THE ACCEPTANCE OF A MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AMONG APPALACHIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS*

Hideko Asada,** Eric Swank,‡,# and Gregory T. Goldey[&]

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This study explores the multicultural predispositions of 437 students in a Central Appalachian university. After selecting students from a wide range of majors, this article shows which sort of multicultural programs garner weaker and stronger support in this undergraduate population. Following this descriptive elaboration, a set of OLS regressions tests a wide range of competing explanatory prepositions. Some of the explanatory models draw from familiar demographic and university-effect variables. However, this article expands on the education literature by drawing from some sociological, psychological and political science studies of American reactions to other multicultural programs (i.e., Affirmative Action, school desegregation, and welfare reform). By adding the variables on symbolic racism, authoritarianism and beliefs in American meritocracy, the final mix of 21 independent variables produces a somewhat robust model. Moreover, this analysis also identifies which educational practices seem to encourage a greater appreciation of a multicultural learning process. Finally, we address issues of generalizing to a national population by comparing our findings to case studies of multicultural education at other universities.

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KEY WORDS: cultural pluralism; racial attitudes; college environment; peer relationships; diversity.

INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, the topic of multiculturalism has created many public debates. For example, California's Proposition 227, which seeks to end bilingual education, was passed by the 61% of Californian voters (Facts on File, 1998).

With a majority of voters backing this proposal, it seems that most Californians do not prize linguistic diversity. In the popular press, the notion of multiculturalism is often attacked by pundits who believe that a culturally diverse curriculum hurts white students and destroys the foundation of a classical Western education (Bloom, 1987; Hirsch, 1987; Schlesinger, 1992).

The academic literatures focus less on polemical matters and more on the descriptions of multicultural teaching pedagogies. Regrettably, there are few systematic studies on student reactions to these multicultural pedagogies (Beckham, 1999; Levine and Cureton, 1998; Lopez, Holliman, and Peng, 1995). With most of these studies being descriptive, there are even fewer studies that explain the reasons behind the adherence to certain multicultural predispositions (Astin, 1993; Hughes-Miller, Anderson, Cannon, Perez, and Moore, 1998; Pascarella et al., 1996). Moreover, most of these explanatory studies are in the early stages of knowledge development. That is, most studies have sampled students from a single academic major and have used a small number of predictor variables (Bronstein and Gibson, 1998; Nell, 1993; Pohn, 1996; Tettegah, 1997).

The more extensive studies of multicultural attitudes have focused on the "liberalizing effects" of college (Astin, 1993; Pascarella et al., 1996). That is, these studies look at how student perceptions are altered by immediate collegiate contexts. While these inquires are a good start, they fail to take into account the larger social processes that sway American multicultural attitudes. Since student lives reach beyond the campus, this study includes many of these noncollegiate variables that have predicted American attitudes toward the multicultural and race-targeted programs.

In addition to the inclusion of many sorts of independent variables, this article has a unique sampling component. Earlier studies on student multicultural attitudes have only looked at national or urban samples (Bronstein and Gibson, 1998; Lopez et al., 1995). As such, these studies gloss over regional differences. However, students from universities in different geographical areas might be more prone to the acceptance or rejection of multiculturalism. For example, students attending Deep-South colleges might have very different attitudes toward multiculturalism than students at Urban Northeastern universities. Therefore, this articled is unique in that it explores the ideas of students in a state university located in Central Appalachia. By doing so, we can examine reactions to a multicultural education in a region that is predominantly white, extremely poor, and very rural.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In beginning this theoretical elaboration, a definition of "multiculturalism" seems in order. At a general level, multiculturalism is the recognition that the United States does not have a monolithic culture and that "to understand the

nature and complexities of American culture, it is crucial to study and comprehend the widest possible array of the contributing cultures" (Levine, 1996, p. 11). To achieve an adequate level of comprehension, a multicultural education should contain a curriculum that emphasizes some understandings of traditionally ignored peoples, a pedagogy that enhances critical thinking, and an atmosphere that promotes widespread interactions of individuals from diverse social backgrounds (American Council on Education, 1989; La Belle and Ward, 1996).

Demographic Factors

Gender has frequently been used in studies that deal with race-targeted policies and cultural diversity (Astin, 1993; Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Pascarella et al., 1996). Most of these quantitative studies identify a gender gap and conclude that women show more positive attitudes toward race-targeted policies than men (Hughes-Miller et al., 1998; Link and Oldendick, 1996; Milem, 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996; Qualls, Cox, and Schehr, 1992; Seltzer, Frazier, and Ricks, 1995; Springer et al., 1996; Stack, 1997; Wood and Chesser, 1994).

The age of a person has shown mixed results. Some studies show that older respondents favor multiculturalism (Link and Oldendick, 1996), while other studies find that older populations hold more negative attitudes toward minority groups (Seltzer et al., 1995). Ironically, other studies find that age has no bearing on the acceptance of multiculturalism or on general racial attitudes (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Hughes-Miller et al., 1998; Sears, van Laar, Carrillo, and Kosterman, 1997).

Many scholars have argued that economic status can influence racial attitudes. Early proponents of the "hard hat" thesis argue that people from the working class are highly antagonistic to minority groups and are less supportive of race-targeted policies (Lipset, 1961). However, the research on this thesis has displayed mixed results. In a few cases, some empirical studies suggest that racial antagonism is higher in the working class. For instance, some studies suggest that manual workers were more pessimistic about the legitimacy of race-based programs (Grabb, 1980; Ransford, 1972), and lower class individuals who faced economic crisis were more likely to feel threatened by minority groups (Quillian, 1996). Conversely, most recent studies found that racial biases are equally distributed between the different social classes (Dekker and Ester, 1987; Ray, 1988) and that income presents no effects on attitudes toward multiculturalism or race-targeted programs (Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Link and Oldendick, 1996; Tuch and Hughes, 1996). Finally, some studies even conclude that lower income individuals are more likely to support equality and social welfare programs (Kinder and Sanders, 1996; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, and Krysan, 1997). In effect, these studies conclude that those who are economically disadvantaged tend to support policies that have a redistributive nature.

Some works argue that the degree of urbanism carried some explanatory weight. For instance, Frendreis and Tatalovich (1997) found that residents from small towns tended to support English-only legislation more frequently than their metropolitan counterparts. Also, Seltzer and his colleagues (1995) found that suburban residents are more likely to oppose multiculturalism than city dwellers. In contrast, other studies reveal that living in urban or rural settings does not predict attitudes toward race-targeted policies (Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Hughes-Miller et al., 1998; Tuch and Hughes, 1996).

Finally, the geographical aspect of this sample brings the variable of Appalachian status. Since systematic studies on Appalachian racial attitudes are almost unheard of, one can only guess about the impact of this characteristic. If Appalachians view themselves as a cultural minority, they might think that it is in their best interest to include more information on subordinated groups. Conversely, the perceptions of Appalachians may not lead to a greater appreciation of racial injustices. In fact, Smith and Bylund's (1983) survey found that Appalachians are less likely to believe that racism is a large problem in the United States. Thus, it is possible that Appalachian college students may be like other rural white counterparts who are less receptive to multicultural education.

Ideological Interpretations and Social Hierarchies

The second cluster of variables deals with general orientations to societal institutions. It is assumed that people who embrace the status quo will see no need to alter the traditional collegiate curriculum. While the issue of legitimacy applies to many institutions, the concepts of "authoritarianism" and "perceived economic meritocracies" have been the best predictors of race program attitudes (Alvarez and Brehm, 1997; Sidanius, Devereux, and Pratto, 1991).

In testing the authoritarian argument, some studies conclude that people's attitudes toward obedience and conformity have a bearing on their acceptance of racial policies (Alvarez and Brehm, 1997), and an internalization of authoritarianism increases the degree of prejudice (Weigel and Howes, 1985). Thus, people with strong authoritarian predispositions might oppose multiculturalism. Similarly, some Americans whole-heartedly believe that the economic system fairly allocates rewards to talented and hardworking individuals. This faith in a meritocracy can result in blaming the poor for their poverty and has a significant impact on opposition to welfare and affirmative action (Alvarez and Brehm, 1997; Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Gilens, 1995; Sidanius et al., 1991).

Racial Worldviews: Overt Stereotypes, Symbolic Racism, and Racial Resentment

The third set of variables highlights the salience of particular racial attitudes. Rather than looking at a respondent's social status or general social values, these

variables focus on how people decipher the complicated and politically charged world of U.S. race relations.

Throughout U.S. history, racist ideologies have blamed racial inequalities on the personal shortcomings of blacks, Asians, Latinos and Native Americans. Although the absolute numbers of "overt bigots" have declined in the last 50 years, many Americans retain negative racial stereotypes. It fact, it is estimated that somewhere between 40% and 60% of white Americans believe that racial minorities are lazy, unintelligent, violent, and more likely to be welfare cheats who are hard to get along with (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Gilens, 1995). Predictably, studies have found that whites who cling to such derogatory characterizations are very likely to oppose the programs that celebrate or assist racial minorities (Alvarez and Brehm, 1997; Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Gilens, 1995; Link and Oldendick, 1996; Sigelman and Welch, 1993; Taylor, 1998).

Based on these studies, it is almost self-evident that those who hold overt prejudices will be against multiculturalism. However, as straightforward as this claim seems, the exact role of old-fashioned prejudice remains unclear. The doubts lays in the fact that fewer and fewer whites will publicly endorse stereotypical statements, although the general opposition to busing and affirmative action has remained intact.

To comprehend this anomaly, Sears (1988) has argued that a large percentage of whites have shifted to a new sort of "symbolic" or "contemporary racism." In modifying their racist repertories, Sears contends that symbolic racists do not condone disparaging or derogatory portrayals of minorities. Instead, the symbolic racist implicitly supports contemporary racial inequities by minimizing the existence of institutional discrimination. That is, these individuals insist that American racism is a thing of the past and racism has not endured. Subsequently, with a perceived absence of contemporary biases, it seems bizarre to symbolic racists that minorities keep complaining about a nonexistent entity. In effect, minority activists are seen as malcontents who keep fabricating racial problems that do not exist. Lastly, if one does not notice any racial injustices, programs such as Affirmative Action or bilingual education are seen as unnecessary wastes of money that address imagined problems (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Quillian, 1996; Sidanius et al., 1991; Tuch and Hughes, 1996).

Another segment of the population may not be simply annoyed by "misguided" or "pointless" racial policies. Instead, some whites may perceive racial policies as an encroachment on assumed white entitlements; that is, racial programs may be detested since they challenge the very notion of white privilege (e.g., content will not primarily revolve around the experiences of WASP males). In turn, this perception of altering traditional racial arrangements can be seen as an unfair strike against whites. Kinder and Sanders (1996) write that "racial

resentment features indignation as a central emotional theme, one provoked by the sense that Black Americans are getting and taking more than their fair share" (p. 293). And while multicultural educations may not elicit as much anger as Affirmative Action programs, it might be seen as part of an insidious trend that strips whites of their earlier advantages (i.e., cultural icons like Thomas Jefferson may now be seen as adulterers, and whites might have to learn about the lives Chicana maids).

University Contexts and Experiences

The last group of variables relates to the impact of college settings. Although the students described in this article attend the same institution, their daily experiences and routines are not identical. In turn, these variables deal with the unique academic and extracurricular encounters that might affect a student's multicultural attitudes. There are many reasons to attend college. Students who are intrinsically motivated to learn about the human condition tend to promote multiculturalism, and those who came for vocational or "partying" purposes are less likely to embrace multiculturalism (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994; Springer et al., 1996).

Once a person becomes a student, their exposure to different segments of the curriculum can be eventful. Some studies argue that the years of education can produce a very small pro-multicultural effect (Case, 1990; Hughes-Miller et al., 1998; Miville, Molla, and Sedlacek, 1992; Seltzer et al., 1995). However, the years of education might have less of a bearing than the types of classes that students have completed. Many studies argue that those who engage in ethnic or gendered courses are more likely to show favorable attitudes toward racial diversity (Astin, 1993; Black, 1994; Hughes-Miller et al., 1998; Milem, 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996; Royse and Riffe, 1999; Springer et al., 1996). However, some projects found that the number of multicultural classes taken had no bearing on the student commitment to social justice (Moran, 1989), and students saw a more just society after they completed a class on social oppression (Van Soest, 1996). Also, students tend to be more receptive to cultural diversity when they see their professors incorporating some multicultural content into their classroom (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994; Miville et al., 1992).

Although classroom interactions can modify student perceptions, the informal sphere of student friendships might also drive this relationship. Students seem to like multicultural educations more when they think their peers accept interracial dating (Hughes-Miller et al., 1998). Likewise, students who socialize with liberal buddies seem to have a greater acceptance of cultural diversity (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994). Finally, according to the contact thesis, the act of working or spending free time with people from other races can lessen one's level of prejudice. However, the relationship between interracial contacts and racial ideas may not be that simple. Some studies find that casual contacts with neigh-

bors, workers, and schoolmates makes no difference in racial attitudes (Ellison and Powers, 1994; Powers and Ellison, 1995; Smith, 1994). Conversely, other studies find that extended contacts with racial out-group members generally leads to more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, and Ropp, 1997) or that hostility toward racial groups only decreases after one starts a close interracial friendship (Sigelman and Welch, 1993).

Finally, the liberalizing effect of the university can be mitigated by other factors. Some studies suggest that students who live on campus are more likely to back multicultural efforts than their commuting counterparts (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996). Similarly, students who work full time have been found to be less favorable to a multicultural education (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994). Finally, members of Greek organizations seem to be less open to cultural diversity (Milem, 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996) and have higher levels of negative racial prejudices (Morris, 1991; Muir, 1991; Wood and Chesser, 1994).

By synthesizing an interdisciplinary literature review, this study has identified 21 pertinent variables. In grouping these variables into separate domains, this study has assembled four distinct models. Model 1 contains four demographic variables (gender, age, income, urbanism), Model 2 presents two ideological factors (authoritarianism, and the belief in meritocracy), Model 3 has three racial attitudes (old-fashioned stereotypes, symbolic racism, and racial resentment), and Model 3 incorporates 11 university influences (college motivations, academic year, academic achievement, multicultural coursework, liberal professors, multicultural professors, liberal peers, interactions with minority students, dorm residence, off-campus employment, and Greek membership). With these demographic, ideological, race perceptions, and university models in place, the remainder of this article explores our research design and multivariate analyses.

RESEARCH METHODS

Sampling Procedures

To gather the data, this study conveniently drew from the students at our home institution. Being a regional university in Eastern Kentucky, most of the students are rural undergraduate whites (95.2% of the 8,000 students are Euro-American and 4.3% are African American). Moreover, many of the students are first-generation college students, and there is a noticeable contingency of older returning students (only 7% of the surrounding counties have adults have bachelor's degrees and 24% of the students are over 25 years old). Finally, a large percentage of the students grew up in economically distressed communities. The university's most serviced counties have per capita incomes around $11,000 and poverty rates above 35% (Rural Development Working Group, 1995).

Adding to the homogeneity of the student body is an administration that

places a minimal emphasis on creating a racially diverse setting. The university has few minority professors, rarely invites minority speakers, and has an underfinanced minority recruitment program [the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education sanctioned the college for not reaching five of its eight Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) goals in 2000]. The college has never established any black, Asian, Chicano, or women's studies departments, and only a small smattering of race, Appalachian, and women studies classes are offered in a few departments.

The sample was drawn from students who were attending official classes (the fourth and fifth weeks of Fall 1998). Since previous research suggests that racial attitudes vary by student major (Astin, 1993; Milem, 1994), we created a stratified sample of five categories of classes: business, the hard sciences, humanities, social sciences, and human services. To do so, we alphabetized the names of the professors in each area and contacted every fourth professor. In the end, we personally distributed surveys to a broad spectrum of disciplines (two marketing, two math, one chemistry, one biology, three English, two Spanish, one sociology, one government, two social work, two nursing, one golf, and one education).

After distributing the surveys, 437 usable surveys were collected. The ages of the respondents ranged from 17–51 years old, with 76.8% of students falling in the traditional bracket of 17–22 (Mean = 22.2, SD = 5.9). Similar to the contours of the official student body, the sample had a majority of women (59.2%) and was predominantly white (92%). When exploring the class backgrounds of students, a large percentage came from impoverished backgrounds. About 15% of the students earned, or came from families with, an income of less than $15,000 a year, and approximately 6% placed themselves in the income bracket between $15,000 and $20,000. However, the sample also contains a large faction of middle- and upper-middle-class incomes, as slightly more than 30% of them put themselves in the category of $50,000 or more. Since the university is a commuter school in rural Appalachia, it was not surprising that almost 51% of the students grew up in rural areas, 27% lived in small towns, and only 15% said they were raised in the center-city or the suburbs.

Measurement and Operationalizations

Like the American Council on Education (1989), we identified three aspects of a multicultural education: (a) accentuating a pluralistic college environment; (b) multicultural curriculum improvements; and (c) recruitment and retention of minority faculty and students (Hughes-Miller et al., 1998). With these attributes in mind, we created a 6-item multicultural education index. The first two items dealt with enhancing the college context ("There should be special events or workshops to celebrate different cultures," and "This college should have women's studies or black studies majors"). Please note that the idea of "pluralistic

environment" can be interpreted as the rights of *other* students to get a multicultural education. Other items explored a more compulsory multicultural education. Two questions dealt with issues that would affect *all* students since they argued for a campuswide multicultural education ("The perspectives of a wide range of ethnic groups should be included in the curriculum," and "More content on women and minorities should be taught in required courses"). The next question dealt with their personal desire for a multicultural education ("I wish my college had more information on minority issues"). The last question dealt with university hiring practices ("The school staff should reflect ethnic and cultural diversity"). In the end, this multidimensional index hung together and presented a respectable Cronbach's α of .885.

Most of the independent variables were measured with the 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). For the authoritarianism scale, one item emphasized the importance of children respecting authority figures; the second question looked at the perceived benefits of a strong legal system (Cronbach's α = .635). The meritocracy item professed "Anyone who works hard can succeed" (Gilens, 1995).

The stereotype index employed four racist meta-narratives (Cronbach's α = .618). Respondents were if asked minorities were "generally lazy," "more intelligent," "like to be supported by welfare," and "are easy to get along with" (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Gilens, 1995; Link and Oldendick, 1996; Sigelman and Welch, 1997). We measured symbolic racism by crafting an item on racial denial. The statement read: "Minorities frequently see racism where it does not exist." The first question in our racial resentment index said, "Blacks unfairly use affirmative action for their own benefit," and the second insisted that the "government gives Blacks more attention then they deserve" (Kinder and Sanders, 1996; Sears, 1988; Seltzer et al., 1995). The third question bemoaned "minorities are too demanding when they push for equal rights," and the last question stressed that "teachers spend too much time looking at different cultures" (Cronbach's α = .637).

Several of the university variables used the 5-point Lickert scale. The concept of collegiate motivations focused on a social incentive for attending college: "I went to college to party" (Easterlin, 1991; Springer et al., 1996). When addressing the perceived liberalism of others we wrote: "Most of my friends are liberal" and "Most of my professors are liberal." The measure for multicultural professors read: "Most of my professors use readings or materials on racial and/or gender related issues."

Other independent variables were measured and coded in a dichotomous manner. For the variable multicultural class, a dummy code was applied to the question: "At college(s), did you take any minority or gender-related courses such as American Minority Relations, Appalachian Studies, or Women's Studies?" (1 = yes, 0 = no). Likewise, gender, dorm living, Greek membership, and off-

campus work were coded in a similar fashion (i.e., 1 = female, 0 = male or 1 = Greek, 0 = Non-Greek). Finally, the matter of Appalachian residency status was identified by a person's long-term county of residence (the yes for an Appalachian counties was derived via Raitz and Ulack's 1984 Appalachian classification schemata).

Other items had more idiosyncratic scales. Our income item asked about recent family income (the scale started at zero, expanded by $5,000 intervals, and ended at $100,000 plus). In looking at the degree of urbanism, respondents were given five responses that ranged from a rural to a large metropolitan center area. When assessing class standing, student rankings were translated into numbers (1 = freshman to 4 = senior). The matter of academic achievement was accessed through the students' self-identified grade point average (GPA). To measure interracial contacts, we coupled an 8-point frequency scale of every day to never with the question: "At college, how often do you spend free time with members of other races?"

RESULTS

Descriptive Results: Attitudes Toward Multicultural Goals

Although educators and pundits have expressed some strong multicultural opinions, it is clear that most of these students were much less certain (see Table 1). In identifying eager multiculturalists, only one item hit the double digit Strongly Agree (the presence of a workshop). Conversely, fierce objections were equally scarce since only the issue of multicultural majors netted the double digit Strongly Disagree.

Rather than seeing many multicultural champions or opponents, most students gave neutral or lukewarm responses (the modal scores were either Agrees or Not Sure). More precisely, the ambivalent answer of Not Sure consistently netted between 30% to 47% of the students, and moderate approvals fluctuated between 23% and 40% for every statement. Clearly, this meant that most students either faintly condoned or were indifferent to a multicultural experience.

As modest support and uncertainty generally prevailed, some noticeable shifts emerged in some cases. The largest instances of mild advocacy occurred in the optional affairs that did not directly impinge on every student lifeworld (providing multicultural workshops, having a multicultural staff, or creating multicultural majors). This means that almost half of the students mildly accepted a multicultural education when it was seen as voluntary and easy to avoid. However, when a multicultural education was framed as a universal requirement, many of the students were less enthusiastic. For example, when multiculturalism was seen as a part of required classes, the Disagrees shot up to 24% while the Agrees dipped to 23%. Similarly, student negativity rose on the topic of personal

TABLE 1. Percent Responses to the Multicultural Education Index

Item Wording	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	S.D.
Multicultural workshops							
There should be special events or workshops to celebrate different cultures	12.3	37.2	30.0	12.3	8.1	3.33	1.09
Representative multicultural staff							
The school staff should reflect ethnic and cultural diversity	9.0	40.6	32.3	12.8	5.3	3.35	0.99
Add multicultural majors							
This college should have women's studies or black studies majors	9.5	31.6	37.7	11.2	10.0	3.19	1.08
Widespread multicultural curriculum							
The perspectives of a wide range of ethnic groups should be included in the curriculum	7.0	42.5	32.5	12.3	5.8	3.32	0.97
Multiculturalism in Gen Ed classes							
More content on women and minorities should be taught in required courses.	7.4	23.0	36.4	24.4	8.8	2.95	1.06
Personal desire for multicultural learning							
I wish my college had more information on minority issues	4.4	23.0	47.2	17.9	7.4	2.99	0.94

desires for a multicultural learning (NS = 47% and D = 17%). Thus, we can conclude that while almost half of the students supported the availability of a multicultural education, approximately three fourths of these same students believed that a multicultural education was not germane to their studies or lifestyle (indicating a high level of white ethnocentrism and/or a general indifference to learning anything about cultural norms). In other words, a large group of students approved of multicultural experiences as long as they are an elective, but when a multicultural education is pitched as widespread and mandatory, much

of their support turns into ambivalence or full-out opposition (confirming Beck-ham's 1999 national survey results).

This provisional support of race policies is not new to the race-relations litera-ture. In naming this the "implementation gap," Bobo and Hutchings (1996) and Sears (1988) found that many whites are open to the abstract principles of racial equality until those principles are converted into actual programs (i.e., Affirma-tive Action). Thus, our data mirrors the findings that many whites are cultural pluralists as long as this commitment does not impinge on their current lifestyle. However, much of these liberal sentiments disappear when race programs ask for some alterations in their daily routines.

Explanatory Statistics: The Factors that Influence
Multicultural Acceptance

We created a hierarchical regression based on the grouping of demographic, ideological, racial perceptions, and the college factors. This procedure occurred for several reasons. First, each model kept similar variables together. Second, the multiple regression controls for the effects of other independent variables (for bivariate correlations see the appendix). Third, R^2s estimate the accumula-tive impact for all of the entered models. Fourth, a sequential approach high-lights the additional explanatory power for the new variables that were added to the model (F score indicates whether the new model contributed a significant amount of explained variance).

Model 1: Demographic Factors

Column 1 in Table 2 contains the standardized β weights for the demographic variables. As a whole, this group was not that powerful since the R^2 suggests that this model explained only 11% of the variance in the multicultural educa-tion index. Some of this small impact could be explained by the statistical insig-nificance for two of the five variables. Multicultural attitudes did not signifi-cantly vary by the amount of urbanism nor did the students from Appalachian counties show a distinct outlook. However, three variables presented a statisti-cally significant impact; the gender of a person presented the biggest contribu-tion. With a moderate association, women had more positive attitudes toward multiculturalism. Age presented a significant but weaker effect, with older stu-dents being slightly more supportive of multiculturalism. Finally, income showed another weak relationship. In contrast to the theories that locate racism among the poor and working class, our findings indicate that the more affluent students presented greater opposition to cultural diversity. Thus, the initial regression suggests that it is the older female students from modest economic conditions

TABLE 2. Standardized Betas for the Regression on the Multicultural Education Index: All Models

IV	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Female	.204(0.489)**	.135(0.509)**	.017(0.450)	.006(0.486)
Age	.129(0.050)*	.060(0.050)	.064(0.043)	.047(0.051)
Income	−.122(0.087)*	−.100(0.085)*	−.056(0.073)	−.054(0.074)
Urbanism	.072(0.238)	.075(0.237)	.007(0.224)	.003(0.231)
Appalachian	−.044(0.546)	−.057(0.541)	−.049(0.466)	−.078(0.481)
Authority		−.104(0.176)*	−.063(0.151)	−.062(0.158)
Meritocracy		.138(0.216)**	.064(0.184)	.056(0.191)
Stereotype			.171(0.098)**	.144(0.101)**
Symbolic racism			.125(0.238)**	.127(0.248)**
Resentment			.393(0.094)**	.383(0.097)**
College motives				−.011(0.217)
Class standing				−.004(0.237)
Academic achievement				−.029(0.426)
MC courses				.200(0.651)**
Professor—liberal				.031(0.276)
Professor—multi-cultural				.078(0.213)*
Peer–liberal				.117(0.264)**
Free time w/minority				.116(0.130)**
Dorm				.063(0.497)
Off-campus job				.026(0.019)
Greek				−.030(0.587)
R^2	0.113	0.183	0.476	0.499
F score		4.403**	20.235**	2.361**

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. F scores indicate the significance of the explained variance that was added through the new set of variables.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

who are more supportive of the multicultural imperative, while younger, more affluent male students are the program's largest critics.

Model 2: Demographic and Ideological Factors

Model 2 combines the ideological factors with the demographic variables. While the R^2 boost of .069 was not dramatic, this change was large enough to conclude that the ideological variables added a significant contribution ($F =$

4.403). Moreover, the inclusion of these new perceptions altered the relationship of previously significant variables. When controlling for the ideological issues, the effects of age disappeared. Thus, we can conclude that age by itself does not drive the relationship, but rather the beliefs of these older people are what really matter. Conversely, the impact of gender and income shrunk some, but they still remained statistically significant.

With authoritarianism and beliefs in a meritocracy showing some significant results, the combination of these models shows some interesting insights. Students who are female, poorer, less authoritarian, and doubt the reality of an U.S. meritocracy are the type of student who tend to support multiculturalism. Conversely, richer males who believe in "law and order" and "American economic fairness" are less agreeable to multicultural goals.

Model 3: Demographic, Ideological and Racial Attitudes

The inclusion of the racial attitudinal measures dramatically improved the explanatory power of the independent variables. Rather than seeing a small increase, the R^2 grew by 31%, to .476 (the F was significant at 20.235). The potency of the racism variables was prominent enough to nullify the effects of previously significant variables. For example, the significance of gender, income, and the ideological variables dissipated after the racial orientations were introduced.

All three of the racial interpretations showed unique effects. Both the amount of internalized stereotypes and the denial of racism displayed significant results. However, the resentment variable clearly surpassed the strength of all other variables since it matched the moderate level of influence (.393).

In making sense of these findings, some trends become apparent. Demographic and general ideological characteristics have little consequences when the perceptions of race relations are placed in the model. Thus, a student's ascribed social status and general reverence for U.S. institutions do not seem to be that important when exploring multicultural sentiments. Instead, the way in which people perceive the righteousness of the racial order is what matters. Additionally, it is clear that both the "older" and "newer" versions of racist ideas seem to predict the preferences for a multicultural education. That is, if whites think minorities are inferior, that racism does not exist, and that minorities are challenging their place of privileged, then they are generally opposed to any efforts of a multicultural education.

Model 4: Demographic, Ideological, Racial Attitudes, and University Factors

The last regression merged the university variables into the formula. As individual predictors, few of the university variables added much explanatory power. Greek membership did not create a greater acceptance of a multicultural educa-

tion, nor did student GPA, student class standing, the place of residence, and the responsibility of an off-campus job. Conversely, four of the university variables netted some significant results. These significant variables all dealt with perceptions of social cues and reference groups. When students intentionally participated in racially integrated social settings, they are more supportive of a multicultural education. Similarly, when professors and student friends were seen as multicultural proponents, the students were more prone to see themselves as multicultural advocates. Moreover, students who have completed multicultural classes were more appreciative of a multicultural experience. Thus, the importance of creating pro-multiculturalism social environment must be stressed. That is, if student and professional subcultures both affirm the value of a multicultural education, then students are more likely to embrace the multiculturalism notion.

As most of these variables left little impressions, the R^2 was increased only by .023, to .499. In fact, with these university variables providing such a small boost, it seems safe to assume that racial predispositions of undergraduate students outweighs most effects of the university's social milieu. However, even with this smaller effect, researchers should not neglect university factors since these variables established a statistically significant F score.

When making some final assessments of the total model, some insights emerge. First, when simultaneously addressing every variable, none of the demographic or ideological variables show any impact. Therefore, much of the essentialist assumptions about the gender gap, working-class racism, the liberalism of urbanites, and the distinct racial views of Appalachians went unsubstantiated in the total model. Second, while the extent to which a person accepts economic and other hierarchies seems to explain general attitudes to Affirmative Action, it does not predict the student's multicultural attitudes in this sample. Third, these findings highlight the importance of racially politicized interpretations. When students envision their college friends as liberals and professors as multicultural, then they are more likely to be multicultural supporters. Similarity, the act of taking a multicultural class seems to stimulate some greater multicultural affinities. Students who hold derogatory notions of minorities and insist that racism has disappeared, however, are those who generally rebuke a multicultural education. But of all of these variables, it is clear that the degree of racial resentment is the best predictor variable. We can therefore reasonably conclude that people who feel cheated by present racial relations will be the first to join an antimulticulturalism backlash.

DISCUSSION

Before addressing the ramifications of this research, we should reiterate some of our methodological limitations. The use of cross-sectional data is problematic since it cannot present the temporal order of events. For example, without longitudinal cohort data it is impossible to determine if favorable multicultural per-

ceptions preceded or followed the completion of a multicultural class. Furthermore, the use of surveys carries inherent shortcomings. There is always an issue of social desirability, and measures are never perfect. For example, to save space some of our measures used the general concept of "minority." However, the use of such a broad term can be misleading since it might gloss over issues of attitudinal variance toward different sorts of minorities; a person might hate Mexicans, love Filipinos, despise gays, and respect Jews. Furthermore, some readers may not be totally pleased with our operationalization of multiculturalism. Empowerment scholars such as Banks (1988) might complain that the items simply asked students about knowledge acquisition and did not address the issue of using this new knowledge for social transformation (Banks calls this the additive vs. social reconstruction notions of multiculturalism). In matters of sampling, the attitudes of these Appalachian students may not reflect the attitudes of all white Americans. In fact, two case studies suggest some difference in the multicultural perspectives between these students and students from large research universities in Florida and Michigan (Bronstein and Gibson, 1998; Lopez et al., 1995). Conversely, this generalizability concerns may be overstated since studies of other commuter colleges have discovered distributions of multicultural attitudes that are similar to ours (Levine and Cureton, 1998; Pohn, 1996; Smith, Roberts, and Smith, 1997; Tettegah, 1997). Finally, the use of hierarchical regressions only explores the direct contributions of independent variables. Since it is possible that some of the variables that lost statistical significance could have indirect effects, future researchers might want to explore these relationships through path analytic procedures.

Even with these methodological constraints, these results can be important to educational researchers and planners. To the possible dismay of conservative commentators, the students of Eastern Kentucky demonstrated some tepid support of multicultural goals. Most agreed that multicultural information should be available at the university and the college should hire more minority faculty/staff. However, this support seems to be conditional to many students. Substantial segments favored the availability of multicultural classes but most were reluctant to make these classes a requirement to graduate (for similar results see Beckham, 1999). Furthermore, only about one fourth of the students said they felt personally compelled to learn more about cultural diversity. Thus, we might conclude that a large number of white students faintly condone a multicultural education, but they are not enthusiastic about involving themselves in such experiences.

The explanatory findings added more insights to this topic. This article accentuates the importance of certain racial attributions. When students internalize negative racial stereotypes they are more likely to reject a multicultural education. Moreover, students who recoil from a multicultural education are the same students who ignore or dismiss any indications of present-day racism. Finally, students seem to abhor a multicultural education when they think whites suffer from

a more inclusionary education. Thus, the white students who maintain that "minorities are inferior," "no racism occurs," and "reverse discrimination is rampant" are typically those who disavow the virtues of a multicultural education.

However, this article does not show that these values are the only factors that shape a multicultural outlook. The data indicates that multicultural attitudes may not be static and that certain university factors did and did not diminish parochial attitudes. The findings suggests that most demographic and university variables showed no statistical impact. For example, a student's gender, geographical background, work status, or Greek membership seemed irrelevant. Conversely, multicultural classes and multicultural readings seem to enhance an interest in multicultural learning. In turn, this indicates that university programs and individual professors should continue their efforts to incorporate more multicultural material into the formal curriculum. Moreover, this study underscores the relevance of college peer groups. Not surprisingly, students who choose liberal friends also endorse a multicultural education. Similarly, students seem to appreciate a multicultural education when they have racially heterogeneous friendships. Subsequently, educators might try to facilitate such friendships. To do so, programs must initially create an environment that welcomes minority students; this may be a rare event in and of itself. In turn, universities should arrange events and settings that provide some opportunities of interracial exchanges (i.e., music clubs, racially integrated dorms, international student placements). However, the creation of such events should not place minority students in uncomfortable scenarios. Universities must resist any procedures that place minority students in the tiring position of always explaining racism to their white counterparts.

In the end, this study substantiates the multicultural maxim that educators should try to construct formal and informal settings that reinforce promulticulturalism sentiments. However, there is an important caveat. If a professor wishes to enlist multicultural sympathies from most white students, instructors must prudently invent a multicultural experience that does not seem to be imposed or obligatory. Otherwise, a multicultural education can trigger a backlash of white resentment (Van Soest, 1996), a backlash that is predicated on the stipulation that whites should learn about "brown peoples" in their own terms and timeline.

As researchers, we hope future studies build on our theoretical groundwork. We would like to see if our findings would be replicated in a national sample of college students. It seems wise to speculate as to whether the inclusion of racial attitudes will always drown out the effects of gender, income, age, or the university variables. As teachers, we see that this study reconfirms the notion that racial resentments and stereotypes are issues that must be tackled by progressive educators. Furthermore, we can see that a multicultural education is not simply a futile exercise. Most students seem to be somewhat receptive to the multicultural imperative and multicultural interventions can augment positive racial attitudes.

APPENDIX

Correlation Matrix (a)

	Mcgoal	Female	Age	Income
Mcgoal	1.000			
Female	0.224**	1.000		
Age	0.182**	0.155**	1.000	
Income	−0.174**	−0.090*	−0.233**	1.000
Urbanism	−0.015	0.009	0.043	−0.128**
Appalachian	−0.053	0.057	0.043	−0.129**
Authority	−0.077	−0.165**	−0.047	−0.018
Meritocracy	0.202**	0.147**	0.236**	−0.172**
Stereotype		0.501**	0.150**	0.155**
Symbolic racism	0.344**	0.106*	0.070	−0.035
Resentment	0.565**	0.311**	0.161**	−0.115**
College motive	0.145**	0.360**	0.205**	−0.138**
Class standing	0.231**	0.146**	0.509**	−0.111**
Academic achieve.	0.003	0.110*	0.008	0.016
Multicult courses	0.359**	0.161**	0.438**	−0.143**
Professor—liberal	−0.124**	−0.043	−0.056	0.036
Prof—multicultural	−0.182**	−0.070	−0.132**	0.050
Peer—liberal	−0.241**	−0.169**	−0.132**	0.042
Free time w/minority	−0.221**	0.133**	0.155**	−0.003
Dorm	−0.063	−0.110*	−0.387**	0.141**
Off-campus job	0.086*	0.049	−0.090*	−0.108*
Greek	−0.073	0.000	−0.073	0.159**

Correlation Matrix (b)

	College Motive	Class Standing	Academic Achieve	Multicult Courses
College motive	1.000			
Class standing	0.177*	1.000		
Academic achievement	0.146**	−0.152	1.000	
Multicult courses	0.182**	0.514**	−0.021	1.000
Professor—liberal	−0.014	−0.095*	−0.018	−0.087*
Prof—multicultural	−0.067	−0.257**	0.037	−0.340**
Peer—liberal	0.048	−0.145**	−0.012	−0.092*
Free time w/minority	0.148**	0.062	−0.027	0.026
Dorm	−0.176**	−0.425**	0.126**	−0.285**
Off-campus job	−0.042	0.052	0.020	−0.019
Greek	−0.188**	0.137**	−0.074	−0.124**

Significance levels: **$p = .01$; *$p = .05$.

Correlation Matrix (b)

Urban	Appal	Autho	Merit	Stereo	Symbolic Racism	Resent
1.000						
0.292**	1.000					
−0.042	−0.096*	1.000				
0.080*	0.046	0.212**	1.000			
0.028	−0.036	−0.117**	0.081*	1.000		
−0.020	0.012	0.082*	0.125**	0.269**	1.000	
−0.005	0.032	−0.085*	0.147**	0.562**	0.392**	1.000
0.098*	0.193**	−0.270**	0.068	0.156**	0.129**	0.241**
0.055	0.033	−0.045	0.207**	0.211**	0.090*	0.175**
0.033	0.094*	0.004	0.049	−0.006	0.042	0.059
0.085*	0.108*	0.041	0.325**	0.248**	0.164**	0.248**
−0.003	−0.061	0.082*	−0.077	−0.117**	−0.090*	−0.169**
−0.135**	−0.127**	0.030	−0.158**	−0.129**	−0.068	−0.050
−0.012	−0.029	−0.038	−0.093*	−0.200**	−0.024	−0.192**
0.195**	0.203**	−0.051	−0.024	−0.208**	−0.055	−0.132**
−0.075	−0.148**	0.093*	−0.135**	−0.099*	0.022	−0.066
0.014	−0.099*	0.083*	0.000	0.062	0.056	0.062
−0.061	−0.073	0.040	0.012	0.032	−0.090*	−0.109*

Correlation Matrix (b) (*Continued*)

Prof—Liberal	Prof—MC	Peers—Liberal	Free Time w/Min	Dorm	Off-Camp Job	Greek
1.000						
0.203**	1.000					
0.333**	0.121**	1.000				
0.055	0.001	0.147**	1.000			
0.044	0.182**	0.044	−0.212**	1.000		
−0.031	0.023	−0.050	−0.087*	0.093*	1.000	
−0.011	−0.116**	0.003	−0.085	−0.074	0.007	1.000

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