you have your few that will actually have serious relationships with them but most of them would never bring them home to their parents, don't care anything about them, and will treat them any kind of way. And honestly, I'd feel more for us being left alone than I do for the white girls being treated wrong.

I had one white guy ask me out. Matter of fact, for my freshmen or sophomore year, for two years, he was trying to get me to go out with him. I liked him as a friend and that was it. I just wouldn't feel -- I couldn't. -Rita

The males, on the other hand, did not see interracial dating as an issue. They did not see much in the way of interracial dating at all at Easton.

According to Shawn,

... Don't see to much of it. And it goes back down to that social thing, how it's kind of like over here and over here. They never have that chance to even know each other, to even do stuff like that. So I think
like I said, once we kind of pull together maybe stuff like that will happen. Not that it's a great choice thing or anything like that, but it's not a big deal to me. If it happens, it happens. I think because everything is kind of so segregated, I don't think it's even going to happen. There's not much communication between the white group and the black group that I can see of.

As expressed by Christopher about interracial dating,

No, hardly. I don't -- hardly, hardly. So I guess that's one thing that hard for the black females, you know what I mean. Well not dating, but we recently had the forum on interracial relationships, like campus interracial relationships. The black females were up in arms against the black males dating white females. . . .

There was a white female who rose up and said, she was basically abused for going out with a basketball player. . . . Basically, she was going out with this black male. They feel, they have to defend, to rise up against it, in that, they feel since they can't date white males. It's hard to see a black male dating a white female. They feel as if the white females are taking away from their own I mean from them, so they rise up against it. They don't like it at all. When a black male does it, he's basically shunned by the black females.

... I guess some white men will be interested [in dating black women]. A lot of them are not interested. . . . So, I guess, stemming from their background and stemming from their different social setups, the white man will go to the bars to go look for women after getting drunk, but they won't get any black women up there, so. It's hard for the black women to do anything.

Group Racial Identity and Interactions

Another way of examining the black student relations and how they interact as a group is within a racial identity framework. Just as the perceptions of the individual student can be better understood through racial identity, the interactions of black students as a group may be influenced by racial identity. In the group, it is not the racial identity of each individual in the group that is important, but the stage the subgroup or coalition is in (Helms, 1990). With the student participants, each was experiencing some level of stage three, resistance. Therefore, it could be determined that the
dominant stage is resistance. The group did exhibit attitudes and behaviors of the resistance stage.

In a group, there are certain norms and viewpoints that are adopted that most in the group are comfortable with. The unity of the group and maintaining group cohesiveness are obvious norms of the black student group at Easton. As earlier indicated, all of the students discussed the need that the black students get along with each other. All must conform and adapt to the group norms to be a part of the group. The conflicts and friction that the group is currently dealing with is due to subgroups who are not conforming with the group's norms. The students who are in exclusive "cliques" and the basketball players are a good example.

... things had taken on different form. We got a batch of girls who I consider to be very superficial. I thought they had their nose to high up in the air personally. You know, they were more into the ball players. They were more into like looking good. You know, I'm not God, I'm not going to criticize or whatever except I just don't think it was good for their entire collegial experience. I just think things really started deteriorating again, different personalities. We had our group and things began to divide into cliques and again, everybody was basically cool. We'd say hello, but amongst the girls, there were very clear cut divisions between the junior year and sophomore year. By senior year, everything was basically divided into cliques. There were different groups in terms of school year. The students I hung with, we tried to be cool or whatever, everybody coming in and out, we had a central group of students. But things have really broken down... So somebody here, somebody here, you know. So I mean there wasn't the unity that we had freshman year. So with the people not socially involved as much as they were, they couldn't make as much changes, because they weren't willing to work with other students for a common agenda.

The basketball players do not abide by the norms. They interact with others on campus, do not often support black causes or events, they date interracially, etc. They violate the norms of the black student group. They are a subgroup or coalition of their own, with their own set of norms. Their
attitudes and behavior has caused conflict among the black student, particularly the black males.

What holds the black students together, even with their differences and sometimes petty social conflicts, is their shared world view. The students have the same beliefs and attitudes, particularly about Easton and perhaps about the whites at Easton. Many of them claim to not like Easton, claim they would not be there had it not been for the scholarship and feel they are there only to fill a quota, but are not really wanted. Unfortunately, the group shares the same views and beliefs even if the beliefs that they hold may be distorted. This may be an unhealthy situation for black students at Easton.

A lot of the African-American students here say or the minority students say, they don't like this place at all. I think they have a very negative attitude towards it. Most of them came here just because of mainly because of the money. The school offered them the most money. Some of them have asked me how I feel about this place. I say, I love it, cause it's like my second home. I don't really have anywhere else to go up here. This is it for me. -Christopher

I don't think most students have been [happy with the experience of being here]. I think those of us who have been more active and involved are a little more satisfied than those who weren't. As a general rule, most black students, if you ask, don't really like Easton College. Well, I think we've all learned a lot being here, not just academically but about people and not getting along with people. I think most of us probably would have been happier at a place where there were a lot more black students. -Rita

The conflict and disharmony that the black students' coalition is experiencing has had a direct impact on the cohesiveness of the group and certainly a threat to the group. How these conflicts are dealt with is attributable to the leader and it has become clear to me through the participants that I spoke with, that Rob was viewed as the leader of the group. In a group such as the black students at Easton, Rob has evolved as its' leader by his ability to unite the group. Rob's advanced racial identity stage
obviously has had some effect on his ability to influence and manage the group. Not only has he effectively united the group, but he has managed to peak the group's awareness of racial issues.

But I remember there was this kid last year, he graduated, named Rob. He tried his best you know. He tried more I think to keep the people of color pulled together like this and on occasions, he would try to get people from the outside to come in, but I think his interest was more to try to keep -- he was just a great person. He was almost like a leader or something. He tried to keep the little that we had together and not fall apart, just like getting all cliquey. He tried to keep us together. He made me feel real comfortable as a freshman. He invited me up to his room and tried to get me to feel a lot more comfortable.

-Shawn

The seniors who use to have the thing together -- Rob and them, they all moved to the apartments. Now, it kind of fell apart and the cliques became more predominant. Like, before when Rob and them were all still eating in the cafeteria, we would put like four tables together, all sit together. Now, it's more of cliques, this clique sits here, this clique sits here. -Christopher

When conflict arose between coalitions (students in acceptance/resistance and students in resistance/redefinition), Rob was not successful in keeping both coalitions moving forward and free of conflict. By Rob's own admission and acknowledgment, he sided with the more developed coalition to accomplish some of the goals they had identified. As a result, the lesser developed coalition, now leaderless, lost its momentum and cohesiveness.

Sophomore year, we started getting students who weren't as serious or dedicated to things and there was probably more of a split as to what was going on and that was probably more my group with the mainstream of black agenda on campus. I don't think it was a different with the black students except the way we were doing things because I felt we weren't getting to the issues at hand. I thought we were dealing with things superficially, too many meetings. ... I just saw that dealing with things through the mainstream ways of meetings and talks and stuff, wasn't working as much. So what happened was, myself and a group of friends, we created our own organization and we used to write to the [student newspaper]. We used to go out into the community. We went to a couple of projects, a couple of schools,
we talked with the students there trying to create interaction between the institution and the communities.

So I don't know, I mean, in a way that had its benefits and its detriments. I mean looking back at it now, because what it did, was it put a split in the black community [on campus] and I think its affects are being felt even a little bit now. We dealt with things in a very certain fashion. ... Instead of keeping things mainstream where everybody could be involved, a lot of us just took things into our own hands and dealt with things the way that we felt should have been done. I think it kind of caused like a break, again, we lost our cool. It wasn't like we were fighting or whatever, except as far as the political activities and stuff, the activism on campus, there was a split there. What happened is, again, as you get different people coming in, you have people with different mentalities, different experiences. -Rob

All of the participants commented on the loss of group cohesiveness. While Rob, as the leader, may not have been the only reason, it is probably the main reason. Students moving into apartments and no longer needing to use the cafeteria also contributed. This raises the question of whether this situation is a threat to the comfort and satisfaction of students or the possibility that different interactions might result among students.

While Rob's racial identity stage was more developed, it was nevertheless similar. His attitudes and behaviors were different than the other students because of different expectations of Rob due to his role as the group leader. As Rob was in both resistance and redefinition, the other participants were in acceptance and resistance.

Not to go off into what other students do except a lot of black students just get fed up with it and they will just shelter themselves and go do their work. A lot of them just deal with each other at this level instead of trying to solve the problem and they just interact with each other and because it's such a small amount, it's easy for gossip and stuff to get around and across the table and into the black community at Easton College. These were things that happened and I felt -- what I wanted to do and I don't like to impose myself except, I just talked to different students, let them aware of my feelings and tried to articulate what I felt some problems were. -Rob
Since Rob was more advanced in his racial identity development suggests that the relationship of the black students, with Rob as their leader, was a progressive relationship. A progressive relationship is one which the leader is more advanced in racial identity stages than the members of the coalition. (Helms, 1990) As long as the stage is beyond the first, the potential for a progressive relationship exists as it clearly did at Easton.

As stated by Helms (1990), the theme of progressive relationships is movement and energy (p.203). Rob tried to encourage the group to move beyond its level of development at the time. This was not always easy or pleasant for Rob or the students.

But our job now that he’s [Rob] gone, is to follow-up on the classes, making sure that the classes are being implemented into the catalogs and stuff like that for each semester. Then we’re trying to get the Douglas Center to make it mandatory for the black students to at least have one course being taken from that program, so that it becomes as wide as the Western Civilization. -Kristin

The work toward the development of the Black Studies Program indicates the experience of the students working toward, something that they may benefit from. The discussions and cafeteria conversations and calling attention to the subtleties of racism are issues that students may not have recognized without Rob's leadership. His consistent educating around racial issues are indicators of Rob's encouragement toward movement of the group's stage.

Social Activities

It would seem that a natural means of interaction would be via social activities at Easton. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, this was one of the most criticized areas of campus life. The students unanimously and very clearly spoke out about the differences in socialization between black and
white students. This led to the second concern which was almost a total breakdown of social interaction at social activities.

There was a combination of factors that created this situation. First, as previously stated, black students expressed very different attitudes about the use of alcohol by their white peers.

They love to drink. Every weekend, it seems like they start on Thursday, sometimes even Wednesday and they drink until Sunday night, constantly. If you go down [the street], Thursday, Friday, Saturday, even Sunday, there's always parties, people always having keg parties. Just recently, this past weekend, forty five students were arrested for having alcohol beverages open or in cups and the black students, we're not part of that. When we go to a party it's to socialize, dance, listen to music and have fun, but they just go overboard. They're just drunk all the time. So there's a big difference in that sense. -Kristin

I'll say socially it's very different, in that, I've interacted with both parties. When it comes to socially, parties and all, it's really different. Let's say if you go to a white party, their emphasis is on beer, drinking and there's hardly any music or whatever. -Christopher

They're into different things. The differences I'd say is they party different. Their idea of a party is so much different from mine and most of the black people on campus. I always complain about this all the time. I don't even know if it's because they're white or what, it's like, they'll go to a house, be all crammed in, like thousands of people all crammed in one house and they're just sitting there drinking beer. It's the weirdest thing. -Shawn

Not only did they criticize the strong presence of alcohol and the amount of drunkenness at student events, but the type of music lacked in variety and did not appeal to the black students.

... there're usually rock concerts and stuff like that and I don't like rock. I don't think any of us do, so we don't really go. They have beer gardens, cause it's not a dry campus and we won't go. Or they'll have movies and stuff and we won't go to the movies. There's movies every week. We won't go unless it's a movie with a black actor in it. There's social differences like that. -Angie
As far as the social events, white students they have a lot of parties and stuff. You could go, except if that's not music that you're down with what's the sense of going. You go in there and the dancing isn't something that you really like and the music isn't something you really like, why go. -Rob

There was some sentiment that some white students would attend black student events and would enjoy black music. This sentiment was not widely expressed by many of the students.

... Well, a lot of the black students don't go to their parties only because there's the type of music that they play, whether it be rock or soft rock or alternative stuff like that. We had a Unity Jam from the SOAR club, Students Organization Against Racism and we had that last weekend. The majority of the students that came were white, so they pretty much come to our functions if we have any. I think that's only because they tend to listen to black music, whereas we don't really care for their kind of music. So they will come to our functions.
-Kristin

**Black Student Life**

On campus there's hardly [a social life]. We have to create -- our social life off campus. When we had seniors on MLK who lived off campus, so they had like a party like every semester and that's where we all like converted and other than that, it's like we have to create our fun. We have to go to other parties, other functions by other colleges and fraternities and all that. There really isn't much of a social life for blacks here. -Christopher

The student life for black students is key to understanding perceptions of the climate and the black student experience. Stated as the most difficult problem of being a black student on a white campus, the lack of a social life tends to be one of the major problems for students.

See that was always hard. For the most part, if black students want to do something as a member of Easton College, as far as like going out and stuff, you'd probably have to go to another school. We don't have a good reputation for parties. There's such a small amount of us there, that we really couldn't throw an effective party. As far as the social events, white students they have a lot of parties and stuff. . .
Being a minority, there's so few of us there, it's hard to have a social life like that. Parties, that's like a big scene where you find relationships whether they'd be good or bad cause a lot of wild things come out of going to parties as well. You'd have to go to [other campuses]. So you'd have to go somewhere else and to have a party at Easton College, for a black student that's hard. -Rob

It just hadn't occurred to me there would be so few black people to chose from. I think the biggest problem is social functions. Most of the things that go on at school here aren't things that me or any of my friends want to do. I mean there's a lot of things they have here, drinking or whatever. I don't drink at all. Most of my friends drink but that's not all they do at a party. So we have to make our own fun and that is the biggest problem I have, being here. -Rita

Socialization is a key component in the development and growth of a student. The lack of appropriate social activities impedes the opportunity to meet new people, develop male/female relationships and provide an outlet to the rigors of academics.

Without exception, the students were very critical of the social life on campus. All expressed the need they had to create their own fun because Easton did not provide anything for black students in regards to social activities.

... But some of the other events that my friends and I would do especially like my sophomore and junior year, we use to invite everybody over. We'd have movies, we'd create our own things. We'd call it the Underground. There was discussion groups and we use to discuss different topics. ... Anything you want, if you're a student of color and you want it to be effective, you have to do it on your own. You have to seek it out. -Rob

And I think the people that organize it usually are the multicultural clubs that are in the school. They usually start all the things and run them. So it's kind of like, if Easton is not going to give us a dance, you know that all of us can go to we have to make our own. -Shawn
Separation

Like so many campuses across the country, the separation issue, symbolized by black students sitting together in the cafeteria, has been a controversy at Easton. When the students were asked if it was an issue, their responses were similar. The racial separation was described as a matter of comfort and a focus of commonalities.

... We always sit in the back and we've been called that we've been self-segregating ourselves. I think that's a big problem only because it's not so much that we self-segregate ourselves, but we all have something in common. You pretty much sit with people who you know and that you feel comfortable with. It just happens that a lot of the black students sit with the black students. But they don't see it as the basketball players sit with the basketball players or the hockey players sit with their players. They just take more notice because we stick out, we're black, we sit in the back of the cafeteria and it's easy to pick us out that way. -Kristin

It [separation] has been a very big issue on this campus. I mean the cafeteria thing is one thing that tends to come up like every -- I haven't been in the cafeteria the last two years, cause I live in the old campus apartments. I have my own kitchen. But I don't think there's as many of us in there as it use to be, but it use to be a really big issue in my freshmen and sophomore years. -Rita

Then socially at parties and stuff, I feel more comfortable at black parties. With the blacks, even though I'm from a different place, they see me as one of them. Most of them will embrace me as one of them, as a brother. With them, it's a whole different experience for me, being with them, than it is when I'm with the white people. The white people see me as a foreigner with an accent and with interesting things to relate to them about African stuff. So, I guess, that's my experience. -Christopher

All of the student participants commented on the controversy created around the black students sitting in the cafeteria and they all immediately expressed justification for their actions.

Also another thing that was very influential on me, is sitting in the back of the cafeteria. Again, I felt when you feel like you're not part of the mainstream or ostracized, you're going to go to people who
you know you can relate to. In our society, things are whether we like to admit or not, defined in terms of race whether it becomes more blurry or more clear in our days, that's a common stream in the American culture. So when you're alienated, you're going to look for somebody who shares the characteristic that you know that you're familiar with. This went back to the whole concept of race, so we started sitting in back of the cafeteria and there was black students and a couple of Latinos.

What had happened was, there was a whole thing, "why do you alienate yourselves, why do you segregate yourselves". My question to them was, "why do you segregate yourself?" We have all the black students right here and you all sit over there just because you're the majority, you're doing the same thing that we've done. You're sitting with each other, with people that you can relate to based upon your experiences. If you're not making efforts to come sit with us, to come talk with us, why would you expect anything different?" They'd write letters in the [student newspaper] concerning that; black students alienated themselves and you know, it just built up anger in me.

. . . Again, I feel like no matter what we did, we'd be challenged. We'd just sit together in the cafeteria to eat, "why do you have to sit there?" I was like "what gives you the right to ask us that question?" I can't sit with somebody without having to defend myself? -Rob

Not only did the black students resent the charge from white students that they chose to self-segregate, they also charged Easton with creating separation.

One thing I think in the clubs there's segregation is because they put all the clubs that has to do with -- every club has a club room. Every individual club has a club room and they put the Spanish Club, NAACP, BMSA and African-American Society all in one room. We have one club room among four clubs, you know. We noticed, everybody noticed that. Why did you put all the multicultural clubs in one room. Last year, they had us all under one club under BMSA. This year we fought to get them separated and still we've been fighting to get them separated. They are separate organizations and you just can't put them together. They still wanted to know why. Like this one kid was like to me "what's the difference between African-American Society and the NAACP". I was like, "the NAACP is not just for black people. It's for anybody. It's a Civil Rights Organization, it's not just for black people." They don't seem to understand that. They think that we should just all be together, just stick us together in one room. -Angie
The Office of Multicultural Affairs is really about it. I mean, the school itself doesn't do too much of anything. ... I mean every other thing is just seems we're always accused of trying to separate ourselves from the white students, but in a sense, I think the school has done a lot to separate them from us. In fact, like all the activities that they plan tend to be geared towards the white students. -Rita

There was consensus that there is little opportunity on the Easton campus for any cross-race interaction to take place. Therefore, the segregation is inevitable.

... I don't know cause here in Easton the main social setting is parties, that's it. There's not really, besides from the movies we have, old or whatever. There's not really any other level at which you can interact with each other, except the same classes. -Christopher

I guess it kind of annoys me because I think the administration, the purpose of bringing the minorities here is to kind of get a different perspective, but to get everybody together and it's not happening. I don't know if it's just cause there's not enough or if people are just set in their ways and they just don't want to come together or something like that. So, it kind of ticks me off that it's like that.

... And it goes back down to that social thing, how it's kind of like over here and over here. They never have that chance to even know each other, to even do stuff like that. So I think like I said, once we kind of pull together maybe stuff like that will happen. Not that it's a great choice thing or anything like that, but it's not a big deal to me. If it happens, it happens. I think because everything is kind of so segregated, I don't think it's even going to happen. There's not much communication between the white group and the black group that I can see of. -Shawn

Alienation

The three dimensions of alienation, meaninglessness, powerlessness and social estrangement or loneliness, as described by Suen (1983), were evident in listening to the students.
Loneliness

My friend, she always makes me laugh, cause she's always playing with the salt and the pepper. She puts a whole bunch of salt on the table and then she will shake the pepper once and she's like, "this is us". It will be just like little black specs and she's like, "that's us in the cafeteria and this is all the rest of the students." -Angie

The theme of loneliness, a facet of alienation, was evident in all of the student stories. Repeated in a variety of ways, the black students at Easton frequently felt alone and isolated. All of the students expressed feeling this way when they first arrived and this sense of loneliness seemed to continue throughout their stay at Easton.

It [the campus] was a shock to me. Like the first couple of days I remember I left the campus. I just walked throughout the city. I just walked around looking for people to meet because I was coming out of high school at a very angry stage in my life. ... I was very defensive at the time. So I wasn't even trying to be open to half the things. It was difficult, because again you feel alienated because the culture doesn't include you. ... -Rob

With the small number, it is difficult for black students to have class with other blacks. Too often there are only one or two in a class, creating loneliness in the classroom. This was also expressed by all of the students.

... No one likes really being the only black student in classes. I think like a lot of other students who also had problems where teachers have made comments or something, not purposely to offend. One of my friends had a teacher ask them, what tribe she came from -- as if she knew! One time I was in a psychology class and they were talking about how people used to believe that different races were less intelligent or more intelligent than others. As the only black student in the entire class, the entire class turned around to stare at me. I wanted to fall through the floor at that moment. -Rita

Most of the time, you're the only black student in a class. So, usually and it's funny, cause I thought I was the only one who did this, but then I recently found out I wasn't the only one. We all sit in front of the class. None of us sit in the back. I don't know why, but we all sit in the front of the class. Most of the time, I try to get to know who's sitting behind me. The black students here, they'll look around the first
day of class, don't see any other person they know or any other person of color, so they will sit there and shut the rest of them out. They will wait for the professor to come, give the lecture and be out. So it's really hard to say if you're having a problem in the class to really get help from anyone in the class. The thing is, none of the white students go out of their way to get to know you. The black students also have pride in themselves. They're like, "why should they go out of my way to try to get to know them". They probably feel that, if I try to get academic help from them, they will think inferior to them or whatever.

I've had this expressed before, it's like, when two black students are in the same class, on the first day of class, you look around and there's another black student in the class, you feel so good, cause you know, you have at least one black person in your class. -Christopher

A lot of times, I'm the only black person in the class, maybe one or two something like that and it kind of makes you laugh like say you're talking about something like Civil Rights or something like that. We happen to be in Human Resource Management today, we were talking about Civil Rights and I think the guy was reading and I think the word black came up, you know white kids reading a play. He kind of, you know he kind of stopped, looked at me, you know kind of watching himself. Like to make sure he doesn't offend me or something. I'm saying, you're not saying it, you're offending me, you know... . -Shawn

Being the only black student in a class was not the only issue of loneliness. The lack of black faculty is also a contributing factor. Christopher expressed the importance of black faculty presence.

I think the whole time I've been here, I've only had one black teacher this past semester. The next semester, I'll have Professor Cole. I think the black students will be more confident, not really confident but will feel more comfortable rather, to go out to a black Professor, in that, they feel that they have a common background in a way and they can understand where each other is coming from. As I told you the other day, I think it's hard for the -- like rarely do the -- say the minorities interact with the staff unless they really need help or they really need something. With the black faculty member, I think they would be more concerned with, say, how you're doing in the class. They will show more interest, whereas with the white staff, they're not as concerned. I don't think.
As expressed by Shawn, the presence of black faculty is so rare, that when a black faculty member is encountered, black students are clearly moved.

A lot of black students feel uncomfortable as it is, just being the only black person in class, but it's just so nice. Like when I walked in my Calculus class, I had no clue what color my teacher was going to be. I walked in, she was black. It's just felt nice. It was just a good feeling, you know.

Powerlessness

Powerlessness is described as the feeling of the lack of control over one's life at the college (Suen, 1983). In discussing their small numbers and the isolation from the mainstream at Easton, the students indicated their lack of belief of any power to change their experience.

The social life is a good example of the lack of control that black students feel over their existence at Easton. While the students claim they make their own fun, they clearly understand the role that the institution plays in controlling the social life on campus.

I think it's because the organizations that put on [activities], they're usually all white organizations and they're looking for something that they like or that their members will like. Since we're such a small majority, they're not going to care whether we like it or not. We're not really going to make a difference there anyway so that's why. They just do their preference. -Angie

Black students tend to be involved in mainly the multicultural organizations. While it is obvious that these are not the organizations with the clout to make a difference in the climate of the campus, via its programs and policies, the black students make little attempt to get involved in mainstream activity. Angie's explanation describes what many expressed.
To run for your class officer, I don't think there's really a chance that you'd win cause a lot of the white kids, the majority isn't going to vote for you. It's like a hopeless situation. -Angie

The students understand that much of what they expect and desire of Easton is in the control of others, but the lack of understanding is absent. Therefore, the needs of black students continue to go unmet.

I think people need to realize, there are other people on this campus with other needs, you know. Granted you take up most of the population, you can't just focus on them, you know. That's not the way to do it. It shouldn't be a big deal... -Shawn

**Meaninglessness**

The element of meaninglessness did not seem to be generally present. All of the students expressed a high quality of education and there did not seem to be any questions concerning their purpose for being at Easton. The only question in regards to purpose surfaced around the issue of the Western Civilization requirement, coupled with the lack of a Black Studies Program.

Western Civilization... That's the class we have for two years everyday and they teach everything rushed. I mean they go by -- we went through the Civil Rights Movement in one day and we don't do other stuff in one day. We'll do like France in two weeks, but we'll do the Civil Rights Movement in one day. Then we did the like 1968 ... they went into depth about everything. Then they talked about the Black Panther Society and they talked about it for five minutes and then they talked about Martin Luther King for about five minutes.

- Angie

The classes also gave me a hard time. The Western Civ course ... it's a racist program. There's nothing that's going to convince me anything otherwise. I remember the first day I went there, they brought up the philosophies as far as Aristotle, Socrates and Plato and I challenged it. The next day we went to class, I had raised my hand to answer a question and I remember the professor wouldn't pick me. I was saying alright, "maybe he just doesn't want to be disturbed on his lecture". Then a student right in front of me a white student raised their hand and he answered the question. I was only a row behind him, so he clearly saw me. That was one thing that set the tone for how I perceived things at Easton and we would be dealing with things.
Also in Western Civ, I remember how the professor would go out of his way to disprove that certain people were black. I mean, in particular, Cleopatra, the issue didn't come up in class, nobody asked the question, was she black. He made a deliberate effort to say she was not of African descent. He went out of his way which if you're in an institution of higher learning, and were supposedly not a racist school, then why was race even an issue in his mind. Why did he feel the need to disprove whether she was black or white. As we all clearly know, she was of African descent, meaning that you're a black person, light skinned or not. He went out of his way. So these were different things to help shape me. - Rob

I don't blame them, because it's hardly anything that's taught about -- either the focus is on America, Greek civilization and Civ and Rome. There's not to much in the curriculum about Africa so it's hard to learn about it. The funny thing is that in the school systems back home, we learn about everything. We learn about Africans, then we learn about all the Continents. So, I'll know some of the things I'll study in Civ about Greece, I already knew. It struck my strange that this is a place where education is suppose to be pretty good and yet it was lacking in some bits. -Christopher

I'd be like, yeah, this school is so diverse and all this stuff, it's just not. It kind of annoys you. Like I'm sitting in the class, you never get any different aspect, it's just all the same thing. Everybody here it is the same... -Shawn

Support Systems

... my support systems were my friends. I didn't go to administration. I didn't go out to seek anybody else. I went to the people, sat in the corner who were part of the MLK scholarships. We worked to make things more beneficial to us and hopefully for the white students who wanted to learn something different. -Rob

Like Rob, each of the students relied on their friends as their main support system. All of the students thought the closeness was important in order to support each other. Cohesiveness was expected. Black students were expected to be part of the group and not threaten its unity. Rob and Rita expressed expectations beyond this. They both worked hard to promote
change and held expectations that other students would commit as well and work toward change.

Uh, well it kind of tends to bother me a lot. Those of us that are involved, it tends to bother us. You see people that just aren't involved because they don't feel like it. I mean, when you've got a handful of people working so hard trying to do things that will benefit everybody, I think that handful eventually starts getting worn out and tired. I mean, you'd like to know okay, everybody's going to benefit from the Black Studies Program. That me and a very few others worked so hard to get. We're the only ones that put in -- all the ones that put in most of the work, either have already graduated or are graduating this year. So, you kind of start to feel sometimes that, is it even worth it. Everybody complains about there not being so many black functions on this campus or not being so much to do, but when there is something, not everybody shows up. That's kind of makes you upset after a while. You're like -- well okay, well we tried -- we got something on campus, the least you can do is support it. Or if you're not going to support what we do on campus, then don't complain.

-Rita

The Frederick Douglas Center

The Frederick Douglas Center has been very instrumental in the experience of the black students. All of the students made numerous comments about the role and importance of the Douglas Center and its staff. In relation to social activities, student affairs, and particularly as a support system, the center clearly can be attributed to the retention and success of the black students at Easton.

I, in time, I became more appreciative of the Dean. I really began to admire her. When I first dealt with her, she was new. She was dealing with things at a very -- don't want to step on anybody's shoes mentality. She ended up changing in time except when I first met her, I really couldn't swing with that. I'm like, "man, if there's a problem, we deal with the problem." So I didn't really rely on them as much for support. . .

. . . in time, I became very fond of the Dean, except that was after I got to know her and again, I understand her position now, where I may have been more fuzzy a couple of years ago. I actually sympathize with her because she's in a really tough position. The
administration isn't going to create an office that's going to work against what they have there, that isn't going to try and change things. They're going to have something that reflects them, reflects the needs and desires of the school and just put brown faces in there. I think for the most part, that's really what the office was when I went there. I think that it changed a lot. I think the Dean became a lot more outspoken and supportive. I don't know if they're really happy with that and I know the Dean is very aware of how she's perceived and I know she's a very courageous woman now. She told me if I'm going to continue to live the lifestyle that I live make sure I keep my bags next to the door just in case. She says she does the same thing. She says 'I'm ready to leave at any point just in case'. That's the attitude she has. I don't think that was because of the school that the office has now taken on that shape as much as just having a strong woman in there who's shaping the office into something like that. So that became a strong system in the long run. By the time my junior/senior year, I began to recognize that. -Rob

The Douglas Center is a good support system. They pretty much give me the direction of where I need to go on campus to get questions to other kind of problems that they can't handle. They pretty much handle them all, but if there was something that they couldn't handle, I would go somewhere else. . . One time there could be twenty people in there and we all get along. Maybe that's how we would feel comfortable because we can always go to that office and know that people are caring. -Kristin

Well for the minority students, there's the Dean of Multicultural Affairs. She's basically like a mother to us, especially, as I say most of the minority students, they will go up to her and she's a very nice person. So she helps us out a lot. That's basically the main person. Say for the minority students, it's hard for them to go to a white person to tell them about a personal problem. I don't think they'll do it. They would much rather keep it inside. So the only option they have is telling the Dean or not telling anybody. -Christopher

Institutional Commitment

The Douglas Center has been a strong support system to the students of color at Easton. While the retention and success rate is one that Easton can boast about, alienation remain a problem. The quality of interactions at Easton is a good indicator of the campus climate but students will judge the
climate not only by the types of relationships, but also by the perception that the institution portrays to its black students. Aside from the Douglas Center, the students expressed mixed perceptions about the college's commitment to meeting their needs. Ironically, none of the students expressed general discomfort about being at Easton though most did not feel part of the mainstream. As earlier indicated, the poor quality of interactions and the lack of representative activities and programs available to them were issues regularly cited by the students. Rob's explanation depicts what can be gathered about the students' feelings of the institution's commitment.

I think we all felt that we weren't part of the Easton College mainstream. I think we all know deep down inside, that this school regardless of what it says, regardless of it's admission theme, it does not have a full commitment towards the students of color.

I think they're trying. I think there are some individuals who have a sincerely genuine attitude in the Easton College administration, but I think for the most part, the administration basically wants to maintain the peace and they'll give little bread crumbs to keep the students satisfied and quiet. So they're more interested in keeping the peace instead of dealing with the issues at hand.

By not dealing with the issues at hand, you allow what a lot of us determine and define as being a racist institution to maintain itself, which alienates black students. I feel that it alienates simply because again, we're the minority. Things are going to be told from their perspective, are going to be articulated from their perspective with the white students in mind because that's the bulk of the student body. Again, it's their own culture.

It seems like the rest of the administration just wash their hands of you. If there's a problem, go to Dean and that's stressful on her and on the office. I don't think they went out of their way. Again, they didn't take surveys, "what can we do to make this a better place or how do you feel about this, how do you feel about Western Civ, what can we do, are there any classes?" There was never anything like that at all. If we wanted it, we had to do it ourselves, which had it's benefits, but at the same time, the question was what does the administration do, what does the school do? I really don't think they made any attempt. It's all public relations, how they're perceived.

The school should be trying to make all it's students feel comfortable and make a sincere and genuine attempts to make sure that all the students' needs and desires are being fulfilled. But at the
same time you could get some benefits from that, except I think you also get benefits from going out and seeking and doing for yourself. There has to be a balance and I don't think Easton College does have a balance. So you really do, you have to go out of your way.

While Rob was the only student who directly commented on the administration's lack of communication with students or their questioning or probing student needs or satisfaction level, others commented on the lack of involvement, translated into a lack of concern, by the participants.

Christopher spoke in terms that described how he did not expect much from the institution.

Most of the things that are done, are done by the Douglas Center, the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, by the Dean and the staff. They pretty much initiate most of the things. We have banquets, end of the year banquets for the MLK students and actually none of the faculty usually show, apart from Dean [Semenya] and then Dr. [John], Dean [Rhonda], all the black staff. Then the President of the College, sends the Vice President to show up with a speech, or to send his regards and that's pretty much all they do. The President will either just come, read something small and then that's it. I guess that's probably the most they do. ... We have a Mass, a candle light vigil, against racism or something. There are no faculty members there. The only people who are there, are the priests who conduct the Mass and that's usually one or two and that's it. There's not really much that they do to make the blacks feel at home up here.

When asked of Kristin what she thought the college did to let students know and feel that they were welcomed, she shared similar sentiments, but also felt that the black students and the Douglas Center was not part of the college.

That would be a tough question because, let me see, what do they do. They pretty much don't do anything. We pretty much have to, I think we pretty much get together and we have our own family. We go to the Douglas Center. So maybe in a sense we're out of the college, so that's how we feel comfortable because everyone goes there.

There seems to be more faith in the student leadership than in the administrators. As expressed by Angie,
We have a student government. The Student Government is not very representative, but they try to be. They really try to be. They ask us for our input. There are no black students, like class officers or anything but there are representatives from the different clubs. They ask us to send representatives to their meetings. I think it's because of the leaders, how the leaders are, the people who are in charge like the President of Student Congress. She's really into the diversity thing. So they want the Student Government to be diverse.

The students expressed little faith in the administration's commitment to providing anything they could relate to. The Maya Angelou reading was the one exception that all of the students remarked on. All the students expressed surprise that the college sponsored the lecture.

If they do bring somebody here that's for black people, we'll be surprised. Like a lot of us were surprised that they brought Maya Angelou and they just did that for the money. Other than that, we don't expect it because they're representing the majority and we're not the majority, so. -Angie

They got Maya Angelou to come here and speak. That was a shock, cause when we all heard about that, I about passed out and well really that's about it. -Rita

These expressions are not surprising when the students do not see any type of programs that are of interest to them. Most of what is programmed is generally student run.

I think people upstairs [administrators] should take some initiative and say "let's have a cultural day". That way the students, the white students here are learning, the students of color here could feel a little more comfortable and they can finally get together but none of that goes on. None of it, not that I know of. I've been here for four years and I don't remember the last time I saw someone say culture, all welcome.

Yeah, if they have them [cultural activities], it's more like student run. Like a group of SOAR, Students Organization Against Racism. Every so often, they'll have a little meeting or something on some kind of issue. I remember last year, it was interracial relationships and I was so mad, I missed it. I had practice so I couldn't be there. I missed it and I just heard -- I heard it was good. I heard it was really good. I mean interracial relations can be heated sometimes,
you know. . . . I've never remembered anybody saying there was going to be a big old meeting on race from the people upstairs. I've never heard anything like that. -Shawn

Much of the climate issues can be attributed to the small population of black students at Easton. The college has made the attempt in good faith, over the years, to recruit students of color by providing scholarships. Because the numbers have remained low, it has caused problems for the very students who are on scholarship. The lack of a critical mass has developed multiple concerns.

This has been particularly clear with the student clubs and organizations and the efforts put forward by these groups.

... At one point, in my freshman and sophomore year, the organizations all joined into one and we worked against the Western Civ Program. The thing is that there's such a small amount of us on campus, it was basically all the same people. You know we just had different people heading the meeting or the organization. It was basically the same organization just a different facilitator. -Rob

.... a chapter from the city's NAACP. We are trying to run a membership drive. We want to get the memberships. The problem with the organization, is that they're such a small -- with a small minority population on campus it appears as if these clubs are just for the minorities since the rest of the school population don't really bother with them. They don't bother with these issues. They are concerned with other things. I guess. -Christopher

Afro-Ed used to be a very powerful organization on this campus, but they've died down a lot cause the number of black students [attending Easton] are getting lower and lower and then the last few Presidents [of the organization] that we've had, half the people haven't done anything. -Rita

The perception of the institution's commitment to remedying the low numbers of black students is not a good one. On the other hand, the students expressed an understanding about the institution's ability to increase the number of students because of the unlikelihood of awarding greater numbers of scholarships.
[The college] recognizes [the low amount of black students]. The President even spoke about it and he said he wants to get more but they don't really work to achieve that goal. They would like it if they could get more but they're not going to give everybody a Martin Luther King Scholarship ... (black students) don't come here without the scholarship. It's a lot of money. They come to visit and they see there's no black kids and they all go somewhere else, you know.

-Angie

The students without exception felt that the only black students who come to Easton were those on scholarship. They also expressed an understanding that the scholarships were not unlimited and the college would provide only so many, due to the high cost of attending Easton.

In addition to recruiting students, the recruitment of black faculty and staff was a point of dissatisfaction that also added to the feeling of alienation. The students expressed that the college could do a better job.

They say they do [try to recruit more], but I don't honestly think they have. I mean, they say "well that's what the scholarship is all about" and well yes, the scholarship is what brings most of us here. I don't think they do a lot of recruiting in areas where there are a lot of black people. I mean, if they really wanted to try to get more black students to come. I think they'd go to places where there are more black people then there are in just this area. They do recruiting right around the city and that's about it and they say that "oh yeah, well we've tried and no black people seem to want to come". Then the other thing is when it comes to hiring faculty, I think having more black faculty would attract more black students as well. Well if someone has a position open, why not look for a qualified black person to fill the position. I don't think the school -- they say that they do, but once again, you can't prove that they haven't. There are black people out there who can teach a college class. This school isn't hiring them for various reasons. They say none are applying, I don't think they go to graduate schools like Howard and Hampton and other black colleges. Because then you would find qualified black people that want to take the job. They're saying that "oh, well no qualified black people apply." But you haven't recruited in places where you'll find qualified black people, what do you expect? -Rita
While Shawn sees it as his responsibility and the responsibility of other black students to recruit black students, he also expressed that the college should do more to recruit black students and black faculty.

I think the reason we're here is to kind of make this school as diverse as possible. We can't just be here and graduate. There's a lot more to it. You have to show people that this school isn't just that. There're other cultures here and I think by us going out and trying to pull people in, that's our job. I think that's what we're here for, to do that. That's the way I looked at it. I looked at it, I was like well I'm here and I'm not here just to get an education. I guess it's kind of like I said, it's hurting [the college] and that's why I'm here trying to help the school.

Especially when you're a sophomore and you still don't know where you stand or anything like that. It was just a good feeling. I think they could do a little more to kind of recruit some more black teachers. There are a lot out there, so. My dad's one and he's all for that. Try to get them out here.

I think as far as the school is going, like to try to get more black students in the school, I mean they all of a sudden need to start kind of recruiting more administration who're black, more teachers who are black. I mean, there are about a handful of them. It doesn't bother me but I think they should be well represented at the school. -Shawn

Some of the students expressed a misperception of Easton based on some of the university publications and the messages they send.

Then they have -- if you have seen the College booklet, they have all this -- when I received it back home, I was like "wow, it's so diverse because they have all this" -- they had an Asian, they had a Caucasian, they had Hispanic, they had blacks. They had all this. So, I figured that I was coming to a pretty diverse place where there were all these mixtures of everybody. When I came here, it's funny because you're walking to class, you see all these Caucasians and then you see this one black person and the minute you see them, you're like so happy. You have to say hi to them. -Christopher

Shawn has an opposite view of the publications and the messages they send.

I think from the get go, as far as the application process goes, I don't think they make anybody feel comfortable because you look in their little pamphlets -- I don't know if you happen to pick one up yet, just like those yearbooks, you know what I mean. You don't see a person of color on there at all. I think right off the bat if you were
trying to get a black student to come, that's not the way to do it. Besides the basketball team, show them there's some color on this campus. Like I said, I knew what I was getting into when I came here. I think that's a big mistake they're making. I'm not saying take a picture of every single black person on the campus, but I mean, have them well represented in the book besides them slam dunking, you know what I mean. That's not what it's about.

The black student sample was included in this study for purposes of establishing what the campus climate was like from their perspective. Their stories have done that. Much of what has been reported by the students has been revealed in the literature. The campus climate for black students at Easton is much like the campus climate for black students at many predominantly white institutions.

This study did demonstrate that the students are not homogeneous. They come to Easton with different backgrounds, viewpoints and values. A result of this is the difference in their racial identity development. By using racial identity to help to understand how students respond to the climate, I have found that the climate is perceived according to where a student is in the process of learning who they are as members of a racial group and according to how they perceive members of other racial groups. This was particularly revealed in looking at the differences between Rob and Shawn's perceptions. As the students on the highest and lowest stages of development they demonstrated how different two students in the same environment can be.

Both students saw the problems with the interaction among students, but to what they attributed the poor interaction differed dramatically. Shawn seeing only the lack of exposure and background of the white students and able to excuse white students for their attitudes and behaviors because of this. Rob, on the other hand, has been very skeptical of white students and not willing to collude with their beliefs and behaviors.
The other students fell somewhere in between Rob and Shawn but all were unsatisfied with the level of interaction on campus. These students are having a difficult time with Easton; not because they have never experienced racism and not because they have never been in the minority but because Easton's situation is different than what they are accustomed to. The makeup of the student body is different than their previous experiences. Not only is the student body predominantly white but it lacks diversity even within its white population. Some of the students stated that they were accustomed to all white settings but found Easton different and were unable to articulate why. Rob and Shawn both were able to comment on how the student body was very much the same, Irish Catholic, suburban, middle class. Therefore, it was not only the all white setting that students could not deal with, it was as much the lack of ethnic and cultural diversity.

The other key factor that gave students difficulty is the indifference and the lack of acknowledgment that they got from the white students. All of the students were moved by how they are treated by them. With their lack of exposure and experience with blacks, a result of their suburban living, the black students perceive them to be avoiding them which causes pain, anger and some hostility. Moreover, they see the opposite behavior with the basketball players. The black students see the basketball players as black students first before they see them as ball players and celebrities on campus. They see that the white students glorify the basketball players, who are very popular, while the average black students are hardly acknowledged.

The black student interaction was equally problematic. Though the students did not fully admit it, the interactions and relations among them are not good. All said that they get along well and are like a family, however, the friction, of late, seemed to be more prevalent than the camaraderie. The small
number of black students requires them to interact and hopefully like each other. This has not worked favorably. As a group they are basically dysfunctional.

The black students are very wedded to the group and the rules of loyalty and solidarity. The norms of the groups have also put difficult expectations on these students as individuals and as a group. Not only do they have to deal with the poor interaction with the white students, but the problems within their own group causes them distress.

The other element that was revealed was the difference in the experience between the males and the females. This study revealed that there are issues at Easton that are sensitive to women but men are not as susceptible to.

Interestingly enough, with the problems between them, they will pull together when they need each other. The fact that they will support each other was encouraging. All were able to understand the importance of support in a difficult environment such as Easton. The need to know that support from other students is available, is important and recognized.

All of the students are aware that there are so few students of color, leaving few choices, limited interaction and opportunities for meaningful relationships. This is especially highlighted in the dating situation.

The numbers also hamper the chance for any quality social gatherings particularly because of the significant differences in socialization between black and white students. There are not enough black students to be able to support quality programs for black students. The result is students are forced to seek a social life at other colleges.

These factors cause black students to have difficulty mainstreaming with the college. The feelings of isolation become obvious. There is no
evidence of connection to the student body at Easton for black students. They remain unconnected and isolated from the student body. However, to say that black students are not connected to the college would not be a true statement. The Douglas Center and its staff plays a significant role in the life of black students at Easton. Though it has not been able to meet all of the needs of the students, it has been effective in connecting the students to the college through its close contact with the students and the support, trust, confidence and comfort that it has provided to the students of color. Student may feel isolated from other students but they undoubtedly are well connected to the Douglas Center which also serves as a link to other parts of the college.

One thing is clear, though the students come from different backgrounds and experiences before Easton, they did not demonstrate much of a difference in the nature of their experience at Easton. While they may interpret, and process the meaning of things differently, they all shared a similar experience at Easton College.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS OF THE ADMINISTRATORS’ PERCEPTIONS
OF THE CAMPUS CLIMATE

This chapter will begin with a descriptive sketch of each of the participants, all of whom are administrators at Easton. The sketch will include a description of the administrator participant’s background as it relates to the family makeup, neighborhood experience, school years through college and the nature of experiences that each participant has had with people of their own race, as well as with people of other races.

The descriptive sketches will be followed by an explanation and analysis of the racial identity development of each of the participants. Where an individual may be in their racial consciousness and how that person may perceive the climate at Easton will be guided by racial identity and will be explained according to the information and responses given during the interview. Like the students, these participants may also be experiencing more than one stage of racial identity simultaneously.

The chapter will continue with an explanation of the themes that have emerged from the interviews with each of the participants according to the questions and topics covered in the interviews.

The Administrators

Carolyn

Carolyn is the Director of the Counseling Center and has been at Easton since the early seventies. She identifies as Irish-Italian. She grew up in the same general vicinity where Easton is located. She came from an Irish-Italian background but always thought of herself more as Italian. She was very close to her grandmother who was Italian, and lived with her family for
twenty years. Her family consisted of her mother, father and one sister. Attending Catholic elementary school with her sister, she remembers being treated differently because they were the only students in the school who did not have an Italian name.

Carolyn's neighborhood was all white and she had no contact with any people of color. She reports that when she was growing up, "everything was neighborhood oriented." Junior high school for Carolyn was wonderful; her first experience with public school. She became involved with many school activities which were not available to her in Catholic school. She attended public junior high for only one year before going to the local public high school.

Upon entering high school, she became aware of people different than those from her school and neighborhood, even though her parents were always very accepting of other people. High school is described as an "okay experience." Compared to junior high school which was small and where everyone knew everyone, high school was fed by four junior high schools and had a very large student population, which was a dramatic change for Carolyn.

To Carolyn's knowledge, there were only two black families in the city and neither lived in her area, therefore, she had no contact. Her first contact with blacks was at high school, but even then, it was limited. One girl she never got to know at all. The other was in Carolyn's class and was very popular. In retrospect, Carolyn attributes this girl's popularity to being different, rather than the fact that she was a cheerleader and majorette.

At a public college during the late sixties and early seventies, Carolyn's collegial experience was very traditional with a homogeneous population. With all of the civil unrest of that era, Carolyn and the people she was
involved with were "more into the Viet Nam War than racial issues." The campus did not have much of an on-campus residence and the majority was a commuter population. She was involved with the sorority which had an African-American member who was a good friend of Carolyn's.

After receiving her bachelor's degree, Carolyn went onto graduate school where she studied counseling psychology. She had not planned on the field of higher education, in fact, she was interested in gerontology. While at the Easton College Library where she was doing research, she learned of an available position through a passing conversation with a priest who gave her a contact. Carolyn was hired with a one year counselor contract, replacing someone who had been fired. Carolyn explains that it was not higher education that attracted her to the position, but the counseling opportunity. "So to say I was interested in higher ed, I really wasn't. I was interested in counseling and looking at different populations and it was just me."

Carolyn developed relationships on campus and became an effective staff member. "It was almost as if no matter what you did, it was wonderful, because so much hadn't been done." She spent time working with faculty, developing programs, building bridges and doing outreach.

This was twenty three years ago, so outreach was just a new term there too. As a result of that, I was asked to be on the committee that was the Counseling Center. So that's how it happened. It was a matter of being at the right place at the right time, luck and all of those things. What started out as a one year contract has turned into a twenty three year commitment for Carolyn. The challenge of developing a credible and effective counseling center was presented to Carolyn early on.

Interpreting the role of a clinician versus a pastoral person is a real challenge and still is a challenge. We've come a long way, but it's still a challenge. When I came, I met with the Chaplain because I realized that the Chaplain has a lot of power on this campus, did twenty three years ago and does now, okay, for good or for bad, has a
lot of power. ... one of my major goals as I said, was to interpret to the administration that there was a need and to interpret to the college community as a whole what counseling was all about. It just wasn't sitting down and rapping with students, it wasn't just puffing them up. It wasn't just being good and it wasn't infringing your value system on students. ... 

Carolyn met and married her husband who worked at Easton for ten years before they were married. He started the Martin Luther King Scholarship Program and created the administrative positions developed to address the needs of students of color. As a civil rights activist and very involved with issues of equality, "my husband is quite a bit older then me and he was very involved at the college in the seventies, went to the March On Washington and all of that. So, it's been a big part of his life and as a result, I guess as a couple, it's a big part of our life."

Carolyn was eventually appointed the Director of the Counseling Center, and holds that position to date.

Suzanne

Suzanne is the Associate Vice President of Academic Administration and has been at Easton College since the seventies, when Easton increased its population to include women. She identifies as Irish. Suzanne is the third of four children in her family. She has two older sisters and a younger brother. Her parents were both working people, her father a salesman, and her mother a homemaker who went to work part-time when Suzanne went to junior high school. Suzanne's dad died when she was sixteen years old, forcing her mother to seek full time employment.

Suzanne's neighborhood and school experience was among "all Caucasian, working class Irish-Italian, some Yankee types, but not mixed in any other respect." Private education through college was a good
opportunity for Suzanne. Parochial school through high school, then a small Catholic college out-of-state where Suzanne did not have to live in the shadows of her older sisters was, according to Suzanne, one of the best things that she could have happened to her. In college, she majored in history with a minor in education. She had an interest in teaching secondary school.

Once Suzanne finished college, she returned home to help with the family finances and her brother's education. After her father's death, she felt a responsibility to her mother and the family, who lived in a rented tenement. She got a job teaching junior high school which, after one year, exhausted her. She applied for and received an assistantship to attend a graduate program at Easton. The experience was wonderful for Suzanne because Easton at the time was at a cross-road. Preparing to open its doors to women, Suzanne was involved with the transition that the college was about to experience. As one of only two women in her program, she was not allowed to teach, because she was a woman, but was given administrative responsibilities. Suzanne, though aware of the discrimination of the times, is appreciative of her early administrative exposure, and attributes this experience to her current success.

After completing her graduate program in the early seventies and beginning her job search, she encountered further discrimination and was blatantly told that she could not do certain things because of her gender. She eventually was hired to head a federally funded program which would integrate social studies into the high schools. Because of her role in the program and her connections to Easton, she was asked to join a task force which would work on implementing undergraduate co-education at Easton College. Through her hard and successful work on the task force, she was asked to apply for a position at Easton. She was hired as an Assistant Dean in
Academic Administration. For Suzanne, it was a wonderful opportunity. As the only woman as well as the only lay person in her department, she "was listened to as she had never been listened to [before]. " She was happy and successful in this position.

After eight years in this role, she requested a sabbatical to pursue a doctorate degree at a prestigious institution which required her to attend full time. The president of Easton denied her request. Angry and disenchanted, Suzanne took a one year unpaid leave of absence. After returning to her position, she decided that she would only do her job and nothing extra. It was a low period in her life. She began a part-time doctoral program at an institution which required her to commute 150 miles each way to attend courses. This began her first experience with people of color. Her program included a multicultural cohort of students.

After completing her degree which coincided with a change in the administration at Easton, she was offered the job of Associate Vice President of Academic Administration. In this role and as a non-faculty person, she deals with all things that do not relate to faculty affairs. Her responsibilities encompass Registrar, Admissions, Continuing Education, Graduate Programs, Library, Audio Visual, Study Abroad Program, Center for Teaching Excellence and the Douglas Multicultural Student Services Center. This position does not give her the direct student contact that she had with previous positions, but she does find it challenging and interesting.

I can honestly say I miss my old job and that I miss my daily working with students. When you work with a kid who's got a problem, or who just needs a kick to keep them going, you can see almost instant ramifications at that. When you're working with forty and fifty year olds who are still messing up and not learning from their mistakes, it's much more frustrating and there's a lot of time that you have to spend listening to people because they really, in many
cases have no one else to listen to them. It's been a difficult job also in that we're in transition here in the college.

So the job has grown. I've been here since 1971 in the position, at various levels of sporadic ups and sporadic very very lows. We've had a lot of good things that have happened. There has been a lot of low points in working in a religiously affiliated institution. There are a lot of drawbacks because there are a lot of key positions that will never be held by a lay person, let alone a woman. And so there's a lot of frustration in that you not only reach that ceiling, the female ceiling, you reach that lay person ceiling as well. So you got a lot of bumps on your head and a lot of gray hairs and a lot of scar tissue, but at that same time, there has been a lot of wonderful pluses that I never could have had anywhere else.

So it's an emotional, it's a very emotional place to be. I think people whose lives I've been involved with and who have touched mine as well, it's been a very good experience. But working with people can be a roller coaster.

Colleen

Colleen is the Director of Health Services and has been at Easton since the mid seventies. She identifies as Irish. She is the oldest of six children who grew up with both parents in the local Easton College area. The six children are spread out in years, and Colleen's youngest sister was born as Colleen graduated from nursing school. Colleen remembers always having a grandmother, grandfather, aunt or uncle living with the family. Her grandmother lived with her family for thirty eight years, before she passed away. Colleen describes her family as a tight-knit Irish family.

Colleen has no memories of her neighborhood where her parents also grew up and she lived until the age of five. She did know that the neighborhood was always ethnically mixed "and I would say probably in the last few years that we lived there, certainly totally mixed. We were probably the minority, black and white, which was not a problem to my family." The family purchased a home in another section of the city, described as
predominantly white, middle class. Colleen lived in this neighborhood until marrying, and even then lived only blocks away from her family.

Before attending nursing school at a community college, Colleen attended Catholic school throughout her elementary and secondary school years. She did not have any experience with people of color at Catholic school or at nursing school. Her nursing school experience, according to Colleen, was not a true collegiate experience. The program was very structured and rigorous and nursing students did not have the time or opportunity to interact with anyone outside of the Nursing Department. Additionally, Colleen commuted from home because she did not want to leave her family.

After graduating from nursing school and working part-time while married and after having her first child, Colleen decided that a more regular work schedule without nights and weekends was best for her family. After hearing about an opening at Easton's infirmary, she was successful in securing a Monday through Friday, day shift. At the time, the infirmary was opened twenty four hours per day. According to Colleen, the facility did not have a good reputation, nor was it respected. Colleen set out to make the center more professional and better able to meet the medical needs of the Easton community.

After many years of changes and transition, the infirmary became the Health Center, which no longer operated twenty four hours per day, but twelve hours. It became more able to deliver medical help and advice and to offer some counseling and referrals on a more professional level. According to Colleen, the redefining and redesigning of the center was difficult and controversial and she was at the forefront of the necessary change.
Colleen has two children. Her daughter is in high school and has always attended Catholic school. Her son, now in fifth grade attends public school. Though he started school at the same Catholic school as his sister, Colleen and her husband decided to place their son in a public school after he completed first grade. Discovering that he had a reading disability prompted Colleen to place him a school that provided resources for his disability. His educational experience has been multicultural and also a learning experience for Colleen and her family, none of whom had any exposure to people different from them. It was through her son’s school experience and exposure to a mixture of ethnicity and race that Colleen responded to many of my questions, particularly those related to race.

Peter

Peter is the Associate Director of Residence Life and has been at Easton for nine years. He identifies as Irish-Italian. Peter also grew up in the local Easton area. With only one brother who is four years younger than Peter, they grew up with both their parents. His dad was a middle school principal for thirty five years until his retirement and his mother never worked outside of their home.

The neighborhood where Peter grew up was a predominantly white, working class neighborhood. Peter’s father was the only professional in the neighborhood, the others were blue collar workers. When asked about the neighborhood, Peter described it as “mixed” with second generation French, Italian and Polish, but with no people of color.

In his early years, his parents bought a summer home by the shore where Peter spent his summers. Up to that point, the neighborhood and school interaction was “very restricted in terms of who I was socializing
And then it was right around the time when I just started to go to Xavier, so it’s been a real changing point in my life. And at that point, they got the house and we started going down to the shore in the summertime. And then I met all kinds of — a whole new kind of breed of people, not racially different, but socioeconomics was very different. I all of a sudden began to associate with the more white collar professional kids and there was a lot of money down there. So it was very much more affluent. And those were primarily the people that I hung around with after the summer was over, you know. I ran into a bunch of friends down there that went to Xavier and so I had a couple of friends that went to Xavier, then I met a couple of people that went to St. Phillips and then I had a couple of friends that eventually went to prep schools and then came back to come to Easton and be captain of a hockey team at Easton.

So it was really a real big move, especially for my parents, to get us down there in terms of the people that I met. I was exposed to a completely different group of individuals. So I was very grateful for that. I really enjoyed the summer experience. It was wonderful being down by the shore and doing all kinds of stuff.

Unlike Peter's neighborhood and early school experience with a working class population, high school was very much middle to upper middle class. There was some racial diversity at Peter's high school but he did not have much contact. His high school experience was not a pleasant one. Peter never wanted to attend this school but wanted to remain in public school where he met many friends whom he wanted to stay with. Moreover, Peter did not feel that it was a good academic experience. He does not feel that he learned much, but did express that it was probably good that he went "from a disciplinary standpoint."

From high school, Peter attended the state university. "It took me my entire freshman year to really catch up with a lot of the other students in terms of you know, just dealing with women, social and otherwise. I would never do it to my kids."
It was at the university, that Peter had his first meaningful contact with a person of color. He became very friendly with one of his professors, who according to Peter has some very interesting stories about race. The course Peter took with this professor introduced him to experiences and readings which gave him his first real exposure.

After completing his Bachelors degree, Peter began taking music courses in hopes of pursuing a professional music career. He, at the time, began dating a woman who was a career counselor and introduced him to the field of higher education. Peter took an interest in the field and decided that the music field was too idealistic and not serious. He went back to college for a Masters in Higher Education and was fortunate enough to secure a housing position at his alma mater at the same time. He stayed in that position for four years before coming to Easton College.

When first entering the field and while at his first position, Peter was very enthusiastic about working in residence life.

... It just seemed to be an area for a lot of creativity, working with students, helping students, you know, just being able to kind of interact with college students was a real pleasurable experience for me. I really felt like I could relate to college students, and it was something I enjoyed and lived in four years. It was an awesome feeling.

While Peter spoke of his early career experience with pleasure and excitement, his tone changed when describing his Easton experience.

Well, the past nine years, you know, hasn't been easy. When I first came here, there was a housing office that really had no sense of any kind of structure or development at all. A priest had run it for years and years and years. I came in as an associate director replacing a man that was a retired colonel in the Army and when I came here, the current director had left, so they replaced him with a priest, ... A lot of the things that I tried to implement here were, I would say, just didn't seem what people wanted. So it was very frustrating.

At that time there were head residents. Half of the head residents were priests who didn't want to have weekly meetings. You know, they were used to meeting twice a year. They didn't want to
check -- there were mailboxes and they didn't want any paper work and so all of the things that I was trying -- there was no RA programming that was done. So I implemented, you know, mailboxes for all directors which I almost got hung for. RA programming, I almost got shot for and decided to call the office Residence Life. I mean, these were residence, you know, residence office and they didn't like that. So it was just kind of a series of kind of a political debacles type of place for several years. And so, you know, it was tough going for a few years.

Currently, Peter sees his purpose and goals at Easton,

    My purpose right now is, the same as it was when I was down at [the university]. It's to help students and to help this department grow and develop and to uphold the mission of Easton College. I've learned only too well over the years here that Easton has a way that they want things to be and I've learned those ways. I come in everyday and support them as best as I possibly can which I think has been adequate. I am not one of the people who have been asked to participate in developing a plan, so I'm here as a person who's ready to support whatever plans are being developed here.

John

John serves at Easton as the Director of the Martin Luther King Scholarship Program. He has been at Easton since 1972. John identifies as African-American. The youngest of ten children, John grew up in the local Easton area. Both his parents migrated from the south with eight children. His father was a laborer and his mother never worked outside of the home. He and his sister were born in New England. John was the only one of the siblings to go on to college. He has successfully completed a Ph.D.. Only one of his sisters graduated from high school. One sister and two brothers eventually completed their GED's.

The neighborhood was predominantly black, working people, poor people all of whom including my family didn't have much but we were a family with values as was the neighborhood. Not any of the neighbors could be considered even middle class, but people who have strong family ties, strong values, family values and most of the
kids that I grew up with did not go onto college, but most of them went on to become productive citizens.

John attended all public schools. From the time that he started kindergarten, the schools were racially mixed because of their locations which fed many neighborhoods. The area where his school was located was heavily populated by Italians. Located two miles from home, he would walk to school, walk back home for lunch, return, then walk home at the end of the school day at 3:00.

Junior high school and high school were integrated but with more whites than blacks. John remembers always having good relations with his white peers.

John always knew that he wanted to attend a predominantly black college. His dream was to attend Howard University in Washington D.C. but when the time came, his parents were unable to afford to send him. He had to settle for the local state college or not go to college at all.

I realized later how painful it must have been for my parents to tell me that they couldn't afford to send me to Howard since I know that I was their youngest child, their baby, the only one who had any inspiration to go onto college and their inability to pay for me to go there. And of course, there weren't the kinds of grants, scholarships and money around like now to help minority students go onto college. So I went to (the local state college), where I majored in English and Social Science and went on to a career of teaching.

Like his primary and secondary school, John's college experience was predominantly white with very few black students.

After graduating, John began teaching junior high school then soon after began studying for his Masters in English. Upon completing his degree, he requested and was granted a transfer to a high school where he stayed for six years. John decided that he would like another change and sent resumes to all of the colleges in the state. With a hiring freeze in the state college
system there was not much interest in hiring him, but he got a good response from the private institutions and eventually accepted a position with Easton which made the best offer. John has been there since 1972.

John pursued a second Masters degree after being at Easton for a few years. He earned a degree in counseling at Easton which he felt was close to what he was doing with the scholarship program. This experience left him wanting to pursue a doctorate which he was able to complete at Boston College in three years time. With the exception of the dissertation, he found the program to be relatively easy and enjoyable.

At Easton, most of, practically all my work is involved with students, but I have served on committees over the years, task force committees which came up with documentation and I can remember serving on such committees and I would always insist that efforts be made to aggressively recruit people of color at all levels.

I suppose my major goal was and is to make a difference in the lives of college students, all college students, but since my job, a major portion of my job focused then and does now by working with students of color, by making a difference in their lives and I think I maintain that and that's what I want to continue to do until I complete my career as an educator in a few years.

Since interviewing John, I have learned that his health has been failing and the current academic year will probably be his last at Easton.

Semenya

Semenya is the Dean of Multicultural Student Affairs and has been in this position for five years. Previously, she worked as a Special Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs in the late seventies at Easton then left for a number of years before returning to serve in her current role. Semenya identifies herself as African-American.

Because of the richness of Semenya's story and her presentation, I have presented her profile totally in her own words. Unlike the other participants,
Semenya’s story was presented in full detail without the need to interject or ask questions. Her presentation was free flowing, rich and complete. In order to preserve the essence of her story, I have presented her narrative as told by her.

I was born in Arkansas, but since the age of two, lived in Kansas City, Kansas. I’m the only child. My father was born in Jet Moore, Kansas and my mother was born in Arkansas. They met at a historically black college Arkansas.

My grandmother graduated from that college in I believe it was 1908, and became a teacher. So my grandfather had about a six grade education, but he was a self educated man and he farmed in Arkansas and my understanding is that he had become very wealthy. They kind of founded that little town called Fargo.

My grandmother and grandfather had five children. All of them were college educated and all of their children were college educated. Everyone who was old enough to go to college, it was never questioned, if you would go, but if you lived in our family, you had to go. I don’t remember ever having a choice. And if it had been my choice, I would have chosen not to go to college because I had no ambition for a higher education. I was more interested in self education. I wasn’t too crazy about someone telling me what I needed to learn. So I had kind of a rebel instinct about learning. I had no desire to continue but that was not thought of in our family. They literally took me to the train station crying and every year, I quit and every year I went back.

My mother was a teacher and she's of course retired now. My father was a teacher, but when we came back to Kansas, was coming back for him and the first time for my mother, he didn't continue teaching. I never understood why he never continued teaching, but he did teach when he was in Arkansas with my mother. But my mother continued to teach. She went back to work when I was nine. She stayed with me the first nine years and then she went back.

She wanted to be a concert pianist, so she -- during the first nine years of my life, she was training, after teaching a little while -- she actually was studying for the stage as a concert pianist and that was her dream. But my father wasn't making enough money to send me to school and my mother went back to work full time as a teacher, so that I would be able to have an education. She no longer had time to study for the stage as a concert pianist, so that was always a dream deferred.

My father, the same thing, he had studied music and he had studied Science in college. He wanted to be on the stage as a singer. He was a tenor, a beautiful tenor voice. So he studied Opera and he sang in Italian and German mainly and he sang a number of arias. He
wanted to be a full time performer but the traveling was something that my mother couldn't cope with and I think she gave him an ultimatum at one point and he then stopped traveling. But he had -- before that, he had traveled all over the United States, all fifty States and had done a lot of choral singing.

So when I grew up with these two people, they were very centered on education in the home. It was an education just growing up in their household, but music was very much a part of the household because even though they didn't do it -- they didn't fulfill their dreams as they had intended or dreamed, they gave concerts in the community. They would give recitals. My father would sing, my mother would accompany him and then during intermission, she would play pieces. So she -- I would hear them practicing. Then their friends were also musicians and so sometimes when they were rehearsing together, one playing the violin, one who's a contralto soloist and then my father, a tenor. So that would be kind of -- in our living room, so when I was sent to bed, I would hear this in the background. So that was something I just took for granted. When they gave recitals, I was in the back seat of the church. Generally, it was at churches, cause this was during segregation.

I grew up during segregation, so for the first 18 years of my life, I lived in an all black community. The first time I entered a community where there were whites, I was 18 years old, when I went away to college. And even coming home, it was still in an all black community.

So, I grew up seeing black professionals and entrepreneurs, dentists, doctors, lawyers, insurance, every single thing that we needed, it was provided for us by black people. So it was perplexing to me in the sixties when this was defined as a problem, because that was what I had -- I had black teachers, black principals, everybody, you know, so I saw some that were wealthy, some that were poor, but very very proud self reliant people. So there was never any question about what I could do, what any of us could do because we had people in our community who were doing those things. We had the person who was the doctor and the person who owned the cleaners. Even the cleaners, we didn't take the clothes to a white cleaners. The only time we did any business or interacted with whites was when we went downtown and maybe for furniture or something like that. But we rarely came in contact with whites. So there was a certain self reliance that came out of that. Ironically, even though that was something that was imposed, out of that generation, I would venture to say most of us came out with a certain kind of self reliance that many of the students who are now integrated, because somehow going to school with white students -- there's more equipment or supposedly, you know, a better curriculum. It gives sort of a back drop of comparison where we didn't
have that comparison, that was it. So, we weren't compared with anyone.

When we did have an instance to compete with whites, we were good. We were competitive with them. The high school I went to was an all black high school. Every year we won the National Science Fair side by side with the white school. And so my first real introduction to racism is when we continued to win the Science Fair not only winning basketball or football, but that we won the Science Fair. They took our teacher out of the classroom and that was my first real lesson as what racism could do. He was given another job, but it was quite clear that if he was no longer the science teacher, we wouldn't have that kind of leadership. He was a superb teacher and his students won.

As strange as it might seem, I'm happy for me that I didn't, because the influence that it had on me when I see what has happened with students who have gone through integration and the busing. My life, I think would have been different if I hadn't. So, yes, we knew that we had -- our schools were not as nice as the schools that the white students went to and when we got new furniture, it was second hand furniture that they had gotten rid of and we got that furniture and they got brand new furniture. But it was what went on in that classroom with that second hand furniture and with those second hand books, we had first rate teachers. We had superior teachers. We had teachers who desperately cared about us and taught us and nurtured us and taught us how to cope in a world when we would leave that area. So the meaning, the tools and the tables and the chairs didn't mean as much as the teacher.

So by that time, I had graduated from high school and had missed the integration and had gone to -- willingly had gone to Kansas State. I didn't want to go to a predominantly black college. I had chosen to go to a state school. My mother had wanted me to follow the tradition of the family, going to a historically black college, of course, you know, initially, we had to as a people. But then when we no longer had to, I chose to because I thought I would get a better chance of not being scrutinized going to a white school than if I went to a black school. I was not a terribly sociable kid and then my value system didn't incorporate a lot of clothes, you know, and things that I had observed in the black community. I felt I couldn't keep up with the sorority and with the social life with the black kids, where I wouldn't have that pressure going to a white school. I could just go to class and do what I wanted to do, but if I went to a black school, I would be scrutinized and I would have certain expectations that I just didn't feel like achieving.

So, most of us who attended that school came out as teachers. I had a degree in physiology. My first job was in Wichita, Kansas, teaching language arts and social studies. I graduated in June and got married in August. So again, very strong willed, not following my
mother's advice. She said if you work on your Masters instead of getting married we'll give you a car. Which is a pretty big deal then as it would be a big deal now. No, I was in love and so I married in August and then I started work in September, and nine months later I had my first child. So that was not unusual. Most of my classmates, who did not go to college had married anyway. So that wasn't a big deal.

[About teaching]... these were children of the sixties. These were seventh graders of that time, sixty seven, sixty eight, sixty nine. So these kids were angry. You know, there were white teachers who had come to the school to teach them, the green [inexperienced], white teachers were sent and the experienced black teachers were sent away and we always got the ones that were inexperienced or not particularly good and they were also very angry at being there. ... they taught like they didn't want to be there.

I had to convince the students to speak standard English. 'Why do I have to? -- I don't want to sound like Nixon -- I don't want to' -- you know, and they -- but to teach them how to speak standard English, to teach them why they should, why they need to know the Government, we didn't compromise on that. But I just felt that it was a whole lie at that time, so it was that -- during that period.

In 1970, I got the fellowship and it was an HEW fellowship for teachers of disadvantage students. So, I was able to get that and there are about thirty of us all over the country who went to UMass Amherst. That was where we had to go to receive our fellowship. And it was great for me because I was, at that time leaving this marriage that I had gone into in order to have children and finally, you know, be validated as a woman, a grown woman. It was also the period where during the first six months of the pregnancy, I had to resign at the end of six months because I started to show and I couldn't teach and show. When I told my principal I was pregnant, he says "you can teach until you start to show".

Then, anyway, coming to the northeast -- when I got off the bus -- actually I had been -- I think this is important to put in. When -- I had been very very shy, very retiring even with that kind of passion that I had inside but very shy, not to expressive. Because the family -- while it is a very educated family, it is also a very conservative family. So it's not a family where passion is allowed. You don't show -- you don't get too loud, you speak softly. All the women kind of sound the same way I sound. The same kind of tone of voice, lady like, you know. So we were brought up black bourgeois kind of thing.

When I got on the plane to go there [to UMass] with the two children, by that time, I had two children. I said on this plane, I will become anybody I want. And by the time the plane lands, there's not a soul who knows me, so I can -- I won't have this comparison "oh what are you trying to be", cause in a black community you don't get away
with anything...if I had two people, one from 1970 back and one from 1974, they would look and kind of say -- we wouldn't expect the same person. If one person described me Semenya past 1970, you know 1970, 1969, 1968 back there, they would have a description. People who met me 1970, up until the present time, they have a description. And it's not even close, not even close.

In my family, the woman are world class worriers. They are world class -- bright well educated women. Almost all of them have two and three degrees. Worry, can worry great. I mean -- oh, we're very good at that. So, that was something, I didn't want that for them. I wanted them to be free young women. I had two daughters at that time. And so that's what started to happen. I started being called upon to be the spokesman to do this and this person to speak out. I never would have done that before. I never would have gotten a Masters, because I wouldn't have had the confidence to go after a Masters staying in the Midwest.

So, I was there for -- did my Masters there and then Certificate of Advance Graduate Study in Urban Education and then the doctorate. And since I was on fire -- I did so -- I didn't realize that you couldn't do it that fast. And so I later got embarrassed that people probably wouldn't think that I did all the work because I did it so fast. I finally loved school. And I had these wonderful teachers,... You know, it was great. UMass was a very exciting place to go to school in the early seventies.

... when I finished the Masters, I was looking for a job to go back into high school, that's what I was being trained for, to go back into high school and couldn't find anything. I had just -- I remember very clearly cause I also questioned religion. I was also for a long period agnostic and so I was very questioning, but I had about three significant prayers during that period. And one of them was, 'Lord, I got to find a job to feed these kids, Amen.' So since I was out of the Church at that time, that's a perfectly acceptable prayer and that day, I had a friend who said "what's going on" and I told him, "I need a job" and he says, "I have a job"... So, I took the job here at Easton in 1971.

I was Special Assistant to the Vice President of Student Relations or Student Affairs, something like that. Then I taught one course a semester, but mainly it's what I'm doing now, but it was called that. They had this Martin Luther King Program

And then my friend, who was also getting her doctorate, had just forced the issue, Semenya, you got to go into the doctoral program. I said no way, a Masters was enough. I was lucky to get through that, no way, I've seen grown men cry getting their doctorate and she just pushed and nagged and pushed and plus they had a quota system at that time,... that I went ahead and applied and I was accepted into
the doctoral program. And again, enrolled in all those courses, while I was doing this job here.

... I just couldn't keep up that pace. I was near exhaustion because I was teaching night school, I was doing some consulting, you know, as a single parent, not getting child support, I had to do all those things to manage with the kids.

So the University of Massachusetts -- I had applied for a job at UMass ... they said we'd like to hire you to teach and they didn't have a subject. I could pick the subjects, I could design my own courses. So they offered me more money and then I could stay there and go to school which would be a lot better then going back and fourth. So that's the only reason I left here ...

... when I went back to Massachusetts -- not before, you know, marrying my son's father who is from the West Indies. He just swept me off my feet only to find out that I was very convenient for him to stay in the United States to finish his dissertation. But out of that came a son. But I went back and I was teaching at UMass and finishing up my dissertation, my doctorate all of that, cried a lot. A doctorate will make you cry a lot.

Then I was driven because he was going to leave the country and I was still trying to make the marriage work and I needed to -- I didn't want to leave the country without my doctorate. And so I finished the doctorate and went with him. I left the country and went to the West Indies, Trinidad. I just completely lost my mind and went with him. And it was the most, the marriage aside, I had the most wonderful education living with the people in the West Indies and learning what they had to teach an outsider and being accepted by them and being rejected by them and all the other. It was a wonderful experience, the marriage aside. The marriage was not fantastic, it was not a good thing. But the experience was a good thing.

They would only allow foreigners to work in a job that a local, a national couldn't work so I had to invent my own job. I invented a job with the radio station and took a proposal to the head of the radio station and said, "what if everyday, I have a program that will teach people about child care and education, what about that?" He says, "okay, bring me in five samples." So I went home and typed up five scripts and came back and did an audition reading the scripts and it was called "Our Home Nursery" and it was essentially child care development and it was on for eight years.

I got letters and that validated me into the community because I was a foreigner, very much a Yankee and they didn't always -- they were a little suspicious of an American woman. That helped me cause I'm in their home every morning. So that got me speaking engagements and it got me all sorts of things that helped me get into the country. So, that's how -- and it paid well enough that I had some
of my own money that I could save and give my children advantages and what have you.

... So, we stayed there until my daughter graduated secondary school and took her exams. ... the marriage, I could just see was never going to improve and I could see myself getting older and older and people back home dying and they don't even know me anymore. I said if I'm going to do something, I better do it now while I still got a little life left. I had seen what happened to a number of ex-patriot wives who lived there and so when she graduated, I, we were suppose to be -- we were taking this trip to Disney World and to enroll my daughter into college and I was suppose to come back.

But that was the way I had to do it, because he said he wouldn't give me a divorce and he said that I couldn't take the child, take his son. So, we had to just be taking this trip to Disney World. And so all of my possessions, everything that looked like I might be leaving for good left behind, because we were just going to Disney World and to enroll Christine into a school. Once I put my feet on the American soil and was there, then he left and I was suppose to join him and come back with the other two children. I haven't been back since. But you know, I found a lawyer who was able to help me get a divorce without his consent and so I've been here ever since.

So, we came back and then -- because my son was a little boy, he was about six or seven when we came back to the States. I always took care of the kids. So I had different periods of where I was at home, so in order to be accessible to him, he had just lost his father. His father is in the West Indies and for his mother to be at work. So I couldn't do that. I just couldn't do it. So, I stayed home in Massachusetts.

I was still broadcasting. I would -- part of the eight years was when I would -- I found a radio station that would allow me to use their studio and my daughter is very very bright and so she would -- she learned how to tape me, using the studio equipment. So she would tape me. I'd tape a month supply of "Our Home Nursery" and then I would package the tape and mail it to the West Indies, then they would exchange my money to U.S. currency and send me a check. So, I was able to still get paid and work here. But it allowed me to stay at home with my son and then I started a newsletter and I did some consulting.

So for ten years, I kind of dropped out and looked after my son. I made a living for the kids and did the program until -- it was being sponsored by Nestles. ... Nestles had bottled milk in the third world country so they boycotted my sponsor. In response they dropped the child care program... so they dropped my program, broke my heart.

... I started getting ready to re-enter the mainstream. Because we had just virtually dropped out. ... My parents were asking me to come back home and they said "what do you want" and nobody had
ever asked me what I wanted. My answer to that was how I came here.

I said I wanted to work with black students because I started to feel guilty. I had this very wonderful fellowship and then had never gone back into the city again and so I felt that if I'm going to be worth my while, after I had raised my children, I can now live anywhere I want to and I can serve the community because of what I'm seeing on television. It doesn't do any good to keep saying tisk, tisk. This is so terrible, poor black people, poor Hispanic people. Oh this is so terrible and I'm living out there in this little valley and it's pretty and there's a field and horses down the street. I got to leave. I hated to leave. I wanted to just retire in Massachusetts. And I knew that I had to get back with the program. There was no excuse, you know. So, I just sort of mapped out what I wanted.

The next thing I knew, they [Easton] offered me the position and it's what I had wanted to do -- was to somehow -- I had made a decision -- I had worked with students who were difficult and I had worked in difficult situations with people who just didn't want to do stuff. You had to find ways to motivate them and I was burnt out from that. I wanted to work with students who were motivated but didn't know how to succeed, they didn't know what to do. . . . So I figured -- that's what I want to do because nobody's doing anything for the kids who want to do stuff. They always have all these programs for unmotivated people.

That's what I thought. You know, that you're in higher education, you have all these wonderful minds, so you can have this wonderful conversation and at a Catholic college -- it's a Christian college, so I could get a chance to express my spirituality by now, I had given up being an agnostic, and had decided, yes, there really is a God because of all the stuff that I had been through, I know I had somebody on my side. So I had come to a whole different spiritual growth and I just hadn't packaged it into a denomination, but I would like to be some place where I could express it. Well, was I in for a shock. It's not exactly that way. I had met more -- you know stuff that I had never expected to meet, politically. Working here, I quit about once a semester.

. . . I don't have that segregated community or that all black community, but you have that community in your house and you try to keep an honest relationship with your husband. I've married again. I said some people do drugs, I marry. I just don't give up easily on anything. And so you know, I'm an optimist and as a black woman, I have to be. I don't see how you can be a black woman and have children and a grandchild and not be an optimist. . . You can't be around young people and be a pessimist, how could you taint them that way. You have to believe that their education is going to count for something and make things different. If not better, it certainly would
make things different. If I'm a pessimist, I should quit my job and not allowed young people to be around me because you can't -- you have to be idealistic. And they have to see enthusiasm and they have to see you survive, so that they -- so it can validate their survival. They have to see that everyday that you come in. They have to be able to see the survival and the upbeat and I like that.

**Racial Identity Development**

The racial identity development of each participant will be described in this section starting with those in the earlier stages and proceeding to those in the more developed stages of racial identity. The differences in white racial identity stages and black racial identity stages will not allow for the participants to be presented separately. Therefore, the four white participants will be presented prior to the black participants. It should be noted that in the administrator sample, Peter and Colleen were recommended and described as people who did not know a lot about black people or as Patton's (1990) typical cases. Suzanne and Carolyn were categorized as people who know a lot about blacks or critical cases (Patton, 1990). The racial identity development of these participants did support these recommendations. The two black participants, Semenya and John, the negative participants (Patton, 1990), differed in their racial identity development.

With the student sample, the Hardiman and Jackson model of racial identity was used to describe the student's racial identity development. This model is more applicable to young, college aged students. Moreover, it does not, in my opinion, provide enough information on white racial identity to assess the stages of the white participants. For the administrator sample, Helm's models of black racial identity and white racial identity are used. For consistency and comparison, the Hardiman and Jackson model will be used for the two black participants but the Helm's model will also be used.
The Racial Identity of Colleen

In Colleen's own personal and professional life, she has had little to no contact with people of color. It has not been until very recently, through her son's attendance at a very diverse public school and her limited contact with a work study student in her office, that Colleen has had the opportunity to experience any cross-race interaction. The only exceptions have been the occasional visits by students of color, but sheer numbers alone keep that contact to a minimum. Colleen has also in the past couple of years attended some of Easton's Multicultural Week activities, which have been educational for her.

She is aware of the difference that exposure can make and expresses it through her children's school experience, where her daughter has not had any exposure.

And Corey is like [in reference to black people he may see or come in contact with], "oh here's my friend. Can you imagine mommy, he has to go to the store for his mother. He has to drag that cart all the way down to Valu-land," and he has seen a lot more and I think it has really made him much more flexible and you know, easy going. I mean he plays basketball with all these kids and everybody's just his buddy and I think it's wonderful.

You know, Jennifer has -- she's great, she's a good kid, she has no prejudices. She's more naive. She's not street wise at all, she's not exposed, and now she's at a private school, and she's probably the only Irishman up there with all the French so that's what we always joke about.

Colleen obviously has a very narrow view or not a well developed racial identity. She demonstrated the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of a person in both disintegration and reintegration. Her stereotypical thinking of her children's experience is an example. Her expressions of her son's interactions with his school friends and her daughter's inability to be "street-
wise" because of her lack of exposure to blacks is indicative of the perception
that she has of black culture and it's inferiority.

Helm's (1993) explains that racial development may be viewed in two
phases, the first being the abandonment of racism and the second, the
development of a healthy white identity. As the final stage of Helm's first
phase of racial identity where first a person abandons her racism in her
personal life while opposing institutional and cultural racism, then later
developing a healthy white identity, Colleen's development to reintegration
has not allowed her to develop an understanding of her whiteness. When
asked about her first acknowledgment and identification with her whiteness,
she replied,

Nothing really jumps out at me. But I can say I probably have
had times when it will be very clear to me. To be perfectly honest, one
thing that I remember is we went to Bermuda. And we had such a
wonderful time and then I remember when I came home and we were
going by a school, and a lot of black students were coming out of the
school and they were just so rude passing in front of the traffic and
what not and I thought, now, why we were with so many people of all
different cultures and everyone seemed like they were, if you want to
say on the same level. Whether it was us greeting them or a group
greeting us, and then like all of a sudden I came home and there was
this screeching halt and I thought why are you trying to cross the street
and intimidate me in my car or make me feel -- I'm intimidated, maybe
you don't even know you're doing it. That I have to say stands out,
that time coming home from my trip.

Colleen was unable to answer the question about her whiteness
without bringing blacks into her thinking. Her thinking and comments have
little relation to her whiteness as she has never had to think about and is still
incapable of any acknowledgment of what it means to be white. Moreover,
hers stereotypical thinking of American blacks as rude and intimidating
demonstrates her fear which is an indication that she is still also experiencing
disintegration, and earlier stage than reintegration.
Further indications of her reintegration stage are her belief that there is nothing that she can do to "solve the problem" of racism. In discussing her attendance at an annual panel discussion of students of color at Easton's Multicultural Week activities, she explains,

... But, I think it's almost like everyone leaves like a little upset versus going to learn more and enjoy the week. And by last year, I actually left and the other nurse and I said, I don't really think this is working the way it should. It almost brings out a lot of aggression, but no solution to the problem that they see. Last year, I was really frustrated by it.

I'm probably frustrated that the students feel that strongly, but I can't see -- I can't find the solution. Or when solutions are suggested, then each group battles them out like I don't know, it's really really hard. And even amongst themselves, whether it be a white student, Hispanic student whatever, it's always, well you, well you, and I hope the reason for having the week was to bring people together, but it seems to bring more argument out and then like you see people leaving by separate doors again.

Colleen does not see the racism and problems that "they see" and probably does not understand what it is that blacks are complaining about. In the disintegration stage, one cannot understand what blacks want from whites. Colleen clearly indicated this. Through her denial of racism, she would be happier if the issue was not discussed, the friction was not created and everyone just came together to have a good time and not express any discomfort or disagreement. Throughout the interview she would reply to questions by stating that "this is what they [black students] say" as though she does not agree with them or have an opinion about the question being asked. Again, indication of the denial or lack of understanding of racism.

Unintentionally, Colleen consistently expressed victim blaming when discussing the black students at Easton. One example involved her work study student who she tried to introduce to her very quiet, shy cousin with whom she hoped would become good friends.
And that's what I was hoping, you know, maybe after I hired her, not thinking of it before, but gee maybe, you know, I tried to get her together with my cousin cause she's a freshmen the two of them are freshmen and I said, Erin's really lonely. She comes from New Hampshire, this is like totally different for her and she doesn't have anybody, maybe the two of you could get together. But she, actually Kyla has resisted. You know, I left her the phone number. She hasn't called her.

She also expressed these feeling about black students and their campus interactions.

... I will say I've observed in the waiting room, I mean the reception area can get pretty hectic at sick call time. They don't mingle if they're with a friend it's fine, then they're chatting, but if they come by themselves for the most part they don't mingle as much as you might hear a lot of chatting and talking out there. And that you know I see as a problem but I don't know how....

While Colleen felt she was knowledgeable enough to know the problems of black student interaction, she had very little knowledge or information about the black student population, or any of the programs or activities that they were involved in, including the Douglas Center and the Martin Luther King Scholarship Program.

Colleen's racial identity stage does not allow her to be intentionally more involved with black students. In keeping with her "people are people" belief, coupled with her inability to recognize racism, there is no motivation for better service or outreach to black students.

The Racial Identity of Peter

Peter's contact with people of color has been limited throughout his life. His younger years in his neighborhood and in the schools he attended did not give Peter any opportunity to be exposed to any racial diversity. His most significant exposure was during his college years when he spent a considerable amount of time with a black professor who had an impact on
Peter’s understanding of race through their friendship as well as the material that Peter was exposed to through the Black Literature course that Peter took with this professor. The situation has not changed for Peter in his professional career at Easton. His contact with people of color continues to be limited. Peter, like Colleen, is experiencing early stages of racial identity.

The pain that Peter experienced when the reality of racism set in, as it does in the disintegration stage, was expressed when he described his relationship with his professor in college.

I was an English major, kind of out of default. I got real close with one of the professors there and he’s a black male. We always hang out together. He had some very interesting stories. It was really kind of hard for me to listen to. . . very successful academically, but had a lot of stories about being abused and just bad experiences that people -- as a result of being black, yeah. And he just had some horrendous stories, shot at and all kinds of crazy things. And I think as a result, I don’t know if it was as a result of that, but the more and more I got to know him, the more and more I saw that he had a lot of confusion within himself.

His tone has not changed significantly. Throughout our interview and in discussing the topic of blacks on campus, it was clear that Peter still experiences pain in discussing issues around racism and inequality. He views himself as liberal yet he does not see that his liberalism is only in his thinking but does not extend to any behavior or action that he might take.

. . . I mean, I lived through the late 60’s, so I didn’t happen to know that there was a problem. But, then I think I was a fairly contemporary liberal activist type person in the middle 70’s. So, I had somewhat of a consciousness about lots of things, but I certainly didn’t have hands on experience.

Peter did express some understanding which may place him beyond disintegration. He, on several occasions, articulated an understanding of the experience of being a person of color, marginalized and oppressed at Easton.
On the other hand, his recognition of difference may also be attributed to his view of superiority/inferiority of whites and blacks.

... I think the students of color here do feel somewhat isolated. I think they feel awkward and I don't know if this is pretty much a common thing that happens but they eat together in the caf and they're rooming in a similar residence hall, those kinds of things. So it becomes difficult to kind of mainstream with the white students and I think because it is small too.

While Peter is aware of the isolation, his perception of "feeling awkward" and the inability to mainstream as a responsibility of the black student becomes questionable and indicative of reintegration. He further explained his understanding of the difficulty of being on a campus where one is different from the majority population. He is also aware of the culture of Easton and the possible conflicts of that culture with students of color.

An area where Peter was very sensitive was the life experiences of black students and how they compared to white students, as he saw it from his professional perspective and in relation to his position as the chief judicial officer at Easton.

... I do not have a lot of black students in my office for discipline. To be honest, they tend to be rather mature. I think that the students of color who come here are much more, I don't know if the word is mature, but I think they've just had more worldly exposure for whatever reason. It's like when we get an international student come from France and they come here and they're just baffled. They can't," why do students drink 15 shots of Whiskey and why do they do that?" I think some of the students of color have that similar kind of maturity about them for whatever.....

As is common in the disintegration stage, Peter is confused and conflicted with racial issues and his ability to understand the morals of society and its treatment of blacks. Disintegration may cause one to overidentify with blacks or to avoid them (Helms, 1993). Peter has obviously chosen avoidance. He continues to have very limited contact with blacks
even though he has had ample opportunity to get to know and work with black students and staff. While he has had contact with the basketball players, he admits it is limited. "Occasionally. It's mostly with the basketball players. So, I occasionally get to talk to them. But overall, I don't have a lot of contact."

While discussing his indirect contact with black students through the staff of the Douglas Center, Peter explains.

... I think what happens is -- like for example these students that recognized the fact that there was an inordinate amount of black students in one of the halls. So they went to Semenya instead of coming to me. Instead of coming here. So I never interacted with these people. I never had any interactions with these students at all. I think that happens fairly frequently that when they have a problem, they go to Semenya or a professor in Economics. She deals with the South East Asian students. I end up talking to her on the telephone and Semenya on the telephone and not the students. So they've become a mouth piece for them which I think they need. They need somebody in their corner. But you know, at the same time, I think they're fighting their battles for them when they're not learning how to assert themselves or present themselves, especially the South East Asian students. They seem quieter, they're not as assertive. . . .

Yeah, like why don't you go talk to, why don't you go over to Peter and see what Peter has to say about the situation. But here again, I mean, I don't know. Semenya has certain pressures and concerns. She needs to make these students think that she's out there for them. And if she said, well you go take care of it yourself, maybe they wouldn't think that. So it's all -- it's very complicated.

Peter's ambivalence and conflict is evident in his desire to have more contact but with an understanding that students of color have particular needs and support systems in place to help with their success and comfort level at Easton.

Peter's avoidance of blacks and lack of contact, due to his disintegration, makes it difficult at his stage to promote inclusive programs within residence life for students of color. While he has sufficient
understanding of black students' needs, it is unlikely that he will incorporate those needs in the residence life environment or programming.

The Racial Identity of Suzanne

Suzanne has clearly been able to abandon racism in not only her personal life, but she openly opposes racism in institutional and cultural contexts. Her openness to understanding the anger and frustration of black students was evident and her high level of understanding and compassion continually led me to try to understand her stage of development in autonomy, the highest stage of development.

I think some of them have gotten very frustrated. I don't know whether that militant element has to -- I don't know whether that has to bubble enough again to -- I hope it doesn't have to get to that, but then at the same time, I don't want our kids to be complacent, so that energy and I hate to define it as militant, but somehow, it's a different generation. They don't remember all the fighting of the sixties regardless. And I mean, I was certainly not in the forefront. I was aware of it and was very sensitive to it and but they don't even have that awareness. I don't know -- I hate to keep re-inventing the wheel but at the same time I don't know how to get them in a better perspective.

There were some things that did arise in the interview which caused me to consider that she may also be experiencing pseudo-independence. Although Suzanne had thoroughly abandoned any racist or stereotypical beliefs or attitudes, she may still be in the process of developing her own white racial identity. Autonomy requires consistent acknowledgment of one's whiteness (Helms, 1993). Whenever I attempted to get an explanation of the meaning of her whiteness, she avoided discussing the role it played in her identity. Even when significant events occurred in her life related to racial incidents, she could easily see the ramifications of race as it related to blacks, but did not make connections to herself as a white person and what it meant.
to be white. In describing a situation where she chaperoned a trip with a
group of eleven black athletes,

At that particular time they took me into the middle of Roxbury
because there was this great lunch place that they knew. So, I was the
only white person in the -- so it was a total reverse, it was a very good.
... I mean, it was a wonderful experience. It was a wonderful
experience.

... So that's where I really began to have my most intimate experience
with not only the athletes but with the students of color. And I
continued doing that for a lot of the athletes.

When I tried to probe Suzanne about her perception of this experience
through her own racial lens, she could not or would not view it from a white
perspective. She stated,

I think it was a very significant experience for me as a human being.
Did I consciously define myself as a racial being as a result of that?
No. As more of a human being, yes. I felt really really good.

This thinking may easily be interpreted as autonomy stage thinking
but in connection to some of the other things that she said, and the distance
that she demonstrated when discussing her own identity causes me to
question the possibility of her pseudo-independence. It can be said that
people in the autonomy stage are capable of putting less of an emphasis on
blackness or whiteness and Suzanne at most times seemed to think and
behave on that level, but occasions and situations arose that prompted me to
reexamine whether she was fully in the autonomy stage.

When discussing her feelings about taking extra steps to help students
of color and black students at the college, Suzanne replied,

I have no problem with any kid. I don't care whether they're green. If
a kid is hungry, I'll go more than half a mile. I think if a kid is hungry,
you give him the opportunity and if they're willing to do what they
have to do, to me that's what we're in business for.
While her commitment is genuine and she will do all that she can to help any student, the question and topic of our discussion related to black students. People are not green and to not see students as black denies their heritage, culture and historical difficulties.

Throughout the interview, though questioned specifically about black students, it was difficult to determine when she was referring to black students and tended to talk about students in a very general sense, and not race specific. In other words, she at times was unable to discuss the differences between black and white students and spoke of them in a general context.

I was also struck by a few things that may indicate Suzanne's tendency to expect blacks to take responsibility for changing racism, which also indicate the pseudo-independence stage.

Although there were things about Suzanne's racial identity development that prompted me to examine pseudo-independence she clearly demonstrates the attitudes and behaviors of a person on the autonomy level. She exhibited a genuine respect and appreciation for some of the cultural differences of blacks. Her understanding though very intellectual also reflected emotional understanding. She indicated having many opportunities to be in the presence of people who "happen to be black" and also that many of her friends and acquaintances were black and that she is as comfortable with them as she is with her white friends and acquaintances. Suzanne also seems to seek opportunities which will allow for cross-racial interactions which is also indicative of the autonomy stage of racial development.

Suzanne indicated the importance of working closely with the black administrators and being accessible and sensitive to the black students. Her behavior and her interactions at the college confirm this. Suzanne's advanced
stage or racial identity makes it possible for her to be an ally in working toward eliminating racism at Easton. She demonstrates this on a regular basis.

The Racial Identity of Carolyn

As a young person, Carolyn has no memories of race being an issue to her. As stated by Helms (1989), and indicative of early racial identity development, whites often do not have to confront their whiteness. According to Katz and Ivey (1977), often when you ask a white person about race, they respond by speaking of their ethnicity. This happened with Carolyn as she reflected on her early school years. Her part Italian ethnicity was very important to her particularly as a child with mixed heritage in an all Italian setting. While her ethnicity was important to her, race was not.

Carolyn explains that her parents were very accepting and she provides an example which explains ethnic rather than racial differences.

There were two black families in the area. And so I certainly didn't grow up being aware at all of what else was out there. It was very traditional, very homogeneous. My parents were very -- even though they were kind of old school, they were very accepting of other people. For example, in [my hometown], there are two churches next door to each other, two Catholic churches. And one is, I mean, if you're looking at one church, you can see the other one. They're that close. One is sort of the Italian church parish and one is sort of the Irish parish. And really that was my world in a sense, Italian, Irish and that was it.

With no contact with blacks or people of other races, it was obviously the main reason why Carolyn did not have to confront her whiteness at that time.

Because the interview with Carolyn involved a good deal of her younger years as well as her more current experiences, it is easy to recognize the differences in the younger Carolyn in the contact stage, versus the more
mature Carolyn in the highly developed autonomy stage. There were several things about Carolyn that indicated autonomy.

With Carolyn, there was not the need to probe her on the meaning of her whiteness. She included a personal connection to the issues she discussed and very clear feelings and understanding of the differences of black and white privilege. In her acknowledgment of Easton as not only predominantly white but Irish-Catholic institution, she is aware of the privilege it has afforded her as a professional, as well as the difficulties it has caused for staff and students of color.

It was very clear who she was referring to when talking about black or white students or administrators. She explained some of the difficulties that she encountered as a white woman trying to work with blacks and other students of color. While she understands the establishment of trust and mutual understanding, she has no problems being critical of those who make the relationship difficult, be they black or white.

She explained that she does things in her office to help her peers understand racial issues and eliminate oppressive environmental circumstances (Helms, 1984).

It's, I guess as a counselor, as a person certainly, I respond first because I'm very mindful being at a predominantly white college and students of color and some of their issues about coming into a counselor center, so it's something that -- for myself and my staff, is a big issue that we talk about and brainstorm about and all of that.

In this office, again, obviously, we're very mindful that we don't have a counselor of color on staff. Although we worked very hard in recruiting and went to a couple of national conferences and really tried our best. One of the things that I think has been important is that, if students see us counselors at some of their events and some of the programs that are important to them, they know that we're interested in them. So, for example, the Martin Luther King Vigil, we always make sure -- we're very conscious of that. We always make sure that there's good representation from this office or if Semenya's office is
sponsoring a program, we always make sure that there’s representation from this office.

She also will take the time to explore an issue and seek information which will be beneficial to students and her clients. The following is an example:

... when we first started our Southeast Asian Scholarship Program years ago, I felt a real need to find out something about this population. And the hospital has a support center for Southeast Asians in the community and I called them and they sent me this booklet on dealing with mental health and physical health issues of South East Asians. And I had a Southeast Asian student referred to me by the director of the program and she was coming in on Wednesday.

... The student came in and she had an eating disorder, it's quite obvious. And she was talking about not feeling well and this and that. I mentioned something, I can't even remember what it was, something about her culture and the doctor and she said "oh, you know our culture", you know, and it was well, I learned about it Monday night. But it was, you know, that ...

What I did then was to have people who run the Southeast Asian Center, come and speak to a group of us and I invited the Minority Scholarship Committee, okay. And it was an opening for -- I mean a real wonderful experience for all of us to hear what this woman was saying about this population in particularly this age group that we were working with and some of the issues. And Semenya said to me, "I always remember that talk."

To empathize with the students' anger and frustration even when it is directed toward whites, indicated the racial development of a person in the autonomy stage.

Something that I just talked about recently, my husband had gone to a conference and it was about how to put together a diversity plan, okay. ... So he came back and he was very excited and we got together about seven task force with students, faculty and I chaired the one on student services. And half way through our plan, we each submitted an oral report about what we were doing and what the next step was.

Well then the following year, my husband stepped down from his position. And all of the reports he was told in the transition was
going to the new director of planning. You know, to that day, we've never seen any of these reports, they just kind of...

And here I was chairing the one on student services and I felt like, you know, students would say "well what happened?" What do you say?

Carolyn empathizes with the students of color and has a good understanding of many of their problems.

Carolyn has actively sought opportunities to involve herself in cross-racial interactions because she values diversity (Helms, 1984). She understands that there are cultural norms of blacks and approaches cross-race interactions with appreciation and respect.

You know, Semenya and I have talked about a model of -- she was talking about hiring a counselor of color through the Douglas Center because they have some money or something and I said one of my problems is, and it wouldn't be for a full time person or even a half time person, okay. I said one of my problems is, I wouldn't want to see a counselor at the Douglas Center who is thought of well that's where the black students go when they have a problem and this is the white center, okay.

I said we have worked so hard to make sure that -- and not everybody does, but that students feel okay about coming here and that would be going backwards to me. . . .

Carolyn accepts both the strengths and weaknesses of white society and this includes the whites of Easton with their strengths and weaknesses.

I think there are those of us who really make efforts and then there are those who could care less or think they're making the effort, but it's because they don't know what they don't know. They're missing it. I think some of it is they don't know what they don't know. I truly do and sometimes I think that's even worse then indifference because if you don't know what you don't know, you're not going to seek out, because you don't know what you don't know, right?

The extra efforts that Carolyn has made to work with the Douglas Center, her efforts to help staff understand diverse students and her own relationship with students of color demonstrate how someone in autonomy can create an office environment that is friendly and inclusive.
The Racial Identity of Semenya

Semenya's story provides a clear description of black racial identity development through each of the stages in Helm's (1989) and Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) models. Her experience as it relates to race is different than any of the other subjects, black or white, student or administrator. While all of the other subjects are from the northeast, with most being from the local Easton area, Semenya grew up in Kansas. Her experience for the first eighteen years of her life was living with legalized segregation.

Naturally, this experience has had a very significant impact on Semenya's racial identity development. As stated by Helms (1989) the background and environment of a person determines the development of racial identity. Indicative of the early stages of racial identity is the dominant/subordinate or superior/inferior attitudes and beliefs of white and blacks. Semenya had not as a child or adolescent been subjected to these attitudes and beliefs.

So there was never any question about what I could do, what any of us could do . . . So, but mainly I was not aware of any comparison or of racism because that was the whole community. Living in Kansas, it's quite a large place to grow up in and so you could go for miles and miles and miles. That area of the county that I grew up in, you just didn't come in contact with white people for miles, our neighborhoods, our Churches. You just didn't see them until you went to certain sections because the segregation was so successful, that we were so divided, that we never crossed paths and when we did, my parents really kind of guided me away from situations where I would come in contact. I went to a white movie theater, you know. So some of the things that were happening, I wasn't made aware of because they were able to keep it away from me.

This stage of Semenya's racial identity is when she was experiencing stage two, acceptance or encounter. At this early stage a person is aware of racism but is very concerned with reference group orientation. High self-esteem and self-image with low anxiety are also experienced at this stage.
Semenya was aware of racism but was not directly subjected to it unless she had contact with white society which was not often. When she did, she learned of the impacts of racism that are usually experienced during the encounter stage of racial identity.

The high school I went to was an all black high school. Every year we won the National Science Fair side by side with the white school in that community. And so my first real introduction to racism is when we continued to win the Science Fair. Not only winning basketball or football, but that we won the Science Fair, that they took our teacher out of the classroom and that was my first real lesson of what racism could do. He was given another job, but it was quite clear that if he was no longer the Science teacher, we wouldn't have that kind of leadership. He was a superb teacher and his students won.

When Semenya went to college and for the first time lived in a white environment, she had no negative experiences. She attributes this to her understanding and preparedness for racism.

I don't really have any memories, any negative memories [of being in a white environment]. Although I knew that -- see I grew up understanding racism. I mean even though I didn't grow up with any kind of anxiousness, or bitterness or anger, I understood racism the same way you did. With in the winter, it's cold and you have to wear a coat. Sometimes there is a blizzard because we had very harsh winters in Kansas when I was growing up. So it was frequently that we would have extremes of weather so, just like you would expect with a blizzard, you've got to wear snow shoes and a heavy coat, it was a fact of life. It's going to snow, it's going to get cold, you have to protect yourself from the cold or you'll freeze to death.

There was absolutely no other feeling about racism other than understanding what it's character was and what you had to do about it. That was a fact of life. This was the feelings that white people had about black people, and this is what we must do. Nothing personal, there was nothing personal about the snow coming on you, making you cold. . . . To me that was the character of white people, was to see this difference, and to act on it. That's what they did, that was their job and it's our job to find ways to survive, to cope, not to waste time with bitterness, not to waste time with revenge, not to waste time with anger, not to waste time with retaliation but to spend all of our energy being creative people, who coped with the snow.
At this stage of Semenya's life and experiences, she begins her transition to the immersion/emersion stage. She understands and makes appropriate adjustments to cope with racism. She feels no anger or hostility toward whites, though there is a denigration of whites indicative of Helms (1989) stage three, immersion or Hardiman's (1992) stage three, resistance. Semenya further states,

... a group of people who needed to make a law to separate themselves from someone else had to be a group of people who you couldn't respect very much. So there wasn't this big thing where you'd think about them that much. How could you have that much respect for someone who needed to do that? Why would you compare yourself with somebody who needed to do that, why would you look at them as role models. I never had a white role model, not one. How could you have a white role model, when they needed to be this way I mean so -- preposterous, so ridiculous, you have to have these laws -- you have to do -- and you just -- and the more you learned about racism, the less respect you have for the people who needed to be racist, who need to have separation, who needed to not hire you, because you were another color. But at the same time, would hire you to take care of their children. How can you respect anybody who thinks like that?

Semenya went through some changes during the sixties when she experienced desegregation and the violence and confrontation that went along with it. According to Semenya, though she had never felt bitterness or anger about racism, she now began to feel real emotion for the first time during this period. Obviously causing her entry into Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) stage four, redefinition, she experiences a number of changes in herself which prompted her period of Afrocentricism.

So I went through my period of during the sixties of writing poems, and poems and you know, getting mixed with that whole kind of movement and cutting my hair and wearing an Afro. I cut my hair off and I got an Afro and then after the Afro -- and I was shocked with all this short hair suddenly, then I started wearing a scarf because I felt naked without the hair. So, I found out that that's what -- you know -- looking at magazines and woman in the West Indies and in Africa who
wrapped their head. So I went through this whole thing, I wrapped my head. I still do when I'm not on campus here. I look very ethnic when I'm not on campus because that's still a part of me. I incorporated a lot of that during the sixties and it just stayed because after that, I lived eight years in the West Indies so, again, there was a real connection.

Her next obvious developmental change occurred around 1970 when Semenya separated from her husband and moved back to Massachusetts. No longer under his influence, she was able to become her own person and express her own beliefs about her racial identity.

If one person described me, Semenya, past 1970, you know 1970, 1969, 1968 back there, they would have a description. People who met me 1970, up until the present time, they have a description. And it's not even close, not even close. . . . I wanted to be outgoing because I was married to somebody who was black power and he had this anger and "you don't want to talk to white people". Well, I knew who they were and what they were about, but I wasn't particularly angry with them. I just, you know, kind of -- it's just sort of pathetic. I didn't have any anger towards them and he was, "you got to" -- don't be this way and I was trying to get with the program, with his program and I didn't want to be that way. . . . I wanted people to be comfortable in my presence. I didn't want people to be intimidated by me because I was a black woman. I wanted people to be able to come and talk to me -- come and -- whatever their race, whatever their background, that they would feel comfortable talking to me, they wouldn't feel judged. And that's what I wanted for myself. That's who I wanted to be.

Then I wanted to be able to have the strength in my convictions and be able to speak up and do something about them. I wanted to raise children like that. I wanted children to be healthy and spiritual.

Stage five, internalization, in both Helm's (1989) and Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) model is what describes Semenya's experience during this time. Though race was an important part of her identity, it was not the only significant part. Semenya was very secure in her racial identity and was able to be comfortable with people, regardless of their racial group, and she wanted others to feel the same with her. She was able to notice the strengths and weaknesses of both blacks and whites.
While working with students of color at Easton, she tries to pass on some of this attitude to her students to help them to better cope in their environment. She still does not judge people and is very capable of working with people on all different racial identity stages.

. . . But I also talk to the students a lot and then when they're talking about each other -- when they're talking about you know, who is -- how they relate to each other, sometimes they're comfortable enough to kind of say how they move with each other. And that's how -- you know that's how you kind of get an idea that they do. They mainly bring the socialization that they had before they were Easton College students. They bring that same socialization here.

The second phase of Helm's (1993) internalization/commitment involves a plan of action or a sense of commitment to the concerns of blacks as a group. Semenya has indicated that, as previously stated, in her expressions of the kind of children that she wants to raise. She has also made a commitment to work with blacks as a result of her way of giving back for the HEW fellowship, but also, for the need to work with the black and Hispanic community. She has taken her beliefs and put them into action within the community of color at Easton College.

Semenya's internalization/commitment stage provides her with the ability to help black students cope with racism without calling undo attention to the matter. She has also given considerable effort to encourage white students to make use of the center. Her stage of racial identity enables Semenya to work towards making the Frederick Douglas Center a center for all.

The Racial Identity of John

Of all the participants, John is the most difficult to determine his racial identity. Our conversations and the nature of the interview was such that
much of what John shared with me was very guarded and without the detail that was given by the other participants. Admittedly, my expectations were that because he was an African-American, he would share details that would be very revealing about the climate at Easton. While John did present a good interview and his perspective of what it was like for students of color, my impression was that he had no desire to present Easton (his employer) in a negative light which is commendable but may have prevented him from speaking his true feelings.

Although John lived in a predominantly black neighborhood as a young person, he attended school in a racially mixed setting with varying percentages of whites and blacks, depending on the primary and secondary school level. John's college experience was different in that the environment was predominantly white with very few blacks. John describes his interactions with whites as "good, it was good."

There was very little information that John divulged about himself that would indicate his racial identity, however, there were times that I was able to make assessments from what he did not say. Also, when speaking of students, where the information was more forthright, he provided more factual information. He did not share many opinions or subjective information in response to my questions. This opinion was also shared by other participants, who in discussing climate issues for black students and the MLK Program, expressed that they thought John could be more assertive. This told me that John is in a passive stage of his racial identity. For these reasons, I would place John predominantly in passive resistance and less in redefinition.

John displayed no anger or hostility about race or whites, another indication of his passiveness. He did, however, indicate clearly that he
rejects racism. While he would speak briefly about his personal recognition of racism, he acknowledged the students' recognition.

... Easton is a mirror of the larger society and there are those who perhaps resent and there may be -- not may be, there are these subtle ways, and don't ask me to cite specifics because I don't know, that's how subtle sometimes things are.

In response to what he thought the students perceptions of the climate were, he replied,

It [perception of the climate] might depend on which students you're asking. Maybe I'm more -- what day are you asking? How they're feeling on a particular day, but I think that the African-American students are aware of, for want of a better term, of institutional racism. Some have experience some overt forms, other subtle forms, because it is prevalent not just -- I shouldn't say prevalent, it is here. I would dare not say in what amounts but I suppose this is a mirror of the larger society of which Easton is a part of this institutional racism and the students are aware of it. And I would certainly not deny it with any of them, because they are here day and night, most of them.

But all I can do is help them out of this part of life, it's not a pleasant part of life, but it's something that you have to deal with and not let it cloud our focus or make us lose sight of the fact that we're -- that we as people and where they as individuals must move forward and go on with our lives.

In discussing students and their perspectives, John seemed to be knowledgeable about the differing perspectives of students. As indicated, he did attribute their perceptions to "what day and what mood they might be in." On the one hand, he may be referring to stages of racial identity that he recognizes in his students in an attempt to name the concern, indicative of redefinition or immersion/emersion.

At one time, the MLK scholars were on a five year program. John's defensive posture of the students in his response gave me the impression that he was concerned about rejection or unfair judgment of them as members of his racial group.
... as the screening and selection process became more competitive that the scholars must complete in their programs within the same time frame as anyone else. And this was something that actually emanated from the students, because students realized the kinds of stigma that were being asked of them, by their very presence. Because professors knew that they were committed to finish a four year program in five years. So it was the students who asked if that could be changed.

His response may also be indicative of black glorification, indicative of resistance and immersion/emersion.

Another issue that highlighted John's redefinition stage is his stance on separation which he expressed from a student perspective as well as a personal perspective.

Or if you go into the lunch room at lunch time or dinner time, you'd find a group of students who choose to sit together here as opposed to a group of white students who might be -- or groups of white students who may be over there. I don't have a problem with it, some people do, but I don't. Because some of my colleagues and I we hang out together and I feel as though it's my personal prerogative to hang out and have lunch with whom I choose, not because I am a member of this department, that I have to go have lunch or sit over here. I want to sit where I please and do.

They say they segregate themselves. I don't feel that it is segregation as such. I look at it as a time when students want to socialize and if they choose to socialize with their friends and their friends happen to be other blacks, so what. No one says anything when white students go sit off with their white friends. So why should they expect anything different from black students who tend to sit with their black friends.

Reference group orientation and old allegiances are important to people in redefinition or immersion/emersion (Hardiman and Jackson, 1992; Helms, 1993) and obviously important to John.

John's style of working at an institution such at Easton and with black students, can be described as conservative. He is very attentive and nurturing with the students. While he recognizes the racism that confronts
the students and that exists in the institution, he tends to be passive. This is indicative of his passive resistance stage.

The background, experience and knowledge of these participants varies as much as their stages of racial identity. As with the students, the racial identity development will determine how these administrators view themselves as members of their own racial group and how they view members of other racial group. This worldview impacts how each administrator thinks, believes and behaves and helps to explain how each interprets the environment and perception of the climate for black students. As administrators, the racial identity stage will influence how well they understand the divergent and conflicting behavior of students and how they grapple with Easton's racial issues. It also influences how each serves students, organizes and structures their offices and the contributions to the environment of their offices. An examination of the themes will begin with student interaction at Easton.

**Student Interactions**

**Interaction of Black and White Students**

When the participants were asked about the interactions between the black and white students, each provided a description of the student interaction from their own perspective. All agreed that the interaction was problematic. Both Colleen and Peter, the typical case administrators, admitted that they did not have a lot of knowledge and indicated that their perceptions were based on their limited observations and exposure, rather than personal knowledge.
Well, you know, I see it very segregated. I think probably the most interaction between white students and black students is with the basketball team because the black basketball players are just so popular and that's probably the most interaction between people of color and people of non color, between the athletes. Other than that, to be perfectly honest, I mean, I don't see a whole lot of interaction between the two groups. . . . Right, so I mean this is the perspective you're getting, in terms of what I see. —Peter

The other four described the interaction from a broader perspective.

Semenya and John, the negative case administrators, and Carolyn, a critical case administrator, agreed that interaction was dependent on the student. All explained that a student's experience was different and accordingly, the interaction may be different. They understand that black students are not a homogeneous group. When asked about the student interaction between blacks and whites, Semenya described the black student.

They're some [black students] who are friendly with everybody. They're some students who pull it off very well. They're friendly with white students, they're friendly with black students. They're friendly with everyone. Then you have some students who have grown up maybe in the suburbs and they spend a lot of time with white students and so they have a reputation that "oh she's not one of us, or she's not with one of us" and so there's a little referral to that, because some of the students who do almost exclusively are with white students and not with black students as much. Then when you find out they came from a community where that was the look of their community, that they were surrounded by whites and they grew up with whites and that's who they're comfortable with. Not because they're white, but because they had a similar suburban experience. But I don't think they're shunned because of it. And as with any other place, you have some who have -- who are really much into -- say have a multicultural setting. You have some kids who are always with Hispanics or with, you know with minorities and they have a definite feeling about themselves and they are with themselves mostly and that's kind of a culture. Those are the students who might -- who really get some of the things changed on campus. They're the ones who work in the clubs, who organize to bring lecturers, bring plays here, to establish a Black Studies Department.

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What Semenya is also describing is the different stages of racial identity stages that students may be in, due to their background and what they may be experiencing at Easton.

Suzanne had a difficult time discussing her opinion of the interaction on campus. While she was aware that generally interactions were not good, she was appreciative of the friendships that did develop.

That's a difficult one, cause I try to separate what I would really like it to be to what it really is. I know we still have -- at lunch, you see groups of minority students basically sitting together in groups rather then just at a table. Open hostility, there probably isn't, but I think that's easier to deal with.

After probing and follow up questions, she stated,

... I think some closer friendships probably go on but after they leave here. I think there have been some very good interactions among students.

Carolyn thought the poor interaction is a problem that exists, though it has improved. It also goes beyond the black students and extends to the general student body. She attributed the problem of poor interaction to the physical layout and the lack of opportunity to interact and connect.

I think it depends first of all on the student themselves. But, I think I've seen -- at times there seems to be -- I've seen some improvement maybe, but then I see more of a gap.

Socially, on this campus the climate is not -- we don't have a lot of places on campus for kids to just hang around, no matter what color they are. There isn't a good place for people to just be and connect with one another informally.

Residence Hall and Classroom Interaction

The administrators had little to say about the residence hall or the classroom interaction. Peter, as a housing administrator, discussed the issue of an inordinate amount of students being assigned to the same hall, but discovered that this situation was created by the students' personal requests.
Aside from this, he shared no opinion of what the residence hall interaction was like. The only other administrator discussion about the classroom was Suzanne, who was more concerned with the level of sensitivity rather than describing the interaction.

I have to believe that there is more then a tolerance, that's there's more then -- I don't think they ignore them. I have to believe that there are members of the majority community who just see them as another student and accept them into their groups, into their classes, into whatever as just kids.

But I also knowing the nature of the type of student that we have here, I have to believe that there are probably still those that would be considered red necks and would have that hostility. I think that the students that we're seeing now are much more comfortable in having all types of different students, be they disabled students or be they people of any other minority group, because they've got them in their high school classrooms. So, I mean, it's not you know, you get stared at because you're different. I've never seen them.

Black Student Relations

Black student interaction is important on a predominantly white campus, particularly if the interactions between black and white students are limited or problematic. Peter and Colleen saw the black student interactions differently than Suzanne and Carolyn or Semenya and John. While many of the participants acknowledged that the interaction among the black students is good, all except Peter and Colleen were aware of the friction and disagreement that exists amongst them.

Colleen had no knowledge or perspective of the quality of interaction among the black students other than, "Where just from what I observed, the black students will stick to a little group." Peter's observations were made from his residence life vantage point.

Yeah, I know, I think the black students are a pretty tight group on campus. I think that they work-- I see them spending a lot of time
together. I don't see a lot -- I mean, in terms of the 2600 students that I have on campus here, you know, a large majority of the black students are living on campus. I don't see a lot of squabbling or arguing or disciplinary problems or any of that.

Others had a different opinion. Carolyn was aware of the reference group expectations that black students experience. As she explained,

I don't know, sometimes I get a sense that it's not great and that people put -- there are a lot of different expectations. I think probably there are some special pressures that I'm probably not really clued into, but I pick up sometimes, that if a black student tends to have a lot of white friends, that person is thought of as some kind of a traitor. I do get that feeling.

There's also I think tension with black basketball players dating white women. I've heard a lot that black women get very angry about that.

Both John and Semenya, who work closely with the black students discussed some of the problems that they have had to work out with the black students. Their description of the problems and friction among the black students was very similar to the description provided by the students. According to Semenya,

I think they get a lot of support from each other and they also cause each other trouble. Because they gossip a little bit. This is a little -- it's a little village. This is a village and when you have something that small, when you have a village this small, you do have people who will have opinions about one another and they don't mind sharing them with someone else, so. Last year we had that as a problem of students and this is the females. I have to say this is one time I have to say is not the guys, but it was the females who would gossip on each other and really annoy one another.

John stated that even with the friction among the black students, they are usually there for each other for support and companionship and this he and Semenya encourage.

They use each other [for support] and that's something that we encourage all of the time. Sometimes they may disagree, but we continuously express the fact that it's important for each of us to help each other to develop self esteem and self worth and self confidence,
not to tear each other down but to help build each other up. We need each other.

**Dating**

The issue of dating did not spark as much discussion with the administrators as it did with the students. While the students explained the need to go to other campuses to date because of the brother/sister relationships, the administrators has little to say about this aspect of the dating situation. The exceptions were Suzanne and Semenya. These women, like the students, spoke of the lack of dating as well as the interracial dating, which was an issue that all of the participants commented on.

I would say the numbers are too small [to date]. I would think that there probably are some. I think that there are a number of the black men who date white women and vice-versa. I think it's more prominent in the mixed race among black men and white women, but I think it is hard for black women to meet, you know, the man of their dreams. I think it's more difficult for the women then it is for the men.

... I cannot say there has been a problem. Do I have to assume that there might be some resentment among the mixed situation? Yeah, I'm sure there is. I think the black women, as black women in general probably feel, the field is very limited for them to meet someone that they can have any kind of a relationship with. Even if they go over to Western. They probably have a better chance at Western because they have regular numbers.

But I think it's very difficult for them to find educated peers that they can really get a solid relationship with. I think there's a -- I find more of a camaraderie, a friendship rather than intimacy. -Suzanne

... So somebody's meeting somebody, but for the most part they have more of a brother/sister relationship. They really behave as though their brothers and sisters, in a way, because they say there's not enough selection, not enough choice. So some of them have boyfriends or girlfriends at home or off campus or another campus. And then the guys, some of them will date white girls.

There are not too many of the females that I've ever seen. I know one instance. Maybe one or two incidents where the girls will date white guys, but that is just so rare, but you'll have the basketball guys some of them date white girls. So that's a point of contention. When I first got here, they complained about that and I said, I can't do
anything about that. But that's something that -- because the guys have that flexibility. So you have a few of them who will date white females. -Semenya

The issue of the basketball players dating white women was discussed by Colleen, Carolyn and John. Carolyn and John remarked on the anger that it caused the black women. Colleen did not have first hand knowledge, but described what she heard at the panel discussion.

Black Student Life

Of the participants, Carolyn, Suzanne, Semenya and John discussed the quality of student life for black students. Peter and Colleen did not share any views and admittedly did not know how students spend their time or much about the socialization for black students.

One of the major areas of concern to the students of color and also cited by the above mentioned administrators was the socialization and student activities available to black students. The lack of a social life on the Easton campus for black students is an obvious problem. Easton's black students regularly seek out other campuses for their socialization but are not comfortable inviting other students to their campus.

... There's this additional element of why our students go to other campuses for parties. They never have a party here on campus. They really hate having parties. I've tried. And they're so uncomfortable and when we do have something, we've got about two or three security guards that show up. Now, I know you have to have security guards when you have a party particularly if you bring people from off campus, but there just seems to be more when it's a minority.
-Semenya

Suzanne acknowledged the lack of social activities for the black students and the role and responsibility that the college plays in creating and shaping the social atmosphere.
In general, I think that we do a very fine job of trying to meet the needs to students. I think Student Services has really extended itself. I think the social area that interpersonal relationships and social setting is probably the weakest. It's not from lack of trying. I just don't think they necessarily have maybe the right people making those efforts. . . .

I don't think there is a conscious plan by the college for socialization of students of color. I think it's --they're part of that whole mix. I think Semenya makes a very conscious effort in some of the programs that she sponsors in trying to bring in adult mentors for some of these smaller groups, like the Hispanic group and you know, trying to do things like that. I think she makes much more of a conscious effort. So in that regard, she is the administrative representative. But a lot of that is also who she is, not necessarily who they are.

The lack of on campus socialization and sending students away from campus obviously contributes to black and white students not connecting. There are other reasons why the interaction is limited between the two groups. The following section discusses the issue of separation which is receiving a great deal of attention and is a subject of controversy on campuses across the country.

Separation

In discussing the interaction of students at Easton, naturally that of the separation on campus becomes an issue and topic of discussion. Like many campuses, Easton has its share of separation which was confirmed by each of the participants. While it may be easy on a campus such as Easton to see that the interaction between black and white students is not good, it is also important to note what administrators attribute the division to. As with the students, I thought it important to hear from the administrators, not only a description of the interaction, but also their thoughts about the reasons that cause the separation.
When asked directly about the reasons for the separation on campus, Colleen was not able to cite any specific reasons.

I'm not positive. I don't know if it's from where they're coming from, like already their background, maybe where they lived, they've always lived with the same ethnic group of people or whatever and then they come to school and tend to do that. I don't think here I see enough to know the true reason, but I -- it's visible on the campus. But I haven't got a feel for it through the health center as to the reason. I really don't know.

However, when Colleen was asked whether she thought too much emphasis was placed on race in our society, she then was able to discuss the separation on campus. She expressed her opinion of what she remembered from the students, both black and white, as she heard them at the Multicultural Week panel discussion.

And I'm sure these are very real feelings that they have. You know, "we're not welcomed here" and then you'll have immediately a white student jump up and say, "well how come in the cafeteria, you sit altogether?"

"Well because that's the only time we get to be together and we like being together." So, it's like a double edge sword, you're saying you want to mix in and then you're saying, well we like sitting with, which is true. I mean, a family likes to sit together, I understand that. But, I think it's almost like everyone leaves like a little upset versus going to learn more and enjoy the week.

... I haven't heard of it [separation] as being a problem. I can look at it and see it as something that is not right, but I haven't heard of it being a problem other than when the kids complain at that one event. I never hear that --like it's weird. I'll say, God, why is all this coming out now unless it's going on all the time and we just totally miss it here.

Colleen's assumptions are that the separation is not an ongoing problem but bubbles up as a result of the open discussion. She can admit that "something is not right" but because she has not heard any complaints other than at the panel discussion, she assumes that the discussion is the problem and not the greater issue of separation.
Peter expressed an understanding, though ambivalent of his opinion, of the black students' need to be with each other but saw the separation as one that goes beyond the small population.

Probably some to numbers, some to feeling uncomfortable, interacting to some of the students here. I don't know, I'm just guessing. It must be difficult to feel welcomed on a campus where there are so many people that are not like you. I don't hear a lot of people complain. I don't hear people, saying anything about activists or groups protesting or editorials in the student newspaper or anything like that. It's very quiet. But this is the way Easton is. I mean, even though--white students are here like that. I mean it's basketball, sports and alcohol.

Though Peter had more of an understanding of the black student perception and feeling of discomfort and being unwelcomed, he was unsure how much of a problem it was. He, like Colleen, was not aware of any complaints. This demonstrates the lack of understanding of the subtleties. Unless something is blatantly clear, they tend to go unnoticed, and receive little attention.

Suzanne expressed the separation as something that fills a need of the black students that they do not get from others on campus, but views the separation on campus from a broader perspective.

It [separation] does exist here. I think some of it is ignorance on the part of the majority. I think that students of color need to feel a sense of community and if they don't get it in a greater community, they've got to find it among themselves. So I think that they have to form small little groups to get that sense. I also think that the economic times are such and I find it scary because I talk to people who were in Europe at the time when Hitler was in power and what was going on in there at that time is what they experienced and how the situations of the Jews came about. And there just is a lot of power that I get nervous about. I think the economic situation is such that people see people's color as a threat. . . . It's still there. And even I think that there is a separation on campuses for survival. And for the need sometimes of the community for people to understand and tend to gravitate to those who are going to be empathetic.
John and Semenya's perspective of the separation issue were similar. When asked directly about the separation issue, they expressed it in defense of the black students and an issue that tends to be made into more than it should be.

They're separate, very definite. . . But, everybody and that's more conspicuous because of the skin color that you see friends eating together. But people have made a big deal out of that because they think there's this self-imposed segregation. But then you also -- they never think of the other part. Well has any white students come over here and eaten with the black students? -Semenya

While discussing the issue of separation Semenya described the black students' need to be together and the understanding and comfort that they find in one another. As she explained, as a black administrator, she shares some of the same experiences as the students.

I get a lot of support from my colleagues with Rhonda and with John. That makes a big difference and I think that we mutually support each other. If we didn't have the support of each other, anyone of us here alone, it would be an all together a different work experience.

But whatever difficult thing is going on in our lives in this work place or sometimes even outside and we come together and have lunch and we talk to each other, it's like a little support group. We come in and we crack up and we can laugh and I can understand why the students would need to do that, because there are certain things -- we're here and we're saying oh, it's time I get out of the room, because there's a certain kind of humor that we don't have to explain. There're certain parts of ourselves that we don't have to translate because so much of that, that the students have to translate themselves. That's exhausting, when you have to explain who you are or defend who you are. I am not this stereotypical black person you think I am. To always have to defend who you are and what you are as a person. . . . But when you have to put so much work into validating your existence because you have to overcome a previous expectation of who they think you are, it's exhausting.
Alienation

... The students are a joy, but the work itself, the work and the environment has taken it's toll. I would like to eventually go back to teaching but you know every other day, I re-evaluate my place here. Because it does take it's toll and I can empathize with the students who are so much younger and they're processing this as well. And they have to act like it, okay no, there's no racism, alright. Because if they bring it up to any -- if they discuss it, "you're complaining, you're being militant, you're being" -- so they have to kind of be very conservative in their behavior. These are the most conservative black people I ever met in my life. They have to behave in a very conservative way. So they kind of fit in until they graduate. -Semenya

All of the participants agreed and attributed the major difficulty of black students to their small number compared to the majority student population. As stated by John,

I think that if we had larger numbers, this is something that I have said over the years. If we had larger numbers of students of color, specifically African-Americans, many of the problems would disappear by increasing the numbers. Such as loneliness, many of the kids feel lonely and some are isolated and there aren't enough things on the campus socially for them to do.

Carolyn expressed strong feelings about what she thought of the alienation and isolation that black students feel at Easton.

I think a lot of students feel like they're being tolerated. I think a lot of students feel like they're not understood. I think some students feel like they're thought of as second class citizens, maybe that's too harsh, but I don't know.

... Black students probably feel more isolated. They feel less welcomed, they might feel more tolerated, that they're just being tolerated because we had to do our duty to get students of color in here. That's why they're here too. I think for some black students, they genuinely like it here too. But I think that sense of isolation must be overwhelming for a lot of them.

Suzanne viewed the feelings of isolation beyond the numbers but from the individual student's perspective, recognizing that different students have different experiences, with identity playing a significant role.
As I know you are very very acutely aware, we don't have many [black students]. ... it is always very painful because at an institution such as ours, our size, the fact that we're a liberal arts institution where we don't have a lot of variety of courses to offer students of color, we are not always able to meet the needs of our students. 

...I think that many of them find it very difficult. I think there are some of the students who are probably still questioning their own identity as people of color, so I mean you know, who am I? And then to come into this very very -- now I mean we've cornered the market on the Irish Catholics and I think we've got a lot of the Italian Catholics too. I mean even going as broad as the Germans and the Polish -- so that even our ethnic make-up is very narrow as well as our racial make-up.

Peter articulated what most of the participants expressed about the difficulty of black students attending Easton, which contributes to the possibility of getting more black students to attend.

Although I think that it really has a long long way to go, but it's kind of this circular thing because it's such a homogeneous campus that it's difficult to get black students here or difficult to get any kind of student of color here. So, it's difficult to get students here, so it's a homogeneous campus and it's kind of just chasing it's tail. So that's difficult.

Like Peter, Suzanne and John also cited the difficulty of recruiting students of color because of the small number of students. The college has looked toward the students of color and the Douglas Center to assist with the recruiting efforts.

With the Douglas money that came in, one of the things was to set up a group of current students who could go out and do some recruiting. And so that started weekly last year. It's been a very sore point for the coaching staff especially the men's basketball team. He says. "how can I entice" and this goes back to [previous coaches] as well as the current coach. "How can I entice a recruit to come if when they come there are not even any black girls around? And they got to go across town to find a date." So they've pushed from that side for us to do a better job at recruiting minority students to help them out.
Of interest was the theme that emerged regarding students coping and surviving at Easton and the responsibility that they are encouraged to take for their own existence and environment at Easton. Semenya and John expressed the need for students, as black people, to continue approaching their Easton experience as they have any other in their life. As stated by both, these students were black before they got here and they will be black when they leave. Their blackness and the racism or inequality that they feel should not be anymore of a hindrance to their education than it has been in the past.

Semenya described the advice that she gives to students,

... I tell these students when they come in here. They have to have faith and they have to believe in their talents and they don't have to go around asking permission to be who they are. You know that they validate themselves, so that this whole nonsense about coming on campus, did they welcome you. Why have you noticed whether -- "you welcome yourself!"

You make the environment on your campus for yourself. Otherwise, you're setting yourself up for somebody to make you welcome or not make you welcome, you don't even process it that way.

Similarly, John is always prepared to help student cope and move beyond these difficulties.

... but I think that the African-American students are aware of, for lack of a better term, of institutional racism. Some have experienced some overt forms, other subtle forms, because it is prevalent not just -- I shouldn't say prevalent, it is here. . . .

But all I can do is help them out of this part of life, it's not a pleasant part of life, but it's something that you have to deal with and not let it cloud our focus or make us lose sight of the fact that we're -- that we as people and where they as individuals must move forward and go on with their lives.

According to Semenya, many of the students do cope and concentrate on the education that they came to Easton to pursue. Again, she describes the differences in students and their experiences.
I would say that the majority of our students adapt, they're resilient, they're flexible and while that's -- they're not ideal proportions. They kind of just bite the bullet and just go with it and I find them to be exceptionally resilient with those kinds of odds. But, once in a while you have some who are here for the whole four years. They bemoaned the fact that they're very much in the minority. But that to me is more the minority expression, that it's so much that it interferes with your school work. It can be something that's conspicuous but if it interferes with your work, then you know that that's when it gets to be a problem and for most of them it's conspicuous and it's something that they notice and in an ideal world, they would have it different. But it hasn't interfered with their achievement.

Suzanne expressed the need for students to take responsibility to voice their feelings if change is to be expected.

Being on a college or university campus is not only a tremendous responsibility, it is an energizing thing because if dialogue can't happen here, it can't happen anywhere. And we might not always agree on the issues but we've at least got to have the right and the responsibility to let each other know how we feel about issues and that's what I'm afraid stops happening when people get frustrated, they shut down. . . .

. . . And I think as kids change, some groups of students communicate more easily, more forthrightly with Semenya to let her know what their needs are. Other groups are apt to go off and just ignore her and do their own little thing over here in a much more, I don't want to say militant, but a much stronger presentation like, we are here and we're doing it and we've got a right to it.

Talking and Listening to Students

As stated by the NAICU (1991), the best way to assess and understand the climate is to give students the opportunity to express their feelings and needs. This was a point that was made by Semenya, John and Suzanne but clearly stated by Carolyn.

You know, it's hard to separate right now because morale on campus is very low. Campus climate is not at a good state anywhere. And I don't think students are being listened to. I don't mean to be so critical because it really -- there are wonderful things about this school.
It's just that people tend to come up with programs and ideas without listening to the students first. And as I said, these two freshmen committees that I'm on, they want to, I mentioned about getting feedback from students and somebody right away said "let's survey" and I said maybe what we need to do is to and I hate the word focus, the term focus groups, but to have some sessions with the students, because part of the process of just letting them know that we're open to listening to them, is what we might want to model for them. You know, community building.

So we miss the boat a lot. So I guess when we're talking about minority students, we must miss the boat even more. I guess I just have to make that jump, huh, I would guess.

It's so difficult, it really is. And as I said -- especially -- there's a mentality of, well you got a problem run a program, run a program and I hate that mentality especially in being in Student Affairs, I hate it with a passion. Is there another way to find out where students are at, and to just listen to them cause students don't feel connected. They really don't feel connected. They're not connected at home with their parents, they're not connected here.

Support Systems

There are several support systems in place at Easton but the support system that many felt was the strongest was the support students find in each other. The other support system, which was equally noted and explained, was the Douglas Center and the role that it plays in black students' experiences.

Suzanne, Carolyn, Semenya, and Bob all acknowledged the support that the students give to each other. Peter and Colleen suggested other support systems that the students may utilize but were not knowledgeable of the support that the students find in each other.

I think they're probably much more dependent on each other than the regular students are. I think they look to each other for help and advice much more than the majority of the students. They obviously utilize all of the services that we have available. But I think they're apt to call on each other for help if there were a problem as to how to get through the maze, rather then the majority student who might be more demanding of an authority figure. -Suzanne
The Frederick Douglas Center plays an important role in many of the aspects of the black students' experience, the most important is the support that it gives to students. The center is well established and utilized by the students of color as well as other support service offices which work with the Douglas Center staff in reaching out to students of color. The students look not only to the services that are provided by the Douglas Center but also the trust and the special relationship that the staff has developed with the students.

If there is an issue or something, I would advocate for them. There are fights they don't even know about. I'm here for them, that's my only reason for stepping foot on this campus in the morning, is for them and I hope some of that's communicated. So, it just -- I think it sort of ranges from that, somebody's that funny, somebody that would just help them get what they need or just to be here to be supportive.

-Semenya

The retention rate of the black students is one that Easton is proud of and boasts about. Much of that credit is attributed to the Douglas Center, its staff and the relationship it has with its students. As Semenya explains,

Dr. Hamlin sees the students once a week. . . . We have about a ninety seven retention rate. We have a higher retention rate among our minority students than the percentage campus wise and that's high.

. . . I think it has a lot of to do with the way Dr. Hamlin nurtures the scholars and it's not any hand holding but to see them for about 15 minutes. "How are you doing? Are you eating? Are you sleeping?" Things like that, that kind of personal interest, which is really much part of that culture. It's -- where the family that these kids have come from are really into their business. You know, it's no arms length kind of thing, they're into their business. So that's something that they can relate to, us getting in their business. "Girl, are you eating? You came out here with no socks on and it's 30 degrees!" It's that kind of thing, so. They're kind of use to that.

John, Semenya and Carolyn each stated that the Douglas Center, though a necessity for not only students of color, but the college in general, is
an added support for students of color which is an advantage that white students at Easton do not have. John shares this feeling with his students.

Well you know, they do have an advantage and I do from time to time tell this to some of the students. They have an added benefit that other students don't have. I might say in those terms that I use, I say, "you guys have a bonus or a benefit by having this as a place where you can come anytime." I said, "the other students might go to the Chaplain's Office, but you can go there too. Other students may go to Student Development, you may go there as well. Other students have advisors, but you have advisors as well." I said "but the majority of the students don't have a place where they know they can go anytime and be seen and heard by someone who is caring and willing to listen to the students."

Colleen expressed a problem with the Douglas Center and the assistance that it provides to students of color. Reflective of Colleen's racial identity, she does not believe that people should be viewed differently. People are people and the differences should not be emphasized. This is where Colleen may see the Douglas Center as more of a detriment to black students than a help.

I know at orientation we have people who speak and, you know, say please come over. But you know, once again, it's like come to our office. They have the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and there's something about that when I'm sitting there listening -- granted I say, come to our Health Center, but it's because you're sick. But when you say come to our office and we have things there for your, it's also once again, saying that you're different cause you're going to the Office of Multicultural Affairs. That's what it triggers off in my mind. "And we have books and magazines and we can get you into things." But I don't know, each year at orientation, I must say that triggers something off to me like, well you're already saying you're different.

Peter clearly sees the advantage that the Douglas Center plays in the life of students of color on campus, but he is struck by the dilemma of the existence of a center to people who may have a problem of not having enough interaction with students of color. In the story cited earlier by Peter
about the students of color who go to the Douglas Center when they are confronted with a problem rather than go to the office that is directly responsible for that problem or service, Peter attempted to explain his awareness of the support that students rely on from the center. He, on the other hand, would like to see the students become more independent and to use their own voice when dealing with others on campus rather than have the Douglas staff speak for them.

On these same lines, Semenya worries about the image that the center has and how it portrays the student of color at Easton.

On the other hand, I don't want it to be thought of as so necessary that they think that our students are in some way socially disabled, that they just need this crutch. They need someone to come in and help them go through -- they just somehow can't do it, the way any other young person can do it. ... But I would like to believe that our students are strong enough and resilient enough if they didn't. But yes, you do have some people who perceive it as perhaps a crutch for black students and you have some who think "well why can't they just do like the rest of us" and it isn't necessary. I think the minority thought would be those who think, isn't this a good idea having a multicultural office. In a perfect world we wouldn't, but then we wouldn't also have a counseling office because no one would have any kind of emotional problems. They wouldn't go through grief, they wouldn't go through eating disorders, they wouldn't go through addictions. So, we don't need the counseling office either. Or we wouldn't need to have the infirmary cause no one would ever be ill or injured. So, we're in the category with any other support office that's here, a counseling office, student service, health office any other office that is here to support the experience of the college student. This too, does that to support minority students, but also to support -- I'm starting to get white students to come in when they have one to one education on this race thing or multiculturalism, so I have students who come in now, they either were interviewed or just to talk.

The Douglas Center works closely with many other offices at Easton and although students often come to the center before going where they may be more appropriately served, the staff at the Douglas Center will make
referrals. The working relationship that the Douglas Center has with other offices ensures that students will make good use of other campus services. In some cases, it has improved the contact that these offices have with students of color. Though this may not be the case with all offices, as indicated by Peter, the collaboration between offices improves services and support for the offices as well as the students.

To help with the image of the center and to encourage the Easton community to use the center, the staff is trying to outreach to white students and staff to make use of the services of the Douglas Center. As stated by John, "This center is not exclusively for minority students. It is for the entire community, but the entire community is not fully aware of what we have to offer."

Student Affairs

The unquestionable use of the Douglas Center by black students begs the question of whether or not students utilize other services that are available to them. Each participant was asked to give an assessment of: the student services, the administrators responsible for the delivery of these services, and whether they thought students of color sufficiently utilized the services. The responses varied among the participants where student affairs received mixed reviews.

The utilization of the Douglas Center has already been established as the area most frequented by the black students. The use of other services is often made through referrals made by Semenya, John and others in the Douglas Center.

Sometimes they do [make use of the other support services] and sometimes they don't. When they come to us first, when we have a certain student who will come to us first either to see their director or
to see me, we will send them to that service. So, this office works very closely with every other support office because frequently, they will feel more comfortable coming to us. And then we'll say, you know, you should go and see so and so because they'll help you work through that. . . . -Semenya

One of the issues that came up was that of trust and assuring students that they could trust and feel comfortable with others in the offices that they were referred to. Semenya and Carolyn were very sensitive to the issue of trust and comfort while students are seeking help and support.

They might tell us first and then we have to try to work to get them to trust the other -- especially in going to counseling. They might get something -- "I don't want to talk to a white woman." And I have to say, "well I've met her. I know that she's a very caring person, give it a try. Go once and see how it works out and if you feel uncomfortable, we'll send you to another counselor. But that's not my expertise. I can listen to you and be sympathetic, but I'm not a trained counselor and I think this is where you need to go." So, we'll do things like that but that might be one impression. Or if your first language is not English and you want to talk about something very close to your heart, you may wish to speak with someone in Spanish. This is what our next step is to work on with the counseling service, is to try to get something going here for cross-cultural counseling. -Semenya

In my center, again, I think we do a good job of hooking the students of color in, not everybody certainly, but not everybody's going to be comfortable seeing a counselor, no matter what color they are. As I said last time, I think that element of trust is important. When I talk with colleagues at other institutions who don't see any students of color, I think we do a pretty good job, but also we built bridges out there with Semenya's office, with Rhonda and that makes a difference.

-Carolyn

John commented on the efforts that needed to be made to outreach to students in order for them to visit student services offices.

I think as an administrator, trying to get students to utilize a service, it's not always easy and you really have to get out there and make the students feel welcome and let them know that the services are there for them. You've got to do some work in order to get them into your center, your office or whatever.
Colleen and Peter did not know how successful other offices were in getting students of color to use their services. Colleen felt there were certain services that students should use, but again did not think there should be a difference in what is available and what is used by students.

I really don't know. I don't -- they should use the Chaplain's Office, but I don't know if they do. And they certainly -- I mean, I think the two big support --well there are three, you know, Chaplain's Office, Student Development Center, has a wide variety of counselors, contacts that they can make, even right from freshmen year not getting along with the roommate to senior year, job placement. We have a wonderful shadowing program where you can go out and work with an alum that is out in the field that you are interested in. So, that certainly is a resource area that they should use. And then I guess speaking with Semenya and see what is there for them besides health wise with us, but I have no idea what they use and don't use. But I would think that -- those are your big areas. But see, I would say that for any student, I'd say every student should utilize those areas on campus. So, I don't feel that it should be a difference.

Student activities, as one of the areas that the students have the most trouble with and the lack of social events, some of the participants were equally aware and concerned. Carolyn and Suzanne were the most forthright with their criticism of the college sponsored activities. As Carolyn explained,

There is, Susan's office in activities. There's the Board of Programmers which is the big group that works on major events on campus, lecture series, concerts and again, they work through Susan's office. . . . Okay and then when they don't hear, that's a bigger deal. So, there isn't a lot of follow through. I'm not saying it's anybody's fault. She's a one person office too. But there isn't a lot of follow through. And again, I have to say for most students, it's poor, but again, for students of color, I think it is worst.

Suzanne compared the activities area to other areas of service on campus. As previously mentioned, she believes that Easton does a "fine job of trying to meet the needs of students," but knows that "the social area is the weakest." While Suzanne credits the area for trying, she does not believe they have the right people making efforts
Like Suzanne, John agrees that the administrators of these services do a good job. He did not express any criticisms.

The administrators who are responsible for delivering these services, they’re great, highly trained in what they’re doing and they do it well. I have no criticism about them at all.

Suzanne, however, did not hesitate to articulate where she saw the expertise and where she had criticisms. She differentiates between the performance and decision making of middle management and top level administrators.

Quite frankly, I think the middle managers are much more professionally prepared and committed. The top administrators in some of the areas, especially in students services, are not professional and don’t always support the recommendations that the middle managers who are on the front line suggest. I think that’s a real weakness in the division. A lot of that has to do with the fact that, I mean they’re just not trained and there is no concerted effort to get young priests trained in these professional areas. You can’t run it by the seat of your pants. You know twenty five years ago you could get away with somebody who just liked kids and did a few workshops and they were successful, you can’t do that today. There are a lot of legal ramifications, you’ve got to have professional background and training.

I think that there are areas that we are weak in, but we don’t have people who have a sensitivity to what that is about . . . both the lay people that have been hired through the -- basically the good old boy system and some of the priests who are given top responsibilities who are not necessarily professionally trained. Middle managers, I would say we have a very outstanding middle manager staff. People who are well trained or who have been encouraged by their superiors to get the training, to go to workshops, to stay current. We work very very hard. And they’re the ones who are on the front line with the kids so the kids are in good hands. There are not always good decisions made at the top.

Peter was also critical of the student service area. His concern seemed to be more in relation to Easton’s adversity to change and tendency to stick with tradition.
Well Easton College is a great place, it really is and it has a lot to offer students. My personal opinion is that it could be more contemporary in terms it's presentation of offering services. And that's kind of a big mouth, I could probably go on for another half an hour about that. I think there could be -- services in general could be presented in a better fashion that students would use them more and that they would be more effective. And I think that starts out just basic kind of teamwork within a division in getting the personnel in student affairs in general. I think the officers in student affairs work independently and don't work together or pull together as a team for students. Kind of getting down to the level that students are at.

While both Peter and Colleen thought that their areas of Residence Life and Health Services were doing well in delivering services to students, others were not as complimentary. Suzanne and Carolyn, in particular, had some criticisms.

Residence, I think there is a lack of sensitivity in the residence office. I have heard students talk about unfairness by RA's, that they can be allowed parties, but if a group of black students get together, somehow they're creating a mob scene that has to be right away disbursed. I think Residence could be more sensitive but our Residence Office doesn't tend to be sensitive to many things right now. It's in a transitional stage but I think there are problems there. -Carolyn

... student health, I don't know, frankly. Our student health center again, the nurses there are lovely, lovely people, but it's not an outreach center. It's not a real student health center. It acts more like an infirmary, okay. So, whether a student might just use it as a necessity, if they're not feeling well and going over there, it's a very white place, everything's white about it, okay, the doctors, the nurses, the uniforms, the walls. -Carolyn

I think the health services are adequate and they know enough to refer out if indeed they need to do that for either physiological or psychological assistance. -Suzanne

Institutional Commitment

The perception of an institution's commitment to achieving diversity is an important part of the feelings of alienation and isolation (Hurtado, 1993).
The administrator participants were asked how they perceived the college's commitment to diversity. Again, the perceptions varied.

Colleen viewed diversity as something that was the responsibility of certain departments. Her response, which coincides with her racial identity development, indicated that she did not view it as a college-wide effort and diversity is only recognized by specific departments.

I would say that the departments that recognize it, are very sincere. The people that work on multicultural week, I hear them at other events, at my meetings every other Thursday. They are very interested in, at some orientations I hear it, but I can't -- as I said once again, that small handful. So I can't say that everybody is or isn't.

Peter acknowledged that the college has made improvements, but also commented on the indifference. Diversity issues, to Peter, are not always a top priority for the college.

Probably not as sensitive as maybe they should be if they had some of the experiences that some of the black students have had. I think it's the kind of thing where it kind of is on the agenda, gets to the top of the agenda and then falls down from the top and then kind of bubbles up occasionally. I don't necessarily from my perspective see it at the top of the agenda all the time but I think once the situation arises, once somebody confronts the issue that needs to be addressed, once the student comes in with a concern that surrounds these kinds of issues, that in general are sensitive.

I mean, I think Easton is going through a lot of things, a lot of changes right now where it would be nice if that could be one of the issues at the top of the list, but because of so many other issues that they have to deal with, it's not. And because of their priorities and the way they structured their commitment and the way Easton's history has been over the years, I think is in the mode that I just explained. It gets brought to the top of the list only when an issue arises or when somebody is dealing with an area that multicultural issues kind of falls into.

Suzanne's perception was similar to Peter's where she thought diversity is not always a top priority, but an issue that continually needs to be forced to receive the appropriate attention.
I think there has been a conscious effort to attempt to broaden our base and to attempt to meet the needs. I think currently, we are a composite of what's going on the outside. I think because of the issue with affirmative action across the board, I think the impact here on the college, it is no longer the highest priority and that is very distressing. Some of that is convenience. If you're a gnat, people have to keep paying attention to you. If indeed you become a larger insect and you get swatted away and batted away for a while, I mean, that's just part of what we're working with.

But I think as with all top administrators, when they're not having their backs to the wall, to make something happen there are just to many other priorities that they shift to.

Suzanne sees diversity as a responsibility and commitment that the college needs to make and keep as a priority, but she also on several occasions, like some of the other participants, indicated that the students need to take responsibility to keep the institution on its toes in order to keep the issue active.

I think that the Black Studies Program here on this campus is going to happen. As I say, with enough people committed to it. Is it going to receive all the resources it needs to make it a first rate program? Very honestly, no. That is going to be a continuous battle. It's going to be wearing away, making a real pain in the rump of yourself to make everything happen. We're going to have to really continue to stay on top of it and kids are going to have to continue to want it strongly enough to wear the administration down. I mean, that's just where we are.

I don't see them -- I see them seeing it as a value, that is not a question. But the priority, it is not the priority that maybe you would prefer it to be or I would prefer it to be.... As I say, I think there are enough people who are going to continue to push and push, but you get tired, you do get tired. And that's why the students have got to keep not only us going, but they have to kind of take some of the responsibility too.

Suzanne was appreciative of some of the efforts that the institution has made, particularly with the support of the Douglas Center and the scholarship program. She is also sensitive to the differing perceptions that students may have regarding the college's commitment.
I think that there has been some commitment, but again, it's always very tight limits. There's been some commitment by the administration in the Douglas Center that we have established. But there is always that element there, but we've got to keep them within those bounds. It's not an isolation, but they're not going to grow any bigger, it's not going to get any bigger.

Like that's it. I think that there are a lot of outreach efforts that are made by that office but again, I'm sure from a student point of view, they see that office as being --keeping the peace and keeping everyone quiet rather than necessarily revving things up and that's a very difficult position to be in. I mean they're administrators, so they obviously have to support what the institution is doing and as you know and I know, there are a lot of things that have to be done very quietly and very politically behind the scene, so you've got to be respected by that other element as not being an aggressive kind of person who's going to when they come to you is going to come to you for real reasons. So, therefore, you're going to be listened to. So it's a very tight rope that I think Semenya walks up there.

Semenya was also sensitive to the students' feelings about the college's commitment and their feelings that enough is not being done. She, on the other hand, does have an appreciation for what is being accomplished.

I mean to keep the doors open and the lights on, you do need warm bodies in here who are bright and can pay. But sometimes you have to go, if you really want to diversify, you may need to go and look for some warm brown bodies who can pay. And there are some colleges who are making that kind of commitment because they're bringing them in. They're getting them at their schools. They diversify their faculty. That sometimes attracts. This is an overwhelmingly white faculty.

So that can be a perception. On the other hand, that is a big commitment. It is something to pay our [Douglas staff] salaries to be here to give them support. But sometimes if you're young, you can't see that. Those same students might say "my mother doesn't care anything about me" when they're talking. "She doesn't appreciate me. She hasn't done enough for me," or whatever. They may have that same point of view.

John's concern continues to be the numbers and recruitment of black students, as well as the future growth of the scholarship program.

I think I mentioned the fact that I sometimes question the commitment that the institution has and whether or not they're doing
this because it's the thing to do or because they have a, by they, I mean top administration, have a sincere commitment. In other words, I sometimes question, I questioned it before and I question it today. Because I think that if a directive or a statement from the top went out especially to the admissions people, "go out and bring back here applications from qualified minority students. I don't care what you have to do to do it, but go out and do it."

In the three selection categories of typical, critical, and negative, participants reflected anticipated distinctions in perceptions and attributions. All of the administrators were able to read the climate for black students at Easton. All described a very separate and isolated climate that in many ways does not include the black students. According to all of the participants, this sense of invisibility was very blatant. The distinctions across participants lies in the sources of the knowledge that each has pertaining to black student climate and also the level of specificity with which they can explain their perceptions.

The justification and observation of the administrator sample by case was very appropriate. The three sets of cases exhibited expected patterns in their level of knowledge. The typical cases did not know much about black students. The critical cases demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding and shared a similar perspective with the negative cases which fall outside of either category. As expected, the negative cases had perceptions that were unique and different from the critical and are attributable to their being black and having direct daily contact with black students.

The differences in administrator's perspectives can clearly be attributed to their differences in racial identity stages as well as their roles on campus. Of the four white administrators, the critical cases, Carolyn and Suzanne are on significantly higher stages of development than Colleen and Peter, the
typical case administrators. Moreover, as higher level administrators, Suzanne and Carolyn are both more seasoned. The nature of their work and their level of management has given them more contact, access and experience with policies, practices and issues at Easton.

Of the black administrators, though they differed in their level of racial identity, both were able to relate their perspectives of the climate for black students based on first hand knowledge. The daily contact with students allowed them to share student experiences in a more intimate manner than the critical case administrators. Their ability to compare their own experiences with the black students gave them the authority to speak from a personal perspective.
CHAPTER 6
COMPARISON OF THE STUDENTS AND THE ADMINISTRATORS

The previous two chapters presented the stories of the students and what their experiences have been like and the administrators perspective of life on campus for black students. This chapter will compare the two perspectives and highlight the differences and similarities. I begin with the areas with the greatest similarities.

The Frederick Douglas Center

The discussion of the Douglas Center was the topic that found the most agreement between the students and the administrators. As a support system to students of color, the students and the administrators spoke of the center and the important role that it plays in the black student experience. All of the participants noted the prominence of the Douglas Center. It was not only acknowledged as a key system of support but it was also credited for the retention of black students, which is a matter of some pride for the college and students.

The students felt that the Douglas Center is their sole source of service at Easton. All commented on Douglas’s role in most of their problems and needs. Before going for any other support services, all the students reported that they went to the Douglas Center first and in some cases only. They generally agreed that Douglas handles all the black students’ problems and spoke highly of the caring welcoming treatment they receive from the staff. They described themselves as a group and like a family and the dean like a mother. The Douglas Center staff is part of that family.

Semenya and John, who are responsible for the center and the mentoring and advising of black students, spoke affectionately of the students
and of the advocacy and special care that they try to provide to them on a regular basis. Their descriptions of the relationships and support they provide was much like the students' description - personal, and hands on.

The other administrators spoke of the special relationship that the Douglas Center staff has with the students of color. Although the descriptions did not provide the intimacy that the student descriptions provided, all were appreciative of the dependence that the students have on the center and its staff. Even Colleen who disagrees with a separate center designated for multicultural students because she disagrees with calling attention to difference, has an appreciation for the service that Douglas provides to students of color.

The administrators were also aware that the black students generally go to the Douglas Center before going to another support office. It was common knowledge that black students make full use of the center and that the center has been very instrumental in connecting black students through not only its staff relationship with the students and the service it delivers, but also the programs it provides and the referrals it makes to other offices. The four white administrators were appreciative and praised the work the Douglas staff does to collaborate and refer to other support services.

While all agreed on the effectiveness and success of the center, there were concerns raised by the administrators about the perception of the Douglas Center. Semenya was concerned for the perception of the Douglas as a crutch for the black students who may be perceived to be disabled in some way and in need of special assistance. Peter was well aware of the need that the Douglas Center provides, but was concerned that the students' dependence on the center may not allow for a sufficient level of contact with other offices because of the immediate assistance it provides.
Carolyn and John expressed the added benefit that the Douglas Center provides to black students, giving them a special service that was not available to white students. Semenya and John stressed that the center has been trying to and has achieved some success in reaching out to white students who could learn from the Douglas Center.

**Institutional Commitment**

Not one of the participants, student or administrator, felt that Easton has made a full commitment to diversity. The students saw the only commitment made being through the Douglas Center, yet many failed to see the connection of the Douglas Center to the college. They saw it as a separate entity. The lack of black faculty and administrators, and the low number of black students was a major indicator to the students of the college's limited commitment. Though appreciative to be recipients of the MLK Scholarship, all felt the commitment falls short. Most of the students felt they are tokens.

The administrators expressed that while the college has made efforts, diversity has never been a top priority. This message from the top has filtered down to its staff who also did not make it a top priority. Like the students, the administrators agree that the representation of faculty, staff and students must be increased and is an indication of the college's commitment to diversifying its campus.

**Separation**

The issue of separation was presented as a question regarding the attention that black students receive from congregating together in the campus cafeteria, athletic events, etc. All of the participants, student and administrator without exception, agreed that Easton was no different than
any other predominantly white campus. It was unanimously stated that separation does occur at Easton.

The reasons for the separation were generally agreed upon by all of the student and administrator participants. Students separate to spend time together for comfort and because of the commonalities among them. There was little difference expressed between the students and administrators. Even the three groups of administrators, typical, critical, and negative agreed with the students' need to be together for comfort. Aside from the agreement that separation exists and agreement on the basic attributions, there were some explanations given by the students that were not given by the administrators and vice versa.

The students cited the white student lack of desire for interaction, forcing them to seek each other out. The students all disagreed that the separation was self-imposed as has been charged by the student reporters and others. Some charged that structural factors within the college, such as: the club and organization structure, the physical space assignment, and the nature of college sponsored activities designed to appeal to white students and exclude blacks, has created separation.

Suzanne, Carolyn, and Peter described the students need for community in each other since it is lacking in the mainstream. Semenya and John expressed that too much has been made of the separation issue. Both explained their understanding of the student position through their own feelings as blacks at Easton which tends to be similar to the students' isolation and alienation.
Alienation

Of the three dimensions of alienation, loneliness, powerlessness, and meaninglessness, there was general agreement in the area of loneliness. The administrators and students disagreed about powerlessness and there was little said by the administrators of the meaninglessness dimension.

The students described the loneliness they have felt from the day they arrived at Easton to the present in different ways. All spoke of what it was like to be one of the few on campus and often the only one in class. They spoke of the lack of role models and their desire and need for more black faculty. The powerlessness dimension of alienation surfaced as the students explained their lack of control over their lives or their ability to make changes on campus. There was little in the area of meaninglessness. All of the students expressed an appreciation for the quality education which they are receiving at Easton. However, the demand for a Black Studies Program and the lingering question of the relevance of the lengthy and rigorous, two year, twenty credit Western Civilization Program has been a hotly debated issue over the years. Many of the student participants discussed their involvement in the fight to implement the Black Studies Program.

All of the administrators were aware of the students' loneliness and they also described it in different ways. Some spoke of the students difficulty of trying to fit in and of being isolated. Semenya explained how they are forced to behave conservatively in an effort to fit in. John spoke of his insistence of increasing the number of students because of the isolation and loneliness that students feel. He, like the students, stressed that problems would be fewer if there were more black students. Carolyn felt that students feel tolerated and were viewed as second class citizens on campus. Suzanne was aware of the uneasiness and loneliness that students feel in addition to
questioning their own identity, who they are and how they fit in. Peter could understand how black students would feel unwelcome when the majority of students are different. Colleen, though she did not share her own perspective, heard what was being said by students and knew that their feelings were real, regardless of her own opinions. Like the students, Semenya and Suzanne discussed the importance of and need to recruit greater numbers of black faculty.

Of the four administrators, John, Semenya, and Suzanne, did not accept the idea that the students do not have any control of their lives at Easton. They spoke of students taking control and responsibility for themselves, their environment and their rights on campus. It was my impression that they do understand the students' feelings of a lack of control, but as administrators, advisors and mentors, they try to encourage students away from those feelings and more toward taking control.

Suzanne was really the only administrator who fully discussed the Black Studies Program and its importance to black students. Carolyn acknowledged the issue but gave it no special recognition or thought.

Social Activities and Black Student Life

The social life for black students at Easton was an area that all generally agreed is problematic. The administrators, however, were not aware of the specific problem areas as described by the students or how important the issue was to the students.

The lack of social life was a central piece of discussion with the students. It was stated by most of the students that the social life is the biggest problem at Easton. Their feelings were that "there is not enough to do on campus" and the college sponsored activities did not appeal to them. The
result was that they are forced to go to other campuses to seek social activity. The role that some of the multicultural organizations play in sponsoring the little that was available to them on campus is important to the students. They all described their involvement in a list of clubs and activities. Though the greatest amount of involvement was in the multicultural organizations, there was also mention of involvement in some of the mainstream campus activities. They also spoke of their community involvement outside of campus. The comparison of their social life and the social life of white students was made by all. They were very critical of the alcohol use and abuse by white students. There was resentment of the presence of alcohol at parties, both on and off campus, and the college's response to the drinking situation.

The administrators were well aware of the lack of social life for black students. They, like the students, acknowledged that there was not enough to do. They, however, did not state the problem with the same magnitude as the students. The students see the problem as the most serious with their campus life while the administrators tended to see it as one of the many but did not express it with the urgency that the students did.

Each of the critical and negative administrators were knowledgeable of the regular visits to other campuses by black students to attend parties and to date. They were aware that students pursue activity at other campuses because of the lack of activities that would be attractive to them at Easton. Again, Peter and Colleen were the exceptions and were not aware of how black students spend their leisure time.

Carolyn and Suzanne were critical of the college sponsored activity and expressed that the people responsible for student activities misunderstood the social needs of black students. Colleen attempted to make
the point that all Activities Board programs are available for all students but admitted that this assumptions does not work. She was aware that black students complain about having nothing to do on campus but also showed no knowledge of their social needs.

An area where the students and the administrators presented different perspectives with student life was the black students' involvement in student clubs and organizations. The critical and negative administrators were not positive or encouraging about black student involvement in clubs and organizations. Suzanne was not as negative as the other administrators who expressed a lack of involvement. Semenya stated that "the black students are not clubbers." She and John stated that the students are encouraged to join a variety of organizations (and not only the multicultural) but neither felt that the students are fully involved. Carolyn thought the lack of involvement in clubs and organizations, like other areas of student life, was not only a black student problem but a general student problem. She thought the problem of club involvement exists for commuter students and freshmen but acknowledged that it was worse for black students. Colleen and Peter were not aware of any of the multicultural organizations at Easton, nor the level of involvement of the black students in campus organizations.

Peter and Carolyn, like the students, were critical of the alcohol situation. Acknowledging the college's reputation for alcohol abuse and the accompanying behavior, Peter expressed disapproval as did Carolyn. Peter's perspective was from the college disciplinarian. Carolyn was critical of the college's major concern being public relations and keeping the college name out of the media, but not addressing the student problem. John, Semenya, and Suzanne acknowledged that alcohol was prevalent at student gatherings but they were more centered on the black students' lack of desire to drink.
The students see the use of alcohol as a major problem among white students and a deliberate oversight by the college. The administrators express it more as a difference in socialization between the black and white students.

Interactions Among Black and White Students

As stated earlier, the interactions on campus are very important and key to the experience for not only black students but all students. In describing and discussing the dynamics of the black and white student interactions, all of the participants, both black and white, student and administrator, were in agreement that interaction was poor or limited.

All of the student participants provided very descriptive reasons for the poor interaction. They were aware of the white student lack of experience and exposure to black people. They described the lack of diversity of the white students who are predominantly middle class Irish-Catholic, coming from the suburbs, attending school and living in neighborhoods where there are little or no blacks. They attribute this as one of the factors to poor interaction. Not only were they sensitive to the majority of white students who make no effort to interact but they were very aware and appreciative of the students who did. Without exception, they described the good relations they developed with white students who were roommates or who shared the same floor or resident building. Contrasted to the residence experience, the students described the loneliness and isolation of the classroom.

Though the administrators acknowledged the poor interaction, they were not as descriptive of the white student behaviors and attitudes as the student participants. While the students explained specific reasons why white students could not relate to them, the administrators did not provide such explanations or attributions. Suzanne, Carolyn, and Peter, all of whom
are Irish-Catholic or Irish-Italian-Catholic, commented on the lack of diversity. Like the students, they acknowledged that the majority of Easton students are Irish-Catholic, making it difficult for students of color.

Although the administrators did not provide the level of detail and description that the students did, the critical cases, Suzanne and Carolyn, and the negative cases, Semenya and John both were knowledgeable of the student dynamics. Each of them also acknowledged their appreciation for the differences in students which accounts for the difference in experiences and interaction. They understood that the black students are not homogeneous. Through their observations, conversations and student contact, they had perceptions about the nature of student interactions.

There was little discussion of the extremes of behavior and attitudes of the white students. The radical differences between the lack of acknowledgment on behalf of white students and the very actively involved and sensitive white students was not a topic of discussion or importance to the administrators. Peter and Colleen, the typical case administrators, were not as knowledgeable as the other four. They did not have the contact or awareness of the other four and described the admittedly limited observations in what they saw when they occasionally got out of their offices or made contact.

Of all the forms of interaction: social events, classroom interaction, student activities and organizations, the residence halls interaction was the most positive and healthy according to the students. This fact was not acknowledged by any of the administrators, including Peter who works in Residence Life. The administrators shared no thoughts about the classroom interaction. Semenya, Carolyn, and Suzanne each acknowledged that they
teach class but gave no information about how they perceived the classroom interaction.

Support Systems

Four of the administrators described support systems similarly to the students but in a more general manner. Each of the students described their dependence on each other for support. Support was expected and almost demanded. The norms of the group require students to support the causes and programs which black students are involved in. The threat to group cohesion was lessened as long as students were supportive.

The four administrators, Suzanne, Carolyn, John, and Semenya, were aware of the strong support system that the students are to each other. They were each able to describe what all of the students described, which is their dependence on each other. They did not however, describe the support with the same detail but understood the need students have for each other. Peter and Colleen saw student support systems for black students among the college services but had little knowledge of the support students provide to each other, even though both reported their sense that black students, as a group, were very close. They credited the college with the needed support it gives to students.

Black Student Relations

The students and administrators responded very differently to the relations among the black students. The emphasis of the students' discussions about their relations was on the cohesiveness. All of the student participants described their group as "a family" and compared their relationships to brother/sister relationships. Their closeness was the most
important feature of any discussion of black student relations. An interesting feature of the discussion was that the black students did not see the basketball players as part of the group. They were a separate and distinct group with a different set of norms. The friction among the black students was very thoroughly explained by all of the student participants. The area and reasons for the friction cited were: the lack of opportunity to date because of the closeness to each other which forces black students to seek relationships off campus, the black male/white female dating choices, the men resenting the ball players for their treatment of women, the women not having good relations with each other, and the gossiping among them.

The administrators discussions of the black student relations focused more on the friction than on the cohesiveness. While they acknowledged that the black students spend a lot of time together as a group, they were concerned with the friction. The exceptions were Peter and Colleen. They both stated that from their knowledge and observations, the black students are a close group. Neither were aware of any friction among them. With Colleen, there was no mention of friction. Peter stated that from his standpoint, there was never any bickering or infighting; only black students spending lots of time together and getting along well.

The administrators' discussions of the students often included explanations of both the athletes and the MLK students. While they explained the differences in the campus life of both, they saw both the athletes and the MLK as the black students at Easton. This was particularly true of Peter and Colleen. These two typical administrators had more discussion and knowledge of the ball players than of the MLK students.

The four critical and negative administrators, Suzanne, Carolyn, Semenya, and John, were concerned about the friction, particularly among the
women. They were each aware that the relations among the women were not good. John and Semenya, however, were able to provide the detail of the problems among the women. This can be attributed to their direct contact with the students and their level of involvement in trying to resolve some of these problems through discussions and meetings with the female students.

Carolyn and Suzanne, while aware of the friction among women, did not provide any descriptions or explanations about the attributes of the friction and disagreements. Colleen did not discuss the friction among the women, but did comment more than once on the dissatisfaction that she has witnessed in them. Of the administrators, only Semenya and Suzanne were concerned with the nature of the black student relationships and the brother/sister relations which created a lack of choice in dating, particularly for the women who do not have the opportunity to date interracially or otherwise.

**Student Affairs**

The use of student services was an area that did not show much agreement between the students and the administrators. The students did not indicate any significant utilization of the student services at Easton. Each of them had a difficult time describing what was available and providing an assessment of the administrators of these services. By the students own admission, they did not need nor did they make good use of Easton's student services. They reported mixed evaluations of the services and their administrators. Half of the students stated that the services were adequate while the other half were critical, stating that their staffs were not helpful, sincere, or understanding of the black students. The insincerity and lack of trust was particularly aimed at top administration. The negative reaction
stemmed from the lack of knowledge of the services and contact with the staff. Of the areas that students are more positive were the areas that students had a reasonable amount of contact through a working relationship or leadership situation. Receiving very positive evaluations were the areas of counseling, career services, athletics and the Douglas Center. All of the students expressed their use of the Douglas Center which meets most of their needs.

The administrators did not express any knowledge of the lack of utilization of services by the black students. While John and Semenya commented on their need to make referrals and to encourage students to use other services, no one reported, as the students did, that they make little use of available support services.

Carolyn was confident, and Semenya agreed that her area of counseling and career services does a good job of "hooking students in." The difference in these areas can be attributed to the extra effort that Carolyn and her staff make to work with the Douglas Center and the black students to collaborate on projects and activities and to build the trust of the students. Semenya and Carolyn were both vocal about the importance of trust between the students and staff. Trust was also an issue with the students.

Of some of the other services, health did not receive a good evaluation from either the students or the administrators. They did not give the assessment that Colleen would have expected. Residence Life was reported by administrators to be unfair and not open to black students. Some of the administrators, including Peter, had complaints that there have been some problems which involved students of color. The student activities area (as earlier mentioned) received the greatest criticism of all the services from both
the students and the administration. With the exception of Colleen, who praised student activities, this area was cited as the weakest.

Like the students, half of the administrator participants were also critical of the top administration. That top level administrators, who are usually priests, were not well trained, often make poor decisions, were not supportive of their staff and are too traditional, were some of the criticisms of the administrators. Middle managers in general received high praise and little criticism by all of the administrator participants.

**Overall Student Satisfaction**

Generally speaking, the administrators showed more similarities than differences in how they perceived the climate for black students. While four of these six participants make extra efforts to understand and support black students, the students continue to feel the college has not embraced their presence at Easton.

In its publications, Easton boasts of its supportive environment and its efforts to embrace all its students, particularly the multicultural, to include them in the Easton community. Aside from the Douglas Center, I found little indication of this. Students presented story after story that made it clear that they do not feel like part of the Easton community. The administrators confirmed their feelings.

Overall, the students are not happy and do not like Easton. Christopher, who does like it, qualified his affection for the college with the fact that being so far away from home, he has to like it because he has nothing else. He also expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be at Easton, knowing what many students back home in Nigeria would give for the same opportunity. While Shawn did not state that he did not like Easton, he, like
the other students, freely discussed climate problems. He and Christopher acknowledged that most black students do not like Easton and expressed their understanding of reasons why.

Ironically, only Peter and Colleen stated that the black students did not like Easton. Colleen’s statements were based on reports she heard from students at panel discussions. Peter surmised from his impression of the unwelcomed and isolated environment for black students. The other four administrators, Carolyn, Suzanne, Semenya, and John were of the opinion that despite the climate problems at Easton, the black students did like it.

On several instances with each of the students, they expressed gratitude for the scholarship and the opportunity to be at Easton. As a researcher and interviewer, I was careful to make them comfortable with talking with me and assuring them of confidentiality and their anonymity. Their admission of dislike of the campus may have been therapeutic because of the nature of our conversations and the focus of black students on white campuses which usually carries a negative connotation. It is clearly conceivable that publicly admitting that the black students dislike Easton would be a lack of gratitude and perhaps a threat to their scholarship. Speaking to a black woman with no connection to the campus may have presented them with the chance to express feelings that they otherwise have been cautious of.

The campus climate has been very difficult for them to navigate. Easton has in effect dealt with barriers that commonly confront many black students on predominantly white campuses, which are the lack of financial aid and academic readiness. It has provided most of its black students with full scholarships and has only selected students who can compete with their white counterparts. In the long run, the financial aid provided to them and
the fact that they are academically prepared to be at Easton, became issues
tied to the climate. There are messages, spoken and unspoken, real or
perceived, that say black students should be grateful for attending on a full
scholarship. It has been made clear by all of the students that they stay at
Easton only because of the scholarship. Moreover, they are still confronted
with the stereotype that they are not qualified to be there and have been
invited to attend under special admissions standards. These students clearly
have reason to be unsatisfied with their experience at Easton. Their
perceptions are understandable.

Comments

In analyzing the administrators perspectives, it has shown how
important it is to also be aware of the differences in administrators. Like the
students, they are not homogeneous and have qualities which may be
attributed to a number of factors. The two important differences in this study
are their assignment to the three types of cases: typical, critical, and negative
and their racial identity development. The connection between the two has
been demonstrated.

The typical administrators, Colleen and Peter, were selected because
they fall under the description of those who do not know much about black
students. As demonstrated, they were the least aware of the three types.
They were also the least involved with black students. The amount of contact
that they have had with black students has been very little. They were both
aware that there are problems but the nature of their awareness was different.
Both openly admitted not knowing much and not being exposed. Not only
did Peter and Colleen not know much about the black students, they had little
knowledge about the MLK Program and the Douglas Center. They had no
knowledge of whether the MLK students were admitted under special circumstances or if they met the same admissions requirements as other students. They epitomized what black students described of the white students.

Even with his limited information, Peter was more knowledgeable which may be attributable to Colleen being in the service delivery of student affairs, while Peter is more involved in student development and is trained to acknowledge the personal and social concerns of students. Peter’s perspective was based on assumptions he has made from the limited knowledge he has of race and racism in society and on campus, coupled with his own beliefs. Colleen, in most instances, could not explain her own personal perspective but rather described what she heard from the students. Her explanations often did not include any agreement with the students, although she admitted that their feelings were real. At times, she led me to believe that she disagreed with their feelings while at other times, she indicated that she did not understand them.

As the critical case administrators, Suzanne and Carolyn demonstrated a high level of understanding of the black students. They recognized the problems and barriers that black students are confronted with. Both demonstrated a personal concern for the students and how they connect with the college. As administrators, they fit the description of the small group of white students described by the black students as sensitive, aware, and involved. Like these students, they are unique and few. Like Colleen and Peter, there were differences between them. Carolyn surprised me with her candor and the forthright manner in which she explained where she saw the problems. She was fair in her criticisms of the college’s lack of commitment and understanding, yet, she also pointed to areas where the black students
needed to take responsibility. Carolyn described the inadequacies of the Easton system and the manner in which it makes decisions and conducts business. There were several times when she expressed cynicism and asked me not to quote her. She was very open and honest. Suzanne was also honest but less skeptical and critical of Easton in regards to its black students. She focused her critical comments on individuals and events and less on the college. While she understands the inadequacies of the diversity efforts, she was more accepting than Carolyn. I attribute some of this to her position at the college, as well as, racial identity.

The negative case administrators, John and Semenya, clearly fell outside of the range of typical or critical. Just as comparisons can be made between the white administrators and the white students, John and Semenya can be compared to the black students. They have a lot in common. As advocates for the black students and their major support system they understand the students. Not only have they both attended predominantly white institutions as students, but they share some of the same barriers as the black students in their role as administrators. They were not as critical of Easton as the students were. I did not expect this. Semenya, to me, is naturally optimistic. Her story reveals that her upbringing has taught and conditioned her to look at the positive side of things in life. John, on the other hand, gave me the impression that he was guarding his statements and not being totally forthright.

Though both were negative cases, they differed. Semenya was clear on the racism within the college and how it affects the students. She freely discussed and explained her perceptions. John only discussed the obvious signs of campus climate and would not or could not speak beyond the superficial. The one distinct similarity between the two was the nurturing
style of counseling and supporting students and their positive attitudes about making the best of the college experience and focusing on a successful education. Their differences could also be attributed to their differing stages of racial identity. While age and professional experience may be similar, their environment and background are very different.

I expected that my interviews with these two black administrators might produce data that I would not get from the students or the white administrators. That is, after all, why they are negative cases. They did to some degree provide me with some data that was peculiar to them but this had more to do with their direct contact to the black students than to the fact that I was a black women speaking to them as a black administrator.

After I completed my interviews with John and Semenya, and while having an informal and unrelated conversation with Semenya, the issue of my race came up. She assumed that I was Hispanic and not black. This caught me by surprise and led me to question whether her responses may have been different had she known from the beginning that I was African-American and not Hispanic. I also wondered if John had made the same assumption and if his responses would be different.

Like Suzanne and Carolyn, John and Semenya's perceptions were very valuable. The four clearly had a high level of understanding and shared many of the same impressions with the students. There were some differences between John and Semenya as negative cases, and Carolyn and Suzanne as critical cases. In their discussions, Carolyn and Suzanne spoke with the voice of the college representative, indicating involvement and a responsibility to the college as well as to the black students. Semenya and John did not present themselves as college representatives, yet, were less critical. Perhaps due to the nature of their responsibilities of working with a
designated group of students, Semenya and John gave me the impression that they, like the students, are isolated and not in the mainstream. They did not speak from the college's perspective or present their opinions of the college in the same manner as Carolyn and Suzanne. They spoke from the Douglas Center perspective but did not present Douglas as an integral part of the mainstream of the college.

It is important to note the difficulty of Semenya's position as the Dean of Multicultural Services. She has a responsibility to the students to support and guide them while knowing that there are very real problems within the environment. As a role model, she is well aware that she must try to remain positive and optimistic rather than encourage their pain and anger toward the institution. She is aware of the problems of the institution, but also has a responsibility of loyalty and support to the college and its administration which employs her, yet condones the hostile environment through its complacency. This dilemma was recognized by many of the students and also Suzanne and Carolyn.

As lay women administrators in a hierarchy of males who are predominantly priests, I had the impression that Suzanne and Carolyn have the sensitivity level that they have, because they experience their own level of frustration. As women in a male dominated institution, they understand that the oppressive environment for women can be comparable to the environment for black students.

The efforts that they make to stay in contact with and support the black students and staff is to be commended. These women make extra efforts to work with people of color even though there is little college incentive to do so. There is quite a contrast between them and Colleen and Peter.
This analysis has centered more on the critical and negative because
they share more similarities with the students. The emphasis on the
differences should not be dismissed or forgotten. In the case of Peter and
Colleen, the difference is more comparable to a void or what is lacking. Both
admitted that before their interviews, they had not given these issues much
thought. Their activity and involvement also indicate that they have not been
overly concerned. Like the majority of white students, their interactions with
black students have been poor. As in typical cases, they represent the
majority of administrators. Their lack of involvement and rather latent
concern (only prompted by my study) indicates that they feel no ownership
or responsibility to the climate for black students. What I find ironic is the
fact that Colleen and Peter are typical Eastonians.
At the outset of this study, I did not know what would be revealed about the campus climate for black students at Easton. Impressed by the four year scholarship, and the very attractive Douglas Center, my first impression was that this college is committed to diversity and supporting its students of color. Having completed the study, I have found that Easton shares some of the same problems as other predominantly white institutions, yet has some which may be unique.

There is no question that Easton can boast about being successful at the same time there is still work to be done. The rate at which it successfully graduates black students must be commended. With one of the highest success rates in the country among not only its general student body but also its black students, Easton scores high marks. Black students who are admitted and who enroll at Easton will complete their program and receive a degree. Unlike many of our predominantly white institutions, there is no revolving door for black students at Easton.

The students' openness and honesty about their lives at Easton gave me the ability to reflect back on my own experience at a predominantly white institution as I put myself in their shoes. With the limited effort to encourage racial appreciation and inclusion, the climate at Easton has hardened these students and led them to be critical of most aspects of the college. Once they have graduated, if their experiences are not terribly positive neither will their memories or loyalty be very positive.

There is a level of mistrust in Easton's black students which will be difficult to overcome without demonstrating more significant attempts. Until then, any efforts that the college makes to improve the climate will be
questioned. The Maya Angelou lecture confirmed this. The effort shocked the students and each of the participants commented on it and questioned the motives of its sponsors. Although it was one of the few events that the students could relate to, they were unable to see it as a positive effort.

There have been other disappointments as well. The diversity efforts which were undertaken then dropped through the many committees have been contentious issues that included the progress of the Black Studies Program which has dragged on for years but has yet met fruition. Undoubtedly, there are more. These perceived failures send a message to the students.

The inadequate representation of students of color is a blatant problem. The students are convinced that the high cost of attending Easton and the low number of black students prevents other qualified black students from choosing Easton. Many of them have also stated that they would not stay if not for the scholarship. This is a sad commentary. In essence, they stay because they are paid to do so.

The low number of black students has created its own set of problems, particularly with the climate. The small group of black students coupled with the homogeneity of the white students is a formula guaranteed to equal difficulty. The white students at Easton are not only inexperienced and unexposed, they lack diversity. If we have learned one tenet from diversity, it is certainly what can be learned from one another. At Easton, the black students know the white students quite well, yet, the reverse is not the case. Moreover, Easton is doing little to create a learning environment that promotes appreciation while rejecting indifference in its students. Social and cultural isolation is prevalent.
The need for leadership for the students of color was revealed to me through this study. Strong student leadership has been instrumental in uniting the group around a number of issues. The lack of leadership and the breakdown of cohesiveness has had a negative effect on the level of satisfaction and involvement. If the group can rely on an individual or group of individuals to shepherd them through the difficult climate, the black students may be more satisfied, individually and collectively. They were in the past. The more recent lack of leadership has created a void.

There has been some leadership from the Douglas Center but what is sorely lacking and is necessary is student leadership. These students expressed the need to resist conforming or colluding with the injustices committed through the lack of representation on campus. They also understand the difficult position that Semenya is in. As an employee and representative of the college, they understand that she cannot lead them in their protest and disagreements with the administration. She is the administration. They need a student who will lead them to organize and express their views. They are aware and unhappy with their own complacency formed by the absence in leadership to keep them active and involved.

Like the students, most of the administrators also spoke of Easton with honesty. Though some were reluctant to speak negatively, the pain of the truth was obvious through their forthright depiction of Easton. I was given the insight I needed to get a true picture of their perceptions. Even in their honesty about the difficult climate for students of color, they described Easton and its population as nice people who are caring and supportive. There is no doubt in my mind that this is true. The problem can be pinpointed. Care and support is limited because of insufficient knowledge and inadequate
exposure to black culture which has been described throughout the participants' stories. To quote Carolyn, "they [white administrators] don't know what they don't know."

The administrators' homogeneity is similar to that of the student body. Although the homogeneity among the staff also exists, I was able to select people from all three case types; typical, critical, and negative. Aside from John and Semenya, there is only one other black administrator. This woman also has a significant impact on not only the black students, but the white students as well. In their roles at the Douglas Center, John and Semenya have little contact with white students, but are making extra efforts to increase usage of the center and their exposure to white students. Similar to the black students, they are also isolated. While they closely compare to the Carolyn and Suzanne in their perceptions, their isolation from the mainstream undoubtedly means they are different in their behavior and this determines how they fill their roles as student affairs administrators.

Suzanne and Carolyn, the critical case administrators are, in fact, very critical. Their understanding, support, and advocacy has been invaluable. Chosen as participants because they are perceived to be very knowledgeable about black students, has proven to be true. These women demonstrated that they not only know a lot about black students, but they also know a lot about the college. This combination is needed in more of the staff. If the climate is the responsibility of all in the community, it is this combination that will promote success. Unfortunately, this is not the situation. The majority of staff at Easton are typical.

As the typical case administrators (beyond the obvious) Peter and Colleen did not know much about black students. Selected because they were described as typical and probably would not know much about the black
population, I found them to fit the description. Like the majority of administrators they had little contact and as a result, knew very little. Unlike the other four administrators, neither has made diversity a priority and feel no ownership or responsibility for the campus climate for black students.

I was heartened by the means in which Colleen did gain knowledge about black students. During Multicultural Week, she has taken the time, with good intentions, to attend the annual panel discussion. Even this seemingly minor exposure has been an education for her. As I indicated earlier, most of her responses were based on information she has gained from attending this program and listening to students. In Colleen’s case, without this opportunity, she would be virtually void of information. If there were more opportunities for dialogue and sharing, such as those that Carolyn and Suzanne create for themselves and the black students and staff, the knowledge base would undoubtedly improve and create better interaction.

The Douglas Center has struggled to create better interaction and the role it has played in campus life for black students cannot be overlooked. The presence of such a significant support system, which very intrusively monitors and encourages its students, has obviously been very successful and important to the college and its black student population. Easton must be credited with developing and continuing support for this program which has enabled black students to connect to the institution, albeit in a limited manner. The college should also be criticized for not better embracing the Center and bringing it further into the fold as an integral part of the college. The Douglas Center remains in the periphery.

Through its MLK Scholarship Program and the quality of the black students who are selected and are academically ready to be there, Easton has managed to overcome two of the major barriers described in the literature;
academic readiness and financial aid. By selecting only the best, providing
them with the financial means to be successful, they have also played it safe.
Easton has made a significant monetary contribution and commitment but, it
is not enough.

Even with the MLK Scholarship Program and the Douglas Center, the
college commitment is lacking for a number of reasons. The message was
clear from the participants, but particularly the administrators, that not only
is diversity not a priority, but there are no expectations of them as
administrators and shapers of the climate. The extra efforts that Carolyn
makes to "hook students in" and earn their trust must not be overlooked.
While John and Semenya, Suzanne and Carolyn make efforts to include and
support students of color, Peter and Colleen do not. This is typical. There is
no direction from any authority which requires any responsibility for
improving the climate. Even when efforts are attempted, there is avoidance,
resistance, and indifference.

The lack of systemic planning and modeling from the top
administration sends the message that changing the climate for students of
color is not important. The status of the recruitment efforts support this. As
an institution of higher learning, Easton has earned a good reputation. With
sufficient effort and commitment, it can attract not only greater numbers of
students of color, but faculty and staff as well. This has yet to occur.

As a Catholic institution, Easton has maintained many of its traditions,
i.e. priests in high ranking positions, the homogeneity of its students and
staff and the Western Civilization Program, to name a few. These things may
be what Catholic colleges are built on. Their publications certainly boast
about them as selling points. From a diversity point of view, they are
troublesome. The message about "the old boys network" is clear and it is not
inclusive or just. The student body perpetuates itself from year to year and the Western Civilization debate has been brewing across institutions for years. The cycle continues.

I question whether Easton truly wants change. It will most definitely have to sacrifice some things that it, as a traditional institution, may not do willingly. It is very possible that as an institution, they are happy to maintain the status quo. The perception is that as an institution they feel they are doing enough but not so much to create difficulty and challenge which may be disruptive to the public relations image of the college.

Little demand has been made on the college to change its complexion. It has been allowed to maintain itself and its image as a small private college with a very favorable reputation. Without the full press for change, I question whether it will ever do so. The black students are given their four year scholarships but are acutely aware of the difficulties. As stated by Semenya, their resiliency allows them to cope and not create a problem for the college. Moreover, there are too few to make waves. The same is the case for the faculty and staff of color, as well as the others who may think and behave like Suzanne and Carolyn.

If Easton truly wants to make adjustments which will eventually mean change, there are several things that it can do. Creating more opportunities for student interaction, particularly in the classroom and the residence halls is something that Easton can initiate immediately. The classroom was cited as lonely and where there is limited interaction. To underscore the problem, the three most understanding administrators, Carolyn, Suzanne and Semenya, all of whom teach class, did not give any consideration to classroom interaction during our discussions. Faculty should be encouraged to promote student interaction through collaborative projects which allow students to work
together more regularly, thereby exposing students to each other and hopefully creating some bonding.

On the more long term basis, cluster courses or a grouping system where students as freshmen are grouped together beginning with orientation, then assigned a number of the same courses throughout the year should be considered. They create a situation where students are assigned to a cohort and move together through the year with common academics and hopefully social interaction which will in time develop experience, exposure, camaraderie, and a sense of community which includes students of color.

As an area cited for its positive interaction, more and varied residence hall programs should be considered, including holding classes in residence hall locations. The positive assessment of the residence hall interaction should be taken advantage of and utilized whenever possible. Other social activities should be expanded and located in the halls.

The student activities are a real sore spot. While diversity is lacking in this area, so is the staffing. Easton would be wise to consider increasing its staff to provide support to the student activities office. Additional staff with the expertise to design and implement diverse programs, while involving and outreaching to students of color, would be a major benefit. If black students had quality programs which they could showcase to attract other students of color from surrounding campuses, it would create some pride in the college and not force students to seek interaction at other campuses. Quality black programs which may also attract white students will not only expose white students and improve interaction, it will also instill pride and ownership in the black students and create leadership opportunities.

Visibility of diversity in all student service offices and areas is necessary. The students spoke highly of the offices they were familiar with.
With the lack of black staff members, the presence of student representation in each office may give students more reason to visit and utilize these offices. Students will feel more comfortable visiting offices where they are apt to see someone who looks like them. Black student presence may also help with outreach.

Staff development which includes ongoing diversity training is a must at Easton. There are many good people with good intentions and a desire to do the right thing but they lack the knowledge and tools to do so. If Easton would require its faculty and staff to take advantage of diversity training and the implementation of diversity programs, it could make a difference. Staff cannot be expected to shape the climate, teach, and expose white students while supporting and acknowledging black students without appropriate knowledge and proper training. Peter and Colleen, and some like them, even with their limited experience and knowledge, would probably be very willing to make adjustments in their efforts if given direction, training, and the incentive to do more. Others will not and conflict will be inevitable. It must be expected and confronted.

Top administrators especially need to be better trained to set the example for others on staff. If the message does not come from the top, it will not be heard. Efforts to achieve diversity must be communicated and measured through ongoing assessment. Only top administrators can make this happen. Easton should consider a person or group of people with authority, who are responsible for measuring and monitoring diversity efforts and progress.

I suggest that racial identity development be used as part of the training. It would be very useful and helpful if staff could understand their own racial identity development and how it effects their thinking, their
attitudes, and their behavior. It will also help them to understand their students and their development, both black and white. Racial identity development could be a valuable tool for understanding the dynamics of campus interaction.

The most important and maybe the most difficult thing that Easton could do is to increase the number of students of color and faculty and staff of color. It remains the root of the problem. The high cost of attending Easton and viewing students of color as unwilling to come without an MLK or athletic scholarship, is a mistake of both the black students and white administrators who hold this assumption. Although there is a fair amount of agreement among the students that the scholarship is important, their perceptions are different. Just as I have indicated the differences in perception due to racial identity development, students who are recruited will reflect all levels of racial identity and therefore have differing perceptions of Easton while deciding to attend or not attend Easton.

Extraordinary recruiting efforts to attract students of color such as those used to recruit athletes will result in better representation. The full scholarship need not be the only reason for attending. There are students who can and will pay. There is also the option of providing partial financial support.

This recruiting effort must coincide with efforts to recruit faculty and staff of color. The excuse that they are not available or are unwilling to come, is no longer an excuse, nor is it justified. Black faculty and other professionals can be recruited at Easton with effort and incentives that indicate commitment.

Funding and implementing the Black Student Program must finally go forward. If Easton can continue to justify a twenty credit, two year Western
Civilization Program, how can it deny a Black Studies Program? It can send the message that it does want to achieve diversity through a number of efforts but most certainly the Black Studies Program should be one. Such a program would strike a balance. As it stands now, it is unequal, unfair and unjustified.

Lastly, Easton should take the bold step of evaluating its structure. Its current method of management and organization does not permit the promotion of diversity goals that would foster inclusion. To make diversity a priority, Easton must develop a system that makes the entire community responsible for change. It must conduct a thorough examination of its policies and practices. People with the vision, knowledge and willingness to make change must be involved in the assessment. Components of the system such as admissions practices, the budget structure, hiring and promotion strategies, selection and development of programs and services, etc. must be redesigned so that accountability for true multiculturalism is sought and monitored. These efforts should be undertaken with the clear understanding by all that the status quo is being challenged and a new way of doing business is underway.

All of these efforts are not only to make Easton a better place for students of color but also to prepare its white students for the twenty first century. The students have come to Easton with little experience and exposure to diversity and students of color. To allow them to go through four or more years without education and exposure to diversity, knowing what is projected in the very near future, is inexcusable. Easton has a responsibility as an institution of higher learning to all of its constituents. It must begin to make change and prepare all of its students to operate as productive citizens in our ever changing and diverse society.
APPENDIX
INFORMED WRITTEN CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. The study is part of my doctoral dissertation which I am pursuing at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The dissertation topic focuses on the experience of black students on white campuses. The study is also a means of expanding my interest, knowledge and research in the area of diversity in higher education. I believe it is necessary for one to understand the experience of what it is like to be a black student on a predominantly white campus before one can understand how to better integrate these students into the campus community.

From this belief stems my request to interview you about your college experience. Our meetings will consist of two interviews, each lasting for one hour, and scheduled within a two week period. All interviews will be audio taped and notes will be taken throughout. Although I do not foresee any risks to you in participating in this project, I assure you that you have the right to withdraw your participation at anytime without any prejudice against you.

Anonymity cannot be guaranteed; however, every effort will be made to conceal your identity. Neither your full name nor your college name need be used. Only your first name or your initials and a fictitious college name will be used.

The tapes and notes will be used to draft a narrative report which will become part of the dissertation and will be shared with my doctoral committee. If you so desire, a copy of the narrative report will be made available to you. The completed dissertation will be filed with the University of Massachusetts Amherst and will be available at the university library. The information from your interview will not be used for any other purpose, including publication, without your prior consent.

If you have any questions or wish to contact me concerning the project, you can reach me at 322 Fisher Road, No. Dartmouth, Ma. 02747 or by calling (508) 636-4034.

Sincerely,

Susan Costa

I understand and agree to the above______________________________
REFERENCES


