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# The Relationship of Black Racial Identity and Aggressive Humor

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## Abstract

*Humor is a form of intra-personal and inter-personal communication. Previous scholarship identified the expression of affiliative and self-enhancing humor as beneficial for one's mental health, whereas aggressive and self-defeating humor can have harmful effects. However, in the African American community, culture specific humor, which often includes aggressive elements, has historically aided in coping with racism, oppression, and social inequality. Similarly, strong racial identification can mediate the detrimental outcomes of negative social experiences. This study evaluates the relationship between black racial identity and the aforementioned humor styles, with a focus on aggressive humor. For this correlational study, 63 African American participants from Brooklyn were recruited and classified into two racial identity groups (Pre-Encounter and Advanced Stage), using the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS). Their general humor expression were measured with the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), as well as their enjoyment and perception of African American comedy video clips. MANOVA analysis revealed that Pre-Encounter individuals use all four humor domains significantly less than Advanced Stage persons, with the strongest discrepancy for aggressive humor. In addition, Pre-Encounter individuals also enjoy aggressive comedy video clips significantly less than the Advanced Stage group, and rate this comedy as less affiliative and self-enhancing, but more aggressive and self-defeating. These findings suggest that racial identity characteristics are reflected in one's humor expression and that aggressive humor can have more beneficial psychological outcomes for blacks than generally assumed.*

## Introduction

Previous research has identified detrimental effects of racism on the mental health of African Americans, including anxiety, low life satisfaction, and depression. However, racial identity – one's level of social identification with his/her racial group – can have a mediating effect on such outcomes (Cokley, Hall-Clark, & Hicks, 2011; Cokley, 2002; Cokley & Helm, 2007; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). According to Cross (1971; 1991; 1995), African Americans develop from an internalization of Eurocentric values, which includes the denial of racism, towards a healthy identity, that incorporates Afrocentric or multicultural values. The different stages of Cross' revised Nigrescence model are summarized in Table 1. An advanced racial identity increases one's awareness of racism, helps to anticipate such events, and to mentally prepare for them. Moreover, these individuals also recognize constraints in the system, and do not solely blame themselves for failures, which maintains their self-esteem. Furthermore, African Americans develop a

healthy solidarity with other blacks, and build a social identity that includes their racial group membership, which is linked to the feeling of being wanted, connected, and accepted. An advanced racial identity stage is characterized by good mental health, especially a high level of resilience (Cokley et al., 2011; Cokley, 2002; Cokley & Helm, 2007; Cross, 1995; 2001; Sellers & Shelton, 2003).

Similar beneficial psychological effects on one's mental health are ascribed to the use of humor, which has been identified as one of the character traits that foster emotional wellbeing, particularly resilience (Kuiper, 2012; Edwards & Martin, 2014). Humor can help an individual to confront challenges, deal with stress, and remain a positive outlook on life during difficult life situations (Bailey, 2012, Edwards & Martin, 2014; Leak, 1974; Stephenson, 1951). It furthermore can enhance communication, ease conflicts, and convey solidarity in interpersonal encounters (Edwards & Martin, 2014; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1996). However, humor can also be used in harmful

ways, such as reinforcing and socializing superiority, as well as reducing one's self-esteem through ridicule and self-deprecation (Billig, 2001; Edwards & Martin 2014; Gillota, 2013; Hodson, MacInnis, & Rush, 2010). Consequently, Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Weir (2003) classified self-enhancing and affiliative humor as domains that foster personal well-being and interpersonal relationships, while aggressive and self-defeating humor have inverse effects (Edward & Martin, 2014). However, humor domains often overlap and cannot be neatly separated; for instance, mildly aggressive elements can often be found in affiliative and self-enhancing humor. Table 2 displays the correlations of the four humor styles (Martin et al., 2003).

Furthermore, ethnic humor reflects the social experiences of minority groups in the US, and usually includes stereotypical portrayals, self-deprecation, and criticism of social dynamics. These elements are often used to cope with oppression, encourage group solidarity, cultural pride, and resilience (Gillota, 2013; Gonzalez & Wisemann, 2005; Thorson, Powell, & Samuel, 2001). Especially in the African American community humor has historically played a crucial role, since slaves developed unique forms of comedy, which also included West-African elements, to cope with their hopeless situation. This form of humor evolved further in the following centuries, and usually included stereotyping, trickster tales, aggressive elements, self-deprecation, and ridicule of oppressors, elements that can still be found today in African American comedy (Banjo, 2011; Gordon, 1998; Cooper, 2007; Watkins, 1999). However, humor has also been used to reinforce and socialize the inferiority of a racial group, most notably through the use of minstrelsy (Gillota, 2013; Watkins, 1999).

As a result, people differ significantly in their perception of humor. Generally, people seem to enjoy humor about their own ethnic group, but consider it simultaneously offensive (Gonzalez

& Wiseman, 2005; Thorson et al., 2001). Moreover, the presence of co-viewers of another race has shown to be influential for one's enjoyment of, sensitivity towards, and concern for racial humor (Akiba & Miller, 2004; Banjo, 2013). Additionally, research identified that black and white Americans' enjoyment of humor was also related to their racial identity (Banjo, 2011; Middleton, 1959). While most blacks enjoyed stereotypical ethnic humor, prejudiced whites were generally uncomfortable with this humor style. In contrast, tolerant white Americans displayed a similar positive enjoyment as blacks (Banjo, 2011; Banjo, 2013). However, in the 1950s, when discrimination against blacks was socially accepted, whites' enjoyment pattern was reversed (Middleton, 1959).

Previous scholarship has provided an eclectic analysis of the positive and negative functions of humor. Especially, the different humor styles, which are beneficial or harmful for mental health outcomes, have recently enjoyed much attention (Edwards & Martin, 2014; Martin et al., 2003). However, research about cultural differences in the use, enjoyment, and perception of humor is scarce. The few studies that analyzed such differences usually compared entire ethnic groups with one another, but neglected the construct of racial identity (Banjo, 2013, Gonzalez & Wiseman, 2005; Thorson et al., 2001). The ones that included racial identity stages focused on the enjoyment and understanding of humorous stereotypes (Banjo, 2011; Middleton, 1959). To my knowledge, no study has connected racial identity to humor styles, and ethnic humor has not been evaluated in light of these constructs. It can be assumed that the use of aggressive humor in African American comedy, which includes elements to cope with oppression, might have more beneficial mental health effects than currently identified by scholars.

The purpose of the current study was to analyze aggressive humor in a cultural context,

and to connect it to the construct of racial identity. African Americans, who appreciate Afrocentric values and highly identify with their culture, have developed resilience towards discrimination and prejudice (Cokley et al., 2011; Cokley & Helm, 2007; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). African American comedy, which often includes highly aggressive elements, has been found to support blacks' cultural identification (Gillota, 2013; Gonzalez & Wisemann, 2005; Thorson et al., 2001, Watkins, 1999). Thus, it is expected that advanced racial identity stages, which are linked to better mental health, appreciate aggressive humor more than those who have a low identification with their culture. Moreover, since humor styles can often overlap and are not mutually exclusive (Martin et al., 2003), I analyzed how people of different racial identifications enjoyed and perceived black stand-up comedy in light of the different humor styles. Multivariate Analysis was applied to evaluate these dynamics.

I predicted that racial identification influenced one's preference for humor styles, as well as one's enjoyment and perception of them. Particularly, I hypothesized that:

1. Participants in the Pre-Encounter stages of the CRIS (Cross & Vandiver, 2001) score lower on the aggression scale of the HSQ (Martin et al., 2003) than the Advanced Stages.
- 2a. Pre-encounter individuals display less enjoyment of aggressive African American stand-up comedy clips than Advanced Stages.
- 2b. All racial identity groups will rate these clips as aggressive, but the Pre-Encounter group will rate them lower in the positive dimensions (Affiliative and Self-Enhancing) than the Advanced Stage group.

## Method

### Research Design

This study employed a correlational between-subjects design, for which 63 black persons were recruited. The participants completed an online survey, which consisted of the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), a video stimulus of aggressive black stand-up comedy, a corresponding enjoyment and rating questionnaire, and the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS). Multivariate statistical analysis (MANOVA) was conducted to test the aforementioned hypotheses. Prior to conducting this study, St. Joseph's College Institutional Review Board approved the research design.

### Participants

For this study I recruited a convenient sample of 63 black participants, who were operationalized as individuals who display the physical characteristics of blackness, which includes persons of mixed race. To be eligible for this study, participants had to fulfill the following criteria: a) at least 18 years of age, b) self-identification as black (at least in parts). The demographics of the sample are presented in Table 3.

The participants were recruited from the SJC population, including adult students, and from the communities Fort Greene, Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Flatbush, which have large black populations. However, participation was not dependent upon residency in these neighborhoods. I approached the participants personally on campus, in stores, bars, and fitness clubs, or I sent them an email request. All participants were volunteers and not compensated. The study did not require a pre-screening procedure, and participants agreed to the study conditions through an online consent form.

### Instruments

#### Cross Racial Identity Scale

The predictor variable racial identity was measured by a shortened version of the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; Cross & Vandiver,

2001), which consists of 22 items, measuring 6 of the subscales of the revised Nigrescence Model: Pre-Encounter Assimilation (PA), Pre-Encounter Miseducation (PM), Pre-Encounter Self-hatred (PSH), Immersion-Emersion Anti-White (IEAW), Internalization Afrocentricity (IA), and Internalization Multiculturalist (IM). For each stage 3 items are evaluated with a 7-point Likert-Scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The remaining 4 items are fillers to control for response bias. Sample items of the CRIS are listed in Table 4. Mean scores are calculated for each subscale, and compared (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Cokley, 2002; Cokley & Helm, 2007). This instrument was found to be adequately valid and reliable (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002).

#### **Humor Styles Questionnaire**

The outcome variable in Hypothesis 1 was measured with a shortened version of the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ; Martin et al., 2003), which is a 20 item Likert-Type scale that measures four dimensions of individual experiences and expression of humor (Affiliative humor, Self-Enhancing humor, Aggressive humor, and Self-Defeating humor). Each subscale consists of 5 items, rated on a Likert-Type scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree). Sample items of HSQ are listed in Table 5. For each subscale a mean score is calculated. As point of reference, the mean scores of the 1195 participants who were involved in testing the HSQ are presented in Table 6. The HSQ was found to be adequately valid and reliable (Martin et al., 2003).

#### **Video Stimuli**

For Hypothesis 2, I used video stimuli, consisting of 6 short stand-up comedy clips of Paul Mooney, who is famous for the use of aggression in his humor. The clips were selected from his performances “It’s the end of the world” (Mikelarry2010, 2013) and “Paul Mooney:

Piece of My Mind” (Brewster, 2014). The overall length of the video stream is approximately 5 minutes. The comedy clips were selected based on several criteria: a) displaying aggressive humor to different extents, and b) potential to be simultaneously rated as either self-enhancing, affiliative, or self-defeating. A description of these video clips is presented in Appendix A.

#### **Enjoyment and Rating Response**

To measure the outcome variables of Hypothesis 2, a questionnaire corresponding to the video stimuli was used. The questionnaire contained 5 descriptive statements; one for the enjoyment of the clips, and one for each humor dimension (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, self-defeating). For each comedy clip, the participants rated the aforementioned statements on a Likert-Type scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree).

#### **Procedure**

The research project was administered using the online survey tool “surveygizmo.” The participants were provided with the online link to this survey. The first screen displayed the online consent, which contained three checkboxes, where the participants confirmed that they were at least 18 years of age, identified at least partially as black, and that they agreed to the conditions of this study. The second screen asked for demographic information, including age, gender, and race. Afterwards, the participants completed the shortened HSQ, watched the video stimuli, answered the Enjoyment and Rating Questionnaire, and responded to the CRIS items. Upon completion, SJC students had the opportunity to generate an ID for extra credit purposes, but none of the participants used this option.

Prior to launching the survey, I coded each response according to the scoring instructions. The project was online from 03/03/2016 to 04/10/2016. After this deadline, I downloaded an excel sheet that contained the participants scored responses. Next, I calculated the mean

scores for the CRIS subcategories and I assigned the participants to the appropriate level of the predictor variable. The data was then imported into IBM SPSS for statistical analysis.

## Results

The predictor variable (PV) Black Racial Identity consisted of two levels: Pre-Encounter and Advanced Stage. The characteristics of the PV are portrayed in Table 7. The means and standard deviations for all outcome measures used in this study are displayed in Table 8. For all presented analyses, the significance level (alpha) was set at .05. A one-way between-subjects MANOVA was conducted to analyze the groups' mean differences on nine outcome variables (OV): 1. HSQ Affiliative, 2. HSQ Self-Enhancing, 3. HSQ Aggressive, 4. HSQ Self-Defeating, 5. Video Enjoyment, 6. Video Affiliative, 7. Video Self-Enhancing, 8. Video Aggressive, and 9. Video Self-Defeating scores. Tests of Equality and Covariance revealed a bias. With the use of Wilk's Criterion, a significant difference between the Pre-Encounter and the Advanced Stage groups was measured,  $F(9, 53) = 10.16, p < .001$ . The impact on the individual outcome measures were tested in follow-up univariate ANOVAs. Tests of homogeneity of variance and normality were satisfactory for all measures in this analysis.

### Humor Styles

The first part of this study was concerned with group differences in the expression on four humor styles. As presented in Table 8, both groups preferred positive humor domains (affiliative and self-enhancing) over negative ones (aggressive and self-defeating). However, the Advanced Stage group scored higher on all four measures. Univariate ANOVAs revealed significant differences on the affiliative, self-enhancing, and aggressive domain, with  $F(1, 61) = 11.36, p < .001$ ,  $F(1, 61) = 4.67, p = .04$ , and  $F(1, 61) = 18.75, p < .001$ , respectively, but not on the self-defeating measure,  $F(1, 61) = 1.43, p = .24$ . The Pre-Encounter group did not

only score significantly lower on the aggressive scale, as predicted in Hypothesis 1, but they also had lower results on the affiliative and self-enhancing domain. Furthermore, as displayed in Table 9, all four humor measures (HSQ Affiliative, HSQ Self-Enhancing, HSQ Aggressive, HSQ Self-Defeating) were significantly correlated with the other three domains.

### Comedy Perception

The second part of this study was concerned with group differences in the enjoyment and perception of comedy clips on the four humor domains. ANOVA analysis demonstrated a significant difference in enjoyment,  $F(1, 61) = 51.56, p < .001$ . As predicted in Hypothesis II a, Pre-Encounter individuals ( $M = 5.13, SD = .73$ ) enjoyed these aggressive comedy clips significantly less than persons in the Advanced Stages ( $M = 6.33, SD = .59$ ).

In addition, the groups differed significantly in their perception of the video clips on the affiliative, self-enhancing, and self-defeating outcome measure, with  $F(1, 61) = 43.94, p < .001$ ,  $F(1, 61) = 54.23, p < .001$ , and  $F(1, 61) = 24.86, p < .001$ , respectively, but not on the aggressive style,  $F(1, 61) = 3.78, p = .56$ . I predicted in Hypothesis II b that the Pre-Encounter group scored lower on the affiliative and self-enhancing video perception, which was confirmed by these findings. Moreover, I hypothesized that the groups would not differ on the aggressive video outcome measure; the groups differed in their aggressiveness perception, but it was not statistically significant, with  $F(1, 61) = 3.78, p = .06$ . Furthermore, the Pre-Encounter group scored significantly higher on the self-defeating perception than the Advanced Stage,  $F(1, 61) = 24.86, p < .001$ , for which I had made no prediction.

Moreover, Pearson correlation coefficients, which are displayed in Table 9, show that participants' HSQ Aggressive scores correlated significantly with the comedy enjoyment and

affiliative and self-enhancing perception OVs (Video Enjoyment, Video Affiliative, Video Self-Enhancing). Furthermore, enjoyment of comedy most positively correlated with participants' perceptions of the video as affiliative and self-enhancing, and correlated negatively with their perception as self-defeating (Video Self-Defeating).

### Discussion

The major finding of this study is the predictive power of black racial identity stages on the expression and perception of humor. In Hypothesis I, it was predicted that Pre-Encounter stages would score lower on the aggressive domain of the HSQ than advanced racial identity stages. Pre-Encounter participants demonstrated indeed significantly lower uses of the aggressive style, but also of affiliative and self-enhancing humor. However, the discrepancy was strongest for the aggressive humor domain. Moreover, for both groups strong positive correlations were found within the two positive (affiliative and self-enhancing) humor domains and within the two negative ones (aggressive and self-defeating). Similar trends were observed for the enjoyment and perception of aggressive African American comedy. It was predicted that Pre-Encounter participants enjoyed these video clips less than persons in advanced racial identity stages, while also perceiving them as less affiliative and self-enhancing. These assumptions were confirmed, as well as the prediction that the groups would not significantly differ in their aggressive video perception. However, despite the lack of significance, the Pre-Encounter group perceived this comedy as slightly more aggressive. On the other hand, participants in both groups enjoyed the video clips more when they had a general preference for aggressive humor, and consequently rated the comedy as more affiliative and self-enhancing.

Both groups displayed stronger affiliative and self-enhancing humor expression than

aggressive and self-defeating ones, which is in line with previous findings (Martin et al., 2003). Similar to the general population, as seen in Table 2, Pre-Encounter individuals appreciate affiliative humor the most, while also displaying a preference for self-enhancing humor; aggressive and self-defeating humor, however, are barely appreciated. Despite this group's similarity to the general population in their expression of humor, they differ significantly from other black individuals. The African American sample of the present study displayed stronger expressions of affiliative and self-enhancing humor than the general population, which is not surprising considering the crucial role humor has historically played in the African American community (Watkins, 1999). However, the Pre-Encounter group did not display this culture specific pattern.

In light of racial identity, it is not surprising that Pre-Encounter participants have lower preferences for affiliative, self-enhancing, and aggressive humor than the Advanced Stage group. Persons in the Pre-Encounter stage adhere to social norms of the dominant white culture, where the importance of individual responsibility exceeds group connectedness and solidarity. Moreover, this group has internalized negative stereotypes, from which they aim to distance themselves. In contrast, persons in the advanced racial identity stages display a strong connection to and identification with their racial group (Cross, 1991; Cross, 1995), since group solidarity has historically been essential for African Americans' survival (Watkins, 1999). As a result, their stronger focus on a group identity encourages increased use of affiliative humor in comparison to Pre-Encounter individuals. Similarly, advanced stages are characterized by stronger mental resilience because they have developed successful strategies to deal with the adverse effects of racism (Cokley et al., 2011; Cokley & Helm, 2007, Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Self-enhancing humor, which aids in developing resilience (Edwards &

Martin, 2014), might be one such strategy to mediate the psychologically harmful effects of discrimination, a method which is not very prevalent among Pre-Encounter individuals (Cokley et al., 2011; Cokley & Helm, 2007).

The role of aggressive humor, where the two groups differed the strongest, was of particular interest in this study. Historically, through aggressive ridicule of their oppressors, the African American community used this form of humor to protest social oppression, to encourage group solidarity, and increase resilience (Watkins, 1999), characteristics that also describe affiliative and self-enhancing humor (Martin et al., 2003). The strong correlations between the positive humor domains and aggressive humor in this study, as seen in Table 8, suggest that advanced stages' use of aggressive humor also serves affiliative and self-enhancing functions. On the other hand, Pre-Encounter individuals do not recognize this beneficial potential of aggressive humor, but perceive it as harmful for race relations. Since they deny systematic racism, they might blame such culture-specific aggression for their socially disadvantaged status (Cross, 1995).

In the second part of the study, participants were exposed to video clips of aggressive African American stand-up comedy. Even though both groups enjoyed this comedy, the Pre-Encounter stage rated it as significantly less enjoyable than the advanced stages. Enjoyment ratings strongly correlated with participants' perceptions of these clips on the four humor domains, where the Pre-Encounter group scored significantly lower on the affiliative and self-enhancing style. Due to their perceived connectedness with white society, this group might have felt personally offended by the aggressive content, which elicited negative emotions (Cross, 1995; Cross, 2001). Advanced stages on the other hand, experienced positive feelings since this humor conveyed group solidarity to other blacks and fostered their self-esteem (Gillota, 2013; Gonzalez & Wiseman, 2005; Thorson et al.,

2001; Watkins, 1999). Even though aggressive humor triggered negative emotions for Pre-Encounter individuals, such feelings are also part of cognitive dissonance that might encourage the creation of more realistic cognitions, which is an important process of racial identity development (Cross, 1995; Cross, 2001). Consequently, such individuals might develop a healthier racial identity that protects them from the adverse effects of racism (Cokley et al., 2011; Cokley & Helm, 2007). It is unlikely that humor alone initiates such a development, but in combination with other social experiences it can assist in the process (Cross, 1995), and introduces a possible coping strategy: humor! In the cultural context of the present study, aggressive humor seems to have more beneficial health outcomes than generally assumed.

The present study confirmed previous findings about the beneficial effects of affiliative and self-enhancing humor, but challenges the solely negative role of aggressive humor (Edwards & Martin, 2014; Martin et al., 2003), which seems to have some beneficial potential for African Americans. Furthermore, this study suggests a strong correlation between black racial identity and humor expression, enjoyment, and perception. While one's racial identity characteristics affect the appreciation of humor, exposure to culture specific humor might also aid in racial identity development. Future studies should explore this potential through experimental designs by comparing exposure to aggressive humor versus non-aggressive comedy and measuring the effects on racial cognitions and self-concepts. Furthermore, since racial identity involves unconscious schemas, future designs should also include an implicit attitude measure.

The present study has some limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, and tests of homogeneity indicated a sample bias. The participants were not randomly selected, and since the volunteers were mainly recruited



from my personal environment, they might be more similar in their humor perception, as would be assumed in the general population. Moreover, I measured the perception of video clips with a self-created measure that was not subject to previous reliability and validity tests. Third, the racial identity stages are more complex than operationalized in this project. I compared two groups, but the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) identifies six different stages. Especially the Internalization stages are very diverse, and it is possible that my clusters missed important connections.

Despite the limitations, this study adds to the existing knowledge of racial identity development. These findings have shown that specific characteristics of racial identity stages are reflected in person's expression and perception of humor, which further supports the validity of the model. Moreover, this study supports the use of humor in positive psychology. It added a cultural component to the expression and perception of positive and negative humor styles, which implies that aggressive humor can strengthen racial identity. These findings are of particular interest for multi-cultural counseling, which is often based on racial identity development and includes culture specific components, such as the use of humor (Bailey, 2012; Cross, 2001).

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## Appendix

Table 1  
*Revised Nigrescence model*

Stage	Main Characteristics
1a. Pre-Encounter Assimilation	American and/or individual identity Little significance to racial group identity No engagement in Blackness/ black culture
1b. Pre-Encounter Miseducation	Accepts black stereotypes and historical misinformation about blacks Differentiates from stereotypical blacks No trust in black community Hesitation to engage in black culture/ black problem solving
1c. Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	Negative feelings towards blacks in general negative self-image no engagement in black culture and problem solving
2. Encounter	“awakening”; recognition of racial dynamics Starting curiosity about blackness Negative emotions (anxiety, depression, guilt, anger)
3a. Immersion Anti-White/ Intense Black Involvement	Hate of white people and white society Display anger and frustration Engage in black culture and problem solving Obsessively dedicated to everything black Romanticizes and simplifies blackness Either/or thinking about complex issues; black = good; white = bad
3b. Emersion	More realistic/complex view of blackness develops Extreme feelings level off
4a. Internalization Nationalist	Afrocentric self-perception and solidarity to other blacks Engages in black culture and problem solving
4b. Internalization Biculturalist	Double identity: American and Black Engages in black culture and mainstream society
4c. Internalization Multiculturalist	3 or more social identities (e.g. American, Black, Feminist) Equal weight to different identities Engages in black culture and struggle Seeks solutions addressing interests of several groups

Note. Adapted from “The psychology of Nigrescence: Revising the Cross model.” by W.E. Cross, Jr., 1995. In “*Handbook of multicultural counseling*,” pp. 93-122, by J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander, 1995, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Table 2

*HSQ Correlations for males and females*

	Affiliative	Self-Enhancing	Aggressive	Self-Defeating
Affiliative	<b>.80</b>	.33**	.28**	.04
Self-Enhancing	.36**	<b>.81</b>	.11*	.12**
Aggressive	.22**	-.01	<b>.77</b>	.22**
Self-Defeating	.06	.04	.23**	<b>.80</b>

Note. Adapted from “Individual Differences in Uses of Humor and Their Relation to Psychological Well-Being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire,” by R.A. Martin, P. Puhlik-Doris, G. Larsen, J. Gray, and K. Weir, 2003, *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37, pp. 48-75.

Cronbach  $\alpha$ -coefficients for males are above the diagonal, for females below the diagonal.

\* p < .05.

\*\* p < .01.

Table 3

*Participant Demographics*

Demographics	N
<b>Race</b>	
African American/ Black	61
Mixed Race: Black / White	2
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	34
Female	29
SJC Students	14
Non-SJC Students	48
<b>Age</b>	
Range	18 – 60
Mean	32.87

Table 4

*Sample Items CRIS by Subscale*

1. Pre-Encounter Assimilation  
I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
2. Pre-Encounter Miseducation  
Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.
3. Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred  
I sometimes have negative feelings about being black.
4. Immersion-Emersion Anti-White  
My negative feelings toward white people are very intense.
5. Internalization Afrocentricity  
I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.
6. Internalization Multiculturalist  
As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Whites, gays & lesbians, etc.)

Note. Adapted from “Nigrescence theory and measurement: Introducing the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS).” by W.E. Cross, Jr. & B.J. Vanidver, 2001. In *Handbook of multicultural counseling (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. ,* pp. 371-393, by J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander, 2001, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Table 5  
*Sample Items HSQ by Subscale*

Subscale	Example
Affiliative Humor	I laugh and joke a lot with my friends
Self-Enhancing Humor	If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor
Aggressive Humor	If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it.
Self-Defeating Humor	Letting others laugh at me is my way of keeping my friends and family in good spirits.

*Note.* Adapted from “Individual differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire.” by R.A. Martin, P. Puhlik-Doris, G. Larsen, J. Gray, & K Weir, 2003. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37, pp. 48-75.

Table 6  
*HSQ Mean scores*

Humor Style	Total	Males	Females
Affiliative	5.80	5.91	5.75
Self-Enhancing	4.74	4.74	4.60
Aggressive	3.56	4.04	3.29
Self-Defeating	3.24	3.48	3.06

*Note.* Adapted from “Individual Differences in Uses of Humor and Their Relation to Psychological Well-Being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire,” by R.A. Martin, P. Puhlik-Doris, G. Larsen, J. Gray, and K. Weir, 2003, *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37, pp. 48-75.

Table 7.  
*Characteristics of independent variable*

Racial Identity Stage	N
Pre-Encounter	24
Assimilation	8
Miseducation	14
Self-hate	2
Advanced Stage	39
IEAW	8
Internalization Afrocentric	15
Internalization Multiculturalist	16

Table 8.

*Descriptive data for independent and dependent variables*

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable					
	Total Sample		Pre-Encounter		Advanced Stages	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
HSQ Affiliative	5.90	.97	5.42	1.03	6.20	.80
HSQ Self-Enhancing	4.97	1.03	4.63	1.02	5.18	.99
HSQ Aggressive	4.25	1.78	3.16	1.41	4.92	1.65
HSQ Self-Defeating	3.40	1.28	3.16	1.13	3.55	1.36
Video Enjoyment	5.87	.87	5.13	.73	6.33	.59
Video Affiliative	5.39	1.24	4.37	.79	6.01	1.04
Video Self-Enhancing	4.55	1.45	3.29	.88	5.33	1.17
Video Aggressive	4.64	1.02	4.95	.91	4.45	1.05
Video Self-Defeating	3.08	1.13	3.85	1.09	2.61	.88

Table 9

*Pearson Correlations for HSQ and Perception*

	Correlation coefficients							
	HSQ Self-Enhancing	HSQ Aggressive	HSQ Self-Defeating	Video Enjoyment	Video Affiliative	Video Self-Enhancing	Video Aggressive	Video Self-Defeating
HSQ Affiliative	.70**	.49**	.37**	.58**	.47**	.47**	-.89	-.24
HSQ Self-Enhancing	-	.30*	.36**	.42**	.31*	.34**	-.04	-.28*
HSQ Aggressive	-	-	.66**	.63**	.79**	.74**	.10	-.20
HSQ Self-Defeating	-	-	-	.44**	.51**	.49**	.43**	.12
Video Enjoyment	-	-	-	-	.81**	.74**	-.16	-.47**
Video Affiliative	-	-	-	-	-	.92**	.13	-.23
Video Self-Enhancing	-	-	-	-	-	-	.07	-.30*
Video Aggressive	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.69**

Note. \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table.10 Video Stimuli

Video Clip	Description
<p>“End of the World”</p> <p>Time: 104 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney has bad news for white people: there will never be a white president again. He refers to black people’s record; whites tried to keep them out of almost every major sport, but blacks got in and took over. Besides, basketball, football, boxing, and baseball, blacks even dominate tennis and golf now. All that white people have left is swimming.</p>
<p>“Obama”</p> <p>Length: 45 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney describes how he celebrated the election of President Obama. He claims they were singing on the streets “Obama beat your mama,” he got on a bus and told white people to get in the back where they belonged; he went to a soul food restaurant and demanded 100 wings for 10 cent because he knew the price for chicken was going down with a black president.</p>
<p>Win/Win</p> <p>Length: 18 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney describes a win-win situation with the example of the Williams sisters. When Serena played against Venus, Mooney went to bed because he knew when he woke up that somebody black had won.</p>
<p>“Jail”</p> <p>Length: 30 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney criticizes mass incarceration of black people. He encourages African Americans to feel proud if they went to jail because that is what society did to Jesus, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King.</p>
<p>“New Diseases”</p> <p>Length: 65 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney wonders where all these new diseases were when they could have used them during slavery. Slaves could have claimed they forgot they were slaves due to Alzheimer’s, or they could have cursed their masters because of Tourette’s. Finally, they could have avoided picking cotton since they had “Michael Jackson Disease” and white people did not pick cotton.</p>
<p>“Africans”</p> <p>Length: 40 seconds</p>	<p>Mooney claims he can’t stand Africans because they let African Americans down during slavery. Africans should have declared war on America to get their people back, but they wrote them off like a bad check, just to show up 400 years later with a brief-case full of watches. Mooney did not need a watch because he knew “what time it is.”</p>