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Transforming Perception:
Black Men and Boys

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

We see so much promise in our children. We want their lives to be filled with love, play, and achievement. We hope their teachers recognize what is special and teach them all they need to learn. We hope their schools spark their curiosity about the world and a desire to excel.

We hope that their schools and communities are supportive and forgiving during the difficult teen years. We hope our children will commit their energies to a sport, an instrument, or some other activity that demands discipline, commitment, and mastery. We imagine their future when they find and fulfill their own unique gifts in a career that brings them satisfaction and respect. We envision a steady path toward college or a skilled trade followed by a good job and a family. While the economic situation is precarious and the future is uncertain, we try to prepare our children to succeed and flourish.

If we are Black parents in the United States, we share these same hopes for our children. However, based on our own experience, we also fear for our children. This is especially true for our sons, as they navigate the complexity of race in the 21st century.

While there has been undeniable progress in terms of racial attitudes and opportunities, the daily realities facing Black men and boys create substantial challenges and obstacles. We know someone will use race to mock or taunt our sons. We know some teachers will underestimate our sons' capacities and will subtly convey those attitudes to our sons. Their enthusiasm and exuberance may be judged as unruly behavior and they will be disciplined. On the opposite end of the spectrum, a teacher, thinking that she is being "nice" – or worried about facing us in parent teacher meetings -- will give our sons good grades for work that is not their best effort. We know what kind of message that will send to our sons – who will become experts at recognizing when they are being patronized.

We will have "the conversation" with our son about the potential danger he faces from police – who may protect him, but sometimes pose the greatest threat. Our conversation will include a warning that some people may view *him* as a threat and will respond to him with fear. We worry that employers will overlook our son's potential. We can imagine a White employer cutting a job interview short before he has a chance to display his skill.

We worry that the economic challenges we face in the Black community will create instability for them – our house will be undervalued and the college fund lessened, our jobs lost and not easily replaced. Our greatest fear is that they will lose us too early: because of discriminatory health care treatment, street violence, a misidentification – the list is still far too long.

Black men and boys face a country beset with contradictions. Both the hopes and the fears are real. Black men and boys can reach every pinnacle of success our country has to offer. They also face a set of obstacles unique to them as they work toward those successes.

We cannot accept that these obstacles are either permanent or insurmountable. Our predecessors in the Civil Rights Movement created a path toward political change that toppled Jim Crow and opened doors previously nailed shut. Civil Rights leaders masterfully harnessed the media and popular culture to challenge stereotypes and to shed light on the horrors of racial oppression. Their strategies were rooted in a sophisticated understanding of human motivations and the complexity of people's fears and ideals.

Race has always been a social construct. Until the middle of the last century, that construct was fixed by the belief that races were blunt categories into which each of us fit. The category into which Black people fit was defined as inferior and, particularly in the Jim Crow South, neither class nor individual circumstance mattered. With the legal changes wrought by the *Brown v. Board of Education* litigation and the impact of the Civil Rights Movement, that categorical inferiority has been successfully challenged.

We no longer live in a racial binary. Perceptions and reactions to a particular Black man or boy will depend upon how he is situated: class status, skin color, comfort level, and context all matter. Whites and members of other racial and ethnic groups may also differ markedly in their perceptions and reactions based upon their own experiences in integrated environments and a host of other factors. But race remains highly salient. Black males remain at significant risk of experiencing high suspension rates in school, disproportionate levels of arrest and imprisonment, and chronic unemployment.

Social science has enormous promise, however, to change the way his teachers and coaches, those who may be his employers, and the police he will encounter see him and more importantly respond to him. Advances in psychology and neuroscience allow us to understand the complexities of people's racial reactions and measure the effect of our toxic racial culture on perceptions and behavior. With this information, we are devising interventions that alter the effect of racial bias and anxiety on the everyday life of Black men and boys.

The American Values Institute and our research advisors from academia and advocacy are in the vanguard of this work. This report shares AVI's original research along with the cutting edge research in social psychology and neuroscience that provides empirically grounded proposals for change. It reviews the current research on the complex psychology of race, which shows that while the shift in values precipitated by the Civil Rights Movement has been profound, these egalitarian ideals have not yet truly permeated people's unconscious stereotypes, or their emotions and fears.

Understanding Our Brain: The Power of Perception

> "We use categories for people too. Based upon visual and aural cues, we make automatic judgments about what category a particular person fits within and we often act on those judgments."

Knowing how the brain works is critical to understanding how race operates. Most of our actions occur without our conscious awareness. Through socialization, our brains have created visual and aural categories (or schemas, to use the scientific phrase) for most of the sights we see and sounds we hear (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000). This process is referred to as 'implicit social cognition."

We use categories for people as well as objects. Based upon visual and aural cues, we make automatic judgments about what category a particular person fits within and we often act on those judgments. These categories and judgments normally serve us well. However, we can obviously be wrong. Our errors are usually meaningless – not recognizing that a small flat object playing a song is an mp3 player and not a cell phone. In some instances, these errors can be life-threatening – the object in a man's hand is a cell phone and not a gun. Why might the life-threatening errors occur more in some situations than others? Because categories also influence what people pay attention to, how they organize their attention, and what they later remember (Whitley & Kite, 2010; Hamilton, 1981).

Not surprisingly, our brain's automatic use of categories is particularly risky with respect to humans. Categorization can activate stereotypes that hamper rather than help our assessment of how to behave or respond in a given situation (e.g. Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). The widespread stereotype of Black criminality makes it more likely that a cell phone will appear to be gun if the man holding it is Black rather than White.

Scientists define stereotypes as the beliefs and opinions people hold about the characteristics, traits, and behaviors of a certain group (Allport, 1954; Macrae, Mile, Bodenhausen, 1994; Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). Stereotypes often cause us to make assumptions (both negative and positive) about people based upon superficial characteristics (Schneider, 2004). They also tend to be self-perpetuating, which leads to their deep entrenchment.

Creating Perceptions of Black Men and Boys: Culture of Racial Stereotypes

> For those whose knowledge of race is largely mediated through the media, race itself triggers a complex set of emotions: fear, envy, anxiety, but also admiration and desire.

Negative stereotypes continue to be powerful despite the egalitarian norms we purport to hold. Media plays a significant role in shaping our perceptions of race. For many Whites and people of other races and ethnicities, the media's portrayal of Black men and boys is the primary basis for their knowledge and emotional reaction. With a few notable examples in politics, most media present Black men as figures to be admired for their athleticism, artistic or entertainment talent, or feared for their criminality. For those whose knowledge of race is largely mediated through the media, race itself triggers a complex set of emotions: fear, envy, anxiety, but also admiration and desire.

Black men and boys are systematically portrayed in negative ways in both news and entertainment programming, which can have the effect of activating and exacerbating racial stereotypes (Dixon, 2008).

On local news shows, Blacks are disproportionately portrayed as criminals, and Whites as victims. The overrepresentation of the criminality of Blacks and the victimization of Whites

is accompanied by other racially-skewed effects, such as the over-portrayal of Black-on-White violence, and the increased likelihood that a Black defendant will face prejudicial pretrial news coverage (Dixon, 2008).

Network news programs also portray negative racial stereotypes in ways that conflict with reality and create a series of harmful associations (Dixon, 2008). In 1996, a study demonstrated that networks typically associated Blacks with poverty and overrepresented poor Blacks in their coverage. Other studies confirmed that Black criminality is over-portrayed both at the national and local level. Together, these media-perpetrated tendencies toward bias and discrimination have the potential to agitate and reinforce numerous harmful racial stereotypes.

Once a group or category has been defined, humans tend to exaggerate the differences between different groups and to presume homogeneity among all "members" of the group (Quattrone & Jones, 1980; Nelson, 2006). People are more easily able to differentiate or individualize among members of their own group (Whitley & Kite, 2010). They are also more likely to attribute negative behavior of a member of their own group to the particularities of the person or situation, but to attribute the same behavior of a member of an "out-group" to a characteristic of the group (Pettigrew 1979; Duncan, 1976).

Social psychologists report that these stereotypes are robust and frequent and lead to a wide variety of negative associations, including people's categorization of ambiguously aggressive behavior (Devine, 1989), their decision to categorize non-weapons as weapons (Payne, 2001), the speed at which people will shoot someone holding a weapon (Correll, et al., 2002), and the likelihood that they will shoot at all (Greenwald, et al., 2003; Eberhardt, Goff, Davies & Purdie, 2004).

Implicit Bias Against Black Men and Boys

Modern bias against Black men and boys has morphed into a new form. Some continue to hold explicit stereotypes about Black men and boys and to be consciously prejudiced attitude against them, but the numbers of such people have declined markedly in the last century (Sears, Hetts, Sidanius & Bobo, 2000). In 1933, 75% of whites openly described Black people as "lazy" but fewer than 5% did so beginning in the 1990s (Brown, 1995). Researchers have found that most Americans subscribe consciously to the norm that Black people deserve equal treatment and that racial integration is a desirable goal (Bobo & Charles, 2009, p. 245).

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Measuring implicit bias against Black men and boys

To understand implicit bias, we need to move beyond "self reporting" because most people consciously reject bias. However, scientists can assess implicit bias levels by measuring people's reactions to stimuli. A widely used measure of implicit bias is the "Implicit Association Test" (IAT) which is housed on the website Project Implicit. The IAT is a computer task that asks participants to link pictures of White male faces or Black male faces with either Good words

(e.g. Joy, Love, Peace) or Bad words (Nasty, Evil, Awful) by pressing a particular key on the computer's keyboard. Project Implicit has found that most people respond more quickly when White male faces and Good words are assigned the same key and Black male faces and Bad words the same key than the reverse.

A significant majority of Whites as well as Asian Americans and Latinos show anti-Black bias in the IAT and almost half of African Americans also show anti-Black bias (for reviews of this research see Dasgupta, 2004; Dasgupta, 2008). This research has also shown a marked discrimination against skin tone; men with darker skin fare less well in both tests of implicit bias and in empirical work on sentencing, hiring, and other important life domains (Kahn & Davies, Eberhardt, et al., 2006; Blair & Maddox).

Other measures of implicit bias include physiological responses to images of Black male faces, assessing blood pressure changes, increases in sweat, and brain imaging shown in fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) scans (Phelps, 2000). Because so many of our actions are a result of our unconscious associations, implicit bias can result in behaviors that are contrary to our conscious values.

Favoring our own kind

Some implicit bias is a result of the unconscious association of negative stereotypes with Black men – but bias can manifest as a result of comparatively positive preference for one group versus another. Social scientists refer to this phenomenon as "in-group" bias or preference and it is sometimes implicit and sometimes explicit. Those Whites who hold explicit in-group preference will rarely understand their feelings as "racist" because they do not involve *active* animus against people of other races. However, although we tend to think of racial discrimination foremost as treating a person or a group *worse* because of the different or disfavored racial group, treating a favored racial group better results in the same outcome. In both, one racial group benefits and the other is harmed because of race.

Contemporary social science research has identified that much present discrimination is a result of favoritism toward an in-group rather than hostility toward an out-group (Tropp & Molina, 2012). For example, when evaluating Whites and Blacks, Whites generally will not overtly rate Blacks negatively—they will simply rate similarly situated Whites more positively (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2006).

Dehumanizing the other

At its most pernicious, our country's historical subordination has resulted in the dehumanization of Black people. This is a practice that often undergirds subordination, war, and violence toward other groups throughout history. The association of groups of people as non-human has been used as a way to reduce the moral resistance to actions that would otherwise be unacceptable to the actor. While this practice is no longer an explicit strategy in our country, the associations linger. A recent study has found that the association of blacks with apes is closely correlated with police officers' use of excessive force against young Black males. (Goff et al., 2008).

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Modern Bias on the Ground

Implicit bias and the tendency toward in-group preference are not inactive in the un-conscious. They have a pernicious effect in important life domains including criminal justice, employment, education, and health treatment. It cannot always be determined whether a particular disparate effect is a result of a negative view toward Black men and boys or an in-group preference toward White men and boys – but the combined negative results of the two are profound.

Recent studies provide powerful evidence that implicit bias (either negative toward Blacks or positive toward Whites) translates into a wide range of behaviors that have significant negative effects on Black men and boys. These behaviors include allowing racial biases to bleed into important decision making as well as non-verbal behaviors that affect day-to-day interactions.

Criminalizing the Black Male

Researchers working to determine whether there is a link between stereotypes about Black criminality and police response have found that when police officers are primed to think about crime by words such as "violent, crime, stop, investigate, arrest", they more quickly focus on Black male faces than comparable White male faces (Eberhardt, et al., 2004). The priming also led police officers to remember the faces as having more stereotypically African American features than they actually did and "more likely to *falsely* identify a face that was more stereotypically Black." (Eberhardt, et al., 2004).

Police officers showed bias when confronted with pictures of faces and asked, "who looks criminal?" They more often choose Black faces than White and the disparity increases as the Black face becomes more stereotypically Black. The study demonstrated well the powerful effects of stereotypical associations on visual perceptions and attentions – findings that carry important implications for split-second police-citizen interactions (Eberhardt, 2004).

Black men and boys appear also to fare worse with prosecutors – though there are fewer studies and most are decades old (Kang et al, 2012). Studies in the 1980s and 90s found that some city prosecutors were more likely to prosecute Black than White defendants and a 2000 report found that prosecutors were more likely to offer White defendants generous plea bargains (Kang et al, 2012).

Race matters in capital sentencing in more than one way. Not only are murderers of White victims more likely to be capitally sentenced than murderers of Black victims, but Black murderers of White victims are more likely to be sentenced to death if they appear more stereotypically Black (Eberhardt, 2006).

Racialized Obstacles to Educational Opportunity

While the vast majority of teachers undoubtedly have the best of intentions, the evidence is strong that implicit bias is affecting our classrooms. National statistics on school suspension paint a particularly grim portrait of the fate of Black boys. The disproportionate suspension

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rates are a striking example of the "discriminatory discipline" that many Black boys experience. This phenomena is experienced by many parents as particularly noticeable beginning in fourth grade as boys move closer to adolescence, often referred to as the "fourth grade" syndrome. In general, suspension rates are higher for boys. Boys are suspended twice as often as girls (9.1% vs. 4.5%), but the problem is acute for Black boys who are suspended at twice the rate of Hispanic boys and three times the rate of White boys (15.0%, 6.8%, and 4.8%, respectively). According to the National Center of Education Statistics, in 2006, Black and Hispanic boys accounted for nearly two thirds of the three million suspensions and over half of the 102,080 expulsions in U.S. public schools (Planty et al., 2009).

A male student of color who is suspended is three times as likely to drop out of school by the 10th grade and is in turn three times as likely to end up incarcerated (Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1996). One little-known but chilling marker of this disproportionality is that, by the age of 15, roughly 2% of the black male American population is simply *missing;* these boys are neither in school nor in the criminal justice system. They are most likely alive, but they are utterly disenfranchised from society (Flynn, 2008). This is a fate suffered by no other demographic group in America.

Sadly, statistics such as these are often thought to reflect objectively worse conduct among black boys – research shows this assumption to be wrong (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Rather, black boys in particular appear to be referred for suspension more readily because their group membership leads them to be stereotyped as more threatening, disruptive, and uncooperative by teachers and school administrators. For example, studies find that whereas white boys are typically suspended for concrete and observable violations such as smoking, fighting, or obscenity, Black boys tend to be suspended for violations such as disrespect, noisiness, or defiance, which are more abstract and subjective in nature and therefore more likely to be influenced by stereotyping or bias (Skiba et al., 2002). Black boys' behaviors seen through the lens of implicit bias are interpreted far differently than the same behavior by a White boy. The suspension statistics are a chilling example of how stereotypes shape behavioral ambiguity to color social judgments (Aronson & Noguera, 2013).

The Bias Continues

HIRING HURDLES : Implicit bias may also impact employment. Researchers have found that race can have powerful effects on a job applicant's prospects for an interview (Bertrand, 2003). Once inside the door, the racial tensions and biases often continue. Measures of implicit bias have been shown to correlate with discriminatory hiring decisions (Ziegert, 2005). Over time, although self-reported measures of racial bias in hiring selections have generally declined over time, the impact of implicit bias on employment decisions has not (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000).

IMPLICIT ASSUMPTIONS AND HEALTHCARE : Racial disparities in health treatment are well-documented and widespread, cutting across socioeconomics, geography, and even affecting those portions of our healthcare system with universal access (i.e. veteran access to healthcare) (Sabin 2009). Black patients received a poorer quality of care in studies involving cancer treatment, cardiovascular diseases, kidney transplants, children's medication, pain management, and many other areas. Racial disparities existed in doctor-patient communications, and in overall clinical interactions. Doctors also exhibited tendencies to believe that White men would be more likely to follow prescriptions than Black men.

Blocking the Pipeline

Often it is assumed that Black students benefit in the college admissions and higher admissions contexts. However, studies by Hodson & Dovidio show that in making college admission decisions using two criteria (GPA and SAT), decision-makers weigh these criteria differently depending on the race of the candidate. For White candidates they emphasize the criterion where the candidate is strong and de-emphasize the criterion on which the candidate is weak. For Black candidates they do the opposite.

In our report, we describe the role that implicit bias plays in undermining perceptions of capacity of Black students and the continuing stigmatization experienced by Black students. We also discuss the particularly hostile climate faced by Black students in states that have abolished affirmative action.

Altering Perceptions and Reducing Bias

What mechanisms can alter inaccurate perceptions and reduce the effects of modern bias? Early research shows that thoughtful interventions can reduce both the bias itself and the behaviors linked to implicit bias. Because implicit bias is caused by the automatic association of Black men and boys with negative stereotypes, researchers have focused on whether exposing people to counter-stereotypes can decrease implicit bias. Research to date suggests that this strategy has merit.

The studies focusing on decreasing implicit racial bias have included exposing people to positive historical exemplars like Martin Luther King, Jr. (and contrasting these positive associations with negative White figures such as Charles Manson) and showing videos of comforting settings such as outdoor barbecues (Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001). Both have reduced implicit bias as measured by the IAT significantly and the result lasted for over 24 hours (Kang et al, 2012; Dasgupta & Rivera, 2008). While not all exposure studies have showed such significant results (Joy-Gaba & Nosek, 2010), the majority of published studies have shown implicit bias reduction after exposure to admired counter-stereotypic individuals suggesting that repeated exposure to positive images of Black men and boys will be an important strategy to reduce implicit bias – and reducing the saturation of continued negative stereotypes is likely of even greater significance (Kang, 2012).

Even as we work to reduce implicit bias itself, we must also focus on interrupting the behavioral effects of existing bias. Research shows that people can and do over-ride implicit biases on decision-making (e.g. Dasgupta & Rivera, 2006). In situations where we are making important decisions – who to hire, whether to find a defendant guilty or not, what diagnosis to give a patient – we can act according to our conscious egalitarian values even if we hold implicit biases. Studies also show that people will act according to egalitarian values when conscious that race may affect their decision-making. People can be taught to doubt their own objectivity around race and other charged categories that can lead to this sort of vigilance (Casey et al, 2012).

Several organizations and academics, including AVI and researchers with whom we work, are involved in projects to educate judges and other important actors in the legal system about the possibility that implicit bias affects behavior (e.g. Kang, 2012). These trainings appear successful in altering judges' perceptions that they are objective and alerting them to the possibility that implicit bias may affect their decisions about sentencing and other important

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outcomes. (Casey et al , 2012). Federal Judge Mark Bennett also does direct jury training about implicit bias during jury selection and in his jury instructions, he expressly directs jurors not to "decide the case based on 'implicit biases.'" (Bennett, 2012).

Researchers such as Pedro Noguera and Joshua Aronson are developing interventions to reduce teachers' unconscious stereotyping of Black boys. These interventions are based on the premise that teachers who learn to appreciate their students as individuals will be less likely to default to stereotypes when viewing student behavior. It simply becomes much harder to dislike a student or see him as merely a representative of a group (e.g., black troublemaker) if one has been given a window into his life and circumstances (Wilson, 2011).

Becoming Colleagues, Friends, and Family: Inter-group Contact

Individualized interventions show promise, but of equal or even greater significance are addressing structural conditions in which people operate. In other words, segregated work places, schools, and neighborhoods deeply affect the incidence of implicit bias and in-group preference.

The individualized interventions show promise, but of equal or even greater significance are addressing the structural conditions in which people operate. In other words, segregated   work places, schools, and neighborhoods deeply affect the incidence of implicit bias and in-group preference. Whites who grow up and are educated in segregated environments appear more likely to hold implicit biases and in-group preferences than those who benefited from early experiences of integration (Tropp & Molina).

Increased diversity has also been shown to decrease the automaticity of stereotypical associations and to encourage more thoughtful decision-making. Studies of juror deliberations have shown, for example, that racially diverse jurors engage in longer discussions, make fewer inaccurate statements, and have greater discussions of race-related topics (Sommers, 2006). Indeed, Professor Sommers found that the simple knowledge that they would be serving on a diverse rather than an all-White jury led White jurors to be less likely to believe at the conclusion of the evidence that the Black defendant was guilty (Sommers, 2006).

Race as an Emotional Construction

Black men and boys often experience the anxiety that they will be the subject of discrimination of hostile or distant treatment. White people may experience the mirror anxiety that they will be assumed to be racist.

Our researchers have concluded that the emotions of race are a critically important component of the challenges confronting Black men and boys. This literature is less known than the implicit bias work that has garnered increasing attention recently. Our report contains a detailed review of this literature and shares our original research in this domain.

Race triggers powerful emotions. Among them is "racial anxiety," which is discomfort about the potential consequences of inter-racial interactions. Black men and boys often experience the anxiety that they will be the subject of discrimination and hostile or distant treatment. White people may experience the mirror anxiety that they will be assumed to be racist by the Black man or boy and therefore, will be met with distrust or hostility.

It may seem surprising that Whites experience "racial anxiety" – but in light of the importance of the social norm of egalitarianism, many Whites truly fear being perceived as racist. This fear is a subset of a broader form of identity anxiety—which has been labeled "stereotype threat" (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat is the frequently unconscious fear that one's actions may confirm stereotypes about their identity groups. Stereotypes differ across groups

so this anxiety can play out differently for particular identity groups and in different situations (Steele, Spencer & Aronson, 2001). It has been most well documented by its effect on the academic performance of students of color who fear confirming the negative stereotypes of intellectual inferiority (Steele & Aronson, 1995). This form of stereotype threat also affects women in math and science and can be triggered in white men when compared to Asian Americans (Aronson & McGlone, 2009).

More recently, it has also been identified in whites with respect to the stereotype that they are racist or otherwise biased against members of marginalized groups (Goff, Steele, and Davies, 2008). Because our society considers racism or bias immoral, the fear of being thought racist or biased can be quite powerful. This anxiety has been shown to reduce the cognitive functioning of whites with high implicit bias levels after they have interacted with a person of color (Trawalter, Richeson & Shelton, 2009).

Race and Identity Threat

Because of the salience of race in the United States, people of all races and ethnicities often experience physiological threat and cognitive depletion in anticipation of and following an interracial interaction (Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton & Tropp, 2008). Indeed, research has shown that Black people's physiological and psychological health can be compromised by interracial interactions or by the anticipation of assessment by Whites (Trawalter, Richeson & Shelton, 2009; Steele, 2011). As with other stressors, racial anxiety can yield cardiovascular and other stress-induced illnesses (Mays, Cochran & Barnes, 2006).

In addition to the physical symptoms, racial anxiety tends to affect the verbal and non-verbal behaviors of members of both groups (Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2002). People experiencing anxiety often physically distance themselves from each other, share eye contact less, and their verbal tone is less friendly and engaging. When both sides of the inter-racial dyad are experiencing anxiety, both members felt the interaction was negative and the anxiety can spiral (Page-Gould et al, 2008). As with implicit bias, racial anxiety can have significant effects across important life domains from the criminal justice system, employment, education, and health.

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Police to Fear

Among the most dramatic and troubling findings about racial anxiety is its correlation with police use of excessive force. In his work with police departments across the country, Professor Phillip Atiba Goff has found that anxiety about appearing racist has a *greater* correlation with the excessive use of force than either explicit or implicit bias. The graph below shows the conditions most linked to excessive use of force.
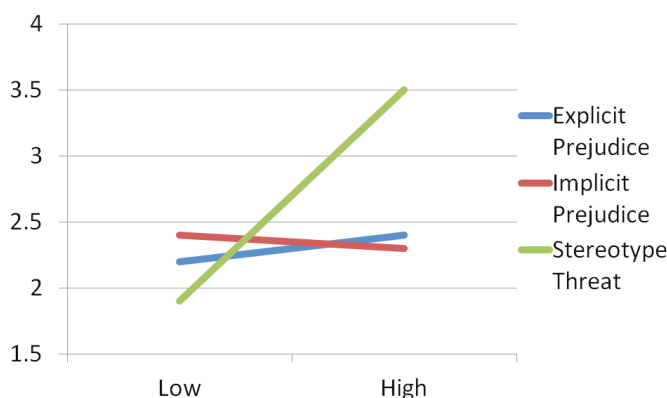
The results were significant. Racially anxious police officers are more of a risk of using excessive force than are explicitly racially biased police officers (though the latter are more likely to engage in racially disparate pedestrian stops) (Goff & Martin, 2013).

Stereotype Threat

Research shows that anxiety about negative stereotypes can trigger physiological changes in the body and the brain (especially an increased cardiovascular profile of threat and activation of brain regions used in emotion regulation), cognitive reactions (especially a vigilant self-monitoring of performance), and affective responses (especially the suppression of self-doubts). These effects all divert cognitive resources that could otherwise be used to maximize task performance,

(Schmader & Johns, 2003).

Stereotype threat was initially identified in the academic domain. It has been shown to hurt the academic performance of Black students who fear confirming pernicious stereotypes about intellectual inferiority (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Why does stereotype threat have such striking effects? When people are aware of a negative stereotype related to the particular domain, their attention may be split between the test at hand and concern that their actions may confirm that stereotype. Or their actions may respond to the need for self-image and/or group based maintenance.

Research shows that anxiety about negative stereotypes can trigger physiological changes in the body and the brain (especially an increased cardiovascular profile of threat and activation of brain regions used in emotion regulation), cognitive reactions (especially a vigilant self-monitoring of performance), and affective responses (especially the suppression of self-doubts). These effects all divert cognitive resources that could otherwise be used to maximize task performance,(Schmader & Johns, 2003). So our most motivated young Black men may experience a culturally constructed obstacle that prevents them from performing to their true capacity when taking tests like the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for college, the Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT) or Medical College Aptitude Test (MCAT) to get into law and medical schools The effects then undermine their opportunities to attend colleges or graduate schools of choice or to obtain scholarships. And if they are admitted with a test score that does not accurately reflect their ability, that score often affects their confidence levels once in college or graduate school and the cycle continues. Stereotype threat does not begin at the college admissions process. It has been shown to influence performance as early as middle school (Cohen et al, 2006).

"White" stereotype threat (the fear of being seen as a racist) can also diminish the likelihood of academic success for Black boys and young men. There are fewer studies in this area, but those studies suggest that some White teachers may be undermining their students' educational advancement out of fear that they will be viewed as racist.

In a recent study, poorly written essays were sent to 113 middle school teachers in the Northeast who were instructed to provide feedback to the student author (Harber, 2012). The teachers who thought they were responding to Black and Latino students provided less critical feedback and more praise than to White students. The only exceptions were teachers who felt that they had supportive principals; these teachers provided equal feedback to White and Black students (though still less critical feedback to Latino students).

A related phenomena is that a fear of appearing prejudiced can lead to a "failure to warn"—a documented phenomenon where teachers or counselors fail to instruct a Black student about the potential negative consequences of a difficult proposed course or plan (Crosby, 2007). In a 2007 study, peer advisors were given information about a prospective student who was seeking advice about whether to take a particularly challenging schedule. Peer advisors who thought the student was White or Asian American recommended against the schedule as too much work for a given semester, but advisors who had Black students did not (Crosby, 2007).

Successful Interventions

Reducing racial anxiety and its effects on behavior is as important as reducing bias. Both result in conditions that create significant obstacles to the full inclusion of Black men and boys in our society – and in the context of the criminal justice system, can literally be dangerous.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS : Cutting edge work by Phillip Atiba Goff with several major police departments provides an instructive pathway to ameliorate the harmful effects of racial anxiety. Professor Goff's solutions begin with an intensive diagnostic process of institutional dynamics to determine the factors that create racial anxiety. He then devises institutional interventions that alter the dynamics within the institutions to reduce the discriminatory outcomes.

SCHOOLS : Stereotype threat can be mitigated and schools can create conditions in which Black boys and young men have a greater likelihood of reaching their potential. We have learned for example that Black students who have been taught that intelligence is malleable rather than fixed were more engaged with their studies and ultimately had higher grade point averages. (Aronson et al., 2002)

In addition, stereotype threat diminishes and Black students are more apt to perform to their potential when they are not the only representative or one of few representatives of their group and when same-race role models are present (Inzlicht & Ben-Zeev, Marx & Roman, Marx & Goff, Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2002; Walton et al, 2008; Purdie-Vaughn et al, 2008). In diverse environments, group membership tends to become less defining of individual identity. Rather than feeling like "the Black guy" in the engineering class, the student can simply be himself and not see his performance as linked to his group identity.

Conclusion: A Culture Shift

To counter implicit bias and the heightened emotion around race, we ultimately have to change the distorted perceptions of Black men and boys. This report explains why we need a change in the cultural context. Visual culture, in particular, plays an important role in reinforcing implicit bias, increasing our racial anxieties and undermining conversations about racial equality and opportunity. Thus, we must work toward developing a more accurate portrayal of Black men and boys in the cultural domain. This cultural shift will show the similarities in experiences, concerns, and values among men and women of all races. Challenging the caricatures—Black men and boys as either criminals or exceptionals (the President, the occasional judge, the star athlete)—will enhance productive interaction among all communities. A cultural shift has enormous potential to increase inter-group empathy. Although we have seen some movement in popular culture with regard to race, we must also be vigilant about the continued prevalence of stereotyped portrayals of black criminality and inferiority. Those of us seeking to address issues of race through messaging campaigns and programs face enormous obstacles in light of the continuous onslaught of stereotypes prevalent in the mainstream media and the myth of colorblind perception that has been largely internalized. American society has a profound misunderstanding of the role that bias plays in creating structural and individualized obstacles to full inclusion of marginalized groups. Using the framework of "implicit bias" and "race as an emotional trigger" allows us to talk about race without accusing people of "being racist," when they genuinely believe they are egalitarian. The social science described in this report helps people understand why inter-racial dynamics can be so complicated and challenging for people despite their best intentions. AVI is working with multifaceted research, a positive counter-narratives and de-biasing messaging to reach and engage a mainstream audience in the ongoing struggle to end racism.

Reducing racial anxiety and its effects on behavior is as important as reducing bias. Both result in conditions that create significant obstacles to the full inclusion of Black men and boys in our society – and in the context of the criminal justice system, can literally be dangerous.

Although we have seen some movement in popular culture with regard to race, we must also be vigilant about the continued prevalence of stereotyped portrayals of black criminality and inferiority. Those of us seeking to address issues of race through messaging campaigns and programs face enormous obstacles in light of the continuous onslaught of stereotypes prevalent in the mainstream media and the myth of colorblind perception that has been largely internalized.

Research Advisors

Joshua Aronson is an Associate Professor of Applied Psychology at New York University.

After receiving a PhD from Princeton, Aronson did post-doctoral work at Stanford University with Professor Claude Steele. In 1995 Steele and Aronson published their landmark laboratory studies on "stereotype threat," a performance-inhibiting phenomenon that occurs when students confront the negative expectations of the particular stereotypes assigned their race. The studies show that if you could minimize stereotype threat in testing situations, you could get rid of a big portion of the gap between blacks and whites on standardized tests.

Since then, Aronson has continued his laboratory research, but he has also conducted intervention work in the schools, both examining the psychological underpinnings of the performance gap and developing practical methods for reducing it. Aronson is also starting to assemble a nationwide coalition of experts concerned with this achievement gap who will eventually create a national task force to focus their efforts and share research.

Matt A. Barreto is an Associate Professor in Political Science at the University of Washington, Seattle and a founding member of the Washington Institute for the Study of Ethnicity, Race and Sexuality (WISER).

He received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Irvine in 2005. His research examines the political participation of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States and his work has been published in the *American Political Science Review, Political Research Quarterly, Social Science Quarterly, Urban Affairs Review*, and other peer-reviewed journals. Matt specializes in Latino and immigrant voting behavior, and teaches courses on Racial and Ethnic Politics, Latino Politics, Voting and Elections, and American Politics at UW. Part of his research agenda also includes public opinion and election surveys, including exit polling methodology. Matt is also an affiliated research scholar with the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (www.trpi.org) since 1999 and with the Center for the Study of Los Angeles (www.lmu.edu/csla) since 2002. In 2004, he was a co-author of the TRPI/Washington Post National Survey of Latino voters and in 2005, he was co-principal investigator of the CSLA Los Angeles Mayoral exit poll.

DeAngelo Bester has nearly 10 years of experience leading local, state, and national racial justice organizing campaigns around issues such as educational equity, preservation and expansion of affordable housing, and increasing access to living wage jobs for African Americans. During his tenure with NPA, DeAngelo has designed a number of political education trainings. In his current role as the project director for NPA's Dismantling Structural Racism Project, he is designing a comprehensive curriculum around structural racialization and developing effective communications around race for community based organizing groups. He is a skilled facilitator and strategic planner.

Ludovic Blain is an author and progressive entrepreneur, having created projects domestically and on three continents. Ludovic is currently Program Director of the Progressive Era Project/Color of Democracy Fund, working with donors to build progressive power of people of color in key counties in California. Previously he helped to direct the Closing the Racial Wealth Gap Initiative at the Insight Center, working with 140 economic and financial experts of color to develop and advocate for federal policies that would close the racial wealth gap. Previously Ludovic was the National Campaign Coordinator for the $6 million 12 state Equal Voice for America's Families Campaign, and has led organizing and advocacy work for almost two decades on environmental justice, anti-racist strategic communications and other racial justice issues.

Camille Charles is Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Term Professor in the Social Sciences and Professor of Sociology and Education, at the University of Pennsylvania.

She is author of *Won't You Be My Neighbor: Race, Class and Residence in Los Angeles* (Russell Sage, Fall 2006), which class- and race-based explanations for persisting residential segregation by race. She is also co-author of The Source of the River: The Social Origins of Freshmen at America's Selective Colleges and Universities (2003, Princeton University Press). More recently, she is co-author of the forthcoming book, *Taming the River: Negotiating the Academic, Financial, and Social Currents in Selective Colleges and Universities* (co-authored with Douglas S. Massey and colleagues; Princeton University Press), the second in a series based The National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen, and Race in the American Mind: From the Moynihan Report to the Obama Candidacy (with Lawrence Bobo). She is also nearing completion of a sole-authored book on Black racial identity in the United States, tentatively titled, The New Black: Race Conscious or Post Racial? Professor Charles earned her Ph.D. in 1996 from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she was a project manager for the 1992-1994 Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality. Her research interests are in the areas of urban inequality, racial attitudes and intergroup relations, racial residential segregation, minorities in higher education, and racial identity; her work has appeared in Social Forces, Social Problems, Social Science Research, The DuBois Review, the American Journal of Education, the Annual Review of Sociology, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and The Root.

Nilanjana Dasgupta is a Professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is interested in people's beliefs and attitudes toward social groups, with special attention to mental processes that promote stereotypes and prejudices toward disadvantaged social groups.

Her recent projects focus on specifying factors that create and magnify stereotypes and prejudice, examining their influence on behavior and developing strategies aimed at undermining such biases. These projects have been funded by the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Mental Health and the American Psychological Foundation.

Rachel D. Godsil is the co-founder and research director for the American Values Institute, a national consortium of social scientists, advocates, and law professors focusing on the role of implicit bias in law and policy, as well as the Eleanor Bontecou Professor of Law at Seton Hall University Law School.

She is currently pursuing research projects to determine differential empathy levels toward young men and police officers, media messages to address racialized moments, and the link between stereotype threat and the success of students of color in law. Professor Godsil's recent publications include Implicit Bias in the Courtroom (UCLA Law Review) co-authored with Jerry Kang et al.; Implicit Bias in Environmental Decision Making in Implicit Racial Bias Across the Law (Oxford University Press, 2012), and Implicit Bias Insights as Preconditions to Structural Change, co-authored with john powell. She has written several amicus briefs in cases involving civil rights, including on behalf of the National Parent Teacher Association in the Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District litigation at the Supreme Court. She is also the co-editor of Awakening from the Dream: Civil Rights Under Siege and the New Struggle for Equal Justice (Carolina Academic Press, 2005).

Phillip Atiba Goff is an Assistant Professor of Social Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

He was born in Philadelphia, PA, and raised in the nearby suburbs. He concentrated in Afro-American Studies at Harvard University and studied Social Psychology at Stanford University before taking his first appointment at The Pennsylvania State University. While there, Dr. Goff created the Africana Research Center's Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program and coordinated it for 2 years before leaving. His research has led him to become an expert in race, policing, and intersectional identity. In that capacity, Dr. Goff has been recruited as an equity researcher and consultant for police departments around the country, a role he continues to play enthusiastically. His work on equity issues in policing has led to foundation of the Consortium for Police Leadership in Equity with Tracie L. Keesee. Goff's research investigates the possibility that contextual explanations play an under-explored role in producing racial inequality. Rather than focusing on racial attitudes that are internal to an individual, his research examines ways in which environmental factors can produce racially disparate outcomes. Through this research, he hopes to expand the scope of what comes to mind when one thinks of the causes and consequences of inequality.

DeLeon L. Gray is an Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology at North Carolina State University.

He has several early career highlights including working in the professional sector at three national organizations that specialize in understanding the science of the mind and human behavior—the National Institutes of Health, the Association for Psychological Science, and the American Institutes for Research. He possesses a command over quantitative analytical approaches with a Master's degree in Quantitative Research,

Evaluation, and Measurement. To date, his research program has been recognized with several prestigious honors, including a Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, a Dissertation Research Fellowship from The Ohio State University, and an AERA Minority Dissertation Fellowship. In addition, the quality of his work has been acknowledged with national awards such as the Research on Socially and Economically Underrepresented Populations Award (RiSE-UP) from the Association for Psychological Science. DeLeon examines the "social triggers" that prompt achievement behavior in diverse educational environments. Specifically, he is intrigued by how students perceive, remember, and interpret information about themselves and others, and how these mental representations facilitate the adoption of the very goals, values, and self-perceptions that determine aptitude. Practically, his research informs discussions on how student patterns of underachievement and emotional turbulence can be disrupted by strategies borne of an understanding of social cognition and motivation.

Connie Cagampang Heller is co-founder of the Linked Fate Salon. The salon offers progressive activists and funders an informal place to think about and discuss movement building strategies with peers across issues and sectors. She serves on the Advisory Board of the Center for Social Inclusion and Americans for American Values, as well as on the Boards of Americans For a Fair Democracy, and World Trust Educational Services.

Jerry Kang is a Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law and also of Asian American Studies. His teaching and research interests include civil procedure, race, and communications. He is also an expert on Asian American communities, and has written about hate crimes, affirmative action, the Japanese American internment and its lessons for the War on Terror.

On communications, Professor Kang has published on the topics of privacy, pervasive computing, mass media policy, and cyber-race (the techno-social construction of race in cyberspace). His work regularly appears in leading journals, such as the UCLA, Stanford, and Harvard Law Reviews. During law school, Professor Kang was a supervising editor of the Harvard Law Review and Special Assistant to Harvard University's Advisory Committee on Free Speech. He joined UCLA in Fall 1995 and was elected Professor of the Year in 1998 and received the Rutter Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2007. At UCLA, he helped found the Concentration for Critical Race Studies, the first program of its kind in American legal education and acted as its founding co-director for two years. During 2003-05, Prof. Kang visited at both Georgetown Law Center and Harvard Law School. Prof. Kang is a member of the American Law Institute, has chaired the American Association of Law School's Section on Defamation and Privacy, serves on the Board of Directors of the Electronic Privacy Information Center, and has received numerous awards including the World Technology Award for Law and the Vice President's "Hammer Award" for Reinventing Government.

john a. powell is an internationally recognized expert in the areas of civil rights and civil liberties and a wide range of issues including race, structural racism, ethnicity, housing, poverty, and democracy. In addition to being a Professor of Law and Professor of African American Studies and Ethnic Studies, Professor powell holds the Robert D. Haas Chancellor's Chair in Equity and Inclusion. He is also the Director of the Haas Diversity Research Center (HDRC), which supports research to generate specific prescriptions for changes in policy and practice that address disparities related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomics in California and nationwide. He was recently the Executive Director of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University and held the Gregory H. Williams Chair in Civil Rights & Civil Liberties at the Moritz College of Law.

Professor powell has written extensively on a number of issues including structural racism, racial justice and regionalism, concentrated poverty and urban sprawl, opportunity based housing, voting rights, affirmative action in the United States, South Africa and Brazil, racial and ethnic identity, spirituality and social justice, and the needs of citizens in a democratic society.

Previously, Professor powell founded and directed the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota. He also served as Director of Legal Services in Miami, Florida and was National Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union where he was instrumental in developing educational adequacy theory.

Professor powell has worked and lived in Africa, where he was a consultant to the governments of Mozambique and South Africa. He has also lived and worked in India and done work in South America and Europe. He is one of the co-founders of the Poverty & Race Research Action Council and serves on the board of several national organizations.

L. Song Richardson is Professor of Law at the University of Iowa College of Law. She received her BA from Harvard College and her JD from The Yale Law School. Professor Richardson's current research utilizes the science of implicit social cognition to study criminal procedure, criminal law and policing. Currently, she is working on a book that examines the legal and moral implications of mind sciences research on policing and criminal procedure. She is also co-editing a book titled The Future of Criminal Justice in America that will be published by Cambridge University Press. Professor Richardson's scholarship has been published by law journals at Cornell University, the University of California, Duke, Iowa, Northwestern University, the University of Minnesota, and Indiana (Bloomington), among others. Her legal career has included partnership at a boutique criminal law firm and work as a state and federal public defender in Seattle, Washington. She was also an Assistant Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. Immediately upon graduation from law school, Professor Richardson was a Skadden Arps Public Interest Fellow with the National Immigration Law Center in Los Angeles and the Legal Aid Society's Immigration Unit in Brooklyn, NY. Professor Richardson has been featured in numerous local and national news programs, including 48 Hours. She teaches Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, and Law and Social Science.

Linda Tropp is Professor and Director of the Psychology of Peace and Violence Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Her main research programs concern experiences with intergroup contact, identification with social groups, interpretations of intergroup relationships, and responses to prejudice and disadvantage. She has received the Gordon Allport Intergroup Relations Prize from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues for her research on intergroup contact, the Erikson Early Career Award for distinguished research contributions from the International Society of Political Psychology, and the McKeachie Early Career Teaching Award from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Dr. Tropp has been a member of the Governing Council of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and she currently serves on the editorial boards of Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin and Group Processes and Intergroup Relations. In addition, Dr. Tropp has been engaged in many efforts to integrate contributions from researchers and practitioners to improve intergroup relations. She has collaborated with national organizations to present social science evidence in US Supreme Court cases on racial desegregation, and she has worked on state initiatives designed to improve interracial relations in schools. She is currently a member of the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity (JLICED), an international, interdisciplinary network of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working to reduce racial and ethnic divisions and build social inclusive communities through effective early childhood education programs.

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