



2011

## An Attack on One Is an Attack on All: Factors That Influence Responses to Witnessing Discrimination

Hilary E. Slover  
*Loyola University Chicago*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_theses](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses)



Part of the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Slover, Hilary E., "An Attack on One Is an Attack on All: Factors That Influence Responses to Witnessing Discrimination" (2011). *Master's Theses*. 544.  
[https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_theses/544](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/544)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact [ecommons@luc.edu](mailto:ecommons@luc.edu).



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).  
Copyright © 2011 Hilary E. Slover

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

AN ATTACK ON ONE IS AN ATTACK ON ALL:  
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RESPONSES TO WITNESSING DISCRIMINATION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS  
  
PROGRAM IN APPLIED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY  
HILARY E. SLOVER  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
MAY, 2011

Copyright by Hilary E. Slover, 2011  
All rights reserved

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	iv
ABSTRACT	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER TWO: PREDICTIONS	11
CHAPTER THREE: METHOD	13
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	17
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	23
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION	31
APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM	33
APPENDIX B: CONSENT FOR VIDEOTAPING	35
APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTION SHEET	37
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTION SCRIPT	39
APPENDIX E: SURVEY MEASURES	43
APPENDIX F: DEBRIEFING FORM	46
REFERENCES	48
VITA	52

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. Relationship to perpetrator x group membership interaction on self-esteem 20

## ABSTRACT

Witnessing discrimination against a racial minority should be threatening to both racial minority and majority group members, but for different reasons. One's racial group membership and one's relationship with the perpetrator could both serve as sources of threat to a third party observer. Ninety-two participants identified as racial majority group members (i.e., White) and 48 identified as racial minority group members (i.e., Asian, Black, and other). Each participant was asked to report one instance of discrimination perpetrated by a close other and one by a distant other. Some differences between minority and majority group members' responses emerged. For example, compared to witnessing close others discriminate against a racial minority, people had stronger negative emotional reactions to witnessing distant others discriminate. A confound between one's relationship with the perpetrator and the type of event reported appeared, such that participants reported witnessing close others commit less impactful events than distant others.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This study uses a stress and coping approach to investigate the extent to which witnessing discrimination against a racial minority creates stress in a third party observer. Although the frequency of discrimination has decreased, targets of prejudice still report experiencing both blatant and subtle race-based discrimination on a regular basis (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald & Bylsma, 2003). Blatant racism is the overt expression of negative feelings toward an outgroup and includes racial slurs, threats, property damage, or violence due to one's race (Swim et al., 2003; Swim & Stangor, 1998). Sometimes referred to as "everyday racism" or racial micro-aggressions, subtle racism is more covert and includes routine annoyances such as receiving stares or bad service in a restaurant due to one's race (Sue et al., 2007; Swim et al., 2003). The present study seeks to understand how witnessing these types of discrimination against a third party impacts the perceiver.

Emotional reactions are an index of how stressful one appraises the event. Taking a stress and coping approach, witnesses of discrimination first appraise the situation, which informs their emotional and behavioral coping response (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). A primary appraisal assesses whether any harm may be experienced by the event whereas a secondary appraisal assesses the resources one has available to deal with the stressor. If the amount of harm exceeds the

resources one has to minimize that harm, then the event is appraised as stressful (Folkman et al., 1986; Miller & Major, 2000). Both racial majority and racial minority group members should go through the same basic appraisal process when witnessing discrimination against a racial minority, but the magnitude of their response may differ based on the type of threat that is experienced.

Witnessing discrimination against a racial minority should be threatening to both racial minority and majority group members, but for different reasons. One's social identity (racial minority, racial majority) and one's relationship with the perpetrator (distant other, close other) could both serve as sources of threat to a third party observer. Emotional reactions that result from each type of threat should then guide behavioral responses, with an emotion like anger motivating confrontation, and emotions like fear and anxiety motivating retreat (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000). Identifying the factors that influence emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination can further our understanding of when people choose to publicly respond to or ignore discrimination.

### **Responding to Everyday Discrimination**

Although we know little about the way that people respond when they witness discrimination, we know much about the variety of emotional and physiological responses that occur when one personally experiences discrimination (Miller & Major, 2000; Trawalter, Richeson, & Shelton, 2009). Typically, the response from the target is negative, both emotionally and physiologically. Racial minorities commonly report feeling anger, anxiety, stress, and low levels of comfort in response to everyday racism (Swim et al., 2003). Moreover, experience with race-related stressors often leads to

physiological outcomes such as an increase in blood pressure, sweating, and heart rate (Trawalter et al., 2009).

Racial minority group members show similar responses when they are a third party witness to discrimination against their group. For example, when Blacks read about racial discrimination or viewed scenes from films in which a racist event was depicted, higher levels of blood pressure and heart rate were experienced as compared to race neutral yet anger-provoking scenes (Armstead, Lawler, Gordon, Cross, & Gibbons, 1989; Jones, Harrell, Morris-Prather, Thomas, & Omowale, 1996). Further, anger, tension, fear, and disgust are reported when viewing discrimination against one's racial group (Armstead et al., 1989; Jones et al., 1996).

Emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination should be especially strong if one does not see the discrimination coming (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). According to Expectancy Violation Theory, when an event violates one's expectations, attention is drawn to that violation. As our attention to an event increases, so do our emotional responses (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004; White, 2008). Mendes and colleagues (2007) took this research a step further to see how people respond to those who violate their expectations (Mendes, Blascovich, Hunter, Lickel, & Jost, 2007). They had participants interact with a confederate who either violated expectations (e.g., a Latina described as high SES or an Asian person speaking with a southern accent) or did not (e.g., a Latina described as low SES or an Asian person speaking with no accent). Participants who interacted with someone who violated their expectations reported more stress and showed a stronger physiological response than those who

interacted with a confederate that fit their expectations. Therefore, if one witnesses discrimination from an unexpected source or in an unexpected setting, then one's emotional reaction to the event should be particularly strong.

Targets of prejudice use certain cues to anticipate the likelihood of experiencing discrimination (Swim & Stangor, 1998). We think of certain people and situations as being typical sources of discrimination. The perpetrators of discrimination are often members of the targets' outgroup. More specifically, Inman and Baron (1996) found that Whites and men were thought to be the most typical perpetrators of racism and sexism, respectively. Moreover one is particularly likely to expect prejudice when one is a numeric minority in a situation (Lord & Saenz, 1985). For example, being the only African American in a group of Whites increases expectations of discrimination. Because being able to anticipate discrimination allows targets to proactively cope with potential stressors (Mallett & Swim, 2005; 2009), not being able to see discrimination coming should disrupt this process and potentially produce stronger negative emotional responses.

Racial majority group members should also have negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination even though their racial group is not directly targeted. Until the 1990s, research on discrimination primarily focused on racial majority group members, cataloguing the variety of prejudiced attitudes, what types of events are typically considered to be discrimination, and how people feel when confronted with evidence that they or their group have not lived up to egalitarian standards (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998). Some of

that research examined racial majority group members' emotional reactions to considering discrimination against racial minority group members. Stephan and Finlay (1999) found that while reading vignettes of a time that a racial minority experienced discrimination, Whites felt some of the same emotions as the target of the discrimination (i.e., discomfort) as well as anger towards their own racial group. The most commonly reported emotion from racial majority group members who read about or watched videos of discrimination against minorities was guilt (Doosje et al., 1998; Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Mallett et al., 2008). This gives us reason to believe that being a witness to discrimination should also provoke emotional responses in racial majority group members.

While this study is mainly interested in the *emotional reactions* to witnessing discrimination, it is important to acknowledge that when one witnesses discrimination, there are different ways that one might behaviorally react. For example, one may simply ignore an act of discrimination, assertively confront the perpetrator, or react somewhere in between these extremes. Racial minority group members use at least three types of behavioral responses when coping with discrimination and these responses can theoretically also be used by the third party observer (Mallett & Swim, 2009). First, they may physically avoid the situation. If one anticipates discrimination from a certain person, they may avoid interactions with this person. For example, if a certain uncle is racist and a cousin has a Black boyfriend, the uncle may not be invited to family dinner, or if this uncle is at dinner and makes a racist comment, one may choose to leave dinner early. Second, there is situation-based coping in which the person considers what external

factors can be changed in order to make the situation easier to cope with. So, if someone overhears a racist comment, she may respond by using sarcasm or personally confronting the person who made the comment. Or she may talk to the target about how rude the perpetrator was. Third, there is self-focused coping. This is when a person looks to themselves for things that can be changed in order to avoid discrimination. This could involve thoughts, emotions, or behaviors, such as trying to stay calm if a discriminatory altercation is happening on public transportation, or assessing an appropriate way to respond. This may also involve internally condemning the perpetrator and acknowledging that the behavior is wrong (Mallett & Swim, 2009).

Perpetrators of discrimination can react to being confronted in a variety of ways, and the perpetrator's reaction should exert an additional effect on the emotional reaction of the witness. Czopp and colleagues (2006) identified six ways that perpetrators respond to confrontation. These responses can be categorized into two general types of reactions. First, an expressive reaction involves a perpetrator acknowledging a confronter's concerns or recognizing that their own response may have been racially biased. This may lead the perpetrator to apologize or express remorse for the comment or behavior. If a third party observer witnesses the perpetrator engaging in an expressive reaction, the witness may see the event as less threatening and therefore have less of a negative emotional reaction. Second, a denial reaction involves the perpetrator denying that race had anything to do with a comment or behavior or denying outright that he or she is prejudiced. If witnesses observe the perpetrator engaging in a denial reaction, they may see the event as threatening and have a stronger negative emotional reaction. Again, the

present research is primarily interested in examining emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination, but it will begin to explore behavioral responses.

### **Social and Personal Identity Threat Affect Responses to Discrimination**

Another factor that should influence emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination against a third party is one's group membership. Everyone gets self esteem from both personal (e.g., outgoing) and social identities (e.g., racial group; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Hogg, 2006); therefore we can experience threat when an event reflects negatively on either our personal or social identity. A social identity threat is "a concern that one will be judged on the basis of or conform to the stereotypes associated with one's group, rather than concerns about negative group evaluation more generally" (Shelton, Richeson, & Vorauer, 2006). In a racial discrimination scenario, one's racial group membership should become salient. In that situation, the experience of social identity threat should depend on whether one's group is targeted by (racial minority) or perpetrating (racial majority) the act of discrimination. We often see ourselves as interchangeable with ingroup members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), so if another ingroup member is attacked, we also feel attacked. Therefore, racial minority group members should have strong negative emotional reactions to events that target a fellow racial minority group member because this is a direct attack on the ingroup (Shelton et al., 2006).

We also want to defend our groups and protect their reputations (Castano, Paladino, Coull, & Yzerbyt, 2002; De Cremer & Sedikides, 2008). Therefore majority group members should experience social identity threat if they believe the act

reflects badly on the group's reputation. Because the threat for racial majority group members is indirect (i.e., they are not personally perpetrating discrimination), I expect that racial majority group members should report weaker negative emotional reactions to events that target a racial minority group member than racial minority group members report. Negative emotional reactions might also be weaker if racial majority group members escape a threat to the group's reputation by changing the way they frame the situation, such as minimizing the severity of the act (Doosje et al., 1998; Mallett & Swim, 2004). It should be more difficult for racial minority group members to escape a threat to their group being directly devalued with a negative act because a direct attack may not be reframed as easily as an indirect attack.

I also predict that as one's connection to the perpetrator increases, so should the strength of one's negative emotional reaction to seeing that person engage in discrimination. This should occur for two reasons. First our personal identity is influenced, in part, by our friends and family members because characteristics of close others are incorporated into our sense of self (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992; Tropp & Wright, 2001). For example, even if someone is a shy person, thinking about a friend who is outgoing will make him see himself as more outgoing. In this way, close friends, family members, and romantic partners contribute to one's personal identity. If we see discriminatory behaviors perpetrated by people that we have close connections with, we should see those acts as a reflection of our self. Witnessing someone that we know and love engage in discrimination should pose a threat to our personal identity and could

therefore be experienced in the same way by both racial minority and majority group members.

Second, because discrimination is most often perpetrated by strangers, witnessing close others perpetrate discrimination should violate one's expectancies and therefore increase the strength of negative emotional reactions. Landrine and Klonoff (1996) found that discrimination is encountered more often by strangers (83% of the time) than by friends (45% of the time). Swim and colleagues (2003) found similar results in a daily diary study among African American college students. Strangers were the most common perpetrators of discrimination (58% of the time) whereas romantic partners and family members were the least common perpetrators (3% of the time). Events that violate our expectancies produce more threat and stronger negative emotional reactions than events that do not violate our expectancies (Mendes et al., 2007), therefore I expect stronger negative emotional reactions to discrimination that is perpetrated by a close other than by a distant other. Interestingly, there has not been any in-depth investigation as to how we react when we see close others discriminate against a third party.

I predict that negative emotional reactions will be particularly strong for racial minority group members who witness discrimination from a racial majority group member that they are close to. Racial majority group members are seen as typical sources of discrimination; therefore racial minority group members may not immediately trust them. In fact, expecting to be the target of prejudice is negatively related to trusting the outgroup, and therefore negatively related to intergroup friendships (Shelton, Richeson, & Salvatore, 2005). However, a racial minority group member may trust certain racial

majority group members that have proven themselves to be generally non-prejudiced (Paolini, Hewstone, & Cairns, 2007; Tropp, 2008). If this is the case, then racial minority group members may be less likely than racial majority group members to expect those who are close to them to engage in discrimination. When those people do discriminate, racial minority group members are likely caught off guard. Their negative emotional reactions could be especially intense because this type of event threatens both social and personal identity. Therefore I predict that one's relationship to the perpetrator should have a stronger effect on racial minority group member's negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination than on racial majority group member's negative emotional reactions.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PREDICTIONS

#### **Hypothesis #1**

I predict a main effect of social identity threat on the strength of negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination against a racial minority. I expect that racial minority group members will experience a social identity threat because another ingroup member is being attacked. In comparison, racial majority group members will experience a social identity threat because an ingroup member is responsible for a bad act. Accordingly, I expect that racial minority group members will report stronger negative emotional reactions than racial majority group members because their social identity threat is more direct than racial majority group members.

#### **Hypothesis #2**

I also predict a main effect of personal identity threat on the strength of negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination against a racial minority. Specifically, I predict that as one's connection to the perpetrator increases, so will the strength of one's negative emotional reactions to seeing that person engage in discrimination.

#### **Hypothesis #3**

Finally, I expect an interaction between social and personal identity threats for the strength of negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination against a racial

minority. One's relationship to the perpetrator should have a stronger effect on racial minority group members' negative emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination than on racial majority group members. This is because it is a double identity threat to racial minority group members.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHOD

#### **Participants**

One-hundred sixty-three students were recruited from a mid-sized, private university to complete this study in exchange for course credit ( $n = 144$ ) or for pay ( $n = 19$ ). Some participants did not report both events with the required criteria and were therefore dropped from the analysis. Of 100 racial majority group members, 2 reported the close other event incorrectly, 5 reported the distant other event incorrectly, and 1 reported both events incorrectly. Of 63 racial minority group members, 8 reported the close other event incorrectly, 6 reported the distant other event incorrectly, and 1 reported both events incorrectly.

Of this remaining sample (overall  $n = 140$ ), there were 94 females and 46 males. Ninety-two participants identified as racial majority group members (i.e., White) and 48 identified as racial minority group members (25 Asian, 9 Black, and 14 other). There were 80 first year students, 33 second year students, 13 third year students, 13 fourth year students, and 1 graduate student. The average age of the sample was 19, ranging from 18 to 26.

#### **Procedure**

When participants arrived at the lab, they were given an informed consent form (see Appendix A). After having the opportunity to ask questions, they signed the consent

form if they wished to participate. Because portions of the study were videotaped, participants signed a separate consent regarding the usage of those videotapes (see Appendix B).

Every participant completed the same procedures and surveys. The experimenter led the participant through a structured interview to describe two events, explained below. One event dealt with witnessing a close other engaging in discrimination and the other event dealt with witnessing a distant other engaging in discrimination. Before the interview, an instruction sheet was given to the participant with a checklist of the conditions that needed to be satisfied for the event they described (See Appendix C). If the participant began to describe an event in which the perpetrator was not White, the experimenter stopped the interview, re-explained the instructions, and began the interview again. The order in which participants were prompted to describe the two events was counterbalanced. After describing each event, participants filled out a survey on the computer about the event they just described (see Appendix E). After completing both interviews and surveys, the experimenter personally debriefed each participant (see Appendix F).

## **Materials**

### **Event Description**

The experimenter began by asking questions to acquire a basic description of the event (e.g., who was involved, what racial groups the perpetrator and target were a part of, where the event took place, how long the event lasted, see Appendix D). In one event, the perpetrator had to be a distant other, or someone they had never met. It could be

someone they had seen before but never spoken to (e.g., a classmate). In the other event, the perpetrator had to be a close other (e.g., a close friend or family member).

In order to test whether the type of events that were reported differed according to one's relationship to the perpetrator or one's group membership, I asked five questions. Participants were asked to rate how stressful the event was, how difficult it was to recall the event, whether the perpetrator expressed remorse, the severity of the event, and whether the perpetrator believed his or her behavior harmed the target. For all items, the scale ranged from *1 = not at all* to *7 = extremely*.

### **Expectancy Violation**

In order to establish the extent to which this event violated expectations, participants reported how often they experienced an event like this in the past year and their level of surprise regarding the event. Then, they evaluated how typical the participant felt this type of behavior was for the perpetrator and the perpetrator's racial group. All of these questions were answered on a scale ranging from *1 = not at all* to *7 = extremely*.

### **Personal Identity Threat**

In order to conduct a manipulation check of the relationship to the perpetrator, participants were asked to clarify how well they knew the perpetrator, with responses ranging from *1 = not at all* to *7 = extremely well*. Then, participants assessed their level of closeness to the perpetrator before the event occurred, with responses ranging from *1 = not at all close* to *7 = extremely close*. If the perpetrator was a distant other, they should have responded they did not know them well and they were not close to them. If the

perpetrator was a close other, they should have responded that they knew them very well and were very close to them.

### **Event Evaluation**

Six questions were asked to evaluate perceived threat and perceived resources available to cope with the event. Three items assessed perceived threat: whether the participant felt they would be physically harmed, if they felt their self-esteem would suffer, and if they felt their group's reputation would suffer. Three items assessed perceived resources. Based on a stress and coping framework (Miller & Major, 2000), participants reported how confident they were in their response, how appropriate their response was to the event, and whether they felt they had the skills needed to cope with the event. All items were rated on a scale from *1 = not at all* to *7 = extremely*.

### **Emotional Reactions**

Emotional reactions to the events were measured using a 7-point scale, ranging from *1 = not at all* to *7 = extremely*. Both positive and negative emotions were evaluated, including comfortable, secure, confident, relaxed, upset, intimidated, worried, anxious, afraid, and tense. Positive emotions were reverse coded so that higher numbers indicate a stronger negative reaction to the event. Overall emotion scales were computed for the close other event ( $\alpha = .91$ ) and the distant other event ( $\alpha = .94$ ), separately.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### **Event Description**

A 2 (racial group membership: racial minority, majority; between) x 2 (relationship to perpetrator: distant other, close other; within) mixed-model ANOVA was used to test whether the type of events participants recalled differed by their relationship to the perpetrator and by group membership. There was no main effect of relationship to the perpetrator for ratings of how stressful the event was,  $F(1, 138) = .36, p = .36$ , or how difficult it was to recall the event,  $F(1, 107) = 1.35, p = .25$ .<sup>1</sup> There was a main effect of relationship to the perpetrator for perpetrator's expression of remorse and severity of the event. Participants reported that close others expressed more remorse ( $M = 2.50, SD = 1.83$ ) than distant others ( $M = 1.31, SD = .81$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 50.68, p < .001$  and participants perceived the event as less severe for close others ( $M = 3.37, SD = 1.67$ ) than for distant others ( $M = 4.01, SD = 1.79$ ),  $F(1, 107) = 7.26, p < .01$ . Finally, there was a marginal difference in ratings of whether the perpetrator believed his or her behavior harmed the target, such that ratings in the close other event were slightly lower ( $M = 2.20, SD = 1.59$ ) than distant other events ( $M = 2.54, SD = 2.00$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 3.15, p = .08$ . There was no main effect of group membership on how stressful the event was,  $F(1,$

---

<sup>1</sup>The severity and difficulty of recall items were added later in the data collection process and therefore, some of the data is missing for these items.

138) = .07,  $p = .79$ , how difficult it was to recall the event,  $F(1, 107) = .01, p = .96$ , perpetrator's expression of remorse,  $F(1, 138) = 1.50, p = .22$ , or severity of the event,  $F(1, 107) = .71, p = .40$ . However, there was a main effect of group membership on ratings on whether the perpetrator believed his or her behavior harmed the target, such that majority group members reported that the perpetrator believed his or her behavior to be less harmful ( $M = 2.20, SD = 1.70$ ) than minority group members ( $M = 2.69, SD = 1.96$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 3.78, p = .05$ . There were no interactions,  $F_s(1, 138) < .85, F_s(1, 107) < 1.75$ .

A racial majority group member provided the following explanation of an event where the perpetrator did not believe his or her behavior was harmful to the target (rated 1 on a 1-7 scale).

We were at the Atlanta airport going back to Chicago and we were in the security checkout lane where they run your carry ons and the line was taking a long time to get through. I watched two relatively big families being administered to, one white and the other Sudanese, and the white family was just routinely let through while the Sudanese mom and dad each were given extra security checks.

In comparison, the following is an example of a racial minority group member's explanation of an event where the perpetrator did believe his or her behavior harmed the target (rated 6 on a scale of 1-7).

After 9/11, there was an Afghani woman dressed in religious attire that came to shop at a department store, Target. The woman was in line as she waited to pay for her items. The saleslady was discriminating against the Afghani woman because she believed that she was a terrorist. Thus, the saleslady asked the security guard to come stand behind her as a form of protection.

### **Expectancy Violation**

A repeated measures ANOVA was again used to test the extent to which each event violated expectations. Participants were asked to report how often they experienced

an event like this in the past year, their level of surprise regarding the event, and how typical the behavior was of the perpetrator and of the perpetrator's racial group. There was a marginal main effect of relationship to the perpetrator on how often participants experienced such an event and how typical this behavior was of the perpetrator's racial group. In both cases, participants reported encountering events slightly more often and perceiving the behavior as slightly more typical of the close others' group ( $M = 2.79$   $SD = 1.46$ ,  $M = 4.13$   $SD = 1.57$ , often and typical, respectively) than the distant others' group ( $M = 2.56$   $SD = 1.36$ ,  $M = 3.89$   $SD = 1.48$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 2.89$ ,  $p = .09$ ,  $F(1, 138) = 3.24$ ,  $p = .07$ , often and typical, respectively. There was no main effect of relationship to the perpetrator on surprise or how typical the behavior was of the perpetrator,  $F_s(1, 138) < .44$ .

There were no main effects of group membership on how often participants experienced an event like this in the past year, their level of surprise regarding the event, how typical the behavior was of the perpetrator, or how typical the behavior was of the perpetrator's racial group,  $F_s(1, 138) < 1.94$ . There were no interactions,  $F_s(1, 138) < .42$ .

### **Personal Identity Threat Manipulation Check**

A paired-samples t-test was used to test how well the participant knew the perpetrator and the participant's level of closeness to the perpetrator before the event. As intended, it showed that participants in the close other condition reported knowing the perpetrator better and being closer to the perpetrator before the event ( $M = 6.21$ ,  $SD = .79$ ,  $M = 5.81$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ , know and closeness, respectively), than participants in the

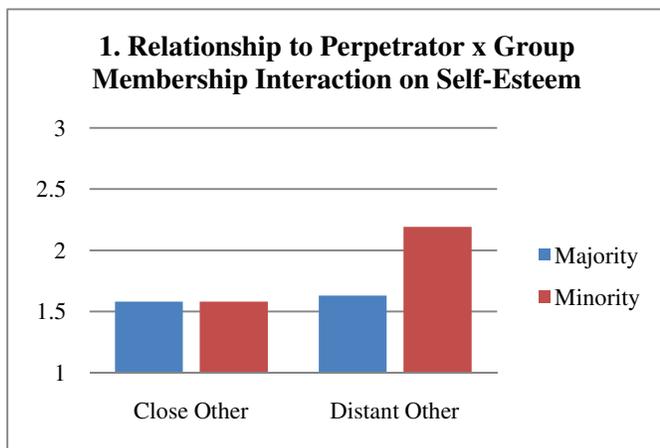
distant other condition ( $M = 1.38$ ,  $SD = .84$ ,  $M = 1.28$ ,  $SD = .74$ , know and closeness, respectively),  $ts(139) > 39.79$ ,  $p < .001$ . This indicates that participants reported the events as instructed.

### Event Evaluation

A repeated measures ANOVA was used to test perceived threat of the event.

There was a main effect of relationship to the perpetrator on the threat items, such that distant other events were rated as more threatening than close other events. Participants reported greater concerns with physical harm ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ), greater threats to self-esteem ( $M = 1.82$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ) and greater threats to their racial group's reputation ( $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = 1.97$ ) in distant other events than close other events ( $M = 1.26$ ,  $SD = .75$ ,  $M = 1.58$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ,  $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.95$ , physical harm, self-esteem and reputation, respectively),  $F_s(1, 138) > 4.38$ ,  $p_s < .05$ .

There was a main effect of group membership on perceived threat to the group's reputation. As predicted, racial majority group members reported greater threat to the group's reputation ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 1.96$ ) than racial minority group members ( $M = 2.53$ ,  $SD = 1.72$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 18.23$ ,  $p < .001$ . There was no main effect of group membership on threat of being physically harmed or threats to self-esteem,  $F_s(1, 138) < 2.68$ . Finally, there was a significant relationship to the perpetrator x group membership interaction (see Figure 1) on threats



to self-esteem,  $F(1, 138) = 5.06, p < .05$ . In the close other condition, threats to self-esteem did not differ for racial majority and minority group members. However in the distant other condition, threats to self-esteem were greater for racial minority than racial majority group members. There were no other significant interactions,  $F_s(1, 138) < 1.32$ .

A repeated measures ANOVA was used to test perceived resources available to cope with the event. There was a significant main effect of relationship to the perpetrator for all three coping items. Participants reported feeling their response was less appropriate for close other events ( $M = 3.68, SD = 1.86$ ) than for distant other events ( $M = 4.49, SD = 1.76$ ),  $F(1, 138) = 15.91, p < .001$ . Participants also reported feeling more confidence in their response and that they had more skills to cope with the event when it occurred with close others ( $M = 4.34, SD = 1.80, M = 4.70, SD = 1.70$ , confidence and skills, respectively) than when it occurred with distant others ( $M = 3.38, SD = 1.74, M = 3.41, SD = 1.76$ , confidence and skills, respectively),  $F_s(1, 138) > 23.49, p_s < .001$ . There was no main effect of group membership on appropriateness of response, confidence or skills,  $F_s(1, 138) < 2.17$ . There were no significant interactions,  $F_s(1, 138) < .66$ .

### **Emotional Reactions**

To test how racial majority and minority group members emotionally reacted to witnessing discrimination against a third party, I again computed a repeated measures ANOVA. There was a significant main effect of relationship to the perpetrator on negative emotional reactions,  $F(1, 138) = 16.41, p < .001$ . Counter to my predictions, negative emotional reactions to witnessing distant others discriminate were stronger ( $M = 4.06, SD = 1.46$ ) than negative emotional reactions

to witnessing close others discriminate ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ). There was no significant main effect of group membership and no interaction,  $F_s(1, 138) < .53$ .

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The present study sought to understand how witnessing discrimination against a third party impacts the perceiver. Identifying the factors that influence emotional reactions to witnessing discrimination against a racial minority can further our understanding of when people choose to publicly respond to or ignore discrimination. The current study found that, compared to witnessing close others discriminate against a racial minority, people had stronger negative emotional reactions to witnessing distant others discriminate against a racial minority. Interestingly, there was no difference in emotional reactions depending on whether the witness was a racial majority or minority group member. Further, there was no interaction between one's relationship to the perpetrator and one's group membership. Learning that witnessing distant others discriminate produces stronger negative emotional reactions has implications for explaining when people publicly respond to discrimination. In general, as the strength of one's negative emotional reaction increases, so does the likelihood of publicly responding to discrimination (Mackie et al., 2000).

#### **A Confound between the Relationship to the Perpetrator and the Type of Event**

##### **Recalled**

The fact that participants reported stronger negative emotional reactions to witnessing distant others discriminate than to witnessing close others discriminate was

the opposite of the predicted pattern. Two factors supported the prediction that witnessing close others discriminate would be a stronger personal identity threat to participants than witnessing distant others discriminate. First, the behaviors of close others are often seen as a reflection of our self (Aron et al., 1997). Therefore, if a close other discriminates, that reflects negatively upon our self. Second, events that violate our expectancies should produce stronger negative emotional reactions than events that do not violate our expectancies. Therefore, witnessing close others discriminate should violate expectancies and produce stronger negative emotional reactions since discrimination is most often perpetrated by distant others (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Swim et al., 2003). Because both of these factors increase the threat to one's personal identity, they should also increase the strength of one's negative emotional reactions.

The opposite pattern of results may be due to differences in the types of events that were recalled by participants. Importantly, the amount of stress experienced and the difficulty of recalling events did not differ between close other and distant other events. This shows that, in at least these two important respects, the events were similar and equally accessible for participants to recall. However, one important difference in events could explain the observed variation in emotional reactions. Specifically, it appears there was a confound between one's relationship with the perpetrator and the type of event that was reported such that participants reported witnessing close others commit less impactful events than distant others. This confound is reflected in differences in three classes of variables, described below.

First, participants reported that acts of discrimination perpetrated by close others were less severe, that close others expressed more remorse, and that close others believed their behavior was less harmful to the target than distant others. As an illustration of the confound, one participant reported the following low impact event (low severity, high remorse, low harm), committed by a close other.

On the soccer field, when we (a group of about 15 white males and females about 20-22) were getting ready to play, a group of about 5 African American males a little older than us (22-25) asked if they could play. A friend of mine responded with something like 'No thanks, I think we're good tonight.' The group that had asked seemed angry in return, and retorted with something like 'I guess we know why you'd say that'.

Another participant reported the following high impact event (high severity, low remorse, high harm), committed by a distant other.

An African American friend and I were pulled over by a CPD officer for going 6-7 mph over the designated speed limit. We soon discovered that the officer had pulled us over specifically because he believed my African American friend had stolen my car and was holding me hostage.

Because the close other events tended to be of lower impact than the distant other events, it makes sense that participants has weaker negative emotional reactions to close other events.

Second, participants reported lower perceived threat (i.e., physical harm, lowered self-esteem, harm to group's reputation) from close other events than from distant other events. Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) found that perceived threat is related to the experience of negative emotions. If participants perceive discrimination perpetrated by close others to be less threatening than discrimination perpetrated by distant others, it makes sense that they would also have weaker negative emotional reactions to these events.

Third, participant's reports of coping differed for close and distant other events. Interestingly, they reported feeling their response was less appropriate for the close other events than the distant other events. In contrast, they reported feeling more confident in their response to the close other events than to the distant other events. These findings of perceiving one's behavior in response to close others as less appropriate but done with more confidence were surprising at first as the two effects appear to go in the opposite direction. However the difference could be due to the way that participants defined appropriateness and confidence. Participants seemed to be defining appropriate responses in terms of the social norms of the situation, as illustrated by this quote, taken from a distant other event.

I didn't want to stand up to the two girls and say something. I would have felt embarrassed and silly for calling them out even though in my head I knew it was wrong. Also, I didn't feel like it was right for me to step in. If they want to act that way, I shouldn't tell them what to do.

Participants seemed to be defining confidence in their responses as being comfortable with one specific type of response: verbally confronting the perpetrator. This is illustrated by a quote, taken from a close other event.

I went off on her. I told her how wrong she was for saying that and how she sounded racist and that how did I not know that when I was not around her that she was talking about black people using racial slurs.

If people are following the social norms of a situation, they may feel confident about the decision to do nothing in response since that is what most people would do in that situation. In that case, confidence should decrease the occurrence of negative emotional reactions.

The current study is enhanced by the richness of real experiences, but this comes at the cost of some experimental control. Most importantly, the present study was limited to the events that participants chose to recall and share rather than randomly assigning them to evaluate a particular experience. As a result, a confound between one's relationship to the perpetrator and the type of event recalled appears to have emerged such that distant other events had more of an impact than close other events on these third party observers. This limitation can be addressed by implementing random assignment in a future study and presenting participants with specific experiences instead of having participants recall real experiences.

For example, one study could randomly assign participants to consider either a severe event (e.g., someone refusing service to a racial minority, using a racial slur with minority group member present) or a minor event (e.g., assuming an Asian person is good at math, assuming a Black person is a good basketball player) committed by a close other or a distant other. I mainly received reports of minor events from close others and severe events from distant others, but using this design would complete the factorial and allow me to also examine severe events from close others and minor events from distant others. Doing so would tell me whether there is something unique about the severity of the event that influences emotional reactions or if it is the relationship to the perpetrator that primarily influences emotions.

Another study could randomly assign participants to consider a close other or a distant other who expressed remorse (e.g., the perpetrator apologizes to the racial minority group member after making a racially offensive comment) or did not express

remorse (e.g., the perpetrator does not apologize to the target or acknowledge that the comment was offensive). I mainly received reports of close others expressing remorse and distant others not expressing remorse, but using this design would complete the factorial and allow me to also examine distant others who express remorse and close others who do not express remorse. Doing so would tell me whether there is something unique about the perpetrator expressing remorse that influences emotional reactions or if it is the relationship to perpetrator that primarily influences emotions.

### **Group Membership and Witnessing Discrimination**

It was predicted that different levels of social identity threat would cause racial minority and majority group members to differ in the strength of negative emotional reactions. For racial majority group members, their social identity threat should come from feeling that their group's reputation is threatened when a fellow group member is responsible for a discriminatory act (Castano et al., 2002; De Cremer & Sedikides, 2008). In contrast, for racial minority group members, their social identity threat should come from feeling that if another racial minority group member is attacked, they have also been attacked (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Contrary to these predictions, there were no differences in the emotional reactions of racial majority and minority group members. This might have happened if the social identity threats that were unique to each group ended up being equally threatening.

One piece of evidence for this idea is that racial majority group members reported feeling more threatened than racial minority group members that their group's reputation would suffer as a result of the event. Past research has found that when majority group

members read about or watched videos of discrimination, they reported feeling guilty that their group was responsible for a bad act (Doosje et al., 1998). In the present research, racial majority group members were the perpetrator in all of the reported events, contributing to the threat to one's group reputation.

Moreover, the social identity threat to racial minority group members appears to have been weaker or more diffuse than predicted. Two procedures could have contributed to this result. First, I had participants describe a time they witnessed discrimination instead of a time that they personally experienced discrimination. This was done in order to allow racial majority and minority group members to report similar experiences. However, it appears as if people's reactions as witnesses to discrimination were not the same as if they had been the actual target of discrimination. Most of the literature that supports a prediction of group differences in emotional reactions to discrimination is focused on how targets of discrimination react to their personal experiences (Miller & Major, 2000; Swim et al., 2003; Trawalter et al., 2009). Perhaps when racial minority group members are not the target of discrimination, and their own racial group is not targeted by the act, they react similarly to racial majority group members.

Second, racial minority group members did not always report an event where a fellow ingroup member was targeted by discrimination. Most racial minorities reported witnessing discrimination against Black targets ( $n = 56$ ), followed by Asian ( $n = 25$ ), and Hispanic ( $n = 15$ ) targets. Since the largest amount of racial minority participants in our sample identified as Asian, most of the targets were not ingroup members. Therefore, the negative emotional reactions of racial minority group members may not have been as

strong as anticipated because they were not reporting personal experiences or discrimination that targeted their own racial group.

Many of the limitations of this study may be addressed with the use of random assignment, including whether participants were the target of discrimination or just a witness. A future study could manipulate one's role in the event by either describing an event in which the participant was a witness to or personally experienced discrimination. Using this design would allow me to test whether this is a meaningful variable. Additionally in the current study, participants were not asked to describe a time when they witnessed their own racial group being discriminated against, just any racial minority group member. There may have been stronger negative emotional reactions if racial minority group members had reported discrimination against their own group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Shelton et al., 2006).

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

Racial discrimination is a common occurrence and therefore, we need to know how people perceive and react to discrimination. These results have implications for interventions designed to improve intergroup relations. This study found that when distant others discriminate, the event is more threatening and upsetting than when close others discriminate. One's emotional reactions inform one's behavioral response to an event, such that the stronger one's negative emotional reaction, the more likely one is to respond (Folkman et al., 1986). Many participants did nothing in response to witnessing close others discriminate, suggesting there is plenty of room for change in behavioral responses to close others. Perhaps people are not confronting close others because they do not feel as strongly when they witness close others discriminate or they are afraid to offend close others. But if they did choose to confront, these confrontations could be powerful in changing the behaviors of close others (Czopp et al., 2006).

Many participants reported that they did not confront distant others because of the social norms involved among strangers. The following is an example of a response to, 'Did anything keep you from doing or saying anything?' in a distant other event.

I don't know them personally and even though I thought it was wrong, I did not want the Caucasian man or woman to do/say anything to me. It wasn't necessarily my business and I feel like no matter what, you can't change the way some people think.

In contrast, there may be different social norms among close others, illustrated by the following example of a close other event.

It was a family environment and I was afraid of creating tension.

If social norms, such as avoiding tension or conflict among close others and feeling as if it is not your place to correct someone among distant others are detracting from the potential confrontations of witnesses, perhaps efforts should lie in encouraging people to ignore social norms or recognize when social norms are at work. If the social situation is making people not want to respond, people should try to refocus on the experience of the target and the potential harm that she or he may experience from the event. Doing so could potentially overcome the discomfort of going against social norms.

Confrontation can reduce prejudice, at least temporarily (Czopp et al., 2006) and cause behavioral change more permanently. People should be encouraged to confront prejudice, instead of choosing not to respond. It is important to understand why people have the emotional reactions that they do when they witness or experience discrimination because this could inform more specific interventions, such as the ‘See something, say something’ campaign on CTA vehicles or the ‘Holla Back Chi-Town’ website (New CTA, 2009; Holla Back, 2010). Further, it is especially important to understand the potential differences in the reactions of racial majority and minority group members so that people can realize the influence they can have on others and possibly be able to form a coalition against these everyday discriminatory acts.

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Project Title:** Student Experiences

**Researcher:** Hilary Slover

**Introduction:** You are being asked to take part in a research study being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mallett in the Department of Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago. You are one of several hundred students being asked to participate in a program of research about your social experiences. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in the study.

**Purpose:** This study investigates how people perceive and respond to events that they witness in their social environment.

**Procedures:** Participants will complete two interviews and two surveys about social events in which they were a third-party observer. The interviewer will ask the same set of questions about each event. These interviews will be videotaped. All survey questions will be answered on a computer.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are minimal risks in this study, and those risks do not exceed a level that you may encounter during your normal daily activities. If you allow us to use your videotapes in our research, the risk increases as the researchers will have access to the statements that you make in your interview. Your name will never be associated with your statements, but your image will appear on the video. If you have not participated in a psychological study before, this is a good opportunity to experience how psychological research is conducted.

**Time Commitment:** The experiment will take between 45 and 60 minutes to complete.

**Compensation:** You will receive one credit hour for the study that counts toward the fulfillment of the research participant component of your introductory psychology course.

**Confidentiality:** Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data from the study. Your name will not be connected to the information you provide, nor will your individual responses be identified in any research reports describing the study. All information obtained during the study will remain confidential. Videotapes will be kept without identifying information. At the end of the study you will receive a separate video release form to sign if you consent to have your video used in future research.

**Joining of your own free will:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withhold information that you do not wish to disclose, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You may choose to withdraw from this study at any time and will receive full credit if you have completed more than half of the tasks.

This study has been approved by the Loyola Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Hilary Slover ([hslover@luc.edu](mailto:hslover@luc.edu)) or Dr. Mallett (phone: 773.508.3028 email: [rmallett@luc.edu](mailto:rmallett@luc.edu)).

I am at least 18 years of age and I agree to participate in this study (please sign below):

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
CONSENT FOR VIDEOTAPING

**CONSENT FOR THE PRESENTATION OF VIDEO RECORDINGS  
IN RESEARCH, EDUCATIONAL, AND PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS**

**Project Title:** Student Experiences

I acknowledge that Hilary Slover and Robyn Mallett from Loyola University Chicago have requested my consent to use video records obtained in this project for future research and to demonstrate aspects of the study in educational and professional settings (e.g., the classroom, a professional conference). I understand these recordings will be reviewed by researchers and potentially reviewed by other Loyola University Chicago students who are taking part in a research study in order to further answer the research question. I also understand that these recording may be used for the purpose of illustrating the methods and results of this study in an educational or professional setting. **The recordings will not be used for any commercial purposes. I also understand that at no time in the presentation of these materials will my name be used.**

I hereby consent to the use of video records obtained from my participation in the study “Student Experiences.”

---

**Signature of Investigator/Researcher Assistant**

**Date**

---

**Name of Participant (print)**

---

**Signature of Participant**

**Date**

APPENDIX C  
PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTION SHEET

Today we are going to ask you to tell about two times that you witnessed a racial minority being discriminated against by a racial majority group member. This should NOT be a time that you personally experienced discrimination; instead we want to know about your experience as a third party observer.

In one event, the person who performed the act of discrimination should be someone that you know well—like a close friend or family member.

In another event, the person who performed the act of discrimination should be a stranger—someone who you have never met. It could be someone you have seen before, but never spoken to (such as a classmate).

Discrimination can take many forms. Sometimes it's really obvious, like when a person uses a racial slur, threatens to or actually hits a person because he belongs to a racial group, or denies someone a job just because she is a racial minority. Other times discrimination is less obvious, like when someone crosses the street when a racial minority is approaching, when someone makes a joke based on another person's racial group membership, or when someone assumes that a person fits stereotypes of the group, even if it's a positive stereotype. Some examples include assuming that an African American is a good dancer or talented basketball player just because of her race or assuming that an Asian student is good at math.

Here are some sample interview questions. You can use this sheet to jot down notes, if needed.

Who was involved?

Where did it take place?

What 'group' was targeted by this discrimination?

Did the target hear/experience the comment or behavior?

What made you sense that this was discrimination?

Did you have a response to the event?

Did you do or say anything to the actor?

Were you surprised that this behavior came from the actor?

Checklist:

\_\_\_ The person who performed the discrimination was Caucasian

\_\_\_ Target was a racial minority group member

\_\_\_ I was present during the situation, but I was not the target or the actor

APPENDIX D  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SCRIPT

**Experimenter:** You will be conducting 2 interviews with each participant. In one they will describe an event that happened with a friend/family member; in the other they will describe an event that happened with a stranger. Look at the experiment log sheet to see which type of event will be the subject of the first interview. Please record the order of interviews. Circle 1<sup>st</sup> by the instructions you read for the first interview and circle 2<sup>nd</sup> by the instructions you read for the second interview.

1<sup>st</sup>            2<sup>nd</sup>    Friend or Family Member Interview Instructions (read these instructions at the beginning of this interview)

“Please describe a time when you witnessed a close friend or family member discriminate against a racial minority. In my questions, I’ll ask you about the ACTOR and the TARGET. When I say actor, I’m referring to the person who performed the discrimination. When I say target, I’m referring to the person who experienced the discrimination. I’ll start out by asking some basic questions about the event. Please begin by describing...”

1<sup>st</sup>            2<sup>nd</sup>    Stranger Interview Instructions (read these instructions at the beginning of this interview)

“Please describe a time when you witnessed a stranger, or someone you might have seen before but never talked to, discriminate against a racial minority. In my questions, I’ll ask you about the ACTOR and the TARGET. When I say actor, I’m referring to the person who performed the discrimination. When I say target, I’m referring to the person who experienced the discrimination. I’ll start out by asking some basic questions about the event. Please begin by describing...”

**During each interview, please check off the questions as they are answered. Complete this list for the first interview and then again for the second interview.**

<b>Please begin by describing what happened. For example, what comment did you overhear or what behavior did you witness?</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>Who was involved? [Note: If participant doesn’t mention both the “target” and the “actor”, ask about the missing party.]</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>How well did you know the actor? [Note: in STRANGER condition, they should say THEY DID NOT KNOW THEM. In the FAMILY OR FRIEND they should state whether the friend was just an acquaintance, a best friend, etc. OR if a family member, what relation)]</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>Can you describe the actor a bit more. Age? Gender? Race?</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>About how long did the event last?</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>What racial group was targeted by this discrimination? Can you describe the person who was the target of the act?</b> <i>[Note: there might not be a single target if a comment was made about an entire racial group. Make sure to clarify.]</i>	
First Interview	Second Interview
<b>Where did the event take place? [Note: if they over simplify, ask for more details. Ex. if they say</b>	

<b>‘downtown’ clarify if it happened in a store, bar, on the EL, etc.]</b>		<b>circle one below</b>
First Interview: work, home, class, other school setting, bar, restaurant, other social setting, in transit, gym, store, other	Second Interview: work, home, class, other school setting, bar, restaurant, other social setting, in transit, gym, store, other	
<b>Now I’ll ask you to give a more in depth overview of what occurred between the two parties. Were you the only one who heard/witnessed it? YES/NO/NOT SURE</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>IF NO, Did the target hear the comment or personally experience the behavior? [Note: This might not apply if a comment was made about an entire group.]</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>What made you sense that this was discrimination?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>Did the “actor” believe that his/her behavior harmed the “target” or target’s group? Could you explain?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>Did the “actor” express remorse for the comment or behavior?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>What, if any, role did YOU play in the event?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>Did you have a response to the event?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>How did you feel about it?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>Did you do or say anything to the actor?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>Did anything keep you from doing or saying anything?</b>		
First Interview	Second Interview	
<b>How satisfied were you with the way you responded? Would you change anything about your response?</b>		

First Interview	Second Interview
<b>Were you surprised that this behavior came from the actor? That is, do you consider this typical for the actor?</b>	
First Interview	Second Interview

APPENDIX E  
SURVEY MEASURES

1. What is your relationship to the actor in the event you just described?  
Stranger    Friend/Family Member/Romantic partner
  
2. How well did you know the ACTOR who engaged in the behavior you described?  
(choose a number from 1-7)  
  

Not at all				somewhat				extremely well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
3. Were you surprised by the fact that the actor engaged in the behavior?  
Not at all surprised                      somewhat surprised                      extremely surprised  
  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
4. Do you consider this behavior typical for the actor?  
  

Not at all typical				somewhat typical				extremely typical
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
5. Do you consider this behavior typical for “the actor’s” racial group?  
  

Not at all typical				somewhat typical				extremely typical
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
6. To what extent did you feel CLOSE to the ACTOR before he or she engaged in the behavior you described above? Please choose the pair of circles below that best describe your feeling of closeness.  
Not at all close                      Somewhat close                      Extremely close  
  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
7. How stressful was this event for you?  
  

Not at all stressful				somewhat stressful				extremely stressful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
8. Did the actor who engaged in the behavior believe his or her behavior harmed the target?  
  

Not at all harmful				somewhat harmful				extremely harmful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
9. Did the actor who engaged in the behavior express remorse?  
  

Not at all remorseful,				somewhat remorseful,				extremely remorseful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
10. How SEVERE would you rate this instance of discrimination?  
  

Not at all severe,	somewhat severe,	extremely severe
--------------------	------------------	------------------

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

For the following items, please rate how strongly you felt the emotion during the event. Choose the number that best corresponds with how you felt, 1 being not at all and 7 being very much

11. COMFORTABLE      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. SECURE            1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. CONFIDENT        1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. RELAXED           1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. UPSET              1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. INTIMIDATED      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. WORRIED          1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. ANXIOUS          1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. AFRAID            1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. TENSE              1 2 3 4 5 6 7

For the following items, please rate the degree to which you had the following concerns during the event. Choose the number that best corresponds with how you felt, 1 being not at all and 7 being very much

21. Concerned that I would be physically harmed      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. Concerned that my self-esteem would suffer      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. Concerned that my racial group's reputation would suffer      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I was unsure of the appropriate way to respond in this situation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. I was confident in my response to the event.      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I felt like I had the skills to deal with this situation while it was happening.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. How difficult was it for you to recall this event?      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX F  
DEBRIEFING FORM

The present study is part of a program of research that explores how people perceive and respond to witnessing discrimination. Over the past few decades, acts of blatant discrimination have decreased in frequency but subtle forms of discrimination are surprisingly frequent and lead to negative outcomes in terms of mental and physical health. Although minority group members are the typical targets of discrimination, majority and minority group members frequently witness these events and have the ability to reduce the negative consequences of discrimination by acting on behalf of, or in concert with, the minority group (Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair & Swim, 2008). The proposed research is a step toward understanding how people from different social groups perceive and respond to discrimination against a third party.

We asked you to describe and evaluate two times that you witnessed discrimination against a racial minority. One experience involved a time when a friend or family member discriminated against a racial minority group member and the other experience involved a time that a stranger discriminated against a racial minority group member. We will compare the perceptions of and reactions to both experiences and look at the ways that majority and minority group members differ in their emotional responses.

Not every interpersonal interaction contains the potential for discrimination, but when we see (or think we see) discrimination, we often have an emotional response (Swim, Cohen & Hyers, 1998). Most times, that response is anger, anxiety, or fear. We plan to examine the emotional responses of people that have witnessed racial discrimination. If one experiences these emotions, they are likely to feel threatened. We think that one's group membership will affect their response. If one witnesses discrimination against someone from their own racial group, they are likely to feel threatened on behalf of members of that racial group. If one witnesses discrimination committed by someone of the same racial group, threat may be experienced, but they are likely to feel that their self-esteem or personal identity is threatened because a fellow group member was responsible for a bad act and that reflects on their group, as a whole.

If you would like to learn more about the research that inspired the present studies, please contact Dr. Robyn Mallett, [rmallett@luc.edu](mailto:rmallett@luc.edu) or 773.508.3028. You may also wish to read the following articles:

Mallett, R.K & Swim, J.K. (2009). Making the Best of a Bad Situation: Proactive Coping with Racial Discrimination. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 31, 304-316.

Shelton, J.N., Richeson, J.A., & Vorauer, J.D. (2006). Threatened identities in interethnic interactions. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 17, 321-358.

## REFERENCES

- Allison, K.W. (1998). Stress and oppressed social category membership. In J.K. Swim & C. Stangor (Eds.), *Prejudice: The target's perspective* (145-170). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Armstead, C. A., Lawler, K. A., Gorden, G., Cross, J., & Gibbons, J. (1989). Relationship of racial stressors to blood pressure responses and anger expression in Black college students. *Health Psychology, 8*, 541-556.
- Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Interpersonal Relations and Group Processes, 63*, 596-612.
- Brewer, M. B. & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "we"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71*, 83-93.
- Czopp, A. M., Monteith, M. J., & Mark, A. Y. (2006). Standing up for a change: Reducing bias through interpersonal confrontation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*, 784-803.
- Devine, P. G., Monteith, M. J., Zuwerink, J. R., & Elliot, A. J. (1991). Prejudice with and without compunction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*, 817-830.
- Doosje, B., Branscombe, N. R., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. S. R. (1998). Guilty by association: When one's group has a negative history. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*, 872-886.
- Finlay, K. A., & Stephan, W. G. (2000). Reducing prejudice: The effects of empathy on intergroup attitudes. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*, 1720-1737.
- Flacke, J.M., Amaro, H., Jenkin, S.W., Kunitz, S., Levy, J., Mikon, M., & Yu, E. (1995). Panel I: Epidemiology of minority health. *Health Psychology, 14*, 592-600.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. J. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*, 992-1003.

- Hogg, M. A. (2006). Social identity theory. In P. J. Burke (Ed.), *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*. Stanford University Press: Stanford, 111-136.
- Holla back Chicago. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.hollabackchitown.blogspot.com/>.
- Inman, M. L. & Baron, R. S. (1996). Influence of prototypes on perceptions of prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70, 727-739.
- Jones, D. R., Harrell, J. P., Morris-Prather, C. E., Thomas, J., & Omowale, N. (1996) Affective and physiological responses to racism: The roles of afrocentrism and mode of presentation. *Ethnicity and Disease*, 6, 109-122.
- Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D. A., Schwarz, N. & Stone, A. A. (2004). A survey method for characterizing daily life experience: The day reconstruction method. *Science*, 306, 1776-1780.
- Landrine, H. & Klonoff, E. A. (1996). The schedule of racist events: A measure of racial discrimination and a study of its negative physical and mental health consequences. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 22, 144-168.
- Lord, C. G. & Saenz, D. S. (1985). Memory deficits and memory surfeits: Differential cognitive consequences of tokenism for tokens and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 49, 918-926.
- Mackie, D. M., Devos, T., & Smith, E. R. (2000). Intergroup emotions: Explaining offensive action tendencies in an intergroup context. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 602-616.
- Mallett, R. K., Huntsinger, J. R., Sinclair, S., & Swim, J. K. (2008). Seeing through their eyes: When majority group members take collective action on behalf of an outgroup. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 11, 451-470.
- Mallett, R. K. & Swim, J. K. (2004). Collective guilt in the United States: Predicting support for social policies that alleviate social injustice. In N. R. Branscombe & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Collective guilt: International perspectives* (56–74). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mallet, R. K. & Swim, J. K. (2005). Bring it on: Proactive coping with discrimination. *Motivation and Emotion*, 29, 411-441.
- Mallett, R. K. & Swim, J. K. (2009). Making the best of a bad situation: Proactive coping with racial discrimination. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 31, 304-316.

- Mendes, W. B., Blascovich, J., Hunter, S. B., Lickel, B., & Jost, J. T. (2007). Threatened by the unexpected: Responses during social interactions with expectancy-violating partners. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*, 698-716.
- Miller, C. T. & Major, B. (2000). Coping with stigma and prejudice. In T. F. Heatherton, R. E. Kleck, M. R. Hebl, & J. G. Hull (Eds.), *The social psychology of stigma* (243-272). New York: Guilford Press.
- New CTA ads aimed at stopping sexual harassment. (2009). Retrieved February 6, 2011, from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/09/new-cta-ads-aimed-at-stop\\_n\\_350626.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/09/new-cta-ads-aimed-at-stop_n_350626.html).
- Paolini, S., Hewstone, M., & Cairns, E. (2007). Direct and indirect friendship effects: Testing the moderating role of the affective-cognitive bases of prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *33*, 1406-1420.
- Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L. M., & Malle, B. F. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *67*, 741-763.
- Shrauger, J. S., & Schoeneman, T. J. (1979). Symbolic interactionist view of self-concept: Through the looking glass darkly. *Psychological Bulletin*, *86*, 549-573.
- Shelton, J. N., Richeson, J. A., & Salvatore, J. (2005). Expecting to be the target of prejudice: Implications for interethnic interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *31*, 1189-1202.
- Shelton, J. N., Richeson, J. A., & Vorauer, J. D. (2006). Threatened identities and interethnic interactions. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *17*, 321-358.
- Stangor, C., Swim, J. K., Sechrist, G. B., DeCoster, J., Van Allen, K. L., & Ottenbreit, A. (2003). Ask, answer, and announce: Three stages in perceiving and responding to discrimination. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *14*, 277-311.
- Stephan, W. G. & Finlay, K. (1999). The role of empathy in improving intergroup relations. *Journal of Social Issues*, *55*, 729-743.
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, *62*, 271-286.
- Swim, J. K., Hyers, L. L., Cohen, L. L., Fitzgerald, D. C., & Bylsma, W. H. (2003). African American college students' experiences with everyday racism:

Characteristics of and responses to these incidents. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 29, 38-67.

Swim, J. K. & Stangor, C. (1998). *Prejudice: The target's perspective*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Trawalter, S., Richeson, J. A., & Shelton, J. N. (2009). Predicting behavior during interracial interactions: A stress and coping approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 13, 243-268.

Tropp, L. R. (2008). The role of trust in intergroup contact: Its significance and implications for improving relations between groups. In U. Wagner, L. R. Tropp, G. Finchilescu, & C. Tredoux (Eds.), *Improving intergroup relations: Building on the legacy of Thomas F. Pettigrew*. (91-106). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Tropp, L. R. & Wright, S. C. (2001). Ingroup identification as the inclusion of ingroup in the self. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 585-600.

White, C. H. (2008). Expectancy violations theory and interaction adaptation theory. In L. A. Baxter & D. O. Braithewaite (Eds.), *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (189-202). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Woodzicka, J. A. & LaFrance, M. (2001). Real versus imagined gender harassment. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57, 15-30.

## VITA

Hilary Slover was born in Granite City, Illinois and grew up in Melbourne, Florida. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she attended the University of Central Florida where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, cum laude, in 2009.

While at Loyola, Hilary was involved with several projects, including two program evaluation projects. She was awarded the Social Psychology Graduate Student Research Scholarship in 2010 for her thesis work.

Currently, she holds a position with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, Office of Evaluation and Inspections as a Program Analyst. She lives in Chicago, Illinois.