

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION®

LEADERSHIP
Insights

Racial Inclusion

What Every College Leader
Needs to Know

LEADERSHIP Insights

Racial Inclusion

IN THE fall of 2015, the University of Missouri at Columbia grabbed the attention of the country. A series of protests about the treatment of black students at the flagship eventually led to the resignations of the system president and campus chancellor. Since then, the university has sought to bridge racial divisions, while colleges elsewhere have taken steps to avoid the problems that erupted so visibly at Mizzou.

It's not an easy task. Higher education has for decades

grappled with the legacy of American racism and sought to be more inclusive of both students and professors of color; many argue it has a long way to go.

The way race impacts college education, access, and life is multifaceted. No one article collection can encompass it all. But this selection of *Chronicle* articles and essays aims to help college leaders understand the experiences of minority members on campus, the opportunities to build dialogue and diversity, and the historical context for current debates.

Campus Climate:

What it's like for students and faculty of color

4 The Isolation of Minority Students

At the U. of Missouri, black students describe their experience.

10 Being a Black Professor

An African-American scholar wonders if he's destined to be disheartened.

15 Diversity Fatigue

It's real. And it afflicts those who are most committed to diversity.

17 Talking Over the Racial Divide

Can a half-semester course change students' views?

Policy and Practice:

Ideas to build diversity

24 Race-Conscious Admissions

Using solid data and tracking progress are key.

27 Making Access Equitable

For many students, the journey to college is no fairytale.

34 Faculty Hiring

What it takes to fundamentally reform your search efforts.

39 Diversity Training

It's popular. But does it work?

Lessons From the Past:

Higher ed's long struggle with inclusion

43 The Hard Discussions

After a high-profile incident, the U. of Oklahoma tries to talk about race.

48 The Uncertain Road to Inclusion

Victory is hard to define as colleges pursue diversity.

53 When Higher Ed Was a Public Good

As the nation has grown more diverse, has support dwindled for college access?

60 Ripples From a Protest Past

Why an occupation by black students at Cornell in 1969 still matters today.

What It's Like to Be a Black Student at the U. of Missouri

By BETH MCMURTRIE

Reminders of their race are constant. On the streets, when drivers yell slurs at them. In class, when their mostly white peers expect them to speak for all black people. And in social settings, when the racial divide seems most unbridgeable.

Just 7 percent of a student body of 35,000, black students here at the University of Missouri are used to feeling invisible at times, singled out at others. They are hardly alone. Black students across the country in recent months have shared similar stories of isolation and prejudice.

But what happened here this past fall — a homecoming protest, a televised hunger strike, a show of support by the football team, the resignations of the system president and campus chancellor — made Missouri a stage on which black students' frustration, in all its dimensions, played out for a national audience. On the campus and beyond, their cause has resonated. Yet many people are unsympathetic to some of the tactics protesters have employed, or are confused by what black students mean when they talk about being made to feel that they don't belong. What is it that they go through? What do they want to change?

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Appreciate the Catch-22:** Often minority students feel caught between not wanting to speak for an entire race of people and knowing that if they don't, stereotypes will remain unchallenged.
- **See the social segregation:** At Mizzou, the social life often felt like it existed on two parallel tracks. Some college events, like homecoming, were open to all, but black undergraduates felt they were mostly for their white peers.
- **Connect with grad students:** Souring relations between the administration and minority graduate students was one reason protests swelled at the university. College leaders should not overlook the distinct problems such students face.



JUSTIN L. STEWART/MISSOURIAN

Danielle Walker, a graduate student in public policy, has helped lead the “Racism Lives Here” movement on the Missouri campus. As an undergraduate diversity peer educator there, she says, she found that white classmates often prefer to see racism as only a series of isolated incidents.

The Chronicle asked several black students at Missouri to describe what their lives here are like, and what they’re working toward. As they navigate college or graduate school, they say, they often feel caught between not wanting to speak for an entire race of people and knowing that if they don’t say something, stereotypes will lie unchallenged, and black and white people will stay in their own corners.

“If you continue on that path, seeing that separation as OK, you’re setting a course for misunderstanding,” says AnDrea Jackson, a senior. “You’re basically setting yourself up to repeat history.”

MISSOURI’S BLACK population is concentrated in St. Louis and Kansas City, where neighborhoods remain largely segregated. As a result, many students, black and white, set foot on the flagship campus in Columbia having little experience with classmates of a different race.

Ms. Jackson grew up in St. Louis, 100 miles east of here, but in an uncommonly diverse neighborhood. Now 39, she also has moved around a lot, including out of state. She was shocked by how overwhelming-

ly white the campus here is. “A lot of white students who come from small towns are like, ‘This is so diverse!’ And I’m like, ‘No, it’s not,’” says Ms. Jackson, a journalism major who earned an associate degree in Georgia. “It didn’t take long for me to have an identity crisis.”

The social segregation struck her one night as she was leaving the black-culture center, a second home for many black students. New students had been talking with upperclassmen about how to navigate campus life: heavy stuff like dealing with racism and day-to-day details like where to get their hair done. As Ms. Jackson was walking back across the campus, a stream of white students poured out of a building where they had wrapped up a homecoming-related event. Many black students consider homecoming, every fall, a largely white tradition.

Why is it, Ms. Jackson wondered, that when it comes to social life, Mizzou has two parallel tracks, white and black (or, sometimes, multicultural)? How could the university get unstuck from its past? In Atlanta, she says, people liked to learn from one another because they were different. Those differences actually brought them together, she says. “Here our



DANIEL BRENNER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Supporters of the protest group Concerned Student 1950 celebrated in November after Timothy Wolfe, president of the U. of Missouri, announced his resignation. But many of the student organizers will soon graduate, leaving behind a campus they hope can reinvent itself.

differences separate us.”

Teah Hairston has been wrestling with identity, too, and with the divisions she sees in the classroom. That struggle will probably influence her choice of career. She grew up in a diverse part of Sacramento, Calif., where, she says, “I didn’t have to pay attention to being black.” Instead what united people she knew was being poor.

Now a graduate student in sociology, Ms. Hairston is conscious of how often she walks across the campus without encountering another black person. That the general curriculum reflects a white, male perspective she finds troubling, and that just 3 percent of the faculty members at Missouri are black weighs on her. “A lot of people in this department want to go on to be a professor,” she says. “And I don’t. I don’t feel like I belong in this culture.”

She teaches undergraduate courses, and she’s the first black instructor some of her students have had. They tell her they like her because her informal teaching style makes her relatable, and her classes relevant to their lives. But ill-informed views on race

crop up on course discussion boards. One student this fall questioned how the graduate student who had gone on a hunger strike at Missouri could have experienced discrimination if his family is, as reported, well-off. Others have acknowledged that black and white students don’t interact much socially and asked why that’s wrong if it’s what both groups prefer.

Ms. Hairston uses students’ comments to start discussions about race, inequality, or sexuality. “I try to give them different ways to think about things,” she says. “I’m not necessarily trying to change minds.”

Black students say they frequently have to deal with snap judgments. Despite being a third-year doctoral student in psychology, Reuben Faloughi still gets introduced as an athlete (he played football as an undergrad at the University of Georgia). In those introductions, there’s a distinct undertone, he says: “This guy can’t ever be a scholar. He’s here for entertainment.” Once a professor asked him to play rap music, as if that was all he listened to. “These are

small things,” he says, “but they add up.”

The ignorance and intimidation some students experience has shocked them. Corie Wilkins, a senior, remembers having been on campus all of two days when a car passed by and the driver yelled “Nigger!” out the window at him and his friends. “If you say that to somebody on the street in Chicago, the consequences are understood,” says Mr. Wilkins, who grew up on the city’s South Side. “And these guys were so fearless when they said it. At that point I knew, this is going to be a problem here.”

There’s also a cluelessness he sees among some white students. I’m not racist, they tell him, because I have black friends, or I like fried chicken and sweet-potato pie. It’s OK to say “nigga,” they say, as long as I drop the “r.”

“No,” says Mr. Wilkins, “you cannot say that, ever.”

Racial slurs are frequent. This fall the student-government president, who is black, posted on Facebook his reflections on being yelled at by white men in a pickup truck. “I really just want to know why my simple existence is such a threat to society,” wrote the president, Payton Head. “For those of you who wonder why I’m always talking about the importance of inclusion and respect, it’s because I’ve experienced moments like this multiple times at THIS university, making me not feel included here.”

Tiana Glass knows the feeling. She looks to the faculty for mentors or role models and doesn’t find many. The only two black professors she’s had in three years have been in black studies. Classmates tell her she must be here because of affirmative action. An administrator, knowing little about her, thought she couldn’t afford a study-abroad trip to Ghana. “People are making assumptions,” she says, “based on my blackness.”

Ms. Glass looks back on a summer transition program for incoming students and thinks of friends she made who have since dropped out. She understands the reasons: culture shock, alienation, money. Eventually she found a home in the women’s-studies department, where two faculty mentors have offered support and a sense of belonging. If not for them, Ms. Glass says, she would have left long ago. “Missouri is good at recruiting, but you have to retain,” she says. “And I don’t see that.”

TO UNDERSTAND the protests at Missouri this past fall, you need to go back to August 2014. The fatal shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo., was a defining moment for many black students. They began to talk more about structural racism, and to organize, bringing to light the discrimination they experienced at the university and linking it to how the black residents of Ferguson were treated. It was the first time some of the students had considered taking a new approach to race relations on campus.

They formed the group MU4MikeBrown and held rallies. They staged a die-in in the student union. They met with administrators to talk about the tense racial climate and lack of diversity in the student body and the faculty. They discussed slurs scrawled on dorm-room doors and cotton balls strewn on the lawn of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, an offense in 2010 that resulted in two white students’ being charged with littering. Little seemed to come of it all, black students said, other than forums and promises that they were being heard.

“A lot of white students who come from small towns are like, ‘This is so diverse!’ And I’m like, ‘No, it’s not.’”

Still, coming together was a powerful experience. “It touched me to the core,” says Mr. Faloughi, whose initial act of protest was to participate in a demonstration and die-in, which drew hundreds of people. “It was the first time I saw that many students committed to the cause.”

This past fall, after Mr. Head’s Facebook post, Danielle Walker wondered what the chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, would say. Surely, she thought, the student government president’s words carry weight. But days went by. “Oh,” Ms. Walker, a graduate student in public policy, remembers thinking, “you all are really not going to say anything.”

Six days after Mr. Head’s comments, the chancellor finally put out a letter. There was no mention of race or details about the incident. Mr. Loftin simply said that the university opposed bias and discrimination and was working “to address the issues brought forward.”

Ms. Walker is familiar with that kind of response. As an undergrad here, she was a diversity peer educator, leading discussions in dorms. She would ask people to think about the biases they were raised with and would stress that acknowledging prejudice doesn’t mean you’re a bad person. But students rarely opened up. “I’d get what I call pageant responses,” she recalls: bland and uplifting comments like, I accept everyone for who they are. White people, she says, often prefer to see racism as a series of isolated incidents. This isn’t the 1950s anymore, classmates would tell her. We have a black president.

Ms. Walker observes racism in more subtle in-

teractions. A professor once told her that her Afro was too big and that she needed to sit in the back of the classroom so others could see. Peers say she speaks well, as if she doesn't match their expectations of how a black person should sound. After Michael Brown was shot, people attempted to offer reassurance: We know you're not one of those people, Danielle. Michael Brown didn't respect police authority.

Ms. Glass, the women's-studies major, was taking a course in cross-cultural communication when Ferguson came up. That's where she's from. My mom always told me to be respectful toward the police, a white student said. Ms. Glass wondered if her classmate knew what it felt like to be afraid to talk to a police officer.

Black students have continued to mobilize. Ms. Walker formed a loose coalition called Racism Lives Here and staged marches and demonstrations. She was tired of many people's not hearing what black students had been saying all along. But activism was stressful, and she dealt with migraines all semester. As she walked to class, she says, students would pass by and say things like, "You're what's wrong with Mizzou."

“Basically, people are asleep. To try to wake them up is to jolt them to a reality they don't want to face.”

The group Concerned Student 1950 also formed to bring attention to race, its name a nod to the year the first black student was admitted to Missouri. During homecoming, members staged a protest, linking arms and speaking about the black student experience.

As demonstrations gained momentum, some students' perspectives shifted. Until this fall, when Ms. Jackson, the journalism major, heard insensitive or ignorant comments from classmates, she would feel that it was on her to correct the bias. The protests — and the pushback — led her to think that the problems were deeper than individual acts of ignorance, she says. “I got angry at what I was hearing and seeing: That we're overreacting, that we're whining, that we need to get over it, that we're making things up, that the mere idea of being the only black person in the room is not such a big deal.”

“I won't say that my perspective was shattered,” she continues. “But you understand that there are moments that are teachable moments, and there are

moments when you have to fight.”

The hunger strike and other tactics, such as protesters' demand that the system president resign, divided black students, although they say those tensions were played up by outsiders, including the news media. For every “act of rage” that got attention, says Mr. Wilkins, the Chicagoan, “there were 10, 20, maybe 100 peaceful demonstrations or peaceful talks.”

People were also quietly working behind the scenes. Marquise Griffin got involved in discussions with classmates and professors in the College of Education, where he is pursuing a master's degree. Those conversations were constructive, he says, in ways he generally doesn't see elsewhere on campus.

Through his job in the parent-relations office, he heard from lots of angry mothers and fathers during the height of the protests, when dozens of students were camped out on the quad. “I don't think my son or daughter should be exposed to all these protests,” they told him over the phone. And he would wonder: “Why don't you? That should be part of what it means to learn.”

He didn't actually say that. His instructions were simply to let parents vent. But occasionally, he says, someone would stop and ask him about his experience. People knew from his voice that he wasn't white. So he would tell them: Since enrolling in June, he's been harassed and intimidated on several occasions. It's particularly bad after football games, he says, when drunken white men drive through the streets of downtown Columbia and unleash expressions of “toxic masculinity.” Once a big blue pickup truck, its headlights off, followed him to his apartment building.

After hearing Mr. Griffin describe his experiences, a caller would usually go silent for a few seconds, then refer to isolated incidents of racism. One parent told him she'd been sexually harassed a lot in college, as if to say that we all have to deal with bad stuff.

“That's part of the culture in Columbia,” says Mr. Griffin. “Basically, people are asleep. To try to wake them up is to jolt them to a reality they don't want to face.”

THE TURMOIL at Missouri resulted in new leadership and a sense of urgency. The interim president, Michael Middleton, is deeply respected by black students. As a black undergraduate at Missouri in the 1960s, he lived that generation's struggles, and his activism led to, among other things, the creation of the Legion of Black Collegians (the black student government) and the black-culture center.

Minority students are glad to see that the university has created an Office for Civil Rights and Title IX, concentrating functions formerly handled by several offices to deal more directly and openly with their concerns. And they are encouraged that a new

position — vice chancellor for diversity, inclusion, and equity — has been created (Chuck Henson, a black professor of law, is filling it on an interim basis). A race-relations committee, including students, faculty members and administrators, formed last spring and meets regularly.

That said, students remain wary of what may ultimately prove to be token efforts. They are unsure how to go about improving campus culture. They're mindful that progress needs to be tangible but also that change is hard.

Rhodesia McMillian, a doctoral student in educational leadership and policy analysis, is one of many students working with the administration on improving the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.

Her group, MU Policy Now, advocated for Mr. Middleton's appointment, and she is part of a systemwide graduate-student leadership-development program. She's committed to pushing Missouri to do more to retain more minority faculty members, noting that the professor who encouraged her to apply to the Ph.D. program has since been recruited away.

Ms. McMillian feels confident in her power to affect change. "I don't need a bullhorn in the streets," she says. "All I have to do is set up a meeting. If I don't feel my concerns are listened to, I can take my talents elsewhere."

Mr. Griffin, the graduate student who fielded calls from white parents, plans to continue engaging his classmates and professors. People in education policy and leadership, he says, need these discussions.

At the height of campus tensions, Mr. Griffin's friends and mentors asked if he would transfer. "I was like, Of course not. Even though it has been rough, being a graduate student and a graduate assistant and a social activist here, I'm exactly where I need to be. I believe I can leave this place better than

I found it."

Ms. Walker, the former diversity peer educator, wants to see Missouri put together a full history of the university, one that is explicit about the role of race in its evolution and character. She wants to see more minority staff members in key positions, including in student health, counseling, and the civil-rights office.

Concerned Student 1950 remains active. The group is working to set up a meeting with Missouri's Board of Curators, which recently held a listening session for students to talk about their experiences. Ms. Hairston spoke about her upbringing in Sacramento, having been homeless, and why it's important for the university to embrace diversity. Asked why she came forward, Ms. Hairston, who is pregnant, says that when her child is in college and may experience some of the same problems, "I can't say I didn't try to make things better."

Some student organizers will soon graduate, leaving behind a campus they hope can reinvent itself. Mr. Wilkins, who plans to pursue a master's degree in divinity, says that he's inspired by how students and professors, black and white, came together this fall, but also that he's frustrated by continued resistance.

Mr. Wilkins, who sits on the race-relations committee with Mr. Middleton, expressed his frustration during the height of the turmoil. "I told him I was tired and that I don't see much change," recalls Mr. Wilkins. "He says, 'Yeah, but you have to continue. I've been at this 50-plus years. If I haven't given up, neither can you.'"

"I will never forget that," says Mr. Wilkins. "There was nothing to do but shut up and get back to work."

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What It Feels Like to Be a Black Professor

By JOHN L. JACKSON JR.

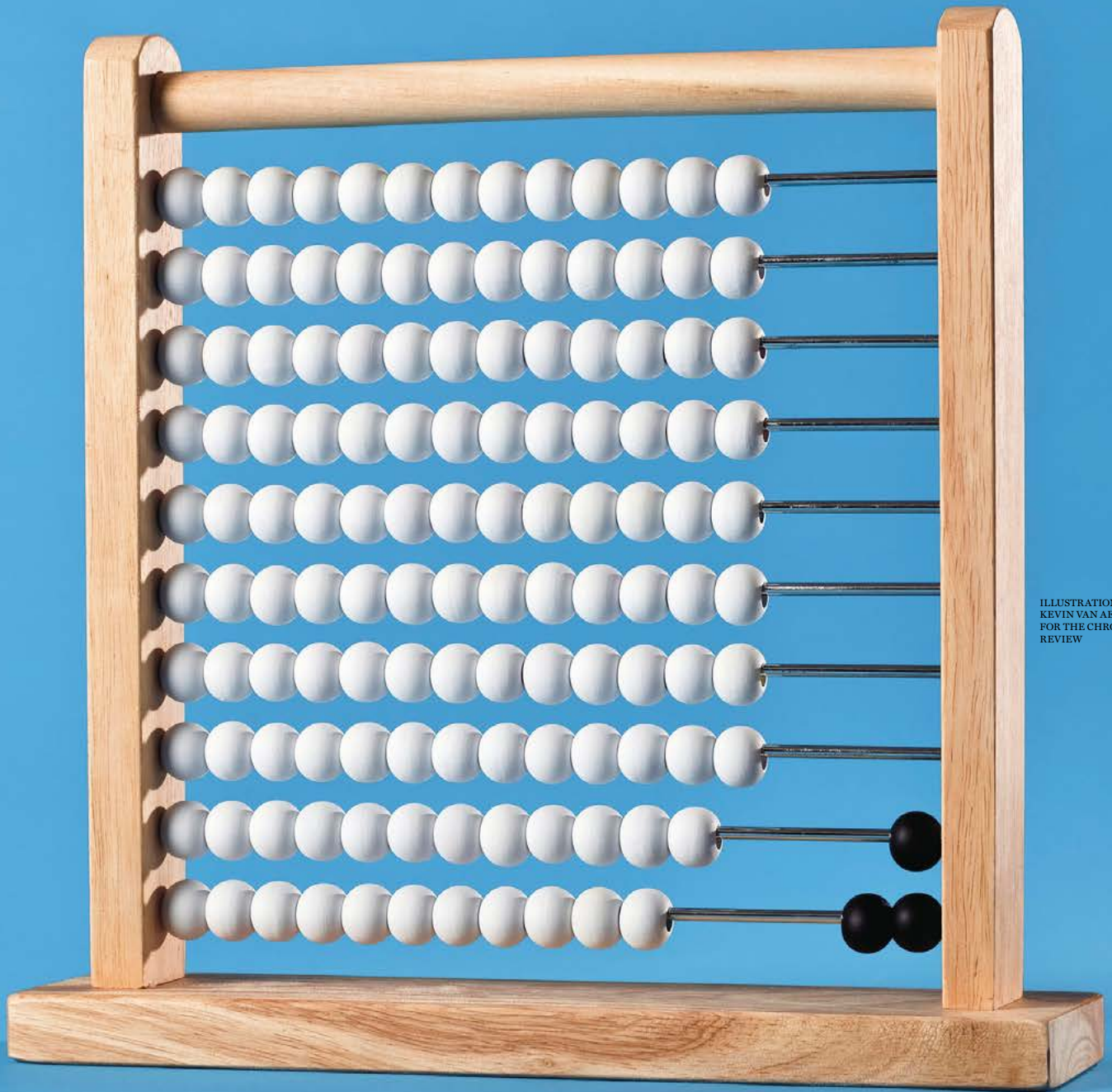


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A

YOUNG CHILD scribbling on a blackboard perched atop an easel in the hallway of a two-bedroom Brooklyn apartment.

That's one of my earliest memories. I'm writing my ABCs and spelling out three-letter words, fingertips and palms caked white with chalk. For as long as I can remember, probably from about my second birthday, this was my afternoon routine, a ritual mandated by my stepfather, who would periodically make stops at the chalkboard on his way out the front door, or to the bathroom, just to confirm that I was demonstrating the kind of progress that he expected.

He was determined to make sure that I was better prepared for school than all the other kids on the block. More to the point, he had convinced himself that I already was. The man loved to pump me up with positive reinforcement about my intellectual abilities, my God-given gifts—only further enhanced by his judicious enforcement of my daily chalkboard regimen.

By the time I started kindergarten, I was more than ready for public school. And I did well, both at the original elementary school I attended (with mostly Afro-Caribbean and African-American classmates) in East Flatbush and at the second one (with a majority of Jewish and Italian kids) just a 15-minute drive south in Canarsie. In junior high and high school, I read and read and read. When I scored in the 90s on a test or paper, I would hear tongue-in-cheek (mostly) questions about why I hadn't gotten the full 100. I got the point. I had to be the best. I needed to outcompete everybody in my classes. "What did the chiney girls get on the test?" my Trinidadian stepfather would ask.

We never really talked about racism in my house, and certainly not as the reason for why I had to do well. In fact, I never heard my parents talk about race at all. When we moved to Canarsie, a lower-middle-class neighborhood, there were ample opportunities for them to wax xenophobic—or at least frustrated and incredulous—about the ethnic whites in our housing project or in the coveted single-family brick houses just across the street. But if they did, I wasn't within earshot.

Many academics have written about the differences between how African-Americans and black immigrants from the West Indies or Africa deal with racism. They offer various theories for why those differences exist and how they affect black people's lives. Many of those scholars would find the lack of

COMMENTARY

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Recognize the frustrations:** Despite earning tenure and earning academic accolades, many accomplished black scholars can feel overlooked by administrators, who may not see how hard the professors continue to work for acceptance.
- **Understand the network:** Senior professors talk to junior professors. And negative feelings about a campus or department easily get passed on if improvements aren't made.

race-talk in my household predictable, given that my mother and stepfather were both from the Caribbean. But I grew up thinking of myself as an African-American, and not just because my biological father and his family were from the Deep South.

Most of the black kids I went to school with, West Indian or not, were raised on hip-hop. America was our reference point, and though our race-talk gen-



COURTESY OF JOHN L. JACKSON JR.

John L. Jackson Jr. in elementary school

erally consisted of little more than retelling Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor jokes about how blacks and whites behaved differently in similar circumstances, we read ourselves quite fully into the saga of America's sordid racial history.

Although my stepfather didn't talk about racism per se, he had a kind of natural fearlessness about him, an aura of invincibility, that I believed would have met racism—and any would-be racist—with a swift kick in the ass (or at least a couple of lashes from his belt). But he made it clear to me, even early on, that I didn't have the luxury of being mediocre. My stepfather couldn't intimidate some admissions officer into punching my ticket for college, and the strict mandate about studying hard and getting good grades must have been predicated on his assessment of the challenges that growing up a young black man in America would bring.

SOME AFRICAN-AMERICANS still wax nostalgic about how much harder black people used to work. You know, “back in the day.” It is a subplot in the story about segregation's golden age of black-on-black harmony and mutual benevolence. Racism was so awful and humiliating, they claim, that blacks had no choice but to stick together and give everything their all, to work as hard as they possibly could. Being unex-

ceptional was the kiss of death for a black person in “a white man's world.” Those who were exceptional might not get much more than the white world's castoffs. Still, plodding along in uninspired mediocrity was hardly a fruitful alternative.

Of course, some black people would always be mediocre—and in a white-supremacist state, mediocre blacks “proved” the rule of racial inferiority. They made the race look bad. Mediocre whites were individual underachievers, but racism demanded that mediocre blacks stand in for the inherent, God-given limitations of their entire race. Plus, whites controlled most of the important social and economic institutions in the country, and the weaker members of their social networks could still benefit from those connections. Blacks didn't have the luxury of being average if they still wanted a chance to succeed.

We had to be—as the elders explained—“twice as good as whites” to get the jobs that whites didn't even want.

“Twice as good as whites” is about recognizing that America is a place where whites and blacks can do the exact same things and achieve very different results. That is one textbook definition of what racism looks like. “Twice as good” means that “average” portends different things for blacks and whites.

But there has long been another argument afoot in the black community—the “culture of poverty” theory. Some of its biggest proponents include various neo-cons like Thomas Sowell and celebrities like the comedian Bill Cosby, though the latter's touting of “respectability” seems ironic given the controversy now swirling around “America's dad.” I hear versions of “the culture of poverty” whenever I speak to audiences about race in America, black or white audiences. The argument is simple and turns “twice as good” on its head.

There may have been a time when blacks championed high achievement, say the “culture of poverty” proponents. Blacks didn't have what they deserved, so they fought harder to get it. But now African-Americans have grown comfortable with having less, content as second-class citizens, less angry about their social marginalization. They once fought tooth-and-nail for equal rights; now they're resigned to their own inequality. They once protested and marched and faced down dogs for the right to vote. Now they've lost respect for the ballot, even though there are legislators who seem committed to making it harder for them to vote. The recent protests about police violence in Ferguson, New York City, and elsewhere seem like throwbacks to some bygone era, a temporary speed-bump of agitation along a lengthy highway of black apathy.

According to the “culture of poverty” crowd, blacks don't want to do much of anything. Instead, they think everything should be handed to them. Forget about being “twice as good”; for the 21st-century black person, “half as good” is more than good enough. While “twice as good” thinking is a cri-

tique of racism, culture-of-poverty partisans attack any talk of racism as little more than a justification for do-nothingism.

Those who believe that a “twice as good” ethos has been replaced by a “culture of poverty” mentality maintain that many black people are so busy fetishizing race and racism that they don’t pull themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps and take responsibility for their lives.

Bill O’Reilly, the Fox News host, is only the most prominent figure who declares that the real “conversation on race” that liberals are afraid to have is a conversation about blacks being on the lookout for scapegoats, for external forces that explain away their own underachievement: I didn’t get good grades because the test is biased. I didn’t get the job because the employer must be prejudiced. The bank won’t give me a loan because the loan officer is racist. It is raining in my neighborhood because the clouds are bigots. Someone or something is always out to get them.

There are all kinds of statistical regressions demonstrating, other things being equal, the many ways in which racism does account for different social outcomes. Think of the audit studies where identical résumés have black-sounding versus white-sounding names at the top. The Biffs end up getting called in for job interviews much more often than the Leroy’s.

This argument—that blacks have gone from promoting the idea of “twice as good” to embracing the idea that something closer to “half as good” is fine—is absurd and strategically brilliant at the same time.

First of all, it sets up a scenario wherein talking about racism at all is only ever a crutch. People who see racism must be the ones looking for handouts and celebrating their victimhood. Critical analysis and social critique be damned: To see race or racism is to be lazy—and racist. Period. It means kicking back on your heels and waiting for “the white man” to give you everything you want. “Why should I have to work hard?” the thought-bubble in black people’s heads is supposed to be saying. “My forefathers built this country. They worked enough for all of their offspring. We are owed our reparations.” They want their bling, the argument goes, and they want it handed to them on a silver platter.

This is exactly why there is such demonization of “the welfare state.” Charles Murray, Lawrence Mead, and other “culture of poverty” theorists have convinced many lawmakers that food stamps and other government handouts are Trojan horses of psychological self-destruction. Here the “culture of poverty” argument closes: If blacks think they can get everything without doing anything and you combine that with Americans’ penchant for lavishing praise on their children for mediocrity, the result is a perfect storm of racial underachievement, lowered expectations, and undeserved entitlement.

As I see it, blacks are not clamoring for half-as-good-opportunities. If anything, they feel like “twice as good” might get them less than it once did.

TAKE MY OWN tribe: black academics. A few years ago, a series of odd coincidences and scheduling serendipities found me breaking bread with some of the most successful blacks in academe. They have each won all kinds of prestigious awards. Their work has been well cited within their disciplines and beyond. They are tenured at some of the most distinguished institutions in the country. And, down to a person, they felt underappreciated, disrespected, and dismissed as scholars. They had achieved everything, yet they felt that many of their white colleagues treated them with little more than contempt or utter indifference. It was disheartening to hear.

These senior scholars of color described being ignored by administrators, maligned by others in their fields, and somewhat alienated from the centers of their disciplines—even when they ostensibly constituted, by reasonable criteria, the very centers of those disciplines.

The first time I heard such a tale, over lunch at a coffee shop in California, I tried to dismiss it as an isolated incident, one person’s idiosyncratic experience. Maybe he was hypersensitive. Maybe I had caught him on a bad day. But then I met other senior and very successful scholars (in Michigan and Massachusetts, in New York and North Carolina) with similar stories to tell about humiliating slights that they interpreted as race-based disrespect. I had to admit that something more was going on than thin-skinned bellyaching.

Most of these scholars were sharing their stories with me (their junior colleague) for my own good, in hopes of steeling me for a similar fate. Their point: No amount of publishing productivity or public acclaim will exempt you from the vulnerabilities and burdens that come from being black in the academy. Being “twice as good” wasn’t enough to spare them the sting of race-based stigma.

These scholars weren’t lamenting the stain of “affirmative action,” the fear that people assumed their achievements were based on something other than purely meritocratic deservedness (the Clarence Thomas critique). Rather, they were arguing something close to the opposite: They had succeeded at a game stacked against them—most people in their fields knew and understood that—but the thanks they received were attempts to ignore them, to demean them with cool disinterest and a series of daily exclusions from important departmental discussions or leadership roles at their respective universities.

They were bitter and disheartened. Was I doomed for the same fate?

My stepfather might have given me my early taste of academic success, but my mother gave me my temperament. I have always tried to be a generous and empathetic interlocutor. I don’t always succeed, but I try. Many faculty members reserve their empathy for students and colleagues who are just like them, based on ethnic affiliation, regional background, or any number of factors. They see them-

selves in those individuals and are, therefore, more than willing to give them the benefit of the doubt, in subtle ways, maybe without even realizing it. I have seen that at every place I've ever taught. It doesn't matter if the scholars are left-leaning or right-leaning, male or female, black or white. Everyone does it.

But only a small subset of scholars musters the same kind of empathy for (and investment in) people who differ from them in some substantial way. Clearly, race is one of those rubrics, but not the only one. Certain professors are less likely to go the extra mile for colleagues who are different from them, doing things "by the book" instead of thinking off-script in more humane and creative ways about what these people need—something they would be more likely to do with folks "just like them."

What modicum of professional success I might have is almost exclusively a function of the fact that I try (though don't always succeed) to take everyone I meet very seriously. It is an ethnographic disposition, I tell myself. Everyone is a more than adequate ambassador of his or her cultural world. It doesn't matter how educated people are; if you listen long enough and carefully enough, a good ethnographer can always learn something important. If not, the failure is the ethnographer's, nobody else's. And often people respond generously to just being listened to.

I SMILE TOO much. I'm working on that. I wish I had more of my stepfather's cold stare. But I also realize that smiling, genuinely and warmly smiling, is a kind of magic bullet, especially for black men in the academy.

Not too long ago, I did a kind of experiment. I am constantly telling students that "everything is ethnography," that an anthropologist is always on the clock, seeking out new ways of spying on and interpreting cultural practices and processes. So as a kind of ethnographic investigation, I went against the grain of my general tendencies and tried not to smile. I wanted to see how it would affect my social interactions.

I conducted this little test as part of a job interview. I didn't really know anyone on the search committee, at least not very well, and I decided that I would actively try not to over-smile during my interview. I wasn't going to scowl, but I would stay, as much as I could, emotionally (and facially) neutral. I couldn't stop a smile from breaking out across my face for a few fleeting seconds at least once, but I tried to suppress it immediately. I did all I could to look "serious." I crossed my right leg over my left. I sat back calmly. I answered their questions soberly but substantively (I thought), and then I left.

I don't know how I was read, but I fear that I might have come across as arrogant. Maybe even a little standoffish and "uppity." Who knows?

It wasn't a controlled scientific experiment, so I can't isolate all the variables and search for some statistically significant correlation between my de-

meanor and the committee's decision that I wasn't a good "fit" for the job. But I imagined that I could feel their coolness during our conversation, and I wish that I had been able to go back into the interview room and test that first response against the one that my more smiley self might have garnered.

I want to think about my smiling as a sign of empathy and generosity, but maybe I am reading myself too kindly. At my most cynical and self-critical, I call it a postmodern version of "shucking and jiving": my trying to do whatever I can to put people at ease, to listen to what they have to say, to shower them with inviting (and unselfconscious) smiles. Is this the 21st-century equivalent of the yes man?

I must not have wanted that job if I was willing to do my little experiment during the interview. But it still stung when I didn't get the nod. When I was told that I wasn't right for the post, I thought of my senior black colleagues and the disrespect they'd talked about.

Like everyone else, regardless of race, my world is full of tiny and not-so-tiny slights, major and minor humiliations every single day: a barrage of looks, comments, emails, reactions, decisions, and personal or professional rejections—intended and inadvertent—that seem to belittle at every turn. At least it feels that way, as if my daily life is organized around the reeling dash from one disrespectful dismissal to another.

The world's playlist constantly ends on a version of the same tune: "John, don't believe your own hype. You're not as good as people pretend you are. And don't you ever forget it." That little ditty does battle with my stepfather's earlier accolades. It is probably an outgrowth of those very accolades, nurtured by my nasty little subconscious, my own idiosyncratic version of academic impostor syndrome.

I spent my 20s and 30s hoping that I could credentialize myself into a kind of protective cocoon against such onslaughts, the ones I try to deflect from others and the many more I inflict upon myself. I may not have been "twice as good" as anybody, but I was going to try my damndest to reach my goals: B.A. M.A. Ph.D. Tenure. Named professorship.

None of it is foolproof though. And at the end of the day, success might simply be based on how often and easily one smiles, on whether someone is twice or half as good at that—yet another example of something universal that might be felt a little more acutely from a perch on one side of the racial tracks that divide us.

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The Impact of Diversity Fatigue

By MARIAM B. LAM

AS AN administrator and faculty member at one of the nation's most racially diverse research universities, I have seen commitments to "diversity work" ebb and flow over the decades. The ebbing is not due to a lack of commitment or conviction. Rather, it can be debilitating to meet the demand for free lessons in cultural competency, while at the same time negotiating constant resistance to such work from other quarters on a daily basis, and even during downtime. It is the very people who are the most committed to doing diversity work who are experiencing this diversity fatigue.

Of course, we in higher education are also battling another type of diversity fatigue, among those who see diversity efforts as merely politically correct. Yet others are just generally tired of the term "diversity," which they believe has been so co-opted and diluted that it no longer has any meaning. (That has also been the case with its predecessor, "multiculturalism.")

But for many folks of color in the academy, the language of diversity itself is tired and appears to be bandied about primarily for branding purposes. Such battle fatigue plagues our underrepresented faculty and staff members and students, who must balance feelings of frustration, anger, and devaluation with a lack of mentorship, uncertain resources, and, often, additional family-care responsibilities. These are all familiar realities for academics of color and first-generation scholars.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Watch your words:** For professors from underrepresented minorities, the oft-used terms about diversity and racial inclusion can become "tired" and may feel more like a branding exercise.
- **Value the unseen labor:** Minority faculty and staff members often assume heavier workloads in mentoring, counseling, training, and service work.

Underrepresented faculty and staff members share the burden of diversity work in many visible and invisible forms: They often assume heavier workloads in teaching, advising, mentoring, and counseling, and spend more time on outreach, recruitment, training and workshops, and other service work. While their institutions benefit from collective gains in student success, those who do this work find it exhausting to do more than their fair share, indefinitely.

There is no easy way to relieve diversity fatigue. The underlying equity issues it reflects have built up over many years, and it will most likely take many more years of work before we see drastic improvements.

Those scholars must also argue vigorously for the value of one another's research and additional teaching contributions. The University of California's Systemwide Academic Senate labored for at least five years to approve minor changes in the system's Academic Personnel Manual, designed to give proper merit value to diversity work across teaching, research, and service categories in the tenure and promotion process. Historically, at many universities, most such work has been relegated to "service." During the Senate discussion, some people asked, "Wouldn't this penalize those who don't do diversity work?" No, those folks will continue to be rewarded despite making little to no contribution to diversity — just as they always were. The change prevents punitive assessment and undervaluing of this additional academic labor.

Graduate students feel the same disciplinary and departmental tensions and frustrations, but have even fewer resources at their disposal than faculty members do. Many break under these pressures and fail to continue into the professoriate or into jobs that make use of their skills. Despite these struggles, graduate students at my institution have been among the most proactive groups in seeking out ways to help our academic departments improve.

The university system's Irvine, Riverside, and Los Angeles campuses all have groups for graduate students of color, and Riverside has piloted a well-received diversity-certification program through its Graduate Division as a result of growing interest among graduate students themselves. They are often on the front lines, encouraging more faculty attention to the needs of first-generation, undocumented, and international students, as well as to those who struggle with disabilities, housing and food insecurity, and gender discrimination.

There is no easy way to relieve diversity fatigue. The underlying equity issues it reflects have built up over many years, and it will most likely take many more years of work before we see drastic improvements.

At Riverside, we have attempted to hire more underrepresented faculty members and women in STEM fields over the past three years through a holistic approach that includes mandatory online training and workshops for search-committee members. The workshops include discussions of diversity data and how implicit bias can affect the faculty-search process. Those sessions, convened jointly by a number of campus offices, and other practices have helped us raise the percentage of underrepresented faculty members hired over the last three years by about nine percentage points.

The university system, meanwhile, has established a group of faculty-equity advisers — senior professors who provide advice and support on equity issues. Seven of the 10 UC campuses have such programs. On our campus, they are compensated for that work.

Understanding how deep-seated institutional hierarchies perpetuate inequities can also help in retention. It is important to avoid a rhetoric of "replacement." The idea that we can simply replace departing faculty members of color and other underrepresented scholars with new faculty members and graduate students of color disrespects the caliber and expertise of those who leave. If we do not assertively address campus-climate issues at the departmental and college level, faculty members and graduate students of color will continue to leave.

Meaningful diversity work cannot be seen as something that is supplemental or remedial, or touted only in times of crisis or promotion. Diversity is not philanthropy. For diversity work to thrive, it needs to be part of everyday life on campus — for everybody.

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ANDRÉ CHUNG FOR THE CHRONICLE

In a dialogue course at the U. of Maryland, students discuss race not in a safe space but in a “courageous” place where they are encouraged to express and hear things that make them uncomfortable.

Talking Over the Racial Divide

How much can a half-semester course
shift a lifetime of experience?

By DAN BERRETT

COLLEGE PARK, MD.

THE STUDENTS started trying to understand one another by explaining the origins of their names, then conveying their cultural identity in three objects.

Mike, a sophomore criminal-justice major, said his Brazilian parents hoped his name would make him sound more American, “whatever that means,” he added, smiling. He sat with his hands in his coat pockets and the zipper pulled up to his mouth on the first day of a course about race here at the University of Maryland, where the goal was to re-examine a lifetime of assumptions in two-hour shifts.

On the second day, Mike brought his objects in a Timberland box, from the boots he started wearing in North Newark, N.J., where lots of black and Hispanic kids did. The objects included a collection of press clippings about homicides in his neighborhood and a photograph of his 5-year-old nephew, Matthew, to help him remember his obligations back home.

Across from him sat Lindi, who grew up in Chevy Chase, Md., a wealthy suburb of Washington. She held up the bow hair clip she'd earned as captain of her high-school cheerleading team; a small box in the shape of Africa, because she had lived in South Africa for the first month of her life; and a Hamsa, a symbol to ward off evil spirits she got on a free trip to Israel for young Jews.

"I didn't realize how much of a minority I was until I was in the majority," she said of the trip. Back in the United States, she said, she tried to eat out on Easter but found restaurants closed.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Help students see each other:** Facilitators of racial dialogue have noticed that as many white students have been raised to aspire to a postracial ideal of colorblindness, that notion can sometimes feel to minority students like a denial of the toll race may take on them.
- **Facilitate frank discussions:** Classes or seminars where undergraduates discuss race benefit from established ground rules: Keep it real. Be specific. Avoid making personal attacks. Assume good will.

On seven Tuesdays this spring, *The Chronicle* watched as 14 students met in a course dedicated to discussing race, a perennial, at times explosive issue on campuses and across the country. Maryland offers the course as part of an effort to make students more proficient with difference — to help them have thorny conversations on uncomfortable topics, see the value of other people's experiences, and gain some perspective on their own. At least, that's the hope. But how potent a tool can talk be?

Some students walked into the classroom here a long way off from racial consciousness. Most had enrolled simply to fill out their course load or check off a diversity requirement. A few had grown up in segregated neighborhoods and schools. But here was a rare opportunity to participate in a dialogue with peers from diverse backgrounds, facilitated by two instructors, Benjamin L. Parks, a white man, and Erica C. Smith, a black woman. The trajectory toward understanding would prove messy, halting, but — maybe, ultimately — revealing.

The class established ground rules: Keep it real.

Be specific. Avoid making personal attacks. Assume good will. Dialogue-based courses developed at the University of Michigan in 1989 provided a model. To encourage frank discussion, *The Chronicle* agreed to use students' first names.

"We want you to be able to have tough conversations," Mr. Parks told the class on the first day. "Learning can't happen unless you get real."

The notion of a "safe space" is imprecise and counterproductive, many instructors of dialogue courses at Maryland believe. They prefer to think of their classrooms as courageous places where students aren't afraid to express and hear things that make them uncomfortable. At first, that was a tall order for many of the students. Politeness reigned. Hearing about one another's foreign and Americanized names or racial experiences, several retreated to the same noncommittal word, "interesting."

The exercise with the objects helped the students recognize their identities as complicated, multifaceted, and socially constructed. It also sparked some early connections. A Coptic Christian whose family came from Egypt sat near the daughter of El Salvadoran immigrants. Around the circle were a Cameroon-born, Maryland-raised budding journalist and a white sister of a Marine.

The son of frugal Chinese immigrants, who grew up owning one pair of shoes at a time, carried his objects in the box that once held his prized pair of Kobe Bryant Nikes. He had bought the shoes to mark his progress up the economic ladder. Baye, a black senior majoring in American studies, leaned forward. His favorite NBA player, he said, was the Chinese star Yao Ming. It was one of the first bids at bridging difference.

Among the objects Baye (pronounced "Bye") shared was a tattoo on his right forearm: "I solemnly swear that I'm up to no good."

Sitting nearby, Sophie, a pale-skinned, half Iraqi Englishwoman, gaped. She recognized the vow of mischief from Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. Sometimes, she said, your assumptions about other people fail you.

"I never would've put you down as a Harry Potter fan," she told Baye.

He smiled. "I'm not what people usually think."

THE STUDENTS disagreed at first on the importance of race or how deeply woven it is into the fabric of American life. But they rarely did so directly.

Such divergent perspectives had complicated previous diversity efforts at the university, says Mark Brimhall-Vargas, who directed the dialogue courses when they began about 15 years ago. Before that, efforts like speaker series and cultural events were derided from all sides as either superficial or shoving diversity down white students' throats, said Mr. Brimhall-Vargas, who is now chief diversity officer and associate provost at Tufts University. The dialogue courses arose as a response: to

meet people where they were, ground the subject matter in students' own experiences, and encourage learning through reflection and discussion.

In this spring's course, the students came from very different places. Race was an inescapable fact for the minority students, even as they tried to play with its ironclad rules.

Mari, whose father is Afro-Caribbean and whose mother is biracial (black and white), rode a skateboard as a way of defying categories. That was uncommon, he said, for a black man in his neighborhood of Baltimore.

Baye, the Harry Potter fan from just north of the Bronx, who described himself as "dark-skinned and big," wore a New York Rangers hockey jersey to one class and talked about his affection for museums and Broadway musicals. But his own group and society more broadly, he said, could tolerate only so much self-invention. One day he proposed an exercise: having students say what racial and cultural categories they thought one of their classmates belonged to. He was the first subject. His race was black, someone said, and his culture African-American.

Baye waved it off. "I don't identify as African-American," he said. His mother is Jamaican, his father Senegalese. He often felt like he didn't fit in among the American-born black New Yorkers he grew up with. Other kids taunted him, he said, as an "African booty scratcher." He called them slaves.

Race had shaped his friendships and relationships. One white friend's grandmother refused to look at him; another's father adored him but warned his daughter not to date black men. When he would go out with a white woman, his stock rose while hers fell, he said, "like she's a car or something."

Some of the white students felt freer to slip from the bonds of race when it suited them, or to question its legacy, and even its existence. One white student said race wasn't a big deal. "It's not a significant piece we should be relishing in," she said, her foot bobbing.

Facilitators of racial-dialogue courses have noticed that perception take hold in recent years, as many students have been raised to aspire to a postracial ideal of colorblindness. But that dream can be a dodge, or even an insult. While seemingly the embodiment of Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision, colorblindness sometimes feels to minority students like a denial of the toll race still takes on them.

Sophie, the light-skinned, half Iraqi Englishwoman, rejected the idea that she was white. Instead, she identified with the Latino culture of her husband.

Lindi, the white woman born in South Africa, said she sometimes checks the box on forms to indicate that she's African-American, even though she knows she's not supposed to.

Ms. Smith asked Lindi why she does it. Africa was where she first drew breath, Lindi replied. "I think race is based off personal life experience and what you know," she told the class, "and not far-off history."

After the course, she explained that she finds such

classification odd. "I don't feel like an honest answer is even necessary," she said. "When they ask questions on these things, it further engrains this racial divide between everyone." Her answer, she said, was a form of rebellion.

Some of the minority students saw her action differently: as cultural appropriation. They kept that view to themselves.

Students' backgrounds tended to shape what they got out of the course. For minority students, the dialogue did little to reframe their thinking. It did, though, give them an opportunity to trade perspectives and bond with other students, in a room where others looked like them. But for many white students, hearing about their classmates' experiences upended their assumptions.

WHEN LONG-HELD beliefs get tested, people often dismiss what they don't want to hear. The facilitators tried to strike a balance between drawing students out and challenging their ideas, especially the white students.

At first, many of them resisted the idea that they benefited from privilege. When the topic came up, their body language showed their discomfort. Several fidgeted, tapped their toes, and rocked back in their chairs. Privilege, they said, was more likely to be held by minorities, who could claim an edge on college applications or in the workplace.

"Some people might get jobs if the company is trying to diverse it," Lindi said.

Mr. Parks asked if it was possible that white people had privilege. That was the instructors' dialogic approach: not offering answers, but phrasing a question to spark reflection. But that can do only so much when historical and theoretical understanding isn't shared. A white student said one day that the idea of privilege hadn't entered his thinking until a year ago. Mari, the black skateboarder from Baltimore, had long been familiar with the concept of double-consciousness. (Developing a common framework is one reason some of the courses at Maryland will be two weeks longer next semester, to allow time to discuss fundamental concepts at the start.)

The disparate depths of knowledge can place a burden on minority students. After Lindi's comment about affirmative action, Mike, the Latino student from Newark, described privilege as longstanding and intertwined with structures and systems of power. It's distinct from what the white students were describing, he said, the isolated examples of temporary advantage.

Around the country, minority students have felt worn down by having to act as "professors of race" on top of their regular responsibilities. Mike didn't mind. "I don't have a problem explaining things," he said later. Though it can be frustrating when people make ignorant comments, he said, he also knew the

shoe could be on the other foot. In his neighborhood, it was unusual both to have parents who were married and to get a scholarship to a private high school. “In that room, I was colored,” he said of the class. “Back home, I was privileged.”

One of the strengths of the dialogue course was the diversity of the students, the instructors came to understand, and they wished they had done more to bring those nuances to the fore. Race was more than black and white. It was Arab, Asian, and Latino, with identities refracted through class, neighborhood, skin tone, and to what extent a student’s parents had assimilated.

The more vocal minority students could describe race in concrete, personal detail. When those students were absent, the instructors sometimes struggled with how forcefully to confront white students’ assumptions.

One day, Lindi wondered if demographic change might simply resolve racial problems, if white people became a minority. For now, she said, the priority should be self-examination. “We have to focus on ourselves,” she said.

“I didn’t realize how much of a minority I was until I was in the majority.”

Mr. Parks turned to her. “I’m wrestling with how to say this, Lindi, because you strike me as a warm and open person,” he said. “But that statement struck me as white privilege.”

Sophie came to her defense. Everyone has a struggle, she said, and no one should be made to feel bad.

Advising people to focus on themselves and let time take care of the rest may ring hollow when they feel under attack, said Mr. Parks, who referred to social-justice movements like Black Lives Matter.

“Black Lives Matter? All lives matter,” Sophie said. “Hispanic lives matter.”

At several points, the Asian, black, and Latino students offered gentle guidance to their white peers, helping them recognize their privilege without browbeating them. One day, after an activity in pairs, Mari remarked that privilege often exerts an invisible influence.

Ryan, a white freshman from suburban Maryland, picked up the thread. He mentioned cultural bias on standardized tests. One example was a question about horseback riding.

How should someone respond to that, to being called out for the privilege suggested by that hobby? Mari distinguished two reactions, guilt and awareness.

“If you have ridden horses,” he said, “that’s not something to feel bad about...”

“Yeah,” Ryan jumped in.

“... just acknowledge it,” Mari finished, because

not everyone has that opportunity.

White people in interracial dialogues can feel like they’re walking on eggshells, Mari later said. Throughout the class, he sought opportunities to send reassuring signals. “If they think people are going to jump down their throats,” he said, “they’ll never venture out on the ledge and be vulnerable.” Taking a risk and being open to change, he believed, is necessary for true progress.

“If we make the conscious choice to do the thing that’s a little bit harder,” Mari said, like striking up a conversation with strangers or resisting the temptation to scoff at privilege, “we’ll move forward.”

Ryan heard in Mari’s remarks an invitation to participate. The white student had been through racial-awareness activities before, he said, but they seemed to have preordained conclusions that people like him were the cause of inequality.

When Mari said people shouldn’t be mocked for their privilege, Ryan felt validated. “To me, that was the biggest step,” Ryan said. “I became much more willing to engage.”

ENGAGEMENT COMES in many forms. For several white students it meant taking an intellectual approach.

By the course’s midpoint, Mr. Parks and Ms. Smith worried that some students were staying in their heads as a way of distancing themselves. But the purpose of the course isn’t to induce shame or to lead students to a particular conclusion. It’s to encourage them to examine their own lives in light of others’. If the students detached from their own feelings, the instructors thought, they would never really hear one another’s.

With three classes remaining, the instructors tried a few exercises to bring home race’s immediacy. In one, students stood in a circle as Mr. Parks read a series of statements. It was assumed from a young age that you would go to college. No one in your immediate family has ever been addicted to drugs or alcohol. You’ve never been the only person of your racial or ethnic group in a class or workplace. After each one, the students stepped forward if it applied.

Several of the students were surprised by how often they stepped forward. Ryan confessed that it made him feel not just vulnerable, but defensive.

The instructors could see in the students’ journal assignments that they were starting to probe their assumptions and see themselves with new eyes. They were working on their final projects, personal essays exploring some aspect of race that made them deeply uncomfortable, something they would feel physically anxious to acknowledge and reluctant to divulge. And yet in class, some students still favored abstraction over frank acknowledgment.

In the next-to-last class, Ms. Smith and Mr. Parks tried another exercise. The group split in two. Those who felt they experienced “light-skin privilege” went with Mr. Parks into another room. Those who didn’t

stayed with Ms. Smith.

The group divided along unpredictable lines. Some Asian and Latino students self-selected as privileged; others didn't. As the privileged students settled in, they described how uncomfortable they felt to be separated from their classmates.

"This is a weird activity," said Lindi. Mr. Parks asked her what "weird" felt like. Several times that day he prompted students to describe their feelings, occasionally drawing his fist to his chest for emphasis.

Some thought they wouldn't learn much with their classmates in the other room, while others worried what those students really thought of them. "I don't want them to think I've had the perfect life," said a white senior. Another student, a Korean-American who had said on the first day that race shouldn't exist as a category, expressed guilt about her privilege and her desire to share it. A Latina student felt bad living in a prosperous suburb, she said, when her cousins from the city would visit. But the term "privilege," a few students said, also seemed accusatory and unfair.

"I haven't done anything to have that privilege," said one student. "I like to think I've earned everything."

"Yeah," Ryan agreed. "That resonates with me." He turned to a white classmate. "When someone says you're in college just because you're white," Ryan asked him, "does that make you mad?"

It did, the two young men agreed. They had worked hard to make good choices. Dismissing their accomplishments as a result of privilege, Ryan said, "delegitimizes your work and your life."

In the other room, the students who felt they didn't benefit from light-skin privilege were more comfortable speaking freely. That's why they often self-segregate, they said, and it's part of how they learned to code-switch to better fit in with majority culture. Several students told Ms. Smith that they probably wouldn't share those thoughts with the others.

When the two groups reconvened, the tension was thick. Eye contact was furtive.

The class then did something called a fishbowl exercise. The privileged group sat in the middle and debriefed on what they had just discussed while their classmates listened. Then the outer group recounted what they had heard. After that, they switched places. In the end, the nonprivileged group decided to share what they'd said when they were alone.

The awkwardness started to ease. The conversation grew more candid. Several of the students said they sensed they were hearing, at last, what their classmates really thought. "I feel like there's been a weight lifted off our shoulders," a white student said.

The discussion lingered on the idea that the term "white privilege" could make some students feel like their lives and accomplishments were discredited. "Sure, there are advantages you grew up with," said one of the students from the nonprivileged group. "But it wasn't your choice."

Mike could appreciate where some of the white students were coming from, he said. The reaction is

similar to what he and other minorities feel, he said, when people assume they benefit unfairly from affirmative action.

THE EXERCISE marked a turning point. On the last day, the students shared more openly. They weren't tiptoeing anymore, venturing instead to share their frustrations and fears. If they had achieved the goal of the course, learning to speak honestly across difference, they were also at the beginning of a longer and more arduous process of forging understanding.

Prompted by Mr. Parks, several students described their final essays examining an aspect of race that made them uncomfortable. Several students acknowledged that they sometimes felt uneasy among people of other races. Sophie, the half-Iraqi Englishwoman, described how she had left a recent class and made her way across campus. When a black man slowed near her, she tensed up. Then, to her embarrassment, he asked her for directions to the bus.

"It's difficult for me to admit that," she said. "I'm a minority."

"If we make the conscious choice to do the thing that's a little bit harder, we'll move forward."

Several black and Latino students shared their perspective on moments like those. They often feared being perceived as threatening. Baye said he crosses to the other side of the street when he sees white women coming. Mari said he tends to keep his distance and look at his phone when walking at night.

He started becoming keenly aware in middle school, he said, of his place in the world. As the class wound down, he described one episode that left a mark. He and his grandmother, who is white, went to the mall the summer before eighth grade. He tagged along as she shopped, checking his phone as he trailed behind her, looking up every so often to make sure he didn't lose her.

As they made their way to the exit, he realized she had gotten too far ahead. He ran to catch up.

Before he could reach her, a security guard blocked his way. Mari realized what the guard must have seen — not a grandson trying to rejoin his grandmother, but a young black man running after an elderly white woman. He remembered how the people around him quickly dispersed. He wondered what their lasting impression of him would be. Could they see him as he was, a bookish kid who loved documentaries and mythology, or was he just some young thug?

"That's not something you forget," he said softly.

The class fell silent.

Sophie, who until that point had disclaimed her whiteness, spoke first. “As a white woman,” she said, “I’m really, really sorry you have to deal with that.”

At the time, Mari wasn’t sure how to respond. Part of him felt bad that Sophie was expressing such distress. Should he reassure her?

That moment stood out as a powerful one as Mr. Parks and Ms. Smith reflected on the course. “So much of the credit,” Mr. Parks said, “goes to Mari.” But moments like those also need a facilitator cultivating trust and patiently sanding away politeness and resistance.

The exchange with Sophie stuck with Mari, too. A few weeks after the course, he said it had become clear to him how genuinely moved she was and why that mattered.

“In that moment, I was just glad that she listened,” he said. For her to understand how an episode like that could affect someone from a very different background felt meaningful.

“I didn’t want her to move mountains,” said Mari. “I just wanted her to hear me.”

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

HOW do you make sure you understand the experience of minority students and professors on your campus?

ARE there ways to acknowledge the extra work that minority faculty and staff members may be doing to support students or junior colleagues of color?

DOES your campus have a group of faculty-equity advisers, who provide advice and support on equity issues?

HOW well does your institution facilitate frank and open discussions about race among students?
Would a for-credit class help?

Defending Diversity

Using solid data and tracking progress are key to race-conscious admissions

By ERIC HOOVER

WITHOUT PRECISE goals, reams of research, and continuing discussions among campus leaders, your college's race-conscious admissions program is probably toast.

Although the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling last year in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* wasn't so blunt, the takeaways are clear. Campus leaders concerned about enhancing diversity — and helping their institution survive a legal challenge — are wise to stay knee-deep in good data. “The question of evidence is front and center,” says Arthur L. Coleman, managing partner of EducationCounsel LLC, which advises colleges on student-diversity strategies. “We've moved from the concept of diversity being a compelling interest to, now, a clear lens on the illustrative kinds of evidence that it takes to make a case for diversity policies.”

Since the court affirmed once again that colleges could use race as one of many factors in admissions, so long as those policies are “narrowly tailored” to achieve educational goals, colleges have been taking stock of their own practices. Many institutions are using big data to refine their recruitment, admissions, and retention strategies in ways that might enhance diversity. That's just a first step. To comply with the legal precedents restated in *Fisher*, enrollment officials know they must carefully track their progress. Without measures of effectiveness, a diversity policy is legally risky and, perhaps, educationally unsound.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Evidence counts:** Colleges must be able to demonstrate the impact of race-conscious admissions programs.
- **Review your policies:** Reviewing diversity policies isn't a one-time thing. Continuing assessment of campus-specific data is crucial.



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ILLUSTRATION BY MARTIN ELFMAN FOR THE CHRONICLE

Given the ever-present threat of lawsuits, colleges might seem confined by a long list of proscriptions. Yet Philip A. Ballinger was encouraged by a key line in the court's opinion: "Public universities ... can serve as 'laboratories of experimentation.'"

Mr. Ballinger, associate vice provost for enrollment and undergraduate admissions at the University of Washington, is overseeing an admissions experiment. In 2015 the university incorporated robust geodemographic information — data on where people live — into its review of applicants. More socioeconomic data points, he hoped, would give admissions officers a better glimpse of students' life circumstances, and, in turn, help the university enroll a more diverse class. "Before, we were missing all this information," he says, "about the families from which students come, their neighborhoods, what's happening in their schools."

So the university created a "Geo-Index," which merges information from students' applications with census and high-school data. All that is distilled to a single number (from 1 to 5), designed to measure the adversity experienced by each applicant.

Because Washington banned racial preferences in 1998, the Geo-Index does not include data on race or ethnicity. It can reveal disadvantages among white students from rural areas as well as among black students in urban neighborhoods, Mr. Ballinger says: "This is based purely on the word 'Where.' It's more contextual, a really powerful distillation of what we're asking about in holistic review."

After just one year, it's difficult to judge Washington's experiment. There were more underrepresented minority freshmen in the fall of 2016 than in the preceding year, which Mr. Ballinger suspects is a result of several factors. To gauge the Geo-Index's effectiveness, the university will have to study it over time. "We do think it can make a difference on the margins," he says.

At Texas, a robust blend of evidence helped the university prevail in the Fisher case.

Mr. Coleman, the consultant, a former deputy assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, has seen more institutions gathering a broader variety of data. Some are surveying underrepresented minority students about their experiences on campus, and compiling statistics on the number of courses in which such students are underrepresented. Anecdotal insights gleaned from focus groups can help, too.

"We recommend, without exception, that senior leadership engage periodically with students," Mr. Coleman says. "The student voice can be instrumental."

The University of Maryland at College Park has taken an especially deep look at its race-conscious strategies over the years. "The takeaway from Fisher, as from previous cases, is that this is a continual process," says Shannon Gundy, director of admissions. "You can't rest on your laurels."

After the Supreme Court's 2003 rulings in the Uni-

versity of Michigan affirmative-action cases, which upheld the use of race as one of multiple factors in admissions evaluations, Maryland officials engaged in some soul-searching: What did the institution value? What was most important when choosing applicants?

The answers led to the "Statement of Philosophy of Undergraduate Admissions," which describes diversity as "an integral component of the educational process and academic excellence." The document links specific institutional goals to Maryland's holistic review process, which includes 26 factors that could influence admissions decisions, including an applicant's race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background, as well as leadership, community involvement, and "breadth of life experiences."

Maryland's rendering of its admissions process reflects the tight fit between institutional goals and practices that legal experts say is crucial. Moreover, its policies clearly define an array of diversity components that go beyond race. The 26 admissions factors are "flexibly applied"; eschewing a rigid formula, admissions officers conduct individualized reviews of applicants and their unique circumstances.

To help justify the necessity of race-conscious programs, Maryland has investigated alternatives. Recently the university used data to determine whether a race-neutral plan like the one in Texas might limit diversity (the answer was yes). Several years ago, the admissions staff spent much of the summer "re-reviewing" a subset of that year's applicant pool without considering any student's race. The experiment allowed Maryland to document the extent to which a race-neutral policy would hinder its efforts to enroll underrepresented minority students. "It's daunting and it's expensive," Ms. Gundy says. "But you have to do the work to collect the evidence."

Admissions policies get all the attention, but the Fisher case affirmed that colleges must consider the full spectrum of enrollment policies. "The discussion is reorienting around the question of what success looks like," Mr. Coleman says. "It's not just a question of compositional diversity, but a question of student success on campus, which includes student satisfaction and students feeling like they belong."

At College Park, discussions of students' success are continuous. Recently, Barbara Gill, associate vice president for enrollment management, participated in a four-hour strategic-planning exercise with colleagues from other departments. They described the kind of experiences they wanted students to have in 2022. And they discussed ways of promoting more interaction among students from different backgrounds. "In classrooms, there's that mixing, but in terms of how students define their social lives, it's more homogeneous than they want," she says. "So the next question is, How do we do that?"

Whatever the university decides, the answers are sure to be well documented.

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LAURA BUCKMAN FOR THE CHRONICLE

Making Access Equitable

For many students, the journey to college is no fairytale

By ERIC HOOVER

DALLAS

IN LATE May, Seagoville High School's Class of 2017 gathered for a ceremony that some students welcomed and others dreaded. It was "signing day," celebrating those bound for college, especially recipients of big academic scholarships and grants. The lucky students, sporting T-shirts from various campuses, sat on the right side of the auditorium.

The rest of the seniors — who had to sit in the middle — filled twice as many seats. They were "the undecideds," unsure where they were going to college. Though a few were slackers, many were top students with sterling grades, solid test scores, and clear ambitions. They wanted to pursue a major, a career, a life. They just weren't sure yet which, if any, options they could afford.

At affluent high schools where savvy students apply to scores of selective colleges, May marks the end of the admissions cycle. Here, most applicants were low-income, and the timeline was different. Closure was a ways off.

Just before 11 a.m., hip-hop songs blared as restless teenagers waited for the event to start. Some in the middle rows chatted and goofed around. One young man dropped gum wrappers in a classmate's hair.

Other undecideds sat quietly, blanketed by doubts. One was an aspiring teacher, hoping a state university would give her more grants so she wouldn't have to start at a community college. One was parentless, eager to study science, waiting to see financial-aid packages. One was an undocumented immigrant accepted by a half-dozen colleges her family couldn't afford; as the ceremony began, she felt embarrassed.

The assembly, like those held at many high schools

Ms. Morgan, the college adviser, usually left work thinking she could have done more. Sometimes ideas surfaced while she was trying to fall asleep.

each spring, was meant to mimic the fanfare that football stars get when they commit to Division I programs. The teachers who organized the event wanted to show these students some love. And why not? Nearly all 281 seniors had been accepted to at least one college, and several had received a good deal of money. That was especially good news at a public high school where four-fifths of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, and few have parents who even started college.

Still, acceptances don't guarantee access to higher education. When the neediest students end up with too little aid, an acceptance can feel hollow, even cruel. In the fairy-tale version of college admissions, applicants find the right "fit" by weighing one institution's qualities against another's. Yet the quaint notion of fit derives from an assumption: that everyone's got plenty of choices.

Many students don't, as Sara Morgan knew all too well. The school's lone college adviser, she had guided seniors through an anxious spring, helping them apply for financial aid. Later, dozens were required to submit extra financial documents, a demoralizing process that often delayed their aid awards. Some were waiting for colleges to award state grants that could make or break their plans. As May neared its end, some students still didn't

know what it would all cost, and some who did were disappointed.

So Ms. Morgan, 28, understood why many seniors weren't in a celebratory mood. Wearing a blouse, skirt, and low-top Converse All Stars, she walked to the microphone. She acknowledged those in limbo, where they were likely to remain for weeks. "There are a lot of people sitting in the middle who have decided to go to college, and, unfortunately, are still waiting on financial aid," she said, urging them to hang in there. Yet the hours were disappearing fast: Graduation was nine days away.

SEAGOVILLE HIGH School, a beige square of a building, stands on the southeastern edge of Dallas County, far from the city's mirrored towers. Just down the road, goats tread green lots, the Migalitos Supermercado sells local tomatillos and bright dresses, and houses in the nearest subdivision go for \$500 down. The old oaks shading the school's parking lot can't be seen from the college-advising office; it's windowless.

Ms. Morgan started last November. She was hired by the Academic Success Program, a nonprofit group that provides college counselors to 17 schools in the Dallas Independent School District. The group's executive director told Ms. Morgan that she was walking into a tough situation, the kind of job that tends to burn people out. The previous adviser had left after only a couple of months. When Ms. Morgan started, just after Thanksgiving, the admissions cycle was well underway. She had no college-counseling experience.

Ms. Morgan had taught high-school students, all of them poor, in American Samoa, an experience that drew her to college access. At Seagoville she quickly saw how poverty entwined with other circumstances to shape students' views of higher education — and their chances of reaching it. All winter she summoned students to her cramped office, where colorful pennants hang from the wall. Low-key and soft-spoken, she asked about their plans. Most hadn't started a single college application.

She advised unaccompanied youths, such as the young woman who had no bed. She advised the sons and daughters of undocumented immigrants who feared that completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid would imperil their families. She advised a young woman who wanted to enroll full time while caring for her 4-year-old son.

And she advised students who were homeless. Victoria Denestan was one of them. Last fall she applied to colleges and completed the Fafsa on her own. Ever since her parents split up, during her junior year, she and her mother had been squatting in a house, knowing they could get booted at any time. She worked shifts at a movie theater, earning \$150 a week, which helped pay for groceries. Her mother was unemployed.

Though Ms. Denestan had an acceptance from a state university, she would need to take out loans, which she feared. She knew she would have to borrow plenty later to fulfill her dream: a doctorate in psychology.

So, on Ms. Morgan's suggestion, she called the University of North Texas at Dallas one day and asked if it would consider her for one of its top scholarships. In her application essay, she wrote that when hardship "came crashing into me like a bulldozer," she realized what would allow her to overcome it: Education.

Early one afternoon in April, Ms. Denestan sat down at the long table in Ms. Morgan's office just after the third-period bell rang. She wore a camouflage cap and big hoop earrings. As she dug into a bag of Chester's Flamin' Hot Fries, she was thinking about her scholarship interview, less than 24 hours away. Outgoing and expressive, Ms. Denestan was apt to impress anyone during face-to-face interactions. But she worried that her so-so standardized-test scores would sink her.

Ms. Morgan, huddling with another student at a computer, looked over at her. "Victoria, we have to do interview prep."

"OK. We can do that."

"Can we do it after school today?"

Ms. Denestan cocked her head and smiled. "If you want to take me home. ..." The bus she rode left soon after the last bell.

Ms. Morgan nodded. On the way home, they discussed some practice questions while riding in Ms. Morgan's used Prius.

The next morning, Ms. Denestan took a moment before walking into the room at UNT-Dallas where the selection committee would ask her many questions. She whispered to the ceiling: "Help me, Jesus."

A week later, representatives of the university came to Ms. Denestan's fourth-period English class. They handed her a certificate and a backpack full of schwag: She had won the full-ride scholarship, which would close the gap in her aid package. Stunned, she posed for a photo with her mother, whom Ms. Morgan had invited to share in the surprise. This, the young woman thought, just made my life.

Ms. Morgan was happy for Ms. Denestan. Still, she urged her to at least consider one alternative — an out-of-state college that had sparked the teenager's interest. A college adviser must think in terms of possibilities: The more, the better.

Ms. Denestan was torn, though. After one college puts a golden ticket in your hand, was it foolish to think about going anywhere else?

COLLEGE GUIDEBOOKS and online search engines urge students to consider an institution's many facets. Location, class sizes, culture. "Find your soulmate school," a Princeton Review website says.

As spring wore on, Ms. Morgan counseled many capable students who couldn't choose among colleges so easily. They're locked into whatever is going to be affordable, she thought again and again. To pick a college based on anything besides that one, bottom-line variable was a luxury.

As more aid packages arrived, Mr. Hernandez grew anxious. A fan of science, he distracted himself by reading a book about pathogens and viruses. Then, one day in late April, Texas Tech University, his second choice, sent his aid letter, which included a Pell Grant — \$5,920 — and \$5,500 in federal loans, leaving him with a \$10,000 gap. He knew that as a dependent he could take out only \$4,000 more because his father, a handyman, wouldn't qualify for a PLUS Loan. And he knew that he lacked a co-signer for a private loan.

Discouraged, Mr. Hernandez came to Ms. Morgan's office and slumped low in a chair. His black headphones rested on the collar of his black polo, which he wore over a black T-shirt, with black jeans. The outfit conveyed his mood. Wry and thoughtful, he paused before answering Ms. Morgan's questions.

"What about the University of Houston?" she asked.

"I don't want to go there."

"Have you seen the financial-aid package?"

"Yeah. There's only a \$3,000 gap. I can afford that."

Mr. Hernandez, who was considering a career in the pharmaceutical industry, liked Houston's chemistry program but much preferred Texas Tech's campus and social scene. Those qualities mattered to him so much that he was ready to turn down Houston, the most affordable option.

Texas Tech had told Ms. Morgan that it wouldn't apply state grants to students' aid packages for several more weeks. So Mr. Hernandez, who was eligible, might end up getting another \$5,000, which would halve his gap.

Either way, his father had saved enough to help him cover his freshman year. After that, though, Mr. Hernandez would have to find a way — scholarships, part-time jobs — to get through. Despite those unknowns, he was leaning toward Texas Tech, accepting that he might have to drop out after one year. He wanted to want the campus he selected.

"I try to be a logical person," he told Ms. Morgan. "But I don't want to be logical when it comes to something that's so important to me. I don't want to, like, settle."

FOR MANY low-income students, the road to college is lined with red tape. This year's admissions cycle dumped more of it in their path.

First there were high hopes because the aid process had evolved in crucial ways. This time around, the Fafsa opened in October, three months earlier than before. And for the first time, applicants could use tax data from the "prior prior year" — 2015 — to complete the form. An online tool



LAURA BUCKMAN FOR THE CHRONICLE

College counseling requires constant resourcefulness and attention to detail. Sara Morgan (left), at Seagoville High School, in Dallas, soon realized that her job was to navigate, encourage, translate, and cajole.

would allow them to pull that data from the Internal Revenue Service directly into their applications. A kinder, simpler Fafsa, many believed, would increase completion rates and give applicants earlier aid awards.

But two snags complicated all that. In March the data-retrieval tool was taken offline amid concerns about fraud. Without it, applicants had to enter tax information manually, using 2015 tax forms. That hitch disproportionately affected disadvantaged students, especially those applying to community colleges and less-selective four-year colleges, where the application season was far from over.

Though the tool's demise hindered some of Ms. Morgan's students, many more couldn't have used it in the first place. That's because many came from families that didn't pay taxes, often because their incomes were so low that they weren't required to file. Some students' parents lacked a Social Security number. Others didn't live with their parents. Some were homeless unaccompanied youths who hadn't paid taxes before.

What's more, applicants who don't use the IRS tool are more likely to be selected for verification, which requires them to submit additional documentation. Many colleges don't award aid to accepted students until they complete the time-consuming process.

And that's where the second complication came in. This cycle came with a new policy: If selected for verification, students and parents who said they hadn't filed taxes in 2015 would be required to submit proof of nonfiling from the IRS. More than 50 of Ms. Morgan's students were chosen for verification, and most found the required documents exceedingly difficult to obtain.

One afternoon in April, four of those seniors huddled in the college-advising office. One was still waiting for his nonfiling letter after nearly three

months and two dozen phone calls to the IRS. He had been told he needed an appointment at the Austin, Tex., office to get the form, but the next available date was in late May.

Students' confusion was palpable. Ms. Morgan stood beside an anxious young woman who had just called a university's financial-aid office. "I just wanted to know," she said, "if you got all my, um. ..."

"Verification documents," Ms. Morgan whispered. "Verification documents."

Later, Ms. Morgan sat down with a young woman whose mother had died two years earlier. Since then she had been renting an apartment with her older sister and earning about \$8,000 a year at a part-time job. Pell-eligible, she planned to major in biology at a nearby university. But so far she couldn't get the tax form she needed.

"I need an update on what you're thinking right now," Ms. Morgan said.

"I don't know, it's just stressful," the young woman replied, her voice trembling. "I can't get anything done."

After finally finishing verification, she had to further document the extent of her poverty. The university she planned to attend instructed her to complete a "low-income verification form," requiring her to list monthly expenses and income. She also had to write a personal statement explaining how she had supported herself "on little or zero income during 2015."

Many other students at Seagoville had nobody else to help them, which is why they had come to depend on Ms. Morgan. Late one afternoon, the adviser was leaving her office when she glanced at the whiteboard by the door. Someone had written a message in looping, green letters: "I love you Ms. Morgan!" She smiled faintly at the words, and then she wiped them away.

MOST DAYS Ms. Morgan left thinking she could have done more. At night she remained tethered to seniors, who often texted her questions. Sometimes ideas surfaced while she was trying to fall asleep. She wrote each one in a notebook: Handout that explains how to apply for Parent Plus Loan.

Ms. Morgan thought about some students all the time, especially M.C. Those are the initials of an eloquent young woman who loved theater. Who wanted to go to Texas A&M at College Station. Who happened to be an undocumented immigrant.

Born in Mexico, Ms. C. was 4 or 5 when she crossed the Rio Grande with her mother and older sister, not far from El Paso. Walking through rugged terrain on one cold night, she was frightened by the sharp outlines of cows and bulls against the sky. After learning English, she read everything she could: Junie B. Jones and Captain Underpants, then *Frankenstein* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

At Seagoville, Ms. C. excelled in science and served on the student council. She organized blood drives and cleanup projects. Ms. Morgan saw her as the kind of student who very likely would have received a generous offer from a selective liberal-arts college or two, especially if she had applied early. Yet by the time they met, those deadlines had passed.

As of May, Ms. C. was ranked 13th in the class, and to her that number felt unlucky. She had acceptances from a handful of colleges, but only modest aid awards. Texas A&M, which had not offered her a scholarship for first-generation students, had an annual price tag well north of \$20,000. The University of Utah — with tuition of \$35,000 a year for non-residents — gave her a spot in its honors college but no grants. And a couple of more affordable options nearby lacked drama programs.

As an undocumented student, Ms. C. couldn't get federal aid. Though Texas gives aid to undocumented students, any award would be limited.

Then there was her last option. Panola College, a community college in Carthage, Tex., had offered her a theater scholarship, but it would cover only a fraction of the cost of attendance, about \$16,000. My college dream just vanished, she thought upon adding up all the numbers. Though her parents weren't against her earning a degree, they didn't seem interested in discussing it. "Why 'don't you just work for a couple years?'" her mother asked.

One afternoon in May, Ms. C. stopped by Ms. Morgan's office wearing her black hair pulled back tightly and a shirt that said "Property of SHS Theater Department." She sat quietly near a half-dozen of her classmates discussing their college prospects. After listening for a few minutes, she stood up and bolted out the door, crying.

Ms. Morgan ran down the hallway to catch up with her. For 15 minutes, they huddled at a table in the waiting area. Resting her head on her floral-print

backpack, Ms. C. explained that it was hard to be around peers with similar academic records who had been offered much more money. "It felt like I wasn't equal," she said. "That really hurts."

Ms. Morgan spoke softly, telling her not to get down on herself, not to give up, not to write off Panola.

Ms. C. trusted Ms. Morgan, who had helped "take the fog away" as she navigated the admissions process. She knew some students who mistook the adviser's candor for discouragement. But she was grateful when Ms. Morgan told her one day that, with no Pell Grant or scholarships, she probably couldn't afford her dream college. That was more helpful than all the times other people had said, "Oh, you'll get to A&M!"

After the impromptu chat with Ms. Morgan, Ms. C. felt better. Sniffling, she wiped both eyes with her

Lessons for Leaders:

Admissions often doesn't work the way we think: In the ideal version of college admissions, applicants have multiple choices and look for the right "fit" by weighing one institution against another. Yet many students don't have that luxury.

Financial aid can fall short: Even for the most academically accomplished low-income students, there is often a gap between what assistance they receive and what they will owe. Sometimes it may seem small — a few hundred dollars — but that's more than enough to keep a student from enrolling.

hands, adorned with glittery silver rings. She looked up at the fluorescent lights and smiled. All she could do was wait and see what would happen. She had done everything else.

BY LATE May, the seniors could feel time thinning out. On the next-to-last day of classes, harried students poured into Ms. Morgan's office, each one bursting with questions.

One young woman hoping to visit a beauty school didn't know what to do because her mother refused to take her. Another wondered if she should apply to one more college. Another didn't know if she should get a part-time job next fall instead of doing work-study.

College counseling, Ms. Morgan had learned, required constant attention to small details, hour-to-hour resourcefulness. When she realized that some seniors didn't know how to address an envelope, she stuck a sample on her wall. When they kept forgetting their passwords to online portals, she made a list of them. Her job was to navigate, encourage, translate, cajole.

Throughout the day, Ms. Morgan rarely sat down, carrying on three or four conversations at once. Students interrupted her constantly. While peering over the shoulder of a young man completing the Fafsa, she said, "You were not born in 2099!" After microwaving a pot pie for lunch, she placed it on the table. Thirty-two minutes passed before she took a bite.

At one computer, Victoria Denestan, the homeless student who had won the scholarship at UNT-Dallas, was checking out Centenary College of Louisiana, which had accepted her. She liked the descriptions of student life at the small, residential college. And she doubted she would experience the same "togetherness" at UNT-Dallas, where most of the students would be commuters.

Ms. Morgan had offered to drive her to Centenary — about three hours away — the following week. But Ms. Denestan was hesitant. Centenary had left her a gap — \$4,000 — and UNT-Dallas had not. She felt bound to the university that had given her so much money. And she wondered aloud what might happen if she fell in love with Centenary: "It might be really great, but right now I don't know that."

A college adviser can present choices, but only students can seize them. After Mr. Hernandez got his aid award from Texas Tech, Ms. Morgan tried to scare up another option. She reached out to Hampshire College, in Massachusetts, which was still accepting applicants.

LATER SHE WROTE the admissions office's name and number on a Post-it and handed it to Mr. Hernandez. But the note stayed in his pocket. The tiny college didn't seem like a good fit. And he didn't want another acceptance from a college he couldn't afford.

The next day, a dozen students crowded into Ms. Morgan's office all at once. Amid the whirl of teenagers, she remained placid, as she had all spring. She high-fived students who brought good news. She told those who had accomplished small tasks that she was proud of them. Now and then she took a long swig from a cup of hours-old coffee.

A few times, her exasperation came through. Once, while talking with a senior who had been ignoring a verification request, and who had yet to talk with his parents about the loans they would need to take out to pay for his college, she raised her hands in disbelief: "What in the world," she exclaimed, "are you doing with your life?" She knew the young man — then ranked second in the class — had great potential.

After the last bell rang, a few students huddled around the long table, griping about the signing-day ceremony, which would take place the next morning. One young woman who had yet to complete the verification process said she didn't feel like going. "I don't want to be belittled by all these students getting all this money," she said, shuffling her pink Nikes. A young man with thick, floppy hair nodded in agreement: "I don't want to get embarrassed."

Ms. Morgan gave them a plaintive look. "You guys ... you've got acceptances to big schools, you should be proud," she said. "It's not your fault that you don't know where you're going." The young woman shrugged.

As the last students trickled out, they left the office strangely silent for the first time in seven hours. Ms. Morgan looked down at the table and sighed. "I give up," she said. But that wasn't true.

Later that evening, Ms. Morgan tended to an urgent matter: Robert Delcastillo, one of the stars of signing day, needed a T-shirt to wear to the assembly.

Last winter Ms. Morgan encouraged him to apply for the Texas A&M at Commerce's honors college, which comes with a scholarship. She edited his essay, a clever riff on the duality of his personality. After some last-minute technical difficulties, Ms. Morgan, working on a laptop at Starbucks, helped him submit his application just before the deadline.

The morning of his interview, Mr. Delcastillo couldn't take a shower because his parents hadn't paid the water bill. So he boiled bottled water on the stove, bathed himself as best he could, and ironed a dress shirt. His mother, then unemployed, drove him to Commerce, where he nervously dropped puns on his interviewers. Weeks later, a letter came: He got the scholarship, about \$70,000 over four years, plus a \$2,750 annual stipend.

When poor students snag major scholarships, however, their financial hardships don't magically disappear. Though Mr. Delcastillo's mother had since found a job, there was little money for day-to-day expenses. His father was disabled and couldn't work. A while back, Mr. Delcastillo sold his Xbox for \$80 to cover his family's cellphone bill. He knew that his parents probably couldn't pay \$25 apiece to attend orientation with him.

So, as seniors throughout the nation adorned themselves with brand-new college gear this spring, he didn't even consider buying himself a \$20 Commerce T-shirt. Knowing that, Ms. Morgan arranged to get one from a university admissions officer.

At school the next morning, she handed it to Mr. Delcastillo. The shirt — blue, with big yellow letters — said "LION PRIDE." It fit.

At the ceremony later, Ms. Morgan thanked the seniors who had met with her, "even a few of you against your will." They included an aspiring computer engineer who once had told her, politely, to stop calling him into her office, because he thought college was too expensive. After she explained grants and schol-

arships, he changed his mind. Months later, he was wearing a T-shirt from the University of Texas at Dallas, where he wouldn't have to take out loans.

Nervous, Ms. Morgan stepped away from the mic but then turned back to thank the seniors again: "I know it was very personal, and ... I know, I think, I appreciate that a lot." Many students applauded. "Woo!" one shouted, "Ms. Morrrr-gaaan!"

Then the raucous celebration began. Teachers onstage hurled handfuls of candy at the crowd. A young woman with a sweet voice sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," reading the lyrics from her phone. The school's mascot — a blue, wide-eyed dragon — danced vigorously.

Sitting in the center of the auditorium, Ms. C., the undocumented student, watched as her classmates took the stage one by one. Those planning to attend two-year colleges went first, followed by those headed to four-year campuses. Then came a dozen bound for the military. Each senior received a pair of balloons and a T-shirt that said, "I DECIDED."

Though Ms. C. was happy for her peers, she resented the ceremony, which quite literally divided the class. She felt ostracized. And she winced when a teacher demanding quiet told the collegebound students that the chit-chatting undecideds were "interrupting your show." Just because we're undecided, Ms. C. thought, doesn't mean we've decided to throw our lives away.

Finally, seniors who had received an especially large bundle of grants and scholarships took the stage. They sat down at a skirted table and posed with big, laminated checks bearing five-figure totals. Mr. Delcastillo, in his new Commerce shirt, smiled sheepishly when his name was called. After another student's \$98,680 aid package was announced, a young woman in the middle section shouted a question: "Can I have some?"

APPLYING TO college is often described as a rite of passage, a moment of self-discovery. But for many students, it's a long and disheartening walk in the dark.

At Seagoville High School, that walk continued into June. Nine days after getting their diplomas, a dozen recent graduates came to Ms. Morgan's office, still seeking an end to the admissions process. Many had not yet seen aid awards.

Four who had completed the verification process were told that their documents hadn't been processed yet. One was told the wait would be six weeks. Another was told eight weeks.

Some Texas colleges didn't hold state grants for applicants flagged for verification, which meant that money ran out while some eligible students were scrambling to finish the process. By the time one top student finished verification at her chosen university, she was told that all state grants had been allotted. Having received only a Pell Grant, she planned to take out loans to cover the gap that remained.

Another young woman, who'd waited all spring for an aid award, realized too late that she had missed several emails informing her that she was selected for verification. With no grants coming her way, she decided to attend a two-year college instead.

College counselors aren't superheroes. They have the power to help students get more choices, but that power goes only so far. And each student's decision takes a different shape.

Ms. Denestan never accepted Ms. Morgan's offer to drive her to Centenary. After praying for guidance, she decided that God wanted her to go to UNT-Dallas. She decided not to tempt herself with a choice between two very different colleges.

When poor students snag major scholarships, however, their financial hardships don't magically disappear.

In mid-June, Mr. Hernandez, who had committed to Texas Tech, had not heard about the state grant; the university had yet to give out all the awards. He found the wait nerve-racking. By turning down a more affordable university, he had based his decision on a feeling instead of logic.

Ms. C., whose last-choice college had become her only viable one, was feeling optimistic. She had finished 11th in the class, moving up two spots. The more she learned about her scholarship at Panola, the better it sounded. Her parents had agreed to take out loans to support her. But, like many other undocumented students in Texas, she still didn't know if she would get a state grant.

As one senior class departed, Ms. Morgan was thinking about the next. She could hear the questions students would ask. She could feel the weight of the challenges they would carry. Already she felt behind. Before verification swamped her this spring, she had planned to spend more time meeting one-on-one with juniors.

In the months ahead, rising seniors in wealthier parts of the city would take test-prep classes. Their parents would edit their essays. Their counselors would polish their applications for early-decision deadlines.

Many of them were already much farther along than her students, who were just learning the essential vocabulary of applying to college. Before the school year ended, she ran a workshop for 30 juniors ranked at the top of the class. She asked if anyone knew what the Fafsa was. Only one hand went up.

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DAVID ZENTZ FOR THE CHRONICLE

Rahuldeep Gill, an associate professor of religion at California Lutheran U., and Leanne Neilson, the provost, are among the members of the university's "evidence team," which helps recruit and retain a more diverse faculty.

Get Serious About Diversity Hiring

By ALINA TUGEND

RAHULDEEP GILL, an associate professor of religion, is visibly different as a Sikh at California Lutheran University and has often felt alienated during his nine years there.

Faculty members of color, he says, are “hypervisible when they needed us to be in glossy brochures and invisible when it came to our needs.” A member of a new task force created to help the university understand how to recruit and retain minority professors, he recounts several incidents of harassment and microaggressions. He was asked if his turban could double as an umbrella, and told he didn’t look Lutheran.

“It’s not curiosity, it’s ignorance, which is maliciousness,” he says. “Curiosity involves dignity.”

While administrators and fellow faculty members may not have been aware of Gill’s feelings a few years ago, they certainly are now. The university, in Thousand Oaks, between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, has taken a hard look at itself and its efforts to attract and keep nonwhite faculty members, both to become a more welcoming place for professors such as Gill and to better serve its students.

Cal Lutheran has seen its student population change significantly over the past decade. About half of its 4,000 students now are nonwhite, the majority of those Hispanic.

“But as our number of Hispanic students were growing, we were woefully low in Hispanic faculty,” says Leanne Neilson, the provost and vice president for academic affairs. About 82 percent of its faculty members, in fact, were white.

So, the 59-year-old institution decided it was time to confront the issue head on. It spent \$100,000 for outside experts to spend a year helping it revamp its search-and-hiring process.

Colleges have long bemoaned the lack of faculty diversity. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, as of the fall of 2016, 83 percent of the full professors in degree-granting postsecondary institutions were white — 55 percent of them men and 27 percent women. Ten percent were Asian/Pacific Islanders, 4 percent were black, and 3 percent were Hispanic. While those proportions have crept up over the years, they have lagged behind the growing number of nonwhite students in American colleges.

Discussions of how to create a faculty more representative of the student population have become repetitive. People give it lip service, says Estela Bensimon, a professor of higher education at the University of Southern California and director of its Center for Urban Education, but then offer endless reasons why they can’t do it: “‘They don’t apply.’ ‘There aren’t enough in the pipeline.’ ‘We can’t compete with institutions that can pay higher salaries.’ But we don’t talk about how our hiring system privileges whiteness.”

Nonetheless, Bensimon and others agree that at some colleges there is a new effort — as some put it, an intentionality — in recruiting, hiring, and retaining diverse faculty members. That intentionality entails rewriting recruitment ads, training search committees with evidence-based research on how to avoid falling back into the status quo, and understanding why the process doesn’t end with the hire.

Administrators at Cal Lutheran knew they wanted to make wholesale changes, so they hired Bensimon and her team to teach them throughout 2016.

As a result, the university’s search process was reconfigured, beginning with recruitment ads that would attract candidates specifically interested in working with Cal Lutheran’s student population.

The ads refer to the university’s designation as a Hispanic-serving institution, meaning that at least 25 percent of its full-time undergraduates are Hispanic. In its ads, Cal Lutheran also states a preference for candidates who can mentor African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students.

“Very few universities mention that in recruitment ads,” Bensimon says. “They forget because we have taught ourselves not to acknowledge race.” But including it was important “to signal to potential candidates of color that this is a place I should apply for.”

Kevin McDonald, vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity, and equity at the University of Missouri system, says ads must go beyond the stale phrases of “equal-opportunity and affirmative-action employer,” because “you have to woo prospective faculty as you expect them to woo you.”

Consider the job postings for two separate deans for the University of Indiana’s School of Education, which is splitting into two schools, one on the flagship campus, in Bloomington, and one in Indianapolis.

The two campuses are very different; Indianapolis is much more diverse in terms of its student population, says Lori Patton Davis, a professor of higher education and student affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. She was not on the search committee for the Indianapolis dean but was on a search committee for a dean before the schools were divided.

“The Indianapolis description talks about wanting a dean who understands the importance of antiracist education,” she says. “There are clear words in there. If you are not someone who believes in racial justice, social justice, equity, serving races and minoritized populations, then it might not be a good fit.”

The Bloomington post is more standard in its wording.

“I think if you would ask faculty, the commitment to diversity is the same,” says Patton Davis. “But how it gets communicated is very different. As a black woman who studies racism in higher education, if I’m going to be looking for a position, the Indianapolis ad would stand out for me more, because it doesn’t come across as just general language around diversity.”

Beyond recruitment ads, diversity hiring is about creating and maintaining personal relationships, connecting with journals and organizations of interest to faculty members of color, and helping create a pipeline of candidates, something an increasing number of colleges are doing.

A couple of years ago, the University of Missouri started a two-year program for postdocs in departments that expect to have tenure-track jobs open within two years. In addition, the office of graduate studies and postdoctoral education meets monthly with the postdocs to help prepare them for faculty roles at Missouri or elsewhere — advising them, for



DAVID ZENTZ FOR THE CHRONICLE

Rahuldeep Gill, of California Lutheran U., is among the faculty members joining a diversity effort there. “We give tools that help faculty members be anthropologists of their own practice,” says an academic consultant who assembled the team.

instance, on how to use tools to publicize their research and how to win external funding.

Clemson University has a similar Pathfinders program for minority doctoral and postdoctoral students, mostly African-American and Hispanic. Lee A. Gill, the university’s chief inclusion and equity officer, says he has appointed an associate director of faculty-diversity recruitment, “whose sole job is to go out into the hinterlands to recruit them for Clemson.”

Clemson brings in about a dozen doctoral students and postdocs yearly under the program, in departments where there will be openings in the near future. When those job become available, he says, “we have somebody waiting in the wings.”

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Educate search committees:** Bentley University offers a two-hour workshop to members of search committees, with the first part focused on forms of bias, and the second on process.
- **Don’t forget retention:** To retain professors of color requires an awareness of not just the college climate but also of the culture of the wider community the faculty members will live in and quality-of-life issues.

THE ISSUE of diversity affects all institutions, including historically black colleges and universities. “We just have to think about diversity in a different way,” says Ontario Wooden, associate vice chancellor for innovative, engaged, and global education at North Carolina Central University.

That means focusing on factors in addition to color when recruiting faculty members. Are they from a rural area? Are they the first in their families to go to college? “It’s important to have a faculty not only responsive to students but who understand it by lived experience,” he says.

“Many people have a misguided notion that all faculty at HBCUs are black,” says Fred Bonner, a professor of educational leadership and counseling at Prairie View A&M University and executive director of its Minority Achievement, Creativity, and High Ability Center, known as Mach-III. In fact, says Wooden, 57 percent of faculty members at HBCUs, on average, are African-American.

“STEM areas look just like at predominantly white institutions,” Bonner says. After all, everyone wants those African-American STEM Ph.D.s. “It’s very competitive, but you want to put folks in front of students, especially where they’re underrepresented, that look like them.”

In an article in *The Washington Post* two years ago, Marybeth Gasman, a professor of education at the University of Pennsylvania, wrote: “The reason we don’t have more faculty of color among college faculty is that we don’t want them. We simply don’t want them.” Judging by the article’s 1,061 comments — and Gasman says she received 7,000 responses through emails sent directly to her — she hit a nerve.

Predominantly white institutions would do well to study HBCUs to emulate how they do their hiring, Gasman says. “They’re much more open to the types of institutions people come from, and much more open about people coming in that are different than themselves. They’re also more open to the kinds of skills people can bring and not wedded to just one model of faculty members.”

ONCE A hiring committee has a good array of candidates, it risks sinking back into a status quo mind-set. Focus, experts say, on “interrupting the usual.”

That’s what Bentley University, in Waltham, Mass., has tried to do. “If we’re working to develop the pool,” asks Katherine Lampley, director of its office of diversity and inclusion, “why aren’t more making it through the hiring process?” The university’s leaders, she says, recognized the two obstacles: “the individual’s conscious or unconscious bias and the process itself.”

Bentley began a pilot project a year ago, offering a two-hour workshop to everyone on search committees — the first hour on implicit and individual bias, the second on process. The committees were asked to follow particular steps: Specify job qualifications ahead of time, and use those as the only criteria against which candidates are evaluated; run a posting through a gender-decoder program that flags words or phrases that might signal that a job candidate should be male or female; discuss the listings after the decoding; and evaluate candidates individually, not as a group.

Having a committee meet as a group to decide on which candidates to call back can lead to groupthink or dominance by a more senior faculty member, Lampley says. Instead, each member should separately select her or his top candidate, give those selections to the chair, then come together to compare notes.

The workshops and adoption of those steps were voluntary. Out of 11 searches this year, eight of the committees went through the pilot project. Lampley thinks it made a difference.

“One committee, for example, was planning to phone-screen the candidates at their next meeting,” she says. “After the workshop, they shifted the priority of the meeting to talk about bias and delayed the phone interviews to be more thoughtful. And that was a search committee that was primarily white men.”

The workshop henceforth will be required of anyone on a search committee, and Bentley will offer a similar program to hiring managers on the staff side, Lampley says.

Andy Aylesworth, an associate professor of marketing who took part in the Bentley pilot program, says he was nervous about asking his committee to participate, “but I didn’t get any pushback.” Taking an implicit-bias test, he says, was helpful. “I think it’s

really easy to say, ‘I understand there’s implicit bias, and I’m not going to let it affect me.’ It’s different having a score in front of me. It made the conversation more tangible.”

At Duke University, for the past three years, every new faculty member in arts and sciences — which comprises about 80 to 85 percent of the faculty — has gone through a workshop on implicit bias. The university is starting to require it for the professional schools, too.

“There’s been a proliferation of research that speaks to the importance of subtle and implicit bias in hiring,” says Benjamin D. Reese Jr., chief diversity officer and vice president of Duke’s office for institutional equity. “We in no way think that the workshop in and of itself will change a culture and mitigate the influence of structural racism, sexism, and homophobia. But we think it’s one component in building a more inclusive and engaged faculty.”

Those on search committees at Duke are trained further and sometimes have reminders in front of them when discussing candidates. Business-sized laminated cards that Reese hands out caution interviewers how they might be biased according to a candidate’s actual or assumed race, gender, age, pedigree, weight, culture, language, accent, or sexual orientation.

Putting principles into practices takes leadership, resources, and commitment. Some colleges are taking specific steps to shake up the status quo.

Cal Lutheran has taken an even deeper dive, including an anti-bias checklist for four different stages of the search process: job announcements; application reviews; reference checks, phone interviews, and choosing finalists; and campus visits by finalists. A dean has to sign off on the anti-bias integrity of each of the four stages.

Eighteen faculty members, along with Provost Neilson and the dean of the Graduate School of Education were on the evidence team that Estela Bensimon, the professor from Southern Cal, assembled to help recruit and retain a more diverse faculty at Cal Lutheran. Over five months, she and her colleagues met with the team for three hours monthly.

Out of that work they developed the idea of “equi-

ty advocates,” one of whom sat on every search committee. Those advocates “came with the status and knowledge where they could call out the search committees when they were not being consistent with the new equity goals,” Bensimon says. “We give tools that help faculty members be anthropologists of their own practice.”

It’s crucial, Bensimon says, to be willing to look beyond traditional criteria: where candidates went to school and what journals they’re published in. “Universities want faculty members who have gone to Ivy League institutions and come with all sorts of fellowships and experiences with well-known faculty members. That doesn’t take into account that faculty of color have not always had that experience. Also, often faculty of color do work on racial issues and are published in journals that may not be considered first-class. People who get grants, get published in top journals — it’s often due to networks, and those networks are white.”

“We in no way think that the workshop in and of itself will change a culture.”

As Lee Gill, the inclusion officer at Clemson, says, the status-quo benchmarks that are used to find and measure candidates often “create this bubble that minorities and women are unable to break into.”

At Duke, as elsewhere, trying to change search committees’ long-held values has had varying success, says Reese. “It’s certainly a challenge to help people broaden their perspective and recognize that excellence often presents itself in a variety of forms, and that people can be at the top of their game even though they come from what some people would consider ‘second-class schools.’”

THE CONCERN about diverse faculty can’t stop once the hiring is complete. Retaining professors of color requires continuing effort and an awareness not just of the college cultural climate but also of the wider community.

“Any university that is more rural-based, and not near an urban or metropolitan district and is predominantly white, is going to be a bit more of a struggle,” says Patton Davis, the education professor at Indiana-Purdue. When she was offered a job at Iowa State University, she recalls, she specifically asked to speak to a black woman on the faculty to find out how she felt living in the area.

When recruiting, hiring committees need to look at “things that make you happy beyond your job,” Patton Davis says. Those things may be different for black women than for white women. “It’s about finding a place to get your hair done, or pantyhose that are your color or hair products or a radio station that plays my music. It’s quality of life.”

“One of the things I’ve noticed when I come to campuses,” says Marybeth Gasman, of Penn, “is that administrators will tell me about all they’re doing for faculty of color, but faculty will tell me they feel excluded. There’s a disconnect.”

Cal Lutheran, over the past three years, has gone from 17-percent nonwhite faculty to 24 percent, a result that administrators are proud of. But more important, they say, the culture has begun to shift. During their evidence-team meetings, “nonwhite faculty started sharing their experience of what it was like to be a person of color here, and it was eye-opening,” says Neilson. “We had some deep emotional types of conversations, but I would say in general, outside the evidence team, I don’t think faculty of color felt comfortable talking about their experiences.”

She’d always thought of the university as “a very pleasant and nice place” and wasn’t aware that some of her colleagues did not. “I had my blinders on,” she says.

While some of the harassing comments that faculty members of color have mentioned may have been weak attempts at humor, Gasman argues that “when someone is ‘othered’ constantly, then you’re contributing to it.”

After a sabbatical a few years ago, Rahuldeep Gill, the Sikh associate professor of religion at Cal Lutheran, seriously thought about not returning. Since the university’s new efforts, however, he has “recommitted to the university,” he says. “I’m grateful for the change. There’s definitely a more inclusive attitude. But I see the work we’ve still got to do. Ask me again in five years.”

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Diversity Training Is in Demand. Does It Work?

By STEVE KOLOWICH

ONE MONTH before R. Bowen Loftin resigned as chancellor of the University of Missouri at Columbia, accused of not fighting racism on the flagship campus, he announced mandatory “diversity training” for faculty, staff, and students. Some hailed the move as overdue, but others were not impressed. An emeritus professor at the university criticized the training as a “Band-Aid.” Jonathan Butler, a graduate student whose hunger strike later became a centerpiece of campus protests, said the gesture was “a good step” but “not enough.” Others called it “meaningless” and “patronizing.” The protests persisted, culminating in the resignations last week of Mr. Loftin and Timothy M. Wolfe, the system president.

Does diversity training work? That is the question many college officials face as they scramble to deal with protests of the racial climate on their campuses. Many hope that education can play a role in fighting prejudice. Yet their optimism is shaded by the fact that diversity-education programs have been around on campuses for a long time without appearing to have solved much of anything.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Focus on the right type of training:** Facilitators say that the lessons from relatively brief workshops or lectures are easily ignored or forgotten. And mandatory training often doesn't work well.
- **Involve everyone:** Don't make teacher training available only to tenured or tenure-track professors. Be sure to include adjuncts and graduate teaching assistants.



PURDUEEXPONENT.ORG

Students at Purdue U. protested campus prejudice and racial tensions this month in solidarity with activists at the U. of Missouri. Institutions like Missouri hope diversity-training programs can foster meaningful change.

Workshops, seminars, and lectures about how to respect differences at diversifying institutions have been commonplace at colleges for at least two decades. In 1997 a Bryn Mawr College study estimated that 81 percent of colleges had tried holding workshops at which students discussed their experiences of racial bias.

Students seemed to like the workshops, according to a survey of administrators, but nobody had studied whether the events were changing campus attitudes or behaviors. Only recently have researchers begun to know if the workshops actually change how people think and feel.

Katerina Bezrukova, an assistant professor of psychology at Santa Clara University, worked with a team that analyzed more than 200 studies of diversity training — not just on colleges campuses but also in various workplaces — conducted over the last four decades. They found that while training programs can change how people think about racial differences, they tend not to change how people feel.

Racial attitudes have deep roots, the researchers explain. If a diversity workshop manages to sway a

person intellectually, emotional biases can undo that work in short order — especially if the person returns to the same culture that created and reinforced those biases in the first place. Ms. Bezrukova and her team found no strong evidence in the research to suggest that diversity training changes people's attitudes over the long term.

They did find, however, that training has sometimes changed people's minds. While their biases might remain intact, people can learn new ways of thinking about things like race. That thinking can lead them to act against their instincts.

TAKING IT SERIOUSLY

But that has not often happened in the past. Too many organizations have relied on relatively brief seminars, workshops, or lectures whose lessons are easily ignored or forgotten, says Ms. Bezrukova. Mandatory training, in particular, has not been very effective. "People just don't take it seriously," she says.

Jonathan Poullard, a senior consultant with the

Equity Consulting Group, agrees that prejudice on a campus cannot be solved in a single afternoon, if at all.

That's why Mr. Poullard, a former dean of students at the University of California at Berkeley, asks for long-term commitments from his clients, who are usually student-affairs administrators and their staff.

In a typical arrangement, he meets with the clients for two days every semester for two years, beginning with individual interviews with participants about what they hope to get out of the program. Mr. Poullard says he avoids giving one-off presentations to large groups, especially if those invitations come from colleges that might be seeking only to burnish their reputations.

"Sometimes people want to use diversity training or leadership training as a check box," he says. But real change takes time and commitment.

"Sometimes people want to use diversity training or leadership training as a check box."

One of the greatest challenges for trainers is persuading people that it might be necessary for them, personally, to change. Professors can be an especially tough crowd, especially if they already consider themselves to be right-thinking, empathetic teachers with the glowing evaluations to prove it.

"Most people, certainly faculty, believe that if they're for social justice, it's automatically integrated into whatever they do," says Robin DiAngelo, a former education professor at Westfield State University, in Massachusetts, who consults with colleges on racial issues. "Therefore they don't need training."

Academics may see themselves as more-sophisticated thinkers than most people, she says, but that doesn't mean they notice how their unconscious biases affect their interactions with students.

ERRING ON SIDE OF EMPATHY

Students, however, do notice.

In April about 200 Emerson College students interrupted a faculty meeting to tell their professors about the various times they had felt marginalized, excluded, or discriminated against in class. Then they asked that the faculty members undergo diversity training.

Sylvia Spears, Emerson's vice president for diversity and inclusion, was not surprised. She had heard similar stories directly from students. Some said

their professors hadn't bothered learning to pronounce their names correctly; others believed the Massachusetts college's performing-arts program did not provide enough opportunities for students of color.

Her office already offered diversity training to Emerson faculty members, but only to professors who asked for it. Getting a critical mass to seek help posed a challenge. So before the fall semester began, Ms. Spears helped organize a diversity workshop during an existing professional-development day that all full-time faculty members were required to attend.

Jabari Asim, an associate professor of creative writing, was one of the workshop's organizers. At the April faculty meeting, when a student had talked about how a professor's aversion to learning the correct pronunciation of her name had made her feel invisible, Mr. Asim had felt a pang of guilt. He had done that before.

As a student, he had never minded much if a professor mispronounced his name. But Mr. Asim, who is black, does remember other things, like when people encountered him in an academic building and asked if he was lost. He understands how those slights can accumulate.

"I don't want to be dismissive of whatever your perceived emotional burden is," he says. "I'd rather err on the side of empathy."

At the workshop, a panel of faculty members gave presentations on how to handle "difficult conversations" about race and difference that might come up, unexpectedly, in class. The professors talked about some of the scenarios in which students had said they felt discriminated against. "My co-chair and I were very worried that we'd run into a lot of resistance," says Mr. Asim. "But we didn't."

The workshop went well, but it wasn't perfect. Only full-time faculty members were required to attend; Emerson's adjuncts, who make up half of its teaching force, were not included. The professors were told about the more-rigorous training available to those who wanted to put their teaching practices under a microscope, but nobody would be forced to go.

Emerson officials nonetheless say they see progress. Participation in voluntary diversity-education programs is up this year, says Ms. Spears, and "not everybody who applies is part of the choir." April's student-led intervention and this fall's diversity workshop may not have solved any problems, she says, but that doesn't mean they were not important steps.

If a professor leaves such a workshop and thinks, "Maybe I don't buy all of this, but maybe I'll consider thinking about this a little more," Ms. Spears says, "then I've created an appetite for trying to do something differently."

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

HOW well do you track your student data related to minority admissions and enrollment?

HOW well does your institution understand the experience of high-school students from low-income or first-generation families who apply to your college?

CAN you make financial-aid forms simpler?

DO members of faculty search committees understand ideas like implicit bias and how it can affect the hiring process?

IF YOU offer diversity training for faculty and staff members, how do you evaluate whether it is successful?

Lessons From the Past



BRETT DEERING FOR THE CHRONICLE

In a display of unity against racism, students at the U. of Oklahoma place messages — “I am listening,” said one, “because my people have talked long enough” — on a campus lawn.

Stunned by a Video, the U. of Oklahoma Struggles to Talk About Race

By DAN BERRETT

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Take concrete steps:** In the wake of a high-profile racist incident, Oklahoma took symbolic gestures, such as a silent march and a candlelight vigil. But it earned praise from student activists when the administration announced it would hire a vice president for diversity.
- **Be specific:** It's easy for leaders to call for campus conversations about race; it's harder to start them. Offer specifics if you can: What kind of conversation is needed to move the institution forward? How might faculty or staff members facilitate difficult discussions for students?

NORMAN, OKLA.

THE TEXT message arrived on Latrecia Breath's phone while she was grocery shopping on a Sunday afternoon.

"Please watch this," her friend urged.

Ms. Breath, a sophomore majoring in broadcasting and electronic media at the University of Oklahoma, waited until she was in the parking lot before she clicked on the link. There, in her prune-colored Saturn, she watched the video that was rapidly engulfing the 27,000-student campus. Her university had become a flash point in the national conversation about race.

The hand-held video showed members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity aboard a bus. A white student, in a bow tie, was leading the passengers in a song. To the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It," they vowed to never have black students in their fraternity, using a racist slur and invoking imagery of lynching.

Ms. Breath's emotions swirled. She was disappointed and confused, wondering how things like that still happened in 2015. Sure, she'd had to deal with indignities before as a black student attending a mostly white high school in rural Oklahoma. Here at Norman, she'd experienced white students' touching her braids without asking and then darting to their friends to chirp about it. She'd been told she spoke very well — for a black woman.

The video distilled an underlying sense of discomfort that she and others had felt but hadn't widely discussed. Now it was impossible to ignore. The problem wasn't just the fraternity brothers leading the chant. It was also the passengers clapping along, singing enthusiastically. They seemed to have sung it before.

The video also had a salutary effect: It started tugging at the veil of reticence that often shrouded frank discussions about race. Such conversations can carry risks as well, as many students in Norman quickly learned. At least for now, though, they were happening.

COLLEGE CAMPUSES are growing increasingly diverse, typically because of rising numbers of Hispanic students. Black students continue to be a clear minority. At Oklahoma, 5 percent of the students are black, as are 2 percent of the full-time faculty, librarians, and deans. Despite their small numbers, black students remain frequent targets of racist incidents.

At the University of Mississippi, a noose and a Confederate flag were draped on a statue of James Meredith, who was the first black student to enroll there. A black student at San Jose State University had a bicycle lock cinched around his neck by his white suitmates, who took to calling him “three-fifth.”

“We need to challenge ourselves to remove that stigma of being scared of whatever it may be and open up our minds and hearts, and find out what that person may know that you don’t know.”

Beyond college campuses, the recent killings of black men, including Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Mo., and Eric Garner, in New York City, have ignited racial tensions and fostered unease among many black students.

The Oklahoma video became public at a poignant moment: It was the day after President Obama commemorated the 50th anniversary of “Bloody Sunday,” the march in Selma, Ala., that set the stage for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

As the nation grapples with questions of equity, of how far society has come and how far it has yet to go, campuses, too, are struggling. How can they respond effectively to the incidents of racism on their campuses that can now be so easily, quickly, and widely shared? More fundamentally, how can they keep those incidents from happening in the first place? How well prepared are they to foster inclusion and facilitate candid and constructive dialogue when their own cultures often need to change?

Soon after Ms. Breath arrived back at her apartment, her roommates — who are black, white, His-

panic, and Native American — began trickling in. The video was on everyone’s mind.

Shawntal Brown, who is black, had watched it at the library while studying for an anthropology exam. A sophomore majoring in psychology, she spent an hour futilely trying to regain focus before calling it quits. Another roommate, who is white and Native American, came in, upset but not surprised. After all, she’d seen campus announcements for cowboy-and-Indian-themed parties. A third roommate’s boyfriend, a white graduate student who had rushed SAE as an undergraduate at the Georgia Institute of Technology, felt deep disappointment.

They talked for an hour and a half, trying to make sense of the video and what it said about the fraternity and sorority system and the campus’s racial climate. It was the first time, Ms. Breath said, that she and her roommates had truly talked about race.

As she and Ms. Brown made signs for a rally the next morning, Ms. Breath kept tabs on Twitter. She came across a tweet from her white suitemate from freshman year, who had joined a sorority and was worried that the entire Greek system would be labeled racist.

“The pointing fingers needs to stop,” the former suitemate wrote. “Everyone needs to make a change together and not blame each other for what has transpired.”

Ms. Breath felt that they had enjoyed a friendly relationship when they lived together. They’d never really talked about race or the Greek system, but they had found common ground as students in Oklahoma’s Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

“Not all people within this system are bad,” Ms. Breath wrote. But something was clearly wrong within the Greek system. “Who is to say this doesn’t happen in all fraternities?”

“‘The system’ in place does a good job of inclusion for OU,” her former suitemate wrote. “How, though, do you think the system needs to change to end this type of racism?”

They needed to be more diverse, with difference conceived of in broad terms, not just race and ethnicity, Ms. Breath wrote. “This change also needs to happen within the university too.”

THE UNIVERSITY’S response to the video came the next day. David L. Boren, the president, spoke bluntly, intending to send a message to the campus and the country.

“There is zero tolerance for this kind of racist and bigoted behavior,” he said at a news conference. “These people don’t deserve to be called Sooners.” He shut down the fraternity and soon expelled the two ringleaders of the chant.

Sitting in the audience, Ms. Breath and Ms. Brown liked what they heard. But they didn’t want the expulsions to be the end of it. The campus climate still needed improving. It had been desegregated in 1949, although its first black student was forced to sit cordoned

off from her white peers, in a chair marked “colored.”

With the fraternity video’s notoriety, calls for change in Oklahoma fell into categories that would strike many observers as familiar. Symbolic efforts, like a silent march and candlelight vigil, came first.

Before the video surfaced, a group of black students, called OU Unheard, was already pursuing a broad strategy, issuing a list of demands in January that included hiring more black faculty members. The students also wanted more money allocated to organizations serving black students and to retention efforts and scholarships; more diversity programs; and a larger role in planning homecoming.

They scored a quick victory when Mr. Boren announced, soon after the video went public, that he would hire a vice president for diversity.

The most common response was a call for dialogue. Speakers at town-hall meetings and rallies described the need for difficult conversations, as did students on Twitter and Facebook. Small flags, holding handwritten notes, were planted in the campus’s South Oval in a demonstration of unity, calling for candor and openness.

“I hope we can have the humility to truly listen,” one read. “I am listening,” read another, “because my people have talked long enough.”

IT CAN be easier, however, to call for such conversations than to actually start and engage in them. What needed to happen to help move the campus forward? How might faculty members facilitate difficult discussions for their students? Oklahoma’s faculty showed little appetite for discussing the subject, at least with a reporter.

The Faculty Senate met the day after the video surfaced. When asked to describe the conversation, its chair, Randall S. Hewes, referred the request to the administration, which forwarded the senate’s resolution. It was broad in nature and promised to make concrete recommendations.

“The Faculty Senate stands united against racial injustice,” it began, declaring that the faculty supported Mr. Boren, affirmed a commitment to fostering an inclusive and respectful campus culture, and stood together with students and the administration. The university had no other comment.

Seleena D. Smith, an adjunct instructor of African and African-American studies, said her courses sparked difficult conversations even before the video came to light. Ms. Smith, who has a degree in counseling psychology, said in an email that, on the first day of class, she makes students sit near someone who doesn’t look like them. She also allows them to establish the ground rules for discussion, which “set the stage for my students to feel safe and a little more willing to take risks in my classes.”

While several students said their professors mentioned the video in passing during the week, they also described a pattern of missed opportunities for deeper dialogues, both in the classroom and in day-

to-day interactions.

Darion Mayhorn, a graduate student from Ferguson, Mo., said during a town-hall discussion that he lived with a white roommate who had never asked him about the events that shook his hometown or about the fraternity video.

“You live with a black guy that lived in Ferguson, and you haven’t asked him anything what he thought about it?” he said. “We need to challenge ourselves to remove that stigma of being scared of whatever it may be and open up our minds and hearts, and find out what that person may know that you don’t know.”

Students said their peers sometimes held back in the classroom, too. Ms. Brown, who is Ms. Breath’s roommate, said discussions in her “Introduction to African-American Studies” course (not the one that Ms. Smith taught) sometimes came to a standstill. In a talk about the black family, she recalled, the professor asked the students to describe some common stereotypes. No one wanted to speak up. “It was like the elephant in the room,” Ms. Brown said.

Guiding such conversations requires skills that often lie outside a professor’s experience, said Belinda Biscoe, Oklahoma’s associate vice president for university outreach. “We still have gaping wounds that fester because we don’t create safe environments” to talk, she said. A dialogue alone won’t solve larger conflicts, but “it’s the first step, the baby step.”

Even baby steps risk deepening misunderstandings. Having an honest discussion about race sometimes means that white students will ask questions that, deliberately or not, end up inflaming their black peers. Such questions can be perceived as microaggressions, the small indignities that, intended or not, alienate black students from the campus mainstream.

The complicated dynamics that characterize discussions about race have led some professors elsewhere to question whether Mr. Boren’s forceful condemnation of SAE may have a perversely negative effect because it will make dialogue even more fraught. It’s relatively easy to call out individuals’ racist speech, especially when it is caught on video. It’s much harder to root out racism and subtler and more systematic forms of prejudice.

What’s more, evidence suggests that discussions about race can sometimes actually have a negative effect on black students. As they catalog microaggressions, they can acquire racial battle fatigue, a term coined by William A. Smith, an associate professor of education, culture, and society at the University of Utah, to describe race-related stress. Each incident feeds an internal narrative for many black students that they don’t belong on a campus or aren’t wanted there, he said. Many times, they withdraw emotionally or socially, or simply drop out.

Black students can also find themselves in an uncomfortable position with their white classmates during conversations about race. Instead of being able to focus on their courses, those students often spend time explaining to their white peers exactly how and

why an event like the video at Oklahoma is harmful.

“They bear the burden of being professors of race relations,” Mr. Smith said. “It’s like they’re the racial Atlas.”

IN NORMAN, many students argue that real change is likely only if they push themselves beyond their comfort zones. Ms. Smith’s classroom exercise — deliberately seating students from different racial or ethnic groups next to one another — was one example. But unexpected opportunities can present themselves, too.

One of those happened in November, on a long bus ride to a student-governance conference at Iowa State University. Most of the Oklahoma students were dressed in business casual. Alex Byron, the student-government vice president, noticed one black man, however, who was dressed to the nines. He wore a tailored suit and cufflinks. “You could tell everything had been planned head to toe,” said Ms. Byron, who is white. “Nothing had been left unironed.”

She thought to herself, “This is a very, very well-dressed black man.” And then she caught herself. Why and how did his race figure into her observation? What were her assumptions? And why did he dress in a way that she thought would come off as ostentatious for a white man?

She turned to Chelsea Brown, a freshman and chair of projects and problems for the student government. Ms. Byron broached her question by mentioning *Dear White People*, a satirical movie about four black students at an Ivy League-like college. She knew that Ms. Brown, who is black, had also seen it. That gave them an opening to talk about how black people present themselves, which led to a conversation about how some black students sometimes feel they must work harder and dress better than their white peers to succeed.

The comments didn’t bother Ms. Brown. Growing up in North Texas in an almost exclusively white community, she had learned to differentiate the barbed comments from the naïve ones, or from those that were asked in all earnestness. It was often a matter of how the questioner behaved. Was the questioner playing to a group of friends? Or was it an honest approach?

Ms. Brown believes that change at Oklahoma should come from within the black community. She’s not sure that demands issued by groups like Unheard, such as hiring more black faculty members, are realistic or even necessary. She’s always felt comfortable asking a white professor for help, but she also realizes that she’s used to doing so because of where she grew up.

“I don’t think it’s as easy as ‘We need more black people’” on the campus, she said. “Students need to bring issues to the table and be open.”

George Henderson, a professor emeritus of human relations, education, and sociology, has seen the pushes for change and reconciliation in Norman ebb and flow for more than four decades. The third black

professor ever hired at Oklahoma, in 1967, Mr. Henderson helped students in 1969 draft a “black declaration of independence,” which articulated some of the same demands of campus administrators that are being issued today by Unheard.

While some important things have changed, Mr. Henderson said, many have not. “We’re desegregated. We’re not integrated,” he said, describing how Asian, white, black, and Greek-group students often remain in clusters in the dining hall. “We share geography but not a common space called a university.”

If students don’t so much as eat with one another, he said, how will they learn about one another?

Such polarization isn’t surprising, considering wider trends: Nearly one-quarter of freshmen nationwide grew up in neighborhoods that are either white exclusively or nonwhite.

Mr. Henderson’s arrival in and continued presence here reflect a combination of structural changes, a willingness to have difficult conversations, and a desire to push beyond the familiar.

He wrote in his memoir, *Race and the University*, that his mentor at Wayne State University warned him against moving to Oklahoma. “It’s a small red-neck school in a backwater state,” Mr. Henderson recalled being told. He went anyway.

Once he got here, the response was hostile. Brokers for three houses that he wanted to buy backed out of deals, telling him they were no longer available. They still were, he said. It was only when one real-estate agency co-operated that he was able to find a place to live.

Subsequently, he learned, longtime friends of those brokers said they would never speak to them again. Their listings fell off. Five years after they had sold to the Hendersons, their business closed.

Mr. Henderson frequently woke up to find trash strewn on his lawn and drivers hurling epithets as they drove past. But he also remembers people opening their arms to him, his wife, and their seven children.

While some in Norman considered the brokers traitors, “they were heroes to me,” he wrote. “They were the real stars in this historic story, and history matters.”

While ostensibly retired, Mr. Henderson still teaches. He’s heard white students ask questions that would incite controversy in less-capable hands. (“Why can’t I use the n-word?” one asked him once.) When he sees smirks and eye rolls from his black students in response, he stops them. His goal is for white students to become more attuned to the thoughts and beliefs of students of color, and for black students to become more sensitive to those of their white peers.

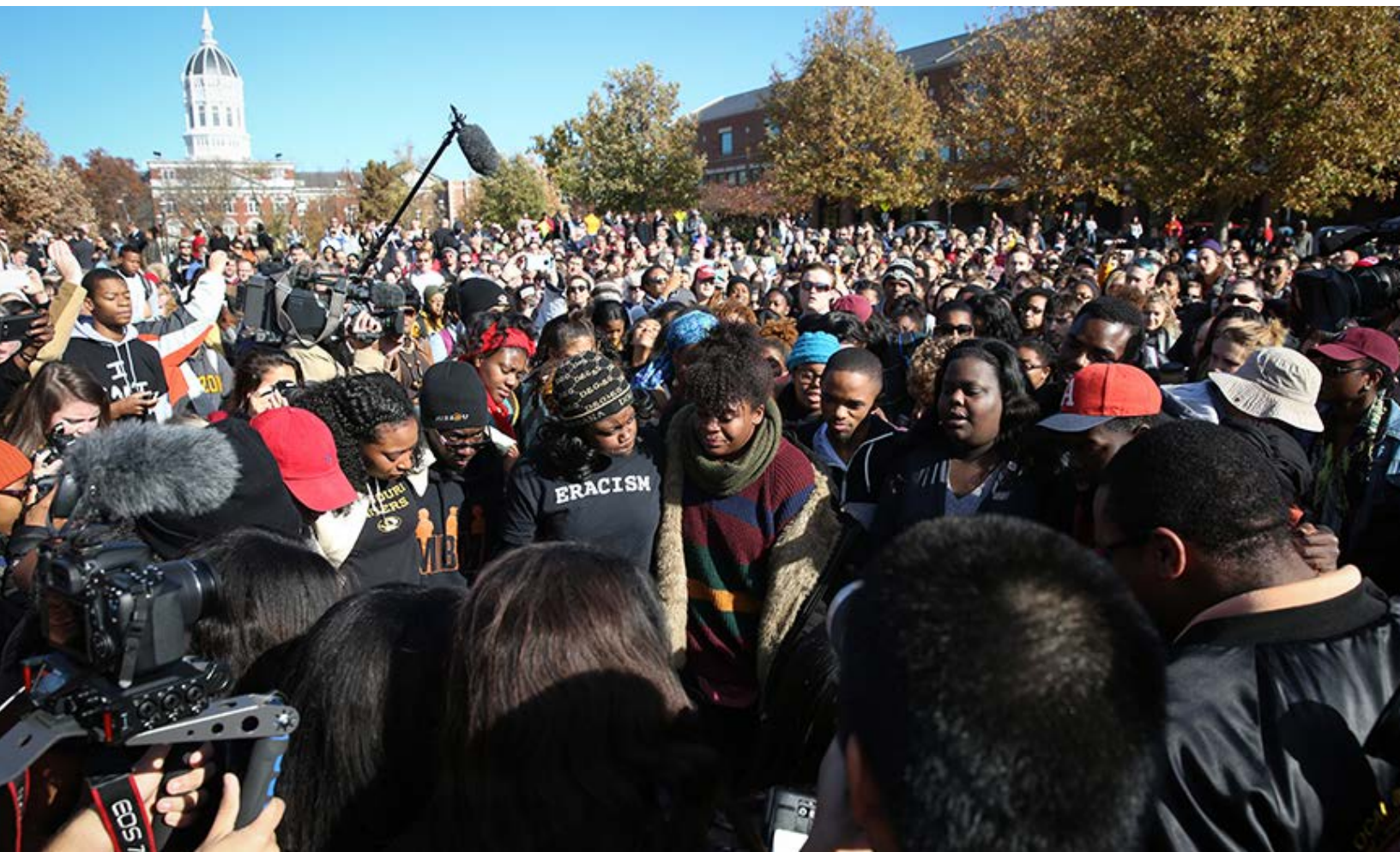
Mr. Henderson has thought deeply about how to create change in society. It’s a matter of managing one’s allies, and neutralizing bystanders and adversaries, he said. “No minority anywhere has been successful without the support of someone in the majority group,” Mr. Henderson said. “That’s the reality of life.”

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When Pursuing Diversity, Victory Is Hard to Define

THEY SHOUTED their outrage through megaphones. Last month black students at the University of Missouri's flagship campus blocked the homecoming parade to voice their concerns about racism, how they felt unwelcome on their own campus. "It is our duty to fight for freedom," they chanted, echoing the well-known activists' refrain. "It is our duty to win."

By DAN BERRETT
AND ERIC HOOVER



This week brought a dramatic outcome. Students who had demanded a change in leadership got it when two top administrators stepped down. By all accounts, the protesters won.

Yet that victory is complicated. “Two kings’ heads rolled,” as one professor told *The Chronicle*, but the campus remained largely as it was before: a veritable town of almost 35,000 students from different backgrounds, with various understandings of diversity, power, and how to get along. The university announced changes — including plans for a diversity officer and mandatory diversity training — even as it responded to threats of violence. One student said the recent protests were “just the beginning.” He need not look far to see that short-term victories don’t guarantee much.

People in higher education have been watching closely the events in Columbia. Some, like Calvin L. Warren, an assistant professor of American studies at George Washington University, see the ouster of the president and chancellor as satisfying but, ultimately, “an illusion of change.”

Mr. Warren, whose work focuses on African-American history, black nihilism, and ethics, praises the courage, sacrifice, and resolve of Missouri’s student activists. At the same time, he is cautious not to make too much of the results. Symbolic gains are not the same as systemic ones.

“Because people want to believe in higher education,” he says, “they translate minor changes into great victories.”

Students across the country, from Ithaca, N.Y., to Claremont, Calif., mounted protests this week. They are fed up with racial injustices on their campuses and feel empowered to push for change. Many institutions — some riven by protests or shamed by bigotry — are weighing lists of demands, an array of strategies for promoting inclusion. But changing a racial climate is a long-term struggle, students, faculty, and administrators agree. And nobody, anywhere, can say exactly what it would mean to win.

OUTRAGE IN OKLAHOMA

Calling out overt displays of racism is relatively easy. Unacceptable behavior is more visible and eas-

ier to eliminate than systemic inequity.

That was the case in March after a video surfaced of a racist chant by fraternity brothers at the University of Oklahoma. Members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, aboard a bus, sang to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It,” vowing never to allow black men into their brotherhood. They used a racist slur and referred to lynching.

Protests, candlelight vigils, and national attention followed. So did a swift response from the university. David L. Boren, the president, spoke in unusually blunt terms.

“There is zero tolerance for this kind of racist and bigoted behavior,” he said at a news conference the day after the video surfaced. “These people don’t deserve to be called Sooners.” He cut ties with the fraternity’s campus chapter and expelled the two leaders of the chant.

That was the easy part. Mr. Boren’s actions may have raised First Amendment concerns, but they offered a certain moral satisfaction. Meeting the demands of a group of black students called OU Unheard, a list presented months before the crisis, has been slower work.

Most of what the students are calling for is administrative: more black faculty members, more money for organizations that serve black students, and expanded retention ef-

forts, among other things.

On some fronts, there has been progress. A vice president to oversee diversity efforts was hired just weeks after the video spread widely. Each college is taking on an associate dean or director who will focus on diversity and inclusion. Incoming students are now required to take five hours of diversity training.

TOUGHER CHALLENGES

Meanwhile, OU Unheard is seeking another change, one that is grand and nebulous: improving the university’s “atmosphere.”

That task lacks clear metrics and someone who can own it. Yes, the atmosphere is a product of institutional decisions and priorities. But it also reflects scores of choices made every day by thousands of students, faculty, and staff. Where do you sit at lunch? Do you ever

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Take the long view:** Improving a racial climate at a college is a long-term struggle. Do celebrate the small achievements along the way, but don’t mistake them for major accomplishments.
- **Be honest:** Colleges often tout a diverse and welcoming campus community that may not match reality. Some experts recommend institutions talk candidly with current and applying students about the diversity work that’s being done and what else needs to be done.

really interact with people of different races? When they share their experiences and opinions, how do you react? Do you listen to what they say, however painful it may be, or do you reject it out of hand?

Being able to engage in productive, respectful dialogue is a good start, says George Henderson, a professor emeritus of human relations, education, and sociology at Oklahoma. But true inclusion, he says, requires something deeper, especially when many spaces on campus remain segregated.

Over the years, there's been change on the campus, to be sure, and Mr. Henderson, who was the third black professor hired at Oklahoma, in 1967, has experienced it firsthand. During the ferment of the 1960s and '70s, he says, activists sought, and won, a series of objectives: changes in the curriculum, the presence of black administrators, and efforts to attract and retain graduate students of color. "We declared victory," he says.

But it was fleeting. New minority faculty members were hired, but many soon left, he says, because the campus had not truly embraced them. "Progress," he says, "was illusory."

Even these days, says Mr. Henderson, a diverse student body or faculty should not be the only end goal. A certain number does not guarantee inclusion.

Faculty members tend to stick to their own group, he says. So do students. "I hear as many black students say they're more comfortable with black people as I hear white students say they're more comfortable with white people," the professor says. "At what point do we say we feel comfortable with people on campus without the qualification?"

For students, the series of crises on campuses across the country, linked by social media, can be both empowering and exhausting. "Mizzou is OU!" OU Unheard recently posted on Twitter, referring to a new hashtag campaign to share what it's like to be a black college student. "Educate those who do not know how it feels to be #BlackOnCampus!"

The catalog of racial incidents can also eclipse one another, and collective amnesia can set in, as one activist suggested in response. "It's like we forget the SAE thing JUST happened."

SLIGHTS AND HARASSMENTS

Not long after Capri'Nara Kendall, a black woman, enrolled at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, a white classmate asked her if she was there on an athletics scholarship. Other students would ask her the same question, which always made her feel unwelcome. Yes, she had received a scholarship, an academic one.

Two years ago, Ms. Kendall helped create the viral Twitter campaign #BBUM (Being Black at the University of Michigan). Students used the hashtag to recount their experiences on the campus. Many felt angry and isolated, they said, describing a slew of racial harassments and slights. The social-media

surge carried Ms. Kendall and other members of the university's Black Student Union to the forefront of a national discussion of race. Frustration, funneled into 140 characters, reached students far and wide, inspiring similar campaigns on other campuses.

Soon high-tech expression gave way to old-school tactics. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day last year, the Black Student Union delivered seven demands to Michigan's administration. They included providing emergency funds to students struggling financially, a new campus multicultural center, and increasing the BSU's budget. Members of the group started meeting with administrators weekly.

Although Ms. Kendall, now a senior, credits the university for meeting some of the demands, she still worries about the dearth of students who look like her. The enrollment of black students has dropped since 2006, when Michigan voters approved a ban on considering race in college admissions. This year, less than 5 percent of all students on campus are black, down from almost 8 percent in 2005. One of the BSU's demands had been to increase that number to 10 percent. "I probably won't see that in my lifetime," she says. "I can't say students of color are satisfied."

Recently, Michigan announced plans to recruit more high-achieving, low-income students, part of a broad plan to expand campus diversity without considering applicants' race. Making the campus more welcoming, Ms. Kendall says, depends on enrolling and retaining more underrepresented-minority students (almost 13 percent in this year's freshman class, compared with 10 percent last year). The campus climate can't improve, she says, unless the university enrolls more students of color.

In Ms. Kendall's experience over the last two years, that climate hasn't changed much. She was pleased to see so many white students turn out for a "die in" following the deaths of two black men, Michael Brown in Missouri and Eric Garner in New York, in encounters with the police. Nonetheless, she doesn't think many white students are concerned about the minority students' experiences — or their feelings. This week a black friend relayed an exchange on a campus bus: As she was reading about the protests at the University of Missouri, a white student tapped her on the shoulder and warned her against similar action in Ann Arbor.

Such stories remind Ms. Kendall why she got involved with the Black Student Union in the first place. Yet pushing for change, like the university-wide race-and-ethnicity course requirement the group demanded, is tiring when you're taking 15 credits, working part time, and preparing to graduate. "I'm not going to lie," she says. "I'm kind of burnt out."

As the BSU's leader, Ms. Kendall is not about to abandon activism. She planned to meet on Friday with Michigan's president, Mark S. Schlissel, to discuss the university's strategic plan for increasing campus diversity. "The momentum has not died, but it's

like, OK, where do you go from here?” she says. “I see the same cycle of students becoming activists, exposing issues the university is having, and the university giving them just enough so that the PR dies out.”

Longtime observers have seen that cycle, too. Protests come and go; college bureaucracies endure.

PASSING ON INSIGHTS

As an undergraduate at Michigan in the late 1970s, Elizabeth James sometimes found a racial slur scrawled on her friends’ doors, or her own. She once saw effigies of gorillas hanging from trees. As part of a tight-knit group of black students, she says, she didn’t feel as isolated or angry as many students do today. “We were mainly just trying to hold on to a semblance of black pride,” recalls Ms. James, who graduated from Michigan in 1982 and earned a master’s there two years later. “We were discussing issues among ourselves rather than pushing for broader, systemic change.”

Now the Black Student Union’s faculty adviser, Ms. James has watched waves of activism rise and fall. Something about the latest round, sparked by the #BBUM campaign, is different, she thinks. Technology has helped students mobilize — and publicize their message — like never before.

But the Twitter age might have a downside, too. “Sometimes the speed with which things come, there’s a level of impatience there,” Ms. James says of students. “I’m always trying to get them to be patient with one another, to say, OK, we’re about to embark on a long journey. You’re going to be dealing with race issues your whole life.”

To that end, Ms. James talks with students about the importance of passing on insights, lessons learned from protests, to younger students. She sees more of them in new roles, serving on committees alongside administrators. “For once I can say that there is a movement instead of a moment,” she says. “They’re doing the hard, quiet work that goes on behind the scenes. Sometimes, that’s when the hardest work gets done.”

But how much can happen in a year? Or four?

Walter M. Kimbrough says he can relate to the negative experiences described by black activists on many campuses. Although he believes it’s possible for them to have fulfilling experiences at predominantly white institutions, he thinks some students have unrealistic expectations. “Don’t go expecting some kind of Kumbaya campus,” says Mr. Kimbrough, president of Dillard University, a historically black institution in New Orleans. “That isn’t there.”

Some demands go beyond the power of even well-intentioned administrators. “You’re trying to change the entire culture of a campus,” he says, “and I don’t think any president or student affairs office can do that.”

Colleges, of course, play a large role in shaping students’ expectations, often touting a commitment

to diversity that may not match reality. “They’re presenting themselves as some kind of utopia that doesn’t exist,” Mr. Kimbrough says. “And now students are calling them on it, pushing back against the superficial.”

‘SEMANTIC SUBSTITUTES’

Higher education itself is an imperfect laboratory for enacting change. While often seen as liberal enclaves, colleges can have a harder time grappling with racism than they acknowledge, says Shaun R. Harper, executive director of the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania. The word “racism” is often buried in euphemism, he says. Researchers and campus officials use terms like “alienating,” “hostile,” or “unfriendly” to describe campuses, his research has found.

“The semantic substitutes we’ve embraced make it sting a lot less,” Mr. Harper says, but only for white people. It lets them avoid a sense of discomfort, which is often a necessary part of talking about race. To call a climate “chilly” instead of racist, Mr. Harper says, minimizes the gravity of the problem. It sends the message that solving it is as simple as putting on a sweater.

Some wonder if the scope of the problem is beyond higher education’s capacity to fix. Racism, or “anti-blackness,” has no real solution except its elimination, which is unrealistic, says Mr. Warren, of George Washington University. Racism was written into the U.S. Constitution. It is embedded in environmental policy, real estate, and the economy. “It’s such a juggernaut,” he says. “You can try to negotiate it,” but “you’re not going to get rid of it.”

Colleges reflect and amplify the larger culture, with all its inequities. Higher education may have distinct principles and espouse humanist values, he says, holding fast to the idea that every problem has a solution.

“Universities really want to promote the notion of the student as change agent,” he says. But that can offer them a false sense of their own power.

This week, students at Missouri found such power. They and others on campuses across the country are now coming to grips with the scale of their challenge. Go back a few decades, and racial change in higher education had a different meaning. The task was more fraught, but the goal was also simpler.

In the mid-20th century, black students were fighting to attend public flagship campuses. In 1962, that meant braving armed state troopers and angry mobs, as James Meredith found at the University of Mississippi.

A DIFFERENT FIGHT IN 1950

Gus T. Ridgel, from Poplar Bluff, Mo., helped to break the racial barrier at the Columbia campus in 1950, and he became its first black student to earn



DONATED BY GUS RIDGEL

For Gus T. Ridgel, who entered a master's program at the U. of Missouri at Columbia in 1950, just being there was victory enough.

a graduate degree, a master's in economics. At the time, his presence there was victory enough. Today's activists draw a direct line from their experience to his, calling their group Concerned Student 1950.

Mr. Ridgel, who is 89, lived through different circumstances. "I didn't encounter any overt discrimination on campus," he says. Off-campus was another matter; it was completely off limits to him.

He recalls eating in the dining hall because he wouldn't be served anywhere else. He slept alone in his two-bed dorm room because no one would share it with him. Asked if he felt isolated, he says he had little opportunity to dwell on it back then. He was speeding through his studies. To save money, he completed his two-year program, including his thesis, in one year. "I knew I didn't have any time to do any more testing at that time," Mr. Ridgel says.

Though today's black students remain small in number relative to the college's population (8 per-

cent of the student body is black), they are not as alone as Mr. Ridgel was.

But greater visibility and greater numbers come at a cost. Today's students have cited a series of high-profile incidents in recent months. Passers-by hurled racial invective at the president of the student body, who is black; black students were similarly harassed and demeaned during a rehearsal; feces were smeared in the shape of a swastika in a dormitory. All were followed by what the activists saw as a dismissive response by administrators.

Mr. Ridgel had to fight to be admitted. The problem for today's students is that after they have gotten in, the discomfort has not ebbed. Overt discrimination may have been eliminated a long time ago, Mr. Ridgel says. But for today's students, the forces of intimidation and hostility feel no less real.

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When Higher Ed Was a Public Good

As the nation has grown more diverse, has support dwindled for college access?

By SCOTT CARLSON

AT A recent town-hall meeting in Tucson, local business leaders took up education in the state of Arizona. They examined state support for public colleges — among the lowest in the country — and fretted about their future work force, says Gary D. Rhoades, a professor of higher education at the University of Arizona. They had even gone to the statehouse to meet with legislators, he heard at the town hall. “If you need to raise taxes,” the businessmen had told their representatives, “we’ll give you political cover.”

To their surprise, the professor recalls, the legislators waved off their requests. One reportedly said: “Those kids don’t need college.”

In a state where 60 percent of schoolchildren are Hispanic, and the legislature is overwhelmingly white, the words “those kids” have meaning.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Cultivate allies:** There are signs that Americans no longer back big efforts to open doors to college. But college leaders may be able to build support by doing more to promote higher ed’s contributions to the economy, social mobility, and innovation.
- **Beware a tiered system:** Higher ed is pushing to increase degree attainment by black and Hispanic students. But they disproportionately end up on campuses with fewer resources. Simply raising attainment, if even that happens, may not be enough.



BETTMANN, GETTY IMAGES

The GI Bill opened the doors to college to returning World War II veterans, including many from immigrant families. They joined the professional class and became further integrated into American society.

“It’s not hard to figure out that when people say ‘those kids,’ it’s a euphemism for African-American kids, Latino kids, Native American kids,” Mr. Rhoades says. “We have been systematically disinvesting in higher education, and that is precisely at the time when people who want higher education — lower-income kids, students of color, and immigrant kids — have increased.” As the student population has diversified, the language that many people use to define the value of a college degree has shifted, from a public good to an individual one. Is that merely a coincidence?

It’s a jarring question for a sector that sees itself as a great equalizer, in a society that aspires to be a meritocracy. But look at a range of evidence, and it seems that policy makers — with the encouragement or tacit acceptance of the public — have erected barriers to higher education based on race and class.

That is a difficult theory to pin down, and one not everyone believes. As federal and state governments face many financial obligations, and budgets

are tight, it may be facile to argue that a decline in public higher-education funding is grounded in racism. Jason Delisle, who studies higher-education finance at the American Enterprise Institute, points to the burdens of pensions, Medicaid, and K-12 school systems, drawing a connection between increased spending there and declines for colleges.

Other scholars in economics, higher-education policy, and cultural studies point to arresting correlations, though they’re subtle, shrouded in dog-whistle politics. Even in the dawn of the Trump era — after xenophobic and racist rhetoric energized the campaign of the populist billionaire — few policy makers would bluntly say they don’t want to pay for some students’ education because of the color of their skin.

Yet such attitudes have been documented, says Anthony P. Carnevale, director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. “This is a well-known, constant theme in economics.” Studies have found that diversity is an impediment

ment to the welfare state, of which education is part. A report by the Harvard Institute of Economic Research in 2001 concluded that Americans do not support European-style social-safety nets, including education benefits, because of racial fragmentation — and a belief that minorities benefit more from wealth redistribution. Countries like Finland, Japan, and South Korea beat the United States in educational attainment not because their people are smarter, Mr. Carnevale says, but because they are racially homogenous. And that seems to lead to broad public support for education.

Working on labor and education policy for many years, Mr. Carnevale, 70, has seen that dynamic at play. “White people my age are not going to vote to educate Hispanic kids or black kids,” he says. “All the great advances in education” — like the Morrill Act to create land-grant colleges in 1862 and the GI Bill to educate veterans of World War II — “have come when there was a strong white majority.” As those majorities have diminished, the public instead has pushed through measures to limit education benefits, restricting tax revenue, for example, cutting spending, and putting constraints on immigrant students.

Despite barriers to higher education, national and local campaigns are encouraging more minority students to go to and finish college. But gaps persist, and as the higher-education system stratifies, black and Hispanic students disproportionately end up on campuses with fewer resources. Simply raising attainment, if even that happens, may not be enough. A nation’s fortunes grow as more of the population actually learns new skills and accumulates knowledge, says Mr. Carnevale. If we are going to rebuild our economy, he says, we have to find a way to give more students the promise of a high-quality education.

THE ORIGINAL GI Bill, passed in 1944, is hailed for widening access to higher education. And it did expand opportunity, but only for some.

In the decades before World War II, ethnic Europeans poured into the United States, and Italian-Americans in particular suffered legal and social discrimination. Like other predominantly Catholic groups from Southern and Eastern Europe, they lived in segregated urban enclaves (“Little Italies”) and tended to perform manual labor. Many white Protestants saw these immigrant groups as swarthy, dirty, criminal — a threat to the supposed genetic and cultural purity of America.

As World War II wound down, with a great need to reintegrate returning soldiers and kick-start the postwar economy, Congress passed the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act. On the GI Bill, ethnic European-Americans from Irish, Italian, Polish, Jewish, Greek, and Slavic backgrounds went off to college, joined the professional class, and moved to the

suburbs. The measure essentially made them white, bringing prosperity and acceptance to groups that had not enjoyed it before.

But the GI Bill is as notable for the people it left out as for those it helped up.

A decade before the landmark verdict in *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregating public schools, with Jim Crow laws and restrictions in veterans’ services, African-Americans could not take advantage of the GI Bill the way whites could. In the 1940s and ’50s, blacks were barred from attending many public universities. The historically black institutions of the day were often underfunded, with few graduate programs and limited capacity to accommodate more students.

All of that choked off educational opportunities for black vets. One study shows that among white veterans who turned 18 from 1941 to 1946, 28 percent enrolled in college, while among their black peers, the rate was only 12 percent. The GI Bill also paid for job training and apprenticeships, but studies suggest that blacks were underrepresented in those programs, too. The education gap was not for lack of desire: After the GI Bill was passed, 29 percent of white soldiers and 43 percent of black soldiers said they intended to enroll in college or training.

“White people my age are not going to vote to educate Hispanic kids or black kids.”

In 1960, California embarked on a public-education project that would rival the GI Bill in its ambitions. The California Master Plan established a tiered system of research universities, comprehensive state colleges, and community colleges to offer free higher education to the baby boomers of the state. The plan was a “class compromise,” says Brian Murphy, president of De Anza College, who worked on higher-education policy in California in the 1980s. It acknowledged and in some form sought to resolve class differences among white Californians. In 1960, blacks were less than 6 percent of the state population, Hispanics just 10 percent.

“The subtext of race was not yet dominant in the master-plan conversation,” Mr. Murphy says. “Anybody who looked at high schools in San Diego or Los Angeles saw that it was still largely white.” He points out that Pat Brown, then governor of California, “knew that his base and the base for the next two generations would be largely white, an expanding middle class.”

Mr. Murphy once discussed the master plan with Clark Kerr, who was president of the University of California system during its formation. “You were



CATLIN O'HARA FOR THE CHRONICLE

Lawmakers seem less willing to help today's students. State support for public colleges in Arizona, as here at Arizona State U., is among the lowest in the country. Legislators reportedly told local business leaders, "Those kids don't need college."

buying social peace," he told Kerr, who smiled. Mr. Murphy remembers the man's response: "You're on to it."

Over the course of the 1960s and '70s, African-Americans and Hispanics started making inroads in higher education, thanks to movements that tore down legal and cultural barriers. From 1970 to 1980, the share of African-Americans with at least a four-year degree went from 4 percent to 8 percent, and among Hispanics, 5 percent to 8 percent.

Some of that progress eroded in the '80s, when Ronald Reagan became president. He saw students as freeloaders and "tax eaters," much like unemployed parents on welfare, says Devin Fergus, an associate professor of African-American and African studies at Ohio State University. In a forthcoming book, *The Land of the Fee: Hidden Costs and the Decline of the American Middle Class* (Oxford University Press), Mr. Fergus lays out how the Reagan administration — with the help of conservative Southern Democrats — cut a billion dollars out of Pell Grants and other grant aid, shifting the emphasis of government support for higher education from

taxpayers to bank-based federal loans. At a time when 40 percent of black children were living below the poverty line, the move hit working- and lower-middle-class families hardest. It started a trend toward ballooning student-loan debt, and it lessened minority- and first-generation-student enrollment at elite private institutions.

Some of the rhetoric on the student-aid cuts was racially coded, like Reagan's talk of "welfare queens," Mr. Fergus says. William J. Bennett, who became Reagan's secretary of education in 1985, called students who defaulted on their loans "deadbeats." They might have to absorb financial-aid cuts, he said, through "stereo divestiture, automobile divestiture, three-weeks-at-the-beach divestiture."

"This is dog-whistle politics," Mr. Fergus says. "He was borrowing the language of the anti-apartheid students," who advocated divesting in companies operating in South Africa.

Reagan started a trend that was mimicked by the states.

In the '80s, California's world-class higher-education system "faced a contradiction," says Mr.

Murphy. The state had seen its Hispanic population more than double over two decades, to 19 percent, and in the next two, it would more than triple, to 32 percent by 2000. “The state didn’t have the capacity to handle it,” Mr. Murphy says, “unless you had increased revenue.”

Yet what voters and policy makers did was pass a series of measures that would starve the higher-education system and effectively cut out minorities. Proposition 13, which restricted tax revenue, passed in 1978. In the ’80s and ’90s, California, like other states, focused on crime, ramping up its prison system, and those racially charged efforts would absorb money that might otherwise have gone to higher education. By the late 2000s, California’s spending on corrections would catch up with, and even surpass, its spending on colleges.

Other measures further limited access. Voters approved Proposition 187 in 1994, denying education and services to undocumented immigrants, although the law was later blocked and struck down by courts. The University of California regents abolished affirmative action in 1995.

In the years since, the state’s public colleges have raised tuition markedly and cut enrollment for lack of capacity. The powerhouse tech industry, rather than trying to train local students, meets its workforce needs with programmers from India and China, Mr. Murphy says.

An “anti-tax ideology” dominates the state, and it’s not coming only from rich businessmen, he says. “For a lot of us, the triumph of the Reagan anti-government ideology coincides simultaneously with this dramatic demographic change.”

IS ALL of this a scheme to hurt blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities? Other government programs seem to have had such effects: Studies have shown that welfare reform has restricted public-assistance benefits more in states with greater minority populations. Drug-enforcement laws have been found to disproportionately target African-Americans, while whites use drugs at a similar rate.

In looking for connections between diversity and the defunding of higher education, many see only hazy correlations. But emerging studies suggest some bias. Last year Nicholas Hillman, an associate professor of educational leadership and policy analysis at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, analyzed the balance between state appropriations and tuition revenue at more than 450 public colleges. Those that served primarily white students got more of their money from the state, while the colleges that served minority students relied more on tuition. He points to a striking, if lopsided, comparison between the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Tennessee State University, a historically black institution. State funding per undergraduate at Knoxville, where 7 percent of students are black, is \$19,500; at

Tennessee State, where 71 percent of students are black, that figure is \$5,600.

In another study released last year, two economists — Eric J. Brunner of the University of Connecticut and Erik B. Johnson of the University of Richmond — looked at voting patterns in community-college bond referenda in California. Older white voters were less supportive of college funding than were younger voters, the study showed, and if they lived in areas with a high Hispanic population, they were significantly less supportive.

In many ways, we live in Reagan’s world, with attitudes he shaped about the role of government. What might formerly have been considered a leg up often gets called an entitlement or a handout. Public higher education has undergone a financial and conceptual shift: Once an investment covered mostly by the state to produce a work force and an informed citizenry, today it is more commonly shouldered by individuals and families, and described as a private benefit, a means to a credential and a job.

“All the returns to the economy are coming from higher education now. Our ability to expand that is key.”

It’s not a conspiracy, but a neoliberal ideology, says Michael Fabricant, a professor of social work at the City University of New York Graduate Center and author, with Stephen Brier, of a new book about the disinvestment in public education, *Austerity Blues: Fighting for the Soul of Public Higher Education* (Johns Hopkins University Press).

“Austerity is being imposed not just on higher education, but across public services,” he says. To what extent that randomly or deliberately coincides with rising national diversity is a tricky question. What’s clearer is the effect of stagnating social mobility. “In the absence of the necessary resources for these universities to either provide an affordable education on the one hand or a quality education on the other,” he says, “a certain population is now being defined as disposable.”

Not only activists have noticed. In 1982, Elizabeth Dole, serving as chair of a task force on equal rights for women, wrote a memo to the White House staff secretary, warning that cuts in student aid would lead to “a significant outcry of racism.” She explained that the African-American community “looks to Pell Grants as one of their primary vehicles for upward mobility.”

“People in the administration were aware of what the potential fallout would be from shifting from



KEYSTONE-FRANCE, GAMMA-KEYSTONE, GETTY IMAGES

The GI Bill is as notable for the people it left out as for those it helped up, like some students here at New York U. in 1945. Among white veterans who turned 18 from 1941 to 1946, 28 percent enrolled in college, while among their black peers, the rate was only 12 percent.

grants to loans,” says Mr. Fergus, of Ohio State. What they didn’t count on was the stagnation of wages for most Americans and the escalating cost of college, which have ensnared whites, too. “I just don’t think they imagined that middle-class whites would ever need aid.”

In an analysis of student-loan-borrowing patterns from 1992 to 2012, Mr. Hillman, of Wisconsin, found that black and white students were equally likely to borrow early on, but that over the decades, blacks have become more likely to borrow — and they borrow more. “Debt has been a crisis for low-income students for quite some time,” he says, but only recently, as higher-income families are exposed to it, have policy makers taken an interest in the student debt “crisis.”

Meanwhile, for poor whites, the economic options have narrowed. Decades ago, manufacturing was a path to a decent livelihood, but those jobs disappeared, to be replaced by work that requires post-secondary training. This year white, non-college-educated voters registered their frustration in the presidential election. At a time when the cost of college

drives a national conversation about its payoffs, policy decisions that have made college less accessible have hurt everyone, regardless of race.

THE COUNTRY today looks different than it used to. Among schoolchildren, fewer are white, and many more are Hispanic. By 2040 or earlier, America will be a majority-minority nation.

And it has maxed out on the benefits it can get from its 80-percent high-school-graduation rate, says Mr. Carnevale, of Georgetown. “All the returns to the economy are coming from higher education now,” he says. “Our ability to expand that is key.”

If college degrees are more important than ever, could the country develop a new great advance in education that would give more people, a broad cross-section of the population, a real shot at college?

Hillary Clinton might have had a solution, borrowed from Bernie Sanders, to offer free public-college tuition to students from families making \$125,000 or less. Or it could have been another

advantage for upper-middle-class whites, leading to “bumping,” says Mr. Carnevale, as top-tier colleges selected students with the best grades and test scores. Stratification might have worsened as less-prepared students — often black and Hispanic — found slots on campuses with fewer resources and lower graduation rates.

The free-college plan is far from reality, but it now serves as a rallying point for progressives. A future Democratic candidate could resurrect it in a presidential bid in 2020 or 2024, although some observers have wondered if the party will spurn minority constituents to recapture the white, working-class vote.

President-elect Donald Trump, who has branded Mexicans as “criminals” and described black neighborhoods as apocalyptic “war zones,” has yet to present his higher-education agenda. But some fear he will revive policies that have hurt minorities.

The new administration may push more students toward private student loans, Mr. Fergus says, even as bipartisan commissions going back 20 years have found that the federal government provides loans more cheaply and efficiently than do private lenders. Given his aggressive talk on immigration, Mr. Trump will probably kill the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which gives undocumented immigrants access to higher education. Mr. Trump might also revive the fortunes of for-profit colleges, some of which have been found to prey on minority students, leaving them in debt with a less-valuable degree, if any.

If the federal government doesn’t expand access to education, more of that burden will fall on states. In many of them, individuals and families now pay for a greater share of college costs than taxpayers do. Some places, like Arizona, have been going the way of California years ago.

Arizona’s legislature is whiter, more male, and more Republican than its population. And lately, that state — which has a clause in its constitution proclaiming that higher education “shall be as nearly free as possible” — has passed deep cuts in funding and big increases in tuition.

One of the leaders of that drive is John Kavanaugh, a Republican state representative and communi-

ty-college professor who has made headlines for his anti-immigration stance and remarks about Hispanics and Muslims. In an interview with *The Chronicle*, he was more measured, saying that the state has had to raise tuition to close a budget gap.

In 2012, he sponsored a bill that would require all students, regardless of income, to pay at least \$2,000 toward tuition, in part to ease the burden on middle- and upper-middle-income students. He believes students should have “some skin in the game,” and bristles at the notion of poor students’ paying less, thanks to tuition revenue that gets redistributed as aid.

“I don’t think it’s a good policy to take money from one student to pay for another student’s tuition,” he said. “There is no reason that even a poor student can’t pay a nominal tuition, given that they are going to earn a lot more money than people who don’t have college degrees.”

But Alfredo Gutierrez, president of Maricopa Community College’s governing board and a former Democratic state senator, doesn’t buy the straight argument against subsidies. The state has been extraordinarily hostile to education, he says, a pattern he believes is tied to race. State funding for the Maricopa system had been going down since 2009, he says, until it got none last year. Half of Maricopa’s students are nonwhite.

“The deterioration to the K-12 system, the community-college system, and the universities will ultimately have to be paid for,” Mr. Gutierrez says. “If this trajectory that we are on continues, this will be an extraordinarily ignorant, uneducated state — certainly not a place that can deal with the economy of the future. And it will create a permanent underclass. There will be little ability to escape poverty.”

But Arizona, he predicts, is on the cusp of change. The Latino population is growing so fast that in six to 10 years, Arizona could flip over politically, possibly taking the state in a different direction, one that is more willing to invest in the education of immigrants and minority groups.

“Perhaps we have lost a generation,” he says, “but there is still a real opportunity to make a change.”

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Ripples From a Protest Past

Why an occupation by black students at Cornell in 1969 still matters today

By IAN WILHELM

WALKING PAST the heavy wooden doors of Willard Straight Hall that April afternoon in 1969, Ed Whitfield felt relieved. For 36 hours he and other members of the Afro-American Society had occupied Cornell University's student union, and now, with the tense standoff over, the lanky sophomore was leading his fellow protesters out into the cool Ithaca air.

In his left hand, he gripped notes he had taken during the negotiations with administrators to end the occupation; in his right, a loaded rifle, a 7.65-millimeter Argentine Mauser.

As he and other armed students left the building, a crowd of students, reporters, and other onlookers seemed stunned.

"Oh my God, look at those goddamned guns," said Steve Starr, a photographer for the Associated Press, who snapped a picture of the dramatic departure, a shot that would win a Pulitzer Prize.

Looking back, Mr. Whitfield, now 66, says he never expected to become a symbol, one that is both celebrated and derided. As the group's president, he was focused on the safety of the other black students and himself.

Lessons for Leaders:

- **Know the history:** Colleges have been wrestling with racial inclusion for decades, if not longer. Are there significant moments in your campus history you should know about?
- **Understand the activists:** Student protesters are not monolithic. Each has their own motivation and viewpoints. Student leaders may not always speak for the collective.



STEVE STARR, AP

Ed Whitfield (far right) leads protesters from Cornell's Willard Straight Hall after a tense 36 hours. Although the action quickly became seen as an armed takeover, the students brought in guns only after they felt their own safety threatened.

“We wanted to make our leaving a public activity for the sake of our own protection,” he says. “I wasn’t thinking what the photographs would look like.”

Yet that iconic photo has become something of a Rorschach test.

To some it shows a victory to be celebrated, a moment when higher education started listening to African-American students and offered them an opportunity to help shape their own academic experiences.

To others it is a deplorable example of administrators capitulating to physical intimidation, an event that ultimately helped enshrine a culture of political correctness and sensitivity to challenging ideas about race and other topics on campuses.

While there’s little consensus on what the volatile mix of guns, racial politics, and national attention meant at the time, the Straight crisis, as it is known, was a watershed event for higher education. It helped shape the thinking of such influential scholars as Allan Bloom, the philosopher, and Martin E.P. Seligman, the psychologist. It spurred wealthy conser-

vative donors to back efforts that represented their values in academe. And, according to historians, the protest at Cornell was a harbinger of today’s campus debates about free speech and racial inclusion, with implications for resurgent protests like those at the University of Missouri last fall.

“The parallel is that black students and their allies have lost faith in the ability of faculty and administrators to bring about change that is going to make their campus and academic environment beneficial to them,” says Ibram X. Kendi, an assistant professor of African-American history at the University of Florida who has studied black-student activism in the 1960s. “After losing that faith, they felt it was on them to make the university a better place by any means necessary.”

IN THE dawn hours of Saturday, April 19, 1969, members of the Afro-American Society began entering the Straight, as the building is known. Though the protest is often recalled as an armed takeover, students did not carry ri-



STEVE STARR, AP IMAGES

Thomas Jones gives a black-power salute as he and other occupiers leave the student union. Two days later he would publicly threaten, “Cornell University has three hours to live.” Decades later he became an investment banker, a philanthropist, and a Cornell trustee.

fles and shotguns when they arrived. Those would come later.

The students did cause a ruckus. It was parents’ weekend, and the student union was housing several moms and dads who had come to visit. The protesters roused them from their sleep, ushered them to a garbage room at the back of the building, and forced them out, according to *Cornell ’69: Liberalism and the Crisis of the American University*. That 1999 book by Donald A. Downs, now a professor emeritus of political science at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, provides a detailed account of what happened at Cornell.

As word of the occupation spread, a group of Delta Upsilon fraternity brothers tried to force their way

inside, presumably to retake the building. The black students, who numbered more than 80, repelled the white interlopers.

As some of the occupiers point out today, hunting is a popular pastime in upstate New York, and firearms were legal and ubiquitous. The shooting deaths of three black student protesters a year earlier at South Carolina State University by highway-patrol officers weren’t far from Mr. Whitfield’s mind either.

Zachary W. Carter, who participated in the occupation, says the original plan was for a “peaceful sit-in,” but the situation quickly escalated. If the Afro-American Society members had marched in with guns at the start, he says today, he probably wouldn’t have joined in when he was a freshman.

Other participants emphasize how at the time they saw the occupation as part of a greater cause.

“I’ll borrow a phrase from New Hampshire, ‘Live Free or Die,’” says Thomas W. Jones, who was outspoken on campus at the time. “So that was what was in my mind. I was fully committed. What was happening on campus at Cornell was part of a much broader context, and that fight was about fundamental human rights and dignities for African-Americans.”

BY SATURDAY night, when Cornell’s administration learned that the occupiers had firearms, a delicate situation became even more difficult for President James A. Perkins. Administrators began negotiating with the Afro-American Society, with a peaceful resolution being the overriding goal.

Perkins, who died in 1998, had been working for months alongside his colleagues to meet a host of the activists’ demands, some of which echo those of student protesters today: better mental-health services for minority students, more minority faculty and students, and professors sensitive to black perspectives.

While the institution as a whole was receptive, the reaction by a few faculty members was, “How dare any students demand that faculty make changes, let alone these black students who should just be happy to be here,” says Frank R. Dawson, who was a freshman and self-described member of the “infantry” during the takeover. “They finally have an opportunity to take advantage of this wonderful education. Why don’t they just shut their mouths and be quiet and assimilate and be thankful?”

In his book, Mr. Downs shows that Perkins and other professors were committed to racial inclusion on the campus and in some ways were ahead of their time. In 1963, when Perkins became president, he started the Committee on Special Education Projects to recruit more black students, especially those from poor city neighborhoods, and support them while on campus. With help from that program, the number of minority undergraduates grew from eight in 1963 to 250 in 1968-69. (Cornell had about 10,000

undergraduate students that year.)

But the university, like most, was unprepared for the growing radicalism among white and black students alike.

In 1968 the Afro-American Society, fueled in part by a growing national black-power movement and the unrest after the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, pursued increasingly aggressive tactics. One of them included a forced takeover of the economics department after accusing a visiting lecturer of teaching racist views. Foreshadowing debates during the Straight crisis, the Cornell chapter of the American Association of University Professors said the administration had ignored standard policies protecting academic freedom in settling the case against the instructor.

Perhaps the most contentious question was what direction a new black-studies program would take. The administration was largely supportive of an academic effort focused on African and African-American perspectives, but the debate hinged on how independent it would be from the university's departmental structure and what approach it would take in teaching a highly political topic.

Students like Mr. Whitfield, who had come to Cornell on a scholarship from Little Rock, Ark., wanted a program that would teach them practical skills to help confront urban poverty and other societal ills facing black neighborhoods.

"We wanted to make sure that our experience at the school was going to be useful in terms of the kind of social transformation we wanted to see outside the school back in the communities that we'd left," says Mr. Whitfield, who was studying math and philosophy in an experimental undergrad-to-Ph.D. program. "There was this boiling civil rights and black liberation going on in our own communities that we were wanting our experience in the college to remain a part of."

Some professors, Mr. Downs writes, were concerned that the students' proposed program would be academically unsound and politically slanted.

With that debate simmering, a provocative act of vandalism sparked the rebellion. In mid-April, a wooden cross was set aflame outside Wari house, a dorm for African-American women. The culprits have never been identified, and Mr. Downs's book quotes former administrators who accused black students of carrying out the crime to stir up outrage. While finding that hypothesis in the "realm of possibility," Mr. Whitfield says that he was never told about such a plan and that the Afro-American Society certainly never sanctioned it.

Regardless of who was responsible, the burning of a cross, an act that historically preceded violence against African-Americans, helped fuel the siege mentality inside the Straight.

On April 20, worried about a potentially explosive situation, Perkins and his administration gave in to most of the Afro-American Society's demands,

including allowing the students to leave the building armed, which they had argued was for their own protection, and granting them amnesty for seizing the Straight, as well as for earlier protests.

The protesters made no specific demands about the future shape of the black-studies program. But they and some historians call the Straight takeover a catalyst to its creation — and its initial design as largely autonomous.

"What happened at Cornell provided a model for black studies, which is something they gained during the protests," says Stefan M. Bradley, an associate professor of history at Saint Louis University who has studied black-student activism. "That became a model years down the road."

Mr. Bradley and other scholars also credit the Straight takeover and other prominent protests of the time, like the student occupation at Columbia

"Those black faces and huge guns agitated the many fears many Americans had been accruing after four straight years of violent urban rebellions and black-power protests."

University in 1968, with ushering in a broader definition of shared governance to include more student voices.

Of course one crucial element makes the Straight occupation stand out from other student protests: the occupiers' rifles and shotguns.

In response, New York's Legislature would eventually pass a law banning guns on campuses — an ironic move, notes Mr. Kendi of the University of Florida, now that several states today have approved concealed carry at colleges in the name of public safety.

But the law was only one small repercussion of that public display of firearms on a college campus. To many on and off campus, the deal Perkins and the administration struck seemed like capitulation, and the implied threat of force challenged fundamental notions of what a university is: a place where disagreements are settled with reason and where physical intimidation should not shut down the free exchange of ideas. What's more, the image of the armed black students, especially taken out of context, touched a raw nerve with the American public.

"Those black faces and huge guns agitated the



STEVE STARR, AP IMAGES

President James Perkins met with students after the occupation ended. Although some professors criticized him for giving in to the Afro-American Society's demands, others later praised him for ending the crisis without bloodshed.

many fears many Americans had been accruing after four straight years of violent urban rebellions and black-power protests," says Mr. Kendi. "It not only sent shock waves across America. It sent waves of fear across America."

That mix of national attention and a divided campus set the stage for a crisis few colleges have ever experienced.

"CORNELL UNIVERSITY has three hours to live."

Those words echoed from the radio, broadcast by WHCU, Cornell's station. The intent of the dramatic announcement was unclear. Was it a metaphor? A call to action to spur more student occupations? A deadly threat?

It was two days after the end of the takeover, and

Mr. Jones, who had participated in the Straight occupation, decided to give a searing radio speech that remains controversial to this day. In it, he called Perkins and several Cornell faculty members racist, and then said the president and two others "are going to die in the gutter like dogs."

The university, still in chaos, did not need that. Perkins had tried to reassert control by, among other things, barring firearms and disruptive protests on campus, yet law-enforcement officials were poised to take over the restive university, which by now was national news. "Cornell Negroes Seize a Building," said a headline on the front page of *The New York Times*. "Universities Under the Gun," blared a *Newsweek* cover that featured the now-famous photo.

Meanwhile, the faculty fiercely debated whether to approve the administration's deal to give the Afro-American Society members amnesty. Rumors flew of other possible occupations, and the campus chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, which had supported the occupation of the Straight, organized a meeting of thousands of students in Cornell's Barton Hall to hear speeches about racism and what action to take if professors abandoned the deal.

With his radio address, Mr. Jones had tossed a rhetorical firebomb into the turmoil. In 2009 he told the *Cornell Alumni Magazine* his assertion that Cornell "has three hours to live" was a "metaphorical statement." In an interview with *The Chronicle*, he declined to discuss the details of what happened in 1969, saying that he is writing his autobiography and will share them there.

Members of the Afro-American Society did not support his comments at the time. Mr. Whitfield says Mr. Jones's radio speech and another equally militant one to the people in Barton Hall were "incredibly dangerous."

Whatever the intent, some professors took the threats seriously and left their homes, taking their families to hotels for safety.

After Mr. Jones's speeches and under a threat of retaliation, the faculty reversed itself and voted overwhelmingly on April 23 to support amnesty for the students and to give students more voice in university governance. Some professors told Mr. Downs they had acted out of fear, in hopes of restoring order.

But a small group of professors had had enough. To them, the administration had allowed students to intimidate faculty decision-making and hamper professors' ability to freely express opinions, eroding the university's core values: academic freedom, open inquiry, and the intellectual pursuit of truth.

Some would eventually leave Cornell for these reasons. Among them was Martin E.P. Seligman, an assistant professor of psychology who would become regarded as the "father" of positive psychology. He declined an interview with *The Chronicle* but shared a chapter of his planned autobiography.

He maintains that the majority of faculty mem-

bers abandoned their principles by surrendering to the students' demands. "Giving up the freedom to teach what one believes, giving in to violence," he says, "this is not what a university is about."

Mr. Seligman writes that he eventually left Cornell after he found himself self-censoring in a lecture that dealt with a controversial theory by Arthur R. Jensen, a Berkeley scholar, on race and intelligence. After that moment, he writes, "I know that the time for me to leave Cornell had come."

As a result of the contentious debate among Cornell's faculty members, long-held friendships were ruptured, some permanently.

"Those times brought out the worst in all of us," says the political scientist Andrew Hacker, who was a professor in the government department, which fractured as a result of the campus debate. "It was posturing, on the left and on the right. You're with our black brothers; you're in favor of academic freedom; it's the decline of Western civilization. We were all posturing."

Two years after the crisis, Mr. Hacker left for Queens College of the City University of New York, where today he is an emeritus professor. His departure wasn't related to the events of April 1969, but he says they helped shape his thoughts on race relations. He would later explore those ideas in his critically acclaimed 1992 book, *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*.

The crucible of Cornell in 1969 helped forge the career paths of other noted scholars. Among those who resigned in protest over how the administration handled the crisis were Allan Sandler, a chairman of the government department who would later lead the public-policy school at Berkeley; Donald Kagan, a historian who left for Yale and in the 1990s became a controversial figure in a public battle over the teaching of Western-civilization courses there; and Allan Bloom, the philosopher and social theorist.

Of them all, Bloom, who died in 1992, most shaped discussions about colleges today. In his controversial 1987 book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, he offers the Cornell crisis as the prime example of how the liberal arts have been perverted. Universities like Cornell, he wrote, gave in to an ideology of multicultural relativism, no longer valuing the exploration of the more universal truths exemplified by Plato and Socrates.

Almost 20 years after the book's publication, Bloom's ideas — and his experience at Cornell — continue to shape the thinking of some of higher education's most prominent scholars.

"Even though I didn't live through the crisis itself, it did affect me," says Francis Fukuyama, the political scientist and author of *The End of History and the Last Man*.

Mr. Fukuyama, a Cornell graduate and Stanford University professor, says Bloom was an early mentor whose emphasis on deeper truths still rings true.

"Higher education has been affected for some time

by political correctness," he says. "You have these social issues like race, gender, ethnicity, and identity politics, and now it's gay marriage and a lot of other things, which are all important social issues. They are questions of great meaning to various groups in the society, but the importance of them tends to get magnified in the fishbowl of a university setting. It displaces interest in the more enduring questions."

Another onetime student of Bloom's has a different take on the lasting impact of the professor's ideas.

Mr. Whitfield, the former Afro-American Society president, describes dinners with Bloom during which the professor tried to persuade him to be a philosopher and not an activist, a choice the former student radical says didn't have to be an either/or.

"Allan Bloom said we destroyed the university, we destroyed academic freedom, and I'm going, The university looks like it's pretty healthy still," says Mr. Whitfield. "The academy is still intact despite what we said."

"It's particularly painful to see, despite the sacrifices that were made during that time, similar things could still be happening" today.

AT CORNELL today, the legacy of the Straight crisis still holds sway. In 2009 at the 40th anniversary of the protest, then-President David Skorton said the incident had "changed Cornell, and to some extent American higher education." He gave the speech at the college's Africana Studies and Research Center, the descendant of the much-debated black-studies program that started in 1969, the same year as the Straight occupation.

For black student activists at Cornell, the story of the Straight takeover is empowering, says Amber Aspinall, the political-action chair of Black Students United, a Cornell student group. In November, the group issued seven pages of demands to the administration on how to improve the racial climate at Cornell. Some of them could have been copied almost verbatim from the Afro-American Society of 1969. Ms. Aspinall, a junior, says the administration has so far been responsive to the students.

Kent L. Hubbell, Cornell's dean of students, says the administration tries to be proactive in creating a constructive dialogue with student activists, a lesson gleaned in part from the Straight takeover. Mr. Hubbell, who was a senior at Cornell in the spring

of 1969, says the crisis is never far from his mind. His office sits above the doors where the members of the Afro-American Society made their historic exit. “I’m reminded every day of what happened at the Straight.”

He says one of the key lessons of that event was President Perkins’s “forbearance” toward the black protesters inside the Straight, which included not calling in the police.

Not everyone agrees on that lesson.

Perkins resigned two months after the crisis in the face of a rising backlash from Cornell’s faculty and Board of Trustees.

One former trustee, John M. Olin, a Cornell alumnus and industrialist, saw the administration’s decisions about student conduct and other issues as indicative of a much wider problem within academe.

“Even though I didn’t live through the crisis itself, it did affect me.”

The Straight crisis was “one of the spurs,” though not the principal one, that caused him to dedicate his foundation to supporting the study and teaching of free enterprise at American colleges, says James Piereson, who served as executive director of the John M. Olin Foundation from 1985 to 2005. The foundation, which awarded some \$370 million before shutting down 11 years ago, established a host of conservative think tanks and law programs.

But a conservative backlash isn’t the only repercussion from the takeover.

In his book, Mr. Downs, who was also a Cornell undergraduate at the time of the Straight crisis, is sympathetic to Perkins and the administration for trying to help right, in a small but significant way, centuries of racial oppression and inequity.

Yet Mr. Downs, a scholar who has written extensively on the First Amendment, ultimately sides with those like Bloom who left Cornell. He says that in 1968 and early 1969, the president and others had given the black activists deferential treatment in the name of fighting racism, forgoing campus rules and failing to support professors who disagreed with the Afro-American Society. As he puts it, the “social-justice mission” of the university trumped the “intellectual mission.”

It’s a problem that has metastasized today, he says, pointing to students’ disinviting controversial speakers, seeking “safe spaces” to avoid sensitive topics, and complaining about microaggressions by instructors.

Cornell in 1969 “lay the foundation, the basis, for these kinds of disputes,” he says. “Cornell was about the conflict between pursuing truth with academic freedom and the pursuit of social justice on campus.”

It’s “the idea that certain ideas were detrimental to a particular notion of social justice and therefore should not be tolerated.”

FOR THE members of the Afro-American Society, the Straight takeover helped establish career paths and a lifelong dedication to social causes. They praise the Cornell administration for not resolving the occupation with force, which almost certainly would have led to bloodshed.

“We did not become Kent State before Kent State,” says Mr. Carter, the student activist who had expected a peaceful occupation. Today he is New York City’s chief legal officer, overseeing its law department.

Mr. Jones, the man who once publicly threatened administrators and faculty members over the radio, shed his radicalism long ago — and Cornell has embraced him. He is now a private-equity investment manager, philanthropist, and a trustee emeritus of the university. When he was appointed to Cornell’s board in 1993, several professors who were there in 1969 objected; Mr. Seligman, the psychologist, told *The Philadelphia Inquirer* that the move was “obscene.”

Yet Mr. Jones has tried to make amends. Among other gifts to Cornell, he established the James A. Perkins Prize for Interracial and Intercultural Peace and Harmony. This year, the prize, worth \$5,000, was awarded to Mixed at Cornell, a multiracial and multiethnic student group.

Mr. Jones continues to support diversity efforts but says he wants broader coalitions of students on the campus. “All that we can do today is come together as a people of shared values and unite as a broader community that encompasses all of our universities.”

While demands by black students on campuses today may resemble what the Afro-American Society pressed for, Mr. Jones sees only “shallow similarities because America is a dramatically different country now. We’re really not talking about basic human rights and Constitutional protections, because the laws have been changed.” America is different in “ways that we could only dream of back in the 1960s.”

He continues: “I’m sympathetic to students on campus, but to me the level of gravity of their complaints doesn’t compare to what we were fighting for in the ’60s.”

Mr. Dawson, another former Afro-American Society member who occupied the Straight, sees it differently. An associate dean at Santa Monica College and a television producer, he has made a documentary with a fellow Cornell graduate that draws a line from the Straight takeover and the student strike at San Francisco State University in 1968 to campus activism today.

The pair is screening the film, *Agents of Change*, at colleges and hosting discussions about it. Mr. Dawson says the goal is to educate students about

what happened in the late 1960s and, he hopes, build lasting efforts to fight racism on campus.

“It’s particularly painful to see, despite the sacrifices that were made during that time, similar things could still be happening” today, he says.

MR. WHITFIELD, who is featured in that famous photo, never graduated from Cornell.

He worked for a while at the now-defunct Malcolm X Liberation University, and today is co-founder of the Fund for Democratic Communities, a nonprofit in Greensboro, N.C., that focuses on community organizing.

Higher education hasn’t improved since 1969, says Mr. Whitfield, and his criticism echoes his concern about Cornell’s nascent black-studies program. “The academy should be grounded in reality and facilitate the efforts of those who want to make the world better,” he says. “That would mean sharing all of the tools of power in the world, as well as sharing the values necessary to properly employ those tools.”

He’s reluctant to give advice to administrators,

perhaps remaining somewhat distrustful of them, but he does offer this: “Pay a lot of attention and be really, really real and genuine when listening. That’s the only way we’ll ever learn from each other.”

Easier said than done, as the events of April 1969 at Cornell show. But while times have changed — black student activists today seem to have shed some of the more radical tactics of the ’60s, and administrators may be less likely to engage in the appeasement that Perkins was criticized for — it’s a lesson that’s perhaps more relevant today.

As one historian, Mr. Kendi of the University of Florida, noted, Cornell in 1969 was in some ways a “climax” to an era of unprecedented student protest and activism. In 2015, the University of Missouri, where students forced out a president and grabbed headlines, inspired campus demonstrations all across the nation. Mizzou, he says, was a “trigger” to a social movement.

It’s a movement that history will ultimately judge, answering the question: Did today’s students and university leaders learn any lessons from the past?

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

DOES your institution have a plan to deal with the aftermath of a high-profile racist incident?

HOW candid are you with trustees, faculty, staff, and students about the racial climate on campus?

HOW are you measuring diversity efforts? How have you defined the goals?

DOES the college leadership consistently speak to the public and state legislators about the importance of college access for minority populations?

ARE there important historical moments — or infamous ones — related to racial inclusion on the campus? Can they be used as opportunities to start discussions?

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