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## 'You make me wanna holler and throw up both my hands!': campus culture, Black misandric microaggressions, and racial battle fatigue

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### ABSTRACT

Black males are scarce on White campuses. Still, they experience hypervisibility and are targets of hypersurveillance. This study used focus groups and semi-structured interviews to examine the experiences of 36 Black male students attending seven 'elite' historically White Research I institutions. Two themes emerged: (a) anti-Black male stereotyping and marginality and (b) hypersurveillance and control directed at Black men by Whites. Participants reported stereotyping and increased surveillance by police on and off campus. They also reported being defined as 'out of place' and 'fitting the description' of illegitimate members of the campus community. As a result, students reported psychological stress responses symptomatic of racial battle fatigue (e.g. frustration, shock, anger, disappointment, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear). The study finds the college environment was more hostile toward Black men than other groups, exemplifying Black racial misandry.

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It's just, you know, as soon as, if you're sitting in class, [for instance,] my English class, just last week at our final English class that we had, there was a [White] girl who sat next to me, and I asked her if she was on the newspaper staff, because I heard the teacher mention it or something like that. I wanted to know her position for some odd reason. I don't know why I asked. But, I was just like, 'Are you on the newspaper staff?' And she was like, 'Yeah! She gave me her position. Then she was like, 'So, um, you know, what sport do you play?' You know. I mean, just as calm and I just caught it, and before I answered, you know, I've learned to kind of like keep my cool because really I just want to, you know, let these people know how ignorant they are about the stereotypes. [They assume] that if you're an African American male you have to be an athlete to be here. (Andre, University of California, Berkeley student)

The legendary singer, Marvin Gaye, penned and sang a song called 'Inner City Blues.' Several key verses in the song state,

Oh, make you wanna holler, the way they do my life. Make me wanna holler, the way they do my life. This ain't livin', this ain't livin'. No, no baby, this ain't livin' ... makes me wanna holler and throw up both my hands.

Gaye's lyrics eloquently capture the 'Blues,' the stress responses he and other Black males in the 'Inner City' of the 1970s experienced as a result of gendered racism, or the way 'they do [his] life.' Regrettably, the claims made in these lyrics are similar to those many Black college and university young men make today as frequent victims of gendered racism.

The negative impact of gendered racial microaggressions influences the quality of young Black men's collegiate lives (Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Feagin & Hernan, 2000). This ubiquitous form of oppression and discrimination is disseminated across individual, class, race–gender, and racial group levels. Black men's experiences with gendered racism may be overt or covert, acute and/or chronic; they are deeply psychological (Pierce, 1995; Smith, 2004). As the opening quote of this study attests, Andre has learned from his numerous experiences with gendered racist stereotypes that White students seldom see him as he believes himself to be: equally intelligent, academic, hardworking, and deserving as any other student attending one of the country's most elite institutions. However, numerous battles with gendered forms of racism and stereotypes have taught him that he must 'keep cool,' should he inadvertently confirm the many erroneous beliefs he feels most people possess about Black men as violent, unintelligent, lazy, or angry (see Bowman & Smith, 2002). The frequency of these types of racialized and gendered experiences within collegiate spaces results in a deeply marred and inequitable experience; even elite institutions offer no shield.

This article offers racial battle fatigue as a theoretical framework for examining the psychosocial stress responses (e.g. frustration, sadness, shock, anger, defensiveness, apathy, academic disidentification, hypersensitivity, hypervigilance, anxiety, irritability, depression, and feelings of helplessness or hopelessness) associated with encountering Black racial misandric ideologies on historically White campuses. Our national, multiple-campus study suggests that Black misandric racial microaggressions and racial battle fatigue – concepts we define and explain in later sections – can help us better understand how campus racial climate affects the educational experiences of Black men. These concepts guide our understanding as we explore the thematic experiences of campus racial microaggressions and Black racial misandry at historically White campuses and universities to determine the common psychological responses they produce. We believe Black male students experience unique 'racial' and 'gendered racial' microaggressions at all stages of the educational pipeline, experiences that are often detrimental to their educational aspirations, achievements, and ability to be appropriately taught and mentored. To provide evidence of these detrimental effects, we highlight Black male student experiences from our study, and while these experiences may seem, to some, isolated and individual, we argue they are part of systemic and predictable racial microaggressions pervasive on US campuses (Blumer, 1958; Harper, 2009).

We use the phrase 'historically White' instead of the more typical 'predominantly White' to emphasize that the gross numbers or percentages of White students have less to do with constituting the majority population than with the historical and contemporary racialized infrastructure that is in place. We examine how the social and institutional environments in which historically White colleges and universities (HWCUs) are situated reinforce and strengthen Black misandric racial ideologies. The current campus racial climate, culture, and ecology of these modern-day institutions still benefit Whites at the expense of People of Color in innumerable ways. We conclude with a discussion of Black male students' coping strategies and the limitations of such strategies, including microaggressions' fatality, and the compelling need for more in depth structural analysis.

### **Understanding Black racial misandry in HWCUs**

The practices and ideologies used to justify slavery or a system of *Jim Crow* in the past are present in the continued subordination of people of African descent today. Modern forms use color-blind race-talk, customs, and protocols so as not to appear overtly racist in thoughts, words, or deeds (Anderson, 1993; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2002; Ellison, 1952; Jordan, 1968; Wilson, 1990). Yet the racism, particularly against Black males, runs deep and is symptomatic of *Black racial misandry*. Smith (2010) defined Black racial misandry as an exaggerated pathological aversion toward Black boys and men, created and strengthened in societal, institutional, and individual ideologies and practices (c.f., Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2002; Bowman & Smith, 2002; Brown et al., 2003; Feagin, 2000; Scheurich & Young, 2002; Smith, 1998; Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007; Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2006, 2007). It is important to note that misandry does not exist on its own, as a sole identity marker that is a part of societal and institutional oppression

against men. Rather, Smith's concept names a pathological and structural aversion that functions at the intersections of race, class, and gender categories to capture the multiple marginality Black men experience in US society. Black racial misandry is an ideological pathology, similar to but distinct from Black racial misogyny (Collins, 2000), that is 'reinforced in scholarly ontologies, axiologies, and epistemologies [as a result of which] Black men are held in suspicion, marginalized, hated, rendered invisible,' treated with decreased empathy, and 'put under increased surveillance, or placed in one or more socially acceptable stereotypical categories' (Smith, Allen, et al., 2007, p. 558). A handful of scholars have begun theorizing and examining this pathological situation, scholars we reference in the following section. Rarely, however, are Black male students themselves asked how they are uniquely oppressed in this country, given the specific form of gendered racism that is Black racial misandry (Smith, Allen, et al., 2007; Smith, Yosso, et al., 2006, 2007). Bringing Black male student voices into the conversation is a particular strength of this study.

### ***Acknowledging interlocking systems of oppression***

Robert Staples (1978) offered pioneering work on intersectionality and the dual dilemma of being a Black male in the United States. Staples argued that

In the case of black men, their subordination as a racial minority has more than cancelled out their advantages as males in the larger society. Any understanding of their [Black male] experience will have to come from an analysis of the complex problems they face as blacks and as [Black] men. (pp. 69–70)

In other words, White patriarchy fails Black men. The gendered/sexual racism Black males suffer actually distorts the values and powers often attributed to (White) masculinity. As political theorist Tommy J. Curry (2014a) explains,

The Black male is not born a patriarchal male. He is raced and sexed peculiarly, configured as barbaric and savage, imagined to be a violent animal, not a human being. His mere existence ignites the negrophobia taken to be the agreed upon justification for his death. (p. 1)

The physical death of Black men and boys is the desired result of White patriarchy as it maintains the racist social order of the United States. This racist order depends on Black male corpses, because 'Black male death lessens their economic competition with, as well as their political radicality against, white society' (Curry, 2014a, p. 1).

Historically, White patriarchy has constructed Black males as phobic entities who threaten the order of American society and thereby deserve death (Curry & Kelleher, 2015). As such, it is practically impossible to understand Black males as a group attempting to remedy their marginalization through an embrace of White patriarchal norms and attitudes. Explaining this 'outsider position' imposed upon Black males by White patriarchy, Angela Harris (2000) argues:

Materially, emasculation means that African American men have been denied the privileges of hegemonic masculinity, including patriarchal control over women, jobs that permit one to exercise technical mastery and autonomy, and the financial and political power that enables control over others. Culturally, African American men have been stereotyped by whites as docile and childlike in antebellum times, and in postbellum times as violent, unable to control their physical and sexual urges, and unintelligent. This latter set of stereotypes allows white men to see themselves as superior: Though African American men may possess a brutish maleness, they are lacking in the mental and moral qualities that are necessary for 'civilized' men: gentlemen, patriarchs, rulers. (783–784)

As a theoretical intervention into gender theory, the emerging literature on Black misandry is an effort to capture this peculiar condition of sexual vulnerability used to justify the racist violence and marginalization directed toward Black males in the United States over the last several centuries.

This realization has both sociological and theoretical consequences. Because the specific gendered effects of racism upon Black males are de-emphasized in current attempts to study Black men and boys, their sexual vulnerability to White patriarchy/White supremacy is often overlooked. The distance Black males have from White patriarchy is ignored as often as their sexual victimization by it. As Curry (2014a) explains,

academic discourse(s) of race-class-gender – presupposing the infinite power of all male bodies – prefigures a conceptual calculus dedicated to eradicating the vulnerability of Black men because they are men. Black men are thought to be mimetic (white) patriarchs; an untenable theoretical position given the empirical evidence of Black male disadvantage, but one that serves to affirm society's assuredness in holding that his death is the only way to remedy the dangers he poses to society. (p. 1)

This relationship between Black male death and disadvantage must be given more serious attention in the literature if academic theory is to accurately account for the social reality of Black males. In educational terms, 'individual [Black] boys educated in supportive environments often regress when they enter predominantly White schools where they are stereotypically categorized as non-learners' (hooks, 2004, p. 45). In White supremacist capitalist, patriarchal spaces like college and university campuses and society more generally, Black men are doomed if they are not given more focused, dedicated, and serious attention coupled with non-oppressive alternatives to traditional masculinity (McGuire, Berhanu, Davis, & Harper, 2014). Therefore, HWCUs must be problematized as purveyors of racial inequality and Black racial misandry.

### ***Black racial misandric microaggressions, macroaggressions, and racial battle fatigue***

Pierce (1974), in analyzing racial discrimination, has argued we 'must not look for the gross and obvious. The subtle, cumulative mini-assault is the substance of today's racism' (p. 516). He further described these assaults as racial microaggressions. Racial microaggressions can range from racial slights, recurrent indignities and irritations, unfair treatments, stigmatization, hypersurveillance, low expectations, and personal threats or attacks on one's well-being (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Essed & Stanfield, 1991; Sue, 2010; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997; Wilson, 1990). Sue (2010) further elaborates that microaggressions are 'everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership' (p. 3). Microaggressions are indicative of *macro*-stressors or racial macroaggressions (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). Racial macroaggressions are large-scale, systems-related stressors that are widespread, sometimes becoming highly publicized, race-related, traumatic events.<sup>1</sup> Whether racial attacks are at the micro or macro-level, racism has a powerful and far-reaching effect on its targets.

On the other hand, racial battle fatigue is the cumulative psychosocial–physiological impact of racial micro and macroaggressions on racially marginalized targets. According to Smith (2004, 2008a, 2008b, 2010), racial battle fatigue is the result of these toxic and persistent racialized microaggressions and the subsequent negative health sequelae on marginalized and oppressed people. Racial battle fatigue is experienced at both individual and group levels simply by being a part of a racially oppressed group. The symptoms are oftentimes communicable, as pain is shared among family, friends, and the larger racial group; and, thus, racial battle fatigue has the potential to be spread across generations through collective group memories, racial socialization, and coping processes (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2008).

Many Black boys and men, as a result of chronic racial micro and macroaggressions, will perceive their environment as extremely stressful, exhausting, and diminishing to their sense of control, comfort, and meaning while eliciting feelings of loss, ambiguity, strain, frustration, and injustice (Brown et al., 2003; Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011; Smith, Allen, et al., 2007; Smith, Yosso, et al., 2006, 2007). In this social milieu, where institutional and individual racist practices are present, People of Color must constantly dedicate time and energy to determine if there was a stressor, whether that stressor was motivated by a racist (or gendered racist) purpose, and how or if they should respond. The unification of these four larger concepts is particularly evident in the recent #BlackLivesMatter movement which continues to nationally publicize racially motivated brutalities and deaths of Black people, particularly men. It spotlights the intersection of Black racial misandry and micro and macroaggressions when viewed through the lens of racial battle fatigue. In this study, we extend this focused attention to argue that



an effect on *educational* outcomes exists, particularly when such experiences of racism and resulting racial battle fatigue occur in HWCUs.

### ***The social cost of Black misandric campus environments***

Early in the high school to college transition process, many Black students begin to feel that they are unwanted on campus, off campus, or in the United States overall (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2002; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Bowman & Smith, 2002; Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996; Harper, 2009; Smith, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2002; Strayhorn, 2009). Black men attending college chronically fight battles of racial misandry in which cyclical access and academic persistence issues are pervasive and where popular misconceptions result in the policing of identity and deadly violence (Allen, 1992; Duncan, 2003; Gougis, 1986; hooks, 2004; Smith, Yosso, et al., 2006, 2007). The repressive environments of college campuses challenge and limit the activity of Black males as a group. Black males are consistently frustrated with issues around racial isolation, racial distancing, and racial stereotyping. They are oftentimes viewed as cheaters when they receive a high score on an exam or term paper. In lab classes, Black males are typically the last one selected as a research partner. Black males are considered the most stereotyped of any group on campus and in the larger society. On campus and off, they are held in suspicion by dominant society and local law enforcement without material evidence. Additionally, they are the least retained among all racial/ethnic and gender groups in higher education (Harper, 2015; Smith, Allen, et al., 2007; Smith, Yosso, et al., 2006, 2007). In a policy report, Harper and Harris (2012) examined four cohorts of Black male undergraduates attending public four-year colleges and universities. Their findings revealed that only 33% of Black males earned bachelor's degrees within six years at the institutions where they matriculated, compared to 48% of students overall. In other words, Black male undergraduate students are structurally placed at the margins of the overall campus experience. They are prevented from developing a full sense of belonging in the institution, and they are placed at a competitive academic disadvantage compared to other students. Conversely, White administrators, professors, staff, and students directly and indirectly benefit from the passivity cultivated within these Black misandric environments. For example, Whites benefit from the strategic elimination of Black males as graduates who will not enter a competitive future employment pool as potential candidates. Importantly, it must be noted that Whites actually *lose out* because they miss the opportunities – professionally, educationally, interpersonally – that might be accrued by encouraging the diverse experiences and intellectual contributions Black males can offer the campus community.

This paper expands the initial formulation of Black misandry (Smith, 2010) by linking structural violence to the conceptualization of Black male vulnerability. Curry (2014b, 2016) maintains that societal violence against Black males – their disposability – fuels the racist misandric attitudes toward them more generally. Specifically, Curry (2014b) notes that 'Destroying the Black male body, murdering the Black life that demanded to be more than the petrified phantasm of the White imagination, and extinguishing the idea of the Black human the white supremacist world demands cannot exist' serves to increase racial misandry (p. 128). Indeed, 'Killing Black men who dare to speak against and live beyond their place erases them from the world, making them an example, leaving only their dead melaninated corpse as a deterrent against future revolts against white knowledge' (p. 129). Black racial misandry then emerges as a race–sex cognate to the death and dehumanization of Black males throughout society.

It is understood (implicitly and explicitly) by most marginalized racial/ethnic groups that ultimate control is reinforced by White power (i.e. police power, institutional power, and 'community policing')<sup>2</sup>, which protects White privilege and 'White spaces' while imposing stigma on People of Color. Black male college students experience a social cost when they identify discrimination as the reason for blocked opportunities. Kaiser and Miller (2001) found that no matter how much self-reported discrimination a Black male student faced, he was rated as more hypersensitive, emotional, argumentative, irritating, trouble making, and a complainer when he suggested that discrimination or racism was the source of his frustration, blocked opportunities, and reduced successes. Simply put, this irrational framing aligns with a historic framing of Black males as cognitively inferior and voluntarily lazy (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

Thus, White privilege and power retains social control through the pathologizing of Black males, and Black male death establishes the order between those fit to rule and those deemed disposable.

Wynter (1992) has previously identified these murderous logics used on Black males in 'No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to My Conception.' Wynter explains that young Black men have been utilized as caricatures of violence, made into savage beasts devoid of humanity in the minds of Whites. Referring to the Los Angeles police department's acronym 'No Humans Involved' (N.H.I.), which was used to announce police officers' engagement with Black males, Wynter advises, 'the social effects of this acronym (N.H.I.), while not overtly genocidal, are clearly serving to achieve parallel results: the incarceration and elimination of young Black males by ostensibly normal and everyday means' (p. 14). The consequence of routine displays of Black male death, their public executions, and the institutionalized responses of police and the public to their murders, conditions their psychological response and the at-large social performances of Black manhood in society. This is the psychological, physiological, and emotional cost that Smith (2004, 2010) described as symptomatic of racial battle fatigue.

## Research participants and procedures

### *Research questions and participants*

To investigate how experiencing persistent Black racist misandric stereotypes can produce psychological symptoms of racial battle fatigue, this study examined the responses of 36 self-identified Black male students between the ages of 18 and 25 who were attending college or university. They responded to the following research questions:

- Have you experienced racial discrimination at 'this university'? If so, please give specific examples.
- If applicable, describe your reactions to the specific examples of racial discrimination you have experienced.
- How would you describe the racial campus climate at 'this university' in relation to Black male students such as yourself? Please note specific incidents that led you describe the campus climate as you did.

Seven (7) Black male students were interviewed from each school and one (1) Black male law student. Through purposive sampling, the research team identified candidate-respondents using membership in African-American campus student organizations and referrals. Additionally, candidate-respondents were recruited through electronic mail and advertisements in student newspapers. The questions researchers asked were fairly straightforward and simple. They asked Black male students to respond directly to the current orthodoxy that suggests that America is now a post-racial and egalitarian society and where racial discrimination is a relic of a previous era. However, as researchers, we felt the implications of students' answers to the questions would be complex and far-reaching. If current orthodoxy was truly the case, then post-secondary institutions would no longer need to take aggressive actions to ensure discriminated groups have equal opportunity. However, if this were not what these young men reported, then there would continue to be a need for institutional control, affirmative action, and the development or continued support of programs that promote access, equity, diversity, opportunity, and fairness.

### *Site selection*

Interview sites consisted of several elite, historically White institutions including Harvard University, Michigan State University, University of California Berkeley, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, and the University of Michigan Law School. The sites, a mix of public, private, undergraduate, and graduate institutions, were chosen as part of a convenience sample. Researchers were aided by cooperating faculty at these institutions and were provided access to students selected in conjunction with their positions as expert witnesses in the Michigan Law School case of student

intervention. Students from these institutions provide important perspectives, given the institutions' stated commitment to diversity and their support of affirmative action.

Based upon the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, the Fall 2000 semester total Black student enrollment at Harvard University was 6% of the population. At Michigan State University it was 8%, at University of California Berkeley it was 4%, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign it was 6%, and at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor it was 7% (US Department of Education, 2001). During the 2014 and 2015 academic years, each of the campuses' new freshman classes enrolled between 3 and 11% of Black students, with overall enrollment deviating little (The Harvard Crimson, 2014; Michigan State University, 2014; University of California Berkeley, 2013; University of California Berkeley, 2014a, 2014b; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Division of Management Information, 2015; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Office for Planning and Budgeting, 2014; University of Michigan Ann Arbor Office of Budget and Planning, 2014a, 2014b). Disappointingly, Black students and faculty numbers on these campuses have not significantly changed in this 14-year period, and neither have the conditions that produce Black racial misandric environments.

### ***Instrumentation***

Project coordinators for each site contacted students who agreed to participate in the study, and interview times were arranged for data collection. Interviews were conducted as open-ended focus groups at Harvard University, Michigan State University, University of California Berkeley, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, and semi-structured one-on-one interviews were also conducted at the University of Michigan. Focus groups were held in conference rooms at respective institutions between April and May 2000. Each focus group was facilitated by the African-American researchers. Facilitators were the same at each site. Training and focus group protocol ensured consistency in the process. The focus group sessions were followed by the one-on-one interviews with two participants who had experienced racial microaggressions on campus but who had been unable to meet with the focus group. Students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign were emailed the same open-ended questions by a well-known African-American researcher on that campus. Students at this university were asked to reflect upon specific campus racial climate experiences.<sup>3</sup> All focus groups and semi-structured interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed with the participants' permission. The recordings and transcripts were coded and analyzed by the research team. All email responses from the students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign were coded and analyzed by the research team as well.

The focus group and individual interview sessions covered, in total, eight areas of inquiry: (1) types of racial discrimination experienced by Black male students, (2) how Black male students reacted to racial discrimination, (3) psychological responses that resulted from each racial incident experienced by the Black male students, (4) how mundane racism influenced the student's ability to perform academically, (5) whether they would recommend their college to students of color, (6) the advantages of having a critical mass of students of color on campus, (7) whether the racial climate for students of color has improved or worsened in the past few years, and (8) their advice for the study. For the purposes of this paper, we report findings from only the first five areas of inquiry, primarily focusing on the first three: types of racial discrimination experienced by Black male students, Black male students' reactions to racial discrimination, and psychological responses resulting from each racial incident experienced by the Black male students. Focus groups led by a Black male project coordinator helped to create safe spaces so that participants could more freely share experiences and reflect on them, even when the information was sometimes sensitive or embarrassing. Group exchanges in such a space encouraged participants to disclose feelings about their perceptions of racial encounters. Additionally, the focus group approach produced an atmosphere of support and comfort for expressing delicate information.



## Data analysis

Guided discussions on the topic of how campus racial climate influences Black racial misandric environments engendered participant responses showing both a wealth of commonalities and unique participant experiences. We used the Constant Comparison Method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) as our data analysis strategy and identified well-defined themes and patterns. Using the grounded theory approach, we examined how social environment engenders conditions of campus stereotypes and racial microaggressions that foster racial battle fatigue. The campus racial climate that Black males face was important for understanding the theory's fit and for control within the context of this study. The findings from this study are addressed in five ways. We begin by examining the various forms of racial microaggressions experienced as constant Black misandric stereotyping of Black males attending historically White institutions. Second, we looked for examples of how these males interpreted the racialized events they shared. Next, we examined each narrative for themes to develop a typology of the kinds of discrimination Black males experience on campus and in communities surrounding the campus. Fourth, we identified within the narrative the perpetrator(s) who committed discriminatory acts against the participants. Fifth, we investigated how these Black male students responded to different forms of Black misandric microaggressions. We looked for examples of psychological responses by exploring the voices and narratives of these students, including physiological responses only when the respondents spontaneously mentioned them. Additionally, observations and interviews allowed us to develop empirically grounded theory. In sum, the racial microaggressions exhibited by the Black misandric stereotypical ideologies experienced by these participants were analyzed as data for emerging categories. Data were blind coded by two individuals from the research team and reconciled to ensure reliability.

The focus groups and one-on-one interviews do not represent a random student sample, nor are the findings intended to be generalizable. Rather, this qualitative analysis examines the lived experiences of the participants and illustrates how their narratives can provide understanding and foster deeper and more meaningful inquiry. Further, our findings can be a guide to future research on how campus racial climate produces conditions that can lead to racial battle fatigue and, more specifically, Black racial misandry.

## Results

The Black males participating in our study reported experiencing various forms of racial microaggressions in academic, campus-social, and public spaces. Two major themes emerged from analyzing these reports/findings: (a) Black misandric stereotyping and marginality and (b) hypersurveillance and control. These themes manifested in a variety of ways for our respondents: as interactional–interpersonal problems, as subtle–overt racial insults, and as being seen as ‘out of place’ or ‘fitting the description’ of an illegitimate member of the campus community. In each account of perceived Black misandric microaggressive acts, the students reported having psychological responses, i.e. frustration, shock, avoidance/withdrawal, disbelief, anger, defensiveness, uncertainty/confusion, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear.

To be sure, individuals responded with different levels of intensity, and the chronic forms of microaggressions that they experienced differed in severity. However, they unanimously perceived the college environment as much more hostile and unwelcoming toward Black males than toward other groups, evidence of Black racial misandry. One participant, Joseph, a Harvard University student, for example, reported several run-ins with police officers, experiences which he described as ‘racially discriminatory.’ He said:

At one point my friend and I were coming back from Wayne Paterson University, the school in New Jersey. We were coming back on the highway about 11:00 at night from a party. We were pulled over for allegedly speeding. The state trooper said we were going at least 70 and he had to go all the way up to 65 in order to catch us. So, we immediately were like ‘What?’ And he then went back to his car, ran my friend’s plates and the next thing there

were six patrol cars there. They took us out of the car, patted us down, searched the car, and found nothing. There was nothing to find. And then left without issuing a ticket of any kind.

Michael, a University of Michigan law student, reported feeling 'like the police [are] everywhere here, watching you, waiting.'

Joseph and Michael shared feelings of frustration and anger about how they constantly felt under surveillance just because they are Black men. They reported what others shared as well, that they felt they were being followed and racially profiled everywhere they went. The Black males in our sample believed they experienced their campuses and connecting communities in ways that most students do not: as outsiders who appeared to be 'out of place' and as people who should be feared. These Black males were expected to possess first-hand knowledge of violence, welfare, gangs, sexual promiscuity, drugs, and the gangsta' rap industry which was evident of their presumed criminality. The only 'relief' from these Black misandric stereotypes were the equally stereotypical assumptions that they were basketball or football players, which still trumped their academic merit. Unless they were perceived to be athletes, they were constantly reminded that they, to use Smith, Allen, et al.'s (2007) term, 'fit the description' of an unwanted element in that environment.

It is critical to note that perpetrators, including faculty members, administrators, staff, college students, and both campus and local police officers, initiated each racial microaggression or discriminatory act. By definition the perpetrators held some form of power, i.e. as a professor or teaching assistant who controlled content, an advisor who controlled course enrollment and professional advisement, or a White classmate to whose voice the professor gave more legitimacy and approval that marginalized the Black students' voices in the class. In each case, the experiences were indicative of deeply held race prejudice where the perpetrators demonstrated negative and/or narrow views of Black males and disregarded their status as deserving and legitimate full tuition-paying students.

From our analysis of study transcripts, we identified four Black misandric stereotypes in which the student was viewed as: (a) a criminal/predator, (b) the possessor of ghetto-specific knowledge and behaviors, (c) as an exclusive *non-student* athlete, and (d) an anti-intellectual. All four categories meant that the Black male student was seen as not a legitimate part of the formal academic or intellectual campus community. Each of these Black misandric stereotypes occurred at the intersections of being both Black and a minoritized male.

### ***The criminal/predator stereotype***

For many of these Black men, being seen as a potential criminal (e.g. shoplifter, rapist, purse snatcher, or carjacker) had become a common, indeed, mundane, racial misandric experience, among the most frequent of microaggressions. Therefore, many of the Black men dismissed the affronts without direct response despite their frustrations. The presumptive Democratic nominee for President of the United States and former US Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, highlighted the pervasiveness of these types of racial microaggressions against Black men when she stated, 'I mean, if we're honest, for a lot of well-meaning, opened-minded White people, the sight of a young Black man in a hoodie still evokes a twinge of fear' (qtd. in Holloway, 2015). Consequently, these reprehensible racial microaggressions are a personal and group-level insult and character assassination to people who consider themselves peaceful and law-abiding individuals. Danthony, a Michigan law student, states:

One time when I was a freshman – and this is very bad – I was [in the department] and I was walking down the hallway and one of the teachers' doors was open. This is kind of wild. And I was ... coming toward her. [Talking aloud,] she's like, 'Oh, I should have locked the door. My purse is in there.' And I was like, 'Wow ... maybe you should have kept that to yourself or something.' I didn't say it [aloud] but I was thinking to myself, 'Like, oh, I reminded you that you should, like, lock the door.'

Danthony reported feeling annoyed by this experience and that because of these kinds of racist events he has to pretend to 'become somewhat blind sometimes' just so he can get through a typical day. Proving Danthony's experience was not unique or an uncommon generalized belief about Black males, a California Berkeley student, Rich, shared his experience. He said, 'I had a young lady say in class, 'Aren't

all gangs [primarily] with Black people?" Rich indicated that he constantly feels defensive in all of his classes because 'a lot of the [White] students in class [are] very ignorant to Black issues.' He also indicated that he believes his defensive attitude will never wane because 'the students who are sitting in class with us perpetuate this ignorance over and over and over again till it's bred in them.' Maybe this explains why Parker, a student attending the University of Illinois, shared a similar experience of feeling insulted and agitated. He stated the following: 'In fact, sometimes late at night, I'd be walking home from the library when some White women would cross the street to avoid me.' When Black males are sent verbal or non-verbal racial messages that they are not wanted, a physical body to be feared, or when they are treated as social pariah, the body codes this rejection as both a psychological and physical attack (Harper, 2009; Prillerman et al., 1989; Sapolsky, 1998; Shay, 2002; Smith, 2004; Smith, Allen, et al., 2007).

The Black males in our study found it extremely difficult to avoid thinking about their race-gendered position because they were constantly reminded through others' deeply held Black misandric beliefs and actions toward them. Paul, who attends the University of Illinois, recounts an all too common overt Black misandric act on a campus elevator, saying:

I was on an elevator in some university building alone when a White woman got on. She looked at me and made a face like something smelled. Then she turned to face the door, real stiff, staring straight ahead. I was behind her and to her right. After a few seconds, I saw her move her head, trying to peek back at me over her right shoulder. I guess she got nervous, not knowing what I was doing behind her. When she couldn't see me clearly from the slight turn, she squeezed her purse tight, and then quickly switched it to her left hand.

Paul did not feel too disturbed by this woman's action. In fact, he dismissed it because he had been in this position, as he said, 'too many times before.' In another common example of street corner behavior, Benjamin, another Illinois student, reported:

As you approach a street corner when the light is red, if the White driver feels threatened by the presence of a Black man near his or her car, the driver will lock the door. That resounding 'thunk' sound of car locks engaging is all too familiar.

Benjamin also shared that the 'familiar thunk' sounds were a source of not only his anger at White people; but also each time he heard the 'thunk' it gave him a headache that lasted for at least an hour. The elevator and car situations were between the two most common experiences reported.

Barry, a third student from the University of Illinois and a member of a Black Greek-letter fraternity, shared his frustration about the inequality that Black male students experience as a group:

One summer the Bruhs [i.e., fraternity 'Brothers'] had a party at [a fraternity brother's] apartment. One hour after the party ended, someone got shot in the foot a street over. The main Champaign newspaper reported the shooting occurred at the party held by [our fraternity]. They also refused to retract it after being confronted by the Bruhs.

Even with clear evidence presented by this fraternity's faculty and graduate advisors and the student witnesses who told the police officers that this fraternity house did not engage in any unlawful activity, it was still easier to believe that they were deviant and involved in some wrongdoing rather than just gathering legitimately for a social party. Barry indicated that the police constantly provoked his frustration and resentment because he felt obligated to defend his fraternity's innocence at every event or gathering.

Finally, Kyle, a student at University of California at Berkeley, shared his experiences on how Black male students are targeted even when they are just relaxing and playing, enjoying recreational activities prior to the beginning of the school year:

[At] Underhill [residence hall], all last semester, almost every night, there's Whites, there's Asians in Underhill playing Frisbee, or playing football, or what have you at one o'clock in the morning. [They are] out there yelling, having a good time, and never [having] any problems. So, me and my friends [all Black males] are out there about to play some football, and it's like 11 o'clock. All of a sudden, UCBP [UC-Berkeley Police] sweeps up. First, it's one car, and they get out the car and it's like, 'We got some complaints. You guys need to leave.' Mind you, there's about maybe 10 of us and we're out there still just tossing the football around. Then, after [the UCBP officer] is there for maybe about two minutes, all of a sudden from this entrance over here, we have two other [UCBP squad] cars swooping in on Underhill lot.

In the end, a total of five police in cars, one UCBP van, and two officers on bikes arrived at the scene and threatened the Black male students with arrest if they did not leave. It is no surprise that Kyle and his friends indicated that they felt threatened, disrespected, scared, vulnerable, and disappointed. Kyle also stated that they felt 'like deterring others who look like me, who we are trying to recruit to get here, [from attending the school] even if they do get admitted.' It is compelling that these Black misandric experiences would motivate these students to discourage other Black male recruits from receiving a UC Berkeley education. The cost of constantly being racially policed, which often leads to psychological violence toward Black males, did not seem like a fair bargain for an elite degree from an HWCU.

These narratives point to a criminal/predator stereotype held about Black men. Such discrimination creates boundaries and alienation, which can only impede social integration, a sense of belonging, scholarship, professional development, and perceptions about what others 'believe' they are as Black men.

### ***The ghetto-specific stereotype***

The ghetto-specific stereotype does not consider the rich diversity of experiences, tastes, desires, communities, economic and educational backgrounds, and behaviors that are part of Black experiences. Consequently, all Blacks, and particularly Black males, are seen as the embodiment of a deficit, pathological ghetto culture that possesses a weak work ethic, a tendency for violence, fatherless home/no positive male role models, and inadequate family values as is expressed by 'gangsta' rap videos (see also Bowman & Smith, 2002; Feagin, 2000; Smith, 1998). Black males are considered 'street-smart' as opposed to 'book-smart,' and the parameters of their intellectual contributions in classroom settings are set accordingly to this Black misandric stereotype.

Malcolm, a University of California Berkeley student and the only Black person in the particular class described, detailed a negative racial encounter with a ghetto-specific stereotype. He articulates the experience this way:

Well, I had the experience in my music class. It was about eastern culturalism. It was an American Studies class, and we studied all types of music theories from around the world. And, we got to rap music, and I was the only African American in the class. So, [when] we got to rap music everyone in the class is focused on me. [LAUGHTER] It was like, okay, so tell us about rap music because you're the Black male. Like, I'm just an authority on everything that happens in the rap industry. And, I said, 'Well, you know, I have no idea about rap music' and everybody was just baffled even though I do know about rap music. But, it was just one of those things. And, [even] the teacher was just like, 'Okay Malcolm, now tell us about rap music.'

Malcolm and many of our other students reported being angered and 'sick and tired' of this type of stereotyping. They also suggested that this was one of the main reasons why they never felt a part of their institution. As another student reported telling his White peers,

the things that some of you guys think ... the things that some of you guys say is, like, really like blowing my mind, you know, as far as like all Black people ... [making] blatant statements like all Black people are ignorant, or all Black people are poor, or ... the reason why, um, the reason why, it's something about Black families, and that, uh, the reason why there's so much gang violence and everything is just because Black families ... the family unit doesn't exist in the Black community.

Black males report rarely being able to engage in meaningful, intellectual, and worldly discussions due to deficit-minded assumption making (Feagin & McKinney, 2003; Harper, 2015). In the above ghetto-specific example, Malcolm is confronted with a form of racial paternalism that he attempted to reject. Malcolm's professor and classmates felt that he would be better off or protected from intellectual harm and embarrassment if he was offered a topic that would allow him to 'more easily' participate in the class discussion as the expert in a minutely defined Black-specific area.

### ***The non-student but athletic stereotype***

In the athlete-student stereotype, Black males are believed to be on campus as athletes exclusively to entertain through sports and not as students with academic merits. Linking to the stereotype of

Black men as individuals to be feared, the athlete stereotype holds Black male physicality as a defining characteristic viewed in a 'positive' manner when used to create school spirit. A University of Michigan student discussed the perception of a Black male football player at Stanford who he knew that became upset during an incident in a dining hall. White students were described as applying an 'animalistic, brutal, aggressive element' to the student-athlete due to the combination of his large stature and race. This same student also illuminated the way that athlete-student status creates legitimacy around a Black male's presence as a 'good Negro' who fulfills the specific role of entertainment.

The athlete-student stereotype is an interesting dilemma most Black males experience and recognize early in their life as a 'back-handed' compliment. According to a study by Stone et al. (1997), Black males – whether athletes or not – are commonly viewed as having natural athletic ability that makes them superior to all other racial groups. However, according to Stone, Perry, and Darley, every other racial group rates Black males as the lowest of all athletes in the areas of intelligence and academic effort. Rodney, from the University of California, Berkeley, shares a personal example of being treated according to the athlete-student stereotype in the following quote:

I think my experience came at the beginning of the year and continues to come around. It has to do with assumptions. As far as being in classes and people assuming that I'm an athlete, I get it all the time. Anytime I indicate to someone, whether it's on campus or off campus, that I am a student here, the next question is, 'So, what sport do you play?' ... It angers me, because what they're doing is they're failing to recognize that Black people can be here for academics as well as a White person or an Asian person ... You know what I'm saying? 'No, I'm actually here on my academic merit 'cause I got in on academic merit. My scholarship came from academic merit. It had nothing to do with athletics.'

Research shows that academic faculty and students believe student-athletes are not as intelligent, motivated, or prepared for college courses as 'traditional' students who do not play sports (Stone et al., 1997). Clearly, it does not matter whether Black males are student-athletes or 'traditional' students; this stereotype disproportionately affects them. Harrison and Lawrence (2004) argued that Black males are still seen as sub- and superhuman within athletic stereotype roles and these beliefs are only microcosms of the larger society's beliefs.

### ***The anti-intellectual stereotype***

The anti-intellectual stereotype views Black males as not belonging to a post-secondary institution in any important or legitimate way; therefore, they are treated as intruders, troublemakers, and outsiders. This stereotype is a form of Blumer's (1958)'sense of group position' proposal which states that theories of prejudice have focused too narrowly on individual feelings of likes and dislikes and perceptions of group differences. Blumer's model also suggests that racially prejudiced individuals see themselves as belonging to a specific racial group that serves as the basis of comparisons to other groups. Such identification involves the formation of an image of their group as superior in opposition to the other racial group as inferior. Hence, viewing Blacks, and Black males in particular, as less intelligent beings includes the view by Whites that Whites are more intelligent or superior. This sense of group position and anti-intellectual stereotype was commonplace on the historically White campuses where we conducted our research. For example, Terrence shared how the staff resisted interacting with him in his academic college:

In the College of Natural Resources, there's obviously an even lower number of minorities in that college who are interested in that field. So in dealing with the staff over there, it often becomes challenging sometimes because I don't know what the motivations are. But it seems that I have the problem over there, sometimes, dealing with the staff, whether I want to change a class, drop a class or add a class. Sometimes it just seems like when I talk to the staff over there, they seem to be a little short with me as far as answering my questions.

Skeptics would argue that Terrence's experience is the common discourtesy that many students routinely face from staffers. However, his encounter matches research that reports that Black males are dismissed because they are viewed as unfairly taking the seats of more deserving students, a 'reverse discrimination' against Whites. This belief is further supported by the ideology that Black males are



not expected to be in college, to express intelligent thoughts, or to have accomplishments worthy of college admission (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000). These biases are particularly true in those disciplines where Black males are chronically underrepresented, as Terrence's experience suggests. Terrence further explains:

Also, when I'm in the building that houses Natural Resources, you kind of get those looks and stares from students and staff like, 'Why are you in this building?' Basically because it is for students who are [White] and not knowing that I am a student who is actually in the College of Natural Resources, they assume that I'm lost or they assume that I'm not supposed to be in there.

When Black males are treated as unimportant or unwanted members of the campus society, or as someone who is lost or trespassing, adjusting to campus life remains difficult if not impossible. Cureton (2003) suggested that 'students' perception of the college environment (feeling comfortable with the university, faculty relations, and nurturing environment that promotes personal development) or the university's reputation strongly affects academic performance' (p. 297). Alternatively, outstanding academic performance may also raise misguided suspicion, facilitated through the anti-intellectual stereotype as evidenced in the following exchange:

Like math is one of my, you know, strong suits. And so I was doing really well in the class. And ... we took the first quiz or something, and I, I got like a 95. I mean, a perfect mid-term. And I got like a 95 and it was, ... it was sort of they, he was like 'How did, how did this happen?' Like he, he was like 'Come into my office hours. We need to talk.' And I was like 'Okay.' I just, I just really knew I was gonna be like acclaimed, and like great job. But he was, it was like, you know, it was like 'We think you've cheated.' And I was like 'Oh, for real?' Uh. And he was like 'Yeah, it's just, it's uncanny.' Or something like that. And I was like 'Oh, okay. Well. Did you see me cheat? Is there someone whose answers are just like mine, seeing as how it's math and the right answer is the right answer.' And he was like 'Well, we just don't know so we think we're gonna make you, you're gonna take it again.' And, uh, I was like 'Okay. Whatever. I'm gonna go talk to the professor.' So I went and talked to the professor and he was like 'Well, you know, I'm gonna have to stick with my staff on this one.' Right. And, um, so I was like 'Okay. Okay.' So what I did, I knew I knew my stuff. So it wasn't even a matter of like 'Oh, my God. I cheated and now I'm gonna get found out.' You know. It was like, fine, I'll take it again. And this time I took it with just the GSI in the room. And just myself. And I got a 98 on the exam.

This story mimics another student's experience, recounted by Harper (2013) in which being one of seven students to receive perfect scores on a test, only Damien (Black male) was singled out with the phrase "you got a 100%" [...] simultaneously [conveying] confusion and shock' (p. 199). The intensity and regularity of Black misandric microaggressions these students faced makes it clear they carry an unnecessary burden of resilience to earn an academic degree.

## Discussion

### *Adaptive coping strategies*

Trying to succeed in college is very stressful, especially among the competitive Carnegie classified doctoral/research extensive institutions that were part of our study. Most Black male students try extremely hard to earn high marks in pursuit of their degree and professional goals. However, the additional stressors of gendered racism that are part of the post-secondary experience can be overwhelming. Our findings allow us to problematize common responses to racial microaggressions and Black racial misandry while suggesting adaptive coping strategies that can address the gendered-racism in Black college males' experiences.

Research has documented how Black students and People of Color navigate racialized spaces and encounters with the following adaptive coping strategies: *Processing* – take the time to acknowledge that racism is embedded in one's lived reality while accessing if it is at play in perceived microaggressions; *Self-care* – take time away from activities and environments in which microaggressions are frequent; *Confrontation* – name the microaggressions and address how they are offensive with the perpetrator; *Counter spaces* – frequent environments that offer validation on the existence of racism, affirm racial identity, and provide support in responding to microaggressions; and, *Public responses* – collective support, action, and response to demonstrate that microaggressions are not individual incidents but reflective of a pervasive racial climate (Hernández et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2011; Solórzano et al., 2000).

While we acknowledge that strategically ignoring certain questionably racist comments or situations is a common tactic for some Black males who are bombarded with daily Black misandric microaggressions, we also seek to problematize that strategy. If raced and gendered microaggressions around Black criminality and ability are not confronted, non-Black students and college employees will likely continue to inflict harm on Black male students. We are not suggesting that Black males should become educators for perpetrators. Instead, we recommend telling the person that their comment was offensive and that it adds to repeated negative Black misandric experiences that Black males unfairly endure on campus. However, each individual must decide their direct level of engagement with perpetrators. Personal histories with racial misandric microaggressions may allow one person to thoroughly explain the offense in question while another may or may not name the offense and exit the conversation.

Confrontation allows Black males to shift the burden of ambiguity inherent in subtle racial misandric microaggressions to the perpetrators as they also engage with the meaning and consequences of their comment or action. Also, sharing the burden of processing, these incidents may allow Black males not to internalize the narrow ideas about who they are on campus or who they can become through their educational journey. Confrontation explicitly makes it clear to the perpetrator that their actions are unacceptable, regardless of intentionality. Although contextualized here on an individual-to-individual level, confrontation is not limited to this level and may take a variety of forms such as op-eds, disruptive activism, or social media campaigns.

The use of tactics in which one attempts to defy all Black male stereotypes is also limited. The rejection and adoption of externally ascribed identities leave no room for Black males to have a spectrum of self-defined emotions and identities beyond constructed binaries. For example, the fear of being labeled as the angry or violent Black man may cause Black male students to ignore racial misandric microaggressions or environments. This stereotype, and others that follow this same racist reasoning, is well entrenched into the American social psyche. As a result, it is very hard to change with old strategies. Stereotypes of Black males do not exist as evidence-based ideas but in hegemonic assumptions that operate as symbolic discourses of control, resistant to contradictions. Thus, no matter how civil, calm, or 'correct' a Black male is in his confrontation, the stereotypes still exist. Arguably, if racial microaggressions result in anger or fear and the stereotype regulates the reaction so it is never expressed, named, or confronted, then maladaptation results from this buried emotional expression (Stevenson, 1994, 1997). Psychological discomfort must not be ignored. The dehumanization of Black boys and men places them at risk for self-alienation. The self-alienated person is not allowed to be himself, define himself, or live outside of his externally defined self. He becomes defined and controlled by stereotypes created and socially reinforced by a racially oppressive misandric system. This externalized definition controls him from the outside, disabling him from developing a centered-self (Wilson, 1990). The worse of all is that the self-alienated person does not see himself or others like him as a full human being. Therefore, his own life and members of his racial-gender group are devalued.

### ***Institutional response to micro and macroaggressions***

Adaptive coping strategies are tactics of resistance, but they are not a solution to racist campus climates and racial microaggressions. Black males should not be seen as a group that must cope no matter what, under any conditions, through all circumstances. Black males are not meant to just survive the college experience but thrive through it. Institutions have the primary responsibility to address the systemic issues that Black males face on their campus with transformative solutions. Hurtado et al. (1998) offer a four-dimensional model to understanding hostile racial campus climates and moving toward inclusivity: (a) address the institution's historic relationship to inclusion and exclusion; (b) increase structural diversity so the number of faculty, staff, and administrators more accurately reflect the diverse student body; (c) engage with the perceptions and attitudes between and among groups, and; (d) address the behavioral climate on how campus groups interact with each other. To be sure, inclusivity defined solely through pluralism as progress or token representation of Black people on campus is racism. The above model is not transformative if it only focuses on changing hearts and minds but does not challenge

and change the social order of institutional and cultural power. Hence, combating racism should not solely happen at the individual level, be it challenging non-Black people's prejudice or giving strategies to students of color. Dismantling racism requires a critique of the structural inner workings of higher education institutions.

### ***Inherent problems in understanding racism and sexism within collegiate spaces***

Many Whites, abetted by neo-conservative writers of all hues, believe that racial discrimination lies in the distant past and is not a current problem. The current racial inequalities that undeniably persist – in education, wages, family income, and access to housing or health care – are attributed to African-Americans' cultural and individual failures (Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Bowman & Smith, 2002). Despite the experiences of many African-Americans saying otherwise, alternative structural explanations have been historically and presently marginalized and co-opted into diversity management wherein progress is measured as Black people's token access (Omi & Winant, 2014) to the student body, administrative positions, and the faculty instead of how structures change to remedy anti-Black policies and practices. Consequently, the academic study of racism and sexism in the United States is biased by built-in operational prejudices that are institutionalized and widely applied, resulting in sustained stress in the victim (Pierce, 1995). Racism and sexism are often treated as isolated incidents, separate systems, their intersections ignored, and assumed to be weakened barriers overtime (Museus & Griffin, 2011). While Black feminism has elevated our understanding of the gendered racism Black women experience at the intersections of their lived experiences (Collins, 1990), a gendered-raced analysis is still underdeveloped for Black men.

Our findings indicate that Black males experience microaggressions based on their race and gender in ways that have previously only been documented among Black women (Donovan et al., 2013). The absence of these microaggressions toward Black males in the scholarly literature is indicative of the ways that current gender theories, like intersectionality, have not been able to reconcile Black males' experiences of vulnerability with the idea of Black male privilege, which presumes that *all maleness* in a patriarchal society enjoys advantages over femaleness more generally. In the case of Black men, this assumption is not so clear (Curry, 2016). As legal scholar Athena Mutua (2013) has argued:

When intersectionality was applied to black men, it was initially interpreted to suggest that 'black men were privileged by gender and subordinated by race;' that is, black men sat at the intersection of the subordinating and oppressive system of race (black) and the privileged system of gender (men). Intuitively this notion seemed correct. It also seemed to support the dominant social and academic practice of examining the oppressive conditions that black men faced from a racial perspective. Yet, the interpretation of black men as privileged by gender and oppressed by race appeared incorrect in our observations of racial profiling ... [W]hile this interpretation of intersectionality seemed to capture some of the differentials between women and men in the black community, as in wage differentials for example, it did not capture the harsher treatment black men seemed to face, not only in the context of anonymous public space that often characterized racial profiling, but also in terms of higher rates of hyper incarceration, death by homicide and certain diseases, suicide rates, and high unemployment as compared to black women. (pp. 344–345)

Similar to Hutchinson's (2001) multidimensionality analysis, which explained that Black males have historically suffered sexually specific violence because of their (heterosexual) maleness, as in the case of lynching, for example, Mutua recognizes that Black males can and do suffer disadvantages because of their (Black) maleness. In the specific case of police violence, Harris (2000) has argued that police brutality against Black males could also be understood as a particular form of gender violence tied to their male identity. Harris (2000) writes that 'Police officers in poor urban minority neighborhoods may come to see themselves as law enforcers in a community of savages, as outposts of the law in a jungle. In such a situation, race, gender, and nation converge' (p. 797). In such cases, Black maleness confers deadly disadvantages. Understanding the vulnerabilities, Black males endure because of their maleness requires a theoretical intervention into masculinity theory situating the experiences racialized males have as victims of White patriarchy, and a sociological verification of these experiences to show that the realities Black men and boys articulate are a legitimate and accurate depiction of the conditions Black males find themselves living within.

Since its deficit-focused scholarship as reported by Harper (2009) and exclusionary practices as stated by Morris et al. (1994) contribute to Black endangerment, the higher education system cannot be seen as a neutral or safe space. This is evidenced by the backlash to Black student protest in the 1960s and 1970s that led to the South Carolina State University Orangeburg Massacre, as well as the University of California Los Angeles' Campbell Hall shootings where Black student campus activism was met with deadly force (Biondi, 2012; Rogers, 2012). As Black student campus activism has once again mobilized, for example, *I Too Am Harvard*, #BlackLivesMatter, *UCLA Black Bruins*, and Mizzou's #ConcernedStudent1950, there must be a corollary concern about how racism expressed as racial microaggressions oftentimes becomes fatal, ending Black lives, or is met with severe racist backlash. For instance, Black student organizers at the University of Missouri, Columbia, who protested against campus racism during the fall of 2015, are feeling the effects of their short-lived victory. Republican lawmakers responded against their complaints and activism by decreasing the proposed budget of all four of the university's campuses. If left unchanged, this will amount in a net loss of \$26.8 million in funding instead of the \$55.8 million proposed by Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon. Additionally, two key faculty members, who supported the Black students' demonstration, had their salaries revoked (D'Onofrio, 2016). Mizzou's Black football players struck the final blow when they joined the student protest and threatened to boycott the upcoming football game. This act of civil disobedience would have cost the university over \$1 million dollars. As a result, the student concerns were expedited and the university's president and chancellor resigned from their positions. Yet, lawmakers sought to victimize and suppress Black student athletes' activism. In December 2015, Missouri lawmakers drafted a bill to revoke the scholarship of 'any college athlete who calls, incites, supports, or participates in any strike or concerted refusal to play a scheduled game' (D'Onofrio, 2016).

If Black male students are continuously being criminalized, even for walking across campus or entering an academic building, then the fear of them as 'criminals' likely will intensify when they are expressing their civic duty to protest, march, or occupy. Campus police will likely be called to regulate and suppress Black student activism, which is disturbing considering a major theme from our study was the shared experience of racial microaggressions Black male students faced as a result of law enforcement. Again, the fatality of subtle racism becomes probable when a wallet or cell phone coupled with Black criminality and pathology causes an officer to misperceive it as a weapon (see Allport & Postman, 1958). The narrow preconceived notions about Black people in the larger society converge with the racial microaggressions about Black male students on campus to not only exhaust adaptive energy, increasing racial battle fatigue, but also to dehumanize and subjugate the group as inferior (Jenkins, 2006).

### **Conclusion: the clogged college racial pipeline**

Under the current systems of oppression, Black male targets are controlled and utilized to benefit the oppressive agents. The alarming downward trend in Black male college participation and graduation rates shows no sign of leveling off or reversing in the near future. We attribute this to Black racial misandry and racial micro/macroaggressions leading to racial battle fatigue. Given the ample research both conducted and presented here, it is clear that racial inequality and abuse of power also plague the halls of academia. Black racial misandry permeates the presumed safe spaces of academia – the college classrooms, hallways, meeting rooms, libraries, and computer labs – where Black male students are targeted and negatively engaged.

The perpetrators of racial microaggressions are not often hard-core racists or Ku Klux Klan members. In our sample, faculty members, administrative staff, and students served as aspiration blockers for far too many Black male students. Many of the respondents in this study reported feelings of dehumanization, alienation, anger, and frustration following the Black racial misandric microaggressions experienced in these academic spaces. The data are clear. Respondents encountered barriers that are in direct conflict with the ideal of access and equality in higher education and the assumption that all students can experience supportive student–faculty and student–student relationships that will foster their academic success. Academic adjustment and social survival for Black males on historically White



campuses is connected to having a sense of support, belonging, and feeling safe, especially when the pressures of the academy become overwhelming. Nevertheless, these Black men still achieve through their resilient determination. In fact, most of the students participating in the study persisted to graduation, and many went on to graduate and professional schools and others are now lawyers with an expressed mission to end racial intolerance. It is critical that research on Black students, particularly on Black males, shift from a singular focus on how they adapt to gendered racism to how their agency challenges on campus marginalization while at the same time generating alternative frames for student engagement, achievement, and support.

In this study, we examine Black male students' experiences with day-to-day gendered racism on historically White campuses. More importantly, we offer a more nuanced examination of Black males' experiences by considering more than just their racial identity. We include their race-gender identities in analyzing our data. In doing so, we can begin to better understand how Black racial misandric environments differentially, and negatively, influence Black males within historically and predominately White institutions and communities. Furthermore, by utilizing a race-gendered analysis that considers Black racial misandric environments, we can consider the nuances of the institutional and societal White supremacist ideology that affect the everyday lives of Black men and boys despite their social or economic location.

## Notes

1. Examples of racial macroaggressions against Blacks are the killings in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1921 and Rosewood, Florida in 1923, the 1963 Birmingham church bombing, the senseless murders of Dr. Martin Luther King, Emmett Till, and James Byrd and the subsequent racial division it caused, and the current impunity and support for officer-involved killings of Sandra Bland, and of children Aiyana Stanley-Jones and Tamir Rice (see Juzwiak & Chan, 2014).
2. Community policing, for our purposes, is enacted by any citizen who is racially primed (see Smith, 2004, 2010; Smith, Allen, et al., 2007) to believe in anti-Black stereotypes and to suspect Black males of anti-social behaviors without justification. In short, Black males are guilty until proven innocent, or as one of our interviewees describes it, they are guilty of being 'Black while in America.'
3. The University of Illinois was added as part of the research protocol during the data collection stages. For additional information on this research protocol, see Smith, Allen, et al. (2007).

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Notes on contributors

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