Stereotypes and Ethnocentrism: Diverging Interethnic Perceptions of African American and White American Youth

Charles M. Judd and Bernadette Park
University of Colorado

Markus Brauer
Universität Konstanz

Susan Kraus
University of Colorado

Carey S. Ryan
University of Pittsburgh

Much recent work on stereotyping has dealt with groups that are either artificially created or that do not have an extensive history of conflict. The authors attempted to overcome this limitation by examining issues of perceived variability and ethnocentrism among samples of White American and African American youth. The goals were both to examine theoretical issues in stereotyping and to describe the current state of ethnic interrelations among young people. Four studies are reported. Throughout, the samples of African Americans demonstrate interethnic judgments that are consistent with existing work on stereotyping and ethnocentrism. White American students, however, reported judgments that replicate neither the out-group homogeneity effect nor ethnocentrism. Alternative explanations for this difference are considered, and the discussion focuses on differing views concerning the role of ethnic identity and diversity in our society.
tergroup perceptions (Judd & Park, 1993; Judd, Ryan, & Park, 1991). Briefly, out-group homogeneity is the tendency to see members of an out-group as less diverse and more stereotypic than members of that group see themselves. Ethnocentrism is the tendency to see one's own group more favorably than the out-group and to show preference for the in-group in reward distribution. Finally, members of a group appear to be more accurate and sensitive in their perceptions of the attributes of in-group relative to out-group members. Nearly all of the research that has emerged both from our own laboratory, as well as from others, has used "safe" groups as the object of study.

Either the groups were artificial (e.g., over-and underestimators of dots, Judd & Park, 1988; Tajfel, 1982) or they were real groups that lacked a strong component of conflict and hostility (e.g., young and old people, Linville, Fischer, & Salovey, 1989; engineering and business majors, Park et al., 1992; or even men and women, Park & Judd, 1990; Park & Rothbart, 1982). This research, again both our own and others', has resulted in quite detailed knowledge of how best to measure these constructs, as well as knowledge of what variables appear to mediate the effects of interest (subgroup organization, Park et al., 1992) and what variables appear not to mediate those effects (familiarity, Park et al., 1992). Our goal in the present research was to extend this previous work to the study of groups with a long history of conflict, for whom group rivalries may be likely to be strong. We therefore decided to examine own and other-group perceptions of African Americans and White Americans.

We had two specific goals in mind in conducting this research. First, we wanted to examine out-group homogeneity, ethnocentrism, and the relation between these two constructs within the context of these two groups.1 In previous research, Park and Judd (1990) identified two components of perceived variability that, at least under some conditions, may be quite unrelated to one another. The first component is perceived stereotypicallity. This is defined as the degree to which a group is viewed in a stereotypic fashion, that is, as possessing stereotypic attributes to a large degree and as not possessing counterstereotypic attributes. A typical measure asks participants to estimate the percentage of some group that has both stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes, and the difference between these estimates is examined. Larger numbers indicate greater perceived stereotypicallity. The second component is perceived dispersion. This is defined as the degree to which group members are seen as highly dispersed about the group mean on either stereotypic or counterstereotypic attributes. It is typically assessed by asking participants to judge the range of values characteristic of group members on some dimension, or to estimate the distribution of group members on an attribute, from which a standard deviation is calculated. Larger values indicate greater perceived dispersion.

Previous research has demonstrated out-group homogeneity effects on both of these components of perceived variability. We assessed both forms in the current research. We began the research with the very simple (and perhaps simplistic) hypothesis that out-group homogeneity and ethnocentrism would both be accentuated when dealing with groups with a history of conflict. Thus, we expected to find larger out-group homogeneity effects and larger ethnocentrism effects with these two groups, relative to other, more "safe," groups that have been studied. Moreover, we expected that within these two groups, those individuals evidencing a stronger affective tie to the in-group over the out-group (i.e., a larger ethnocentrism effect) would also show stronger out-group homogeneity effects.

Our second goal was to use this research to think more broadly about the content of intergroup perceptions of African Americans and White Americans. Attitude surveys have shown an increasingly positive view of Blacks by Whites (Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1984), but this optimistic conclusion has been questioned by proponents of symbolic racism (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976), modern racism (McConahay, 1986; McConahay, Hardee, & Batts, 1981), subtle versus blatant racism ( Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), aversive racism (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986), racial ambivalence (I. Katz & Hass, 1988), and automatic versus controlled processes in racial perception (Devine, 1989). According to most of these theorists, although White Americans may no longer endorse obviously racist attitude positions, they do have negative feelings toward African Americans. This negativity comes from socialization (i.e., acquired anti-Black affect) and from perceived violation of cherished norms and values by African Americans. All of this work has assessed Whites' attitudes toward Blacks. Most of the studies include some items intended to measure old-fashioned or blatant racism (e.g., "It is a bad idea for blacks and whites to marry one another") and some items intended to measure modern or subtle racism (e.g. "Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights"). Although Whites are expected to show little evidence of racism on the old-fashioned items, negative attitudes toward African Americans are expected to show up on modern or subtle racism items.

The present work differs from this previous research in two very important ways. First, we assessed participants' perceptions of the attributes or beliefs of group members (e.g., what proportion of the group is athletic, intelligent, etc.), rather than their attitudes toward the group. In this sense, our work is more like that of D. Katz and Braly (1933), whereas the majority of recent work has focused on Whites' attitudes toward Blacks. Moreover, we assessed the extremity of these perceptions as well as perceived dispersion on the attributes or beliefs, a very different kind of question from previous work.

Second, and perhaps most important, our focus is on the intergroup nature of these perceptions. We are interested not only in the perceptions of African Americans by White Americans, but also in the reverse. Historically, research on ethnic attitudes has focused on the judgments and perceptions of the dominant White majority only (Allport, 1954; Campbell, 1971; Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980; Karlins, Coffman, & Walters, 1969; D. Katz & Braly, 1933; Sigall & Page, 1971). More recent work similarly has focused on Whites' perceptions of Blacks (Devine, 1989; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986). Very rarely have the views of ethnic minorities been assessed or documented in the literature. This bias is largely due to the political view that prejudice is a "White" problem and that to eliminate it we need

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1 We also were interested in the accuracy issue for these groups. The present article, however, does not include a discussion of this issue. A manuscript is currently in preparation on the accuracy data we collected from the studies reported in this article.
simply change the mistaken attitudes of the White population. It is clear from current (and not so current) events, such as the Rodney King case and the associated racial tensions in our cities, that we need to know not only how Whites view various ethnic groups, but how various ethnic groups view Whites. The problem is a complex one, and if there is any hope of understanding it, we need to know something about the perspectives of both groups.

Thus, we wished to characterize current interethnic perceptions between African Americans and White Americans, given the history of conflict and tension between these two groups, and in this capacity, the research was intended to be more descriptive than theoretical. It is important to note at the outset some of the constraints and limitations of this descriptive function of the research. First, although we try to provide a thorough and complete description of some aspects of these groups' mutual perceptions, this is obviously a complicated and multifaceted question that we do not pretend to address in its entirety. In all of the studies we report, except for the fourth and final one, we used a very specific participant population, namely African American and White American college students who lived at the time in a predominantly White setting. We will not attempt to argue that these students' perceptions generalize to all African Americans and White Americans, or even that they are the dominant views of these two groups. We will argue, however, that our findings contribute in important ways to understanding the perceptions of this nontrivial segment of the population (educated, college-aged men and women). In the fourth study we explored the generality of our conclusions for the wider population. Finally, our data consist largely of survey reports of perceptions. We have not tried to examine the behavior of our participant groups or the relation of behavior to reported attitudes.

In summary, in this research, we examined own and other-group perceptions among African American and White American college students. We wished to achieve two goals. First, we wanted to assess out-group homogeneity effects and ethnocentrism effects among these two groups, which have a history of conflict and strong group loyalties. Second, we wished to characterize the current perceptions of African American and White American college students of own and other group, in an effort to understand the social context in which these groups currently exist (Duckitt, 1992).

Study 1

Method

Overview. A sample of African American (AA) and White American (WA) students were recruited for a two-part study. In the first part, all participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that assessed their views of both AA and WA freshmen at the University of Colorado. Included in the questionnaire were measures of the perceived stereotypicality, dispersion, and liking for each group. Participants were also asked several open-ended questions regarding their perceptions of each group. Half of the participants were asked to return for a second part of the study, when perceptions of and sentiments toward each group were again assessed, this time with a priming technique, with response latencies as the principal dependent variable.

Participants. Random samples of 50 AA and 50 WA freshmen at the University of Colorado were selected from the full list of all entering freshmen. They were contacted by telephone and asked to participate in a questionnaire study concerning ethnic groups on campus. They were paid $10 to complete the initial questionnaire portion of the study. Questionnaire data were collected from 46 AA and 48 WA participants (for a combined 94% response rate). The experimenter's ethnicity was matched with that of the participants, who were run individually or in groups of 2 to 3.

Of the participants who completed the questionnaire, random samples of 25 AA and 25 WA participants returned to the laboratory to complete the second part of the study. They were paid an additional $10 for this portion of the study, which involved both computer tasks and a few questionnaire items. The delay between the first and second parts of the study averaged 3 months.

Stimulus materials and procedure: Questionnaire phase. Each participant responded to a series of questions about both target groups: WAs in their freshman year and AAs in their freshman year at the university. The order of the two target groups was counterbalanced across participants. Additionally, participants were randomly assigned to one of two question orders within target groups. Half of the participants completed open-ended questions about the target group before the closed-ended questions; half completed the questions in the reverse order.

There were two open-ended questions for each target group. The first asked participants to give their impression of the group as a whole by writing "eight to ten sentences that describe the group so that five years from now you could read your descriptions and know what your impression of ... was at this time." Second, participants were asked to generate as many subgroups as they could think of for the target group, describing each one in a few sentences and subsequently listing attributes that most characterized each. Both open-ended tasks have been used successfully in our prior work (Park et al., 1992). Two types of closed-ended questions were used. First, participants were given the range task for each of 17 attribute dimensions. On this task, they first indicated where they judged to possess the attribute. This task has also been extensively used previously to assess perceived stereotypicality of the group (Park & Judd, 1990). Second, participants completed the percentage estimation task for each attribute dimension, indicating the percentage of the target group whom they judged to possess the attribute. This task has also been extensively used previously to assess perceived stereotypicality of the group (Park & Judd, 1990; Park & Rothbart, 1982), with greater perceived stereotypicality indicated by a larger difference between the percentage estimates for stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes. We chose the 17 attribute dimensions following procedures elaborated elsewhere (Judd & Park, 1993). We conducted detailed interviews with 8 AA and WA pretest participants. During these interviews, we sought to identify attributes that differed both in their evaluative valence and their stereotypicality for one target group or the other. Thus, we sought attributes that were either positively valenced or negatively va-
lenced and that were either stereotype of AA students on campus (and counterstereotypic of WA students) or stereotype of WA students on campus (and counterstereotypic of AAs). From these pretest participants, we compiled a master list of potential attributes and then chose those on which there was agreement between the AA and WA pretest participants about the stereotypicality and valence of the item. Although the criterion for agreement here was very informal (because attributes were spontaneously mentioned by pretest participants), the results that we present below, showing consistently large stereotype—counterstereotype differences in the ratings provided by both participant groups for both target groups, validate our choices. The set of attributes used, and their stereotypicality and valence, are given in Appendix A. Keep in mind that these attributes were chosen to be stereotype and counterstereotype of AA and WA students at the university, not of these groups in the general population. Note that some of the attribute dimensions involve trait judgments, and others involve judgments of agreement with attitude statements.

Following the questions about the two target groups, the questionnaire contained a number of items tapping familiarity with the outgroup. Thus, for instance, WA participants were asked about how many AAs they knew, both growing up and at college, how well they knew them (all on 7-point scales), what proportion of their high school was AA, and so forth. They were also asked to rate themselves on each of the 17 attribute dimensions. We do not report the self-rating measures in this article. Finally, they were given a “feeling thermometer” and asked to rate 12 groups on a 100-point scale on which 0 meant they felt very coolly toward the group and 100 meant they felt very warmly. Included in these 12 groups were the two target groups of interest.

Stimulus materials and procedure: Laboratory phase. Participants arrived in the laboratory and were seated in front of a computer. Two different computer-based tasks followed. The first examined subgroup accessibility for each of the target groups; the second assessed valence accessibility for each target group. The first was assumed to be a less obtrusive measure of subgrouping. The second, as explained below and as originally described by Dovidio, Evans, and Tyler (1986), was assumed to be a relatively unobtrusive measure of ethnocentrism. Both tasks were modeled after the procedure developed by Dovidio et al. (1986). A trial began with the presentation of a prime, which remained on the screen for 2 s and was then followed by a probe. The probe remained on the screen until a response was made. The screen was then cleared, a row of asterisks was presented for 2 s, and the next trial began. The prime words were the same in both tasks. These were the word house, and the two target group labels, Whites and Blacks. In the written instructions that participants received, they were told that the target group primes referred to White Americans on campus and African Americans on campus. The participant’s task was to judge whether the probe word could ever be true of the prime word.

In the first task, examining subgroup accessibility, there were three types of probes: subgroups identified with high frequency during the earlier questionnaire phase of the study for WA on campus, subgroups identified with high frequency for AAs on campus, and subgroups of types of houses. Examples of WA subgroups are “rich kids,” “granolas,” and “party animals;” examples of AA subgroups are “athletes,” “military activists,” and “wanna be’s;” and examples of house types are “ranch,” “bungalow,” and “a-frame.” In total, there were 12 probes of each of the three types. Following 12 practice trials, participants were exposed to 108 experimental trials, with all primes paired with all possible probes across trials. Order was randomly determined for each participant. Participants were told that their task was to indicate as quickly and as accurately as they could whether the probe could ever be a subgroup or type of the prime. Thus, for instance, if the prime was house and the probe mansion, the correct answer is “yes,” because a mansion is a type of house. When mansion was paired with the prime Whites, however, the correct response is “no.” Although the stimulus queries for the two target group primes were associated exclusively with one of the two target groups from the questionnaire phase of the study, correct responses for these stimulus queries were always “yes” when they were paired with one of the two target group primes (because, for instance, “rich kids” could conceivably be a subcategory of “Blacks” even though it was a subgroup primarily associated with the White target group).

Responses and response latencies were recorded. Shorter latencies in making correct “yes” judgments to probes that could in fact be a subgroup of one of the two target group primes were assumed to indicate greater availability of subgroups in the memory representation of the target group.

The second task was identical to the first except that attributes, varying in valence and stereotypicality, were the probes. Again, the two target groups and the word house served as the primes, and the participant’s task was to say whether the attribute probe could ever describe the prime. Eight probes were house attributes, eight were stereotype of the WA target group (and counterstereotypic of AAs), and eight were stereotype of AAs (and counterstereotypic of WAs). For the WA and AA stereotype attributes, four were positively valenced and four negatively valenced. The target group probes, broken down by group stereotypicality and valence, are given in Table 1. Interviews with pretest participants were used to verify each attribute’s stereotypicality and valence. Following 12 practice trials, participants were exposed to 72 experimental trials, with each of the 24 probes being paired with each prime. Trial order was randomized. Shorter latencies in making correct “yes” judgments to positively valenced probes following a target group prime and longer latencies in making correct “yes” judgments to negatively valenced probes in such cases were assumed to indicate the accessibility of favorable, as opposed to unfavorable, associations with the target group in memory (Dovidio et al., 1986).

Following these two computer tasks, participants completed a brief questionnaire in which they were given the percentage estimation task from the first phase questionnaire. Thus, for each target group, participants were asked to estimate the percentage possessing each trait or agreeing with the attitude statement, using the same 17 attributes as in the Phase 1 questionnaire. These data permit us to assess the reliability of these group perceptions over the time interval between the two phases of the study.

Results

Judgments of outgroup familiarity. For descriptive purposes, we start by characterizing the extent to which the two groups of participants reported contact and familiarity with out-group members. Not surprisingly, given the fact that the WA target group is the dominant majority group in our society, our AA participants reported consistently higher out-group familiarity and contact than did our WA participants. Thus, on a 7-point scale that asked about the extent to which participants knew out-group members before they came to the university, the WA participant mean was 3.52, and the AA mean was 6.19,

Of the 12 subgroup probes for each of the target group primes, 3 were generated or identified primarily by WA participants during the earlier questionnaire phase of the study, 3 were identified primarily by African American participants, 3 were identified consensually by both participant groups, and 3 were identified by the participant him- or herself (i.e., taken from the individual participant’s own subgroup list). This factor had no effect on the latency results we report and hence is ignored subsequently.
To assess perceived stereotypicality, the other component of perceived variability, the percentage estimates from the Phase 1 questionnaire, were analyzed as a function of the same three independent variables. 5 We again collapsed across attributes within stereotypicality. The resulting means are given in the rows of Table 2 that refer to this measure. Recall that perceived stereotypicality is indicated by the magnitude of the stereotypic – counterstereotypic difference. Therefore we present these differences in the S – CS row of the table. Across both target groups and participant groups, the stereotypicality main effect was highly reliable, F(1, 91) = 671.13, p < .001, confirming our choice of stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes. Percentage judgments were consistently well above 50% for stereotypic attributes and well below 50% for counterstereotypic ones. This difference is unconfounded with specific attributes because attributes that are stereotypic of one target group are counterstereotypic of the other. The analysis also revealed an Attribute Stereotypicality × Target Group interaction, F(1, 91) = 10.71, p < .002, and an interaction between attribute stereotypicality and participant group, F(1, 91) = 45.99, p < .001. In general, all participants judged WAs in a more stereotypic manner than they judged AAs. Additionally, AA participants' judgments of both target groups showed considerably more stereotypicality than did the judgments of WA participants. Consistent with the absence of out-group homogeneity in the judged dispersion data, there was absolutely no evidence here of an in-group–out-group difference in perceived stereotypicality, F(1, 91) = 0.01.

The target group difference in these data is worthy of a comment, because it seems to run in the opposite direction from the dispersion results we have just reported. The WA target group was judged to be both more stereotypic and more dispersed than the AA target group, suggesting once again that these are rather different components of group variability (Park & Judd, 1990). Contrary to what one might expect, groups that are seen to be more diverse are not necessarily seen in a less stereotypic manner. Participants can maintain a relatively extreme stereotype of the WA target group while nevertheless acknowledging considerable within-group diversity.

It is also important to comment on the pattern of the means and how individual pairs of means differ or do not differ from prior expectations. For instance, it appears that our AA partici-
Table 2
Perceived Variability Measures: Study 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>White American</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
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<td>Counterstereotypic (CS)</td>
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<td>70.86</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>38.77</td>
<td>39.38</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S − CS</td>
<td>26.11</td>
<td>31.48</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Percentage estimates—Phase 2</strong></td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>65.10</td>
<td>69.86</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S − CS</td>
<td>32.62</td>
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<td>Number spontaneously mentioned</td>
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<td>CS</td>
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<td>S</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S − CS</td>
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* In milliseconds.

pants show the traditional stereotypicality difference, namely, they judge their out-group to be more stereotypic than they perceive themselves to be ($M$ diff = 31.48 for the out-group and 26.11 for the in-group). Additionally, judgments of the WA target group follow the expected pattern. That is, the WA target group is seen more stereotypically by AA participants than it is by WA participants ($M$ diff = 31.48 vs. 19.37, respectively). The cell that deviates from expectations based on out-group homogeneity is the perception of AA targets by WA participants. WA participants reported less stereotypic judgments of AA targets than did the AA participants themselves ($M$ diff = 15.22 vs. 26.11, respectively). Additionally, WA participants reported less perceived stereotypicality in judging AAs than when judging themselves ($M$ diff = 15.22 vs. 19.37, respectively).

To examine the stability of these stereotypicality results, we examined the percentage task results from the 25 WA and 25 AA participants who completed the Phase 2 portion of the study about 3 months later. The relevant means are presented in the middle rows of Table 2. Virtually identical differences emerged, as in the Phase 1 judgments, although they are generally less reliable because of the smaller sample size. The stereotypicality main effect was highly reliable, $F(1, 48) = 201.92, p < .001$, as was the Participant Group × Stereotypicality interaction, $F(1, 48) = 24.27, p < .001$. The Target Group × Attribute Stereotypicality interaction was only marginally reliable at Phase 2, $F(1, 48) = 3.50, p = .07$. Thus, we continue to find that AA participants gave more stereotypic judgments for both target groups than did WA participants. Again, and surprisingly, the least stereotypic judgments were given by WA participants for the AA target group.

In addition to a stable pattern of means over the 3-month interval, the correlations of perceived stereotypicality over the interval were quite high. Across all participants (although partialing out participant group), the stability of the in-group stereotypi-
Judges initially coded 19 of the descriptions. Interjudge reliability was .35. For out-group perceptions, the correlation was .68. Both correlations are reliably different from 0. Although it is tempting to conclude that out-group stereotypicity judgments were more stable than in-group ones, the difference in the correlations was not reliable because of the small sample size and the fact that these are dependent correlations (Meng, Rosenthal, & Rubin, 1992; Olkin & Finn, 1990).

The final set of measures relevant to perceived group variability concern the perception of subgroups in each of the target groups. Park et al. (1992) argued that the tendency to think about a target group at the subgroup level is intimately tied to the perception of group variability. Three measures are relevant to subgroup perceptions in the present set of data. First, we looked at the number of subgroups that participants generated for each target group. Second, we examined the open-ended descriptions each participant provided for each target group and coded any spontaneous references to subgroups. Finally, we examined the accessibility of subgroups for each target group by analyzing the response latencies from the subgroup task during Phase 2 of the study. Relevant means for all three measures are given at the bottom of Table 2.

The number of subgroups participants identified when asked to do so were analyzed as a function of participant group and target group. These data showed two reliable effects: a target group main effect, $F(1, 92) = 34.30, p < .001$, and a Target Group $\times$ Participant Group interaction, $F(1, 92) = 17.87, p < .001$. All participants generated more subgroups for the WA target group. Moreover, AA participants generated more subgroups for the AA target group than did WA participants, whereas WA participants generated more subgroups for the WA target group than did AA participants. This interaction is what one would expect on the basis of past research documenting the out-group homogeneity effect. Thus, even though the dispersion and stereotypicity data show no evidence of out-group homogeneity, these subgrouping data are more consistent with past work.

The open-ended descriptions of each target group were also coded for explicit and spontaneous mentions of subgroups. Two judges initially coded 19 of the descriptions. Interjudge reliability for this subset was .96. A single judge coded the remaining descriptions. These coded data showed results consistent with those just described, namely, more subgroups were spontaneously mentioned by all participants for the WA target group than for the AA target group, $F(1, 92) = 3.86, p = .053$. Additionally, AA participants spontaneously generated more subgroups for the AA target group than WA participants, and WA participants spontaneously generated more subgroups for the WA target group than AA participants, $F(1, 92) = 4.81, p < .05$.

Data from the subgroup latency task from the second phase of the study were used to examine differences in the relative accessibility of subgroups for each of the target groups. Recall that the task required participants to indicate whether the subgroup probe could ever be a subgroup of the prime. Three different primes were used: house, Whites, and Blacks. Subgroup probes were either types of houses or subgroups previously identified and associated with one of the two target groups. We examined the latencies for correct “yes” responses for subgroup probes when the prime was one of the two target groups. Responses to the house prime were ignored, as were responses given to a target group prime followed by a house subtype probe. Additionally, we ignored incorrect “no” responses given to target subgroup probes following target group primes and any “correct” response latencies greater than 6 s. Latencies were log transformed to remove positive skew and analyzed as a function of participant group, target group prime, and whether the probe was a subgroup originally associated with the AA target group or the WA target group. The means in Table 2 have been transformed back to the millisecond metric. Two reliable effects emerged from the analysis of these data. First, there was an interaction between whether the prime was Whites or Blacks and whether the probe was a subgroup originally associated with the WA or AA target group, $F(1, 48) = 7.84, p < .01$. Confirming our choice of subgroups for each target group, participants’ correct “yes” responses were faster when the subgroup was in fact a subgroup of the target group prime than when the subgroup was originally associated with the other target group. Additionally, there emerged a Target Group Prime $\times$ Participant Group interaction, $F(1, 48) = 4.02, p = .05$, such that participants were faster at responding “yes” to in-group primes than to out-group primes. This difference did not depend on whether the probe subgroup matched the prime target group. Thus, regardless of whether the probe was a subgroup originally associated with the WA or AA target group, participants had an easier time responding “yes” to subgroups following their own target group prime than following the other target group prime. Inspection of the simple effect of prime within participant groups showed that the prime difference was reliable only for the AA participants, $F(1, 24) = 5.55, p < .05$. Thus, AA participants in particular showed responses that suggest greater accessibility of subgroup structure for their own group than for the WA target group. Note further that this difference is really present only when the subgroup probe was a subgroup that had been consensually associated with the AA target group (although the triple interaction was not reliable).

Across all of these group variability measures, the AA participants showed results that are quite consistent with past work. Subtracting out some large target group differences, we found that AA participants judged their own group in a relatively less stereotypic and more differentiated manner than they judged the WA out-group. Additionally, they were more adept at thinking about subgroups for their own group than for the WA out-group. WA participants, on the other hand, manifested a rather different pattern of results. Although they mentioned more subgroups for their own group than for the AA out-group, their judgments revealed surprisingly low stereotypicity for the out-group. They reported relatively weak stereotypes when asked questions about AAs, and they seemed to be able to access subgroups of AAs nearly as easily as they could access WA subgroups.

Ethnocentrism results. We included five measures of ethnocentrism. First, the thermometer ratings asked participants to report on their warmth toward both target groups. Second, following the theoretical development in Judd and Park (1993), we used the two percentage estimation tasks from the two
phases of the study to assess ethnocentrism. Instead of concentrating on the difference between stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes, as we did when assessing stereotypicality, we examined the difference in the percentage estimates between positively valenced and negatively valenced attributes. Recall that the same attributes were used in rating each group and that the positive ones and negative ones both contained stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes for each group. Thus, stereotypicality was unconfounded with the valence difference. The fourth measure of ethnocentrism was coded from the open-ended descriptions of each group provided by the participants. For each description, judges made a list of all of the attributes used to describe the group, and then the valence of each of these was judged. We then calculated a valence score for each description by averaging the valence of all attributes in the description. (Interjudge reliability between two judges who coded the valences from 11 descriptions was .93.) The fifth measure of ethnocentrism involved the second set of latency data collected during the second phase of the study, using the procedure adapted from Dovidio et al. (1986). As in the subgroup latency task, we examined the latency of correct "yes" responses when positive and negative probes followed each target group prime. Ethnocentrism is indicated by relatively faster responses to positive attribute probes for the in-group than for the out-group and relatively faster responses to negative attribute probes for the out-group than for the in-group. The means for all ethnocentrism measures are presented in Table 3.

The means from the thermometer ratings, broken down by target group and participant group, are presented in the top row of Table 3. Their analysis revealed a reliable participant effect, $F(1, 92) = 5.35, p < .05$; a reliable target group effect, $F(1, 92) = 12.97, p < .001$; and a reliable Target $\times$ Participant interaction, $F(1, 92) = 100.17, p < .001$. The AA target group was, on average, seen more positively than the WA target group. On average, AA participants reported warmer feelings than the WA participants. Qualifying these main effects, however, was the strong interaction that is ethnocentrism. In-group thermometer ratings by both participant groups were higher than out-group thermometer ratings.

The middle rows in Table 3 present the means from the percentage estimation data. The data from each phase were analyzed as a function of target and participant group and attribute valence. The degree of positivity in perceptions of a target group is indicated by the magnitude of the positive–negative attribute difference, and these valence differences are indicated in the $P - N$ row for each group. The analysis of the first phase data revealed a highly reliable attribute valence difference, $F(1, 92) = 168.44, p < .001$; a reliable Target Group $\times$ Attribute Valence interaction, $F(1, 92) = 40.25, p < .001$; and a reliable Target Group $\times$ Participant Group $\times$ Attribute Valence triple interaction, $F(1, 92) = 19.82, p < .001$. The first effect simply says that all groups were given higher estimates on positive than negative attributes. The Target Group $\times$ Attribute Valence interaction results from the fact that the valence difference was larger for the AA target group than for the WA target group. Thus, all participants displayed more positivity in their ratings of AAs than in their ratings of WAs. Finally, the triple interaction tells us that this target group difference in positivity was greater among AA participants than it was among WA participants. Although this triple interaction is consistent with ethnocentrism, that is, the magnitude of the valence difference was on average greater for in-groups than for out-groups, it is noteworthy that the in-group–out-group difference was actually present only for AA participants. WA participants showed a nonsignificant trend in the wrong direction.

The analysis of the percentage estimates from Phase 2 of the study is entirely consistent with the analysis from Phase 1. The valence difference was highly reliable, $F(1, 48) = 115.56, p < .001$; as was the Target $\times$ Attribute Valence interaction, $F(1, 48) = 18.88, p < .001$; reflecting more positive views of the AA target group. Finally, the triple interaction was reliable as well,
F (1, 48) = 4.99, \( p < .05 \). Again, the means show that all participants displayed more positivity toward the AA target group than toward the WA group. The triple interaction tells us that this target group difference was less true among WA participants than among AA ones. Nevertheless, the ratings from the WA participants again departed from the expectation that in-group evaluations are more positive than out-group evaluations.

Results from the coding of attribute valences from the open-ended descriptions of each target group are entirely consistent with the percentage estimation results. Namely, all open-ended descriptions used more positive attributes and fewer negative ones when describing the AA target group than when describing the WA target group, \( F(1, 92) = 6.81, \ p = .01 \). This target group difference was more true for AA participants than for WA participants, \( F(1, 92) = 7.32, \ p < .01 \). Nevertheless, only AA participants demonstrated ethnocentrism. The open-ended descriptions of WA participants were equally positive toward both their out-group and their in-group.

The bottom rows of Table 3 present the mean latencies from the Phase 2 task that examined valence accessibility for each target group. Recall that in this task participants responded to a valenced probe following one of the two target group primes. This task is a replication of that used by Dovidio et al. (1986). The mean latencies in the table come from correct “yes” responses given to the query whether a member of the target group prime could ever have the attribute that appeared as the probe. Thus, the column headings for this task in Table 3 refer to the target group primes. Latencies from incorrect “no” responses were not included in the analysis, nor were latencies longer than 6 s (resulting in the deletion of 6% of the responses). As in the subgroup accessibility task, we subjected the data to a log transformation prior to analysis. Because the identical positive and negative attributes serve as probes for the two target group primes, differences in latencies to positive and negative attributes between the two target groups presumably indicate differences in the accessibility of positive and negative cognitions about the group. These latency differences are indicated in the N – P row of the table. Dovidio et al. (1986), using only WA participants (and admittedly different attributes), found that participants were faster with positive attributes than negative ones and that this difference depended on the prime, such that larger differences were found for the Whites (in-group) prime than for the Blacks (out-group) prime. Our data replicated the positive – negative probe difference in latencies, \( F(1, 48) = 32.44, \ p < .001 \). Additionally, we found a participant group main effect, \( F(1, 48) = 4.50, \ p < .05 \), such that WA participants’ responses were produced faster than those given by AA participants. Of considerably more interest was the interaction between the valence of the probe and the target group prime, \( F(1, 48) = 3.89, \ p = .054 \). The latency difference between positive and negative probes was larger when the prime was Blacks than when the prime was Whites. Interestingly, this effect did not depend on participant group, because the triple interaction among target group, probe valence, and participant group did not approach reliability, \( F(1, 48) = 1.45, \ p > .20 \). AA participants showed the response latency pattern found by Dovidio et al. (1986) that we might characterize as ethnocentrism. “Yes” responses to positively valenced probes were particularly faster than “yes” responses to negatively valenced probes when the prime was the in-group rather than the out-group. WA participants, on the other hand, showed, if anything, a difference in the opposite direction: The difference in the accessibility of negatively and positively valenced probes was nonreliably higher for the out-group prime than for the in-group prime.\(^7\)

In sum, the pattern of results across the ethnocentrism measures is quite consistent. On all measures, the AA participants manifested what is expected on the basis of the intergroup relations literature. Namely, they showed the classic pattern of ethnocentrism, with more positive evaluations and more accessible positive evaluations for the in-group than for the out-group. Our WA participants, however, except for the thermometer warmth measure, showed slightly more positivity toward the out-group than toward their own group. Interestingly, this tendency was even found on the latency measure, where presumably self-presentational strategies are less able to influence the data participants generated. Once again, as in the perceived-variability results, AA participants manifested the classic effects found in the intergroup relations literature, and the WA participants surprisingly did not.

*Relations between perceived variability and ethnocentrism.*

We were interested in whether differences in ethnocentrism would be associated with differences in perceived variability. With six different measures of perceived variability, five different measures of ethnocentrism, two participant groups, and two target groups, the number of correlations to be examined is quite large. An examination of these correlations yielded surprisingly sparse results. Although most of them were in the expected direction, such that more ethnocentric responses were associated with more stereotypic out-group judgments and less stereotypic in-group judgments, few of the correlations attained traditional significance levels. The strongest correlations were found when looking at the measure of ethnocentrism from the percentage estimation task and the judgments of stereotypicality from that same task. For AA participants at Phase 1, the correlation between ethnocentrism and the in-group–out-group difference in perceived stereotypicality was .293 (\( p < .05 \)); for WA participants the correlation was .213 (\( p < .15 \)). When these correlations were computed separately by target group, only those for the AA group were reliable. Thus, there is

\(^7\) The stereotypicality of the probe was included in the analysis of these data and revealed some reliable effects in interaction with the other variables, although none of these qualify the results given in the text. There was a reliable Probe Valence × Probe Stereotypicality interaction, \( F(1, 48) = 4.17, \ p < .05 \), such that laterites were shorter on positive probes for attributes that were stereotypic of AAs than for attributes that were stereotypic of WAs. The reverse was found for negative probes. This in turn was qualified by a reliable Probe Valence × Probe Stereotypicality × Participant Group interaction, \( F(1, 48) = 4.49, \ p < .05 \), such that the Probe Valence × Probe Stereotypicality interaction just described was stronger for AA participants than for WA participants. Importantly, the Target Group Prime × Probe Valence × Probe Stereotypicality interaction was not reliable. Thus the valence difference for the two target group primes did not depend on the stereotypicality of the probe.
relatively little evidence in these data to suggest a link between ethnocentrism and perceived variability.

**Discussion**

The most succinct summary of the Study 1 data is that AA participants manifested the expected patterns of perceived group variability and ethnocentrism, whereas WA participants did not. The AA participants judged their out-group less positively than their own group and saw them more stereotypically. Additionally, AA participants showed the valence accessibility difference that we had expected between in-group and out-group judgments. On the other hand, the data from the WA participants did not conform to this pattern. In general, they judged the AA target group as positively as they judged their own group and less stereotypically. Additionally, their positive judgments about this target group were no less accessible than they were for their own target group.

Obviously, our initial hypothesis that heightened involvement among members of these groups would accentuate ethnocentrism and out-group homogeneity on the part of both participant groups was too simplistic. Our findings were surprising, yet make sense from a number of possible perspectives. In thinking about the data, we developed three principle interpretations of our findings, and we explore these in the remainder of this article. First, the results may have been due to the particular target groups we examined. Recall that participants were asked to report their perceptions of AA and WA students in their freshman year at the University of Colorado. These are clearly very special subsets of the larger groups of African Americans and White Americans. The stereotype of AA college students in particular is at odds with the cultural stereotype of this group as a whole (as evidenced by the attributes in Appendix A versus Appendix B). For the WA participants in particular, AA college students may be seen as very different from the stereotype of African Americans in general. Thus the surprising pattern of judgments for these participants may be due to the "exceptional" nature of this particular target group. This explanation implies that if we ask this participant population about their perceptions of African Americans and White Americans in general, the pattern of responses would be markedly different. Specifically, both participant groups should now show ethnocentrism and out-group homogeneity in their judgments. We tested this interpretation in Study 2 by using African Americans and White Americans in general as the targets of study.

Alternatively, one might argue that our findings are simply the result of social desirability concerns on the part of the WA participants. That is, in our culture it has become much less socially acceptable over the past 70 years to report overtly negative sentiments toward, or beliefs about, various ethnic groups, including African Americans (McConahay & Hough, 1976; Sigall & Page, 1971). Thus, particularly in self-report data, White Americans may strategically alter what they say to avoid appearing prejudiced. In our culture, this taboo against reporting negative beliefs about ethnic groups other than one's own is not symmetrical, so that it is not nearly as objectionable for members of ethnic minorities to report negative sentiments toward the dominant White majority. We refer to this as the strong form of the social desirability explanation. According to this explanation, the data from Study 1 can be explained by understanding that White Americans in actuality hold strong stereotypes and negative sentiments toward African Americans, realize these are socially unacceptable, and so strategically manipulate their reported responses to avoid appearing bigoted or prejudiced. A key component of the strong form of social desirability is that at some level Whites consciously recognize that they hold more stereotypic and more negative views of Blacks than is acceptable in the culture so that they misreport what they know to be their true beliefs and feelings.

We examine this hypothesis in greater detail in Study 3, but two findings from Study 1 argue against this interpretation. First, the thermometer rating was the most transparent and easy to manipulate measure of group favoritism included in this study. In principle, it should have been much easier for participants to "alter" their true beliefs on this task than on, for instance, the percentage estimation task. Yet the thermometer rating was the single dependent variable on which the WA participants evidenced preference for own group over the out-group. On every other measure the mean judgments of WA participants showed more positive views of AAs than WAs, with the exception of the open-ended descriptions, on which there was essentially no difference. This is certainly not what one would expect if social desirability concerns were responsible for the obtained pattern of data. WA participants should have felt a need to report feeling about as warm toward AAs as WAs if the strong form of social desirability was operating. One could argue that the thermometer variable measures a different construct from the other ethnocentrism tasks in that it asks about feelings of warmth as opposed to beliefs. In part, we suspect this is true, although looking at just the WA participants' judgments of AAs, the thermometer scale was reliably correlated with the percentage estimate measure of ethnocentrism, \( r(48) = .45, p < .001 \). The correlation with the valence accessibility task was also in the right direction, although not reliable, due in part to the small sample size for this task, \( r(25) = .28 \). Clearly, to some degree the thermometer task is related to the other measures of ethnocentrism. It is the most easily manipulated task, and yet WAs reported more positive feelings toward their in-group than the out-group, a finding that seems at odds with the strong form of the social desirability explanation.

A second piece of evidence comes from the valence accessibility task. The data from the WA participants on this task indicate the absence of ethnocentrism in the accessibility of valenced responses to the two target groups. It would be quite difficult for participants to strategically alter their responses in this task because they cannot change the content of what they say (they are required to respond "yes" if a person prime is followed by an adjective probe) and would instead have to alter the latency of their response. It is essentially impossible to speed up responses to particular item pairings because the content of the probe and prime pair must be comprehended before knowing what the socially appropriate response is. The only way in which to strategically manage one's responses in this task, then, is to wait awhile before responding to the Black prime followed by a negative probe, or the White prime followed by a positive probe (assuming the participant can deduce that this is the pat-
tern that would reflect nonbias toward AAs). Although not im-
possible, this scenario seems extremely implausible. One might
expect very long times in those “waiting” cells if strategic re-
responding is in fact occurring, but the differences are only on the
order of 100 ms.

The third and final interpretation posits that these data reflect
important differences in the views of African American and
White American college students about the meaning of ethnic
group membership and ethnic identity in our society. Specifi-
cally, both in these data and in current conceptualizations of
ethnic interrelations, African Americans treat ethnic group
membership as a meaningful category distinction. Members of
ethnic minorities, at least among some subpopulations, are so-
cialized to think about membership in their respective ethnic
group as a meaningful and important component of their self-
concept. Many of these groups are currently involved in politi-
cal struggles to establish their unique cultural heritage and to
define the attributes they wish to be associated with their par-
ticular ethnic group. Thus, ethnicity is important, and it is to
be highlighted rather than ignored. This perspective is typified
in the cultural pluralism approach to solving ethnic conflict and
hostility (Schofield, 1986). It is not surprising, then, that the
judgments of the AA participants in our research look just like
what one would expect given research with other social groups
where group identification matters. Few people today would ar-
gue that gender does not matter and that men and women
should be viewed as equivalent in all ways. Instead, each is asso-
ciated with their own group identities, and we are not surprised
to find out-group homogeneity and ethnocentrism between
these two groups.

In contrast, White Americans, again at least in certain sub-
populations, are typically socialized to avoid making distinc-
tions on the basis of ethnic group membership. Many of them
are taught that it is wrong to judge someone by the color of his
or her skin, that all ethnic groups are equal, and that differen-
tial attitudes or treatment based on skin color are both illegal
and immoral. Thus these individuals hold the belief that it is wrong
to stereotype African Americans. Our WA participants re-
ported a less strong stereotype of African Americans than did
AA participants themselves. Additionally, they report as favor-
able impressions of this target group as of their own. According
to the differential-socialization-interpretation, this is because
the WA participants have internalized the values of a “color-
blind” perspective.

This interpretation has important implications for the cur-
rent state of interethnic relations between African Americans
and White Americans. If members of ethnic minority groups
are eager to have their group identity recognized, and yet the
dominant White majority strives to maintain the belief that
there are no differences between various ethnic groups, this is
bound to create a state of tension and conflict between the two
groups. Both perspectives have strengths and weaknesses. The
color-blind perspective is attractive ideologically because it em-
phasizes the similarities between members of different groups,
and the fact that we are all members of the human race. Unfortu-
nately, this perspective has often been translated into a call for
assimilation on the part of ethnic minority groups. Thus, the
message is that we are all equal, that what needs to happen is
for members of ethnic minority groups to adopt the values, be-
haviors, and customs of the dominant White majority and that
then we will all live peacefully together. That view has not been
warmly embraced by ethnic minority communities for obvious
reasons. The multicultural perspective is attractive because it
emphasizes the unique qualities of various ethnic groups and
maintains that each group is valuable in its own way. Thus,
rather than one group being right and one wrong, an apprecia-
tion for different perspectives and approaches is the goal. This
perspective can also be problematic, though, in that it empha-
sizes group differences and sharpens the boundaries between
members of different groups. A great deal of social psychological
research suggests that emphasizing group boundaries typi-
cally intensifies group conflict and hostilities (Brewer & Miller,
1984; Miller, Brewer, & Edwards, 1985).

It is important at this point to be clear regarding two issues.
First, this interpretation derives from differences in the social-
ization to which WAs and AAs are exposed. To the extent that
their beliefs are shaped by socializing forces, their responses are
influenced by what is socially appropriate or desirable within
the culture. Thus, this interpretation could be viewed as a
“weak” form of the social desirability explanation. It differs in
a very important manner, however, from the strong form of the
social desirability explanation. According to the latter, at some
level participants realize their true beliefs and change these to
appear appropriate. If given a truth serum, however, they would
report highly stereotypic and negative beliefs. In the weak form,
participants truly believe in the ideal of a color blind perspec-
tive, and this belief drives their report of relatively positive and
moderate views of AAs. The WA participants have truly incor-
porated into their ideologies the belief that holding different
views of different ethnic groups is wrong. They are not simply
strategically manipulating their actual views to appear socially
acceptable. Given a truth serum, these participants would con-
tinue to report moderate (as opposed to strong) stereotypes,
and positive views, of AAs.

Second, it is critical to note that the differential-socialization
interpretation does not imply that prejudice and discrimination
among White Americans is a thing of the past. It is completely
possible for White Americans to hold the belief as part of their
basic ideologies that it is wrong to judge others on the basis of
skin color and yet to act out racism and discrimination behav-
iorally or even through other stereotypes. For example, White
Americans may hold negative stereotypes about individuals
from the lower socioeconomic strata of our society, strata that
are disproportionately made up of ethnic minorities. The point
is that internalized beliefs about the irrelevance of ethnicity in
judging others does not preclude discriminatory behaviors and
stereotypes. We return to these issues in the General Discussion.

The differential-socialization interpretation is consistent with
Gaertner and Dovidio’s (1986) concept of aversive racism.
Aversive racism refers to the dilemma Whites experience be-
cause they have been socialized to believe all people are created
equal and should not be judged by race, creed, or color. At the
same time, our culture contains many negative images of AAs
as criminals, as threatening, as “the bad guy,” so that WAs ex-
perience an aversion toward AAs. Our analysis goes beyond that
of Gaertner and Dovidio, however, in that they did not discuss
AAs' perceptions of WAs, whereas we see the intergroup nature of our perspective as very important. Understanding that WAs have been socialized to believe color should be ignored, whereas members of ethnic minorities have come to learn that color cannot help but matter, creates a much richer portrait of ethnic relations in our society than that of existing perspectives.

We view the differential-socialization interpretation as quite unlike work on modern or symbolic versus old-fashioned racism (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay, 1986; McConahay et al., 1981), or subtle versus blatant racism (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995) for several reasons. First, all of this work again focuses only on Whites' perceptions of Blacks, and we see the intergroup comparison as absolutely critical to our work. Second, the perspective of this other work is more like what we have identified as the strong form of social desirability, in that it suggests that participants may not report classically prejudiced views (though they may exist) but will report more subtle or masked forms of racism. So the task is to find the right items, those that will reveal prejudiced views. This suggests a strategic manipulation of reported views, unlike our argument that participants have internalized a norm regarding equality of the races that affects reported views.

Still, a critic might claim that all Study 1 shows is a reluctance of WAs to report old-fashioned or blatant forms of racism. However, the items in Appendix A and Table 1 are very unlike the old-fashioned racism items included, for instance, in the Blatant Racism Scale of Pettigrew and Meertens (1995). In addition, we included a scale consisting of 52 items to assess prejudice in Study 1, and the items on this scale were very much like those used on the modern, symbolic, and subtle racism scales (e.g., "The desire of many ethnic minorities to maintain their cultural traditions impedes the achievement of racial equality," "Members of ethnic minorities have a tendency to blame whites too much for problems that are of their own doing"). We do not focus on responses to items on this scale in the Results section because the nature of the items required that it be administered only to WA participants, and we wished to maintain our focus on intergroup perceptions. Nevertheless, we did examine the correlation for WA participants on this inventory with their valence judgments of AAs. Responses on the inventory (which should reflect modern or subtle racism) were correlated with the thermometer rating of AAs, \( r(48) = .40, p < .01; \) the percentage estimate valence judgments, \( r(48) = .26, p < .05; \) and with the coded valence from the open-ended descriptions, \( r(48) = .27, p < .05. \) Thus, we argue that the lack of ethnocentrism in the WA participants' judgments was not due to a masking of true sentiments by these participants that could have been revealed had we used the "right" items. Responses to items like those used to capture modern and subtle racism correlate with our survey responses, yet these latter consistently showed a slight tendency on the part of our WA participants to favor the out-group over the in-group.

In the remainder of this article we explore the three alternative interpretations of the results from Study 1 presented above. The first explanation, which we call the unique target group explanation, was the primary object of study in Study 2.

**Study 2**

**Method**

**Overview.** In Study 1, participants judged target groups that were defined as White American (WA) and African American (AA) freshmen at the University of Colorado. Our second study was a replication of the first to determine whether results would be different were we to define the target groups more broadly or generally. Accordingly, WA and AA participants in this study completed many of the same tasks as in the first study, including nearly all of the questionnaire measures and the valence accessibility task. The principal difference concerned the target groups, which were defined as African Americans and White Americans in general.

**Participants.** Random samples of all WA and AA undergraduate students at the University of Colorado were selected for participation in this study, with the restriction that they could not have participated in Study 1. Participants were recruited from these same samples. Data were collected from 52 WA participants and 52 AA participants. Efforts to ensure that sampled individuals participated were somewhat less intensive than in the first study, with response rates averaging only about 60% for the two groups. Thus, unlike Study 1, the sample from which data were collected should not be seen as a random sample of University of Colorado undergraduates.

Participants attended a single session that lasted a little over an hour. They were paid $10 for their participation. All participants were run by a White male experimenter, either individually or in groups of 2 or 3.

**Procedure and stimulus materials.** The methods of this study were identical to those of Study 1, with three exceptions. First, all data were collected in a single session, with participants first completing the valence accessibility task on the computer and then the questionnaire portion of the study. Second, some of the measures used in the first study were not included in this one. For instance, the subgroup accessibility task on the computer was not included this time. Third, and most important, different target groups were used for all questions and, correspondingly, different stereotypic and counterstereotypic attributes. The target groups were defined as White Americans and African Americans in the United States as a whole. Because of the change in the target groups, we selected new attributes (using the methods described in Study 1) to be stereotypic and counterstereotypic of these new target groups. The attributes used in the questionnaire portion of the study are given in Appendix B. Those used in the valence accessibility task (Dovidio et al., 1986) are given in Table 4.

Participants started the experimental session with the valence accessibility task on the computer. This task involved the presentation of one of three primes (house, Whites, or Blacks), followed by an attribute probe. Eight attribute probes were house attributes, eight were stereotypic of WAs, and eight were stereotypic of AAs (as indicated in Table 4). Additionally, half of both sets of stereotypic attributes were positively valenced, and half were negatively valenced. In total, there were 72 trials with all probes presented with each prime. The participant's task was to indicate as quickly and accurately as possible whether the attribute could ever describe the prime. Responses and response latencies were recorded. The presentation format and timing parameters were identical to those used in Study 1.

Participants subsequently completed the questionnaire. For each target group, participants completed the open-ended description task, the open-ended subgroup task, the range task on the 16 attributes, and the percentage estimation task on the attributes. All four of these tasks were identical to those used in Study 1, with the exception of different target groups and different attributes. Again, we randomly varied the order of the target groups and the order of the open-ended and closed-ended tasks across participants. Finally, participants completed the thermometer warmth question for 10 groups, including the two target groups of interest.

**Results**

**Perceptions of group variability.** Four measures of perceived variability were analyzed from this study: one dispersion mea-
sure, one stereotypicality measure, and two subgroup measures. The relevant means from all measures are presented in Table 5.

To assess perceived dispersion, we analyzed the range as a function of participant group, target group, and attribute stereotypicality, collapsing across attributes within stereotypicality. The results replicated those reported for Study 1. Namely, higher range estimates were generated for WA targets than for AA targets, $F(1, 102) = 8.11, p = .005$, and the range estimates of WA participants were higher than those generated by AA participants, $F(1, 102) = 19.29, p < .001$. In-group–out-group differences were not found, $F(1, 102) = 2.23, p > .10$.

The perceived stereotypicality results from the percentage estimation task also mirror those gathered in Study 1. The analysis of the data from this task revealed a large attribute stereotypicality main effect, $F(1, 102) = 334.86, p < .001$; and interactions between target group and attribute stereotypicality, $F(1, 102) = 31.88, p < .001$; and between participant group and attribute stereotypicality, $F(1, 102) = 27.19, p < .001$. As in Study 1, the triple interaction did not approach reliability, $F(1, 102) = 0.32, p > .50$. As the means in Table 5 show, WA targets were seen in a more stereotypic manner than were AA targets, the judgments of AA participants were more stereotypic than the judgments of WA participants, and there was no evidence of out-group homogeneity. As in Study 1, the cell in the design that departed from expectations based on prior research involved the judgments of the AA target group by WA participants. These participants reported considerably lower stereotypicality of AAs than did the AA participants themselves. Additionally, WA participants reported considerably less stereotypicality for AA targets than when judging WA targets.

Two measures of subgrouping were available: the number of subgroups generated when participants were asked to list them, and spontaneous mentions of subgroups coded from the open-ended target group descriptions. The means from these two variables, by participant and target groups, are provided in the final rows of Table 5. In Study 1, both of these variables showed reliable target group and Target Group × Participant Group effects. Here, we found only a main effect for target group (for the number of subgroups, $F(1, 102) = 6.89, p = .01$, for spontaneous mentions of subgroups, $F(1, 102) = 3.35, p = .07$). In both cases more subgroups were mentioned for the WA target group than the AA one. Unlike the results of Study 1, there was no evidence here that this target group difference was any larger for WA participants than for AA participants. The one in-group–out-group difference that emerged in the Study 1 results on perceived variability was not replicated here.

In sum, these results closely replicate those found in the first study in spite of the change in target groups. Little evidence was found for out-group homogeneity in these data, and the reason seems once again to be that WA participants reported relatively dispersed and un stereotypic judgments of the AA target group. The judgments of the AA participants, on the other hand, seem to conform much more closely to expectations based on the literature on intergroup relations.

Ethnocentrism results. Four ethnocentrism measures were gathered: thermometer scores, percentage estimates involving positively and negatively valenced attributes, the coded valence of attributes used in the open-ended group descriptions, and the valence accessibility data from the computer task. Relevant means from all four are given in Table 6.

The analysis of the thermometer data closely replicated results found in Study 1. A reliable target effect, $F(1, 102) = 40.29, p < .001$, and a reliable Target Group × Participant Group interaction, $F(1, 102) = 53.12, p < .001$, emerged. On average the AA target group was given higher thermometer ratings than the WA target group. Consistent with the Study 1 results, both participant groups gave higher warmth ratings to their own target group than to the other target group.

We next analyzed the data from the percentage estimation task as a function of target group, participant group, and attribute stereotypicality, collapsing across attributes within stereotypicality. As in Study 1, the triple interaction did not approach reliability, $F(1, 102) = 0.32, p > .50$. As the means in Table 5 show, WA targets were seen in a more stereotypic manner than were AA targets, the judgments of AA participants were more stereotypic than the judgments of WA participants, and there was no evidence of out-group homogeneity. As in Study 1, the cell in the design that departed from expectations based on prior research involved the judgments of the AA target group by WA participants. These participants reported considerably lower stereotypicality of AAs than did the AA participants themselves. Additionally, WA participants reported considerably less stereotypicality for AA targets than when judging WA targets.

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Table 6

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<td>Negative probe</td>
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</table>

Note. Thermometer ratings could range from 0 (very coolly) to 100 (very warmly).

* In milliseconds.

...bute valence. Recall that the magnitude of the positive-negative valence difference in these ratings is indicative of liking or positivity toward the target group. These differences are given in the P – N row of the tabled means. Replicating the results of Study 1, we found a large attribute valence main effect, $F(1, 102) = 325.25, p < .001$, and a Target Group × Attribute Valence interaction, $F(1, 102) = 34.34, p < .001$. Higher judgments were given for positive attributes than for negative ones, and this difference was especially true when judging the AA target group. Unlike the results from Study 1, the triple interaction was not reliable, $F(1, 102) = 0.43, p > .50$. The target group difference in positivity did not depend on participant group.

The valence of the attributes coded from the open-ended descriptions showed a reliable participant effect, $F(1, 102) = 8.17, p = .005$; a reliable target group effect, $F(1, 102) = 9.45, p = .003$; and a reliable Participant × Target Group interaction, $F(1, 102) = 12.09, p < .001$. Inspection of the cell means in Table 6 shows once again that AA participants seemed to show the classic ethnocentrism effect. WA participants, on the other hand, showed hardly any difference between the two target groups.

Finally, the mean response latencies for all correct “yes” responses from the valence accessibility task (Dovidio et al., 1986) are given in the last rows of Table 6. We deleted latencies longer than 6 s and those from incorrect judgments. (This amounted to 3% of the available data.) Differences in the latencies between positive and negative probe responses are assumed to indicate the relative accessibility of positive and negative evaluations for the target group prime. We analyzed log-transformed latencies as a function of probe valence, probe stereotypicality, target group prime, and participant group. This analysis revealed a probe valence main effect, $F(1, 102) = 46.70, p < .001$, such that “yes” responses to positive attributes were given more quickly than to negative attributes. Unlike the data from Study 1, the Target Group Prime × Attribute Valence interaction was not reliable, $F(1, 102) = 2.09, p > .10$; however, the triple interaction among target group prime, participant group, and attribute valence was reliable, $F(1, 102) = 5.29, p < .05$. This triple interaction is consistent with the ethnocentrism prediction: On average the difference in the accessibility of “yes” responses to positive and negative attribute probes was greater for in-group targets than for out-group targets. When we examined the simple Target Group Prime × Attribute Valence interactions within the two participant groups, however, only the AA participants showed the ethnocentrism difference, $F(1, 50) = 4.97, p = .03$. The target group difference was not found for WA participants, $F(1, 50) < 1.00$.

On the whole, these ethnocentrism results, like the perceived variability results, closely paralleled those we reported for Study 1. In general, the AA participants displayed the expected ethnocentrism pattern. This was true on direct liking measures, measures that code open-ended descriptions, and measures that tap the accessibility of positive and negative judgments of the target groups. WA participants, on the other hand, did not show consistent target group differences. On one of the tasks—the valence difference in the percentage estimates—their responses showed more positivity toward the AA target group than toward their own group. On the other three tasks, including the valence accessibility measure, they failed to show reliable differences between in-group judgments and out-group judgments. In sum, it seems that the difference between Studies 1 and 2 in the definition of the target groups had little effect on the judgments we collected.

**Relations between perceived variability and ethnocentrism.** In Study 1, relationships between perceived variability and ethnocentrism were weak at best. We expected to find that participants who showed greater ethnocentrism would tend to see the out-group more stereotypically and would show a larger difference between how stereotypically they saw the in-group and the out-group. Although the direction of the correlations in Study 1 was generally consistent with this expectation, few of them were reliable.

In this study, on the other hand, our expectations were confirmed for the AA participants. The correlation between ethnocentrism on the percentage task and out-group stereotypicality for these participants was .35 ($p < .05$). The same correlation using the thermometer measure of ethnocentrism was .60 ($p < .001$). Unlike the results from Study 1 (see footnote 7), probe stereotypicality was not involved in any reliable effects in these data.
Ethnocentrism was also reliably related to the out-group-in-group difference in stereotypicality for these participants (.43 and .32 for the two ethnocentrism measures). As in Study 1, however, the WA participants failed to manifest reliable correlations between the two constructs.

Discussion

It is clear from the results of Study 2 that the pattern of findings obtained in Study 1 was not due to the unique nature of the target groups used in that study. The results based on African Americans and White Americans in general as the target groups nicely paralleled those using African American and White American freshman as the target groups. AA participants continued to judge the out-group more stereotypically than the in-group, and they continued to show a preference for the in-group over the out-group. WA participants, in contrast, continued to report relatively less stereotypic and more positive views of AAs than one would expect given past research on intergroup relations. Thus, our first possible explanation for the unanticipated findings from Study 1 appears not to be correct.

Our second possible explanation, which applies to the results of both studies, was that WA participants were responding to social desirability pressures. According to this interpretation, WA participants in fact hold stereotypic views of African Americans and prefer their own in-group over African Americans. Because it is not politically correct to say negative things about people of color or to report strong stereotypes of these groups, however, these participants alter or manipulate their responses to appear more socially acceptable. As in Study 1, several findings argue against this interpretation of the data. First, this strong form of the social desirability interpretation would lead one to expect the smallest ethnocentrism effects on the thermometer scale ratings because this is the most transparent measure of group preference that we included. In fact, the only measure on which WA participants evidenced a preference for their own group over out-group was on the thermometer scales in Studies 1 and 2. Second, the valence accessibility task should in principle be less susceptible to a social desirability bias than the other measures. It should be relatively difficult for participants to control the ease with which they access associations stored with the target groups in long-term memory or to guess at the experimenter's dependent measure of group preference. Yet the WA participants showed no faster response times to negative attributes when primed by the category Blacks than when primed by the category Whites in either Study 1 or 2. Similarly, WA participants showed no slower response times to positive attributes when primed by the category Blacks than when primed by the category Whites in either study. These two sets of results are not conclusive but certainly argue against the strong form of the social desirability explanation.

To further pursue our argument that differential socialization regarding ethnic identity operates in the perceptions of WA and AA participants in our studies, we collected the following data. We chose a random sample of 30 questionnaires from Study 2 participants (half WA and half AA) and asked a new group of participants to read the open-ended descriptions of the target groups provided by these participants. Sixteen WA and 16 AA judges read the open-ended descriptions of both target groups written by these 30 participants. None of these judges participated in either Study 1 or 2. Half the judges of each ethnic group were aware of the race of the author when they read and rated the impressions, and the remaining half were unaware of author race. After reading the descriptions of both target groups written by a given author, the judges were asked to make three ratings: to what extent does this author value ethnic diversity, to what extent does the author see Blacks as having a unique ethnic identity, and to what extent does this author believe that Blacks ought to try to assimilate to the White culture? All ratings were made on 7-point scales on which 1 = not at all and 7 = very much. The descriptions written by the AA authors were seen as valuing ethnic diversity (\(M = 4.61\)) more than those written by the WA authors (\(M = 4.22\)), \(F(1, 28) = 5.82, p < .03\). Notably, there were no effects of judge ethnicity, knowledge of author ethnicity, or interactions of these effects with the author main effect (all Fs < 1.0). The descriptions written by AA authors were also judged to be more likely to portray Blacks as having a unique ethnic identity (\(M = 5.00\)) than those of WA authors (\(M = 4.52\)), \(F(1, 28) = 42.53, p < .001\). There was a marginally reliable interaction of this variable with knowledge of author ethnicity, \(F(1, 28) = 3.25, p < .09\), such that this difference was larger in the known (AA = 5.03, WA = 4.31) than in the unknown condition (AA = 4.96, WA = 4.62). No other effects were reliable. Finally, WA authors were seen as more likely to believe that Blacks ought to try to assimilate themselves to the White culture (\(M = 4.04\)) than AA authors (\(M = 3.09\)), \(F(1, 28) = 57.86, p < .001\). Again there were no effects of judge ethnicity, knowledge of author ethnicity, or interactions of these variables with the author ethnicity effect.

Thus, in examining participants' open-ended, spontaneous descriptions, those written by AA authors were seen as valuing ethnic diversity more, as portraying AAs as having a unique ethnic heritage, and as being more antagonistic to an assimilationist perspective, compared with the descriptions of WA authors. Importantly, these effects did not depend on the judges' ethnicity. Thus, both the AA and WA judges agreed in their perceptions of the descriptions. Moreover, the effects did not depend on knowing author ethnicity (although the author ethnicity difference was somewhat larger in the known condition for judgments of AAs having a unique ethnic heritage). This set of judgments is certainly consistent with our argument that among this participant population, there is a divergence of opinions regarding the state of interethnic relations. WAs in this college setting appear to play down ethnic differences, to not engage in strong verbal reports of stereotyping of AAs, and to report quite positive sentiments toward members of this group. AAs in this college setting treat ethnicity much more as one would expect any student to do compared with the descriptions of AA authors. Thus, the descriptions that these participants read were very much.
lence accessibility task. In the first two studies, we modeled our design of this task on that of Dovidio et al. (1986). In their study, the prime appeared for a full 2 s, then disappeared; after another 500 ms, the probe appeared. (Our probe appeared immediately following the disappearance of the prime). This is a long presentation time for the prime if the goal is to assess the long-term memory representation without interference from strategic processes. In Study 3 we shortened the prime presentation time from 2 s to 500 ms. If in the two previous studies, strategic processes played any role in producing the lack of ethnocentrism effects for the WA participants on this task, the shorter lag between the prime and probe should make any such strategies much more difficult to use, and ethnocentrism should be more likely to emerge.

Study 3

Method

Participants and stimulus materials. We used only WA participants in this study, as this was the participant group whose previous data were susceptible to a social desirability explanation. Thus, 65 WA students were recruited for participation in the study, for which they received course credit. The same stimulus materials (primes and probe words) were used in this study as in Study 2.

Procedure. The same basic procedure was followed as in Study 2. The only change was that the prime appeared for only 500 ms rather than 2,000 ms. It then disappeared, and the probe followed immediately. Following the participant's response, the screen was cleared, and a row of asterisks appeared for 1,500 ms. Then the next trial began. Following this valence accessibility task, participants completed a short questionnaire assessing perceived stereotypicality and ethnocentrism. Data from these questionnaires replicated results found for WA participants in Studies 1 and 2. Accordingly, we will not discuss them further.

Results and Discussion

Incorrect responses (i.e., responding "no" to a trait probe when it was preceded by the prime Blacks or Whites), and responses longer than 6 s were deleted from the analyses (resulting in the deletion of 1% of the data). The remaining response times were log transformed, and the four items in each cell were averaged. The analysis included three variables, all within-subjects. These were: target group prime (Blacks or Whites), probe valence (positive or negative), and probe stereotypicality (stereotypic or counter-stereotypic). The mean latencies (reverse log transformed so that they are in the ms metric) appear in Table 7. As in the previous two studies, the probe valence main effect was highly reliable, such that responses were faster to the positive than to the negative probes, $F(1, 64) = 33.18, p < .001$. Of primary interest was the significant Target Group Prime $\times$ Probe Valence interaction, $F(1, 64) = 10.43, p < .002$. Contrary to a social desirability interpretation, the WA participants in this study showed a reliably larger probe-valence difference when the prime was the AA target group than when it was the WA target group. This interaction is largely due to the particularly slow latencies in response to the negative probe following the AA target group prime. The parallel effect—the simple Target Group Prime $\times$ Probe Valence interaction for the WA participant group—was not reliable in either of the previous two studies. The differences were in the same direction in Study 1, and reversed, although small in magnitude, in Study 2. Use of a shorter presentation time for the prime in this study resulted in a stronger tendency for WA participants to report relatively positive views of the AA target group.

Although this finding by itself cannot completely rule out the strong form of the social desirability explanation for the pattern of judgments of WA participants, it is certainly inconsistent with such an interpretation. To reiterate, for participants to manipulate their responses in this task to appear socially desirable, they must first intuit that the researcher is examining the latencies to positive versus negative traits for Whites versus Blacks, that a prejudiced pattern of responses would be indicated by slower responses to positive items paired with the Black versus White prime and to negative items paired with the White versus Black prime. Then they must contrive to hold back or slow down their responses to critical pairings, namely positive items preceded by the White probe and negative items preceded by the Black probe. Additionally, in this third study, this strategic manipulation must take place very quickly, as each prime appeared for only 500 ms and was immediately followed by the probe. The entire valence accessibility task from the beginning of the practice trials to the end of the experimental trials lasted a little over 4 min. Thus, the participants had 4 min in which to intuit the purpose of the task, the experimenter's hypothesis, and the necessary corresponding pattern of responses, and to develop and implement the plan for strategically altering his or her "true" responses. We argue this characterization is extremely implausible.

Thus, we are left with our differential-socialization, or what might be called the weak form of the social desirability explanation, for our data. We believe that our data argue that White American and African American students on the University of Colorado campus have been taught and have learned fundamentally different messages about the role of ethnic identity and whether judgments of others should be guided by their ethnicity. The African American students in our samples, representative of those on campus, manifest both ethnocentrism and relatively strong stereotyping. Additionally, in the second study, these two tendencies were reliably related. We argue that the AA students are simply manifesting the intergroup judgments one would expect when ethnicity is a strong and powerful marker of identity. Our White American participants, on the other hand, seem to be avoiding active stereotyping by ethnicity and associated ethnocentrism. We also argue that the results of our valence accessibility task, in particular, suggest that this is not simply as a result of a conscious self-presentational strategy.

### Table 7

<table>
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<td>(N - P)</td>
<td>107</td>
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</table>
Of course, it must be admitted that students on our campus, particularly the White American students, are likely to come from relatively well-to-do environments with infrequent encounters with members of minority ethnic groups. Also, most of them probably have had little contact with minority ethnic group members on campus. As a result, it may be relatively easy for them to maintain the view that ethnicity should not be used in making group judgments. One might legitimately question the generality of our results beyond the privileged confines of our campus.

We have recently collaborated with Stephen J. Simurda in collecting survey data on interracial relations in the city of Cincinnati. Data were collected from a wide range of White American and African American residents of that city, using a shortened form of our percentage estimation task. These data permit us to examine the generality of some of our results in a very different setting.

Study 4

Method

Participants. Data were collected from 137 adult African American and 217 adult White American residents of the city of Cincinnati. These individuals were recruited from a broad and diverse array of community councils, philanthropic organizations, religious groups, and other organizations in the city of Cincinnati. Although the sample is not strictly representative of the adult population in the city, it is a very diverse sample and generally reflects the city population demographics.

Procedure and stimulus materials. A short questionnaire (10–15 min) was administered to participants in group sessions in the organizations where they were recruited. Included in this questionnaire was our percentage estimation task, which included 8 of the 16 attributes used in Study 2. In Appendix B we have indicated the 8 attributes included in this fourth study with an asterisk. Two positively valenced and two negatively valenced attributes stereotypic of each target group were included. Participants indicated the percentage of White Americans and African Americans in Cincinnati who they believed had the attribute or would agree with the attitude statement. The order of the two target groups varied between participants.

Results and Discussion

To assess perceived stereotypicality, we analyzed the percentage estimates as a function of participant ethnicity, target ethnicity, and attribute stereotypicality, as in Studies 1 and 2. The resulting group means are presented in the top rows of Table 8. This analysis revealed a very strong main effect for attribute stereotypicality, $F(1, 346) = 759.18, p < .0001$; a reliable interaction between attribute stereotypicality and participant ethnicity, $F(1, 346) = 34.41, p < .0001$; and a reliable triple interaction among all three variables, $F(1, 346) = 10.05, p = .0017$. Consistent with the data from the first two studies, the results showed that African Americans had stronger stereotypes of both ethnic groups than did the White American participants. Additionally, and unlike the earlier results, these data also showed evidence of out-group homogeneity: out-groups were judged in a more stereotypic manner than were in-groups by participants of both ethnicities.

To assess ethnocentrism, we conducted a parallel analysis involving participant ethnicity, target ethnicity, and attribute valence. The resulting means are given in the bottom rows of Table 8. Here the valence main effect was highly reliable, $F(1, 346) = 592.83, p < .0001$. There was also a Valence X Participant Ethnicity interaction, $F(1, 346) = 8.05, p = .005$, and a Valence X Target Group X Participant Ethnicity triple interaction, $F(1, 346) = 67.46, p < .0001$. White American participants gave somewhat more positive evaluations than African American participants and, unlike the earlier data from the college samples, both participant groups showed ethnocentrism. The difference in judgments for positive and negative attributes was higher for the in-group than for the out-group for both participant groups.

Because our argument about the earlier results we presented is a socialization argument, namely that White American college students have learned rather different things about the role of ethnicity than African American college students, we decided to examine these data as a function of participants' age to see whether the younger participants in this more diverse sample would more closely replicate the results from our college student samples. In fact the sample in this study was considerably older than our college samples, with a mean age of 46.42 years and a standard deviation of 13.98 years. For purposes of this analysis, we broke participant age into three cohorts: younger than 30, between 30 and 50, and over 50 years of age. We then examined whether the stereotypicality and ethnocentrism results just reported were moderated by age.

For the perceived stereotypicality results, we found that par-

Table 8

Percentage Estimate Results: Study 4

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White American participants

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participants who were in the younger cohort showed a larger Stereotypicality \times Participant Ethnicity interaction than participants in the older cohorts, triple interaction of Linear Age \times Attribute Stereotypicality \times Participant Ethnicity: F(1, 337) = 4.77, p = .029. Thus, the difference between the two participant groups in the strength of their stereotypes, such that African American participants had stronger stereotypes than did White American participants, was greater among the younger cohort than among older respondents. Younger African American participants tended to show stronger stereotyping of both target groups than older African American participants and, conversely, younger White American participants showed weaker stereotypes of both target groups than older White American participants. Although the triple interaction that tests this difference in the age-related patterns for the two participant groups was reliable (as reported above), the simple Linear Age \times Attribute Stereotypicality interaction within each participant group was not reliable for either group.

The ethnocentrism results showed similar age cohort effects, F(1, 337) = 4.17, p < .05, such that ethnocentrism tended to increase among younger African American participants and tended to decrease among younger White Americans. Tests of simple differences in ethnocentrism as a function of age within each participant group revealed that the younger African American participants showed reliably more ethnocentrism than the older African American participants, F(1, 337) = 3.99, p < .05. Among White American participants, younger participants showed less ethnocentrism than older participants, although this simple difference was not reliable.

In sum, although these more heterogeneous samples show both ethnocentrism and out-group homogeneity by participants of both ethnic groups, the age trends are consistent with the results we reported for our college samples. Among White American participants, those in the younger cohort stereotyped less and showed less ethnocentrism. Among the African American participants, those in the younger cohort relied on ethnicity as an important intergroup marker to a greater extent than did the older participants. These age cohort differences and the fact that young African Americans seem to be moving in a very different direction than young White Americans are entirely consistent with our differential-socialization interpretation of the data from the earlier studies.

General Discussion

We began this research with two specific goals in mind. The first was to explore two well-established effects in the literature on intergroup relations in a context in which the groups have a long history of conflict and for whom group loyalties may be expected to be relatively strong. Specifically, we wished to examine ethnocentrism and out-group homogeneity effects using African Americans and White Americans rather than the types of “safe” groups that we and others have used in the past. Second, we wished to characterize the nature of intergroup relations between these two groups as they exist today, at least among samples of White American and African American college students.

Our expectations at the outset were that ethnocentrism and out-group homogeneity would simply be accentuated in these two groups. The results from Study 1 were quite surprising, yet informative in this regard. Using as the target groups African American and White American freshman at the University of Colorado, we found that the African American participants repeatedly treated ethnicity as an important intergroup variable. Their judgments showed stronger stereotypes of the out-group than the in-group and more positive sentiments toward the in-group than toward the out-group. In contrast, White American participants showed a marked reluctance to treat ethnicity as a valid basis for social categorization. These participants showed no more, and often less, stereotyping of African Americans than did the African American participants themselves, and their expressed sentiments toward African Americans were equally as favorable as those reported by African American participants.

We suggested three possible explanations for these results. The first was that they were due to the idiosyncratic target groups used in Study 1—namely, African American and White American freshman at the University of Colorado. In Study 2 we asked participants to make many of the same judgments about African Americans and White Americans in general. The results from this study were essentially identical to those from Study 1, suggesting that the target groups themselves were not responsible for the pattern of findings. Second, we wondered whether the responses of the White American students simply reflected what we have called the strong form of a social desirability bias, in which participants deliberately and consciously mask their true stereotypes and ethnic sentiments. Several results argued against this explanation. First, the only measure on which White American participants showed a reliable ethnocentrism effect in both Studies 1 and 2 was the thermometer rating task, and yet this is the most transparent measure, with the greatest face validity, exactly where one would expect participants might most monitor the responses they were giving. Second, on the valence accessibility task in both Study 1 and Study 2, White American participants showed no evidence of ethnocentrism, and presumably this was the task on which it would be most difficult to strategically manipulate one’s responses. In Study 3 we explored the strong form of the social desirability explanation further by repeating the valence accessibility task, this time severely shortening the amount of time participants had to process the target group prime. This study showed a reliable effect in the opposite direction from ethnocentrism. That is, White American participants were actually faster at responding to negative traits when primed by the target group Whites than when primed by Blacks and were slightly faster at responding to the positive traits when primed by the target group Blacks than when primed by Whites. Although this evidence is not conclusive, together we believe that these results cast doubt on the strong form of the social desirability explanation that suggests the WA participants at some level were consciously altering their responses to appear politically correct.

Our third and final explanation was that the obtained judgments reflect important differences in the way ethnicity is thought about and treated by these two groups of participants. Specifically, we argued that White American college students such as those studied here, coming from predominantly White,
often liberal backgrounds, have been socialized to believe that it is wrong to make distinctions on the basis of skin color and that members of ethnic minorities as a whole are no different from the majority White population. That is, these White American participants have been socialized to attempt to achieve a color blind perspective in their interethnic judgments, and because most of that socialization has taken place in a relatively segregated environment (as our data on familiarity in Study 1 suggest) that perspective has been relatively easy to maintain. In marked contrast, African American students, such as those who participated in our studies, have been socialized to respect and value their ethnic heritage and to realize that ethnicity clearly does make a difference in this country. These students have been socialized to maintain a “cultural pluralism” perspective. Additionally, these students, unlike our White American participants, have had extensive contact with outgroup members and undoubtedly have a personal sense of interethnic conflict in our society. In many ways these students are showing what we would anticipate them to be showing, given their membership in a minority group that has been and continues to be discriminated against (Brewer, Manzi, & Shaw, 1993; Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992). They understand that interethnic relations are far from smooth in our society, and their perceptions reflect this. Thus, in the results reported throughout this article, the African American participants consistently and realistically treated ethnicity as a meaningful group distinction, whereas the White American college students reported minimal ethnic-driven beliefs and attitudes.

The fourth study we reported, in which we used a much more diverse sample of African American and White American respondents from a large metropolitan area, provides additional evidence, we believe, for this differential-socialization explanation for our college-sample data. On the one hand, unlike our college samples, but consistent with the bulk of the existing literature both in and out of laboratory settings, this more diverse group of African Americans and White Americans showed both out-group homogeneity and ethnocentrism. On the surface, then, both White Americans and African Americans demonstrated that the racial distinction is an important basis for interpersonal and intergroup judgments. However, the age differences that we found suggest that rather different socialization processes are currently operating for White Americans and African Americans. The younger cohorts of this sample, when compared with the older cohorts, seem to be going in rather different directions. Younger African Americans demonstrated both greater ethnic stereotyping and ethnocentrism than did older cohorts of African Americans. Younger cohorts of White Americans, however, are moving in the opposite direction, manifesting less strong ethnic stereotyping and less ethnocentrism. Thus, it appears that the lessons being taught to the younger cohorts in our society about the role of race and ethnicity are rather different. White American youth are being told and are learning to deemphasize ethnic differences and to actively avoid ethnic stereotypes. Young African Americans, to the contrary, are increasingly taking pride in their ethnicity and positively valuing ethnic differences.

It is a subtle and difficult issue whether we wish to characterize the socialization of our White American college students as a form of responding in a socially desirable, politically correct manner. Although we believe our data are inconsistent with the strong form of the social desirability explanation, it is certainly possible to characterize the socialization of our White American samples as one in which they have been taught to suppress ethnic stereotypes and interethnic animosity, and it is that socialization process that is reflected in their judgments. The distinction for us is that we believe that this socialization has in fact resulted in lessons internalized by our White American participants. Were we somehow to get unbiased glimpses of our participants’ true feelings about race and ethnic differences, we believe that they would be little different from what we report here. We believe that our participants are not deceiving us about their true beliefs, at least as they exist at an ideological level. Whether or not those beliefs are consistent with their actual behavior vis-à-vis members of minority ethnic groups, of course, is another issue.

The one measure on which we found ethnocentrism from the White American college participants was the thermometer warmth measure. As we have already said, we believe that this measure is in some sense the most transparent measure of group evaluation and so should have been the most subject to biased reporting if the strong form of the social desirability explanation were operating. We think that the weaker form, that is, our socialization explanation, is entirely compatible with weak ethnocentrism on the thermometer ratings but with the absence of ethnocentrism on the percentage estimation task and other measures. We believe that our White American participants had been socialized to say that persons of diverse ethnicities really do not differ from each other in their personal and collective attributes. At the same time, and consistent with aversive racism notions (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986), they need not feel close or particularly warm toward these out-groups.

Thus, we acknowledge again that our differential-socialization interpretation is consistent with Gaertner and Dovidio’s (1986) concept of aversive racism. According to these authors, White Americans have been socialized to believe that people should not be judged by their race or ethnicity, yet they are constantly confronted with negative caricatures of ethnic minorities. The extension of our work over Gaertner and Dovidio’s is that our data are informative not only about the socialization of ethnic beliefs and stereotypes among Whites but also among African Americans. The data suggest that very different socialization processes seem to be occurring in the two ethnic groups. Rather than moving toward any sort of consensus about the role and importance of ethnicity in our society, the two groups seem to be moving in very different directions.

Although Devine’s (1989) work on automatic versus controlled components of stereotypes might appear to be related to our arguments, we believe direct comparisons are not really available. First, we again emphasize the interethnic nature of our work. The contrast of the WA participants to the AA participants is what we believe to be crucial in our work. Like most of the other existing work, Devine focused only on White participants. Accordingly, she argued that all Whites have a negative component to their stereotypes of African Americans that is automatically activated when thinking about the group. “Non-prejudiced” Whites follow with a controlled process in which
they correct the negative component, reminding themselves that African Americans have many positive qualities. We do not feel at the present time that we have strong data with which to debate this argument. The only relevant data we do have come from the valence latency task, and these are clearly inconsistent with Devine’s perspective. That is, we found in Study 3, as compared with Studies 1 and 2, that as we move the responses in the direction of greater automaticity and less control, White Americans show greater positivity in their evaluations of AAs relative to WAs, not less. We caution that Study 3 does not (and was not intended to) measure a classically automatic process. We argue only that this study represents a movement in the direction of greater automaticity and less control and that the corresponding pattern of judgments is the opposite of what Devine’s (1989) model predicts.

One of our intentions in beginning this work was to examine issues of stereotyping in groups who have a long and intense history of conflict. Initially, we were both surprised and dismayed to find that key phenomena demonstrated in the laboratory by those who have adopted a social cognition approach to stereotyping did not seem to generalize very well. Thus, for instance, we had expected strong evidence of out-group homogeneity and consistent correlations between strength of stereotyping and ethnocentrism. In fact, the data turned out to be far richer than those initial expectations. Certainly, in the fourth study, dealing with a very diverse participant population from a large metropolitan area, we found out-group homogeneity and strong ethnocentrism. Yet even here, the age moderation of those effects told us that the story is more complex than simple in-group–out-group differences in ethnic perceptions. The basic phenomena involved in stereotypes and intergroup relations, well studied in the social cognition laboratory, must be fit within historical and ideological contexts once they are used to understand actual intergroup relations. Group perceptions are guided not only by the fundamental cognitive processes that we have come to understand reasonably well in our laboratories but are also guided by ideological beliefs that our society has taught us all about the role of ethnicity and the extent to which ethnic differences are to be valued or denied.

Again, we wish to note that the apparent lack of strong negative stereotypes in the verbal attitude reports of our White American college participants does not suggest that racism and prejudice are things of the past. First, these data consist of verbal reports, and although we believe they constitute a valid reflection of our participants’ perceptions of the attributes and beliefs that characterize these groups, this certainly does not mean that participants’ behaviors are in line with, or follow from, their reported perceptions. When our White American participants interact with specific African Americans, the White Americans’ behaviors may be quite different from their reported judgments of the group’s attributes. In addition, the divergence in perceptions found in the present studies between African Americans and White Americans suggests the possibility for future conflict between these two groups. Our White American participants likely believe in all honesty that their refusal to hold a stereotype of African Americans constitutes a lack of prejudice and racism on their part. At the same time, if African Americans believe that this is an unrealistic viewpoint, and that ethnic differences need to be recognized and respected, White Americans’ failure to do so in and of itself may be seen as a new form of “prejudice.” Thus, when White Americans are heard to make such statements as, “Why do we need an African American student union?” or “Why do we need to have special courses on ethnic minorities? Doesn’t this simply promote intergroup conflict and constitute differential treatment of minorities versus Whites?”—a view that White Americans may consider truly egalitarian—the reaction of an African American may in all likelihood be that this is the newest form of prejudice and racism.

References


## Appendix A

### Attribute Dimensions Used in Study 1 Questionnaire

#### Positively Valenced

**Stereotypic of African Americans/Counterstereotypic of White Americans**
- Athletic
- Dance well
- Have strong emotional bonds to their families
- "I believe taking ethnic studies courses is an important part of a college education."

#### Negatively Valenced

**Stereotypic of African Americans/Counterstereotypic of White Americans**
- Grew up in a household in which their father was absent
- Sexually aggressive
- Likely to drop out of college
- Receive financial support from athletic scholarships

## Appendix B

### Attribute Dimensions Used in Study 2 Questionnaire

#### Positively Valenced

**Stereotypic of African Americans/Counterstereotypic of White Americans**
- Streetwise
- "I would enjoy singing in a church choir."
- Emotionally expressive
- "I grew up close to my cousins, aunts, and uncles."
- Competitive
- "If you want to get ahead, you have to take charge."
- Organized
- "A kid growing up in the U.S. has unlimited opportunities."

**Stereotypic of White Americans/Counterstereotypic of African Americans**
- "If you want to get ahead, you have to take charge."
- Organized
- "A kid growing up in the U.S. has unlimited opportunities."

* These attributes were used in Study 4.

#### Negatively Valenced

**Stereotypic of African Americans/Counterstereotypic of White Americans**
- Poor
- "I've had a lot of run-ins with the police."
- "I just can't seem to keep a job for very long."
- Superstitious

**Stereotypic of White Americans/Counterstereotypic of African Americans**
- Superstitious
- "I have usually been given whatever material things I needed or wanted without having to work for them."
- Sheltered
- "I believe my job is more important than my family."
- Stuffy

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