

ACCEPTANCE OF INJUSTICE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS AS A FUNCTION
OF IDEOLOGY AND SOCIAL COMPARISON PROCESSES

by

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Abstract

ACCEPTANCE OF INJUSTICE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS AS A FUNCTION
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False consciousness is a concept derived from Marxian theory that refers to the failure of an oppressed group to recognize the instruments of their own exploitation by adopting the views of the oppressors. Social psychological research has found extensive evidence of false consciousness among various low-status groups, including a preference for members of majority groups, rationalization of power differences between groups, and internalization of racist messages about their own group. The current research investigated the role that ideology and social comparisons play in the endorsement of false consciousness among members of a traditionally disadvantaged group (native and immigrant Blacks) (n=192). Correlation and regression analyses showed that assimilation and humanist ideologies were positively associated with false consciousness. In general, making comparisons with Whites was negatively associated with false consciousness, although this pattern was primarily associated with native-

born and not immigrant Blacks. However, t-tests showed that there were higher expressions of false consciousness when high-status social comparisons were made salient (Whites) than when low-status social comparisons were made salient (Blacks). Implications for theories of false consciousness among low-status groups are discussed.

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Beat and cuff your slave, keep him hungry and spiritless, and he will follow the chain of his master like a dog (Narrative of a Life of Fredrick Douglas, an American slave, 1845).

The fundamental “success” of oppression is when those who are oppressed actively participate in their own oppression. It is within these instances that the oppression is no longer a physical policing, but a psychological one as exemplified in the above quotation, where oppressed individuals, groups, and societies force upon their own bodies a web of the oppressor’s truths. This dissertation is concerned with this issue of the active participation in oppression from those who are oppressed.

Specifically, this dissertation is concerned with the mechanisms that account for this process. To explore this issue, I will introduce a framework for understanding the mechanisms that mitigate the tendency to further marginalize one’s own marginalization. Before introducing this framework, I will present a review of this phenomenon within the social sciences. I will then critically focus on the social psychological conceptualization of this phenomenon at which time I will introduce and test my framework.

Consequences of Domination: Forms of False Consciousness

The consequences of domination (e.g., oppression, marginalization, colonization, subjugation, etc.) on those who are dominated has a longstanding history within political theory (Marx & Engels, 1896; Gramsci, 1971; Fanon, 1952). In particular,

political theorists have theorized the effects of domination on one's consciousness.

Engels (Marx & Engels, 1896) invoked the concept of "false consciousness" to explain

how the working classes in capitalist societies accept their working class positions.

Specifically, he thought that the working classes failed to recognize their economic and

political interests by internalizing the values of their oppressors. Through institutional

control over economic systems, according to Marx and Engels (1896), dominant groups

in society spread ideas that served to justify and normalize their status and power:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force... The class which has the means of material at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it (Marx & Engels, 1896 p.59-64).

Thus, the political consciousness of the disadvantaged was theorized to be "false", to the

degree that it reflected the interests of dominant groups rather than their own, coupled

with a failure to recognize the instruments of their oppression.

Antonio Gramsci (1971) referenced the concept of "hegemony" to explain the

process and relative stability of political authority and control. Gramsci theorized

hegemony as the way in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, such that

one concept of reality is diffused throughout society. The hegemonic process can be

described as the way by which the dominant classes, through their privileged access to

political and social institutions like education, religion, media, and culture, enforce their

values and ideologies and thereby reinforce their control over these institutions.

Through these values and ideologies, according to Gramsci, ruling groups attempt to

legitimize uneven distributions of power and universalize their own interests as the interests of all. As a consequence, hegemony results in the empowerment and naturalization of certain cultural beliefs, values, and practices via the subjugation, exclusion, and *acceptance* by others. Thus, hegemony is maintained through consensus and acquiescence by those who are subjugated and excluded.

Within this Marxist tradition, Franz Fanon (1952) developed a similar image in his analysis of the impact of colonialism on Black psychology. Fanon highlighted the process of colonization and the central ideology that emerged from it, that is, White's imposition of White supremacy. Specifically, he theorized how the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized becomes normalized into one's psychology.

Fanon's theoretical work was rooted in Africa, in the context of the French colonial occupation of Algeria and the consequent war for liberation. As a trained psychiatrist in an Algerian hospital, Fanon encountered patients who were subjected to severe racist abuse and torture; he reached the conclusion that "the cause rather than the symptoms" of the patients' problems was colonial society. These colonial conditions, according to Fanon, create a "massive psychoexistential complex" from the moment of conquest. Specifically, Fanon argued that racism from White colonizers imposed an existentially false and degrading image upon Blacks that demanded their conformity to White values. This process generated harmful psychological constructs that both blinded the Black man to his subjugation of the universalized White norm and alienated his consciousness. Thus, according to Fanon, the Black man acquires a *white mask* where

“the outcome of a double process is primarily economic; subsequently, the internalization-or, better the epidermalisation–of this inferiority” (1986 p.13).

Recent applications of false consciousness have been taken up by analytic philosophers and sociological theorists (Cunningham, 1987; Felson, Messener, Hoskin, & Deane, 2002). These lenses of analysis have further defined and concretized Marxian notions of false consciousness. Analytic philosophers have attempted to operationalize the experience of false consciousness in everyday life. Cunningham (1987) further concretized consciousness to be “false” when it serves to perpetuate inequality by leading members of subordinate groups to believe that they are inferior, deserving their plight, or incapable of taking action against the cause of their subordination. Other examples of false consciousness that have been identified have been denying that injustice or disadvantage occurs, believing that social change is impossible or undesirable, making false attributions about the causes of political suffering, and adopting the norms of the oppressors (Clark & Clark, 1982; Crosby, 1982; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Lerner, 1982).

False consciousness in social psychology

The deepest puzzle here is not the occasional protest, but pervasive tranquility (Kinder and Sears, 1985).

The phenomenon of false consciousness has also been imported into social psychological theorizing by several contributors. Researchers have identified several distinct but related conceptualizations of false consciousness such as the belief in a just

world (Hafer & Olson, 1983; 1989; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Lerner, 1980; Rubin & Peplau, 1973), illusion of control (Taylor & Brown, 1988), the depressed entitlement effect (Bem & Bem, 1970; Crosby, 1982; Crosby, Putfall, Snyder, O'Connell & Whalen, 1989; Jost, 1997; Major, 1994; Pelham & Hetts, 2001; Taylor et al., 1989), tolerance of injustice (Jost, 1995), paradoxical contentment (Major, 1994), outgroup favoritism (Clark & Clark, 1947; Fine & Bowers, 1984) racial colorblindness (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005), system justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994) and social dominance theory (Levin & Sidanius, 1999; Levin, Federico, Sidanius, & Rabinowitz, 2002; Overbeck, Jost, Mosso, & Flisik, 2004; Sidanius, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993; Sidanius, Levin, & Pratto, 1996). Some of these conceptualizations focus on social and cultural issues, whereas others concern economic matters. However, a common finding among all of these models is that members of low-status groups accept, maintain, and in some instances perpetuate their inferior position in society.

System Justification Theory

One striking example of this phenomenon is system justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994). System justification is defined as the “process by which existing social arrangements are legitimized even at the expense of personal and group interests” (Jost & Banaji, 1994, p.2). That is, system justification refers to the psychological process whereby an individual perceives, understands, and explains an existing situation or arrangement with the result that the situation or arrangement is maintained.

System justification theory posits a motive to invest in and rationalize the status quo, and that this motive is even present among members of disadvantaged groups.

That is, a critical assumption of the system justification perspective is that even members of disadvantaged or powerless groups tend to perceive social events in such a way that hierarchical arrangements are perceived as fair and just, perhaps even natural and inevitable. Thus, existing social arrangements are preserved by the active engagement of the legitimization of those arrangements despite the psychological and material harm they may entail for disadvantaged individuals and groups.

On the assumption that people would further rationalize the status quo by accepting and even bolstering weak justifications for inequality among groups, Haines and Jost (2000) argued that if there is a general social psychological tendency to exaggerate the legitimacy of social events, then people might respond to illegitimate explanations (placebic explanations) as if they are more legitimate and justified than they actually are. They hypothesized that powerless groups would perceive the outgroup as more intelligent, responsible, and deserving when that outgroup occupies a position of power than when it does not. Further, they hypothesized that people would be more likely to perceive the powerful outgroup as intelligent, responsible, and deserving when they are given an explanation for the power differences than when they are not.

Results indicated that powerless groups attributed greater intelligence and responsibility to the outgroup when the outgroup was in a position of high power rather than equal power, and these effects were enhanced when explanations of power differences were provided. Similarly, powerless groups reported more positive affect

when explanations were provided for their own powerlessness, regardless of whether those explanations were classified a priori as either legitimate or illegitimate.

Similar results were found among low-status groups with regard to outgroup favoritism (Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Jost, Pelham, & Carvallo, 2002). Jost and Hunyady (2002) found that members of a low-status group (San Jose State University students) exhibited implicit outgroup favoritism to a greater degree than did members of the high-status group (Stanford University students). Moreover, among low-status groups, implicit stereotyping of the two groups (high-status as more intelligent, low-status as more involved in extracurricular activities) was positively correlated with implicit outgroup favoritism. In a second study, Jost and Hunyady (2002) found that Latinos and Asian Americans preferred to participate in a “getting acquainted” study with a stranger whom they believed to be White and avoided or refused to participate if the stranger was a minority.

Across five studies examining social and political attitudes, Jost and his colleagues (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003) found substantial evidence of system justification among various low-status groups. Low-status individuals (in wealth and education) and African Americans were more likely than high-income participants and Whites to express a willingness to limit criticisms of the government in the press and to limit the right of people to speak out against the government. Similarly, low-income Latinos were more likely to trust the U. S. government and to believe that the government benefits all people than were high-income Latinos. Poorer participants were also more likely than wealthy participants to feel that large differences in income

were necessary to motivate people to work hard. Finally, people from the south, the poor, and Southern African Americans were more likely to endorse meritocratic beliefs systems that were Northerners, the wealthy, and Northern African Americans.

Racial Colorblindness

Racial colorblindness has also been theorized to reflect psychological false consciousness among racial minorities (Neville et al. 2005). Racial colorblindness refers to the denial, distortion, and/or minimization of race and racism. It is the belief that racism is a thing of the past and that race and racism do not play an important role in current social and economic realities. Theorists maintain that colorblindness is a dominant racially abased framework that individuals, groups, and systems consciously or unconsciously use to justify the racial status quo or to explain racial inequalities in the United States.

Psychologists have recently begun to examine the role of racial colorblindness among low-status groups. One of the contributions to this literature has been the development by Neville and her colleagues (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Douglass, 2000) of a scale to assess colorblindness, the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). In studies using the CoBRA, colorblind racial attitudes were found to be associated with racist beliefs, intolerance of multiculturalism, and greater endorsement of beliefs in a just world and the presence of a level playing field (Neville & Lilly, 2000). Specifically, among Blacks, Latinos, and Asians, beliefs in racial colorblindness were related to increased political conservatism such as voting for George W. Bush, less

involvement in anti-racism activities, and blaming racial minorities themselves for economic and social disparities.

In a similar examination of colorblind racial beliefs among African Americans, Neville, Coleman, Falconer, and Holmes (2005) found that individuals who were more likely to adopt racial colorblindness attributed greater levels of social injustice to the victims of racism, adopt higher levels of anti-egalitarian beliefs to justify social inequalities (social dominance orientation), and internalized more racist messages about Blacks. Further, those who were more likely to adopt racial colorblindness also preferred to associate with White American friends in comparison to Black American friends.

Antecedents of false consciousness

Far less attention has been paid to the mechanisms and conditions that mitigate the expression of false consciousness among disadvantaged groups. This issue is important because the social psychological explications of false consciousness described above do not claim that all low-status groups will accept, justify and perpetuate their own inequality. Some theorists have proposed that identity is one mechanism relevant to whether or not disadvantaged group members will exhibit expressions of false consciousness (Crosby et al., 1989; Levin et al., 1998; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Sinclair, Sidanius, & Levin, 1998).

Theorists have proposed that people's responses to injustice are contingent on the specific identity categorization that is salient and relevant within a given context. Self-categorization theory posits that self-perceptions can be conceived as a continuum

ranging from perception of self as an individual to perception of self as a group member (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherwell, 1987). Which specific self categorization becomes relevant to a person depends on the salience of personal versus group identity in a social situation. According to self-categorization theory, salience of personal identity leads to an accentuation of differences between one's self and the ingroup. Thus, when personal identity is salient, we act as individuals. Salience of one's group, in contrast, leads to an accentuation of similarities between oneself and the ingroup and differences between the ingroup and an outgroup. When group identity is made salient, we act and think as a group member.

Recognizing oneself as a member of a social category or as an individual has been found to have considerable impact on how people understand and respond to justice issues. Specifically, high-and low-status groups show differences in beliefs about inequality and support for corrective measures when the context leads them to define themselves in terms of their group identity rather than their personal identity (Postmes, Branscombe, Spears, & Young, 1999). Kawakami and Dion (1993) found that stronger feelings of deprivation and greater likelihood of collective action intentions were reported when group compared to personal identities were made salient.

Although research has shown that variations in the salience of personal versus group categorizations result in marked effects on attitudes and behavior, other theorists have considered individuals' feelings toward the groups to which they belong as relevant. That is, the degree to which individuals feel a psychological attachment and

commitment to their group has been shown to have important psychological implications for the expression of false consciousness (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997).

Crosby et al. (1989) found that identification was a significant mechanism involved in the denial of personal disadvantage among lesbian women. The more identified a woman was as a lesbian, the greater her sense of personal discrimination and specifically in terms of work. Similarly, endorsement of political conservatism, perceived system legitimacy, and attachment to American society were negatively related to ingroup identification among Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and Arabs in Israel (Levin, Sidanius, Rabinowitz, & Federico, 1998; Sinclair, et al., 1998). Positive correlations between identification and feelings of deprivation were also found among a sample of Latinos and Blacks (Tropp & Wright, 1999) such that highly identified group members reported greater perceived deprivation than low identifiers. Similarly, Operario and Fiske (2001) found that high-identified minorities reported more vulnerability to discrimination and showed stronger reactions to prejudice than less-identified minorities who tended to overlook subtle prejudice. Finally, in an analysis of system-justifying beliefs and psychological well-being among low-status groups, O'Brien and Major (2005) found that the endorsement of system-justifying beliefs was positively related to psychological well-being among participants who were not highly identified with their ethnic group

Although the above explications are critical in regard to understanding the mechanisms that drive some disadvantaged groups to justify the system and ideologies that are detrimental to them, the relationship between those mechanisms and false

consciousness are incomplete. These perspectives assume that when a particular identity is made salient or when someone highly identifies (or is less identified) with their group, they respond and react to social justice issues in similar ways. Further, previous research has not consistently demonstrated strong positive correlations between ingroup identification and intergroup bias, for example (Tougas & Veilleux, 1988; Zafefka & Brown, 2005). In the next section, I argue that the expression of false consciousness among disadvantaged groups is more nuanced than salience or the strength of one's identification. Specifically, I will propose a revised framework and add additional components for understanding the mechanisms that mitigate the expression of false consciousness among the disadvantaged.

Ideology and false consciousness

Theorists examining the role of identity in the expression of false consciousness have operationally defined identity either as the salience of one's identity in a given context or the strength of one's identification (Crosby et al., 1989; Levin et al., 1998; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Sinclair et al., 1998). Particularly, these theorizations assume that those whose group identities are salient or those who highly identify with their group, identify for the same reasons. While important, identity defined as salience or the strength of identity overlooks other components of identity. Some research has shown that identity is not just how strongly (or weakly) one is identified with the group, as many of the theories suggest, but also the meaning one places on what it is to be a member of that group (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Abeles, 1976; Dion,

1986; Taylor & Dube, 1986; Cross, 1991; Sellers, 1998). Hinkle and Brown (1990) have underscored this point by suggesting that two important criteria must be met in order for identity-maintaining processes to come into play: members of groups must (1) feel connected with their ingroup and (2) feel concerned about how their group is faring relative to other groups. Thus, I propose that people's ideologies about who the group is, how the group should behave, and how the group is treated are central to how they respond to the system in which they live.

Some early research has highlighted this point in understanding the role that ideologies play in the tendency to deny or act against one's own disadvantage (Abeles, 1976; Dion, 1986; Taylor & Dube, 1986). Abeles (1976), for example, examined what factors contributed to militancy in Black college students. In this analysis, militancy was defined as a cluster of attitudes centering on a rejection of the traditional, passive, and subordinate Black role and around demands for more Black control over the destiny of Black people (e.g., equal treatment as human beings, equitable share in the nation's prosperity, political influence). Militancy also involves a rejection of the racial status quo and an acceptance of either reforms or revolutionary changes in the social system. Across two studies, Abeles found that the best predictor of militancy was the perception that Black people in general are unfairly treated.

Dion (1986) also found evidence of a strong association between militancy and the recognition that one is part of an oppressed group of people. That is, people who believed their group was relatively deprived were more likely to question the system and participate in social movements for change. Taylor and Dube (1986) found similar

results in a series of studies among Canadian women and men. They found that identifying strongly as an oppressed group was contingent upon the perception of personal disadvantage.

Guimond and Dube-Simard (1983) further specified these ideas in an examination of feelings of group discontent and perceptions of inequality among Francophone Canadians. They found that feelings of discontent and perceptions of inequality were strongly related to a strong nationalist ideology with regard to desire for greater political autonomy for Quebec and favoring measures to protect and enhance the status of the French language and culture in Quebec. That is, highly nationalist participants felt more deprived in comparison to Anglophone Canadians and perceived more inequality than those who were less nationalistic.

Recent analyses have found that tendencies to accept inequality in terms of outgroup favoritism (Jost & Hunyady, 2002), reduced sensitivity to discrimination (Major, Gramzow, McCoy, Levin, Schader, & Sidanius, 2002), ambivalent attitudes toward the ingroup (Jost & Burgess, 2000), ingroup blame (Major, Kaiser, O'Brien, & McCoy, 2007) and well-being (Foster & Tsarfati, 2005) were related to political ideologies. For example, in a recent study of ingroup derogation by Hispanic Americans, exposure to employment discrimination against their ingroup increased the tendency to hold the ingroup responsible for its low-status position; this tendency was moderated by the belief in meritocracy (Major et al., 2007). Similarly, Foster and Tsarfati (2005) found that women experiencing discrimination reported greater well-being if they believed that meritocracy exists than if they didn't believe in meritocracy. Cheung and Hardin

(2008) experimentally examined whether conservative members of low-status groups are more likely to accept inequality to the self. In an examination of pay expectations among foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong and among Asian and Hispanics in the United States, they found that these workers devalued their work (paid themselves less), to the extent that they defined themselves as conservative.

Rabinowitz (1999) developed the term *perceived injustice* to explain how some low-status group members adopt viewpoints that are seemingly contradictory and serve to maintain an inequitable social system. He argued that members of the same ingroup can differ in their viewpoints about the social system in which they live, such that some ingroup members may feel that their group is being unfairly treated by external systemic factors while other ingroup members may feel satisfaction with the current state of society. These differences, according to Rabinowitz (1999), are due to one's perception of injustice, defined as the degree to which people feel that their group has been unfairly discriminated against by society. Thus, for Rabinowitz (1999), it is possible for low-status group members to feel just fine about their group position. His theorization suggests that it is an individual's perceptions of unfairness that is central, not the objective reality of one's status.

Rabinowitz (1999) found support for these claims in an analysis of group status, social dominance orientation, and perceived injustice on opposition to hierarchy-attenuating policies among American university students. Results indicated that low-status groups (African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans) who felt that their group was treated fairly showed a significant positive relationship between social

dominance orientation and policy opposition. In contrast, low- status students who sensed greater injustice exhibited no relationship between social dominance orientation and policy opposition.

Similarly, Becker and Wagner (2009) introduced the gender identity model (GIM), which argues that the strength and different types of gender identity explain differences in women's endorsement of sexist beliefs. The gender identity model proposes that the relation between gender identification and endorsement of sexist beliefs is moderated by identity content. Identity content can be in the form of progressive values with their gender ingroup (i.e., women are independent, make their own careers, contribute in politics, share household tasks and child care equally with men, reject traditional gender-related values) or traditional values and norms (i.e., women stay at home, do the household work, take care of the children, value gender-specific behaviors and treatment of women, support the gender-specific division of labor). The GIM differentiates between strength of identification and content of identity, considering content in terms of four types of gender identities: traditional identifiers, progressive identifiers, traditional non-identifiers, and progressive non-identifiers.

Applying the GIM model across three studies, Becker and Wagner (2009) found that highly identified women who prefer a more traditional gender role (traditional identifiers) showed a stronger endorsement of benevolent, hostile, and modern sexism and a stronger rejection of collective action compared to those highly identified women who prefer a more progressive gender role (progressive identifiers). Studies 2 and 3 showed that priming a progressive gender role resulted in stronger rejection of

benevolent, hostile, and modern sexism and stronger engagement of collective action for highly identified women. In contrast, priming a traditional gender role resulted in stronger endorsement of all three types of sexist beliefs and a rejection of collective action for highly identified women.

In sum, this research suggests that one mechanism through which low-status groups accept or reject inequality is ideological. Specifically, a subjective recognition of injustice is central to feelings of militancy, support for hierarchy-attenuating policies, group discontent, nationalist ideologies, progressive gender roles, and general perceptions of systemic oppression, all of which are in contrast to false consciousness. In contrast, conservative ideologies held by low-status groups may legitimize injustice. It can be inferred from the above review that those who accept, justify, and perpetuate their own inequality do not subjectively define themselves and their group as disadvantaged or oppressed.

Ethnic and Racial Identity

Theorists of racial/ethnic identity have also highlighted the importance of understanding what a particular identity means to an individual or group (Ashmore et al., 2004; Cross, 1991; Sellers, 1998). Within the context of Black identity, Cross' (1971; 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001) nigrescence model posits the importance of ideology in understanding the complexity of Black identities and identity in general. The Cross model frames Black identity as comprising a set of specific stages at which people develop and transact their Blackness. In addition, Cross' model captures the everyday

experiences of people living with their Blackness. The Cross model of nigrescence (Cross, 1971; 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001) is comprised of five stages: 1) pre-encounter; 2) encounter; 3) immersion-emersion; 4) internalization; and 5) internalization commitment. These stages are theorized to reflect attitudes or ideologies that become templates used to organize racial information about the self, others, and the environment.

In the first stage, pre-encounter, an identity is ready to be changed and developed. Individuals in this stage, according to Cross, are characterized by their miseducated outlook and often possess a White-oriented framework in which there is an idealization of the dominant White worldview and a devaluing of their membership in the Black community. Cross (1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001) describes three distinct ideologies or worldviews at this stage: pre-encounter assimilation, miseducation, and self hatred. Individuals with an assimilation identity have a pro-American orientation where race is not a salient component of their identity. The miseducation identity is described as the stereotypical mindset a Black person has about the Black community in general. The self-hatred identity characterizes Blacks who view themselves negatively as a result of their race.

Cross (1991) describes the second stage of nigrescence, the encounter stage, as the experience of an event or series of events that motivate individuals to reexamine their Blackness or their social group membership. At this stage, an individual begins to deal with the social, political, and personal consequences of being Black in America and becomes receptive to a reinterpretation of his or her identity.

The third stage of the nigrescence model, immersion-emersion, is characterized by an intense period of transition during which a new identity is being developed. The first part of this stage involves an immersion into all things Black, coupled with feelings of rage, anger, and hostility toward White people and culture. In contrast, the emersion phase involves an emergence from the oversimplified negative attitudes adopted in the immersion stage into a proactive Black perspective, in which the person makes a more substantial commitment to Black issues. Cross identified two worldviews based on the immersion-emersion phases of this stage: intense Black involvement and anti-White (Cross, 1991).

According to Cross (1991), the fourth stage, internalization, marks a resolution of conflicts between an individual's former identity and a new identity. Central to this stage is Black self-acceptance, comprising a sense of comfort of one's Blackness. The fifth stage, internalization commitment, was theorized in Cross' original nigrescence model but was later merged with stage four in the revised and expanded versions of model (Cross, 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001). Thus, this final stage is characteristic of people who make serious and continued commitment to Black interests and issues. In Cross' revised model (1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001), there are three possible identities: Afrocentric, biculturalist, and multiculturalist identity. Individuals with an Afrocentric identity concentrate their energies on empowering the Black community. The biculturalist identity is characterized by Black self-acceptance and an active focus on one other cultural orientation (e.g., gender, nationality, and sexual orientation). Similarly, the multiculturalist identity focuses on a positive Black identity and on two or more

cultural identities. Unlike the Afrocentric ideology, the biculturalist and multiculturalist identities define their identity beyond the Black community.

Taking a similar perspective, Sellers (1998) argues that individuals belonging to the same racial group vary a great deal in their experiences and cultural expressions, resulting in differences in the significance and qualitative meaning that they attribute to being part of the Black racial group. Some Black individuals, for instance, place little significance on race in defining who they are, while others may see their racial membership as the defining characteristic of their self-concept. In addition, Sellers (1998) argues that even when individuals endorse similarly high levels of race (identification) in defining themselves, they may differ a great deal in what they believe it means to be Black. One individual may believe that being Black means spending time with other Blacks, while others may believe being Black means that one should integrate with Whites.

Sellers' (1997) multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI) underscores the points above. According to the MMRI, identity is defined as the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute within their self-concepts to their membership within the Black racial group. This definition of identity answers two questions: "How important is race in an individual's perception of self" and "What does it mean to be a member of this racial group." Within this definition, the MMRI proposes four dimensions consisting of (a) racial salience, (b) the centrality of the identity, (c) the regard in which the person holds the group associated with the identity, and (d) the ideology associated with the identity.

In particular, the ideology dimension refers to a person's philosophy about the ways in which African Americans should live and interact in society. Sellers refers to four ideological philosophies that seem to be prevalent: a nationalist philosophy, an oppressed minority philosophy, an assimilation philosophy, and a humanist philosophy.

The nationalist ideology stresses the uniqueness of being Black. As such, the nationalist ideology posits that African Americans should be in control of their own destiny with minimal input from other groups. This worldview often expresses resistance to the marginalized status that African Americans have in society. There is also a deep appreciation and awareness of the culture and accomplishments of African Americans coupled with a preference for African American (or African) social environments. In contrast, the oppressed minority ideology emphasizes the similarities between the oppression that African Americans face and that of other groups. Like the nationalist worldview, individuals who adopt this ideology are acutely aware of the oppression that continues to confront African Americans. However, the oppressed minority ideology sees a link between the oppression that African Americans face and that of other minority groups.

The assimilation ideology emphasizes the similarities between African Americans and the rest of society. Assimilationists acknowledge their status as members of society and attempt to enter into mainstream society. They recognize that racism exists in society, but believe that the way to implement social change is to work within the system. Thus, persons with an assimilation framework are more likely to

believe it is important to interact socially with Whites. Finally, the humanist ideology emphasizes the similarities among all humans. Humanists do not think in terms of race, gender, or class; rather they view everyone as belonging to the same race, that is, the human race. Thus, they emphasize the characteristics of the individual person regardless of race, gender, or class. As such, oppression is seen in terms of “man’s inhumanity towards man” (Sellers et al., 1998). According to Sellers, these four ideologies are manifested across four areas of functioning consisting of individual attitudes with respect to political/economic development, cultural/social attitudes, intergroup relations, and perceptions of the dominant group.

The racial identity perspectives of both Cross and Sellers underscore the importance of taking a phenomenological approach to investigating racial identity. That is, interpreting the meaning of individuals’ attitudes and beliefs regarding their membership in a particular racial group without measuring the significance and meaning of the membership to an individual can be problematic. The use of paradigms that presume a monolithic Black identity for all African Americans simply because of their physical characteristics obscures the true relationship between racial identity and political attitudes. Cross (1991) uses the term *experimenter-ascribed* identity to describe the situation where the experimenter makes assumptions about a participant’s identity simply because they have characteristics that identify them as belonging to a particular group. In contrast, Cross and I both argue that it is the meaningfulness of what identity means to an individual, rather than an assumed ascribed disadvantage or advantage from others that is important. Because race is a significant part of American society,

most African Americans are able to report feelings about being African American. However, the extent to which these attitudes influence their self-concepts is dependent on the subjective meaning that an individual places on race. As a result, one must not assume that simply because an individual belongs to a socially-defined social category and is highly identified with that social category (Black) that his or her subjective meanings with that category can be inferred.

Recent research using these assumptions has highlighted the importance of understanding the complexity of identity in political attitudes. Schermund, Sellers, Muller, and Crosby (2001) explored the relationship between attitudes toward affirmative action and racial identity as conceptualized in the MMRI. The researchers explored what factors accounted for the variation in attitudes regarding affirmative action among African-American college students. In general, participants endorsed affirmative action, but specific aspects of racial identity as conceptualized by the MMRI also predicted variations in these attitudes. African American students for whom race was central to their identity more strongly endorsed affirmative action than did others. Additionally, findings showed that a positive evaluation of Blacks (private regard) and an endorsement of an oppressed minority ideology both predicted positive attitudes toward affirmative action policies.

In an examination of Cross's racial identity model and the process of African Americans internalizing White stereotypes about Blacks (positive and negative), called internalized racialism (e.g., an African American who believes Blacks are more prone to criminality than Whites or who believes that Blacks naturally run faster than Whites),

Cokley (2002) found that pre-encounter racial identity attitudes of miseducation and self-hatred were positively related to internalized racialism. Specifically, miseducation and self-hatred attitudes were significantly and positively related to beliefs in the mental and genetic deficiencies of Blacks. Similarly, in an analysis of colorblind racial beliefs, Neville, Coleman, Woody, and Holmes (2005) found that greater endorsement of colorblind racial beliefs was related to internalization of the racial ideology of White superiority-Black inferiority.

Research from a racial identity framework suggests that what predicted the endorsement of system-attenuating policies, like affirmative action, was an identification with a particular world view: an oppressed minority ideology. On the other hand, the endorsement of system-enhancing attitudes, like internalized racism, was predicted by an identification with a miseducation and self-hatred worldview.

Thus, I predict that ideologies that deemphasize the inequalities and hardships experienced by Black people will mitigate the expression of false consciousness among disadvantaged group members. With regard to Cross' racial identity conceptualizations, I hypothesize that earlier and middle stages of racial identity development (i.e., pre-encounter identities) will be positively correlated with expressions of false consciousness because individuals holding these ideologies, according to Cross, have not progressed to an acceptance of a positive Black identity. Specifically, members of disadvantaged groups are more likely to accept, justify, and perpetuate their own inequality when their opinions and attitudes with respect to the way individuals/groups should act reflect assimilation, miseducation, and self-hatred

orientations rather than anti-White, nationalist, biculturalist, and multiculturalist orientations.

Similarly, with regard to Sellers' racial identity conceptualizations, members of disadvantaged groups are more likely to accept, justify, and perpetuate their own inequality when their opinions and attitudes with respect to the way individuals/groups should act reflect an assimilation or humanist philosophical ideology, rather than a nationalist or oppressed minority ideology, because the former ideologies de-emphasize the inequalities and hardships experienced by Black people and the positive aspects of being Black.

Social comparisons and false consciousness

Social comparison processes have also been shown to play an important role in people's endorsement of false consciousness. This research demonstrates that people not only judge their status and outcomes according to an objective situation, but also according to the situation of relevant others. That is, feelings of deprivation develop on the basis of social comparisons with specific others. Crosby (1976) underscores this point when she argues that feeling deprived is a relative experience rather than an absolute one, and that feelings of deprivation are not isomorphically related to objective states. That is, comparing to someone serves to define whether and how much deprivation and disadvantage an individual feels and experiences.

The theory of relative deprivation assumes that one's sense of deprivation is not a monotonic function of one's actual deprivation in an absolute sense; rather, feelings of

deprivation with respect to social, economic, or other status dimensions depend on whom the individual compares him or herself with (Crosby, 1976). For example, an individual who lacks something will be less angry if the people with whom he or she compares also lack the same thing, but will feel relatively deprived if comparable others do possess the object. Thus, in terms of false consciousness among disadvantaged groups, relative deprivation theory would suggest that an individual may not even be aware of their deprivation or disadvantage if other people around them are similar to them. Runciman (1966) further distinguished two different types of relative deprivation comparisons: egoistic relative deprivation (ERD) and fraternal relative deprivation (FRD). ERD involves the individual comparing self with other members of his or her ingroup and feeling deprived with relation to them. FRD concerns the comparison, by the individual, of the ingroup to an outgroup and the conclusion that the ingroup is deprived. This research is concerned with the latter type of relative deprivation.

Early research by Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star, and Williams (1949) examined, among other things, why military police who were given slow promotions were more satisfied than air corpsmen who were given quick promotions. They concluded that the military police did not compare themselves with air corpsmen and therefore did not feel deprived.

Major and Konar (1984) underscore these points in an analysis of gender differences in pay expectations and their possible causes. They theorized that women would have lower self-pay expectations than men because they compare their pay outcomes to lower standards, probably to other women, who typically earn less than

men. Previous research has shown that comparison standards are important mediators of self-pay expectations and beliefs about fair pay (Adam, 1965). Across a sample of management internship students, they found that the social comparison standards accounted for almost half of the difference between women's and men's entry self-pay expectations. Bylsma and Major (1994) and Blanton, George, and Crocker (2001) found similar findings in analyses of pay expectations for past work. Across both studies, men felt they deserved significantly more money than women felt they deserved. Thus, these studies suggest that social comparison standards are important with regard to beliefs about fair pay. However, the research did not ask the participants who they were comparing themselves to and only assumed that women compared their pay outcomes to lower standards, possibly to other women.

What types of social comparisons lead to relative deprivation (or satisfaction)? Research has theorized that characteristics of the comparison target, such as their relative advantage or disadvantage, can influence the extent to which disadvantaged individuals feel deprived (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). Tropp and Wright (1999) examined comparisons of relatively advantaged outgroup targets and targets from other disadvantaged outgroups. Consistent with theorizations on relative deprivation, Tropp and Wright predicted that low-status individuals will report more deprivation in comparisons with clearly advantaged targets (Whites) than comparisons with other disadvantaged targets (other minorities). Using a sample of Latino and African American respondents, Tropp and Wright confirmed their hypothesis. Latinos and African Americans reported more deprivation in comparison with Whites than with

other minorities or with their own group. Participants generally reported satisfaction (not deprivation) in their comparisons with other minorities, while they reported deprivation in comparisons with Whites.

Zagefka and Brown (2005) also found that interest in comparing with ingroup members negatively predicted group deprivations among a German minority sample. Similarly, interest in comparing with majority group members positively predicted deprivation among a sample of minority groups in London. That is, minority group members expressed more deprivation when they compared their situation to majority group members and less deprivation when comparing to ingroup members. In fact, relative deprivation negatively predicted comparison interest for intragroup targets. Similar results were found in their longitudinal study among ethnic minority members (Zagefka & Brown, 2005).

Kawakami and Dion (1993) found comparable results in their analysis of the magnitude of intragroup and intergroup inequalities upon feelings of relative deprivation. Consistent with previous relative deprivation research, magnitude of social inequalities affected feelings of satisfaction, perceived justice, and action intentions. The size of intergroup inequality influenced both feelings of group relative deprivation and collective action intentions. Those who perceived intergroup inequalities were less satisfied and perceived less justice concerns.

Thus, in terms of the mechanisms that mitigate the expression of false consciousness in disadvantaged groups, research on relative deprivation and social comparison theory suggests that those who feel relatively deprived are referring to

different comparison groups than those who don't feel deprived. Relative deprivation and social comparison theory would argue that those who endorse false consciousness are most likely referring to targets that are less or similarly disadvantaged as they are. While several investigators have demonstrated this finding, there is scant experimental research that directly demonstrates that specific social comparisons elicit expressions of false consciousness. To provide a test of the hypothesis that less or similarly disadvantaged (as opposed to advantaged) social comparisons will elicit greater false consciousness among low-status groups, social comparison choice will be experimentally manipulated in the present research.

Social comparison preferences as mediators of false consciousness

Relative deprivation theory and social comparison theory in general underscore the psychological significance of the social comparison process. Comparison choices have been shown to determine whether people perceive existing discrimination, whether they feel deprived, and whether they are satisfied with their own or their group's outcomes (Kawakami and Dion, 1993; Major & Konar, 1984; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984; Tropp & Wright, 1999; Zagefka & Brown, 2005). Comparison choices have also been shown to affect perceptions of injustice, entitlement, and might raise or lower people's aspirations and expectations for change. Thus, whom one compares to is central to our evaluations and perceptions of the world.

A recurrent point of critique concerning relative deprivation theory and social comparison theories in general is that although these perspectives acknowledge that

various kinds of comparisons can be made and that the attached consequences of those comparisons can vary as well (e.g., deprivation, satisfaction), they do not offer predictions about which specific comparisons (to advantaged vs. disadvantaged groups or intergroup vs. intragroup) are likely to be preferred under which circumstances (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987; Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith & Huo, 1997). As a consequence, the comparison choice that is being made is inferred post hoc.

Social identity theory and self-categorization theory, however, do specify what comparisons are likely to be made under which circumstances. Specifically, social identity theory states that our identities affect which comparisons are attended to and how they are perceived (Oakes, 1987). Tajfel's (1975) concept of "cognitive alternatives" maintains that people's comparison preferences depend on what are considered relevant entities in a particular social context, which in turn determine what kind of comparison is likely to be seen as most informative to the situation at hand. That is, what determines whether an individual makes intragroup or intergroup comparisons is the level of abstraction at which individuals define themselves and others. When people define themselves as individuals, social identity theory argues that they are likely to engage in intragroup comparisons, while intergroup comparisons are expected to ensue when people primarily consider themselves in terms of their group membership.

Kawakami and Dion's (1993) analysis of the perceptions of intragroup and intergroup inequalities on feelings of relative deprivation supports Tajfel's thesis of cognitive alternatives. They found that salient personal identities led individuals to engage in intragroup comparisons and salient group identities led individuals to engage

in intergroup comparisons. Further, only the salient group identities resulted in feelings of group relative deprivation.

While Tajfel's (1975) concept of cognitive alternatives theorizes the conditions under which people will engage in intragroup or intergroup comparisons, other theorists argue that social comparisons with ingroup members are more likely to occur no matter whether people view themselves as an individual or part of a group. Specifically, for members of stigmatized social groups, Crocker and Major (1989) suggested that social comparisons with other ingroup members and similarly stigmatized individuals are more likely to occur because comparing with more favored outgroup members would be too painful. This tendency to compare with only ingroup members was found when stigmatized group members did not show evidence of lower self-esteem than members of high-status groups (Crocker & Major, 1989).

Social identity theory also posits that the strength of one's identification informs our comparison choices. The theory argues that people derive part of their self-concept and esteem from their group membership and that people have a need for a positive social identity from outgroup members (Turner, 1999). Hence, people compare their ingroup with outgroups in order to construe their group as both different and superior to other groups. Accordingly, those who highly identify with their group should be more motivated to distinguish their ingroup positively from outgroups and be more interested in intergroup comparisons than low identifiers. Because high identifiers are motivated to distinguish their ingroup positively from outgroups, comparisons to more

advantaged outgroups are theorized to be avoided and comparisons with less or similarly advantaged outgroups preferred.

However, social identity theory also proposes that under some circumstances comparisons that are disparate from the self/ingroup on the status hierarchy become comparable. That is, people might elect to compare with more advantaged targets relative to the self/group in order to challenge the existing social hierarchy. As such, people might make comparisons with more advantaged outgroups if “equity” concerns are strong. Across several studies with minority groups, Zagefka and Brown (2006) found that motives affect comparison choices and that different comparison choices are chosen to fulfill different motives. Their data show that upward comparisons satisfied “evaluation” motives; temporal, intragroup, and social downward comparisons satisfied “enhancement” motives; and comparisons with members of outgroups were often motivated by equity concerns.

Lastly, social identity theory proposes that certain socio-structural conditions might render previously incomparable groups comparable (Tajfel, 1978). For example, in situations in which the social climate appears illegitimate and unstable, people might start comparing with dissimilar outgroups, such as more advantaged outgroups.

Taken together, various aspects of social identity theory allow predictions about which specific comparisons are likely to be preferred in general and with regard to social justice issues. Because many of the predictions social identity theory puts forth in regard to the specific comparisons people make are essentially about individuals’ views about themselves, their group and the social climate around them, the ideological

positions I described earlier appear relevant to the social comparison decisions people make as they relate to false consciousness. I propose that a person's ideology about the group to which they belong informs social comparison choices (intragroup vs. intergroup, high-status vs. low-status) and in turn influences expressions of false consciousness. Thus, social comparison preferences will also be examined as a mediating variable between ideology and false consciousness.

Based on social identity theory's argument and Zagefka and Brown's (2006) findings that some people's comparison choices are motivated by equity and social justice concerns that leads to upward outgroup comparisons, I hypothesize that a stronger endorsement of Afrocentric, multicultural, or anti-White ideologies will be associated with lower endorsements of false consciousness and further, that advantaged group comparisons (Whites) will account for this relationship. These ideologies are motivated by equity and social justice concerns because they all represent a serious commitment to Black issues that could include eliminating the racism experienced by Blacks.

Secondly, based on social identity theory's argument that some people's comparison choices are based on enhancement that lead to downward comparisons, I hypothesize that the more people endorse self-hatred or miseducation ideologies, the more strongly they will endorse false consciousness and that lower- status outgroup (other minority groups) comparisons will account for this relationship. These ideologies may be motivated by enhancement motives because they represent a miseducated and negative outlook on the Black race. Because of this, people holding these ideologies may

compare themselves with other minorities to make themselves feel better about being Black. It is also possible that the more people endorse self-hatred or miseducation ideologies, the stronger will be their false consciousness and further, that ingroup comparisons (Blacks) will account for this relationship based on Crocker and Major's (1989) argument that social comparisons with other ingroup members and similarly stigmatized individuals are more likely to occur when comparing with more favored outgroup members would be too painful.

Finally, stronger endorsement of assimilation or humanist ideologies will be positively related to false consciousness and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship. Those holding an assimilation or humanist ideology may be motivated to compare with people in general because both ideologies assume that race is not a salient component of one's identity.

Summary of Research and Hypotheses

The purpose of the current research is to investigate the specific mechanisms involved in the endorsement of false consciousness among members of a traditionally disadvantaged group (Blacks). Specifically, the current research will examine the role that ideology plays in the endorsement of false consciousness. A second objective is to examine the role that social comparisons play in the endorsement of false consciousness, which will be approached in two different ways. Firstly, social comparison preference will be examined as a possible mediator between ideology and false consciousness. Secondly and more directly, social comparisons to Black versus White groups will be

experimentally manipulated in an experimental paradigm to determine the effect of specific comparisons on the expression of false consciousness. Three sets of hypotheses will be tested centering around three main research questions:

1. *What is the relationship between ideology and false consciousness? I hypothesize that:*

The more participants adopt an assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred or humanist ideology, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. In contrast, the more participants adopt an Anti-White, Afrocentric, or multicultural ideology, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness.

2. *What is the relationship between comparison preferences and expressions of false consciousness? Based on social comparison and relative deprivation theories, I hypothesize that:*

2A. In general, the more participants compare themselves with Blacks and other minority groups, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. In contrast, the more participants compare themselves with Whites, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness.

2B. However, the more participants feel they are better off (rather than worse off) when comparing themselves with Whites, the more likely they will exhibit expressions of false consciousness.

2C. The more participants feel they are satisfied (rather than angry) about their situation in comparison to Whites, the more likely they will exhibit expressions of false consciousness.

To examine the causal relationship between social comparisons and false consciousness, I hypothesized that:

2D. Expressions of false consciousness will be stronger when low-status social comparisons (Blacks) are made salient than when high-status social comparisons (Whites) are made salient.

3. Do social comparison preferences mediate the relationship between ideology and false consciousness? I hypothesize that:

3A. In general, I hypothesize that specific ideologies will be related to expressions of false consciousness and that specific social comparison preferences will account for these relationships.

3B. Specifically, based on social identity theory's argument that some people's comparison choices are based on equity and social justice concerns, I hypothesize that the more strongly participants endorse Afrocentric, multicultural, or anti-White ideologies, the less likely they will be to endorse false consciousness and that advantaged group comparisons (Whites) will account for this relationship.

3C. Based on social identity theory's argument that some people's comparison choices are based on enhancement, the more strongly participants endorse self-hatred or miseducation ideologies, the more they will endorse false consciousness and that lower-status outgroup (other minority groups) comparisons will account for this relationship.

3D. It is also possible that the endorsement of self-hatred or miseducation will be positively associated with false consciousness and that ingroup comparisons (Blacks)

will account for this relationship, based on Crocker and Major's (1989) argument that social comparisons with other ingroup members and similarly stigmatized individuals are more likely to occur because comparing with more favored outgroup members would be too painful.

3E. Finally, endorsement of assimilation or humanist ideologies will be positively related to false consciousness, and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship.

Method

Overview

In a questionnaire study, African-American participants answered a variety of questions related to the key theoretical variables: ideology, social comparisons, and false consciousness. An experimental manipulation of the salience of specific social comparisons was included in the questionnaire design, by varying the order in which participants considered their position relative to either high or low-status groups.

Participants

The participants were recruited from New York City social organizations, community centers, and other venues that had high percentages of Blacks. Each participant was given a \$4 metrocard for his or her participation. A total of 192 individuals of African descent (native and foreign-born) participated in the study. A total of 80 participants were native born and 103 were immigrants (nine participants did not indicate their country of birth). The two samples will be compared in later sections of the paper.

Procedures

All of the participants were given the same set of materials to complete, but the order of the questions was varied in such a way to allow the manipulation of the comparison to Black versus White groups. Social comparison was experimentally manipulated by having participants answer high-status (Whites) or low-status (Blacks) social comparison questions either before or after completing questions related to false consciousness. Specifically, through random assignment, half of the participants

estimated their endorsement of false consciousness after responding to questions about high-status social comparisons. The other half estimated their endorsement of false consciousness after they responded to social comparisons questions about low-status groups.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire consisted of four sections, as described below and as presented in Appendix A and B.

Racial Ideology. Two measures of racial ideology were included in the questionnaire, the Cross Racial Identity scale and the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity.

Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS). Ideologies were assessed using the CRIS, assessing Black racial identity (Cross, 1971; 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001). The 50 (10 filler items) item CRIS scale consists of six subscales (alphas are reported from this dissertation data set): 1) Pre-Encounter Assimilation (8 items) ($\alpha=.84$); e.g., “I think of myself primarily as an American and seldom as a member of a racial group”; 2) Pre-Encounter Miseducation (11 items) ($\alpha=.82$) e.g., “Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work”; 3) Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred (7 items) ($\alpha=.79$); e.g., “I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black”; 4) Immersion-Emersion Anti-White (5 items) ($\alpha=.85$) e.g., “I hate White people”; 5) Internalization Afrocentricity (11 items) ($\alpha=.80$) e.g., “Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles”; and) Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive (8 items) ($\alpha=.75$); e.g., “I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asian, Latinos, gays,

lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).” Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree).

Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). Ideologies were also assessed using the 9-item humanist ideology subscale of the MMRI₁ ($\alpha=.67$) e.g., “Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.” Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The reliability coefficient for the humanist subscale was lower than the other ideology subscales but is in line with Sellers’ (1997) findings from his initial validation study.

Social Comparison Groups. The social comparison group measure was modeled on the procedures of Zagefka and Brown (2005) and Tropp and Wright (1999). Participants were asked about their comparisons they make between their group and each of four other groups: Whites, Blacks, other minority groups, and people in general. As noted earlier, questionnaires varied in terms of whether Black or White was presented initially; comparison to other minorities and to people in general always came later in the questionnaire, together with either the White or Black comparison, depending on which was not presented earlier. For each group comparison, participants were asked three questions: “How often do you compare with most [group name]”, “Would you say you are better or worse off than most [group name]”, and “How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most [group name].” All items were answered on a 5-

point Likert scale ranging from 1 (comparing not at all, worse off, very angry) to 5 (comparing very often, better off, very satisfied).

Endorsement of false consciousness. False consciousness was measured in two ways: system justification and racial colorblindness.

System justification. Participants were asked to complete an eight-item system justification scale that measures perceptions of the fairness, legitimacy, and justifiability of the justice system as developed by Kay and Jost (2003) ($\alpha=.67$) with items such as: “Everyone has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.” Participants indicated their degree of agreement or disagreement with each item on a 9-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 9= strongly agree).

Colorblind racial attitudes. Endorsement of false consciousness was also assessed using the 20-item Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) measuring awareness of institutional racism as developed by Neville et al. (2000). The CoBRAS consists of three subscales: Unawareness of Racial Privilege (“Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich”), Institutional Discrimination (“Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.”), and Blatant Racial Issues (“Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today”). Participants indicated their degree of agreement or disagreement with each item on a 6-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 6= strongly agree). For the purposes of this research, I used the total item scale ($\alpha=.80$).

Demographics. Participants were asked about demographic characteristics including their age, sex, occupation, income status, country of birth, and their parent’s country of birth.

In addition, the questionnaire included some questions about political orientation and about the racial/ethnic group of their close friends. Specifically, participants were asked two political attitudes questions: "What best describes where you stand in politics in general?" on a 7-point Likert scale (1= very liberal, 7= very conservative); and "What do you believe best describes your affiliation with political parties?" on a 7-point Likert scale (1= strong Democrat, 7= strong Republican). Finally, participants were also asked about the number of close friends they have who are Black, White, and other minorities.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Means and standard deviations were computed on all the items on the questionnaire including the demographic variables, the ideology subscales, (i.e., assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, multiculturalism, anti-White, Afrocentric, and humanist), the social comparison preferences scales (i.e., comparisons with, angry/satisfied compared to, better off/worse off compared to Whites, Blacks, other minorities, people in general), the system justification scale, and the racial colorblindness scale.

Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 84 with a mean age of 37.62. Fifty-eight percent of the participants were female and 38% were male (5% of the sample did not indicate their gender).

The participants were approximately equally distributed between immigrants and natives: 103 immigrants and 80 native-born (nine participants did not indicate their birthplace). Immigrants were significantly older than native-born participants ($M_s=40.1$ and 35.5 , respectively, $t=2.04$, $p<.05$). With regard to the birthplace of the immigrant participants, the majority were from Jamaica, Eritrea, Haiti, and Trinidad, and Guyana. On average, immigrant participants lived in the United States for 28.9 years and had come to the United States when they were 19.6 years old.

In general, participants indicated that they were somewhat well off economically and there were no differences between immigrant and native-born participants. The majority (43%) of participants picked the 2nd highest option in the perceived

socioeconomic status scale: “My family has no problem buying the things we need and sometimes we can buy some extras things”. Twenty-two percent of the sample picked the 2nd lowest option in the perceived socioeconomic status scale: “My family has just enough money for the things that we need.”

Participants identified as being more liberal than conservative. However, immigrant participants reported being more conservative than native-born participants ($M_s = 3.91$ and 3.42 , respectively, $t = -2.27$, $p < .05$). There were no significant differences between immigrant and native-born participants’ political party association (“What do you believe best describes your affiliation with political parties?”).

Means for all variables are shown in Table 1. Regarding the central themes of this project, on average, the sample reported low levels of both system justification and racial colorblindness relative to the mid-point of the response scale. Multiculturalism and humanism were the most strongly endorsed ideologies (see Table 1) with scores above the midpoint of the response scale in each case.

In addition, the overall sample compared themselves more with other Blacks than Whites, other minorities, and people in general ($F(3,169) = 19.61$, $p < .001$). Further, participants compared themselves the least with Whites. There were no differences between comparing with other minorities and people in general. The sample also reported on average, above the midpoint on all of the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons. That is, participants felt on average better off and very satisfied about their situation when comparing to Whites, Blacks, other minorities, and people in general. However, the sample reported feeling the most satisfied about their situation

compared to Blacks and people in general and the least satisfied (more angry) about their situation when they compared to Whites ($F(3, 171) = 4.59, p < .01$). Similarly, participants reported feeling the worst off about their situation compared to Whites than when comparing with Blacks, other minorities, and people in general ($F(3, 173) = 9.99, p < .01$). There were no differences on this item between Blacks, other minorities, and people in general.

Ideology and False Consciousness

The first research question concerns the link between ideology and endorsement of false consciousness. This linkage was tested in two ways, first by correlations between the various measures and second by a series of multiple regressions. I hypothesized that the more participants adopt an assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred or humanist ideology, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. To understand the associations between the ideological dimensions described above and the two false consciousness measures (system justification, racial colorblindness) (*H1*), zero-order correlations were calculated. Table 2 displays the zero-order correlations among the ideology variables, system justification, and racial colorblindness.

Somewhat consistent with prediction 1, some but not all of the ideologies I hypothesized were associated with false consciousness. Additionally, although the two measures of false consciousness were strongly correlated with each ($r = .58$), they related slightly differently to a number of the other variables. Both measures of false consciousness were significantly related to the endorsement of assimilation ($r = .32$ and $.45$, for system

justification and racial colorblindness, respectively); both were also related to humanist ideologies, though the relationship was only a trend in the case of colorblindness ($r = .20$ and $.16$ for system justification and racial colorblindness, respectively). Greater endorsement of racial colorblindness was also associated with stronger endorsement of miseducation and marginally associated with self-hatred, a finding not found among system justification ($r = .32$ and $.14$, for miseducation and self-hatred, respectively).

I also hypothesized that the more participants adopt an Anti-White, Afrocentric, or multicultural ideology, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness. Somewhat consistent with my prediction, greater endorsement of system justification beliefs was associated with lower endorsement of an anti-White ideology $r(171) = -.15$, $p < .05$, but not among racial colorblindness. However, greater endorsement of racial colorblindness beliefs was associated with lower endorsement of an Afrocentric ideology $r(165) = -.22$, $p < .01$. There were no significant relationships between multiculturalism and either of the false consciousness measures.

Predicting False Consciousness

Based on the bivariate findings, I ran a series of multiple regressions to determine the relative strength that the specific ideologies have on false consciousness beliefs. Participants false consciousness (system justification and colorblindness, separately) scores were regressed on participants assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, anti-White, multiculturalism, Afrocentric and humanist scores (see Table 4). The ideology variables were mean centered and the criterion variables (system justification

and colorblindness) were left uncentered. The overall model explained 14% of the variance in system justification ($F(7, 132) = 2.81; p < .01$). Somewhat consistent with 3a, only an assimilation ideology had a significant multivariate association with system justification ($b = .25; p < .01$). Specifically, support for system justification was greatest among those for whom assimilation was a central ideology.

The overall model for racial colorblindness explained 33% of the variance in racial colorblindness ($F(7, 130) = 8.65; p < .001$). Assimilation ($b = .35; p < .001$), miseducation ($b = .24; p < .01$), and Afrocentric ($b = -.28; p < .001$) ideologies had a significant multivariate association with racial colorblindness. That is, support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom assimilation and miseducation were central ideologies. Further, support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom Afrocentrism was not a central ideology.

The regression analyses above show that assimilation is a central ideology related to the endorsement of both system justification and racial colorblindness. These findings mirror those found in the bivariate analysis where assimilation was positively associated with system justification and racial colorblindness.

Social Comparisons and False Consciousness

The second set of research questions concerned the link between social comparisons and endorsement of false consciousness. This linkage was tested in two ways, first by correlations between the various measures and second by an experimental manipulation of the salience of either Black or White comparisons. In general, I

hypothesized that the more participants compare themselves with Blacks and other minorities, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. In contrast, the more participants compare themselves with Whites, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness. To understand the associations between social comparison preferences described above and the two false consciousness measures (system justification, racial colorblindness) (*H2*), zero-order correlations were calculated. Table 3 displays the zero-order correlations among the social comparison variables, system justification, and racial colorblindness. Somewhat consistent with prediction *2a*, the more participants endorsed racial colorblindness beliefs, the less likely they were to compare themselves with Whites $r(170) = -.15, p < .05$. There was no negative association between system justification and comparisons with Whites. Neither of the false consciousness measures were significantly associated with the likelihood of comparisons with Black or other minorities as I had hypothesized.

Prediction *2b* said that the more participants feel they are better off (rather than worse off) when comparing themselves with Whites, the more likely they will exhibit expressions of false consciousness. The results showed that, the better off participants felt they were compared to Whites, the more they endorsed system justification $r(174) = .15, p < .05$. Similarly, greater endorsement of racial colorblindness was marginally associated with feeling better off compared to Whites $r(173) = .13, p < .10$. Prediction *2c* said that the more participants feel they are satisfied (rather than angry) about their situation in comparison to Whites, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. Consistent with prediction *2c*, the more participants felt satisfied about their situation

compared to Whites, the more strongly they endorsed system justification $r(175) = .19, p < .01$ and racial colorblindness $r(174) = .18, p < .05$.

Some other relationships between the false consciousness measures and the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons emerged that were not predicted. Specifically, greater endorsement of system justification was marginally associated with feeling better off compared to Blacks $r(176) = .14, p < .10$ and significantly associated with comparing with people in general $r(177) = .26, p < .001$. Similarly, the more participants felt satisfied about their situation compared to Blacks $r(174) = .20, p < .01$ and compared to people in general $r(178) = .24, p < .001$, the more strongly they endorsed system justification. These relationships were not significant for colorblindness as an indication of false consciousness; however, colorblindness did correlate with the extent to which participants felt satisfied about their situation compared to other minorities, $r(179) = .18, p < .05$.

Overall, these findings show that it is not just whether one compares with other groups (both ingroup and outgroup) but also the cognitive and affective dimensions of our social comparison process. Guimond and Dube-Simard's (1983) thesis that people protest and rebel against their conditions when they "feel" deprived relative to some comparison person or group may also apply to people's acceptance of unjust situations. That is, these findings show that people accept unjust situations because of their group membership when they feel both satisfied and better off relative to some comparison group.

Social Comparison Preferences and False Consciousness

To test more directly whether specific social comparisons elicits false consciousness (2D), two-tailed t-tests were computed to compare the mean scores of the low-status social comparison condition and the high-status social comparison condition on system justification and on racial colorblindness attitudes. I hypothesized that false consciousness will be stronger when low-status social comparisons (Blacks) are made salient than when high-status social comparisons (Whites) are made salient. In contrast to my hypothesis, expressions of system justification were marginally higher when high-status social comparisons (Whites) were made salient than when low-status social comparisons (Blacks) were made salient ($M_s = 4.25$ and 3.98 , high-status and low-status condition respectively, $t = 1.66$, $p < .10$).

Similarly and again in contrast my hypothesis, expressions of racial colorblindness were significantly higher when high-status social comparisons (Whites) were made salient than when low-status social comparisons (Blacks) were made salient ($M_s = 2.78$ and 2.56 , high-status and low-status conditions respectively, $t = -2.54$, $p < .01$).

The social comparison manipulation was different from what I hypothesized. Further, my findings were different from the results I found in the bivariate analysis. It may be that there are two different psychological processes going, a topic that I will elaborate on in the discussion.

Social Comparisons as Mediator

My findings above partially support relative deprivation theory. I found that the more participants compared themselves with Whites, the less likely they endorsed racial colorblindness. Further, the more participants felt they were better off and felt satisfied about their situation compared to Whites, the greater they endorsed system justification and racial colorblindness. I also hypothesized that what informs our comparison choices (intragroup vs. intergroup, high-status vs. low-status) are the particular ideologies that people hold and this in turn will influence false consciousness beliefs. Thus, I examined social comparisons as a mediating variable between ideology and false consciousness.

To test for mediation, that social comparisons will be mediate the relationship between ideological beliefs and false consciousness, I followed the recommendations outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986), which suggests that several statistically significant conditions must be met to establish mediation. First, there must be a significant relationship between the predictor variable (ideology) and outcome variable (false consciousness) in order to establish that there is an effect being mediated. Second, the predictor variable (ideology) must be related to a proposed mediator (social comparisons). If the above relationships are found to be significant, one proceeds to the third and final step. The third step involves testing whether the effect of the predictor variable (ideology) on the outcome variable (false consciousness) vanishes, in the case of full mediation, or is significantly diminished, in the case of a partial mediation, when the mediators (social comparisons) are controlled. Mediation was analyzed through a series

of multiple regression analyses based on the specific hypotheses (3A-3E) I proposed above.

With regard to hypothesis *3b*, that the more strongly participants endorse a multiculturalism ideology, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness and that advantaged groups comparisons (Whites) will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between multiculturalism and false consciousness (for either system justification or racial colorblindness) were not present. The second and third part of this hypothesis, that the more strongly participants endorse a Afrocentric and anti-White ideologies, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness and advantaged groups comparisons will account for this relationship was also not testable because the association between Afrocentrism and system justification and the association between Anti-White and colorblindness were not present.

I did test the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse an Afrocentric ideology, the less likely they will endorse colorblindness and Whites comparisons will account for this relationship. An Afrocentric ideology did predict racial colorblindness, but the second step of the mediation analysis, that Afrocentrism will be related to White comparisons was not significant. I also tested the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse an anti-White ideology, the less likely they will endorse system justification and White comparisons will account for this relationship. Again, an anti-White ideology did predict system justification, but in the second step, that anti-White ideology will be related to White comparisons was not significant.

With regard to *3c-3d*, that the more strongly participants endorse self-hatred, the more likely they will endorse system justification and low-status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between self-hatred and system justification was not present. The second part of this hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse miseducation, the more likely they will endorse racial colorblindness and lower status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationships was also not testable because the association between miseducaiton and racial colorblindness was not present.

I tested the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse self-hatred or humanist ideology, the more likely they will endorse racial colorblindness and low-status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship. Humanism did predict racial colorblindness, but the second step of the mediation analysis, that humanism will be related to lower status outgroup or Black comparisons was not significant. Self-hatred and Black comparisons were also was not significant in the second step of the mediation analysis. Finally, self-hatred was found to be related to colorblindness (step 1) and self-hatred did significantly predict low-status outgroup comparisons (step 2), but the final step of the mediation analysis, that the relationship between self-hatred and colorblindness will no longer be significant when low-status outgroup comparisons are controlled was not found.

Lastly, I tested *3e*, that endorsement of assimilation or humanist ideologies will be positively related to false consciousness (both system justification and racial colorblindness), and comparisons with people in general will account for this

relationship. Both assimilation and humanism did predict false consciousness, but the second step of each of these mediation analyses, that assimilation and humanism will be related to comparisons with people in general was not significant.

Taken together, none of my hypothesized mediations were found to be significant. One possible explanation for these null findings is that in the bivariate analysis, only comparing with Whites had a significant negative association with false consciousness (racial colorblindness). Comparing with Blacks, other minorities, or people in general had no significant positive or negative relationship with either system justification or racial colorblindness. That said, whether one compares with other groups (or not) may not matter as much as the cognitive and affective components of the comparison process. Moreover, it appears that ideologies on their own, particularly an assimilation ideology, play an important role in participants endorsement of false consciousness.

The Context of Immigration

The purpose of the current research was to investigate the specific mechanisms involved in the endorsement of false consciousness among members of a traditionally disadvantaged group (Blacks) that includes both native and immigrant Blacks. Very little research has examined these issues in an immigrant context. Based on Sears, Fu, and Bui's (2003) concept of "Black exceptionalism", there should be no differences between native and immigrant Blacks. Black exceptionalism is a concept that maintains that ethnic identity is tied to the experience of discrimination for Blacks in the United

States in which the impermeable color line makes the experience of Blacks, both native- and immigrant, as basically similar.

Though there are features common to the identities of Black people (Phinney, 1990), each racial identity is also formed under the influence of a specific history and specific social conditions of the present that may represent differences between native and immigrant Blacks on social justice issues like false consciousness. Two studies using Sellers' MMRI (Sellers et al. 1997) underscore this point. Examining Black identity in a German (Wandert, Ochsmann, Brug, Chybicka, Lacassagne & Verkuyten 2009) and British context (Walsh, 2000), an assimilation ideology received the highest level of agreement in the German sample, whereas a nationalist ideology received the lowest. The comparison of the ideology dimensions between countries also points to the influence of the social context. Black Germans showed more agreement with the assimilation ideology than American or British participants and less agreement with the nationalist ideology than the African American sample and, to a smaller degree, Black British. In contrast to these findings, Jones, Cross, & DeFour's (2007) analysis of racial identity and race-related stress among American and Caribbean women support the "Black exceptionalism" theory. Specifically, using the CRIS, there were no significant differences on any of the subscales between American and Caribbean women.

The social comparison process of Black immigrants may also differ from that of native-born Blacks. Contact with racism may be a defining feature of these differences. Unlike American-born Blacks, the Black-White dichotomy is not a primary dimension of comparison for many Black immigrants (Waters, 1999). As a consequence, it is possible

that Black immigrants may have more favorable views toward Whites. In an analysis of the comparison choices among ethnic and immigrant groups, Wiley, Perkins, and Deaux (2010) found that 2nd generation Black immigrants rated comparisons with Whites less favorably than 1st generation Black immigrants. Thus, Black immigrants may have more favorable views toward Whites such that Whites may be a source of comparison.

Finally, it is plausible that Black immigrant groups will endorse false consciousness more strongly than native-born participants based on dissonance theories (Festinger, 1957). According to cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), attitude discrepant behavior creates an uncomfortable psychological state of dissonance. People are motivated to resolve inconsistencies in their thoughts, feelings, and behavior by providing justifications or rationalizations for their actions and experiences. Thus, changing attitude discrepant behavior is one way to reduce dissonance. For Black immigrant groups, immigrating to another country and finding that that country treats you unequally because of the color of your skin may lead to feelings of dissonance. To reduce this dissonance, Black immigrants may justify and rationalize this unequal treatment in order to feel that they made the right decision immigrate.

To investigate these possible differences and the role that ideology and social comparisons have on false consciousness, I tested the above hypotheses again separately for native and immigrant groups.

Preliminary Analysis among Immigrant Groups

Table 5 displays the means and standard deviations among system justification, racial colorblindness, the ideology variables, and the social comparison items. Mean scores on false consciousness assessing system justification and racial colorblindness did not differ between native and immigrant participants ($M_s=4.13$ and 4.11 , respectively for system justification, n.s.; $M_s=2.60$ and 2.71 , respectively for racial colorblindness, n.s.).

Native-born participants had significantly higher ratings of Afrocentric ideology than immigrant participants ($M_s=3.73$ and 3.24 , respectively, $t=2.25$, $p < .05$). Similarly, native-born participants had marginally higher ratings of assimilation ideology than immigrant participants ($M_s=3.76$ and 3.32 for native and immigrants, respectively, $t=1.67$, $p < .10$).

Regarding social comparison preferences, immigrant participants compared themselves more with all groups (Blacks, Whites, other minorities, and people in general) than native-born participants. Immigrant participants had significantly higher ratings on comparisons with other minorities and comparisons with people in general than native-born participants, ($M_s=2.18$ and 2.52 , respectively for native and immigrant comparisons with other minorities, $t=-2.02$, $p < .05$; $M_s=2.20$ and 2.52 , respectively for native and immigrant comparisons with people in general, $t=-1.95$, $p < .05$). Immigrants also had marginally higher ratings on comparisons with Whites and Blacks, such that immigrants compared themselves more with Whites and Blacks than did native-born participants ($M_s=1.77$ and 2.04 , respectively for native and immigrant comparisons with

Whites, $t=-1.70$, $p < .10$; $M_s=2.42$ and 2.72 , respectively for native and immigrant comparisons with Blacks, $t=-1.67$, $p < .10$).

While immigrant participants compared themselves more with all comparison groups, they did not feel any better off or any more satisfied about their situation compared to native-born participants. In fact, the only difference between the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons was a tendency for native-born participants to think they were better off compared to Whites to a greater degree than immigrant participants ($M_s=3.27$ and 3.04 for native and immigrants, respectively, $t=.705$, $p < .10$).

Time in the United States played a role in immigrant's comparison preferences. There was a marginal negative association between time in the United States and comparison with Whites, $r(77) = -.21$, $p < .10$, such that the more time immigrants lived in the United States, the less likely they were to compare themselves with Whites. There was also a significant negative association between time in the United States and comparisons with people in general, $r(80) = -.26$, $p < .05$, such that the more time immigrants lived in the United States, the less likely they compare themselves with people in general.

Finally, time in the United States was also associated with feeling better off compared to other minorities, $r(80) = .25$, $p < .05$ and people in general, $r(80) = .31$, $p < .01$ such that the more time immigrants lived in the United States, the more likely they felt better off about their situation compared to other minorities and to people in general.

Taken together, immigrants may compare themselves less with Whites over time because they may learn about and experience how the racial hierarchy in the United States treats Whites better than Blacks. Comparing with people in general is somewhat of an ambiguous comparison and it is plausible that the longer immigrants live in the United States their comparison choices become more specific to particular groups. Finally, the fact that immigrants felt better off compared to other minorities and people in general over time may be indicative of the dissonance process. Specifically, feeling better off compared to other low-status groups and people in general may be a rationalization tool for immigrants the longer than they live in the United States.

Ideology and False Consciousness by Immigrant Groups

To understand the associations between the ideological dimensions described above and the two false consciousness measures (system justification, racial colorblindness) by native and immigrant groups, zero-order correlations were calculated. In general, I hypothesized that the more participants adopt an assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred or humanist ideology, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness. Table 6 displays the zero-order correlations among the ideology variables, system justification, and racial colorblindness by native and immigrant groups separately.

Looking at the correlations by immigrant group, the data reveal that endorsing a humanist ideology was associated with both native and immigrant groups false consciousness beliefs but in differing ways. Greater endorsement of racial

colorblindness was marginally associated with a humanist ideology among native-born participants $r(64) = .21, p < .10$, a pattern not found among the immigrant participants. However, greater endorsement of system justification was associated with a humanist ideology among immigrant participants $r(83) = .24, p < .05$. The trend is the same for native-born participants, but is not significant.

I also hypothesized that the more participants adopt an Anti-White, Afrocentric, or multicultural ideology, the less likely they will endorse false consciousness. Only an Afrocentric ideology was negatively associated with false consciousness among native-born participants. That is, greater endorsement of racial colorblindness was associated with lower endorsement of an Afrocentric ideology, $r(70) = -.29, p < .05$ among native-born participants, a pattern not found among immigrant participants.

Predicting False Consciousness among Immigrant Groups

I ran a series of multiple regressions to determine the relative strength that the specific ideologies have on false consciousness beliefs. To test that specific ideologies predict false consciousness, participants false consciousness (system justification and colorblindness, separately) scores were regressed on participants assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, anti-White, multiculturalism, Afrocentric and humanist scores for native and immigrant participants separately. The ideology variables were mean centered and the criterion variables (system justification and colorblindness) were left uncentered.

Somewhat consistent with H1 (see Table 8), the overall model for native-born participants explained 31% of the variance in system justification ($F(7, 57) = 3.18; p < .01$). Miseducation ($b = -.36; p < .01$), self-hatred (marginal) ($b = .25; p < .10$), anti-White ($b = -.38; p < .05$), and Afrocentrism ($b = .24; p < .10$) (marginal) ideologies had a significant multivariate association with system justification. That is, among native-born participants, justifying the system was greatest among those for whom self-hatred was a central ideology and surprisingly when Afrocentrism was a central ideology. Further, support for the system was greatest among those for whom miseducation and Anti-white were not central ideologies.

The overall model for racial colorblindness among native-born participants explained 34% of the variance in racial colorblindness ($F(7, 56) = 3.34; p < .01$). Only assimilation ($b = .46; p < .01$) and Afrocentric ($b = -.25; p < .10$) (marginal) ideologies had a significant multivariate association with racial colorblindness. That is, support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom assimilation was a central ideology. In contrast, support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom Afrocentrism was not a central ideology.

Somewhat consistent with H1, for immigrant participants (see Table 9), the overall model for system justification explained 22% of the variance in system justification ($F(7, 72) = 2.63; p < .05$). Only assimilation ($b = .33; p < .01$) and multiculturalism ideologies ($b = -.32; p < .05$) had a significant multivariate association with system justification. Among immigrant participants, justifying the system was greatest among those for whom assimilation was a central ideology. Justifying the

system was also greatest among those for whom multiculturalism was not a central ideology.

The overall model for racial colorblindness explained 37% of the variance in racial colorblindness ($F(7, 71) = 5.38; p < .001$). Assimilation ($b = .35; p < .01$), miseducation ($b = .28; p < .05$), and Afrocentrism ($b = -.23; p < .05$) had a significant multivariate association with racial colorblindness. Support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom assimilation and miseducation were central ideologies. In contrast, support for colorblindness was greatest among those for whom Afrocentrism was not a central ideology.

Taken together, it appears that system justification is better predicted for native-born participants than for immigrants in terms of the total variance accounted for in the analysis (31% vs. 22%), while the variance for racial colorblindness across the two groups were fairly similar (34% for native-born and 37% for immigrants). There were also some differences in the ideologies that predicted false consciousness among native-born and immigrants. The ideologies that predicted colorblindness by native and immigrant participants were fairly similar with assimilation and Afrocentrism predicting colorblindness (in different directions). For system justification, however, the predictive models were fairly unique by native and immigrant participants. In particular, while assimilation played a role in immigrants and native-born bivariate relationships and positively predicted colorblindness across the groups, assimilation only significantly predicted system justification for immigrant participants. In contrast,

among native-born participants, miseducation, self-hatred, anti-White and Afrocentric ideologies predicted system justification.

Social Comparisons and False Consciousness among Immigrant Groups

To understand the associations between social comparisons and the two false consciousness measures (system justification, racial colorblindness) by immigrant group, zero-order correlations were calculated. Table 7 displays the zero-order correlations among the social comparisons items, system justification, and racial colorblindness by native and immigrant groups separately.

Consistent with *2a*, the data reveal that the more native-born participants endorsed racial colorblindness, the less likely they compared themselves with Whites $r(71) = -.30, p < .01$; a finding not found among immigrant participants. However, in contrast in *2a*, the data also show that the more native-born participants endorsed racial colorblindness, the less likely they compared themselves with Blacks $r(71) = -.28, p < .05$; a finding not found among immigrant participants. Based on these findings, it is possible that at least for native-born participants, endorsing racial colorblindness may mean not thinking of people in terms of different ethnic groups and thus comparing less with any group.

Feeling better off, rather than worse off in comparison to Whites (*2b*) was not significantly associated with either system justification or racial colorblindness among native or immigrant participants. However, consistent with *2c*, the more immigrant participants felt satisfied about their situation compared to Whites, the more they

endorsed racial colorblindness $r(100) = .28, p < .01$ and system justification, $r(100) = .22, p < .05$, a finding not found among native-born participants.

There were also relationships between how participants thought and felt about their situation compared to other groups and false consciousness that I did not hypothesize. Specifically, the better off native-born participants felt about their situation compared to Blacks (their ingroup), the less likely they were to endorse racial colorblindness $r(73) = -.21, p < .05$. In contrast, among immigrant participants, there was a marginal positive association between feeling better or worse off compared to Blacks and racial colorblindness $r(98) = .17, p < .10$. That is, the better immigrant participants felt about their situation compared to Blacks, the more they endorsed racial colorblindness. Thus, feeling better off compared to their own group (Blacks) showed differing relationships between native and immigrant Blacks. For native-born participants, feeling better off compared to their own group did not mean that they denied, distorted, and minimized race and racism. In contrast, for immigrant groups, feeling better off compared to their ingroup (Blacks) did mean they denied, distorted and minimized race and racism. However, it may be possible that immigrants do not consider "Blacks" to be part of their ingroup.

Similarly, the more immigrant participants felt better off compared to people in general, the greater they endorsed system justification, $r(100) = .38, p < .001$; a finding not found among native-born participants.

Feeling satisfied about one's situation also played a role in immigrant participant's beliefs about system justification and racial colorblindness but not among

native-born participants. For immigrant participants, feeling satisfied about their situation compared to Blacks, $r(97) = .28, p < .01$, other minorities, $r(99) = .26, p < .01$, and people in general (marginal), $r(100) = .18, p < .10$, the greater endorsement of racial colorblindness. Similarly, feeling satisfied about their situation compared to people in general, $r(100) = .33, p < .001$, was also positively associated with system justification.

Taken together, among immigrant participants, feeling better off and feeling satisfied compared Whites, minorities, and people in general was related to their justification of the system and the belief that race and racism does not play an important role in current social and economic realities. Conversely, how native and immigrant participants felt about their situation compared to Blacks play a different role among the groups. For immigrants, feeling better off was positively related to false consciousness while feeling better off was negatively associated among native-born participants.

Social Comparisons as Mediator among Immigrant Groups

None of my hypothesized mediations were found to be significant among the total sample. To test for mediation among native and immigrant participants separately, that social comparisons will be mediate the relationship between ideological beliefs and false consciousness, I followed the recommendations outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). I ran a series of multiple regression analyses based on the specific hypotheses (3a-3e) I proposed above.

Among native-born participants, hypothesis 3b, that the more strongly participants endorse a multiculturalism or an anti-White ideology, the less likely they

will endorse false consciousness and that advantaged groups comparisons (Whites) will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between multiculturalism or an Anti-White ideology and false consciousness (system justification and racial colorblindness) were not present. Similarly, the second part of the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse a Afrocentric ideology, the less likely they will endorse system justification and that advantaged groups comparisons will account for this relationship was also not testable because the association between Afrocentrism and system justification were not present.

I tested the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse an Afrocentric ideology, the less likely they will endorse colorblindness and Whites comparisons will account for this relationship. An Afrocentric ideology did predict racial colorblindness, but the second step of the mediation analysis, that Afrocentrism will be related to White comparisons was not significant.

Among immigrant participants, *3b* was not testable because the initial relationship between Afrocentrism, multiculturalism, anti-White ideologies and false consciousness (both system justification and racial colorblindness) were not present.

Among native-born participants, hypotheses *3c* and *3d*, that the more strongly participants endorse self-hatred, the more likely they will endorse false consciousness (system justification and racial colorblindness) and low-status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between self-hatred and false consciousness was not present. The second part of this hypothesis, that the more strongly participants endorse miseducation, the more likely

they will endorse system justification and low-status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship was also not testable because the association between miseducation and system justification was not present.

I tested the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse miseducation, the more likely they will endorse racial colorblindness and low-status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship. Miseducation did predict racial colorblindness, but the second step of the mediation analysis, that miseducation will be related to low-status outgroup or Black comparisons was not significant.

Among immigrant participants, for *3c* and *3d*, most of the mediations were not testable because the initial relationship between self-hatred, miseducation and false consciousness (system justification and racial colorblindness) were not present. I did test the hypothesis that the more strongly participants endorse miseducation, the more likely they will endorse racial colorblindness and low status outgroup or Black comparisons will account for this relationship. Miseducation did predict racial colorblindness, but the second step of the mediation analysis, that miseducation will be related to lower status outgroup or Black comparisons was not significant.

Finally, among native-born participants, hypothesis *3e*, that the more strongly participants endorse humanism, the more likely they will endorse system justification and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between humanism and system justification was not present.

I tested the hypothesis that assimilation or humanist ideologies will be positively related to false consciousness (both system justification and racial colorblindness for assimilation; colorblindness for humanism), and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship. Both assimilation and humanism did predict false consciousness, but the second step of a mediation analysis that assimilation and humanism will be related to comparisons with people in general, was not significant.

For immigrant participants, for hypothesis 3e, that the more strongly participants endorse humanism, the more likely they will endorse colorblindness and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship was not testable because the association between humanism and colorblindness was not present.

I tested the hypothesis that endorsement of assimilation or humanist ideologies will be positively related to false consciousness (both system justification and racial colorblindness for assimilation; system justification for humanism) and comparisons with people in general will account for this relationship. Both assimilation and humanism did predict false consciousness, but the second step of a mediation analysis, that assimilation and humanist will be related to comparisons with people in general, was not significant.

Similar to my findings among the total sample, none of the hypothesized mediations were found to be significant. These null findings suggest that the ideologies participants hold and the social comparison process may be two separate processes related to false consciousness.

Discussion

Evidence of false consciousness among some low-status groups is well established in the social psychological literature. However, the mechanisms through which low-status groups accept, maintain, and perpetuate their inequality has been less clear. This dissertation sheds light on some of the psychological mechanisms that contribute to the maintenance of false consciousness among low-status groups.

I explored two mechanisms that I believe play a role in African Americans' maintenance of false consciousness. The first mechanism I proposed through which low-status groups endorse false consciousness (or not) is ideological. Specifically, I argue that the significant and subjective meaning one places on what is it to be a member of a particular groups plays a role in whether groups will justify and accept their own inequality (Abeles, 1976; Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998).

Using these assumptions within the context of Black identity, Cross (Cross & Vandiver, 2001) and Sellers (Sellers et al.,1998) developed models of Black identity as comprising a set of attitudes or ideologies that become templates a person uses to organize information about the self, others and the environment. Recent research using Cross's assumptions found that the ideologies of miseducation and self-hatred were positively related to internalized racism (Cokley, 2002). Based on these assumptions, I hypothesized that ideologies that deemphasize the hardships and struggles often experienced by low-status groups would be related to the endorsement of false consciousness.

A second possible factor that I investigated in this dissertation is social comparison. According to relative deprivation theory, feelings of deprivation will depend on whom an individual compares him or herself to (Crosby, 1976) such that an individual who lacks something will be less angry if comparable others also lack the same thing, but will feel relatively deprived if comparable others possess the object. Several studies have found that people in low-status groups who felt relatively contented about their situation compared themselves to groups who were less or similarly disadvantaged as they were.

To provide a test that less or similarly disadvantaged social comparison will elicit false consciousness, the role of social comparisons was approached in two different ways. Firstly, social comparison preference was examined as a mediator between ideology and false consciousness. Secondly and more directly, social comparisons were experimentally manipulated in an experimental paradigm.

In this chapter, I will review key findings from this research. By reflecting on previous literature, the research design, and analyses techniques I used, I will discuss the importance of these findings within the social psychological literature. I will wrap up this final chapter with suggestions for future research, including consideration of the strengths and limitations of the present work.

Summary of Findings and Contributions to Research

Ideology and false consciousness

The results of the study partially supported my hypothesis that system justification and racial colorblindness are associated with ideologies that deemphasize the hardships and struggles often experienced by low-status groups (e.g. assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, humanism). Higher system justification and racial colorblindness beliefs were associated with stronger assimilation and humanist (the relationship was marginal for colorblindness) ideologies. Higher colorblindness beliefs were also associated with stronger miseducation and self-hatred (marginal) ideologies. In contrast, higher racial colorblindness was significantly and negatively associated with Afrocentrism. Similarly, those endorsing an anti-White ideology showed a stronger rejection of system justification. These findings supplement the work of Cokley (2002) who found similar results regarding the CRIS and internalized racialism.

It is noteworthy that multiculturalism had no significant association with system justification or racial colorblindness. I agree with Cokley's (2002) assessment that Blacks who incorporate multiple cultural frames of reference as an ideology are less likely to engage in any sort of racialized thinking and instead recognize the inherent worth and potential of all people. It is also possible, at least in my sample, that the participants were confused or ambivalent with the multiculturalism items. For example, in the statement "I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asian, Latinos, gays, lesbians, Jews,

Whites, etc.”), many participants crossed out the gay and lesbian groups when responding to the statement. It is unclear what effect this had on the participants’ opinions of the multiculturalism items.

The results of the regression analyses further demonstrated that assimilation was a central ideology in people’s expression of false consciousness. Specifically, assimilation had a significant multivariate association with system justification and racial colorblindness. Miseducation and Afrocentrism (negatively) were the only ideologies that also predicted colorblindness.

Social comparison and false consciousness

I also found partial support for my hypothesis that there will be negative relationships between false consciousness beliefs and comparisons with Whites and positive relationships between false consciousness and comparisons with Blacks and other minorities. Results showed that the more participants compared themselves with Whites, the less they endorsed racial colorblindness, but not system justification.

However, my hypothesis that there will be positive relationships between comparisons with Blacks or other minorities and false consciousness was not supported. In contrast to what relative deprivation theorizes and what Tropp and Wright (1999) found in their analysis of social comparisons and relative deprivation among Blacks and Latinos, I found no significant positive relationships between comparisons with Blacks or other minorities and either of the false consciousness measures as I had hypothesized. Two possible explanations may account for our different results. Firstly, Tropp and Wright’s (1999) participants were younger and were recruited mainly from a university

setting, whereas my participants were on average 30 years old and recruited from the community. Secondly, assessing one's sense of deprivation in comparison to less or similarly disadvantaged groups may be a different process from assessing the fairness of the political system (system justification) and racial hierarchy (colorblindness) as these relate to comparisons to less or similarly disadvantaged groups. In particular, the latter is asking participants to make an assessment about the fairness of the structures in society in terms of politics and race, while an assessment of one's sense of deprivation in comparison to Blacks and other minorities is more of an interpersonal process. It is possible that comparisons with less and similarly disadvantaged groups do not tap into the structural inequities of society and among racial groups, as comparisons with higher status groups do, but tap into an interpersonal process that I did not measure.

Consistent with my predictions about the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons, the better off participants felt about their situation compared to Whites, the stronger their beliefs in system justification and racial colorblindness (marginal). The results also showed that feeling satisfied about their situation compared to Whites was significantly and positively associated with both system justification and racial colorblindness.

Moreover, having positive feelings toward all groups was associated with false consciousness beliefs. I found that people who felt better off and more satisfied about their situation compared to Blacks, other minorities, and people in general showed stronger endorsement of system justification and racial colorblindness.

However, my hypothesis that there will be higher expressions of false consciousness when low-status social comparisons (Blacks) are made salient than when high-status social comparisons are made salient was not supported. In fact, the results showed marginally higher system justification and significantly higher colorblindness when high-status social comparison were made salient than when low-status social comparisons were made salient. These findings were unexpected in light of the empirical evidence that has found that comparing with less or similarly disadvantaged social comparison is related to feeling satisfaction (as opposed to deprivation). However, most of the empirical evidence did not directly manipulate status conditions. These findings were also surprising in light of the correlational data that show the opposite relationship, at least among Whites comparisons (comparisons with Whites were negatively associated with racial colorblindness).

It is possible that two different processes are at play and that two different causal directions are represented in the correlational data and the experimental manipulation. In the experimental manipulation, manipulation of group comparison makes one particular group salient, either a Black group or a White group. For the Black participants, this essentially means making an ingroup (their own group of Blacks) or an outgroup (Whites) salient. What might be happening when these groups are made salient is that participants are basing their opinions of colorblindness based on what they perceive to be the positions of either Blacks or Whites to be. For example, if a Black group is salient, a person might be less likely to endorse colorblindness because Blacks are believed to be less endorsing of colorblindness than Whites. If a White group is

salient, Black participants might be more endorsing of colorblindness because they think Whites are generally in agreement with colorblindness. Interestingly, the immigrants and native-born participants split in the Black-salient condition, with the decreased endorsement of colorblindness happening primarily for the native-born, that is, those who are probably more familiar with the critiques of colorblindness.

In the correlational data, a different process may be going on where the causal direction is in the opposite direction and participants are making assessments of colorblindness based on personal experiences, rather than reactions to momentary salience conditions. In this context, an individual's personal beliefs about whether society should be colorblind or not precedes participants comparison choices. If people believe that society is not colorblind, it may be in their interest to look at the full range of comparisons. On the other hand, if they think society is colorblind, then it doesn't matter.

Finally, none of my hypothesized mediations were supported. This might be due to the fact that how often participants compared themselves with Whites, Blacks, other minorities, and people in general did not play a sizeable role in false consciousness beliefs as I had expected. Comparing with Whites only had a significant negative association with false consciousness (racial colorblindness). Because of this, many of my hypotheses about the mediating role of social comparisons could not be assessed. These nonsignificant results may point to the relative importance of ideology. Specifically, the ideologies that people hold about themselves and their group, on their own, played a significant role in their false consciousness beliefs.

Summary of Findings by Immigrant Groups and Contributions to Research

The results of the study with regard to immigrant groups showed that there were no differences between native-born and immigrant participants' beliefs about system justification and racial colorblindness. However, native-born participants did have significantly higher ratings of Afrocentric ideology than immigrant participants. This finding mirrors results of Wandert et al. (2009) and Walsh (2001) who also found less agreement with a Black nationalist orientation among a Black German and a Black British sample. Native-born participants also had marginally higher ratings of assimilation ideology than immigrant participants.

Regarding social comparison preferences, immigrant participants compared themselves more with all groups (Blacks, Whites, other minorities, and people in general) than did native-born participants. These results somewhat support Wiley et al. (2010), at least for comparisons with Whites. They found that first-generation Black immigrants were more interested in comparing with Whites than were second-generation Black immigrants. The groups did not differ that much on how they thought and felt about the groups. The only difference between the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons was a tendency for native-born participants to think they were better off compared to Whites to a greater degree than immigrant participants.

Ideology and false consciousness by immigrant groups

The results for immigrant groups partially support my hypothesis that system justification and racial colorblindness will be associated with ideologies that deemphasize the hardships and struggles often experienced by low-status groups (e.g. assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, humanism). My results showed that humanism was a central ideology for both native and immigrants as it related to endorsement of false consciousness, but in different ways. Immigrants who endorsed a humanist ideology more strongly justified the existing system, a result that was not found among native-born participants. Seeing people as human beings regardless of their racial/ethnic background may be adaptive for immigrants and might play a role in their rationalization and justification of an unjust society. However, for native-born participants, endorsing a humanist ideology was associated with marginally higher racial colorblindness beliefs. It is unclear why endorsement of a humanist ideology played a different role for immigrant and native-born participants.

Greater endorsement of racial colorblindness was also associated with lower endorsement of an Afrocentric ideology among native-born participants but not among immigrant participants. A closer examination of the Afrocentricity items might explain why there was no significant negative relationship between Afrocentrism and false consciousness among immigrant participants. It is possible that immigrant participants did not understand the definition of Afrocentrism. In fact, every item of the Afrocentricity subscale has the word Afrocentric included but does not include a definition of what Afrocentrism is (e.g., "I see and think about things from an

Afrocentric perspective,” “Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective”).

Additionally, because the Black immigrants came from countries where they were in the majority (in terms of population), it is also plausible that, adopting a “Black perspective” that is central to the Afrocentric subscale is taken for granted and naturally part of the self-concept. Thus for Black immigrants, Afrocentrism may already be a state of being, whereas Afrocentrism for native-born participants may be a perspective and a point of view that you, choose whether to adopt or not. Moreover, in a U.S. context, adopting an Afrocentric or a Black nationalist ideology has historically been defined as an attitude centering around a hyper-rejection of the racial status quo. Cross (1991) referred to certain proponents of Afrocentricity as “vulgar nationalists” whose “reactionary racism...is beyond the reach of normal discourse” (p. 213). Because Afrocentrism may naturally be part of the self-concept for immigrants, endorsing Afrocentrism may not be as reactionary to the racial status quo as it is to their native-born counterparts.

For immigrants and native-born participants, assimilation ideology also predicted both system justification and racial colorblindness. Afrocentrism also had a significant negative association among both groups except among native-born participants’ endorsement of system justification. In contrast to what I hypothesized, among native-born participants, justifying the system was greatest among those for whom Afrocentrism was a central ideology. It is unclear why Afrocentrism would positively predict native-born participants’ system justification beliefs, especially since

what is central to Afrocentrism is Black empowerment which is in sharp contrast to system justification.

Social comparisons and false consciousness by immigrant groups

I also found partial support for my hypothesis that there will be negative relationships between false consciousness beliefs and comparisons with Whites and positive relationships between false consciousness and comparisons with Blacks and other minorities. Among native-born participants, the more they compared themselves with Whites, the less they endorsed racial colorblindness, but not system justification.

In contrast to my hypothesis, I found a significant negative relationship between racial colorblindness and comparisons with Blacks among native-born participants, a finding that is inconsistent with theory and empirical evidence of relative deprivation. It is noteworthy that in addition to the significant negative association found between racial colorblindness and comparisons with Blacks and Whites, there were also (non-significant) negative associations with comparisons with other minorities and people in general for native-born participants. This may mean that at least for native-born participants, endorsing racial colorblindness means not thinking of people in terms of different ethnic groups, which in turn may lead people to compare less or not at all with any groups.

Somewhat consistent with my predictions about the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons, the better off participants felt about their situation compared to Whites, the stronger their beliefs in system justification and racial colorblindness. The results also showed that feeling satisfied about their situation

compared to Whites was significantly and positively associated with both system justification and racial colorblindness. However, these results only played a role in immigrants' false-consciousness beliefs.

The results also showed that having positive feelings toward all groups was associated with false consciousness beliefs but only among immigrant participants. I found that people who felt better and more satisfied about their situation compared to Blacks, other minorities, and people in general showed stronger endorsement of system justification and racial colorblindness. For native-born groups, there were no positive relationships between false consciousness and the cognitive and affective dimensions of social comparisons. In fact, there was a negative association between feeling better off compared to Blacks and racial colorblindness mirroring the findings about how often they compared themselves to Blacks. Thus, how well off and how satisfied immigrants felt about their situation played a central role in their endorsement of false consciousness. In contrast, positive feelings in comparison to Blacks showed the opposite effect to native-born participants.

It is striking that feeling better off and feeling satisfied about one's situation toward most groups were central to false-consciousness beliefs but only among immigrant participants. Also noteworthy is the different role that comparisons with the ingroup (Blacks) had on each of these groups endorsement of racial colorblindness. I found that the better that native-born participants felt better off about their situation compared to Blacks, the less likely they were to endorse racial colorblindness. In contrast, the better immigrant participants felt about their situation compared to Blacks,

the more they endorsed racial colorblindness (marginal). This finding speaks to the influence of the social context and of present social conditions that may represent the differences between native and immigrant Blacks. These findings may also reflect a dissonance process among immigrant participants where thinking and feeling better off than most groups may be a rationalization or dissonance reduction tool (Festinger, 1957).

Limitations and Critiques

Several limitations should be noted when interpreting the results of this study. First, the data were obtained from a crosssectional survey and most of the results are purely correlational. Causation and the direction of causation among variables cannot be inferred from the crosssectional data presented. Similarly, because the experimental manipulation did not include a control group, I am unable to say definitely that the manipulation of social comparisons caused changes in people's false consciousness beliefs. The inclusion of a control group would have allowed me to determine whether the results were due to the experimental manipulation and not some other variable.

Secondly, I have presented the results of a single study. Future research will need to use a diversity of samples, methods, and operationalizations to determine the boundary conditions of this effect. In this way, we can more fully determine the role that ideology and social comparisons play in the endorsement of false consciousness. Future studies should do this in part by determining if these results would generalize to different samples of Blacks and to other low-status groups, like women and other

minorities, in order to further understand whether ideologies and social comparisons are important psychological mechanisms in people's acceptance of their own inequality.

I also want to address possible criticisms to this research and to the study of false consciousness more generally. One potential critique of this research is that it blames victims for their oppression by implying that it is their own ideologies, comparisons, and ignorance that create their situation of oppression. It is not the purpose of this research to locate the responsibility or blame within victims. Further, this research does not to imply that members of devalued groups are incapable of rejecting injustice. The aim of this research project is not to find fault in victims but to understand and identify the mechanisms that contribute to the maintenance of false consciousness in order to develop tools for empowerment.

A second objection to this research has to do with social desirability. It is possible that the participants tried to present themselves in the most positive light by endorsing system justification and racial colorblindness. Specifically, participants might have felt it was desirable to adopt a point a view that believes society is fair and just toward all groups of people. However, both in the total sample and broken down by immigrant groups, low levels of both system justification and racial colorblindness were reported, relative to the mid-point of the response scale.

Research by Scott (1990) complicates this issue further by arguing that what looks like false consciousness is really a public display that differs considerably from the political resistance that disadvantaged groups and individuals express in private. I agree with Scott that pressures to comply publicly with the wishes of the powerful play

a significant role in the beliefs and actions of the powerless. However, I do not think his analysis is a complete picture. I believe that public/private beliefs and actions were necessary during a particular time-period when low-status groups had to “put on a show” or “lay it on thick” in order to survive and advance in society. I do not believe this type of behavior is as prevalent today as it might have been before. Moreover, in my research situation, participants’ responses were collected privately, under conditions that guaranteed their anonymity, and their responses had no negative consequences to them.

Future Directions

One key finding that should be elaborated in the future research is the consideration of the role that emotions play in a low-status group’s endorsement of false consciousness. Central to whether participants endorsed false consciousness, especially among immigrant participants, was how much better off and how satisfied they felt in comparison to specific groups. Research on collective action and collective protest has found the role of emotions, particularly anger, important to a person’s desire for political protest. This research suggests that emotions motivate individuals to take action (Smith & Kessler, 2004). The findings from my dissertation also illustrate that emotions are relevant in inaction. Future research should examine the function of emotions in experiences of and reactions to discrimination and how emotions affect both resistance and acquiescence to one’s low-status position.

My findings also raise important questions about personal self-esteem. What role does system justification and racial colorblindness play in personal self-esteem? It is possible that endorsing system justification and racial colorblindness will be associated with lower-self esteem. However, there is little evidence of a negative relationship among low-status groups. In fact, research by Major et al. (2007) and Foster, Sloto, and Ruby (2006) found that endorsing a meritocracy ideology was positively related to self-esteem among members of low-status groups who did not perceive their group to be a target of discrimination or did not perceive themselves to have been a victim of discrimination. This research suggests that there may not be a psychological detriment (at least in terms of self-esteem) to endorsing meritocratic beliefs even to those who are in positions of low status. Future research should further examine the role of self-worth and personal self-esteem.

My dissertation focused solely on understanding the mechanisms that account for false consciousness among a traditionally disadvantaged group. However, the results of the study also draw attention to the boundary conditions between acquiescence and false consciousness and resistance and collective action. That is, membership in a low-status group leads different people to adopt different types of intergroup behavior. The circumstances associated with different forms of action by disadvantaged-group members need to be systematically addressed in social psychological research. Thus, future research frameworks should be developed that categorize the numerous possible behaviors that might be exhibited by disadvantaged-group members. Overbeck et al. (2004) suggest that social dominance is one such

personality variable that predicted which members of low-status groups would rebel against the status quo and which would acquiesce.

Future research should also replicate this study with a large and more geographically diverse sample of Blacks. Black Americans living in New York City, where this research was conducted, live in what Kasinitz (2002) and his colleagues call a “majority-minority city” where non-White groups represent a majority of the population. Further, the participants in this study to the best of my knowledge lived in diverse areas where native and immigrant Blacks represent a large proportion of the population. Blacks living in New York City may have different attitudes than Blacks living in other areas of the country who reside in predominantly White neighborhoods.

One additional finding should be elaborated in future research. Many of my hypotheses were partially supported by system justification and not by racial colorblindness and vice versa. The fact that system justification and racial colorblindness are correlated with one another suggests that they may serve a similar function. However, a closer examination of the system justification scale and the racial colorblindness scale illustrates that they share similar functions, but not all. Most items on the system justification scale ask participants to make an assessment of society in terms of its fairness or unfairness of it (e.g., “In general, you find society to be fair”; “Our society is getting worse every year”; “Most policies serve the greater good.”). In contrast, the racial colorblindness scale measures people’s denial, distortion and/or minimization of race and racism. Specifically, participants are asked to make an assessment of race and racism within a hierarchical society (e.g., “Racism is a major

problem in the U.S.”; “Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison”; “White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.”). What these findings suggest is that there are many forms of false consciousness that have different causes and different consequences. Jost (1995) theorized a taxonomy for the types of beliefs which qualify as false consciousness: fatalism; false identification of blame; failure to perceive injustice or disadvantage; justification of social roles and status; identification with the oppressor; and resistance to change. All of these beliefs are theorized to be harmful to devalued groups insofar as they raise the possibility of acquiescence to unjust conditions and circumstances. However, how this “harm” gets played out in the lives of disadvantaged groups can vary across any of the different forms of false consciousness as my results demonstrate. Future research should develop a more rigorous and consensual classification in order to fully understand the causes and consequences of the different types of false consciousness.

Finally, qualitative inquiry could also complement quantitative research on false consciousness. For example, in a qualitative study of American, Afro-Caribbean, and African-born identity, Perkins (2010) demonstrated through a discourse analysis that the way participants talked about oppression and discrimination can lead them to de-emphasize and rationalize racial injustice in their lives. In particular, some participants de-emphasized discrimination by arguing that African Americans were overly sensitive to oppression and discrimination and too quick to use discrimination as an excuse or as an explanation for not doing well. Other participants rationalized racial injustice by describing the behavior of perpetrators as abnormal and as almost helpless and not in

control of their discriminatory behavior (Verkuyten, 2001). Based on these examples, qualitative analyses of false consciousness can also elucidate how low-status groups understand, express, and make meaning of their low-status positions. Thus, false consciousness research designs should be developed with both quantitative and qualitative methods in mind.

Conclusions

Collectively, the results of this dissertation represent an attempt to specify the ideological, cognitive, and motivational mechanisms associated with false consciousness among low-status groups. The results demonstrate the important role of ideology and the social comparison process. I have offered a starting point to understanding the factors that mitigate this tendency of oppression by those who are oppressed. It is my contention that my framework provides a better understanding of the actions under which some disadvantaged groups may accept, justify and perpetuate their own inequality.

Appendix A

Before you begin, we need to be sure that you are eligible to participate in the study.

Are you over 18 years of age?

If you answered no to this question, please talk to the person who is administering this study now.

If you answered yes to the question, please read the following directions:

- (1) Please answer the questions carefully and honestly. There are no right or wrong answers; we just want to know what you think.*
- (2) Please answer the questions in the order that they are presented.*
- (3) Don't go back and change your answers. We're interested in your first thought about each question.*

A SAMPLE QUESTION:

On most questions you will be asked to read a statement and then rate how much you agree with it. Here is an example:

As an African American, life in America is good for me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

You will be asked to circle one number. You could circle:

- 1 if you strongly disagree,
- 2 or 3 if you moderately disagree,
- 4 if you have no opinion one way or the other,
- 5 or 6 if you moderately agree,
- and 7 if you strongly agree

If you have any questions while filling out the survey, don't hesitate to ask.

Thanks!

Please turn the page and begin filling out the questionnaire.

Directions: Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point Likert scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. **To ensure that your answers can be used, please respond to the statements as written,** and circle your numerical response to the question.

As an African American, life in America is good for me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays, and lesbians, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I hate the White community and all that it represents.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays, & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be "American" and not African American.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks and Whites have more commonalities than differences.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people should not consider race when buying art and selecting a book to read.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
White people should be destroyed.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people than just focusing on Black issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am American, and second I am a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I hate White people.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays, lesbians, etc).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We are all children of a higher being, therefore, we should love people of all races.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have developed an identity that stressed my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People regardless of their race have strengths and limitations.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Everyone has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Our society is getting worse every year.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Society is set up so that people usually get what they deserve.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Directions. Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States (U.S.). Using the **6-point scale, ranging from “1= Strongly disagree” to 6= Strongly agree**”, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racism is a major problem in the U.S.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color of their skin.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Talking about racial issues cause unnecessary tension.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6

It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

English should be the only official language in the U.S.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Directions: Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response using the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

How often do you compare yourself with most Whites?	Not at all				Very often
	1	2	3	4	5

Would you say you are better or worse off than most Whites?	Worse off				Better off
	1	2	3	4	5

How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most Whites?	Very angry				Very satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5

How often do you compare yourself with other minorities?	Not at all				Very often
	1	2	3	4	5

Would you say you are better or worse off than other minorities?	Worse off	Better off			
	1	2	3	4	5
How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to other minorities?	Very angry	Very satisfied			
	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you compare yourself with most people?	Not at all	Very often			
	1	2	3	4	5
Would you say you are better or worse off than most people?	Worse off	Better off			
	1	2	3	4	5
How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most people?	Very angry	Very satisfied			
	1	2	3	4	5

Please fill in the following information about your mother and father, to the extent that you know it.

	Mother	Father
Age now		
Country of birth		
Native Language		
Other Language(s) Spoken		
How would she/he call herself/himself in terms of ethnicity		
Present occupation		

Which of the following statements best describes your family situation?

- My family has a hard time buying the things we need.
- My family has just enough money for the things we need.
- My family has no problem buying the things we need, and sometimes we can also buy special things.
- My family has enough money to buy pretty much anything we want.

Appendix B

Before you begin, we need to be sure that you are eligible to participate in the study.

Are you over 18 years of age?

If you answered no to this question, please talk to the person who is administering this study now.

If you answered yes to the question, please read the following directions:

- (4) Please answer the questions carefully and honestly. There are no right or wrong answers; we just want to know what you think.*
- (5) Please answer the questions in the order that they are presented.*
- (6) Don't go back and change your answers. We're interested in your first thought about each question.*

A SAMPLE QUESTION:

On most questions you will be asked to read a statement and then rate how much you agree with it. Here is an example:

As an African American, life in America is good for me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

You will be asked to circle one number. You could circle:

- 1 if you strongly disagree,
- 2 or 3 if you moderately disagree,
- 4 if you have no opinion one way or the other,
- 5 or 6 if you moderately agree,
- and 7 if you strongly agree

If you have any questions while filling out the survey, don't hesitate to ask.

Thanks!

Please turn the page and begin filling out the questionnaire.

Directions: Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point Likert scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. **To ensure that your answers can be used, please respond to the statements as written,** and circle your numerical response to the question.

As an African American, life in America is good for me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays, and lesbians, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I hate the White community and all that it represents.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays, & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be "American" and not African American.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks and Whites have more commonalities than differences.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people should not consider race when buying art and selecting a book to read.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
White people should be destroyed.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people than just focusing on Black issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am American, and second I am a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I hate White people.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays, lesbians, etc).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We are all children of a higher being, therefore, we should love people of all races.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have developed an identity that stressed my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans).	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People regardless of their race have strengths and limitations.	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Directions: Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response **using the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.**

How often do you compare yourself with most Whites?

Not at all

Very often

1 2 3 4 5

Would you say you are better or worse off than most Whites?

Worse off

Better off

1 2 3 4 5

How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most Whites?

Very angry

Very satisfied

1 2 3 4 5

Directions: Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response **using the Likert scale ranging from “1= Strongly disagree” to “9= Strongly agree.”**

In general, you find society to be fair.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

In general, the American political system operates as it should.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

American society needs to be radically restructured.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

The United States is the best country in the world to live in.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Most policies serve the greater good.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Everyone has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Our society is getting worse every year.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Society is set up so that people usually get what they deserve.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly agree

Directions. Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States (U.S.). Using the **6-point scale, ranging from “1= Strongly disagree” to 6= Strongly agree**”, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.

Strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly agree

Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racism is a major problem in the U.S.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color of their skin.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6
Talking about racial issues cause unnecessary tension.	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	6

It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

English should be the only official language in the U.S.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Directions: Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response using the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

How often do you compare yourself with most Blacks?	Not at all				Very often
	1	2	3	4	5

Would you say you are better or worse off than most Blacks?	Worse off				Better off
	1	2	3	4	5

How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most Blacks?	Very angry				Very satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5

How often do you compare yourself with other minorities?	Not at all				Very often
	1	2	3	4	5

Would you say you are better or worse off than other minorities?	Worse off	Better off			
	1	2	3	4	5
How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to other minorities?	Very angry	Very satisfied			
	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you compare yourself with most people?	Not at all	Very often			
	1	2	3	4	5
Would you say you are better or worse off than most people?	Worse off	Better off			
	1	2	3	4	5
How angry or satisfied are you about your situation relative to most people?	Very angry	Very satisfied			
	1	2	3	4	5

Please fill in the following information about your mother and father, to the extent that you know it.

	Mother	Father
Age now		
Country of birth		
Native Language		
Other Language(s) Spoken		
How would she/he call herself/himself in terms of ethnicity		
Present occupation		

Which of the following statements best describes your family situation?

- My family has a hard time buying the things we need.
- My family has just enough money for the things we need.
- My family has no problem buying the things we need, and sometimes we can also buy special things.
- My family has enough money to buy pretty much anything we want.

Table 1: Means (and standard deviations) of false consciousness, ideology, and social comparisons

False Consciousness	
System Justification	4.10 (1.19)
Colorblindness	2.65 (.64)
Ideology	
Assimilation	3.51 (1.66)
Miseducation	3.42 (1.53)
Self-Hatred	1.88 (1.21)
Anti-White	1.64 (1.04)
Afrocentric	3.46 (1.41)
Multiculturalism	5.45 (1.18)
Humanist	5.29 (.89)
Comparisons	
With Whites	1.92 (1.07)
Better off	3.13 (.95)
Satisfaction	3.27 (.96)
With Blacks	2.61 (1.21)
Better off	3.41 (.78)
Satisfaction	3.44 (.82)
With Minorities	2.37 (1.14)
Better off	3.44 (.76)
Satisfaction	3.23 (.88)
With People	2.40 (1.13)
Better off	3.34 (.74)
Satisfaction	3.44 (.75)

Table 2: Correlations between false consciousness and ideology

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. System Justification	-								
2. Colorblindness	.58**	-							
3. Assimilation	.32**	.45**	-						
4. Miseducation	.04	.32**	.31*	-					
5. Self-Hatred	-.02	.14~	.13~	.36**	-				
6. Anti-White	-.15*	.05	-.11	.09	.55**	-			
7. Afrocentric	-.10	-.22**	-.21**	.11	.25**	.38**	-		
8. Multiculturalism	.03	.02	.08	-.04	-.20**	-.33**	-.04	-	
9. Humanist	.20*	.16~	.38**	.26**	-.16*	-.42**	-.19*	.50**	-

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 3: Correlations between false consciousness and social comparisons

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. System Justification	-													
2. Colorblindness	.58**	-												
3. White Comparisons	-.05	-.15*	-											
4. Better off: Whites	.15*	.13~	-.14~	-										
5. Satisfied: Whites	.19*	.18*	-.17*	.48**	-									
6. Black Comparisons	.03	-.08	.34**	-.00	.01	-								
7. Better off Blacks	.14~	-.01	-.02	.35**	.22**	.20**	-							
8. Satisfied Blacks	.20**	.10	-.12	.27**	.42**	.03	.37**	-						
9. Minority Comparisons	.03	-.04	.55**	-.09	.07	.38**	.06	-.15*	-					
10. Better off: Minorities	.11	.06	-.04	.41**	.24**	.13	.44**	.32**	.02	-				
11. Satisfied: Minorities	.12	.18*	-.04	.26**	.35**	.10	.16*	.21**	.03	.28**	-			
12. People Comparisons	-.01	-.01	.51**	-.13~	.05	.52**	.11	-.03	.59**	.02	.08	-		
13. Better off: People	.26**	.01	-.10	.47**	.22**	-.04	.53**	.53**	-.04	.53**	.26**	-.10	-	
14. Satisfied: People	.24**	.08	-.20**	.41**	.36**	.00	.45**	.45**	-.11	.49**	.37**	-.07	.50**	-

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 4: Ideology variables as direct predictors of system justification and racial colorblindness

	System Justification <i>b</i> (SE)	Colorblindness <i>b</i> (SE)
Constant	4.10	2.64
Assimilation	2.51 (.07)**	.35 (.03)**
Miseducation	-.06 (.07)	.24 (.04)**
Self-Hatred	.06 (.11)	.01 (.05)
Anti-White	-.10 (.15)	.10 (.07)
Afrocentric	-.03 (.08)	-.28 (.04)**
Multiculturalism	-.14 (.11)	.01 (.05)
Humanist	.16 (.16)	-.02 (.07)
<i>F</i> ()	2.81**	8.65**
<i>R</i> ²	.14	.33

Note: ~*p*<.10; **p*<.05; ***p*<.01

Table 5: Means (and standard deviations) of false consciousness, ideology, and social comparisons

	Immigrant	Native-born
False Consciousness		
System Justification	4.11 (1.27)	4.13 (1.10)
Colorblindness	2.71 (.65)	2.60 (.61)
Ideology		
Assimilation	3.32 (1.42)*	3.72 (1.88)*
Miseducation	3.66 (1.45)	3.26 (1.60)
Self-Hatred	1.92 (1.28)	1.82 (1.14)
Anti-White	1.57 (.97)	1.72 (1.14)
Afrocentric	3.24 (1.34)*	3.73 (1.45)*
Multiculturalism	5.42 (1.15)	5.58 (1.10)
Humanist	5.29 (.82)	5.28 (.98)
Comparisons		
With Whites	2.04 (1.08)~	1.77 (1.03)~
Better off	3.04 (.98)~	3.27 (.88)~
Satisfaction	3.24 (1.01)	3.34 (.90)
With Blacks	2.72 (1.17)~	2.42 (1.22)~
Better off	3.35 (.73)	3.47 (.85)
Satisfaction	3.48 (.81)	3.41 (.85)
With Minorities	2.52 (1.12)*	2.18 (1.14)*
Better off	3.40 (.75)	3.47 (.80)
Satisfaction	3.25 (.89)	3.23 (.87)
With People	2.52 (1.10)*	2.20 (1.14)*
Better off	3.26 (.67)	3.42 (.81)
Satisfaction	3.41 (.71)	3.51 (.77)

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6: Correlations between false consciousness and ideology across immigrant and native-born groups

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. System Justification	-	.60**	.33**	.11	-.07	-.14	-.15	-.04	.24*
2. Colorblindness	.53**	-	.47**	.38**	.16	.07	-.14	-.04	-.13
3. Assimilation	.32**	.50**	-	.31**	.18	.05	-.25	-.00	.21~
4. Miseducation	-.05	.29*	.35**	-	.25*	.07	.02	-.10	.28*
5. Self-Hatred	.08	.09	.14	.51**	-	.66	.19~	-.37**	-.29**
6. Anti-White	-.18	.02	-.22~	.14	.43**	-	.31**	-.27**	-.43
7. Afrocentric	.00	-.29*	-.18	.24*	.29*	.41**	-	.06	-.23*
8. Multiculturalism	.13	.07	.22~	.11	-.02	-.44**	-.22~	-	.46**
9. Humanist	.18	.21~	.51**	.27*	-.01	-.39**	-.13	.57**	-

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; immigrants reported above the diagonal, native-born reported below the diagonal

Table 7: Correlations between false consciousness and social comparisons across immigrant and native-born groups

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. System Justification	-	.60**	-.02	.12	.22*	.10	.27**	.34**	-.03	.16	.18	-.05	.38**	.33**
2. Colorblindness	.53**	-	-.08	.14	.28**	.05	.17~	.28**	-.01	.13	.26**	.05	.10	.18~
3. White Comparisons	-.08	-.30**	-	-.09	-.19~	.29**	-.12	-.21*	.49**	-.04	-.02	.50**	-.11	-.28**
4. Better off: Whites	.18	.10	-.22~	-	.53**	.17	.38**	.26**	.02	.37**	.37**	-.04	.35**	.34**
5. Satisfied: Whites	.15	.03	-.13	.41**	-	.09	.25*	.50**	-.13	.24*	.45**	-.03	.35**	.34**
6. Black Comparisons	-.06	-.28*	.35**	-.23*	-.08	-	.25**	.03	.37**	.26**	.15	.55**	-.00	.14
7. Better off Blacks	-.02	-.24*	.09	.31**	.19	.16	-	.37**	.01	.48	.11	-.01	.46**	.50**
8. Satisfied Blacks	.00	-.16	-.01	.31**	.32**	.01	.40**	-	-.21*	.25**	.32**	-.05	.37**	.46**
9. Minority Comparisons	.11	-.16	.59**	-.24*	.06	.39**	.14	-.08	-	.07	.03	.53**	-.05	-.06
10. Better off: Minorities	.06	.01	-.05	.46**	.25*	-.02	.39**	.40**	-.03	-	.33**	-.01	.49**	.38**
11. Satisfied: Minorities	-.03	.03	-.05	.11	.21~	.07	.23*	.06	.05	.27*	-	.06	.20*	.38**
12. People Comparisons	.06	-.13	.49**	-.26*	-.02	.42**	.23*	-.02	.67**	.03	.11	-	-.14	-.06
13. Better off: People	.10	-.08	-.07	.63**	.31**	-.07	.60**	.26*	-.01	.58**	.32**	-.07	-	.49**
14. Satisfied: People	.07	-.09	-.07	.51**	.43**	-.12	.43**	.57**	-.13	.68**	.29**	-.08	.52**	-

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; immigrants reported above the diagonal, native-born reported below the diagonal

Table 8: Ideology variables as direct Predictors of system justification and racial colorblindness among Native-born participants

	System Justification <i>b</i> (SE)	Colorblindness <i>b</i> (SE)
Constant	3.87	2.50
Assimilation	.25 (.09)	.46 (.05)**
Miseducation	-.36 (.09)**	.13 (.06)
Self-Hatred	.25 (.15)~	-.06 (.08)
Anti-White	-.38 (.22)*	.16 (.10)
Afrocentric	.24 (.11)~	-.25 (.06)~
Multiculturalism	.16 (.15)	.12 (.09)
Humanist	-.00 (.21)	-.04 (.06)
<i>F</i> ()	3.18**	3.34**
<i>R</i> ²	.31	.34

Note: ~*p*<.10; **p*<.05; ***p*<.01

Table 9: Ideology variables as direct predictors of system justification and racial colorblindness among immigrant participants

	System Justification <i>b</i> (SE)	Colorblindness <i>b</i> (SE)
Constant	4.26	2.74
Assimilation	.33 (.11)**	.35 (.05)**
Miseducation	.02 (.11)	.28 (.05)*
Self-Hatred	-.17 (.15)	.05 (.07)
Anti-White	.08 (.22)	.11 (.10)
Afrocentric	-.03 (.11)	-.23 (.05)*
Multiculturalism	-.32 (.15)*	.04 (.07)
Humanist	.21 (.22)	-.06 (.10)
<i>F</i>	2.63*	5.38
<i>R</i> ²	.22	.37**

Note: ~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

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1. Sellers' humanist subscale was the only subscale used from the MMRI because the CRIS has similar subscales as the other subscales of the MMRI. Similarly, Cokely (2007) referred to the CRIS as a strong scale measuring Black identity.