ABSTRACT

BREWSTER, ZACHARY W. Everyday Racism in the Context of Full-Service Restaurants. (Under the Direction of William R. Smith.)

Despite popular claims that racism and discrimination are no longer salient issues in contemporary society, racial minorities continue to experience disparate treatment in everyday public interactions. The context of full-service restaurants is one such public setting wherein racial minority patrons, African Americans in particular, encounter discriminate treatment. To further understand the pervasiveness and processes implicated in restaurant servers’ proclivity to discriminate against their racial minority customers, I analyze primary survey data derived from a local sample of servers (N=200) nested in eighteen restaurant establishments. Subjects were asked a series of questions ascertaining information about the racial climate of their workplaces. I utilize ordinary least squares regression and hierarchical linear modeling to assess the effects of both restaurant- and server-level variables on discriminatory server behaviors. Findings highlight the persistence of everyday racial discrimination in settings of public accommodations. A sizable number of sampled subjects self-reported to discriminate racially in their service delivery. Such discrimination can partially be understood as an adaptation to the economic uncertainty inherent in the institution of tipping. Results show that servers are motivated to discriminate statistically in their service delivery, to some extent, due to perceived differences in tipping and dining behaviors across racial groups. However, the economic motivation to provide discriminate service explains only a modest amount of the overall variation in servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Results also reveal a considerable amount of anti-black server discourse within the cultures of restaurant establishments and such discourse is shown to be an important factor towards understanding both within and between-restaurant variation.
in server discrimination. Contrary to my expectations, the proportion of minorities working as servers/bartenders was not shown be a salient organizational-level predictor of discriminatory server behaviors. These research findings are interpreted as reflecting processes of everyday racism in contemporary America. Implications of these findings for restaurant officials are discussed and directions for future research are outlined.
Everyday Racism in the Context of Full-Service Restaurants

by
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BIOGRAPHY

Zachary Wayne Brewster was born on March 8, 1977 in Coldwater, Michigan. He began his collegiate career in 1995 at Western Kentucky University where he studied for one year before transferring to Central Michigan University. After a year at CMU, Zachary left school and moved to Vida, Oregon where he worked in a lumber mill and cleaned office buildings. In the fall of 1998, Zachary returned to college at Grand Valley State University and in the spring of 2000, he earned a Bachelors of Science degree in Sociology. The following fall, Zachary returned to Western Kentucky University to begin his graduate work. He earned a Master of Arts degree in sociology at WKU in the spring of 2002 and in the fall of 2002, he began his doctoral work at North Carolina State University. While in graduate school, Zachary gained extensive experience teaching upper and lower level undergraduate courses in sociology. He also maintained an active research agenda evidenced in his contributions to the publication of 10 scholarly articles.
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I have received my academic training from state universities in Michigan, Kentucky, and North Carolina. It is thus appropriate that I begin by extending my gratitude to the taxpayers of these states. A portion of their hard-earned money was devoted to my intellectual training. As such, my degrees can partially be attributed to their support and for this, I am appreciative. There have also been many individuals who have been influential in my intellectual training. It is unlikely that I would have even considered going to graduate school if it were not for the encouragement of Professor Dennis Malaret. Towards the end of my junior year at Grand Valley State University, Dr. Malaret asked if I was planning to go to graduate school. I told him that I had not thought about it and in response; he suggested I consider doing so. This brief conversation marked what I consider the beginning of my professional career, as it was at that moment that a life in academics entered my purview. I am grateful for Dr. Malaret’s early confidence in my intellectual potential.

I am also thankful for the time and energies that the sociology faculty at Western Kentucky University devoted to my training. The quality of training that I received during my first two years of graduate school at WKU was exceptional. I am especially indebted to the mentorship of Professor Jim Grimm. His intellect and work ethic is beyond reproach and I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to study under his direction. Thank you Jim for the instrumental role you have played in my intellectual and
professional development. Douglas Smith is another WKU faculty that I owe special thanks. He too has been a great mentor and I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him and learn from him over the last nine years.

I not surprisingly owe a great deal of thanks to the sociology faculty at North Carolina State University. Members of the sociology faculty at NCSU have given me exceptional training in statistics, research methods, social theory, work/organizations, and medical sociology. They have prepared me well for a career in academics and I hope the time that they devoted to my training proves to be a good investment. I specifically would like to thank Jeff Leiter, Ginnie Aldige, Ted Greenstein, and Charles Tittle for their role in my professional development.

I owe a special thanks to members of my dissertation committee. My dissertation chair, Bill Smith, has been an incredible asset towards the completion of this project, in particularly, and my doctoral degree more generally. In fact, I might have remained forever lost in post-prelim land if it were not for Bill’s willingness to invest in my professional development. I am truly grateful for his counsel, as I am a better scholar because of it. I also owe a considerable amount of credit to, Ron Czaja, Maxine Thompson, Rick Della Fave, and Michael Schulman. Their thoughtful feedback and insights on my dissertation research is only part of their many contributions to my professional training. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from each of them.

Maneuvering through the NCSU bureaucracy to get things accomplished would have been a daunting task if I had to have done it alone. Thankfully, I could always count
getting help from the department’s support staff. I am grateful for all their help over the course of my graduate training. I owe special thanks to Bruce Cheek, who has been my “go to person” for administrative assistance throughout graduate school. The housekeeping staff also deserves considerable thanks. The hard work of Lucy and Suzy allowed me to write this dissertation in a nice clean environment and for this, I am grateful.

During my tenure as a graduate student, I have received support from too many of my classmates to name individually. The NCSU sociology graduate students are a collegial and supportive bunch and I have really enjoyed my time with them. In fact, out of the graduate student body has emerged friendships that I am confident will last a lifetime. A few of my fellow graduate student colleagues, however, deserve specific recognition for their role in the completion of this dissertation. Jay Wills has been a great friend throughout graduate school. His thought provoking insights on social issues has contributed greatly to my intellectual growth and professional identity. I value all of the conversations—intellectual or otherwise—that we had throughout graduate school. Jon Brauer has also been instrumental towards the completion of this project, in particular. Intellectual consultations with Jon have been priceless and I greatly appreciate the time and attention that he always devoted to my inquires. Finally, I owe considerable thanks to Sarah Rusche. In the spring of 2004, Sarah invited me to be involved in revising and administering a survey of restaurant servers that she had done for Ron Czaja’s graduate methods course. If it were not for this invitation and her initiative this dissertation would be substantially different. Sarah has also provided valuable analytical insights into the
social psychological processes underlying server discrimination. Her contributions to this research are particularly evident in Chapters 4 and 8 of this dissertation.

In the larger scheme of things, members of my family have been the most influential figures towards the completion of my doctoral degree. First, I owe many thanks to my parents, Ken and Donna Brewster. All of my accomplishments in life reflect their love, support, and unconditional commitment to parenthood. I will never be able to give them enough credit for the influence they have had on my life. I can only hope that the future will prove me to be as good of a parent to my son, as they have been to me. Thank you mom and dad for all of your love and support! I am also grateful to my sister, Melissa Denzer. She has not only been supportive but also, along with her husband, Derek, given me three beautiful nieces—Gracie, Addie, Kendal—and one beautiful but naughty nephew, Evan. Getting pictures of the kids in my inbox always provided a welcomed respite from working on this dissertation. Finally, I am grateful to have such great in-laws. Greg and Sandy Tuckey have been supportive of all my academic endeavors, including this dissertation, and I appreciate all of their love and encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

42 U.S.C. §2000a

(a) All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, as defined in this section, without discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin.

42 U.S.C. §2000a(b)

(b) Each of the following establishments is a place of public accommodation within this title if its operations affect commerce, or if discrimination or segregation by it is supported by State action:
(1) any inn, hotel, motel, or other establishment which provides lodging to transient guests, other than an establishment located within a building which contains not more than five rooms for rent or hire and which is actually occupied by the proprietor of such establishment as his residence.
(2) any restaurant, cafeteria, lunchroom, lunch counter, soda fountain, or other facility principally engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises, including, but not limited to, any such facility located on the premises of any retail establishment, or any gasoline station;
(3) any motion picture house, theater, concert hall, sports arena, stadium or other place of exhibition or entertainment; and
(4) any establishment (A)(i) which is physically located within the premises of any establishment otherwise covered by this subsection, or (ii) within the premises of which is physically located any such covered establishment and (B) which holds itself out as serving patrons of any such covered establishment.

— TITLE II OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

1.1 Prologue

Codes 2000a and 2000a(b) of Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it unlawful to discriminate or segregate individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin in settings of public accommodations. Specifically, the law was designed
to eradicate “the unfairness, humiliation, and insult of racial discrimination in facilities which purport to serve the general public” (House of Representatives 1964). After more than four decades since the passing of this Public Accommodations Act, and despite popular notions of egalitarianism and equal opportunity in the United States of America, disparities in how our nation’s citizens are treated according to race, color, religion or national origin continue to be observed. Admittedly, the overt forms of racism that characterized the Jim Crow era have and will likely continue to subside (see Tomaskovic-Devey 1993; Tomaskovic-Devey Mason, and Zingraff 2004; Fiske 2000). However, racism itself has not been eradicated from our societal fabric and arguably has not even declined but rather has simply reemerged in a new form that is characterized by indirectness, subtly, and covertness (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Coates 2008).

Racial minority consumers are particularly vulnerable to such subtle and covert forms of discriminatory treatment when engaging in everyday commercial transactions (Feagin and Sikes 1994; Feagin 1991, 2000). Surprisingly, however, there has been little systematic research into the extent and nature of racial discrimination unfolding in the contexts of everyday consumption (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2006; Siegelman 1998, p. 70; Yinger 1998). A promising body of literature addressing the issue of consumer discrimination in everyday interactions has only recently surfaced in scholarly literatures. In a 2003 survey of the literature on experiences of racial discrimination while shopping in retail stores, Gabbidon (2003), for instance, was able to identify only three scholarly articles addressing the issue despite the fact that racial minorities, like all Americans, spend a substantial amount of time (and money) in retail settings. The limited numbers of
extant studies on everyday consumer discrimination have been inspired by the more established area of inquiry exploring law enforcement officers’ proclivity to utilize individuals’ race as a basis for stopping, investigating, and detaining/arresting people rather than probable cause or even a reasonable amount of suspicion that a law has been violated. Scholars refer to this phenomenon with the now popular concept of ‘driving while black or brown’ (DWB). Researchers subsequently began exploring the pervasiveness of racial profiling in everyday marketplace transactions (Gabbidon and Higgins 2007; Harris, Henderson, and Williams 2005; Williams, Henderson, and Harris 2001; Harris 2003)\(^1\).

Racial profiling occurring in the context of everyday consumption is defined by Harris et al. (2005, p. 163), “as a type of differential treatment of consumers in the marketplace based on race/ethnicity that constitutes denial of or degradation in the products and/or services that are offered to the consumer.” This definition is broad enough to include all consumption experiences including shopping in retail stores, hotels, grocery stores, gas stations, hailing taxicabs, and restaurants, just to name a few of the possible contexts in which racial minorities experience discriminatory treatment. Racial profiling in such contexts can more generally be conceptualized as constituting unique but related dimensions of everyday racism. According to Essed (1991), everyday racism includes the racial attitude and actions infused in the fabric of society and systematically

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\(^1\) As a result of this line of research, terms such as “shopping while black” (Gabbidon 2003; Harris 2003; Williams, Henderson, and Harris 2001), “hailing a cab while black” (Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya 2005), “running for office while black” (Herbert 2008), “dying while black” (Randall 2006), “working while black” (Marshall 2001), and the focus of this dissertation, “dining while black” (Dirks and Rice 2004ab) have emerged in the scholarly and popular literature surrounding race related issues.
unfold within the familiar and recurrent practices of everyday living. Everyday racism is distinct from the individual racism of racist individuals and instead reveals the systemic qualities of a racist society (Essed 1991).

The dearth of scholarship on everyday racism in venues of public accommodations is arguably no more apparent than in the context of restaurant establishments (see Scarborough Research Group’s 2006 research report on restaurant patronage). In fact, according to Fernandez (2006, p. 21), “The entire customer service perspective in full-service restaurants has not been fully explored from a minority patron’s point of view.” This lack of scholarly attention is despite frequent reports delineating incidents of racial discrimination in restaurants across the United States (Carton and Kleiner 2001, p. 128; Curry and Kleiner. 2005; Riesch and Kleiner 2005; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, and Bylsma 2003). The relative absence of studies on everyday racism in restaurant settings is even more surprising given the economic implications associated with discriminate service in this section of the economy. Over the last decade, for instance, numerous litigations of racial discrimination have been levied against restaurant establishments, the most widely publicized cases being Haynes v. Shoney’s (Watkins 1997) and the cases against Denny’s family restaurant (Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997). Shoney’s was mandated to pay $132.5 million to the 21,000 persons involved in the class action lawsuit while Denny’s paid $54 million dollars to the plaintiffs who experienced discrimination. Moreover, as Lynn (2004a, 2004b) points out, legal fees alone make any lawsuit costly regardless of the verdict not to mention the financial loss associated with tarnished public images.

Racial discrimination has also been implicated in lost revenue resulting from
reduced black restaurant patronage (see Lynn 2004b, p.14). In 2007, African American purchasing power was estimated to be $845 billion and is projected to grow at a much faster rate relative to whites (Humphreys 2007). In fact, by 2012 it is estimated that black purchasing power will account for nearly 9% of every dollar spent in the U.S. economy (Humphreys 2007). Yet, relative to the U.S. adult population, blacks spend less money eating out (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007) and are less likely to frequent full-service restaurants, in particular (Scarborough Research 2006). Differences in restaurant patronage are likely to emerge, in part, in response to the discriminatory treatment that African Americans encounter in restaurant establishments. If African Americans experience discriminatory treatment it should not be surprising that they, relative to whites, are less likely to “dine in” and more likely to “carry out” (Scarborough Research 2006; Rousseau 1997).

In response to the relative dearth of extant studies on race-based consumer discrimination in restaurant settings, this research analyzes primary quantitative data to ascertain the extent and nature of restaurant servers’ proclivity to discriminate against their African American customers. I specifically explore the following broad research questions:

1. How prevalent is anti-black discourse and discriminatory behaviors among restaurant servers?

2. What are the causal factors implicated in discriminatory server behaviors?

In the remaining portion of this introductory chapter, I provide an overview of this
research paying particular attention to the theoretical and methodological approaches utilized to shed light on the above research questions. In section 1.3, I conclude with an abbreviated description of the chapters that follow.

1.2 Overview of Research Project

Pervasiveness of Discriminatory Server Behaviors

While there is ample evidence documenting the existence of restaurant servers’ racially motivated discriminatory treatment towards African American patrons (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Feagin 1991, 2000, 2006; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Graham 1995; Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997; Siegelman 1998; Smith 2000; Schuman, Singer, Donovan, and Selltiz 1983; Watkins 1997), there is less known about the pervasiveness of such behaviors. We, for instance, do not know if discrimination against black restaurant patrons reflects the bigotry of a relatively small proportion of servers or rather if such behaviors are systemic and carried out by the masses. Our lack of knowledge regarding the pervasiveness everyday racism within the context of restaurant establishments, in part, reflects the methodological strategies employed by previous researchers working in this area.

Qualitative researchers (e.g., Dirks and Rice 2004b; Feagin and Sikes 1994), for instance, have documented concrete evidence of discriminatory server behaviors but have been unable to derive estimates regarding the pervasiveness of these behaviors. On the other hand, victimization surveys (e.g., Gabbidon and Higgins 2007; Siegelman 1998; Smith 2000) and audit studies (e.g., Schuman et al. 1983; Perry 2005) are conducive for
deriving estimates concerning the commonality of racially motivated server
discrimination but estimates derived from these approaches are likely to be conservative,
part, because of the subtle nature of contemporary racism (Bonilla-Silva 2003). In
many cases, victims of discrimination, including auditors, will simply be unable to detect
the discriminatory service they receive (Bonilla-Silva 2002, 2003; Bonilla-Silva and
Forman 2000; Feagin 2001; Feagin and Sikes 1994). Servers, on the other hand, are well
situated to report the frequency in which their own service behaviors vary according to
their customers’ race. Thus, the first goal of this research is to supplement our existing
knowledge about the pervasiveness of server initiated race-based discrimination by
reporting findings from a local survey of restaurant servers that posed several questions
ascertaining the frequency in which subjects’ service varies according to customers’ race.

Owing to the scarcity of extant quantitative data on everyday racism in restaurant
establishments, it should also be of no surprise that we know very little about the causal
processes that culminate in discriminate service delivery to racial minority customers. Some
scholars have posited that servers statistically discriminate in their service delivery according
to perceived racial differences in tipping and dining behaviors (e.g., Ayres, Vars, and
Zakariya 2005). Others have argued that server discrimination is an outcome of a racist
restaurant ethos characterized by strong anti-black belief systems (e.g., Dirks and Rice
2004a, 2004b). While there are sound theoretical justifications underlying each of the
explanations neither has been systematically explored. As such, the second goal of this
research is to assess the explanatory power of both the statistical discrimination and the
workplace culture frameworks. In the following section, I briefly outline the basic
arguments underlying each of these frameworks.
Theoretical Frameworks—Statistical Discrimination and Workplace Culture

Some customers are just not going to tip, black people don’t tip. When they first come in and they ask you if there is refill on drinks, you know right then that you’re not getting a tip. When we’ve had the kids eat free and they ask you for the free chicken fingers (laugh)...When they ask for the free stuff you know you’re being screwed. [Mallinson and Brewster 2005: 791]

While the above statement is specific to one individual, the sentiment that African Americans routinely tip below the 15-20 per cent tipping norm is widespread among tipped service providers (Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004). A limited number of published empirical studies (Lynn and Graves 1996; Lynn, Le, and Sherwyn 1998; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Noll and Arnold 2004) have generally supported this perception.² There is also some evidence suggesting that racial minorities, blacks in particular, constitute a group of patrons perceived by servers to comparatively more difficult customers to wait on (see Dirks and Rice 2004b; Mallinson and Brewster 2005). Negative perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors are likely to contribute to discriminate service to these guests via the affects of such views on servers’ perceptions of equity/inequity when waiting on black customers.

According to equity theorists (Adams 1963, 1965; also see Cook and Hegtvedt 1983; Greenberg 1982), organizational members compare input to outcome ratios with the ratios of others occupying similar positions within an organization. Inputs are conceptualized as anything that the actor brings to the interactional encounter (i.e., effort,

² Mok and Hansen’s (1999) study is the only identifiable exception to this empirical observation. This discrepancy could be explained by small sample size (N=107) or, more likely, the fact their study was conducted in an upper class restaurant (average bill size per person=$25.70) that employed predominantly male servers. Further research should explore how these factors influence race-based tipping disparities.
education, training, etc.), whereas outcomes are considered the rewards that the actor receives from the exchange. One possible behavioral response to feelings of inequity is to provide inferior service (exert less energy thus reducing inputs) to customers who are members of social groups perceived by servers to be below average tippers or alternatively more difficult to wait on. In other words, servers in response to feelings of inequity, which emerge from their negative perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors, are likely to discriminate statistically (Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya 2005; Foschi, Lai, and Sigerson 1994; Ridgeway 1997; Waldinger and Lichter 2003) in their service delivery in an attempt to maximize profits while simultaneously restoring their sense of equity.

Alternatively, Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b) have argued that discriminatory treatment towards black restaurant patrons reflects a “culture of white servers” that is characterized by strong anti-black belief systems, which are reflected in the racist and stereotypical language that servers use to disparage African American customers privately. Within this organizational culture framework, anti-black discourse is posited to shape the way in which servers categorize and subsequently interact with their black patrons. Racist workplace comments, for instance, function to disseminate stereotypes about African American customers throughout the subculture of serving thereby affirming and reaffirming ideologies of white customer superiority in the cognition of predominately white restaurant wait staff (see Mallinson and Brewster 2005). When servers approach black tables they are likely to access and utilize these culturally constructed race-based categorical distinctions to inform the quality of service that they extend to black customers—a level of
quality that is likely to be inferior relative to their white patrons. In some cases, however, servers may be aware of racist workplace discourse but may actively refrain from acting in accordance with such discourse (Devine 1989; Fiske 2000; Rusche and Brewster 2008). In addition to the server-level effects of racist discourse on servers’ behaviors that emerge out of the everyday workplace interactions, this research also explores the effects of more structural dimensions of restaurant cultures.

One structural dimension of organizational cultures that has been shown to be a salient predictor of intra-organizational race relations is the numerical representation of racial minorities (e.g., Kanter 1977ab). If the absence of blacks working in serving positions is partially responsible for the production and reproduction of an anti-black restaurant cultures (see Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b), it is theoretically reasonable to suspect that an increased presence of African Americans in such positions would result in an alteration of the organizational culture to reduce the discriminatory thoughts and actions of servers. Similarly, this research also seeks to determine the degree to which racist workplace discourse exerts a contextual effect on servers’ discriminatory behaviors. It is, for instance, plausible that servers working in restaurants characterized by high aggregate levels of racist discourse would have a greater proclivity to discriminate as a function of the ambiance or context, net of the effects of individual server’s awareness of such discourse. Alternatively, aggregate or restaurant-level effects of racist discourse may simply reflect the clustering of individuals who utilize racialized language in some restaurants relative to others.

*Data and Methods*

In response to our limited knowledge about the pervasiveness and predictors of racial discriminatory behaviors among restaurant servers, this research analyzes survey
responses from 200 servers nested in 18 restaurants located in a large southeastern city in the United States. The survey posed a series of questions concerning the racial climate of the restaurants wherein subjects were employed. Descriptive statistics for measures of discriminatory server behaviors as well as anti-black discourse are presented to shed additional light on the pervasiveness of race-based server discrimination. I also analyze subjects’ responses to these survey questions to test a series of hypotheses derived from the two explanatory frameworks highlighted in the existing literature on everyday discrimination in the restaurant context—statistical discrimination and workplace culture. Owing to the hierarchical nature of these data (i.e., servers nested in restaurants), I hypothesize effects of both server-level and restaurant-level variables on discriminatory server behaviors, and I utilize both OLS multivariate regression and Hierarchical Linear Modeling statistical techniques to test my hypotheses.

1.3 Outline of Subsequent Chapters

In this opening chapter, I have introduced this research including the general areas in which this project contributes to our existing knowledge of everyday racism in general and everyday discrimination in the context of dining away from home, in particular. In Chapter 2, I review extant literature documenting anti-black sentiments and discriminatory behaviors among restaurant staff. In Chapter 3, I situate this research within a statistical discrimination theoretical framework by providing an overview of the logic and literature implicating economic considerations in servers’ proclivity to engage in racial discrimination. In Chapter 4, I introduce a second theoretical framework that
informs my analyses—workplace culture. Next, in Chapter 5, I describe data collection procedures, sample data, measurement of key constructs, hypotheses, and statistical techniques that I employ in this research.

Data analysis begins in Chapter 6, wherein I present descriptive statistics for measures of servers’ discriminatory behaviors and anti-black workplace discourse. In this chapter, I also present the results from a series of paired sample t-tests comparing subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors with their perceptions of comparable white patrons. In Chapter 7, I present OLS results regressing statistical discrimination measures—perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors—on self-reported server discrimination. Next, in Chapter 8, I present results from the OLS and HLM assessing the effects of salient workplace culture measures (i.e., racist discourse, minority representation) on self-reported server discrimination. In Chapter 9, I present OLS and HLM results assessing the effects of workplace culture measures on observed server discrimination. Finally, in Chapter 10, I conclude by offering a synopsis of the key findings, describe primary contributions, identify limitations, and outline suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 2
EVIDENCE OF RACIALLY MOTIVATED SERVER DISCRIMINATION IN FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

2.1 Introduction

Considering the history of race relations in the United States it should not be surprising that the extant literature has provided ample evidence of the unjust treatment that racial minorities experience in the marketplace. Research, for instance, has documented racial discrimination in housing markets (e.g., Yinger 1986), automobile purchasing (e.g., Ayres and Siegelman 1995; Ayres 1991), quality of homeowners insurance policies (Chan 1999), and mortgage lending (e.g., Ladd 1998). These commercial transactions, however, occur infrequently in comparison with everyday forms of consumption (e.g., shopping) and yet, with few exceptions, there has been little systematic research in the area of such everyday contexts (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2006; Gabbidon 2003; Siegelman 1998, p. 70; Yinger 1998).

The lack of scholarly attention to such discrimination is equally evident in the context of dining away from home—another quintessential American activity (see Scarborough Research Group’s 2006 research report on restaurant patronage). Comparatively there has been little research done that explores the nature and extent of the phenomenon popularly referred to as “dining while black” (Dirks and Rice 2004a). This study contributes to this literature by analyzing a sample of servers’ (N=200) responses to survey questions ascertaining information about the racial climate of their
workplaces. To begin situating the current study in the existing literature, in the next section of this chapter, I review the available evidence concerning racial discrimination in the restaurant industry. I pay particular attention to evidence concerning the pervasiveness of anti-black sentiments and behaviors among restaurant servers. Next, in section 2.3, I discuss the limitations of extant knowledge in this area and conclude, in section 2.4, with a chapter summary.

2.2 Evidence of Anti-Black Server Sentiments, Discourse, and Behaviors

Some research has argued that discriminatory treatment of racial minority restaurant guests is a manifestation of everyday racism within the context of a race conscious society. Dirks and Rice (2004a; 2004b, p. 37), for instance recently documented the existence of a “culture of white servers” within restaurant establishments that in many ways is said to parallel larger cultural structures of oppression. Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b) argue that discriminatory server behaviors are caused, in part, by the anti-minority culture within which servers work. Indicative of such a culture, according to Dirks and Rice (2004b), are code words that servers use to disparage black diners when the servers are in the back, out of earshot of the customers. Such code words constitute one example of what has been referred to as “backstage” racism (Feagin 2006, p. 199; Feagin and Sikes 1994) and include terms such as Canadian, cousins, moolies, and even white people to refer to blacks in the dining room (see also Large 2006). Sometimes these code words are promoted by management, such as the case at Denny’s restaurant where the code word “blackout” was used to convey that there were “too many
black customers in the restaurant at one time” (Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997; see also Dirks and Rice 2004b, p.4).

Dirks and Rice (2004a) also document situations wherein servers simply were unwilling to serve black patrons and to avoid doing so they would participate in ‘the servers’ game of ‘Pass the [Black] Table.’” A respondent in Mallinson and Brewster’s (2005, p. 796) research substantiates the use of avoidance tactics when confronted with serving black patrons:

… It irritates me at night when people don’t take a table because they are black people and they try and find ways of not having to be the person that has that table. That makes me mad. …You know… I blow up about stuff like that.

In some cases, when assigned a black table, servers have even been known to pay other servers to wait on them. Candace Brown, a former server at Cracker Barrel, for instance, reported that paying servers to take black tables “happened all the time,” and moreover, “management knew about” (Schmit and Copeland 2008). In other cases, restaurant managers condoned anti-black servers’ sentiments and actions by adding mandatory gratuities only to black patrons’ checks (Dirks and Rice 2004; also see Perry 2005). Such a practice led to a 1999 lawsuit against an upscale South Beach restaurant. When the plaintiff asked the restaurant owner why an automatic gratuity had been added to his check he was told that “black people don’t tip well” (see Bragg 1999).

The perception that black customers routinely tip below the 15-20 per cent tipping norm is widespread among tipped service providers (Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004). In addition to being perceived to be inadequate tippers, black customers are also perceived to be comparatively more difficult to wait on. A server from Dirks and Rice
(2004b, p. 39) study, for example, reported that “they [black customers] tend to be very snappy, and ‘do this, do this,’ like ‘ma’am,’ snap in your face…” Another respondent, when describing two black women that she had previously waited on and subsequently refused to serve explained that the women had on that prior occasion “‘ran me [her] back and forth…. They returned everything to the kitchen and were a pain” (Dirks and Rice 2004b, p. 43).

Dirks and Rice (2004a; 2004b) argue that the anti-black sentiments among restaurant servers foster an environment wherein servers feel justified in providing inferior service to blacks. In fact, the authors contend that when servers are forced to take a black table they often admittedly provide inferior service by exerting a minimum amount of effort to these guests.

Additional qualitative evidence of discriminatory server behaviors has been documented by Feagin and Sikes (1994; also see Feagin 1991; and Feagin 2000). The authors analyzed data derived from in-depth interviews with 135 middle-class African Americans and found numerous accounts, recited in vivid detail, of race-based discriminatory treatment within restaurants. For instance, one individual in their study reported that he had been refused service by one restaurant because he was “black folk.” In another instance, a server continuously took the order of white patrons who had been seated after a black customer. When the customer told the waitress that he was ready to order she responded by saying, “Well, you’re going to have to wait” (p. 39). African Americans being forced to wait unreasonable times to be seated and/or served are inevitable outcomes of the “games” that at least some servers play to avoid providing
service to black customers\(^3\).

African Americans “having to wait” is not unique to the restaurant context. Ainscough and Motley (2000), in an audit study assessing the effects of race, gender, and dress on service timeliness, found that when black confederates attempted to return an unopened compact disc to retail stores without a receipt they were made to wait twice as long for service than comparable white confederates. Interestingly wait times of black confederates relative to whites was inversely related to length of the line when the study subject arrived\(^4\). The authors interpret this as retail clerks’ impeded ability to ignore black customers when they are ‘next’ inline and in close proximity.

The cases of discrimination documented by Feagin and Sikes (1994) are not unlike those presented in Lawrence Otis Graham’s book, *Member of the Club* (1995). After repeatedly being mistaken for a counter worker in a café car on an Amtrak train, Graham—a successful Manhattan corporate lawyer—was inspired to explore the African American experience while dining in some of New York City’s finest restaurants (1995). He specifically sought out to find answers to the questions that often go unasked and

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\(^3\) Dirks and Rice (2004b), for instance, describe servers’ unwillingness to wait on black tables and to avoid doing so they would play the game of ‘Pass the [Black] Table.” It has even been reported that some servers go as far as to pay other servers to wait on African American patrons when they are seated in their section. According to Candace Brown, a former server at Cracker Barrel, the practice of paying servers to take black tables “happened all the time,” and moreover, “management knew about” (Schmit and Copeland 2008).

\(^4\) If Ainscough and Motley’s (2002) findings generalize to the restaurant context we could expect discriminate service to be particularly pronounced during peak patronage hours. During these times servers maybe more confident that any differences in the quality of their service (e.g. wait time) according to customers’ race, would be attributed to the hectic environment rather than their own motivations. Alternatively, if the server only has two tables—one black and one white—it would be difficult to conceal more overt forms of differential service delivery—although more subtle forms of discriminate service could still be concealed rather easily.
which are certainly not addressed in restaurant reviews. Questions about whether African Americans can be confident that when they dine out they will be treated with respect and not be seated in near the bathrooms/kitchen or mistaken for a restaurant employee (e.g., coatroom attendant). Graham eloquently summarizes the results of his social experiment in the following passage:

During my ten-restaurant odyssey around the city, I was handed five coats while waiting to be seated, given three coat checks while preparing to leave, berated for not setting a patron’s table with the right kind of dishes, mistaken for a valet car parker, mistaken for a men’s room attendant who had turned the hot water faucet too high, threatened by a fellow patron with the loss of my job when I did not get off the only pay phone when asked, and offered the table closest to the bathroom or kitchen seven out of ten times. (Graham 1995, p. 91-92)

Graham reports that he and his friends were treated reasonably well in only two of the ten restaurants they visited.

Based on the above evidence it is not surprising that survey research has also highlighted the discriminatory treatment that African Americans encounter while dining away from home. A 1997 Gallop Poll, for instance, found that 20% of African American respondents reported that they were discriminated against in a restaurant setting in the past month. Utilizing the Gallop Poll data in conjunction with data on total annual meals served to blacks and total number of black restaurant consumers in the marketplace, Siegelman (1998) calculated a crude discrimination rate of 2.5 percent. This estimate predicts that about one out of every forty meals served to African Americans in our nation’s restaurants will result in perceived discrimination. A 2001 nationally

5 Siegelman, utilizing National Restaurant Association reports indicating that 50 billion meals are served in restaurants and school and work cafeterias per year, estimated a crude discrimination
representative sample assessing the pervasiveness of ‘dining while black’ revealed virtually no change over the 1997 figures. Of the 1,003 blacks that were surveyed 21% reported to experience inequitable treatment while dining out in the past month (Gallup Poll Social Audit: Black-White Relations in the United States, 2001).

Yet another national representative survey exploring intergroup relations in the U.S was recently conducted by The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) (Smith 2000). Findings from the NCCJ survey lend additional credence to problematic existence of discriminatory treatment against minority restaurant consumers. Of the 709 blacks that were surveyed, 41.5% reportedly experienced at least one incident of unfair treatment based on their race or ethnicity in the 30 days prior to the survey. Blacks reported that incidents of discrimination occur most frequently while shopping (22%) or while at work (14%). However, a substantial amount of discrimination was also reported to occur while consuming entertainment in venues such as restaurants, bars, or theaters (12%). While the form of discrimination experienced by blacks in restaurants, bars, theaters, etc. vary, the most common identified types of discrimination included being ignored or having service denied (2.9%), observing others being served first

rate of 2.5. Of these 50 billion meals served, Siegelman estimates that 25 billion meals are consumed in commercial settings, and 2.5 billion of these meals are served to blacks. If then there are 25 million black restaurant customers in the commercial restaurant market there would be approximately 8.3 restaurant meals consumed by black customers per month. Conservatively, assuming that each of the 20 percent of the black 1997 gallop poll subjects who reported experiencing discrimination in the past month while dining out experienced only one incident of discrimination and 7.3 nondiscriminatory experiences and the remaining 80 percent experienced 8.3 meals without a discriminatory incident, the proportion of nondiscriminatory meals out of all meals served to blacks can be expressed as (0.8 X 8.3 + .20 X 7.3) / 8.3 = .975. Subtracting the rate of nondiscriminatory meals out of total meals served to blacks (.975) from 1 results in a discrimination rate of 0.025 or 2.5 percent.
(2.5%), receiving rude or discourteous service (2.3%), and being treated ‘unfairly’ (1.7%).

Additional insight can be obtained by examining the prevalence of discrimination wherein the unit of analysis is the establishment level. In a 1981 audit study of 20 restaurants located on the East side of Manhattan, researchers judged at least some discriminatory treatment to have occurred against black testers in six (30%) of the sampled establishments (Schuman et al. 1983; also see: Selltiz 1955). As expected, no instances of blatant discrimination (e.g., blatant refusal of service) were documented. Discrimination rather took the form of black testers’ perceptions that they were seated in less desirable locations and/or received inferior service (e.g., service was slow or rushed, checks were given without asking if they wanted dessert or coffee, etc.) relative to the white testers. More recently, racial discrimination was documented in an audit study of 28 bars and nightclubs on Bourbon Street in New Orleans, Louisiana. Researchers with the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center found that in 40% of the audited bars, compared with white testers, black testers were charged higher prices for the same drinks—often times served by the same bartender. Additionally, in many of the audited sites, bar personnel informed black testers of club rules regarding drink-minimums (10%) and dress codes (7%) while comparable white patrons were not advised of such policies (Perry 2005).

Racial minorities’ experiences of discriminatory treatment have undoubtedly contributed to the abundance of litigations levied against restaurant establishments over the last fifteen years. One of most widely publicized cases was that of Haynes vs.
Shoney’s (Watkins 1997). The court proceedings in this case detailed instances of both overt and covert discriminatory behavior on the part of high-ranking Shoney officials. Because of Shoney’s discriminatory practices, the company was forced to surrender $132.5 million to the 21,000 persons involved in the class action lawsuit.

Similar high profile cases involving discriminatory practices have been levied against Denny’s family restaurant. In 1991, after listening to countless speeches concerning the advancements made by African Americans since the Civil rights movement at a daylong forum for students interested in applying to historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), a group of black teenagers visited a Denny’s in San Jose, California. The students were asked to pay a “sitting fee” of two dollars and pay for their meals in advance before they would be seated and served (Relin and Gaskins 1995). Nine white classmates of the teens were already in the restaurant and not made to pay a “sitting fee” nor pay for their meals in advance. In another high profile incident on the morning of April 1, 1993, “six black [secret service] agents waited almost an hour for breakfast, while their white colleagues at a nearby table were served within minutes and went on to their second and third cups of coffee” (Rousseau 1997: 34). The above cases led to numerous class action lawsuits that were eventually “resolved” when Denny’s paid $54 million to the discriminated against plaintiffs.

More recently, Cracker Barrel—a Tennessee based company employing over 50,000 employees in 505 locations—was ordered to pay 8.7 million dollars to resolve a series of lawsuits filed or supported by the NAACP. The settlement describes countless instances where black Cracker Barrel customers experienced segregated seating,
excessive wait times, and inferior service. Plaintiffs in this case even reported being “subjected to racial slurs and served food taken from the trash, while Cracker Barrel management ignored or condoned such actions” (FoxNews.com 2004).

The above cases may well be some of the most publicized instances involving legally documented discriminatory behaviors in the restaurant industry but unfortunately, they are not the only cases that have recently emerged in the popular press. Siegelman (1998) reviewed evidence of discrimination in commercial transactions across several industries—restaurants, car dealerships, taxi cabs and shopping—between 1990 and 1998 and found that of the 28 official opinions written in state and federal courts, ten cases (36 percent) involved restaurant establishments. Similarly, Harris, Henderson, and Williams (2005) examined federal court decisions between 1990 and 2002 involving alleged racial or ethnic marketplace discrimination. The authors determined that 23.4% of the 81 published federal court opinions involved dine-in restaurants. The evidence reviewed in this section clearly shows the existence of anti-black server sentiments and behaviors. However, while existing evidence of discriminatory server behaviors and sentiments yielded to date are valuable, each source is beset with limitations, which I discuss in the following section.

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6 If fast food establishments are included in this calculation the percentage increases to 36% of the 81 identified federal court opinions.
2.3 Limitations of Extant Knowledge on the Nature and Extent of Anti-Minority Server Sentiments and Behaviors

While extant evidence convincingly shows that African Americans continue to experience discrimination while dining in our nation’s restaurants, we know very little about the commonness of such experiences. Estimates of the pervasiveness of discrimination against racial minorities that are derived from survey and audit research, for instance, should be interpreted as conservative estimates at best. First, in many instances customers themselves are unlikely to interpret racial discrimination as such (see Blank, Dabady, and Citro 2001 for a detailed discussion of the limitations of relying on victims self-reports of discrimination). This, in part, is because of the terminology commonly used in surveys. According to Feagin (2001) the term “discrimination” is reserved, by at least some blacks, to be used only when referring to more serious incidents of maltreatment by whites (e.g., having to pay a “sitting fee,” see, Rousseau 1997: 34).

Similarly, research has demonstrated that individuals in disadvantaged groups are often reluctant to attribute adverse outcomes to discrimination and do so only when they are certain that they have indeed been discriminated against (Ruggiero, Steele, Hwang, and Marx 2000). Individuals may also remain hesitant to attribute negative outcomes to discrimination even in cases where they are virtually certain that they have been discriminated against. This is the case, in part, because individuals who attribute events to discrimination are often negatively evaluated by others (i.e., hypersensitive, emotional, “playing the race card,” complainers, etc.) (Feagin and Sikes 1994; Kaiser and Miller
A subject in Feagin and Sikes’ (1994, p. 279) research describes the implications of confronting discrimination in the following way:

Now, you can’t just holler discrimination, because they’re going to think that you’re trying to get a lawsuit, or trying to [get] a free meal or something, so you really can’t come out and say, “I’m being discriminated against.” You got to handle it in a more mature, more adult way, a more, I guess you could say, a more timid way. You’ve got to know it’s there, do all you can do to avoid it.

In other cases, because today’s racism is for the most part subtle rather than overt in nature (see Bonilla-Silva 2002, 2003; Coates 2008) many blacks will simply not detect the differential treatment that they are receiving and as such will not be able to report experiencing such treatment to researchers. Studies, for example, have shown that blacks rarely perceive more subtle forms of discrimination, such as a white cashier’s refusal to touch the hand of a black customer when giving back change, as discriminatory treatment (Feagin 2001). Likewise, servers have at their disposal a variety of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that function to build rapport with restaurant guests that can be differentially allocated according to the patrons’ race and yet such differential treatment is not likely to be interpreted as discrimination by those discriminated against.

The degree and frequency in which servers smile when greeting their tables, for example, may systematically vary according to customers’ race and yet racial minority customers who are not greeted with this facial expression are not likely to perceive that they have been discriminated against. Nevertheless, the subtle—and largely undetectable—nature of such discrimination undoubtedly has adverse effects on the dining experiences of minority customers even if they are not cognizant of such treatment as constituting discrimination. People, who smile, for instance, are perceived by others to be more sincere, competent,
attractive, and hospitable compared to those who do not smile (Reis, Wilson, Monestere, Bernstein, Clark, Seidl, Franco, Gioioso, Freeman, and Radoane 1990). Alternatively, as other scholars have noted, white hostility is often times conveyed simply with what has been referred as “the stare” (Feagin 2006, p. 209; also see Drago 2007 for an interesting qualitative study assessing the relationship between nonverbal communication and tipping behaviors). Thus, while such forms of discrimination may not be reported in victimization surveys they do nevertheless constitute ways in which servers can differentially allocate hospitality according to the race of their customers. Relying on self-reported perceptions of experiencing disparate treatment may also, in some cases, lead researchers to overestimate the pervasiveness of discrimination because respondents maybe inclined to label mistakenly an incident as constituting racial discrimination when in fact race was not involved. For example, a black restaurant patron might attribute slow service to their race when in fact the slow service was not racially motivated but rather was caused by a problem in the kitchen (Schuman et al. 1983; Siegelman 1998).

Evidence yielded by qualitative studies, while valuable, also suffers from limitations, which, in this case, are inherent to the research design. While such research provides insights into the micro level interactional processes that create and sustain an

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7 Other behaviors that servers can differentially allocate in their service delivery that will not likely be interpreted as discrimination and as such not be reflected in survey respondents’ self-reports of experiencing discrimination include, but are not limited to, greeting guests by introducing oneself by name (Garrity and Degelman 1990), calling guests by name when delivering the check (Lynn 1996, 2003), squatting down next to the table when interacting with customers (Davis, Schrader, Richardson, Kring, and Kieffer 1998; Lynn and Mynier 1993), providing an unexpected gift, such as a piece of candy, at the end of the meal (Strohmetz, Rind, Fisher, and Lynn 2002), or providing small acts of entertainment in their service delivery (Gueguen 2002; Rind and Strohmetz 2001b). Nonverbal cues, more generally can function to either build or impede rapport with restaurant patrons (see Walls 2007). Server discrimination is likely to be best understood within the context of such subtle verbal and nonverbal behaviors.
anti-minority restaurant culture, which is posited to subsequently support the discriminatory treatment of minority guests, these studies are unable to speak to the frequency of race-based prejudices and discriminatory behaviors in the restaurant industry. For instance, we do not know how often code words are actually used to refer to racial minority patrons, nor do we know the frequency in which servers actually provide secondary service to their minority guests. Qualitative studies are also unable to illuminate statistically the relationship between discriminatory server behaviors and theoretical relevant predictors of such behaviors.

Finally, the problem with relying on evidence provided by formal court decisions to determine the commonness of anti-minority server discourse and discriminatory behavior is that, for various reasons (e.g., cost associated with taking the case to court), many additional allegations of discrimination in commercial transactions never reach the point of court proceedings and thus are not reflected in these statistics (Siegelman 1998). In fact, only high profile cases capture the media’s attention, and as such, for every case that gets in the press there are undoubtedly many more that go unreported and thus unnoticed (Carton and Kleiner 2001). Due to the problems with the existing sources of knowledge regarding the racial climate of restaurants combined with the relative scarcity of studies on this topic, knowledge about the pervasiveness of discriminatory treatment of minority restaurant patrons is limited.

2.4 Chapter Summary

Available evidence has identified restaurants as being a context where discrimination against racial minorities continues to occur. Owing to the limitations of
existing studies, discussed in the previous section, we know very little about the nature and extent of race-based discrimination among restaurant servers. Anti-black sentiments are said to be evidenced in the racialized server discourse within the workplace culture (e.g., code words). Such discourse is likely to be driven, in part, by servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors. However, there have been no systematic studies that have quantitatively assessed the pervasiveness of these behaviors, perceptions, and workplace discourse from the perspective of restaurant wait staff. In short, we do not know if racial discrimination among restaurant servers is common or rather, as some contend, unfortunate but rare events. We also do not know the degree to which a “culture of white servers,” characterized by anti-minority discourse, exists within restaurants. For instance, how often is coded language used to refer to African Americans patrons? Finally, while we know that servers generally perceive black patrons to be below average tippers (cf. Noll and Arnold 2004) there have been no quantitative assessments of servers’ perceptions of dining behaviors across racial groups. Are African American patrons widely perceived to be behaviorally more difficult to wait on than comparable white guests or rather are such perceptions rare and only evident among racist servers?

In response to the discussed gaps in our existing knowledge this study assesses the racial climate of restaurants via a community survey of restaurant servers (N=200). Servers were asked to report on their own behaviors as well as the behaviors of their coworkers. In this sense, I am able to assess the pervasiveness of both self-reported and observed discriminatory server behaviors thereby providing a more holistic portrait of the
racial climate within restaurant establishments. While there are certainly limitations with the approach taken here, assessing the pervasiveness of discriminatory behaviors from the perspective of restaurant servers resolves many of the problems evidenced in studies that have relied on victim reports, legal cases, and qualitative projects. Servers, for instance, are better situated to report subtle differences in their behaviors across racial groups—differences that would most likely go undetected by the victims of such differential treatment. This study also quantitatively explores the pervasiveness of racialized discourse within restaurant cultures and addresses the gap in existing knowledge concerning variability in servers’ perceptions of dining behaviors (as well as tipping practices) across racial groups.

In sum, this chapter has outlined existing evidence of anti-black server sentiments and behaviors. Lacking in this literature is evidence concerning the pervasiveness of such sentiments and behaviors among restaurant servers. I have argued that the pervasiveness of such sentiments and behaviors may be ascertained more accurately by asking a sample of servers to report on the racial climate in their restaurants. Empirically evaluated explanatory frameworks are equally absent in the existing literature on the “dining while black” phenomenon. We do not know, for instance, if servers’ perceptions toward African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors are predictive of differential service delivery—as many scholars contend (e.g., Dirks and Rice 2004; Lynn 2004a, 2004b). In the next chapter, I review the literature on equity theory and statistical discrimination and offer one theoretical framework, which may prove to be useful towards understanding the nature of server discrimination.
CHAPTER 3

SELF-REPORTED SERVER DISCRIMINATION: A STATISTICAL DISCRIMINATION FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Anecdotes of server vigilantism against those who tip them poorly flourish on websites such as Bitterwaitress.com, WaiterRant.Net, Tipping.org, and Stainedapron.com. On these sites, servers routinely convey detailed stories of verbal and even physical confrontations between themselves and ‘stingy’ customers. Such confrontations are not surprising considering that servers derive a substantial portion of their total income from tips (Bulter and Skipper 1980; Azar 2003). In fact, because of low hourly wages and tax withholdings, as much as 100 percent of servers’ take home income is often in the form of tips (Lynn 2006a). Owing to the economic importance of tips, at least part of the variability in service quality maybe driven by economic concerns associated with perceived differences in tipping and dining behaviors across social groups. Such differences are likely to influence servers’ perceptions of equity in their relationships with customers. When servers perceive that they are putting more into an interactional encounter (e.g., better service) than they are getting out of the encounter

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8 These websites—along with a host of others—are designed to provide a domain wherein servers can blog about their occupational frustrations. While these blogs are useful for determining some of the difficulties associated with restaurant serving such content should be interpreted with caution, primarily because there is no way of verifying the truthfulness or accuracy of such information.
(e.g., tip) they are likely to perceive the relationship as inequitable and thus behave in ways so as to reduce such feelings.

One possible behavioral response to feelings of inequity is to provide inferior service (exert less energy thus reducing inputs) to customers who are members of social groups perceived by servers to be below average tippers or alternatively more difficult to wait on. In other words, servers in response to feelings of inequity are likely to discriminate statistically in their service delivery in an attempt to maximize profits while simultaneously restoring their sense of equity.

Research in the area of statistical discrimination has revealed compelling theoretical insights into the economic concerns that motivate service providers, in particular, to allocate differentially their efforts across social groups. The theory of statistical discrimination argues that actors attempt to predict the future behaviors of individuals by utilizing perceived statistical differences in salient factors of the social groups to which an individual belongs (Foschi, Lai, and Sigerson 1994; Ridgeway 1997; Waldinger and Lichter 2003). Statistical discrimination has been shown to be an influential factor in explaining African Americans’ difficulty in hailing taxicabs (Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya 2005).

The process briefly outlined above is informed by the literature on statistical discrimination (Foschi, Lai, and Sigerson 1994; Ridgeway 1997; Waldinger and Lichter 2003) and to a lesser extent the literature on equity theory (Adams 1963, 1965; Huseman, Hatfield, and Miles 1987). In the following sections of this chapter, I outline this study’s theoretical and empirical underpinnings. Specifically, in the next section I outline the central
premises of equity theory and discuss its role in this research. In section 3.3, I discuss the literature on statistical discrimination and demonstrate the potential utility of this framework towards understanding server discrimination. Next, in section 3.4, I present hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework within which this study is partially situated. In section 3.5, I conclude with a chapter summary.

3.2 The Posited Importance of Equity Theory Towards Understanding Server Discrimination

The institution of tipping dictates that servers receive the majority of their income from the patrons they serve. Tipping norms in the U.S. prescribe that restaurant patrons tip between 15 and 20% of their bill total. However, as with all cultural norms, people do not always adhere to the norms guiding tipping behaviors. When patrons do not tip as the norm prescribes, servers are likely to perceive their relationships with these guests to be inequitable or unjust. The rational underlying this logic is supported by the literature on equity theory. In the original formulation of Equity Theory, J. Stacy Adams (1963, 1965) argued that organizational members compare input to outcome ratios with the ratios of others occupying similar positions within an organization⁹. Inputs are conceptualized as anything that the actor brings to the interactional encounter (i.e., effort, education,

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⁹ Adams (1963, p.422) uses the case of the employee for illustrative purposes but points out that the concepts that he puts forth “are relevant to any social situation in which an exchange takes place, whether the exchange be of the type taking place between man and wife, between football teammates, between teacher and student, or even between Man and his God.” The exchange between servers and customers can clearly be located within the equity theoretical framework delineated by Adams.
training, etc.), whereas outcomes are considered the rewards that the actor receives from the exchange.

When ratio comparisons result in feelings of inequity Adams proposed that employees would experience distress and subsequent research findings lend credence to this theoretical premise (Schafer and Keith 1980). According to Adams (1963), when individuals’ experience distress because of perceived inequity they will behave in ways to restore equity to the relationship. Individuals may respond to perceptions of inequity by altering their outcomes (i.e., ask for a raise) or altering their inputs (i.e., expend less effort). In some cases, individuals may choose to restore equity by terminating the relationship from which feelings of inequity emerge (i.e., quitting a job). People can also restore equity by cognitively distorting one’s own inputs and outcomes or alternatively the inputs or outcomes of others. Finally, individuals can respond to perceptions of inequity by changing their reference group/individual. Reviews of Adams’ (1963, 1965) formulation of equity theory generally agree that the empirical evidence is in support of the theory’s central tenets, and this was especially true with regard to under-rewarded individuals (Adams 1963; Cook and Hegtvedt 1983; Greenberg 1982).

In this research, I am primarily concerned with behavioral responses to feelings of inequity involving an alteration in subjects’ inputs. Such a behavioral response is likely to take the form of an absolute reduction in the amount of effort servers allocate to customer groups with whom they perceive themselves to be involved in an inequitable relationship with. Servers would be motivated to withhold or reduce the physical and emotional effort that they put into serving these guests when faced with two distinct types
of under-rewarded situations. Feelings of inequity that emerge out of scenarios where servers perceive that they expend the same amount of effort for less pay relative to a referent group (less pay for same work) and/or when they perceive that they expend more effort for same pay (more work same pay)(see Allen and White 2002). The importance of equity theory in framing this study is highlighted further in the next section wherein I introduce and discuss extant literature on statistical discrimination.

3.3 Perceived Inequity and Servers’ Proclivity to Statistically Discriminate

Drawing off the above equity theory ideas this research conceptualizes statistical discrimination as a viable behavioral response that servers can employ to reduce feelings of inequity in their relationships with restaurant guests. The theory of statistical discrimination is largely based on the assumption that the uncertainty concerning the future behaviors of individuals can be efficiently reduced by utilizing perceived statistical differences in salient factors of the social groups to which an individual belongs. In short, individuals theoretically tend to categorize others based on observable attributes and use these categorizations as proxies to predict the likelihood that future interactions with members of these respective groups will be economically rewarding—or alternatively, equitable (e.g., good employee, good candidate to buy a home, good restaurant patron, etc.) (Ayres 1991; Foschi, Lai, and Sigerson 1994; Kirscheman and Neckerman 1991; Neckerman and Kirschenman 1991; Ridgeway 1997; Waldinger and Lichter 2003; Wilson 1996). This process is driven by both revenue-based and/or cost-based inferences made by sellers in the marketplace (Ayres 1991, p. 843).
Revenue-Based Statistical Inferences. Revenue-based statistical discrimination occurs when sellers make inferences about differences in the profitability of interacting with various types of consumers. For instance, inquires into the nature of discrimination in the car market have shown that minorities are often quoted and subsequently charged higher prices than their white male counterparts, in part, because minorities are perceived to have higher reservation prices compared to their white counterparts (Ayres 1991). In other words, minorities are perceived to be willing to pay higher prices and as such, car sales staffs quote minorities higher prices in the hopes of maximizing their income by selling the automobile at a relatively inflated price.\(^\text{10}\) Recent research on “hailing a cab while black,” or “drive by racism” serves as the most relevant source of corroborating evidence concerning service providers’ motivations to engage in revenue-based statistical discrimination. In fact, Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya’s (2005) recent work is arguably the most comprehensive study on the topic. The researchers collaborated with 12 taxicab drivers who collectively provided tipping data on 1066 distinct taxicab fares in the New Haven Connecticut area. The authors’ findings showed that black passengers on average tipped drivers 42% of what the average white customer tipped and they were also substantially more likely to stiff their driver compared with their white counterparts.

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\(^{10}\) Several tentative conclusions have been offered regarding why minorities have higher reservation prices. Minorities may be relatively unable to take the time off from work or family responsibilities that would be required to search for a car. Similarly, because of the sustained economic racial disparities in the U.S. minorities are also less likely to own a trade-in car with which they can engage in an active search for a new car. Finally, racial differences in car-buying knowledge and negotiation skills may motivate car dealers to engage in revenue-based statistical discrimination (see Ayres 1991). Perceived racial differences according to any of these factors—search cost, knowledge, and bargaining—could potentially motivate profit-seeking dealers to charge minority consumers higher rates.
(39.2% stiffing rate among blacks compared with a 10.6% stiffing rate among white passengers). A similar disparity was documented between white and Hispanic passengers. The authors hypothesized that such a disparity in tipping between whites and racial minority passengers would motivate drivers to utilize customers’ race to make inferences about the profitability of picking them up. In other words, the disparate treatment according to passenger’s race is hypothesized to occur, in part, because of drivers’ tendency to engage in revenue-based statistical discrimination in their delivery of service.  

To test their hypothesis the researchers performed a series of regression models wherein they regressed tip size on passenger’s race and other variables that drivers could easily ascertain from curbside (e.g., passenger sex, age, dress, luggage, etc.). Regression results showed that drivers who take into account the race of the passenger as well as other observable curbside information, can effectively use this information to make inferences about the likely revenue garnered through tips. For instance, net of the effects of non-racial indicators of profitability (e.g., manner of dress as a proxy for social class) a driver can expect that a black customer will tip 56.5% less relative to a comparable white passenger.  

11 In addition to rational economic considerations, cab drivers may also be motivated to discriminate against black clientele who hail them because they fear victimization. Andrew Hacker conveys this point nicely (2003, p. 28) in his now classic book Two Nations. According to Hacker (2003, p. 28), “Some black men—a higher proportion than among whites—do have intentions that are in fact dangerous. It is one thing for a passenger to refuse to pay a taxi fare; it is another if he holds a loaded gun to the driver’s head. And the latter has been a frequent enough occurrence to give many drivers pause.”  

12 The authors ran the statistical discrimination regressions in two ways; one way assessing the inferences an “irrational” statistical discriminator would make and one assessing the inferences a
The Ayres et al. (2005) study is particularly pertinent because of the parallels between taxi drivers and restaurant servers. The two occupations, for instance, are both heavily reliant on tips and both servers and taxi drivers are intimately familiar with tipping differences across racial groups. Moreover, taking into account that tipping occurs after a service has been provided, both occupations must extend to the customer a certain degree of trust that he or she will be compensated fairly for the services provided (Butler and Skipper 1981). When adequate tips are not garnered, servers, in particular, are likely to perceive their relationships with such guests as being inequitable (same work less pay). The uncertainty that is thus inherent in the institution of tipping may cause servers to feel a sense of powerlessness over their wage security (Butler and Skipper 1980, 1981; see Brewster and Mallinson 2009), which in turn is likely to promote feelings of inequity within certain exchange relationships (e.g., exchanges with customers perceived to be below average tippers). However, because servers lack reliable “rational” discriminator would make. In addition to models predicting tip size, separate models predicting fare, tip percentage of fare, whether the driver was stiffed, and whether the driver had to drive to a far suburb were also presented. The authors conceptualized irrational discrimination as occurring when drivers ignore all nonracial curbside information and utilize only the customer’s race to make inferences about profitability. Thus, the modeling of irrational discrimination only included the race of the passenger. Conversely, rational discriminators utilize not only customers’ race to make inferences about revenue but a host of other pieces of information available to them at curbside. In these models the effects of race on the outcome variables were assessed net of the effects of the following control variables: passenger sex, age, and dress; age of driver, experience of driver, experience with surveys; is the passenger a regular or acquaintance; time of day and weather conditions (night, late, snow/rain); luggage indicators; and pick-up location. In both the rational and irrational discrimination models, the passenger’s race is a salient predictor of the size of tip earned and the likelihood of being stiffed. However, in the irrational discrimination models, driver inferences are substantially influenced by concerns about lower fare amounts according to passengers’ race and in the controlled model these effects disappear. Thus, a rational discriminator who takes into account all of the available information will still potentially utilize passengers’ race to make inferences about the magnitude of the potential tip earned and the likelihood of being stiffed. This finding holds for both black and Hispanic passengers.
knowledge about which specific individuals will leave satisfying tips, they will potentially be motivated to enhance their tipped income by engaging in revenue-based statistical discrimination. If, for instance, servers perceive differences in tipping behaviors across social groups they would be motivated to provide lower quality service (decrease inputs by exerting less effort) to entire groups that they have categorized as inadequate tippers. Specifically, they construct assumptions about the tipping practices of groups of potential patrons in general before they engage in service interactions with individual patrons, and then utilize these assumptions to inform their subsequent

13 Servers’ perceptions about minority customers’ tipping practices may develop as a result of anticipatory socialization processes wherein they learn from server friends that minorities ‘don’t tip’ and approach minority tables with this preconception before the first piece of evidence in the form of small tips from minorities actually occurs. Alternatively, such perceptions may emerge as a result of previous experiences with minority customers within the context of a race-conscious restaurant subculture. In other words, servers may initially attempt to provide equitable service to all of their customers but soon learn that doing so is not efficient and as such they begin to devote a disproportional amount of their efforts to those who they have experientially determined to be adequate tippers. Barkan and Israeli (2004), for instance, empirically demonstrate that when servers predict tables to leave inadequate tips they exert more effort but the increase in effort expended does not result in a statistically significant increase in the size of the actual tip they received at the end of the service encounter. Had the authors explored the effects of serving experience on this process, it is plausible that they would have found that the less experienced servers devote more effort when predicted tips are low, while more experienced servers exert a level of effort that is commensurate to the size of tip that a table is predicted to leave. See Large (2006) and Noll and Arnold (2004) for anecdotal evidence that at least some servers initially provide equitable service to minorities only to later begin discriminating in their service delivery once they have experienced receiving “inadequate” tips from minorities. In reality, servers’ perceptions toward minority customers are likely shaped by both experience and anticipatory socialization processes. Irrespective of the exact process by which such perceptions emerge, the service they provide to minorities is shaped by the economic factors implicated in their perceptions (i.e., how to increase tips). As such, even if servers approach minority tables with preconceived and experientially unfounded negative perceptions toward these customers they will nevertheless likely view minority customers as economic risks and provide less effort relative to whites because of such preconceptions. Alternatively, if servers initially approach all tables with no preconceived notions about the tipping differences but with time learn such perceptions via gained experience in the subculture of serving, such perceptions are still going to shape the service that they provide to minorities. In short, in this research I am less concerned with the process by which servers’ perceptions about minority tipping practices emerge and more concerned with assessing the power of revenue related inferences to predict self-reported discriminatory behaviors.
interactions with these group members (including whether they decide to interact with them as well as the kind or quality of their interaction). In doing so, servers may perceive that they can maximize profits and restore equity by devoting a disproportionate amount of their energies to those patrons whom they perceived to be adequate or above average tippers (i.e., white) at the expense of those perceived to be below average tippers (i.e., black).\textsuperscript{14}

The motivation to engage in statistical discrimination in response to the institution of tipping has historically been an issue invoking concern. In 1911, for instance, a New Jersey restaurant owner drafted a piece of legislation that would impose severe penalties for excessively high tips (25 cents) because he believed that “poor persons are at times insulted [by their servers] because of their small gratuities.” Similarly, in 1914 the California Railroad Commission issued orders forbidding porters from accepting gratuities asserting that the system of tipping led to inequity in services that otherwise

\textsuperscript{14} This causal relationship between tipping behaviors and service quality was recently documented by Sallaz (2002) in his ethnographic research on blackjack dealers in Nevada. Specifically, he found that dealers help tippers win by giving them advice or strategically reshuffling the cards to increase these players’ odds. In contrast, when advice is solicited from non-tippers dealers will often respond by claiming ignorance (i.e., I don’t know, tough call, etc.; Sallaz 2002, p. 415). According to Sallaz (2002, p. 414), “Dealers also personalize their interactions with tippers more than with nontippers. They ask and address them by their first names, inquire about where they are from and what they do, and so on.” On the other hand, dealers will not only refrain from personalizing their service offerings to non-tippers but will even purposively antagonize them in an attempt to drive them off the table. Sallaz’s research provides clear evidence of discriminatory service driven by blackjack dealers’ economic dependence on tips. However, discrimination in this context is individualized, in that the dealer is able to garner information about the tipping behaviors of specific players throughout the service encounter thus allowing them to make continuous adjustments to their service as they gain additional information. Restaurant servers, on the other hand, are tipped at the end of the service encounter and as such, they are likely to statistically discriminate in their service delivery based on stereotypes surrounding the social groups to which their customers belong. To the contrary, blackjack dealers would have not economic incentive or a need to discriminate statistically.
should be distributed equally. According to the commission women traveling alone serve as a case in point, “because they are known to tip less generously than men, [they] receive the aid of the porters last or not at all (New York Times 1914).”

In accordance with this logic, Barkan and Israeli (2004) analyze data collected from 77 service encounters that occurred across 15 randomly selected restaurants in Israel and find that servers are not only ‘experts’ in predicting the size of tips they receive but they are also proficient at ‘managing’ service encounters to ensure that their predictions materialize. The authors show in a path analysis that as servers predicted higher dollar tips they subsequently tended to exert more effort in the service transaction—by initiating contact with guests to inquire about such things as the food and/or to ask if any there is anything else needed—which in turn increased actual tip amounts. Conversely, when servers predicted lower dollar tips they tended to exert less effort, which resulted in lower tip amounts. In short, the authors quantitatively demonstrate a self-fulfilling prophecy wherein servers predict the size of tips that a table will leave (predicted equity) and subsequently behave in such a way (decrease/increase inputs) to ensure that their prediction materializes (also see Dombrowski, Namasivayam, and Barlett 2006).

Therefore, because African Americans tip less and are also more likely to ‘stiff’ their servers compared to whites (Kerr and Domazlicky 2008; Lynn 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Lynn and Graves 1996; Lynn et al. 1998; Noll and Arnold 2004), it seems reasonable that servers would perceive exchanges with this social group, in particular, as being characterized by inequity. One likely source of differential service delivery should thus theoretically be located in servers’ motivation to engage in
revenue-based statistical discrimination against black patrons. They do so not because of racial animus but rather because they perceive they can effectively reduce the economic uncertainty of tipping—feelings of inequity—in general by devoting a disproportionate amount of their energies to those patrons who they perceive to be ‘good’ tippers at the expense of those perceived to be ‘bad’ tippers (e.g., blacks).\footnote{15 Barkan and Israeli (2004, p. 95) explore why servers would devote ‘over the top’ service to predictably ‘good’ tippers—self-fulfilling prophecy—rather than devoting extra energy to predictably ‘bad’ tippers in order to increase their below average tipping practices—a process the authors refer to as ‘attaining and compensating prophecy. According to Barkan and Israeli (2004, p. 95), the ‘attaining and compensating prophecy’ implies, “that servers would invest the needed effort to attain a large predicted tip, yet would invest even more effort to change and exceed a small predicted tip.” In other words, servers may attempt to attain larger tips from tables perceived to be below average tippers by devoting extra effort to these tables. The ‘attaining and compensating prophecy’ parallels a response to inequity delineated by Adams (1963) in his original formulation of equity theory. According to Adams (1963, p. 427), a person who perceives her effort to be low relative to her referent and to her own outcomes (i.e. wages), may respond by increasing the quality of her work in an attempt to enhance her wages. Barkan and Israeli’s (2004) findings suggest that while servers engage in both processes, the ‘compensation’ strategy is not statistically effective in eliciting greater tips from customers who servers predict to be below average tippers. Consequently, whereas servers may initially try to give all patrons the same quality of service—as prescribed by the formal restaurant ideology—once servers have internalized the subculture of serving, they are likely to realize that doing so is inefficient, ineffective, and not consistent with the cultural rhetoric surrounding minority patrons’ tipping behaviors. As such, servers are likely to begin reserving their greatest energy and effort for patrons that they perceive to be adequate tippers at the expense of African Americans who are, in particular, perceived to be below average tippers (Kerr and Domazlicky 2008; Lynn 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Lynn and Graves 1996; Lynn et al. 1998; Noll and Arnold 2004).}

A server in Dirks and Rice’s (2004, p.43) study corroborates this possibility when he shared, “I…I hate to admit, it…I try to give everyone, um, same service, but I try to concentrate myself on [white] tables who I know are going to tip well.” The revenue-based motivation to engage in racial discrimination is further substantiated in the following passage wherein Emily Noll (Noll and Arnold 2004, p. 27) candidly describes her experiences with waiting tables at a franchised steak house:
I felt frustrated with my black customers. Even more so, I was distressed over the environment of crude language and attitudes of my fellow servers toward black customers, with whom they had a similar experience. Frankly, there were nights that I was not only embarrassed to be privy to the kitchen conversations but also worried that simple ignorance of tipping norms (to which I attributed the cause) was detrimental to race relations. An easy solution was elusive. I could not just go around “educating” my customers on tipping etiquette or adding an automatic 15 percent gratuity without putting my job on the line (and potentially involving the restaurant in a lawsuit). So, I pretended it was a factor I could influence and went n providing the best service possible to all customers, hoping that things would work out. Practically, however, I found myself, too, badgering the hostess to please give me the “tipping customers”; after all, I did have to buy overpriced college textbooks.

Emily’s honest revelation provides us with a unique glimpse into the process by which discriminatory server behaviors may sometimes emerge out of a state of ideological dissonance between maintaining a commitment to racial equity and being financial dependent on tips. Emily experienced “distress” and “embarrassment” about the racialized nature of her workplace and yet not only did she consider adding automatic gratuities to African Americans’ checks—de facto discrimination—but also divulged utilizing tactics to avoid waiting on black customers (e.g., “badgering the hostess”) for financial reasons (e.g., buy college textbooks). In Emily’s case, the economic uncertainty inherent in the institution of tipping motivated her to discriminate statistically against black customers even if doing so contradicted her conviction of racial equity.

Ironically, while discriminating statistically is subjectively rational to servers, it is arguably irrational in a purely economic sense. Servers may, for instance, provide inferior service to minorities by withholding subtle behaviors that add value to the service encounter (e.g., smiling, introducing themselves by name, etc.) and as a result, minority customers may, on average, experience comparatively less hospitality while dining out.
thus causing them to leave below average tips (see Barkan and Israeli 2004; Dirks and Rice 2004; Brewster and Mallinson 2009). When servers receive what they perceive to be inadequate tips they are likely to respond by withholding rapport-building aspects of service from future interactions with black patrons thereby fostering a spiral or reciprocal effect. For instance, a participant in Drago’s (2007, p. 48) study remarked that, “if you’re standoffish then I think that people aren’t going to warm up to you as much, so if you just kind of drop off your food and then walk away and aren’t friendly and smiling and just making them feel comfortable, then I believe that effects tipping behavior.” As such, if servers disproportionately convey inhospitable nonverbal cues when waiting on black tables (e.g., “the stare,” see Feagin 2006, p. 209) it would not be surprising that servers in return receive comparatively lower tips from this social group.

**Cost-Based Statistical Inferences.** The quality of service provided by restaurant wait staff is also likely to be influenced by considerations regarding the potential costs associated with waiting on any given table. Cost-based statistical discrimination is said to occur when sellers perceive that certain categories of consumers, for a variety of reasons, will impose greater cost—and thus less profit—during an economic transaction. Cost-based statistical

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16 If perceived differences in tipping function to encourage servers to engage in revenue-based statistical discrimination, a reader might rightfully query if there is less discrimination in countries where service charges have been institutionalized in lieu of voluntary tips. Such a question is difficult to answer because while the practice of tipping occurs in many countries around the world (Putzi, Reif, Di Carvalho, and Kosaka 2001) research has disproportionately focused on phenomenon as it is practiced in the United States (Lynn, Zinkhan, and Harris 1993; for notable exceptions see Liu 2006; Casey 2001; Dewald 2003). As such, it is difficult to speculate on how tipping related factors, including the use of service charges, may influence the service that servers in other counties provide to their guests.

17 Discriminatory treatment is likely only a partial explanation for racial tipping differences. In a series of influential published papers, Michael Lynn and his colleagues empirically show that African Americans tip less than their white counterparts, in part, because they are unfamiliar with the norms that govern tipping in the United States (Lynn 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003)
discrimination constitutes a second behavioral response to inequity that servers are posited to use when confronted with under-rewarded situations characterized by a subjects’ perception of working harder for the same pay. Griffeth and Gaertner (2001), for instance, recently explored the relationship between perceptions of inequity and turnover among a sample of hospital employees. Utilizing structural equation modeling the authors’ findings show perceptions of equity in work pace (more work) to be a statistical significant predictor of turnover via job satisfaction and intention to quit. Thus, similar to the process by which servers are posited to devote a disproportionate amount of their service energies to patrons perceived to be adequate tippers they are also likely to differentially allocate their energies according to perceived differences in how difficult customer types are to wait on.

Servers are posited to be motivated to discriminate according to the perceived difficulty of waiting on a table for two primary reasons. First, even if servers perceive no differences in tipping behaviors across social groups, they may nevertheless perceive differences in the effort required across groups of customers. Servers are likely to feel that their interactions with certain groups of customers are inequitable to the degree that they perceive inequity in the ratio of effort to tips relative to the ratio of effort to tips when waiting on other categories of patrons (e.g., whites). If servers perceive that they are required to work harder when waiting on racial minorities for the same amount of pay (relative to white tables), one possible response is to restore equity by engaging in cost-based statistical discrimination.

A second factor that is likely implicated in servers’ motivations to engage in cost-
based discrimination involves the nature of the restaurant labor process, which enables—and indeed requires—servers to supplement their income with greater tips by enhancing not just the quality of service they provide to individual tables but also the number of tables served per shift. While there are several ways in which servers can effectively increase the number of patrons served per shift (e.g., working the busiest sections, working the busiest shifts, and bypassing host/hostesses and seating customers themselves in their specified section) one of the most widely used techniques is to “turn” their tables quickly (Paules 1991, p. 27). Turning tables quickly allows servers to increase their total sales per shift by increasing the mere quantity of patrons served\(^{18}\). A recent blog entry, on the website [http://upsetwaitress.com](http://upsetwaitress.com), illuminates the importance of turning tables quickly for wait staff:

\(^{18}\) Under some circumstances, it might be economically beneficial for servers to allow even difficult customers to linger for extended periods. For instance, in cases where the server does not have other tables—and does not have any immediate chances of getting other tables—there would be less of an incentive to discriminate according to cost-based concerns because under such circumstances the alternative to a difficult table is having no table. In such cases, any racial disparity in service is likely a manifestation of servers’ racial biases and/or revenue-based concerns associated with the tipping practices of blacks. Servers are also likely to refrain from engaging in cost-based statistical discrimination in cases where customers are consuming moderate amounts of alcohol. In such cases servers are likely to earn more tips not only via an increase in the table’s bill size due to alcohol sales but also because of the positive effects of alcohol consumption on individuals’ moods (for a more detailed discussion of the theoretical mechanisms that are said to link alcohol consumption with larger tips see, Lynn 1988). With few exceptions (see, Lynn 1988) extant studies have, however, failed to find a statistically significant relationship between alcohol consumption and tips (e.g., Lynn and Grassman 1990; Lynn and Graves 1996). However, the way that alcohol consumption is conventionally measured calls the validity of these studies’ findings into question. Several studies have only ascertained whether the table consumed alcohol (yes=1) (e.g., Lynn and Graves 1996). Measuring alcohol consumption in this way does not allow researchers to determine the number of drinks consumed nor the individual(s) at the table who did the consuming. Researchers in this area have also not taken into account if the individual(s) who consumed the alcohol are the same individuals who subsequently leaves the tip. Because of these measurement issues, we are currently unable to rule out the
One thing that really pisses me off is not being able to turn the table. I time my eaters, and I want them out of the house in 15 minutes or less. Being a small restaurant with only five tables I come up with new ways to rid my patrons faster and faster (September 7, 2007).

Accordingly, all else being equal, tables that are perceived to be difficult or time consuming should thus be conceptualized as a cost that servers would theoretically attempt to reduce by limiting contact or in extreme cases avoiding these guests all together. Moreover, tables perceived to be difficult or time consuming would impede servers ability to provide quality service to other tables perceived to be above average tippers thus decreasing the odds of receiving a “fair” tip even from these customers.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that racial minorities, blacks in particular, constitute one group of patrons perceived by servers to be not only inadequate tippers but also comparatively more difficult customers to wait on (Large 2006). A server from Dirks and Rice (2004b, p. 39) study, for example, reported that “they [black customers] tend to be very snappy, and ‘do this, do this,’ like ‘ma’am,’ snap in your face…” Another respondent, when describing two black women that she had previously waited on and subsequently refused to serve explained that the women had on that prior occasion, “‘ran me [her] back and forth…. They returned everything to the kitchen and were a pain” (Dirks and Rice 2004b, p. 43; see also Rusche and Brewster 2008). Thus, if racial minorities are perceived by servers to be more difficult customers to wait on, it is reasonable to suspect that, all else being equal; they would simultaneously view their relationships with black customers as inequitable possibility that alcohol consumption causes people to leave larger tips in which case servers would be motivated to refrain from engaging in cost-based statistical discrimination.
and as constituting a cost in their efforts to maximize their tipped income. Such perception may therefore act as a mechanism motivating servers to engage in cost-based statistical discrimination in their service delivery.

While the two statistical discrimination processes—revenue and cost-based—are conceptually distinct, in reality both processes are likely to unfold in concert with one another. A subject in Mallinson and Brewster’s (2005, p. 793) research illustrates this point while discussing black and Latino customers:

Um, black, um Latinos are traditionally bad tippers. Saturday night I had a table with like six Latinos. One was kind of translating for everybody else and just ordered the biggest meals on the menu [and was like] do this, do this. Desserts for everybody at the table, drinks you know, you want you want okay I want a margarita, go ahead and make it, just like that. And then 140 dollar check and they leave like three dollars. And every time they’re just asking for something. Every time you come back to the table they feel, it’s almost like they feel obligated that if you’re there they need to ask for something and it seems like black people are the same way. But I mean there are some really nice people so you can’t judge it every single time. It’s just you’ll get a feel for it after, I guess after you start taking tables for a little while, the more they request, it’s almost a good rule, the more they ask for the less they are going to leave you. It really seems that way a lot of times.

Further evidence of the concomitant unfolding of revenue and cost-based statistical discriminatory processes is observed in Rusche and Brewster’s (2008, p. 2023) field notes wherein the authors describe the dialogue between two servers:

A waitress had a black family of seven at her table, most of whom were children. I saw the signs and heard the indications that they were running her and being rude about it. “The bill is already $100 and I bet I get like $5 from them”, she said. Another waitress chimed in, “Yeah, if you’re lucky. I think their favorite number is two, so you’ll probably get $2.” The first waitress agreed, “I know. It doesn’t matter if the bill is $20 or $200, from them. $2 is what you get” (field notes).
3.4 Study Predictions Derived from the Literatures on Equity Theory and Statistical Discrimination

The literature on statistical discrimination provides a sound theoretical basis on which to predict that server discriminatory behaviors are conditioned by economic concerns. Given that servers are dependent on tips, I expect that the quality of the service extended to guests will vary according to the degree that they perceive these guests will compensate them fairly. Because African Americans, in particular, are perceived to be ‘inadequate’ tippers compared to their white counterparts, servers are predicted to feel a sense of inequity in their relations with these patrons. In response to feeling of inequity, servers are predicted\textsuperscript{19} to devote a disproportionate amount of their energies to their white patrons to the detriment of their minority guests\textsuperscript{20}.

\textsuperscript{19} I present formal hypotheses regarding the relationships between statistical discrimination variables and servers’ self-reported discrimination in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{20} Equity Theory has come under some attack due to the theory’s lack of specificity in predicting the behavioral response that under-rewarded subjects would select to rebalance their equity ratio (Greenberg 1987, 1990). In short, the original formulation of equity theory (Adams 1963) could not predict whether an individual experiencing distress because of perceived inequity would choose to rebalance equity by decreasing inputs, increasing inputs, terminating the relationship, changing referents, or cognitively distorting inputs and/or outcomes (see Adams 1963). The lack of specificity of equity theory results from the theory’s underlying assumption that all actors value or are equally sensitive to equity in exchange relationships (Huseman et al. 1987) and research has demonstrated that this may not to be the case. In response to the lack of specificity evidenced in Adams’ formulation of equity theory, Huseman et al. (1987) and his colleagues added the construct of equity sensitivity to the general equity framework. The construct of equity sensitivity proposes that individuals can be conceptually categorized into three groups (Equity Sensitives, Benevolents, and Entitleds) according to the value that they place on equity (see Huseman et al. 1987, pp. 223-225 for a detailed discussion of these groups). Extant research has generally found support for the importance of taking into account the equity sensitivity construct when predicting how individuals will respond to inequitable situations (Allen and White 2002; King, Miles, and Day 1993; Miles, Hatfield, Huseman 1994; O’Neill and Mone 1998). Thus, it is possible that the relationship between perceived tipping/behavioral differences and self-reported discrimination is moderated by subjects’ sensitivity to inequity. Benevolents, for instance, would not be expected to engage in discriminatory behaviors in response to feelings of inequity. Unfortunately, the data used in this research do not allow this possibility to be explored.
The quality of service provided by restaurant wait staff is also likely to be influenced by considerations regarding the potential costs associated with waiting on any given table. When categories of customers are perceived to require more effort for the same pay, relative to other groups (e.g., white), servers are also likely to experience feelings of inequity. Thus, because racial minorities are perceived by servers to be more difficult customers to wait on, I expect, all else being equal, that servers would be motivated to engage in cost-based statistical discrimination against these guests. Servers are expected to view waiting on African Americans as constituting a cost in their efforts to maximize their tipped income for two primary reasons. First, difficult tables would theoretically take longer to “turn” and as such would impede servers’ ability to increase their tipped income by waiting on additional tables. Second, difficult tables would also take servers’ efforts away from tables perceived to be less difficult (i.e., white tables). Servers’ perceptions of black patrons’ dining behaviors are thus predicted to motivate them to engage in cost-based statistical discrimination in their service delivery.

If a statistical discrimination framework is to be useful towards understanding servers’ proclivity to discriminate racially in their service delivery other customer characteristics associated revenue and cost-based concerns, which are easily observable

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21 In some cases, irrespective of the customers’ race, servers may be able to assess immediately how difficult a table is going to be to wait on; thereby partially eliminating the motivation to engage in cost-based statistical discrimination. In such cases, server discrimination parallels the discriminatory behaviors of card dealers who are able to draw conclusions about the profitability of providing service to individual customers more or less immediately (see Sallaz 2002). However, in most cases difficult customer behaviors, such as complaining, will generally not become apparent to the server until after they have delivered the customers’ entrées at which time they would have already invested physical and emotional labor that could have otherwise be devoted to what they perceive to be more desirable tables (i.e., white tables).
to servers at tableside, must also be taken into account. Otherwise, any statistically observed race effect maybe spurious and attributable to inferences about profitability regarding other unmeasured customer characteristics correlated with customers’ race (e.g., social class). In addition to customers’ race, servers have been shown to utilize other observable customer characteristics in an attempt to predict tipping behaviors. Harris (1995), for instance, found age, gender, social class, and presence of children to be groups perceived by servers to be inadequate tippers (also see Dombrowski et al. 2006). Based on this research I control for the effects of servers’ biases associated with customers’ age, gender, social class, and presence of children. Likewise, it is possible that servers discriminate, not because of economic inferences, but rather because they harbor racial prejudices that they bring with them into the workplace. This dissertation also explores this possibility.

The above predictions—and all subsequent multivariate analyses predicting self-reported discrimination—will be explored while statistically controlling for the effects of demographic variables that extant research has implicated in predicting racial prejudices. Owing to the fact that research has consistently shown men to harbor anti-black attitudes relative to females (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Feagin 2006, p. 252; Feagin 2001), I control for the effects of respondents’ sex. Educational attainment is predicted to be inversely associated with self-reported discriminatory behaviors (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Quillian 1996). I also control for the effects of subjects age, as it has been previously shown to be positively associated with anti-black attitudes and behaviors (Bonilla-Silva 2003). Finally, I control for
race and expect nonwhite subjects to report less discrimination in their service than white respondents.

3.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have drawn from the literature on equity theory and statistical discrimination to situate the current study within an explanatory framework. These literatures taken together suggest that server discrimination may be explained, in part, by feelings of inequity that emerge out of perceived racial differences in tipping and dining behaviors. If blacks are perceived to tip less and/or be more difficult to wait on, relative to white customers, servers are posited to feel distress resulting from feeling of inequity. Distress is likely to emerge out of two conceptually distinct circumstances. First, servers are likely to feel distress to the degree that they perceive black customers to be comparatively poor tippers. In such situations, servers are predicted to perceive that black customers require the same amount of work for less pay relative to their white patrons. Alternatively, servers are likely to feel distress to the degree that they perceive black customers to be demanding and comparatively difficult to wait on. In these situations, servers are predicted to perceive that black customers require more work for the same pay relative to their white patrons. When faced with such circumstances—same work less pay and/or more work same pay—equity theory suggest that actors will behave in ways to restore equity to the relationship.

22 Recent research by Lynn, Sturman, Elizabeth, Douglas, and McNeil (2008) raises the possibility that subjects’ race may not be predictive of self-reported discrimination. The authors’ research demonstrates that on average black servers are tipped less than white servers by both white and black customers and this relationship holds net of the effects of customers’ ratings of service quality. It is thus possible that black/nonwhite servers’ behavior may not differ from the behaviors of their white counterparts and may even be more conditioned by economic concerns and thus report engaging in more discriminatory behaviors.
One behavioral response to feelings of inequity is to reduce the amount of effort that they expend when interacting with customers perceived to be poor tippers and/or difficult to wait on. However, because tipping occurs after services have been rendered it is impossible for servers to know which individual customers will leave satisfying tips and be less difficult to wait on. For this reason, servers must discriminate based on perceived statistical differences across categories of customers—categories that are constructed around easily identifiable customer characteristics such as race. In this sense, I conceptualize statistical discrimination as a viable behavioral response to servers’ feelings of inequity in their relations with black patrons.

Statistical discrimination can be driven by both revenue and cost-based concerns. Servers who perceive blacks to be below average tippers are predicted to engage in revenue-based statistical discrimination ($H_1$). Specifically, servers are predicted to adjust (reduce) their service to be commensurate with the predicted lower tip that they will receive from black customers. Servers are also predicted to engage in cost-based statistical discrimination to the degree that they perceive black customers to be more difficult to wait on relative to comparable white customers ($H_2$). In this sense, servers are posited to reduce the amount of effort extended to blacks, not because blacks are perceived to require same work for less pay, but rather because they are perceived to require more work for the same pay.

Irrespective of the concerns underlying servers’ motivations to discriminate in their service delivery, the result of both processes—cost and revenue-based—is that whites receive better service at the expense of African Americans. Servers’ revenue and
cost-based concerns, however, are predicted to explain only a portion of the variability in self-reported discrimination. Additional variability in server discrimination is posited to be explained by factors relating to the cultures of restaurant establishments. Thus, in the following chapter, I introduce a second theoretical framework posited to explain additional variability in servers’ reports of discriminatory behaviors—Workplace Culture.
CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: RESTAURANT DISCOURSE AND MINORITY REPRESENTATION

4.1. Introduction

One of the defining declarations of sociology is that individuals’ behaviors are shaped by the social context within which interaction unfolds (see DiPret and Forristal 1994). Feagin (2000, p. 138), for instance, explains that, “while all discrimination is carried out by individuals, the social context is very important, for that is where the beliefs, norms, and proclivities perpetuating racism are institutionalized.” Moreover, to understand and thus predict when subjects are likely to discriminate it is “necessary to know something of the values and norms to which he subscribes—with what culture or subculture he is associated” (Adams 1963, p. 425). Racially motivated server discrimination is thus predicted to be not only a manifestation of individuals’ attitudes, beliefs, and values but also an outcome of more structural workplace processes within which individual attitudes, beliefs, and values are shaped, sustained, and negotiated. It is within the context of restaurant cultures that servers are exposed to and subsequently

23 It is interesting to note that while the importance of context towards understanding actors’ attitudes and actions is acknowledge and emphasized by sociologist, context is largely ignored by the United States’ judicial system. Such a disregard to context within our judicial system is not without consequence, as pointed out by Austin (2000, p. 1): “Not being particularly interested in the material/social interactions and positioning of the parties that lead up to lawsuits or the material/social consequences of decisions after they are rendered, legal analysis as it is reflected in court opinions often leaves out much that lay people would consider crucial to an assessment of whether justice has been done.”
internalize—to varying degrees—the anti-minority sentiments that are posited to, in part, govern the quality of service they deliver to their customers (see: Kirschenman and Neckerman 1991, Tilly 1998, Browne and Kennelly 1999).

In the following section of this chapter, I provide a conceptualization of workplace culture to make the concept theoretically useful towards understanding server discrimination. Next, I outline the theoretical processes by which relational or interactional dimensions of restaurant cultures are posited to encourage racially motivated discriminate service delivery. In section 4.4, I outline the posited role of structural dimensions of restaurant cultures towards understanding server discrimination. In section 4.5, I discuss the hypotheses that I derive from the literature reviewed in this chapter followed by a brief chapter summary in section 4.6.

4.2 Workplace Culture

Workplace culture has been defined in various ways. According to Kunda (1992, p. 8), “when applied to organizational settings, culture is generally viewed as the shared rules governing cognitive and affective aspects of membership in an organization, and the means whereby they are shaped and expressed.” These shared rules include the organizational norms, values, language, assumptions, symbols, and structures that provide guidelines for employee cognition and actions in the workplace. LeBlanc and Mills (1995, p. 22) eloquently describe the meaning of culture within organizational contexts in the following passage:

Your organization’s corporate culture emanates from its unique values, actions, beliefs, customs, policies and traditions. It is your organization’s character, its
personality. It is that invisible organizational element that automatically encourages new employees to emulate the behavior patterns and standards—good and bad—set by other employees.

The culture of an organization can more pointedly be thought of being comprised of both individual and structural dimensions, which are distinct from and yet intrinsically related to one another (Green 2005). On the one hand, workplace culture can be understood as a continuously negotiated micro-level process wherein organizational members develop a collective understanding of the organization’s informal and formal rules via everyday social interaction within the workplace. Such everyday interaction functions to define and thereby preserve both relational and behavioral workplace expectations (e.g., workplace norms). An organization’s culture, for instance, largely determines employee modes of dress as well as the style and content of workplace conversations. On the other hand, workplace cultures are also comprised of structural components that function to shape the context in which the relational dimensions of culture are shaped and sustained. For example, McIlwee and Robinson (1992) empirically reveal the importance of organizational promotional structures in determining variability in the success that female engineers experience. The authors found that women engineers were considerably more likely to experience mobility in traditional bureaucratic firms, where formal policies guide promotion decisions, in contrast to the newly emerged flexible team-based structures wherein promotions are largely contingent on social relations.

Both individual and structural dimensions of workplace cultures have been shown to be important predictors of organizational success via the influence that culture exerts
on employee behaviors. Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 15), for instance, contend that companies “can gain as much as one or two hours of productive work per employee per day” with a positive workplace culture. According to Tidball (1988), organizational cultures can be considered positive to the degree that what the organization publicly pronounces corresponds with how operations are actually carried out. In his study of 15 restaurant cultures, Tidball (1988) found that the degree of congruency between restaurants’ formal ideology (what is publicly pronounced) and operating ideology (what is actually done) was not only predictive of establishment level profits, but also of employee turnover, employee/management relations, and employees’ commitment to the restaurant. More recently, Simons, Friedman, Liu, and Parks (2008) highlight the importance of ideological congruency in their study of “behavioral integrity” among hotel managers. According to the authors, managers possess behavioral integrity if their employees perceive their actions to be congruent with their professed values. Analysis of survey responses from 1,944 hotel employees, nested within 107 restaurants, revealed a strong relationship between perceived managerial integrity and hotel employees’ organizational commitment (e.g., willing to work hard, intent to stay with company, etc.), and this relationship was particularly pronounced among African American workers. When organizations have incongruent ideologies, countercultures often emerge that adversely affect the success of the organization, in part, via its adverse effects on customer service (Simons et al. 2008; Tidball 1988).

The importance of customer service is conveyed in virtually every organization’s formal ideology and this is the case because companies wish to instill the importance of
guests’ satisfaction into the minds of their employees (see Gatta 2002, pp. 40-48). LeBlanc and Mills (1995, p. 23) argue that a key component of a positive organizational culture is its ability to “foster within employees the feeling that satisfying a guest is a worthwhile personal accomplishment.” Thus, when applied to the issue of racial discrimination, counter cultures can be said to exist within restaurants to degree that servers do not feel that satisfying minority customers “is a worthwhile personal accomplishment.” These anti-black server sentiments and actions are likely to emerge out of both relational and structural dimensions of restaurant cultures.

4.3 The Relational Dimension of Workplace Culture

A divergent server counterculture, which encourages racially motivated discriminate service, is likely to be fostered, in part, by the anti-black discourse that is evidenced in the cultures of restaurant establishments (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Mallinson and Brewster 2005; Noll and Arnold 2004; Rusche and Brewster 2008). Analyzing server interview data, Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b) were able to outline characteristics of what they refer to as a “culture of white servers.” The authors argue that restaurant cultures are characterized by strong anti-minority belief systems that are reflected in the racialized and stereotypical language that servers use to privately disparage their minority guests. Indicative of such a culture, according to Dirks and Rice (2004b), is coded backstage language utilized by servers to reference and discuss black patrons.\footnote{Recall from Chapter 2 of this dissertation that the use of such racially coded language is consistent with what has been referred to as “backstage” racism (Feagin 2006, p. 199; Feagin and Sikes 1994).} Servers, for instance, often reference tables of black customers with terms such as Canadian, cousins, moollies, blacktops, and
even white people (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Rusche and Brewster 2008; also see Feagin 2006; Feagin and Sikes 1994). In some cases, these code words draw explicitly from stereotypes observed in the larger culture. Rusche and Brewster (2008, p. 2020), for instance, cite a server who, after providing service to a table of black customers commented that he had “...just got the gold-tooth treatment.” When asked what he meant by his statement, he explained that when a black table gives their server a bad tip, it is like giving him the “gold-tooth treatment.”

Racially coded workplace language can also be promoted by restaurant management, such as the case at Denny’s restaurant where the code word “blackout” was used to convey that there were “too many black customers in the restaurant at one time” (Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997; see also Dirks and Rice 2004b, p.4). The usage of racist discourse by restaurant managers is also evidenced in Rusche and Brewster’s (2008, p. 2019-2020) research. A manager employed with the restaurant where Rusche (2003) conducted fieldwork was observed groaning that, “It must be welfare Monday,” after peering out of the kitchen into the dining room where a large number of black customers were.

Racist managerial comments, such as those cited above, undoubtedly influence the sentiments and actions that employees view as acceptable within their workplaces (Simons et al. 2008; Tidball 1988). Feagin (2001, p. 119), for instance, argues, “When racially coded language is embedded in white minds, it and its associated concepts often guide everyday thinking and behavior.” It is thus not surprising that researchers have also documented numerous instances where racially disparaging discourse was followed by
both overt and covert forms of discriminatory server behaviors (Dirks and Rice 2004b; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Feagin 1991; Feagin 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004; Rusche and Brewster 2009). Dirks and Rice (2004b), for instance, document cases where servers were simply unwilling to serve black patrons—a practice constituting overt de facto discrimination—and to avoid doing so they would participate in ‘the servers’ game of ‘Pass the [Black] Table.’’ It has even been reported that some servers go as far as to pay other servers to wait on African American patrons when they are seated in their section. According to Candace Brown, a former server at Cracker Barrel, the practice of paying servers to take black tables “happened all the time,” and moreover, “management knew about” (Schmit and Copeland 2004). When servers do wait on black patrons they often times admittedly provide inferior service to them by withholding effort that is otherwise be extended to white customers (Dirks and Rice 2004b).

The racialized server discourse that has been highlighted in extant research is likely to be a central explanatory factor in discriminate server behaviors. Such discourse not only conveys the kinds of behaviors that are (un)acceptable but more importantly, it is through such discourse that servers are exposed to and subsequently internalize an

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25 While inferior service, in some cases, is blatant and overt—as these examples demonstrate—it in most cases will be subtle in nature (see Bonilla-Silva 2003). Restaurant servers are very proficient at presenting themselves in accordance with their restaurants publically professed commitment to providing all customers with quality service and therefore, in most cases, refrain from overt discriminatory behaviors. The subtlety of contemporary discrimination should, however, not be interpreted as being inconsequential. While victims of such subtle discrimination, in many cases, may not even identify such treatment as discrimination (Feagin 2001) they are nevertheless likely to be cognizant of such treatment as constituting a lack of hospitality. In fact, subtle discrimination (e.g., slow service, discourteous treatment, etc.) has been shown to be purposively utilized by servers with the intention of discouraging black patronage (Austin 2000; Curry and Kleiner 2005).
organizational ethos that informally promotes race-based discriminatory service. The importance of discourse in the production and reproduction of racialized ideologies and actions is nicely conveyed by Teun Van Dijk (1995, p. 3), a leading scholar in the area of discourse and racism, in the following passage:

Such [racialized] discourses are not simply innocent forms of language use or marginal types of verbal social interaction. Rather, they have a fundamental impact on the social cognitions of dominant group members, on the acquisition, confirmation, and uses of opinions, attitudes, and ideologies underlying social perceptions, actions, and structures.

The fundamental impact of racialized discourse that Van Dijk (1995) speaks of involves the influence that language has on shaping the dynamics of actors’ natural tendency to organize the world in which they exist by placing things and people into categories. Categorizations are most often made according to easily identifiable attributes such as race, class, gender, age, and, to a lesser degree, sexual orientation. Such categorization processes function to assist individuals in managing and simplifying the constant bombardment of stimuli that they encounter on a daily basis. The cognitive efficiency facilitated by placing encounters into categories is exemplified by Fiske’s (2000) notion of the “cognitive miser.” According to Fiske, a cognitive miser utilizes mental short-cuts to access category-based information that permits those encountered in daily life to be placed into “piles.” By doing so actors do not have to interpret as new each time they encounter someone (or something) in the social world. Rather, when actors encounter others they efficiently access the cognitively constructed category to which the other belongs and employ information derived from these categories to form behavioral expectations for ensuing bouts of interaction with these group members.
While categorizing the social world is cognitively efficient, such categorizations can and often do surface as stereotypes that actors have acquired about out-group members (Fiske and Taylor 1984). Schaller (1991), for instance, argues that social categorization processes inevitable lead to in-group favoritism thereby biasing the processing of information about out-group members (p. 27). As such, when a member of an out-group is encountered previous encounters are accessed and serve as a basis for generalizations about the entire group to which that other belongs (Kirschenman and Neckerman 1991). As stereotypes about out-group members are reproduced they become collectively shared knowledge (see Dirks and Rice 2004b: 260) and in turn are used to justify discrimination against the categorized other (Kirschenman and Neckerman 1991, Tilly 1998, Browne and Kennelly 1999).

Thus, in the context of restaurants the belief that satisfying minority customers is not “a worthwhile personal accomplishment” is, in part, produced and reproduced by discourses of prejudice that are evidenced in the everyday interactions between servers, managers, and even other patrons. Such discourses function to disseminate stereotypes about African American customers throughout the subculture of serving thereby affirming and reaffirming ideologies of white customer superiority in the cognition of predominately white restaurant wait staff (see Mallinson and Brewster 2005 for a detailed analysis of restaurant servers’ racist discourse). Thus, when servers approach black tables they are likely to access and utilize the culturally constructed race-based categorical distinctions to inform

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26 See Rusche and Brewster (2008) for a more detailed discussion of the social psychology of tableside racism.
the quality of service that they extend to these customers—a level of quality that is likely to be inferior relative to their white patrons.

If, however, information about categorized others is processed in biased ways, it is part of the actors cognition, thereby making the actor, in some cases, unaware of not only in-group biases but also any resultant discriminatory behaviors associated with such biases. Kawakami and colleagues (2002), for instance, argue that categorization processes automatically activate stereotypes and that these stereotypes unconsciously determine the actor’s behavior (p. 12). Bargh, Chen and Burrows (1996) agree that this process is unintentional and that because stereotypes are activated automatically with only the presence of activating features (i.e., race, gender), actors can behave in accordance with these stereotypes without even knowing it.

Analyses of white actors’ facial expressions while engaged in inter-racial interaction are likely to reflect the unconscious effects of such cognitive biases. Vrana and Rollock (1998), for instance, experimentally demonstrate that white college students express positive facial expressions when first greeting a white stranger more so than when greeting a comparable black stranger. In a similar study, Vanman, Paul, Ito, and Miller (1997) showed subjects pictures of black and white individuals and asked them to imagine working and interacting with those observed in the photographs. While overtly expressing no racial biases toward the black subjects in the pictures, analysis of facial expressions revealed that most respondents harbored implicit racial prejudices, evident in fewer positive facial expressions when asked to imagine working with African Americans. More recently, Vanman, Saltz, Nathan, and Warren (2004) experimentally
documented a statistically significant positive relationship between implicit racial biases (evident in disparities in facial expressivity) and discriminatory actions.

Fiske (2000, 2004) is in moderate agreement with the above line of inquiry, but points out that these explanations suggest that actors are helpless and are therefore not responsible for the behaviors that might be triggered by these unconscious mechanisms; “a lack of intent often implies a lack of responsibility” (2004 p. 121). She argues

27 In the discussion, I draw off Fiske’s (2004) work to posit the ability of servers’ ability to resist actively the effects of the racialized nature of their work environment. I am not suggesting that server discrimination can be reduced to individual server “choices.” Nevertheless, if we accept the fundamental sociological assumption that individuals’ cognition and behaviors are products of their social environment, Fiske’s (2004, p. 121) usage of the term “individual responsibility” may, on the surface, appear to contradict this assumption. While a detailed delineation of the debate over the causes of human behavior, including those that are responsible/irresponsible, is beyond the scope of this research, a few comments are warranted. On a basic level, inquires into the causes of responsible or irresponsible behaviors inevitably lead to debates on the predictive saliency of structure versus agency. On the one hand, structural perspectives assume that individual behaviors merely reflect individuals’ location within existing social structures. Structural theories reject the entire notion of individual responsibility because the concept implies that the behavior can be located and thus understood by examining the moral character of individuals. For instance, in his structural theory of race relations Della Fave (2008) explains racism/discrimination as an inevitable outgrowth of a capitalist political economy that requires gross social inequalities for it to function. From this perspective, white individuals who embrace anti-black attitudes and behave discriminatorily are no less responsible for their thoughts and actions than African Americans are responsible for their disproportional rates of privation. Rather, the root cause of both phenomena (Anti-black attitudes/actions and black poverty rates) can be located within the structures of our political and economic systems. On the other hand, individual level perspectives that emphasize human agency purport to explain thoughts and behaviors as outcomes of rational decisions that actors make free from external influence. In this sense, rather than outcomes of social structures, white racism and black privation can both understood as reflecting individual choices (e.g., blacks make bad choices thus justifying white indignation toward them). While perspectives that purport to explain human behavior in terms of individual choices are clearly inadequate, so too are those perspectives that attempt to explain behavior by focusing exclusively on the saliency of social structures. In reality, structures and agents are not independent but rather constitute a duality (Giddens 1984). Della Fave’s (2008) structural theory of racial conflict, for instance, recognizes the conditions under which actors could collectively alter the political and economic structures that currently sustain racism and discrimination. In fact, this implicit emphasis on the duality of structure is, in my opinion, a primary contribution of Della Fave’s work. Thus, social structures constitute complex rule sets
instead that actors can resist these automatic processes if they are so motivated. Consistent with this possibility, Devine (1989) showed in a series of experiments that individuals who are aware of racial stereotypes and yet desire to be nonprejudiced are able to control the adverse effects of such stereotypes on their actions.

Restaurant servers may thus be cognizant of the racial stereotypes disseminated by racialized workplace discourse and yet not be affected by such discourse. In other words, some servers may be exposed to racist discourse within their workplace culture and yet refrain from engaging in racially motivated discriminate service delivery. The possibility of a server maintaining equity in their service delivery within the context of a racially biased workplace environment is likely to occur among servers who hold egalitarian values and espouse equality in service delivery across all categories of patrons. In such cases, customers’ race is not likely to be a salient component of servers’ cognitive schemata. Such servers will therefore be able to inhibit the effects of working alongside coworkers or managers who openly disparage African Americans because acting in accordance with such sentiments would contradict their identity as nonprejudiced. Two respondents in Rusche and Brewster’s (2008, pp. 2021-22) research illustrates this possibility particularly well: inquire

My first instinct [when he sees a table of blacks in his section] is like oh, no’. They prevalently give poorer tips, but it doesn’t decrease the service. When I talk to them, I talk to them the same way I talk to everyone else and I serve them the same way. I don’t feel that anyone deserves to be treated poorly because of a misconception, because it could be a misconception.

that both constrain and enable human action but which can be modified via the expression of human agency. This theoretical logic underlies the argument I present concerning servers ability to resist the effects the racialized organizational structures.
I’m very conscious of racism in this restaurant. I give the same service to all tables, regardless of sex, age, or race… Many servers in this restaurant will say things like “I’m not waiting on that table (of black people); they won’t tip!” Their service and tips in turn reflect this attitude.

In short, for some servers, race is not likely to be a salient workplace categorization scheme (Fiske 2000) and as such, even if they are aware racist discourse they are likely to refrain from acting in accordance with such discourse. In extreme cases, this population of servers may even actively engage in efforts to challenge the racialized nature of their workplace thereby altering the very culture out of which discriminatory server behaviors are posited to emerge. This possibility is echoed in Green’s (2005, p. 633) assertion that, “work culture is constantly shifting and changing as internal conflicts and negotiations determine which expectations will prevail.”

4.4 The Structural Dimension of Restaurant Culture

In the previous section, I argued that the racialized discourse that is evidenced in the subculture of restaurant servers functions to indoctrinate servers into the operational—yet divergent—belief system that legitimizes and sustains discrimination against racial minority guests. As race-based categorical distinctions are culturally elaborated and justified within restaurant workplaces the ideology of white customer superiority is more broadly sustained (Mallinson and Brewster 2005). In addition to this individual-level process, server discrimination is also likely to be facilitated by structural features of restaurant cultures.

Recall from the introduction to this chapter, structural dimensions of
organizational cultures function to shape the context in which everyday workplace interactions—including interaction between servers and African American customers—unfold (Green 2005). Such effects are most commonly referred to as contextual or organizational-level effects. According to Blalock (1984), “the essential feature of all contextual-effects models is an allowance for macro processes that are presumed to have an impact on the individual actor over and above the effects of any individual-level variable that may be operating” (p. 354).

While there are multiple ways in which contextual effects can be conceptualized and studied, one prominent strategy for teasing such effects out is to statistically demonstrate that aggregate measures of any person-level characteristic is associated with a micro-level outcome, net of the effects of the individual characteristics of interest (see Bryk and Raudenbush 1992). For example, research has shown that the aggregate measure of students’ SES (i.e., school SES) within schools is positively associated with student achievement even after controlling for the effects of individual student’s SES (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992).

In a similar vein, if servers work in restaurants characterized by high mean levels of racialized discourse, it is plausible that such an ambiance would affect discriminatory server behaviors, net of any server-level effects of observing such workplace discourse. For instance, servers who are unaware of racialized discourse (i.e., perceive no racist comments in their restaurant), and yet work in restaurants characterized by high aggregate levels of such discourse, may discriminate more than a comparable individual working in a restaurant characterized by low aggregate levels of racialized discourse.
Likewise, a server who frequently observes racialized comments at work are likely to discriminate more in a restaurant where such discourse is common compared to a similar server working in a restaurant where such discourse is uncommon. Alternatively, organizational-level effects of racialized discourse on server discrimination may be compositional in nature and thus may simply reflect variability in the number of individuals who utilize racialized language across restaurants.

Arguably, the effects of racialized discourse on discriminatory server behaviors are, in part, a manifestation of the relative absence of minority employees working in the front of the house of restaurants. While blacks represent 11% of employed persons in the labor force they are grossly underrepresented in positions considered to be the best jobs in the restaurant industry—waiters, waitresses, and bartenders (Bernhardt, McGrath, and DeFilippis 2007). African Americans, for instance, currently occupy only 5% of serving positions and 3% of bartending positions (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008). In contrast, black Americans are overrepresented in stations located in the back of restaurants. African Americans constitute 16% of all kitchen workers and as pointed out in a recent Brennan Center for Justice Report on unregulated labor, “mobility from the back to the front of the restaurant is infrequent: workers and employers alike reported that the two are effectively separate worlds” (Bernhardt et al. 2007, p. 53). Considering these statistics, it should not be surprising that African Americans are also underrepresented in the ranks of managers and owners. In fact, African Americans own less than 4% of all eating and drinking establishments (National Restaurant Association 2007).

The underrepresentation of African Americans in customer contact positions is
undoubtedly due, in part, to discriminatory hiring practices. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the case of Shoney’s is one of the most egregious examples of disparate hiring practices. While Shoney’s has since taken aggressive actions to remedy their tarnished image (see Adamson 2000; Faircloth 1998) in the early nineties cofounder of Shoney’s and the Chair of its Board, Ray Danner, was known to discourage the hiring of “too many” African Americans and those that were hired would by rule not experience any internal mobility. In fact, Danner was known to order his managers to “lighten up” their staff, a euphemism for limiting the number of African Americans employed (Watkins 1993). In many cases, black employees would purposively be driven out via a reduction in their hours (Watkins 1993). Danner himself admitted, “In looking for anything to identify why is this unit under-performing, in some cases, I would probably have said this is a neighborhood of predominately white neighbors, and we have a considerable amount of black employees and this might be a problem” (Watkins 1993, p. 427). More recently, an Oregon based

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28 Danner’s concern that white customers are likely to refrain from dining in restaurants staffed by black employees is not without merit and can be understood as being a manifestation of consumer discrimination (see Becker 1971). In fact, there is a considerable amount of extant research showing the influential role that consumer discrimination plays in maintaining racial disparities. For instance, Ihlafeldt and Young’s (1994) research on fast-food restaurants in Atlanta, Georgia revealed an inverse relationship between the proportion of white customers and the wages of black workers, net of a host of control variables. Consumer discrimination is also implicated in Neumark’s (1996) research on sex discrimination in hiring decisions at high priced restaurants in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. More recently, researchers have begun exploring the role of consumer discrimination in tipping behaviors. Ayres, Vars and Zakariya (2005) empirically demonstrate that both black and white taxicab passengers tipped white drivers statistically more than comparable black drivers. Lynn, Sturman, Ganley, Adams, Douglas, and McNeil (2008) replicate the Ayres et al. research within the restaurant context and their findings also reveal a statistically significant effect of servers’ race on the size of tips garnered from both white and black customers. The authors demonstrate that the effect of servers’ race on tipping persisted after controlling for patrons’ rating of service quality. Thus, the literature on consumer discrimination taken as a whole adds yet another explanatory factor in African Americans under representation in restaurant serving positions.
upscale seafood chain, McCormick & Schmick’s, agreed to pay $1.1 million in response to discriminatory hiring practices in its San Francisco location and now faces similar charges in its Baltimore, Maryland store (Saiker 2008).

Recent research by Devah Pager (2007) is perhaps the most telling evidence of exclusionary practices within the restaurant industry. In an audit study exploring the effects of race and criminal record on gaining employment in the restaurant industry, Pager found remarkable differences in the proportion of applicants that received a callback across racial categories. Her findings show that compared with other industries, restaurant jobs are among the easiest to obtain for white individuals and the most difficult to obtain for African Americans, irrespective of criminal backgrounds. In fact, the callback rate for white testers with a criminal record was 23% whereas the comparable rate for black testers with a criminal record was a scant 2 percent. Similarly, 40% of white testers without a criminal record received a callback on their application from restaurant establishments whereas only 7% of comparable black testers did so.

While some readers are likely to be surprised at the gross racial disparities in restaurants’ hiring practices, when interpreted within a broader institutional context, such disparities become not only less surprising but even predictable. Arguably, the most salient institutional context within which to understand the persistent nature of racial inequalities in the United States—including those inequities observed in restaurants—is that of our political economy (Blalock 1967; Bonacich 1972; Della Fave 2008; W. E. B. DuBois 1967, 1969; Wilson 1973, 1980). Scholars have long recognized the role of political and economic forces in producing and sustaining racial inequities (e.g., DuBois
1967, 1969). Of particular importance towards understanding the underrepresentation of African Americans’ in coveted restaurant positions is the influence of the interracial competition that grows out of capitalist free markets.\(^{29}\) Under the economic conditions of capitalism, there are tangible benefits associated with white racism, namely, the procurement of good employment (DuBois 1967, 1969; Della Fave 2008). Such competition is likely to be especially evident when the employment considered requires minimum levels of human capital but pay enough to provide a minimum standard of living, as restaurant positions do. In such cases, it is in the interest of uneducated whites to engage in exclusionary racial practices, lest they be met with the same fate of privation as are a disproportionate number of similarly educated African Americans (Della Fave 2008). I am of course not suggesting that individual whites behave consciously with racial malice to “protect their turf.” Rather, because of whites’ ideological adherence to racial stereotypes surrounding the black service employee (e.g., bad attitude, unfriendly, etc.; see Austin 2000, p. 12), the material benefits whites enjoy as a function of a racially segregated restaurant industry are justified and even appear natural.

Kaufman (2002, p. 567), for instance, recently conducted a national study of racial representation across 1,917 occupations and concluded that variability in the racial composition of occupational positions can be primarily attributed to “widespread employer stereotypes about the race- or sex-typed nature of specific skills and working conditions.” In short, if African Americans are not aligned with the dominant white

\(^{29}\) I emphasis the concept of free markets because, as Della Fave (2008) argues throughout his book, markets have never been free from state intervention and such interventions have almost always served the material interest of capital at the expense of labor.
public’s stereotypical conception of who is “appropriate” for any given position (i.e., waiter/waitress) they are likely to find themselves being steered towards a position that is out of the public’s view and thus more “appropriate” (i.e., dish washer). This point is echoed in an anecdote of a 35-year-old black male who sought employment as a server in many of New York City’s upscale restaurants: “I faxed my qualifications to restaurants and they expressed excitement. Then they saw me in person and the whole conversation changed” (Collins 2000, B1). The relative exclusion of blacks from coveted restaurant positions that require little education but provide a minimum (if not in some cases a very good) standard of living functions to not only disadvantage blacks economically but is also likely to affect the way in which minority customers are perceived and treated.

Extant research, for instance, has consistently demonstrated the importance of minority numerical representation as a structural organizational attribute affecting many outcomes including but not limited to minority well-being (Jackson, Thoits, and Taylor 1995), academic achievement (Alexander and Thoits 1985), wages (Hirsch and Schumacher 1992; Tomaskovic-Devey 1993), and intergroup interaction (Hallinan 1982; Hallinan and Smith 1985; Longshore 1982; South, Bonjean, Markham, and Corder 1982).30 Much of this work has been inspired by Kanter’s theory of proportional representation (1977a, 1977b).

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30 Increased representation does not always result in favorable outcomes for members of minority groups. Gay (2001), for instance, found no relationship between black representatives and black voter turnout within congressional districts. Research has also shown minority representation to be inconsequential with regard to the prevalence of police brutality. However, this does not negate the fact that the majority of research continues to highlight the importance of minority representation towards the promotion of racial equity.
According to Kanter (1977b), organizations can be described as uniform, skewed, tilted, or balanced with regard to minority group representation. In uniform workplaces, all members share the same ascribed statuses (e.g., white males) and as such, uniform groups can be described as homogeneous. In skewed work groups, majority members heavily outnumber their minority member counterparts. Kanter suggests that the ratios of dominant to minority (token) group members in skewed work groups range between 99:1 and 85:15. In titled work groups, minority members remain outnumbered but have gained sizable representation in the group compared with the aforementioned skewed group. Kanter suggest that ratios of dominant to minority group members in titled work groups range from 84:16 to 65:35. In such groups, minority members can utilize their numerical power to affect the culture of the workplace. Lastly, in balanced groups the ratio of dominant to tokens range from 64:36 to 50:50 and in this case the power to influence culture becomes shared and as such any differences in individual outcomes can no longer be said to emerge as a result of group composition.

It is within the context of skewed work groups, according to Kanter (1977b), that minorities encounter the most inequitable treatment with regard to interaction with dominant group members. In such arrangements, dominant group members (Kanter 1977b, p. 208) control the culture of the organization to sustain their organizational power. Kanter identifies several perceptual phenomena experienced by token members in skewed work groups that function as control mechanisms. First, due to their small numerical presence, tokens become more visible than dominant group members and as such their actions take on symbolic consequences. For instance, in her study of tokens in
an industrial supply company Kanter found that “every act tended to be evaluated beyond its meaning for the organization and taken as a sign of ‘how women [blacks] perform’ (1977b, p. 214).” A second perceptual tendency experienced by tokens working in skewed work groups is the continuous exaggeration of difference between themselves and dominant group members. By exaggerating the differences as opposed to similarities, dominant group members were able to highlight and sustain the majority culture that isolates minorities and impedes their ability to advance in the organization (Kanter 1977b, p. 223).

A final perceptual tendency delineated in Kanter’s work is assimilation. In this case, token members have their attributes distorted to fit within the stereotypical notions of them held by dominant group members. These stereotypes serve to track and sustain minorities in less coveted positions that are commonly associated with members that share their attributes (e.g., black jobs). According to Kanter (1977b, p. 980), “stereotypical assumptions and mistaken attributions made about tokens tend to force them into playing limited and caricatured roles in the system.” As a result, token members are at risk of underachievement when compared with their dominant counterparts. This appears especially to be the case among low status tokens working with higher status dominant members (Alexander and Thoits 1985).

While Kanter focuses on the disadvantages that token women encounter in the corporate context, her insights are not limited to this group. According to Kanter (1977, p. 207), “Any situation where proportions of significant types of people are highly skewed can produce similar themes and processes. It was rarity and scarcity, rather than
femaleness per se, that shaped the environment of the women.” Indeed, analysts have long recognized the disadvantages faced by African Americans working in otherwise homogeneous work groups, as conveyed by Feagin (2006, p. 204): “In mostly white workplaces, especially those where there have been relatively few black employees historically, they typically encounter a hostile racial climate, one that is designed to permanently marginalize them or even to drive them out.”

However, to date, research concerning the effects of minority representation on organizational environments has not adequately assessed how, if at all, minority representation affects the way minority consumers are treated. If an increase in the proportional representation of minorities in the workplace, changes the culture of that workplace to reduce the discriminatory treatment of token employees, it seems reasonable that such a change would also be implicated in the quality of service that minority customers receive in restaurants. Consistent with this possibility, extant studies have shown minority representation to be advantageous across a variety of consumer settings. Research, for instance, has shown racial diversity to be an important explanatory factor in the quality of care provided to minority patients within medical establishments (Cohen, Gabriel, and Terrell 2002; Committee on Quality of Health Care in America 2001). Minority representation has also been linked with the quality of education that minority students receive. Meier’s (1984) research, for instance, revealed a statistically significant inverse relationship between the proportion of African American teachers within school districts and discrimination against black students (e.g., suspensions, AP classes, etc.). This relationship held net of the effects of black educational attainment,
income, and resource availability (political, economic, and organizational) within school districts.

Research has also highlighted the advantages of racial diversity in group decision making processes among jurors. Sommers (2006), for instance, found that white research subjects in racially diverse juries, relative to those in racially homogenous juries, were statistically less likely to report a black defendant as being guilty prior to the onset of deliberations. This result is particularly interesting because it demonstrates that the behaviors of white group members are at least partially affected by the mere presence of African Americans and not contingent on black/white intra-group interaction. In other words, the beneficial effects of racial composition on group dynamics are not limited to interactional processes wherein blacks and whites exchange information.

This is not to suggest, however, that information exchange is irrelevant in the process by which racial composition affects group dynamics. To the contrary, Sommers (2006) found that racially diverse juries also deliberated longer, discussed more case facts, made fewer inaccurate statements, and were more open to the discussion of race related issues (e.g., racism), relative to the all white condition. Interestingly, these advantageous effects of racial diversity on group outcomes could not be attributed to the unique contributions made by African American subjects within diverse groups. Rather, the effects of racial composition on group dynamics (e.g., deliberation time, inaccurate information, etc.) were almost entirely due to white participants contributions to the deliberations in racially diverse groups (i.e., whites were more open to discussing race-related issues pertaining to the case). This line of inquiry thus implicates the
underrepresentation of African Americans employed in coveted positions in restaurants (e.g., waitress/waiter) as an explanatory factor in server discrimination. Specifically, resistance to the racist and stereotypical workplace discourse that is said to encourage discriminatory server behaviors (see Dirks and Rice 2004b) is likely to be a function of minority representation in front of the house positions.

In this section, I have discussed existing research highlighting the importance of such structural dimensions of workplace culture on servers’ thoughts and actions. In the following section, I discursively present hypotheses derived from the literature reviewed in this section, which I test in this research. I present the formal hypotheses that I test in this research in Chapter 5.

4.5 Study Predictions Derived from the Literature on Workplace Culture

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides a sound theoretical basis on which to predict that servers’ discriminatory behaviors are partially conditioned by both relational and structural dimensions of restaurant cultures. First, with regard to the relational aspect of restaurant cultures, the racialized content embedded in the everyday interactions between servers and managers (in some cases even customers) is predicted to be paramount towards understanding racial disparities in customer service. Such discourse functions to spread negative stereotypes about African American customers throughout the subculture of serving thereby affecting the way in which servers process information about African American customers. The more servers are exposed to such racialized workplace discourse the more likely they are to categorize blacks as inferior
customers. When servers interact with black tables they are thus likely to access and utilize the culturally constructed race-based categorical distinctions to inform the quality of service that they extend to these customers. In this dissertation, I explore this hypothesized process by assessing the effects of observing coworkers making racist comments, observing managers making racist comments, and the observing coworkers utilizing coded language on servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Owing to the fact that such categorization processes may unconsciously affect servers’ actions (see Bargh et al. 1996; Fiske 2000, 2004; Kawakami et al. 2002), I also assess the effects of these measures of racialized discourse (i.e., observing coworkers making racist comments, etc.) on servers’ reports of observing their coworkers engage in racially motivated discriminatory behaviors.

However, extant evidence has demonstrated that if actors are motivated they are effectively able to resist the adverse effects of racial stereotypes on their behaviors—stereotypes primarily spread through discourse (Devine 1989; Fisk 2004). Servers may thus be aware of racialized workplace discourse (and accompanying stereotypes) and yet the effects of such discourse may not become manifested in their behaviors. This is predicted to be the case among servers who hold egalitarian values and as such do not consider customers’ race as a salient categorization attribute. In response to this possibility, I explore in this dissertation the moderating effects of race as a salient categorization scheme in the relationships between observing racialized workplace discourse and self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

In addition to the relational or interactional aspects of restaurant cultures, extant literature has also highlighted the importance of structural dimensions of organizational
cultures. Structural dimensions of organizational cultures function to shape the context in which routine workplace interactions unfold (Green 2005). Sociologists, in particular, have long been aware of the importance of context in shaping actors’ beliefs and actions. Contextual effects are said to exist to the degree that aggregate measures of any person-level characteristic is associated with a micro-level outcome, net of the effects of the individual characteristics of interest (see Bryk and Raudenbush 1992). In this vein, this dissertation assesses the degree to which aggregate or restaurant-level measures of racialized discourse affects server discrimination. Specifically, I assess whether these aggregate measures of racialized workplace discourse affect server discrimination, net of the effects of subjects exposure to such discourse. In other words, it is plausible that a server working in a restaurant characterized by high aggregate levels of racist discourse would discriminate more than a comparable individual working in a restaurant characterized by low aggregate levels of racialized discourse.

Arguably, the aggregate effects of racialized discourse on discriminatory server behaviors are, in part, a manifestation of the relative absence of minority employees working as servers and bartenders in restaurant establishments (Bernhardt, McGrath, and DeFilippis 2007; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). Minority representation in front of the house positions thus constitutes a second structural feature of restaurant cultures explored in this dissertation. Drawing off extant research demonstrating the importance of minority representation towards attenuating inequities across a variety of contexts, I predict that the relative absence of African Americans employed in these positions will affect the way in which minority customers are perceived and treated. Specifically, I predict an inverse
relationship between the numerical representation of African Americans in front of the house positions and server discrimination. An increase in the proportion of black servers within restaurants is predicted to reduce discrimination by challenging the racist and stereotypical workplace discourse that is said to encourage discriminatory server behaviors (see Dirks and Rice 2004).

4.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have drawn from the literature on workplace culture in general and restaurant cultures in particular to situate the current study within a second explanatory framework. To delineate the processes by which the workplace culture of restaurants encourages discriminatory server behaviors, I have also relied on literature in the area of social psychology. These literatures taken together suggest that server discrimination may be partially explained by taking into account both relational and structural characteristics of large full-service restaurants.

Specifically, the literature reviewed in this chapter highlights evidence of anti-black sentiments that become manifested in the racialized discourse surrounding servers’ interactions about minority customers (Dirks and Rice 2004b; Rusche and Brewster 2008; Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997). Racialized discourse is posited to encourage race-based discrimination by disseminating stereotypes about African American customers throughout the subculture of serving and thereby influencing the way in which servers cognitively process information about black customers. Racist comments made by restaurant managers are likely to be particularly harmful towards promoting racial equality in customer service. Managers have a considerable amount of influence over the behaviors of their
subordinates and by extension the success of the organization (Simons et al. 2008; Tidball 1988). Employees look to managers to determine the kinds of workplace behaviors that are acceptable. Racist managerial comments, including the use of code words, is thus likely to produce and reinforce a prejudice workplace culture by explicitly or implicitly conveying messages that condone racialized customer service.

When servers approach black tables they are likely to access and utilize the culturally constructed cognitive race-based categorical distinctions that they have been acquired and reinforced by racist workplace discourse to consciously or unconsciously inform the quality of service that they extend to black customers—a level of quality that is likely to be inferior relative to their white patrons. Racist comments among restaurant managers are likely to be especially salient towards understanding servers’ proclivity to discriminate racially. This process is likely to be conditioned by the degree to which servers consider customers’ race as a salient categorization attribute. Servers who advocate for racial equity are less likely to be affected by the racist workplace discourse that they observe because acting in accordance with such discourse would contradict their identity as nonprejudiced.

The literature reviewed in this chapter also highlights the importance of structural characteristics of organizations’ cultures towards understanding racial inequity in service quality. In this vein, my research also assesses the role of aggregate measures of racialized discourse on server discrimination. It is plausible that higher aggregate levels of racialized discourse in restaurants may affect servers’ actions, net of effects of servers’ awareness of such discourse. In such cases, a comparatively high level of racialized restaurant discourse is posited to encourage server discrimination beyond the effects of such discourse within the relational or interactional process discussed above (e.g., server-level effects of racist
discourse). If this is the case, I will statistically assess the degree to which between-restaurant variation in server discrimination can be explained according to compositional differences across sampled restaurants (e.g., more workers who utilize racist discourse and thus more workers who engage in discriminatory behaviors).

Minority representation in front of the house positions in restaurants constitutes a second structural feature of restaurant cultures that I explore in this research. Extant research has highlighted the relative absence of racial minorities, blacks in particular, in serving and bartending positions (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007; Bernhardt et al. 2007; Collins 2000). The underrepresentation of African Americans in these positions is posited to be a contributing explanatory factor in race-based server discrimination. Research, for instance, has highlighted the importance of minority representation towards promoting equality across a variety of contexts (Cohen et al. 2002; Committee on Quality of Health Care in America 2001; Meier 1984). White servers are undoubtedly aware of the absence of racial minority coworkers, which is likely to reinforce the racialized way in which they carry out their occupational tasks. Thus, an increase in minority representation in serving and bartending positions should alter the restaurant culture so as to discourage discriminatory service delivery (see Kanter 1977).

The predictions concerning the relationships between workplace culture variables, discussed in this chapter, and statistical discrimination variables, discussed in the previous chapter will be statistically assessed utilizing Ordinary Least Squares regression and Hierarchical Linear Modeling statistical techniques. In the next chapter, I review in detail the data and methods that I employ in this dissertation.
CHAPTER 5
DATA AND METHODS

5.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapters, there is a lack of extant literature addressing everyday forms of consumer discrimination (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2006; Siegelman 1998, p. 70; Gabbidon 2003; Yinger 1998). This lack of scholarly attention is especially evident in the context of the American restaurant. We do not know, for instance, how frequently restaurant servers provide service that is informed by the race of their customers. Likewise, research has offered little insight into the pervasiveness of racist and stereotypical server discourse that is said to reflect an anti-minority “culture of white servers” (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b). Finally, prior research has not examined the relationships between server discrimination and key theoretically relevant predictors of such behaviors.

To address these gaps, I analyze survey responses from 200 restaurant servers, who in 2004 were working in one of 18 local restaurants located in a large southeastern city in the United States. Sample respondents were asked a series of questions concerning the racial climate of the restaurants in which they were employed. These questions permit me to examine empirically the pervasiveness of and relationships between self-reported discriminatory behaviors, observed discriminatory behaviors, anti-minority discourse, server perceptions of racial minorities, and minority representation in the workplace.

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In the next section of this chapter, I discuss the data collection procedures utilized for this research. In section 5.3, I describe the data that I analyze in this dissertation. In section 5.4, I describe the two measures of servers’ discriminatory behaviors that are predicted in this dissertation’s analyses. Next, I present the formal hypotheses that I test in subsequent chapters. In section 5.6, I describe the analytical technique that I utilize to test this study’s hypotheses, and in section 5.7, I conclude with a brief chapter summary.

5.2 Data Collection Procedure

In the summer of 2004, a colleague and I designed and administered a questionnaire to restaurant servers to assess quantitatively the racial climate within restaurant establishments. Specifically, we asked questions to solicit responses concerning the pervasiveness of racialized server discourse and discriminatory behaviors. Using the local phone book, we identified 78 “chain bar and grill” restaurants. To be considered a chain bar and grill, and thus be included in the sampling frame, the restaurant must have been operating in at least two locations in the local area. We made no assumptions about the ownership of these establishments (e.g., corporate, private, franchise). From the list of 78 establishments, we randomly selected 40 restaurants to be included in the sample. After obtaining authorization to conduct the research from the Institutional Review Board, at North Carolina State University, we contacted all 40 restaurants and requested their participation in this study. Of the 40 restaurants contacted, 18 agreed to participate in our study thus yielding a 45% organizational response rate. Many of the corporate offices of these restaurants would not permit access. Our request
for participation was denied in several instances because the general manager feared it would disrupt the restaurant’s operations. Once access was granted, we administered a short questionnaire to the manager who was responsible for granting our access. This short survey was designed to ascertain information about the restaurant, including the number of minorities occupying all of the major restaurant positions (e.g., servers, cooks, bartenders, etc.). We also attempted to request the participation of all the servers who were present at the time of our visit, aiming to gather a convenience sample consisting of a minimum of ten questionnaires from servers within each of the 18 restaurants (see Appendix A for the complete questionnaire).

Among the servers who were asked to participate, virtually nobody refused to do so. Most of the surveys we administered were collected on site. Occasionally servers would indicate that they were too busy to complete the survey. In these cases, we provided them with a stamped envelope and requested that they return the completed survey in the mail at their convenience. Twenty-one surveys were administered in this fashion, but because we failed to collect any contact information, only one questionnaire was actually returned. The data collection procedures described above resulted in the completion of 200 self-administered questionnaires from servers embedded in 18 restaurants. The number of servers interviewed per restaurant ranged from 7 to 19 with an average of 11 surveys collected from each sampled restaurant. In the following section, I describe the sample data analyzed in this dissertation.
5.3 Description of Sample Data

All of the establishments who agreed to participate in this study were full-service restaurants. The U.S. Census Bureau defines full-service restaurants as establishments where servers take the order of patrons who are then expected to pay after services have been rendered. Full-service restaurants represent 39% of all food service and drinking establishments and employ nearly half (47.5%) of the industry’s workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). With regard to ownership, 50% of the sampled restaurants were corporate, 17% were franchises, and the remaining 33% were privately owned. Average dinner checks ranged from $11.59 to $50.00 with a restaurant sample mean of $19.77. According to the National Restaurant Association (2007), the average per-person check observed in this sample constitutes middle/upper levels of economic variability in the restaurant industry.

The number of patrons served per week ranged from 1,000 to 9,500 with a mean of 3,566 and the average sampled restaurant employed 67.4 workers. The sampled restaurants are clearly not representative of the universe of food service and drinking establishments in the United States. In fact, 71.2% of all establishments in this industry employ less than 20 workers (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007) whereas no establishment in this study employed fewer than 20 workers. However, the remaining 30% of establishments employ 74% all the industry’s workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). Thus, the restaurant establishments sampled for this study are representative of only the upper end of the continuum with regard to establishment size but it is within these restaurants that the majority of servers are employed. Thus, while any findings
yielded from this study should be generalized with caution, it is likely that when compared with smaller establishments, estimates of discriminatory server behaviors derived from these data will be lower. This is likely to be the case because of the institutionalized anti-discriminatory policies that exist in larger establishments. Such policies would function to impede formally at least a minimum amount of overt discriminatory behaviors.\footnote{Through the implementation of diversity initiatives Denny’s and Shoney’s, for instance, were both recognized by Fortune Magazine as being among the 50 best companies for racial minorities in 1998, just 6 years after gaining national attention for their discriminatory hiring practices (Faircloth 1998; also see Adamson 2000).}

The sample of 200 respondents consisted of individuals who were working as restaurant servers and/or bar tenders in the summer of 2004. Servers and bartenders represent 25.2% off all those employed in the food service industry (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). Nearly 61% of the respondents in this sample were female with the remaining 39% being male. The majority of sampled respondents reported to be white (86.2%). The remaining respondents self identified as black (7.2%), Native American (.5%), Hispanic (1%), Asian (2.1%), or other (3.1%). Their ages ranged from 17 to 43 with a mean age of twenty-four years. Experience in the restaurant industry varied a great deal but 81.8% of the sample respondents had worked in two or more restaurant establishments in their tenure as servers. The average sampled respondent has worked in the industry for 5.5 years and been employed with their current restaurant for roughly 1.5
years (17.4 months). The majority of the respondents had obtained some post-high school education with 22.5% having obtained a bachelors degree.

My colleague and I did not take formal measures to ensure that the study sample was representative of any particular segment of the restaurant industry but there is no evidence that would suggest that these study subjects are dramatically different from other servers working in similar types of restaurants (see Noll and Arnold 2004; Lynn 2007; Wildes 2004). However, comparing these data with national data on restaurant servers indicates that the average sample respondent in this study is less likely to be female, is more likely to be under 25 years of age, and more likely to possess a college degree (see National Restaurant Association 2008). In all of these cases, the differences are minimal, with the exception of educational attainment. Only 7% of all those working in foodservice occupations report attaining a Bachelor’s degree whereas 22.6% of the respondents in this study did so (National Restaurant Association 2008). This, however, is consistent with the enhanced level of educational attainment in the area wherein the sample was drawn (U.S. Census Bureau 2007). Given the similarities in these sample data and national data on restaurant servers, parametric statistical test are appropriate and are used throughout the analyses that follow.

5.4 Measures of Restaurant Servers’ Discriminatory Behaviors and a Note on The Validity of Self-Reports

I use four measures in this research to assess discriminatory server behaviors. Self-reported racial discrimination is ascertained in both direct and indirect ways. The
direct measure of racial discrimination is assessed with the following question: “How often does the quality of service that you provide vary according to the customers’ race?” Based on extant research demonstrating the widely held sentiment that racial minorities in general and blacks in particular tip below average racial discrimination was also indirectly assessed by asking respondents to report how often they “give customers poor service because” they “think they will not tip well?” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). For the multivariate analyses, self-reported discrimination is measured with a summated and averaged scale consisting of the aforementioned items. The summated scale could thus range from 1 to 4 with a value of 1 indicating no discriminatory behavior and a value of 4 indicating that the respondent’s service always varies according to customers’ race and perceived likelihood of being tipped. The internal reliability of the responses is acceptable ($\alpha = .74$). Observed workplace racial discrimination is ascertained with two questions asking respondents to report the frequency in which they observe “poor treatment of Hispanic customers by coworkers” and the frequency in which they observe “poor treatment of black customers by coworkers.” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4), and don’t know (5). For the multivariate analyses, observed workplace discrimination is measured with a summated and averaged scale consisting of the two items discussed above. Responses could thus range from 1 to 4 with higher values indicating more observed workplace discrimination. The internal reliability of the responses is quite high (alpha=.86).

The subjective nature of self-reports—such as those utilized in this research—has
led researchers to question the validity of such measurements. When soliciting information about sensitive topics, in particular, subjects maybe inclined to respond according to what they perceive to be socially desirable. Social desirability biases in subjects’ reports led Blank et al. (2001) to conclude that “asking white Americans whether they intend to discriminate or whether they support discriminatory policies is [alone] unlikely to provide a good indication of the prevalence of racial discrimination in American Society” (also see Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Quillian 2006, p. 303). I concur with Blank et al. (2001) in that such measurements are likely to yield only conservative estimates of reality. However, while future research will need to continue exploring this area of inquiry, there are several factors—highlighted below—that lend support to the validity of servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

First, evidence demonstrates that whites may not be as reluctant to express racist sentiments to strangers as they are sometimes assumed to be. For instance, an analysis of national attitudinal data led Sniderman and Piazza (1993, p. 12) to conclude that:

Notwithstanding the cliché that Whites will not openly endorse negative racial stereotypes for fear of appearing to be racist, large number of them—rarely less than one in every five and sometimes as many as one out of every two—agree with frankly negative characterizations of Blacks, particularly characterizations of Blacks as irresponsible and as failing to work hard and to make a genuine effort to deal with their problems on their own.

Likewise, analyzing subjects’ responses to five questions appearing on the 1994 general social survey (NORC), Feagin (2001, p. 109) determined that 59% of respondents openly expressed an anti-black view on at least one item (e.g., “White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and blacks should respect that right.”). More recently, exit polls in the 2008 Democratic primary consistently revealed
the saliency of candidates’ race for white southern voters (Fram 2008; Milloy 2008). In
the Kentucky primary, for instance, 20% of whites polled reported that the race of the
democratic candidates played a role in their voting decision and nearly 90% of these
individuals reported voting for Hillary Clinton (Fram 2008). In short, as long as a large
portion of white society continues to express agreement with anti-black stereotypes (e.g.,
blacks are lazy and criminal minded; see Feagin 2001, 2006) and utilize such stereotypes
to inform their actions (e.g., voting) we should not discard white respondents’ self-
reported bigotry—as suggested by Blank et al. (2001).

Moreover, extant research, across substantive areas, have empirically validated
self-reports of stigmatized, illicit, or otherwise undesirable behaviors. Des Jarlais (1998,
p. 265), for instance, claims that “there are now literally thousands of studies that show
relationships between self-reported risk behaviors and HIV sero-status in the theoretically
expected direction.” Validity of self-reports has also been demonstrated with regard to
smoking (Akers, Massey, Clarke, and Lauer 1983; Patrick, Cheadle, Thompson, Diehr,
2006), delinquency and crime (Thornberry and Krohn 2000), just to name a few. While
such research does not speak directly to the validity of the subjective measurements of
discrimination used in this study, at minimum, this line of research lends some credence
to the validity of respondents’ self-reports, more generally.

More specifically, there is some evidence—albeit crude and moderate—
suggesting that the measurement of discriminatory server behaviors used in this research
has both construct and criterion validity. According to Carmines and Zeller (1979, p.23)
construct validation is achieved to the degree that “a particular measure relates to other measures consistent with theoretically derived hypotheses concerning the concepts (or constructs) that are being measured.” If a construct is substantially correlated with other constructs in the theoretically predicted direction, the measurement is said to have construct validity. While the results of this research will shed additional light on the construct validity of servers’ reports, one preliminary piece of evidence indicating construct validation is observed in the bivariate relationships between subjects’ responses to a question asking them to report the race of their ideal customer and the frequency in which they report discriminating in their service delivery.

Theoretically, respondents who report a racial preference should be more inclined to discriminate in their service delivery compared with respondents who report no preference. Bivariate correlations show that reporting a racial preference is statistically significant and positively associated with respondents’ reports of giving poor service to customers they think will not tip well ($r = .23, p < .001$) and with reports of varying the quality of their service according to customers’ race ($r = .27, p < .000$). Thus, there is preliminary support for construct validity of the measurement used here to assess servers’ discriminatory behaviors.

Evidence also indicates that the measurement of server discrimination has criterion validity. Criterion validity is achieved to the degree that a variable that is being validated is related to an external criterion that has objectively determined the quantity of the concept in question (Carmines and Zeller 1979; Thornberry and Krohn 2000, p.52). Criterion validation of self-reported smoking, for example, is achieved by comparing
subjects’ self-reports with an objective biochemical criterion of smoking (salivary thiocyanate—see Akers, Massey, Clarke, and Lauer 1983). Owing to the fact that there is no “gold standard” against which self-reported discriminatory server behaviors can be judged, criterion validation cannot be determined directly.

Criterion validity, however, may be indirectly assessed via comparisons with findings generated in other studies using alternative measurements of discrimination (Blank et al. 2001; Thornberry and Krohn 2000). Thornberry and Krohn (2000, p. 52), for instance, contend, “The similarity of results from different measurement strategies heightens the probability that the various measures are tapping into the underlying concept of interest.” Blank et al. (2001, p. 164), add that “to the extent that members of disadvantaged racial groups report being discriminated against and whites admit to racist attitudes and discriminatory behaviors, these data likely represent lower-bound estimates of the actual occurrence of discrimination in society…” Self-reported victimization is one such alternative measurement of discrimination against which the servers’ self-reports analyzed in this research can be judged.

A 1997 Gallup poll found that 20% of African Americans perceived they were discriminated against while dining out in the past month. Utilizing this information in conjunction with data on total annual meals served to blacks (2.5 billion) and total number of black restaurant consumers (25 million) in the marketplace, Siegelman (1998) calculated a crude discrimination rate of 2.5 percent. This estimate thus predicts that 1 out of every 40 meals served to African Americans will result in perceived discrimination. A similar estimate can be made using information on the average number of meals served
per month in sampled restaurants (14,264) and subjects’ responses to the question ascertaining the frequency in which their service varies according to the customers’ race. From this information, a discrimination rate of 4.1 is calculated. While a rate of 4.1 is slightly higher than Siegelman’s calculation, I expected this to be the case for two reasons. First, Siegelman assumed that the 20% who reported experiencing discrimination while dining out experienced only one incident and multiple incidents per subject would increase the rate. Second, owing to the subtle nature of discrimination, many victims will not perceive that they have been discriminated against even when they have been (i.e., by their servers own admissions). Thus, the similarity in discrimination rates utilizing these data and the national rate calculated by Siegelman lends additional credence in the validity of the servers’ self-reports analyzed in this research.

Precautions were also taken to limit reporting biases during the data collection phase of this research. Procedurally, reporting biases should have been kept to a minimum by ensuring subjects’ anonymity and self-administering the questionnaires. It may also aid the accuracy of these reports that both researchers involved in data collection were white, as were the majority of sampled subjects. Nevertheless, while there are reasons to be confident in the validity of servers’ self-reported discrimination, future research will need to assess the degree to which reporting biases have infiltrated this dissertation’s findings.

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32 See footnote # 5, which is located in chapter 2, for a more detailed explanation for deriving this estimate.
5.5 Study Hypotheses

From the literature reviewed in Chapters 2-4 of this dissertation, I derive a series of empirically testable hypotheses regarding restaurant servers’ proclivity to discriminate in their service delivery according to the race of their customers. These hypotheses can be organized into the following five categories: 1) statistical discrimination hypotheses predicting self-reported server discrimination; 2) server-level workplace culture hypotheses predicting self-reported server discrimination; 3) restaurant-level workplace culture hypotheses predicting self-reported server discrimination; 4) server-level workplace culture hypotheses predicting observed discrimination; and 5) restaurant-level workplace culture hypotheses predicting observed discrimination. In the remaining portion of this section, I outline the formal hypotheses tested in this dissertation.

Statistical Discrimination Hypotheses

\( H_1 \): There will be a statistically significant positive relationship between servers’ perceptions of black patrons’ tipping practices (relative to comparable white patrons) and their self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

\( H_2 \): There will be a statistically significant positive relationship between servers’ perceptions of black patrons’ dining behaviors (relative to comparable white patrons) and their self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

Workplace Culture Hypotheses for Self-Reported Discrimination Outcome

\( H_{3a} \): There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing coworkers making racist comments and self-reported discriminatory behaviors, net of the effects of statistical discrimination variables (e.g., servers’ perceptions of blacks tipping).

\( H_{3b} \): There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing managers making racist comments and self-reported discriminatory behaviors, net of the effects of salient statistical discrimination variables (e.g., servers’ perceptions of blacks tipping).
**H_3c:** There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing the use of code words to refer to customers and self-reported discriminatory behaviors, net of the effects of statistical discrimination variables (e.g., servers’ perceptions of blacks tipping).

**H_4a:** The interaction term between observing racist coworker comments and the frequency in which respondents discuss the race of their customers with coworkers (racial saliency) will be a statistically significant predictor of self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Specifically, the effects of observing coworkers making racist comments on self-reported discrimination will be stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects’ consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion.

**H_4b:** The interaction term between observing racist manager comments and the frequency in which respondents discuss the race of their customers with coworkers (racial saliency) will be a statistically significant predictor of self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Specifically, the effects of observing managers making racist comments on self-reported discrimination will be stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects’ consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion.

**H_4c:** The interaction term between observing coded workplace language and the frequency in which respondents discuss the race of their customers with coworkers (racial saliency) will be a statistically significant predictor of self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Specifically, the effects of observing coded workplace language on self-reported discrimination will be stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects’ consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion.

**Restaurant-Level Workplace Culture Hypotheses for Self-Reported Discrimination Outcome**

**H_5a:** Net of the effects of individual reports of observing coworkers making racist comments on self-reported discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed racist coworker comments and self-reported discriminatory server behaviors.

**H_5b:** Net of the effects of individual reports of observing managers making racist comments on self-reported discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed racist manager comments and self-reported discriminatory server behaviors.

**H_5c:** Net of the effects of individual reports of observing coded workplace language on self-reported discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant,
positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed coded workplace language and self-reported discriminatory server behaviors.

H$_6$: The proportion of minority employees in the front of the house of restaurants will be statistically significant and negatively related to self-reported discrimination.

H$_{7a}$: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on self-reported server discrimination will be mediated by observed racist coworker comments.

H$_{7b}$: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on self-reported server discrimination will be mediated by observed racist manager comments.

H$_{7c}$: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on self-reported server discrimination will be mediated by observed coded workplace language.

Workplace Culture Hypotheses for Observed Discrimination Outcome

H$_8a$: There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing coworkers making racist comments and observed discriminatory server behaviors.

H$_8b$: There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing managers making racist comments and observed discriminatory server behaviors.

H$_8c$: There will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between observing the use of code words to refer to customers and observed discriminatory server behaviors.

Restaurant-Level Workplace Culture Hypotheses for Observed Discrimination Outcome

H$_9a$: Net of the effects of individual reports of observing coworkers making racist comments on observed discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed racist coworker comments and observed discriminatory server behaviors.

H$_9b$: Net of the effects of individual reports of observing managers making racist comments on observed discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed racist manager comments and observed discriminatory server behaviors.
H₉: Net of the effects of individual reports of observing coded workplace language on observed discriminatory behaviors there will be a statistically significant, positive relationship between the aggregate measure of observed coded workplace language and observed discriminatory server behaviors.

H₁₀: The proportion of minority employees in the front of the house of restaurants will be statistically significant and negatively associated with observed discriminatory server behaviors.

H₁₁a: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on observed server discrimination will be mediated by observed racist coworker comments.

H₁₁b: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on observed server discrimination will be mediated by observed racist manager comments.

H₁₁c: The effect of minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants on observed server discrimination will be mediated by observed coded workplace language.

5.6 Statistical Approach

To examine the hypotheses outlined in the previous section (as well as in the previous chapters) four separate analyses are required. The findings from these analyses are presented in chapters 6-9 of this dissertation. In this section, I outline the statistical approach employed in each of the four analyses.

Analysis 1. The first analysis is driven by four specific research questions. First, do servers discriminate in their service according to the race of their customers and if so how often does such discrimination occur? Second, how pervasive is anti-minority discourse within restaurant establishments (e.g., racist comments)? Third, are African Americans perceived by sampled respondents to be poor tippers, as other studies have shown? Finally, do servers perceive African American customers to be more difficult to
wait on relative to comparable white customers? A simple univariate analysis was conducted to address the first two research questions concerning the pervasiveness of anti-black server discourse and discriminatory behaviors. The latter two research questions are addressed with a series of paired sample t-tests wherein item means are compared for measures of respondents’ perceptions of what and black customers’ tipping and dining behaviors.

Analysis 2. As is the case with our knowledge concerning the pervasiveness of server discrimination, there have been no attempts made to discern the causal processes implicated in such behaviors. While researchers have assumed a causal relationship between servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping (and dining) behaviors and discriminate service delivery (e.g., Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b), there is currently no quantitative evidence documenting this relationship. However, the literature on statistical discrimination (reviewed in chapter 3) does provide sound theoretical reasons to expect that such a relationship does indeed exist. As such, in the second analysis of this dissertation, I utilize OLS multivariate regression analysis to model the effects of server perceptions of African American’s tipping and dining behaviors on self-reported discrimination (Hypotheses 1-2).

I begin by estimating a baseline regression model including only salient demographic control variables (age, education, sex, and race). I then add a block of variables measuring server biases that theoretically would motivate them to discriminate statistically in their service delivery. In Model 3, I test my first statistical discrimination hypothesis by adding a single item measuring subjects’ perceptions of African
Americans’ tipping practices. In Model 4, I test my second statistical discrimination hypothesis by modeling the effects of subjects’ perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors on self-reported discrimination. In Models 5 and 6, I re-estimate the effects of servers’ perceptions of blacks tipping and dining behaviors, respectively, on self-reported discrimination while controlling for subjects’ professed racial biases. These latter two models assess the robustness of any initially observed effects of subjects’ perceptions toward blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors on self-reported discrimination by partialling out the component of the effect attributable to subjects’ racial prejudices. In other words, it is possible that negativity toward blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors reflect racial bigotry as opposed to the hypothesized economic motivations underlying discriminate service.

By utilizing nested regression models, I am able to explore the additive predictive power of each of the relevant independent variables in this analysis. The parameter estimates are used to assess the explanatory importance and nature of the effects of the statistical discrimination variables. Owing to the small analytic sample in this research, the net importance of the predictor variables will be discussed if they are statistically significant at or beyond an alpha level of .10 as opposed to the conventional .05 alpha level. $R^2$ coefficients will be examined in order to assess the relative explanatory power of each set of predictors added to the models and more importantly, to determine how powerful a statistical discrimination framework is towards understanding the server discrimination.

**Analysis 3.** The evidence reviewed in Chapter 4 draws attention to cultures of
restaurants as a second key theoretical framework that may prove to be useful towards understanding the casual processes underlying servers’ proclivity to discriminate against their racial minority patrons. In fact, Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b) argue that restaurant cultures not only fail to discourage discriminatory server behaviors but also actively encourage such behaviors by normalizing and reproducing anti-minority server sentiments via racialized and stereotypical workplace discourse. Evidence, for instance, has shown that servers refer to African Americans using code words, such as Canadian, cousins, moolies, and even white people (Relin and Gaskins 1995; Rousseau 1997; see also Dirks and Rice 2004b, p.4), and such code words are said to inform the quality of service that is extended to minorities, blacks in particular. The racialized nature of restaurant cultures is hypothesized to thrive and go unchallenged, in part, because of the relative absence of racial minorities working as servers in front of the house of restaurants.

While there are clear theoretical and empirical justifications for locating discriminatory server behaviors within the cultural context of restaurants, to-date there have been no quantitative assessments of these causal inferences. We do not know, for instance, if racist workplace discourse is indeed predictive of server discrimination. We also do not know if such effects are additive or rather, if such effects are moderated by the degree that individual servers hold customers’ race as a salient categorization scheme. Nor do we know how the proportion of minorities working in the front of the house of restaurants affects servers’ behaviors. Does an increase in black servers working in front of the house positions lead to less server discrimination, and if so, is this relationship
mediated by racist workplace discourse? Finally, extant research has not ascertained how much variability in server discrimination exists across restaurants nor do we know what factors explain such variability.

Owing to the nested nature of these data (i.e., servers nested in restaurants), a two-level hierarchical modeling approach is warranted and thus employed (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992, 2002). The benefits of multi-level modeling involve the inclusion of an error structure that takes into account variation in outcomes within and between social contexts (e.g., schools, families, restaurants, etc.). Multi-level modeling is also not constrained by the assumption that individual-level effects are constant across all social contexts. In other words, the error structure of a multilevel model allows researchers to determine if the effects of individual-level covariates vary as a condition of social contexts. Moreover, multilevel modeling allows researchers to determine the amount of variance in outcome variables that results from differences between contexts as well as the amount of variance attributed to differences across individuals within contexts. Researchers are thus able to determine the relative explanatory power of both level-1 and level-2 variables in predicting individual-level outcomes.

In accordance with Bryk and Raudenbush (1992, p. 201), I employ a “step-up” model building strategy by first utilizing OLS Regression analyses to identify salient level-1 predictors of self-reported discrimination before using HLM to specify theoretically relevant level-2 parameters. Thus, I begin by estimating a series of OLS multivariate regression models only level-1 predictors are specified. In the first Model, I estimate the effects of salient predictors of self-reported server discrimination, which
were identified in the statistical discrimination analysis (Model 1). This model serves as a baseline on which subsequent OLS models are compared. In Models 2-4, I test hypotheses 3a-3c by separately adding measures of observed racist coworker discourse, racist manager discourse, and use of workplace code words. To discern the independence of these effects, in Model 5, I include all three server-level discourse measures (e.g., racist coworker comments, racist manager comments, and use of code words).

In Models 6-8, I separately assess the moderating role of racial saliency in the relationships between racist workplace discourse and self-reported discriminatory behaviors (Hypotheses 4a-4c). Next, I model the effects (Model 9) of salient interaction terms (i.e., statistically significant interaction terms observed in Models 6-8) on subjects’ reports of discriminating while controlling for the effects of observed coworker discrimination. Doing so allows me to assess the robustness of the cultural discourse effects by disentangling these effects from those attributed to observing coworkers’ discriminatory actions. Finally, in Model 10, I present a trimmed model including only variables determined to be salient predictors of self-reported discrimination in prior models (i.e., statistically significant p< .05).

I begin the HLM component of this analysis by estimating an unconditional means models where servers’ self-reported discrimination values are expressed using a pair of linked models: one representing the server-level (level-1) and another at the restaurant-level in which the servers are nested within (level-2). The server-level outcomes (level-1) can be expressed as the mean value for the restaurant in which they are employed and a random error term associated with the response for i^{th} server working
in j\textsuperscript{th} restaurant. Thus, the within restaurant model is expressed as

\[ Y_{ij} = \beta_{o_j} + r_{ij} \]

where \( Y_{ij} \) is the predicted value for server i employed at restaurant j, \( \beta_{o_j} \) is the mean for restaurant j, and \( r_{ij} \) is the random error term representing individual’s deviation from their respective restaurant averages.

At level-2 (the restaurant-level), the restaurant-level intercepts are expressed as the grand mean of all sampled restaurants and a series of deviations from that mean. Thus, the between-restaurant model is expressed as:

\[ \beta_{o_j} = \gamma_o + U_{o_j} \]

where \( \beta_{o_j} \) remains the mean from the within restaurant model, \( \gamma_o \) is the grand mean of all sampled restaurants, and \( U_{o_j} \) is the random error term, representing restaurant “j” deviation from grand-mean average.

If the unconditional means model predicting servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors reveals significant variation in mean values of discrimination across restaurants, the within-restaurant model will be expanded to take into account the effects of theoretically relevant server-level variables that were previously shown in the OLS analyses to be salient predictors of self-reported discrimination. The within-restaurant model is thus formally expressed as

\[ Y_{ij} = \beta_{o_j} + \beta_{1j}X_{1j} + \beta_{2j}X_{2j} + \beta_{3j}X_{3j} + \ldots + \beta_{pj}X_{pj} + r_{ij} \]
where \( Y_{ij} \) remains the predicted value of server \( i \) employed at restaurant \( j \) and is conditioned by the intercept of restaurant \( j \), \( \beta_{o_j} \), and the error term associated with restaurant \( j \), \( r_{ij} \). In this model \( Y_{ij} \) is also a function of the level-1 (servers) independent variables. Taking these server-level variables into account yields the following within-restaurant model and it is this model that I use as a baseline against which subsequent restaurant-level effects are assessed (Model 1):

\[
Y_{ij} = \beta_{o_j} + \beta_{1j} (\text{BLKDMIN})_{ij} + \beta_{2j} (\text{OBDIS})_{ij} + \beta_{3j} (\text{RACOWRK})_{ij} + \beta_{4j} (\text{RACMANG})_{ij} + \\
\beta_{5j} (\text{CODE})_{ij} + \beta_{6j} (\text{RACSAL})_{ij} + \beta_{7j} (\text{RACOWRK} \times \text{RACSAL})_{ij} + r_{ij}
\]

Where

\( \text{BLKDMIN}_{ij} = \) measure of respondents’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors, \\
\( \text{OBDIS}_{ij} = \) measure of observed coworker discriminatory behaviors, \\
\( \text{RACOWRK}_{ij} = \) measure of observed racist coworker comments, \\
\( \text{RACMANG}_{ij} = \) measure of observed racist manager comments, \\
\( \text{CODE}_{ij} = \) measure of observed use of coded language in the workplace, \\
\( \text{RACSAL}_{-ij} = \) measure of racial saliency for respondent, \\
\( \text{RACOWRK} \times \text{RACSAL}_{ij} = \) measure of interaction between respondents’ racial saliency and frequency of observed racist coworker comments.

In the between-restaurant random intercept models only the level-2 intercepts (\( \beta_{o_j} \)) are allowed to vary. This is the case because I am primarily interested in the amount of variation in restaurant intercepts (\( \beta_{o_j} \)) after controlling for the above individual-level
factors. While there is no theoretical reason to believe that the effects of server-level
variables should not be constant across restaurants, I do test to confirm that these effects
should be treated as fixed effects and not allowed to vary across restaurants. The random
intercepts models will determine if there is significant between-restaurant variation in
self-reported discrimination after controlling for the effects of server-level characteristics.
If findings do not show any significant variation in intercepts between-restaurants then a
hierarchical approach will not be utilized.

If, however, the random intercepts model reveal significant between-restaurant
variation, net of server-level variables, I then subsequently further develop the level-2
model by examining how variation in the aggregate measures of both racialized discourse
and proportional representation of minorities (level-2 variables) affect the proportion of
explained variance in intercepts across restaurants. In this case, the within-restaurant
models are the same as the random intercepts models presented above but now the
equation is further developed at level-2:

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 W_{1j} + \gamma_2 W_{2j} + \ldots + \gamma_Q W_Q + U_{oj} \]

where \( \beta_{oj} \) is the mean of the dependent variables in restaurant j and \( \gamma_o \) is the grand mean
of the dependent measure—self-reported discrimination—across all sampled restaurants.
Finally, the parameters \( \gamma_1 \) through \( \gamma_Q \) represent the effects of restaurant-level variables on
the intercept within the average restaurant. Using this equation, I test my multilevel
hypotheses by separately assessing the explanatory power of each aggregate measure of
racist workplace discourse\textsuperscript{33} and proportional representation of minority servers, while controlling for the above server-level effects. Specifically, in Model 2, I add a restaurant-level measurement of racist coworker comments (Hypothesis 5a) to the level-2 model, which is expressed as

$$\beta_{oij} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (RACOWRKL2)_{ij} + U_{oij}$$

$$\beta_{1ij} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2ij} = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_{3ij} = \gamma_{30}$$

$$\beta_{4ij} = \gamma_{40}$$

$$\beta_{5ij} = \gamma_{50}$$

$$\beta_{6ij} = \gamma_{60}$$

$$\beta_{7i} = \gamma_{70}$$

where

\text{RACOWRKL2} = \text{an aggregate measure of observed racist comments.}

In Model 3, I test Hypothesis 5b by including a restaurant-level measure of observed racist comments by managers in the level-2 model. Model 3 is expressed as

\text{Testing for net individual-level and organizational-level effects of racialized workplace discourse on self-reported server discrimination will allow me to delineate further the causal processes by which such discourse affects discriminatory server behaviors. If results reveal organizational-level effects of racist discourse on self-reported discrimination, net of the effects of servers’ perceptions, these effects may be either compositional or contextual in nature. Compositional effects would reflect the clustering of servers who utilize and/or observe racist discourse in some restaurants relative to others. On the other hand, net organizational-level effects of racialized discourse on server discrimination may reflect effects of an organizational context wherein discriminatory behavior is normative.}

\text{\textsuperscript{33}Testing for net individual-level and organizational-level effects of racialized workplace discourse on self-reported server discrimination will allow me to delineate further the causal processes by which such discourse affects discriminatory server behaviors. If results reveal organizational-level effects of racist discourse on self-reported discrimination, net of the effects of servers’ perceptions, these effects may be either compositional or contextual in nature. Compositional effects would reflect the clustering of servers who utilize and/or observe racist discourse in some restaurants relative to others. On the other hand, net organizational-level effects of racialized discourse on server discrimination may reflect effects of an organizational context wherein discriminatory behavior is normative.}
\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (RACMANGL2) + U_{oj} \]

\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]

\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]

\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]

\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]

\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]

\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

\[ \beta_{7j} = \gamma_{70} \]

where

RACMANGL2 = an aggregate measure of observed manager comments.

In Model 4, (Hypothesis 5c) I add a restaurant-level measurement of observed use of coded language in the workplace to the level-2 model, which is expressed as

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (CODEL2) + U_{oj} \]

\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]

\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]

\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]

\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]

\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]

\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

\[ \beta_{7j} = \gamma_{70} \]
where

\[ \text{CODEL2} = \text{an aggregate measure of observed use of code words.} \]

In Model 5, I test Hypothesis 6a by including restaurant-level measurement of minority representation to the level-2 model. This model is formally expressed as

\[ \beta_{o_j} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (\text{MINREP}_j) + U_{o_j} \]

\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]

\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]

\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]

\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]

\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]

\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

\[ \beta_{7j} = \gamma_{70} \]

where

\[ \text{MINREP} = \text{a proportional measurement of racial minorities servers within restaurants.} \]

If the results yield support for the posited negative restaurant-level effect of minority representation on the intercept of servers’ self-reported discrimination (i.e., average levels of discrimination) (Hypothesis 6), I will subsequently explore whether this effect is mediated by measures of racialized workplace discourse (Hypothesis 7a-7c).

**Analysis 4.** Following the same procedures outlined above (Analysis 3), I further
explore the effects of racialized workplace discourse, although in this analysis I predict
discriminatory server behaviors that respondents report observing in their workplaces. In
accordance with analysis 3, I begin by utilizing OLS multivariate regression analysis to
model the effects of demographic control variables (age, education, sex, and race) on
observed discrimination (Model 1). In Models 2-4, I test hypotheses 8a-8c by separately
adding individual-level measures of observed racist coworker discourse, racist manager
discourse, and use of workplace code words, respectively. To discern the degree to
which my measures of racist workplace discourse exert independent effects on observed
discrimination, in Model 5, I include all three discourse measures (e.g., racist coworker
comments, racist manager comments, and use of code words). Finally, to disentangle the
effects of racist discourse on observed discrimination from those attributed to
respondents’ own discriminatory actions, I add a measure of self-reported discrimination
to Model 6.

Similar to the multilevel modeling of self-reported discrimination described
above, I also assess the following research questions concerning between-restaurant
differences in the levels of observed server discrimination: How much variability in
observed server discrimination is there across restaurants after controlling for server-level
characteristics? Is this variability attributed to differences in the representation of
minority servers across restaurants? Is this variability attributed to mean differences in
racist workplace discourse across restaurants?

To determine the amount of explainable level-2 variation in observed
discrimination, I begin by estimating an unconditional means model where servers’
reported observed discrimination values are expressed with a composite model including both server-level (level-1) and restaurant-level equations. Next, I establish a baseline model by expanding the level-1 equation to include measures of respondent’s race, gender, self-reported discriminatory behaviors, and observed racist discourse (i.e., racist coworker/manager comments and use of code words). This within restaurant model can be expressed as

\[ Y_{ij} = \beta_{0i} + \beta_{1j}(\text{FEMALE})_{ij} + \beta_{2j}(\text{WHITE})_{ij} + \beta_{3j}(\text{SELREPORT})_{ij} + \beta_{4j}(\text{RACOWRK})_{ij} + \beta_{5j}(\text{RACMANG})_{ij} + \beta_{6j}(\text{CODE})_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \]

Where

\( \text{FEMALE}_{ij} \) = measure of respondents’ gender; female=1,

\( \text{WHITE}_{ij} \) = measure of respondents’ race; white =1,

\( \text{SELREPORT}_{ij} \) = measure of respondents’ self-reported discrimination,

\( \text{RACOWRK}_{ij} \) = measure of observed racist coworker comments,

\( \text{RACMANG}_{ij} \) = measure of observed racist manager comments,

\( \text{CODE}_{ij} \) = measure of observed use of coded language in the workplace,

The above random-intercepts model will determine if there is significant between-restaurant variation in observed discrimination, after controlling for the effects of server-level characteristics. If findings reveal significant unexplained level-2 variation, net of server-level effects, I will further develop the level-2 sub-model by adding restaurant-level variables to the equation. In Models 2-4, I test hypotheses 9_a-9_c by separately
assessing the explanatory power of each restaurant-level measure of racist workplace discourse. Specifically, in Model 2, I add a restaurant-level measure of racist coworker comments (Hypothesis 9a) to the level-2 model, which is expressed as

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (RACOWRKL2) + U_{oj} \]

\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]
\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]
\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]
\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]
\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]
\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

where

\[ RACOWRKL2 = \text{an aggregate measure of observed racist coworker comments.} \]

In Model 3, I test Hypothesis 9b by including a restaurant-level measure of observed racist comments by managers to the level-2 model. Model 3 is expressed as

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (RACMANGL2) + U_{oj} \]

\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]
\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]
\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]
\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]
\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]
\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

where

\( \text{RACMANGL2} = \) an aggregate measure of observed manager comments.

In Model 4, (Hypothesis 9c) I add a restaurant-level measure of observed use of coded language in the workplace to the level-2 model, which is expressed as

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (\text{CODEL2})_j + U_{oj} \]
\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]
\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]
\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]
\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]
\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]
\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

where

\( \text{CODEL2} = \) an aggregate measure of observed use of code words.

In Model 5, I test Hypothesis 10 by including restaurant-level measurement of minority representation to the level-2 model. This model is formally expressed as

\[ \beta_{oj} = \gamma_o + \gamma_1 (\text{MINREP})_j + U_{oj} \]
\[ \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \]
\[ \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \]
\[ \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} \]
\[ \beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40} \]
\[ \beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} \]
\[ \beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60} \]

where

\[ \text{MINREP} \] = a proportional measurement of racial minorities servers within restaurants.

If the results yield support for the posited negative restaurant-level effect of minority representation on restaurant intercepts of servers’ reported observed discrimination (Hypothesis 6), I will subsequently explore whether this effect is mediated by measures of racialized workplace discourse (Hypothesis 11a-11c).

### 5.7 Chapter Summary

In response to the lack of attention that has been given to the study of everyday racial discrimination, in the context consumer transactions (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2006; Siegelman 1998, p. 70; Gabbidon 2003; Gabbidon and Higgins 2007; Yinger 1998), this research relies on OLS regression and hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to analyze sample data on the racial climate of full service restaurants. Specifically, survey responses from 200 restaurant servers, embedded in 18 different restaurants, are analyzed in this research. The nested nature of these data permit for an assessment of a series of hypothesized relationships between both server-level and organizational-level variables.
and restaurant servers’ discriminatory behaviors.

The analytical approach I take in this research extends existing research on everyday forms of discrimination in four ways. First, I am able to offer insights into the pervasiveness of anti-black server sentiments and behaviors. My approach also permits for an assessment of a statistical discrimination explanation for racial disparities in the quality of service given to restaurant patrons. Within this framework, server discrimination is posited to result from financial concerns that emerge out of servers’ negative perceptions towards blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors (see Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Margalioth 2006, p13). Third, the approach that I take in this research extends Dirks and Rice’s (2004a, 2004b) research into the culture of restaurants by assessing the power of racist workplace discourse to predict discriminatory server behaviors. Finally, the research strategy outlined in this chapter allows me to determine not only if differences exist in server discrimination across restaurants but also allows me to assess whether such differences are manifestations of organizational-level characteristics (e.g., variation in average levels of racist discourse and minority representation).

In Chapters 6-9, of this dissertation, I present the results from analyses 1-4, respectively. In each of the analysis chapters, I provide detailed information about the measurement of all the independent variables used in the analysis, describe the analytic samples, present results, discuss the findings along with any theoretical and/or applied implications, and conclude each chapter by identifying limitations and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER 6

DETERMINING THE PERVERSIVENESS OF DISCRIMINATORY SERVER BEHAVIORS AND ANTI-BLACK SENTIMENTS

6.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 2, we know very little about the commonness of discriminatory server behaviors and anti-minority sentiments within restaurant establishments. Moreover, while research has found that servers generally perceive African American customers to be “inadequate” tippers (see Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004), no studies to date have explored servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors other than tipping. There is, however, anecdotal evidence suggesting that black patrons, in addition to being perceived to be poor tippers, are also thought to be demanding and generally more difficult to wait on relative to their white counterparts (e.g., Dirks and Rice 2004). To assess the pervasiveness of anti-black sentiments and behaviors among restaurant servers, I analyze data derived from a local survey of restaurant servers (N=200). In this chapter, I present univariate statistics, which provide preliminary—and largely exploratory—insights into the racial climate of our nation’s restaurants. In a series of paired sample T-tests, I also explore mean differences in servers’ perceptions of blacks’ and whites’ tipping practices. Finally, for the first time servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors, relative to comparable white tables, is assessed.

In the following section, I describe the measurement of all the variables analyzed in this chapter. In section 5.3, I present the univariate results for variables measuring server
discrimination and anti-minority discourse as well as the paired T-test results comparing perceptions of blacks’ and whites’ tipping and dining behaviors, and in section 5.4, I conclude with a chapter summary and a brief discussion of these results.

6.2 Measurement of Variables

Self-Reported Server Discrimination. The pervasiveness of self-reported racial discrimination is assessed with both direct and indirect proxies. I directly measure the pervasiveness of server discrimination by asking subjects to respond to the following question: “How often does the quality of service that you provide vary according to the customers’ race?” Based on extant research demonstrating the widely held sentiment that racial minorities in general and blacks in particular tip below average, racial discrimination is also indirectly assessed by asking respondents to report how often they “give customers poor service because” they “think they will not tip well?” Response categories for both items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4).

Observed Server Discrimination. I assess the prevalence of observed racial discrimination with four questions. Two questions asked respondents to report the frequency in which they observe “poor treatment of black/Hispanic customers by coworkers.” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Two additional questions assessing respondents’ perceptions of discriminatory coworker behaviors were used as proxies of racial workplace discrimination:34 “How often do you think your coworkers give customers poor service because they think they will not tip well?” and “How

34 The accuracy of subjects’ responses to each of these questions is largely contingent on their
often do you think your coworkers give customers poorer service than other customers based on the customers’ race?” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), always (4), and don’t know (5).

**Workplace Culture Variables.** To partially assess the extent to which a “culture of white servers” exists within the restaurant industry I analyze four items. These include the frequency in which respondents observe racist comments made about customers by co-workers/managers; the frequency in which “code” words/language is used to refer to customers; and the frequency in which subjects discuss the race of their customers with coworkers. Response categories for all these cultural variables are never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4).

**Perceptions of African Americans’ Tipping and Dining Behavior.** Perceptions of patrons’ tipping practices is measured by way of presenting the respondents with a variety of ‘scenarios’ wherein they were asked to report the tipping practices of various tables. Specifically, respondents were asked to consider a variety of scenarios and, in terms of tipping, choose whether you think these customers tend to be very bad, below average, average, above average, or very good tippers. Respondents were instructed to assume that an average tip is 15% of the bill total. Within the scenarios presented to the respondents, four matched pairs were identified that only varied according to the racial proclivity to engage in discussions about customers’ race with their coworkers. Without such discussions subjects would have limited information concerning the motivations and behaviors of their coworkers. Alternatively, in some cases, subjects maybe reporting on the behaviors of their coworkers according to information ascertained from nonverbal cues (e.g., rolling eyes or long sighs when black patrons are seated in their section).
makeup of the table. For instance, servers were asked to separately rate the tipping practices of a table with four black women and two small children and a table with four white women and two small children. Respondents made similar ratings with regard to tables comprised of a family of eight with adult children, two heterosexual couples in their thirties, and three elderly women. In each case, the only factor allowed to vary was the race of the patrons in the question. Response categories for all 8 questions were very bad (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and very good (5).

Respondents’ perceptions of patrons’ dining behaviors according to patrons’ race is measured in a similar fashion. Before completing the “behaviors” matrix, the servers were asked two open ended questions designed to ascertain behavioral characteristics of “good” and “bad” customers. Behaviors of “good customers” derived from their responses include “polite”, “patient”, “nice”, “communicative”, “makes eye contact”, “good tipper”, etc. Some servers listed the absence of “bad” behaviors as qualities of a “good” customer, such as “not demanding” or “not rude”. Alternatively, “bad customers” were described as “rude”, “demanding”, “picky”, “complain a lot”, “belittling”, “cheap/bad tippers”, “messy”, and “runs you”. Some servers listed the absence of “good” behaviors as qualities of a “bad” customer, such as “doesn’t make eye contact” or “doesn’t acknowledge my presence”. With these descriptions in mind, servers were then asked to complete the matrix resembling the one for the tipping practices, but this time, Measuring servers’ perceptions in this way is an improvement over existing studies (see Noll and Arnold 2004) because other customer characteristics that servers perceive to affect tipping are held constant thus isolating subjects’ perceptions of black/white tipping differences. In the elderly scenarios three black women are being compared with a similar table of four white women. Confirmatory factor analysis indicates that both variables load high on the same underlying factor and as such the comparison, although not perfect, is acceptable.
rating the tables’ dining behavior. Response categories for all 8 questions were very bad (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and very good (5).

6.3 Univariate Results for Items Measuring Discrimination, Anti-Minority Discourse, and Anti-Black Perceptions

Table 6.1 provides descriptive statistics for all of the discrimination and anti-minority discourse variables of interest in this study. With regard to self-reported discriminatory treatment of racial minority restaurant guests, findings show that 31.8% (n=62) of the sample respondents reported that the service they provide sometimes varies according to the customers’ race and an additional 6.7% reported that the quality of their service is often or always contingent on the race of their customers. Examining survey findings derived from my indirect measure of self-reported discrimination shows that slightly over forty-percent (42.1%, n=82) of the respondents admit to sometimes providing poor service to customers whom they think will not tip well and an additional 7.1% admitted to do so often or always.

Pervasiveness of Observed Discrimination. When questioned about the treatment of African American guests, 38.7% of the respondents reported to sometimes observe coworkers treat their black customers poorly and an additional 14.1% reported to observe such behavior often or always. Thus, over half (52.8%) of the sample respondents indicated that they observe black guests being treated poorly, at least sometimes, by their coworkers.

A similar picture emerges with regard to observed treatment of Hispanic guests. Of the 188 respondents who provided an answer to this question, nearly half (44.7%) reported to observe poor treatment of Hispanic guests sometimes or often. A similar picture emerges with regard to respondents’ answers concerning the frequency in which they observe coworkers
giving poor service based on the customer’s race. Of the 195 respondents who provided an answer to this question, 54.4% reported that they *sometimes* observe their coworkers’ providing inferior service to racial minorities and an additional 11.2% believe that such behavior occurs *often* or *always*. Only 35 (17.9%) respondents reported to *never* observe such differential treatment in their workplace and 16.4% (n=32) reported that they did not know how often their coworkers discriminate in their service delivery. Similarly, the majority of the respondents (59.7%, n=117) reported that they believe their coworkers *sometimes* give customers poor service because they think they will not leave an adequate tip and an additional 18.9% believe that such behavior occurs *often* or *always*. Only 10.7% (n=21) reportedly think that their coworkers never base their service on predicted tips while an additional 10.7% reported to not know.

*Anti-minority culture.* Of the 191 respondents who provided an answer to the question about the frequency in which they hear their co-workers make racist comments, 17.3% reported to *often* or *always* hear such comments, while an additional 46.1% reported to hear such comments at least *sometimes*. Only slightly over a third (36.6%) of the respondents reported to *never* hear their co-workers make racist comments. The overwhelming majority of respondents, however, reported to *never* observe their managers making such comments (n=142, 74%). A substantial minority (22.4%) of sample respondents did, however, report observing their managers make such comments at least *sometimes* and 3.6% reported that their managers *often* or *always* make such comments.

Consistent with Dirks and Rice’s (2004a) findings, the use of code words to discuss customers is quite common among restaurant servers. Of the 194 servers who responded to this question 38.1% reported *sometimes* observing customers being referred to with coded
language while an additional 31.5% reported observing the use of such code words \textit{often} or \textit{always}. Only 30.4% of the sample respondents reported to \textit{never} observe the use of code words to refer to customers. These code words are likely to be used when servers discuss the race of their customers with one another, which 59\% (n=115) of the sample respondents reported to do at least sometimes. An additional 16.4\% of the servers reported to \textit{often} or \textit{always} engage in such discussions with their coworkers. Only a quarter (24.6\%) of the sample respondents reported to \textit{never} discuss the race of their customers with coworkers.

\textit{Perceived Racial Differences in Tipping and Dining Behavior.} Table 6.2 provides the results of paired sample T-tests comparing respondents’ perceptions of tipping according to the racial makeup of their tables. Consistent with previous research (Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004) these data also indicate that servers perceive white tables to be comparatively better tippers than black tables. As Table 6.2 indicates the average sampled respondent reported white tables to be better tippers than comparable black tables and with no exceptions these differences are statistically significant (p<.05). In fact, when the perceived tipping practices of a black tables are considered by respondents the mean across all comparisons fails to reach a value of 3 (=average) and in two cases item means are below 2 (=below average). Thus, black tables, in every case, are considered by the average respondent to be below average in their tipping practices relative to comparable white tables\textsuperscript{37}. The largest difference is observed in the scenarios

\textsuperscript{37} Paired sample T-test were also conducted after imputing grand means for missing data on all sixteen variables assessing perceived racial tipping and behavioral differences. Substantive interpretations and inferences drawn from the T-tests were unaltered in the mean substitution analyses. With one exception the same conclusions are also reached by comparing the median values across both white and black scenarios. In the case of elderly women, the median value is 2
involving a family of eight with adult children. Comparing scenarios representing a black family of eight (2.65) with a white table of eight (3.59) reveals a mean difference of 1.3.

As seen in Table 6.3, a similar pattern emerges with regard to subjects’ perceived racial differences in dining behaviors. On average respondents reported white tables to be easier to wait on than comparable black tables and in all of these comparisons the differences are statistically significant (p<.05). In no case does the item mean for a black tables reach a value of 3 (=average) whereas the mean value for comparable white tables is 3 or greater in all but one scenario (women with 2 children). Once again the most dramatic difference is observed in the matched paired scenarios involving a family of eight with adult children. The black family is perceived to be below average (2.65), in terms of dining behavior, whereas the white family is (on average) perceived to be above average (i.e., less difficult to wait on) (3.59).

6.4 Summary and Discussion

In this chapter, I have utilized data derived from a local survey of restaurant servers to provide preliminary insights into the racial climate of restaurants. Specifically, I have quantitatively documented the pervasiveness of anti-minority server discourse and server initiated discriminatory behaviors. I have also replicated previous studies exploring servers’ perceptions of racial tipping differences (e.g. Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004) and have extended this line of inquiry by assessing servers’ perceptions of racial differences (=below average) for tipping quality and 3 (=average) for dining behaviors, regardless of race. These finding suggest that elderly women, both black and white, are perceived by servers to be below average tippers and average in their dining behaviors.
in dining behaviors. Findings from this analysis, taken as a whole, reveal a moderate amount of anti-black server discourse and perceptions, which are accompanied by self-reported and observed discriminatory behaviors.

Before discussing this analysis findings in more detail, there are several limitations that readers should note. First, as with all of the analyses in this research, I rely on a small sample of servers embedded in a smaller sample of restaurants that were not selected from the national population of all restaurants and thus, any type of broad generalizations should be made with caution. A second limitation is that I include several indirect measures of racial discrimination (e.g., How often do you give customers poor service because you think they will not tip well?), which are likely to pick up on other customers perceived to be below average tippers (e.g., the elderly) rather than exclusively racial minorities. Extant literature has, however, demonstrated that black customers, in particular, are a category of customers who are perceived by most servers to tip below average.

Third, and not unlike the limitations associated with victims’ reports, perpetrators’ self-reports are also likely to yield conservative estimates of the true pervasiveness of anti-black discourse and discriminatory behaviors—arguably only the tip of the iceberg. When soliciting information about sensitive topics (as discrimination is) subjects may be inclined to respond according to what they perceive to be socially desirable (Blank et al. 2001; also see Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000). There are surely respondents who reportedly never discriminate but in reality do. The use of words such as “racist” in the survey instrument also likely contributed to social desirability biases (see Koss 1996 for a discussion of this problem with regard measuring sexual assault using the term “rape”). In some cases, however, subjects’ may project their own attitudes and behaviors into their
responses to questions about the attitudes and behaviors of their coworkers (observed discrimination) (see Fisher and Tellis 1998). It is thus likely that some observed discrimination is in reality self-reported discrimination that respondents are projecting onto their coworkers.\footnote{While this research is unable to assess directly respondents’ proclivity to project their own racial sentiments into their responses to questions about their coworkers, there are 21 subjects who report to observe at least some discriminatory behaviors but allegedly never engage in such behaviors themselves. Thus, some of these subjects may be reporting on their own behaviors when asked about the behaviors of their coworkers. Future research should systematically explore the extent to which reports of other servers’ behaviors reflect information about the respondents’ own behaviors.} Owing to this possibility, readers should interpret findings for self-reported and observed server discrimination together. Doing so may provide more holistic understanding of the pervasiveness of anti-minority server behaviors.

Asking people to report on others’ behavior can also lead to biased results. Subjects’ political and racial ideology, for instance, may affect their interpretation of what constitutes “poor treatment” or “racist comments.” Similarly, the utilization of variable attributes such as “sometimes,” “often,” and “always” prohibit me from making specific quantitative estimates concerning the pervasiveness of anti-minority discourse and discriminatory server behaviors. Finally, while these results shed some preliminary light on the pervasiveness of anti-black server behaviors the character of such behaviors cannot be determined with these data. With some confidence, however, it can be assumed that the discriminatory behaviors reported by this study’s subjects constitute subtle expressions of differential service across racial groups—although more overt forms of server discrimination most certainly continue to occur in our nation’s restaurants.

These limitations aside, findings show that racialized and stereotypical workplace discourse in restaurants is quite common. In fact, only 10.5% (n=20) of the sample
respondents reported to never engage in or observe any of the racialized discursive practices explored in this analysis (e.g., racist coworker comments, racist manager comments, use of code words, and discussing customers’ race). These findings thus lend strong support for Dirks and Rice’s qualitative documentation of a culture of white servers that is characterized, in part, by strong anti-black sentiments manifested in the stereotyping and racist discourse that servers use to describe their racial minority guests (Dirks and Rice 2004). I have also provided quantitative evidence that both self-reported and observed discriminatory behaviors among restaurant servers is moderately common. Nearly 57% of the sample respondents self-reported to at least sometimes treat customers differently according to their race and/or perceived likelihood of receiving a poor tip. Likewise, 56.1% (n=105) reported to at least sometimes observe their coworkers treating black and/or Hispanic customers poorly.

Using information on the average number of meals served per month in sampled restaurants (14,264) along with information ascertained from the question concerning the frequency in which respondents’ service varies according to their customers’ race, a discrimination rate of 4.1 is observed in these data. Based on this conservative

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39 This calculation parallels the logic underlying Siegelman’s (1998) estimated national discrimination rate of 2.5. Sample data indicate that 61.5% of respondents reported to never vary their service according to customers’ race. Comparable figures for sometimes, often, and always are 31.8%, 4.6%, and 2.1%, respectively. Conservatively assuming that subjects who report to ‘some times’ discriminate in their service delivery do so only once a month and those who report doing so ‘often’ do so 50% of the time, the proportion of nondiscriminatory meals to the average number of meals served in sampled restaurants per month is expressed as \[ \frac{(a \times x) + (b \times (x - 1)) + (c \times (x - 7132)) + (d \times (x - x))}{x} = \text{nondiscriminatory meals} \], where \( a = \% \text{ never}, b = \% \text{ sometimes}, c = \% \text{ often}, D = \% \text{ always}, \) and \( x = \text{average number of meals served per month per restaurant}. \) Solving the equation indicates that 95.9% of all meals served per month per restaurant result in nondiscriminatory service—a discrimination rate of 4.1 percent. While a rate of 4.1 is slightly higher than Siegelman’s calculation, I expected this to be the case for several reasons. First, Siegelman’s estimates discriminatory incidents involving black patrons. My estimate, on the other hand, is derived from a question that simply asks respondents to report how often their
estimate, roughly 2 meals out of every 50 meals served in the average sampled restaurant results in an incident of discriminatory service from the admissions of servers themselves.

Despite the arguable high rate of discrimination observed in these data, a reader of an early presentation of these descriptive findings pointed out that the majority of respondents reported to never or only sometimes engage in discriminatory behaviors. This reader thus concluded that the results do not “make a strong case for a ‘disturbing’ level of discrimination in our nation’s restaurants.” I disagree with this reader’s assessment on multiple fronts. First, as I argued earlier, any estimate of racial discrimination is likely to be conservative at best and estimates derived from these data are not immune to underreporting biases. Second, the more anyone African American visits restaurants the greater odds of that service varies according to race. Second, Siegelman assumed that the 20% who reported experiencing discrimination while dining out experienced only one incident and multiple incidents per subject would increase the rate. The estimate derived from these data is not constrained by this assumption. Finally, owing to the subtle nature of discrimination it is often times difficult for victims to detect such treatment even when it occurs. In this sense, perpetrators of discrimination are in a much better position to report on the subtle ways in which they provide differential service according to customer characteristics. Thus, while these estimates are also most certainly conservative, they should nevertheless be closer to reality than those estimates derived from victims’ reports (e.g., Siegelman 1998). With these points in mind the similarity in the observed discrimination rate utilizing these data and the national rate calculated by Siegelman (2.5) lends additional confidence in the validity of servers’ self-reported behaviors.

This reviewer’s statement parallels the recommendations made by a 1983 Maryland task force set up to study inequity in public school funding. The task force concluded that complete equality was too costly and as such the goal should be 75% equality. In other words, schools in poor districts should receive no less than 75% of what the average school in Maryland receives. Assessing this recommendation Kozol (1991, p. 434) points out that “while the differences are justified by telling us that equity must always be ‘approximate’ and cannot possibility be perfect…[however,] the imperfection falls in almost every case to the advantage of the privileged.” Over twenty years have passed since the Maryland task force made their suggestions and yet, as my reader makes clear, there remains a tendency to accept “some” racial inequality in our society. Moreover, there apparently is still a tendency to accept and thereby ensure that inequality continues benefiting whites. This acceptance is made clear by a subsequent criticism made by the same reader: “The question simply asks does quality vary according to race. Isn’t it possible that servers provide a baseline level of quality to all patrons, but then increase service for white patrons?”
individual experiencing discrimination over any given duration of time. As such, black consumers who dine out frequently are almost guaranteed to experience discrimination at some point over the course of a month not to mention over the course of a year.

Third, when considering the magnitude of the restaurant industry even a phenomenon that is considered to be relatively rare (e.g., servers discriminating “sometimes”) occurs quite frequently in an absolute sense. There are, for example, roughly 171,168 meals served per year in the average restaurant that participated in this study. If we conservatively accept that 4.1% of these meals result in discrimination there will have been roughly 7,018 annual incidents of discriminatory service delivery per sampled restaurant. A sizable minority of customers are clearly receiving service in restaurant establishments that is informed by their race.

These findings also support extant evidence concerning the negative server perceptions of not only the tipping practices of black patrons but also their dining behaviors (see Dirks and Rice 2004). In fact, there were no cases in the tipping or the behavioral scenarios wherein the mean for a black table exceeded that of a comparable white table. Accordingly, these finding suggest that negative perceptions toward African Americans’ are not rare and not limited to issues surrounding tipping but extend to blacks’ dining etiquette (e.g., “demanding,” “picky,” “complain a lot” etc.) and their character (e.g., “rude,” “mean,” “[im]polite,” etc.). While there is evidence demonstrating that African Americans do tend to tip statistically less than whites (e.g., see Noll and Arnold 2004), thus supporting

41 If there are roughly 2.5 billion meals served to blacks each year and if we accept Siegelman’s (1998) national estimate that 2.5 percent of these meals resulted in discrimination there will have been roughly 60 million annual incidents of discrimination in the restaurant industry alone.
servers’ perceptions, the sentiment that they are also more difficult to wait on has not been substantiated nor even directly assessed before now.

Interferences about the validity of these perceptions, however, can be drawn from studies that have examined the relationships between complaint behaviors and consumers’ demographic characteristics. If black patrons were indeed more difficult to wait on compared with white customers, such difficulties should be evidenced in higher rates of complaints among black patrons. Indeed, complaining was cited by numerous respondents as being a trait of an undesirable table. The limited numbers of studies that have explored the relationship between race and propensity to complain, however, have not revealed any racial differences (Shuptrine and Wenglorz 1980; see Singh 1990 for a review of the literature). To the contrary, studies have shown restaurant patrons’ education and income to be positively associated with complaint behaviors and racial minorities; blacks in particular, are disadvantaged on both of these demographic variables (Sujithamrak and Lam 2005). This evidence suggest that blacks should exhibit less complaining behaviors and as such should be perceived to be less difficult, at least on this one dimension of potential difficulties that patrons may pose. If this interpretation is accurate, servers’ perceptions about the dining behaviors of their black guests appear to be driven purely by racist stereotypes portraying African Americans as inferior and not worthy of equal service⁴².

⁴² It is important to keep in mind that even if blacks are empirically shown to complain more than comparable whites this finding, in part, is likely to be explained by the inferior service that, as demonstrated in these data, blacks at least sometimes receive. The same logic holds for the effects of racial tipping disparities. Because tips are, in part, contingent on service quality (Bodvarsson and Gibson 1992, 1994, 1997, 1999; Harris 1995; Lynn and Grassman 1990; Lynn and
Stereotypes concerning blacks’ dining behaviors are not unlike those conjuring up images of uncivilized and hedonistic African Americans that have historically been used by whites to rationalize and sustain oppression. Feagin (2006, p. 275), for instance, explains that “for centuries, this white frame has operated to hide or disguise the injustice of oppression by insisting, among other things, that oppressed groups are in various ways ‘not like us,’ but instead are culturally, socially, and racially inferior.” In this way, servers may potentially rationalize giving inferior service to blacks because, unlike themselves, blacks are uncivilized, animalistic, or childlike (see Feagin 2006) in their dining behavior and as such inferior service is warranted. While future research will need to explore objectively the validity of such perceptions, the perceptions themselves are likely to influence the quality of service that servers extend to their black guests.

In sum, these results taken together provide quantitative evidence of anti-black perceptions and racialized workplace discourse among restaurant servers. Servers’ anti-black sentiments are accompanied by both self-reported and observed discriminatory behaviors. While these finding provide some preliminary insights into the pervasiveness of anti-black sentiments and discriminatory server behaviors, a causal explanation remains needed. As outlined in Chapter 3, there are sound theoretical reasons to expect servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors to be predictive of discriminatory service delivery. Michael Lynn, the foremost expert on tipping related issues, for instance, asserts that “many

Graves 1996) , if servers provide inferior service to blacks it should not be surprising that blacks tip them less (see Dirks and Rice 2004; Brewster and Mallinson 2009).
waiters and waitresses believe that African-Americans tip less [and are more difficult to wait on] than Caucasians….As a result of that belief, many table servers dislike waiting on black customers, deliver inferior service to black guests on whom they must wait, and refuse to work in restaurants with a predominantly black clientele (2004a, p. 12).”

While the relationship between servers’ perceptions of African Americans tipping and dining behaviors and the quality of service they provide to these guests has a theoretical underpinning and intuitive appeal, research to-date has not quantitatively explored these relationships. Likewise, Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b) argue that anti-black server discourse becomes manifested in the quality of service provided to black patrons. To date, however, there have been no studies conducted assessing this posited causal relationship. To address these gaps in the literature, in Chapters 6 and 7, I utilize ordinary least squares regression analysis to model the effects of servers’ anti-black perceptions and observed anti-minority discourse on their self-reported discriminatory behaviors.
CHAPTER 7
ASSESSING SEVERS’ MOTIVATIONS TO STATISTICALLY DISCRIMINATE IN THEIR SERVICE DELIVERY

7.1 Introduction

As described in Chapter 3, there are theoretical grounds for expecting servers’ to discriminate statistically in their service delivery. Extant research has shown statistical discrimination to be an important explanatory framework towards understanding discriminatory behaviors among some service providers (Ayres 1991; Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya’s 2005). However, research to-date has not empirically examined the theory’s utility towards understanding discriminatory server behaviors. The lack of empirical evidence, however, has not prevented scholars from assuming that servers do indeed discriminate in their service delivery as a result of economic incentives that emerge out of perceived tipping (and behavioral) differences across social groups.

Margalioth (2006, p13), for instance, recently presented an argument against the institution of tipping alleging that, “Waiters are likely to exert less effort when providing services to minority customers, assuming they will not be paid for their efforts because minority customers are less likely to tip” (also see Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Dirks and Rice 2004—just to name a few examples asserting the intuitive but quantitatively unsubstantiated relationship between perceived tipping differences and discriminatory server behaviors). Likewise, while anecdotal
evidence (along with more concrete evidence presented in Chapter 5) indicates that black patrons, in addition to being perceived to be poor tippers, are also thought to be demanding and generally more difficult to wait on relative to their white counterparts (e.g., Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b), there have been no studies assessing the consequences of these perceptions on servers’ behaviors. Literature on statistical discrimination, however, suggests that servers maybe motivated to discriminate against consumers perceived to constitute a cost in their efforts to increase profits (e.g., more effort for same pay).

To address these gaps, I analyze survey responses from 196 restaurant servers who in 2004 were working in one of 18 local restaurants that participated in this study (see chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of the study design and sampling procedures). Sample respondents were asked a series of questions concerning the racial climate of the restaurants in which they were employed. Utilizing OLS regression analysis, in this chapter I empirically test the hypothesized relationships between self-reported discrimination and subjects’ perceptions African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors. As outlined in Chapter 3, servers are expected to utilize race-based inferences concerning the predicted revenue garnered in the form of tips, relative to the cost associated with providing service, to inform the quality of service provided to African American guests, in particular. Specifically, servers who perceive blacks’ tipping to be inferior and/or blacks’ to require more of their effort are posited to perceive their relationships with these guests as inequitable. In response to such feelings of inequity, servers are predicted to discriminate statistically in their service delivery.
If a statistical discrimination framework is to be useful towards understanding race-based discriminatory restaurant service, it must be demonstrated that, in addition to race, servers take into account other table characteristics associated with profitability. As such, this analyses also considers the effects of server inferences concerning the predicted profitability associated with customers’ class, sex, age, and presence of children—all factors that have otherwise been shown to be associated servers’ perceptions of tipping quality—on discriminatory service delivery. Likewise, it is possible that any observed effects of servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors on their reports of discriminating maybe a product of subjects’ racial prejudices rather than factors contributing to feelings of inequity—as I argued in Chapter 3. To consider this possibility this analysis explores the effects of servers’ perceptions while controlling for their racial biases.

In the following section, I describe the measurement of all the variables analyzed in this chapter. In section 7.3, I present summary statistics for the analytic sample utilized in this analysis. In section 7.4, I present both bivariate and multivariate results. Finally, in section 7.5, I discuss this analysis findings in more detail, outline implications of these findings for restaurant officials, and conclude by discussing the limitations of my approach along with suggested directions for future research.

7.2 Measurement of Variables

Dependent Variable. Self-reported racial discrimination is measured with a summated scale consisting of both a direct and an indirect item. The direct measure of
self-reported racial discrimination consists of a question asking subjects to report the frequency in which the quality of their service varies according to customers’ race (see Appendix A for exact question wording). Based on extant research demonstrating the widely held sentiment that racial minorities in general and blacks in particular tip below average, racial discrimination is also indirectly assessed by asking respondents to report how often they “give customers poor service because” they “think they will not tip well?” Response categories for both items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Subjects’ responses to the aforementioned items were summed and averaged to create a scale ranging from 1 to 4 with a value of 1 indicating no discriminatory behavior and a value of 4 indicating that the respondent’s service always varies according to customers’ race and perceived likelihood of being tipped fairly. The internal reliability of the self-reported discrimination measure is acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).\(^{43}\)

**Statistical Discrimination Variables.** I assess the effects of both revenue and cost-based statistical discrimination inferences with two summated scales constructed from a series of variables ascertaining subjects’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors. Beginning with the effects of revenue-based inferences, respondents were asked to consider five scenarios and, in terms of tipping, choose

\(^{43}\)Five cases were missing data on both items used to create the scale measuring self-reported discrimination. For these cases, values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Specifically, values for missing cases were predicted using information from three questions ascertaining subjects’ racial preferences in their customers. Subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (=0), a different race (=0), or had no preference (=1). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These latter two questions were recoded to reflect a racial preference (=0) versus no preference (=1). The three dummy variables were all significantly correlated with the two measures of self-reported discrimination in the theoretically predicted direction.
whether they think these customers tend to be very bad (=1), below average (=2), average (=3), above average (=4), or very good (=5) tippers. Respondents were instructed to assume that an average tip is 15% of the bill total.

Within the scenarios presented to the respondents, the only factor that remained constant was the customers’ race. Specifically, respondents were asked to consider the tipping practices of the following tables: “four black women with two small children,” “two black heterosexual couples in their 30s,” “three elderly black women,” “a group of five black men and women,” and “a black family of eight with adult children.” Subjects’ responses to these five questions were summed and averaged to create a scale measuring servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping practices. The scale could thus theoretically range from 1 range to 5 with a value of 1 indicating extremely negative perceptions (very bad tips across all five scenarios) and a value of 5 indicating extremely positive perceptions (very good tips in all five scenarios). The internal reliability of the tipping perception scale is acceptably high (α = .85). Cost-based server inferences were measured in a similar fashion, however, subjects were asked to assess the dining behaviors of African American customers rather than their tipping practices.

Before responding to questions about blacks’ dining behaviors subjects were asked two open ended questions designed to ascertain behavioral characteristics of “good” and “bad” customers. Behaviors of “good customers” derived from their responses include “polite”, “patient”, “nice”, “communicative”, “makes eye contact”, “good tipper”, etc. Some servers listed the absence of “bad” behaviors as qualities of a “good” customer, such as “not demanding” or “not rude”. Alternatively, “bad customers”
were described as “rude”, “demanding”, “picky”, “complain a lot”, “belittling”, “cheap/bad tippers”, “messy”, and “runs you”. Some servers listed the absence of “good” behaviors as qualities of a “bad” customer, such as “doesn’t make eye contact” or “doesn’t acknowledge my presence.”

With these descriptions in mind, servers were then asked to consider the same five scenarios described above, but this time, rating the tables’ dining behavior. Response categories for all 5 questions were, once again, very bad (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and very good (5). Subjects’ responses to these five questions were summed and averaged to create a scale measuring servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors and once again could theoretically range from 1 to 5 with a value of 1 indicating extremely negative perceptions (very bad, in term of dining behaviors, across all five scenarios) and a value of 5 indicating extremely positive perceptions (very good, in terms of behavior, across all five scenarios). The internal reliability of the perceived dining behaviors scale is acceptably high ($\alpha = .80$).

**Additional Statistical Discrimination Variables.** To isolate the effects of customers’ race on discriminatory server behaviors, I also model the effects of other

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44 Between 2 and 4.5% of cases were missing data across the ten variables used to assess the effects of revenue (perceived tipping) and cost-based (perceived dining behaviors) server inferences. For these cases, values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Values were estimated using information from three questions ascertaining subjects’ racial preferences. Subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (=1), a different race (=1), or had no preference (=0). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These last two questions were recoded to reflect a preference (=1) versus no preference (=0). The variables used to estimate values for missing cases were without exception significantly correlated with the perceived tipping and dining behavior variables in the theoretically predicted direction. Subjects, for instance, who reported no racial preferences, were significantly more likely to report more positive perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors compared to respondents who did report having a preference.
observable tableside factors that servers may use to inform the quality of service they provide to their guests. These factors include customers’ sex, social class, age, and the presence of children. I assess the effects of customers’ sex with a dummy variable indicating if the subject reported to prefer to serve customers who are the same sex as themselves (=1), a different sex (=1), or have no preference (=0). Likewise, the effects of server biases toward customers’ social class is assessed with a dummy variable comparing respondents who report no class preference (=0) with those who report preferring to serve a family that appears to be wealthy (=1), middle class (=1), working class (=1), or poor (=1)—although no respondents reported to prefer tables appearing to be poor. The effects of the presence of children on self-reported discrimination are assessed with a dummy variable comparing subjects’ reporting no preference (=0) or a preference for children (=0) with those reporting to prefer tables without small children (=1).

The effects of customers’ age on self-reported server discrimination are assessed with a survey question that asked respondents to rank order a series of customer age groups according to their preferences. The groups that respondents considered were under 21, 21-35, 36-45, 46-60, and over 61 years of age. To control for respondents negativity toward teenagers a dummy variable was created comparing respondents’ who

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45 The dummy variable measuring subjects’ social class biases had missing data on 3.5% of the cases. Values were imputed for these cases using estimates derived from information about subjects reported racial preferences concerning who they wait on. Specifically, subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (=1), a different race (=1), or had no preference (=0). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These last two questions were recoded to reflect a preference (=1) versus no preference (=0). All three variables used to estimate values for missing data were without exception significantly correlated with the social class bias measurement in the theoretically predicted direction.
ranked young customers (under 21 years of age=1) as their least desirable age group, with all other age group rankings (first, second, third, and fourth=0). Likewise, to control for servers’ preference for young adult customers a dummy variable was created comparing respondents’ who ranked customers between 21 and 35 years of age as their most desirable customers (=1) with all other age group rankings (second, third, fourth, and fifth=0).

Finally, if a statistical discrimination framework is to be useful towards understanding servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors it must be demonstrated that the effects of statistical inferences (e.g., revenue and cost-based concerns) operate net of the effects of subjects’ racial prejudices. In other words, it is possible that servers’ discriminate not because of economic concerns but rather because they are simply prejudiced against African Americans. In such a scenario, racial prejudice would be considered an antecedent variable, which would likely become manifested in servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors. To control for the possibility, I assess the effects of racial prejudices with a dummy variable constructed from subjects’

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46 Servers are likely to prefer waiting on young adults (21-35 years of age) for several reasons. First, this population is of legal age to consume alcohol and thus tend to have higher bills. Second, this group has recently entered the labor force and thus has more disposable income but continue to lack major economic responsibilities (e.g., kids). Third, this group is of a similar age as many of the wait staff. Finally, young adults are comparatively more likely to be currently working in the restaurant industry (or have done so in the recent past).

47 The dummy variable measuring subjects’ negative biases toward young patrons (e.g., under 21 years of age) had missing data on 23.5% of the cases and the dummy variable measuring subjects’ preference for 21-35 year old customers was missing data on 9.5% of the cases. For these cases, values were estimated using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Specifically, imputed values were estimated using information from subjects’ ranking of all other designated age ranges as well as their response to a question asking them to identify the age of their ideal customer (see survey questions 6 and 8a in Appendix A).
responses to three questions concerning their racial preferences according to customers’ social class. Specifically, respondents were asked to “assume there is a group at your table who are obviously poor/wealthy/middle class. Which would you rather they be?” Response categories include white, black, Hispanic, Asian, other, or no preference. Respondents reporting a racial preference on any of these variables were coded as prejudiced (=1) while those reporting no preference across all three scenarios were considered non-prejudiced (=0).49

**Control Variables.** In all of the analyses presented in this chapter I also statistically control for the effects of demographic variables that research implicates in predicting racial prejudices and discriminatory behaviors—respondents’ sex, race, educational attainment, and age (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Feagin 2006, p. 252; Feagin 2001; Quillian 1996). Respondents’ sex is dummy coded as female (=1) and male (=0). Respondents’ race is dummy coded as white (=1) and non-white (=0) (i.e., black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, and other)50. Respondents’ educational attainment is treated as a continuous variable and response categories include less than high school (=1), high school (=2), some college—no degree (=3), Associates Degree (=4), Bachelors degree (=5), and Masters Degree (=6). I also control for the effects of

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48 This is admittedly a crude proxy for racial prejudices that potentially transcend the work environment. It is possible—and likely—that a portion of servers’ professed racial preferences stem from economic concerns associated with blacks’ tipping rather than racial animus.

49 Values for cases with missing data on any of the three variables used to construct my measure of racial prejudices were imputed using information ascertained from subjects’ responses about the race of their ideal and least ideal tables.

50 Modal values were imputed for five cases that were missing data on the sex and race variables.
subjects age in years, as it has been previously shown to be positively associated with anti-black attitudes and behaviors (Bonilla-Silva 2003).  

7.3. Summary Statistics

Table 7.1 provides summary statistics for the analytic sample used for the statistical discrimination analysis. All of the statistics presented in Table 7.1 reflect the imputations made for cases missing data on both independent and the dependent variables. The imputation procedures described in footnotes 1 through 6 yielded an analytic sample consisting of 196 individuals working as restaurant servers in the summer of 2004. As shown in Table 7.1, the average respondent admittedly discriminates, at least sometimes, in their service delivery. In general, respondents also perceive African Americans’ tipping practices to be below average and to a lesser extent the same pattern is observed with regard to the perceived dining behaviors of blacks. The majority of sampled respondents expressed biases associated with customers’ class (67%) and the presence of small children (71%). A sizable minority also reported biases with regard to customers’ sex (45%). In addition, 56% of sampled subjects expressed negativity toward customers under 21 years of age (e.g., ranked as least ideal age group) and conversely a strong preference for customers between 21 and 35 years of age (e.g., ranked as most ideal age group). The sample is 62% female, 87% white, and the average subject is 25 years of age. The overwhelming majority of the sampled subjects have completed some college (48%) with a sizable minority having obtained a Bachelors Degree (24%).

Variable mean values were used to impute values for six cases with missing data on the educational attainment variable and eight cases on the age variable.
7.4 Bivariate and Multivariate Results

**Bivariate Results.** Table 7.2 presents zero order correlations for all the variables in this analysis. As evident in table 7.2, the only demographic characteristic statistically associated with self-reported discrimination is the sex of the respondent (p<.05). In this case, being female is associated with less self-reported discrimination. Having biases toward tables with children (p<.01), customers’ sex (p<.10), and a preference for young adult customers (p<.10), however, are all factors statistically associated with increased discriminatory behaviors. Negativity toward customers with small children is, in particular, strongly associated with increased discrimination (r=.21). Self-reported server discrimination is also inversely associated with positive perceptions toward African Americans’ tipping practices (p<.001) and dining behaviors (p<.01). Finally, it should not be surprising that expressing racial preferences in whom subjects’ wait on is strongly associated with increased reports of discriminatory behaviors (p<.01, r=.23).

These bivariate results lend initial credence to the utility of a statistical discrimination framework towards understanding the motivations underlying servers’ proclivity to discriminate against African American patrons. In fact, of the seven statistical discrimination variables only two reveal no statistically significant bivariate relationships with servers’ self-reported discrimination. Neither biases toward young customers (under 21 years of age) nor patrons’ social class are statistically related to self-reported discrimination. On the other hand, and consistent with a statistical discrimination argument, server inferences regarding customers’ sex, age (preference for young adults—21-35 years of age), presence of kids, tipping (blacks), and dining
behaviors (blacks) are all statistically associated with respondents’ reports of discriminating in their service delivery. The relationships between these statistical discrimination variables and self-reported discrimination may not, however, be independent. The effects of servers’ perceptions toward blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors may, for instance, be by-products of servers’ racial prejudices that emerge and are sustained in the larger societal context. Servers may also discriminate against black patrons not because of economic concerns associated with this groups’ tipping and dining behaviors but rather because they perceive these customers to be more likely to dine with children. As such, I further explore these bivariate relationships by separately regressing the measure of self-reported discrimination on respondents’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors, controlling for subjects’ demographic characteristics, other statistical discrimination variables (e.g., biases toward customers sex, social class, age, and presence of kids), and finally, subjects’ racial prejudices.

Multivariate Results. I conduct multivariate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses on the sample data to assess the power of a statistical discrimination framework to explain variability in servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. I am primarily concerned here with assessing the net effects of servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping practices (H1) and their dining behaviors (H2) on discriminate service delivery. To provide a baseline against which other models can be compared, I begin (Model 1 of Table 6.3) by regressing self-reported discrimination on subjects’ demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, and educational attainment). Next, I add a block of variables measuring the effects of inferences that a “rational statistical
discriminator” would make in determining the quality of service they provide to their guests. Specifically, economic inferences regarding the presence of small children, customers’ sex, social class, and age are added in Model 2 of Table 7.3. In Model 3 of Table 7.3., I test my first hypothesis by estimating the effects of subjects’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping practices. In Model 4, I test my second hypothesis predicting a statistically significant inverse relationship between subjects’ positive perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors and self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Finally, in Models 5 and 6, I assess the effects of servers’ perceptions while controlling for their racial prejudices.

By utilizing nested regression models, I am able to explore the relative predictive power of subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors, net of the effects of subjects’ demographics, other statistical discrimination variables, and subjects’ racial prejudices. Owing to the small analytic sample used in this analysis, the net importance of the predictor variables will be discussed if they are statistically significant at or beyond an alpha level of .10, as opposed to the conventional .05 level. Standardized coefficients are presented in parentheses and unless otherwise noted standardized coefficients will also be referred to in the text that follows. Adjusted $R^2$ coefficients will be examined in order to assess the relative explanatory power of the models presented here.

The results presented in Model 1 (Table 7.3) clearly demonstrate the inability of subjects’ demographic characteristics to predict variation in servers’ self-reports of discrimination. The model’s predictive power, however, is enhanced when considering the effects of pertinent statistical discrimination variables (Model 2). When the effects of
subjects’ demographic characteristics and the statistical discrimination control variables (e.g., class, sex, kid, and age biases) are simultaneously considered, being female (-.14, p<.05), expressing biases toward tables with children (.20, p<.05), and having a strong preference for young adult customers (.15, p<.10) are all significant predictors of discriminatory server behaviors. The additive effects of these control variables are, however, only able explain 5% of the variability in self-reported discrimination (adjusted $R^2 = .051$).

In Model 3 (Table 7.3), I test my first hypothesis concerning the effects of servers’ perceptions toward African Americans’ tipping practices on reported discrimination. Positive perceptions toward black Americans’ tipping practices is statistically significant (-.19, p<.05) and inversely associated with self-reported discrimination. When the effects of respondents’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices are taken into account the effects of being female and professed biases toward tables with kids are attenuated, although both effects remain marginally significant (p<.10). However, the effects of reporting a strong preference for young adult customers are reduced to nonsignificance in Model 3, thus indicating that servers’ preferences for young adults is heavily tied with concerns associated with blacks’ perceived tipping quality. The addition of respondents’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping variable adds to the model’s predictive power ($R^2 = .078$) and accounts for nearly 3% of the overall variation in self-reported discrimination explained in Model Three. In fact, servers’ perception toward African Americans’ tipping is the single strongest predictor included in Model 3.

In Model 4, I test my second hypothesis by adding a single variable measuring
respondents’ perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors. As predicted, subjects’ self-reported discrimination is also, in part, contingent on subjects’ perceptions toward blacks’ dining behaviors (−.15, p<.05). The effect of being female (−.14), having biases toward tables with children (.18), and professing a strong preference for young adults (.14) on discriminatory behaviors remained statistically significant in Model 4. Relative to the full control model (Model 2), taking into account the effect of subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors enhances the model’s predictive power (adjusted $R^2=.068$). Servers’ perception of African Americans’ dining behavior explains nearly 2% of the variation in self-reported discrimination and constitutes the second strongest effect observed in Model 4. The findings presented in Models 3 and 4 (Table 7.3) provide support for the hypothesized relationship between revenue and cost-based economic concerns and self-reported server discrimination. Servers who express positive perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors are less likely to report discriminating in their service and this is true net of servers’ considerations regarding customers social class, age, sex, and presence of kids.

These results, however, could reflect the effects of servers’ racial prejudices rather than statistical inferences concerning the tipping and dining behaviors of African Americans. If this were the case, a statistical discrimination explanation could be challenged on the basis that reported differential treatment according to customers’ race could no longer be understood as a perceived rational adaption to the economic uncertainty inherent in the institution of tipping. This possibility is statistically explored in Models 5 and 6 wherein results of the regression analysis modeling the effects of
revenue (tipping) and cost-based (dining behaviors) server inferences on self-reports of racial discrimination are presented, controlling for the effects of servers’ racial prejudices. As is evident in Model 5, controlling for subjects’ racial biases does not improve the model’s power to predict self-reported discrimination. The effect of servers’ positive perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices on self-reported discrimination are reduced but remain marginally significant (p<.01) even after controlling for subjects’ racial prejudices. The statistical significant effects of being female and professing biases toward tables with children are unaltered by the inclusion of the racial prejudice measure in the regression equation. These results thus provide additional confidence in the predicted (H1) importance of revenue-based inferences in explaining variation in servers’ reports of discriminating in their service delivery.

In Model 6, I assess the effect of servers’ perception of blacks’ dining behaviors on self-reported discrimination, once again controlling for subjects’ racial biases. In contrast to the modeling of the net effects of subjects’ perceptions toward blacks’ tipping practices (Model 2), the addition of the racial prejudice measure to Model 6 yields the effect of subjects’ perception of blacks’ dining behaviors nonsignificant. Controlling for subjects’ racial biases, however, does not alter the significant effects of being female, expressing biases toward tables with children, and professing a strong preference for young adult customers on self-reported discrimination. Controlling for subjects’ racial prejudices, in Model 6 does not, however, improve the model’s overall predictive power relative to Model Four. These findings thus provide partial support for my second hypothesis concerning the effects of cost-based inferences surrounding African
Americans’ dining behavior and self-reported server behaviors but also highlight the need for further research.

### 7.5 Summary and Discussion

In this chapter, I have utilized Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses to assess the explanatory power of a statistical discrimination framework towards understanding variability in restaurant servers’ self-reports of racial discrimination. Taken as a whole, these findings make two primary contributions to the literature on race-based server discrimination, in particular, and statistical discrimination, more generally. First, this is the first quantitative assessment of the commonly assumed relationship between perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices and discriminatory service delivery. Second, these findings also constitute the first documentation of the effects of servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors on subjects’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. These findings indicate that a portion—albeit a small portion—of the inequity in the quality of service that customers receive in restaurants is a function of servers’ tendency to discriminate according to perceived statistical differences in the potential for profitability across racial groups. In this section, I discuss these results in more detail, highlight the implications of these findings for the restaurant industry, and conclude by discussing the analysis limitations along with suggestions for future research.

*Discussion of Findings.* Existing literature has demonstrated the importance of statistical discrimination processes towards understanding the motivations underlying discriminatory behaviors among some service providers (Ayres 1991; Ayres, Vars, and
Research, for instance, has demonstrated that the quality of service provided to consumers by both taxicab drivers and automobile sales persons is, in part, contingent on statistical inferences these market sellers make concerning the predicted profitability of engaging in any given transaction (see Ayres 1991; Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya’s 2005). Likewise, many scholars have suggested—but not tested—that economic incentives also motivate restaurant servers to statistically discriminate in their service delivery (Dirks and Rice 2004; Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Mallinson and Brewster 2009; Margalioth 2006). Present findings support this previously untested assumption. A causal relationship was observed between servers’ animosity towards the tipping practices of African Americans and the admitted delivery of inferior service to these patrons (Dirks and Rice 2004; Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Margalioth 2006).

Servers who express more positivity toward the tipping practices of blacks are indeed less likely to report discriminating in their service delivery. This is the case independent of subjects’ demographics and confessed biases regarding customers’ race, sex, age, social class, and the presence of kids. One interpretation of this finding can be located within an equity theoretical framework where the unmeasured mechanism linking servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and their reported discrimination is perceptions of equity/inequity. Servers who do not perceive racial tipping differences, are also not likely to perceive their relationships with black patrons as being characterized as inequitable (tips are commensurate to the effort they perceive to expend and this is true for whites and blacks), and as such they would have no economic motivation to provide inferior
service to these patrons. Doing so, could in fact, be economically irrational if such
discriminate service results in a reduction in tipped income from African Americans, as
existing research has suggested (e.g., Barkan and Israeli 2004; Brewster and Mallinson
2009; Dirks and Rice 2004; Dombrowski et al. 2006). In contrast, servers who perceive
blacks’ tipping as comparatively inferior are motivated to discriminate against these
guests because not doing so invokes and sustains feelings of inequity that emerge out of
perceptions of exerting the same amount of effort (relative to white patrons) for less pay.
In such cases, servers restore feelings of equity (or exert control—see, Brewster and
Mallinson 2009 and Sallaz 2002) by withholding, in most cases, subtle forms of service
(e.g., smiling, being friendly, etc.) from black guests that are otherwise extended to white
patrons

Findings concerning the effects of servers’ perceptions towards blacks’ dining
behaviors on their reports of discriminating can be interpreted similarly. In this case,
feelings of inequity emerge out of servers’ perceptions that waiting on black guests
require more effort (e.g. greater costs), relative to their white guests, thus constituting a
financial cost. Once again, in order to restore feelings of equity servers are motivated to
reduce the perceived costs associated with waiting on black tables by withholding subtle

52 In some cases, as a function of cognitive racial biases, servers may not even be aware of the
subtle ways in which they extend differential service according to the race of their customers.
Experimental research, for instance, has documented statistical differences in whites’ facial
expressions during inter-race interactions, such that when interacting with African Americans
white subjects display fewer positive facial expressions (Vanman et al. 1997; Vanman et al. 2004;
Vrana and Rollock 1998). As such, implicit racial biases that are evident in the facial expressions
of white servers engaged in interracial customer interactions are likely to add to black patrons’
feelings of inhosпитably and consequently the race-based tipping differential. Future research will
need to explore the degree to which subtle differences in service quality vary according to the
race of customers because of implicit versus explicit server biases.
forms of service (e.g., discriminating) that are otherwise extended to their white patrons. Subsequent analyses determined that the effects of servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors are partially mediated by their racial prejudices.

This finding can be interpreted in two ways. First, negativity toward blacks’ dining behaviors may contribute to racial biases (measured here as a racial preference for whom they provide service to), which in turn lead them to engage in discriminatory behaviors. In this case, the process can be located within the context of the organization, and as such a cost-based statistical discrimination explanation cannot be ruled out. That is, servers’ racial prejudices may arise out of their negative perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors, and because of these cost-based inferences, servers are motivated to discriminate in their service. In accordance with this interpretation, Allen and White (2002) argue that when subjects are faced with under-rewarded situations wherein they perceive more work to be required of them for less pay they are likely to react stronger compared with a ‘same work less pay’ scenario. This might explain why the effects of servers perceptions of blacks’ tipping continued to be statistically significant, net of the effects of servers’ racial prejudices whereas the opposite is observed with regard to the effects of servers perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors.

Alternatively, the effect of servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors on self-reports of discriminating maybe driven by racial stereotypes that develop external to the workplace. In this case, perceptions surrounding blacks’ dining behaviors (e.g.

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53 While the direction and nature of causality between subjects’ racial prejudices, perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors, and self-reported discrimination cannot determined definitively the
blacks are “rude,” “demanding,” “picky,” “complain a lot,” “belittling,” “messy,” and “runs you”) are driven by racial biases held by servers. Stereotypes surrounding the behaviors of African American consumers have also emerged in legal cases. In a review of court cases involving litigations of discrimination in the restaurant industry Austin (2000, p. 12) made the following summation concerning common stereotypes attached to black restaurant diners:

The ‘bad black customer is in many ways analog to the black service employee with the bad attitude. The [legal] cases suggest that, in addition to being dangerous and volatile, the bad black customer may also be loud and boisterous, especially when displeased. The bad black customer is unfriendly and suspicious…. The bad black customer is demanding and difficult to please.

If the effects of servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors on self-reports of discrimination are driven by racial stereotypes such discrimination cannot be interpreted as a perceived rational adaptation to the economic uncertainty inherent in the institution of tipping but rather would reflect more systemic processes of black oppression.

While future research, using a better measurement of racial prejudices (e.g., racial ideology measures), should further explore these alternative interpretations, extant research has not found a relationship between race and propensity to complain—a conclusion that perceptions of blacks’ behaviors and subjects’ racial biases are part of the same underlying racist syndrome is supported by a post hoc analysis assessing the unique portion of variance in self-reported discrimination that is explained by perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors after controlling for subjects’ racial prejudices. Specifically, I entered my measure of racial prejudice into the regression model followed by the inclusion of my measure of subjects’ perception of blacks’ dining behaviors. Results showed that the measure of perceived dining behaviors added little to the variance explained (.006%), net of that which was explained by subjects’ racial prejudice.
prominent example of difficulties associated with customer service more generally (see Singh 1990 for a review of this literature). To the contrary, studies have shown both education and income to be positively associated with complaint behaviors and racial minorities; blacks in particular, are disadvantaged on both of these demographic variables (Sujithamrak and Lam 2005). This evidence suggest that, if anything, blacks should exhibit less complaining behaviors and as such should be perceived to be less difficult, at least on this one dimension of potential difficulties that patrons may pose. In this light, these findings suggest that servers do rely on inferences regarding perceived costs associated with waiting on black tables to inform the quality of their service but such inferences maybe an outgrowth of racial biases rather than economic concerns.

This analysis findings thus suggest that server initiated discrimination is, in part, a product of both revenue-based concerns arising out of racial tipping differences and racial prejudices, which become manifested in stereotypes about blacks dining behaviors. Notwithstanding the limitations of this analysis, discussed shortly, these finding have important and interesting implications for the restaurant industry.

Implications for the restaurant industry. The self-reported discriminatory treatment according to customer characteristics, regardless of the motives, is not only harmful to minority consumers but also detrimental to the success of the restaurant industry. This is the case for several reasons beginning with reduced minority restaurant patronage.\(^\text{54}\) Curry and Kleiner (2005,p. 102), for instance, contend that “discrimination

\(^\text{54}\) While it is difficult to speculate how much African American restaurant patronage is lost or otherwise forgone because of discriminatory server behaviors, I recently came across an online
now is done in a subtler fashion, intended to make a customer feel uncomfortable….Discriminatory actions such as poor service are meant to discourage a certain individual or group of individuals from returning to an establishment.” In addition to the potential revenue lost via the reduction in patronage of minority guests, Lynn (2004a) argues that servers’ anti-black attitudes and behaviors also contribute to lawsuits and high server turnover rates in restaurants largely frequented by blacks. These factors, in turn, make markets in predominately-black communities unattractive for restaurant development. These consequences are not only economically costly to the restaurant industry but they are also damaging to the industry’s public image.

So what should industry leaders do with these findings? Most restaurants already have policies that forbid discriminatory behaviors. As these findings suggest, however, these policies are largely ineffective or alternatively not enforced. The ineffectiveness of existing policies is likely due to several interrelated factors. First, management is unable to monitor patron/server interaction with any degree of efficiency (Brewster and discussion board wherein there was an interesting posting on racial differences in tipping and dining behaviors. The web posting (October 16, 2008), on chicagotribune.com, solicited readers to respond to the following prompt: “Do Black Customers Demand More, Tip Less?” Within two days of the original posting more than 140 responses had accumulated. An African American female who reported to be a single parent of an 8-year-old daughter posted one of the final responses on this string. Her statements are quite telling: “I hate to admit it but I am glad I read this article! I have always tipped in a manner that is directly correlated to the level of service I receive. I'm not overly demanding, and have a great appreciation for people who work in the service industry. Let's face it - it's not easy! That said - I will stop eating out at sit down restaurants. I've often marveled at the horrible service that I've received, but honestly had absolutely no idea it was likely because I'm black! Call me naive, but I really didn't know. The comments show me that I will be judged based upon my skin color even before I am seated, and I'm not sure how I can avoid that other than to not dine out at all! WOW! Posted by: bmc0718 | Oct 17, 2008 5:12:06 AM and is available online at http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/race/2008/10/do-black-custom.html (last accessed June 7, 2009)
Nevertheless, even if they were able to do so with greater efficiency, the cost would be immense and the subtlety of discriminatory server behaviors would make it difficult, if not in most cases impossible, for managers to detect definitively. As such, with some degree of certainty restaurant officials can conclude that most discriminatory server behaviors go unnoticed, undocumented, unpunished, and thus unaddressed. Restaurant officials will thus need to direct their attention “up river” and focus on altering the underlying causes of tables side discrimination. As this analysis has shown, servers’ negative perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices constitute one such cause. To address this partial cause of server discrimination restaurant officials will need to work towards undermining the factors that give rise to such perceptions—racial tipping differences.

Brewster and Mallinson (2009) posit that racial tipping differences emerge, in part, because of servers’ efforts to combat the economic insecurity that characterizes the

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55 The inability of restaurant managers to exert complete control over the service encounter and thereby detect discriminatory behaviors is also a function of the intangibility of the service being “sold.” Albrecht and Zemke (1985, p. 20), for instance, describe high-quality service as having a “feel of simple civility or caring when delivered in a face-to-face context…[and] is more easily understood in experience than in definition; you know it when you see it.” Invoking the experience of quality service necessitates that managers grant servers a certain amount of occupational sovereignty so that they can customize their service in accordance with customer desires (see Sallaz 2002). Moreover, there is a possibility that managers would ignore discriminatory server behaviors even when detected. Dixon, Storen, and Van Horn (2002), for example, analyze data derived from a national telephone survey and report that 63% of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace also reported that after making a complaint to their employer they were ignored and nothing was done in response to the incident (also see Slonaker, Wendt, and Baker 2007). It is not unreasonable to suspect that similar practices occur when restaurant consumers report maltreatment.
prevailing voluntary tipping system. Present findings support the authors’ contention—s
servers do utilize revenue-based inferences to inform the quality of service they provide
to their tables (see Dirks and Rice 2004; Barkan and Israeli 2004; Dombrowski,
Namasivayam, and Barlett 2006). Such inferences could largely be rendered irrelevant
within the context of alternative tipping systems wherein tips are no longer voluntary
and/or a system where servers are no longer dependent on tips. Recent research by
Namasivayam and Upneja (2007) compared servers’ perceptions of equity across four
tipping systems—1) tips are pooled and distributed equally among wait staff; 2) servers
retain their own tips; 3) 15% service charge on all checks and equally distributed among
wait staff; and 4) 15% service charge included on all checks and server retains 11.5% of
these charges as their salary with a guaranteed income of $1,200.00 per month. The
authors found that respondents’ overwhelmingly rated the fourth system as being the
most fair and just. In such a system, servers would have little motivation to engage in

56 An additional causal factor in the observed racial tipping differential concerns variability in
familiarity with U.S. tipping norms. In a series of papers, Lynn and his colleagues have shown
that blacks, in particular, tend to tip less than their white counterparts do because they are
comparatively less familiar with the norms that govern tipping (Lynn 2004a, 2004b, 2006ab;
Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003). To reduce partially the racial tipping difference and thereby
partially reducing discriminatory server behaviors, Lynn has suggested that industry officials
promote the 15-20% tipping norm by conducting multimedia campaigns directed, in particular, at
communities with comparatively low knowledge of the norm (e.g., black communities; Lynn
2004ab, 2006b). Providing patrons with suggested tip amounts on their credit card slips or
alternatively on table tents may also be an effective way to spread knowledge about tipping
norms. Another approach to the problem, according to Lynn, is to develop a game wherein
individuals who adhere to the tipping norm would be publicly rewarded. A variant of Lynn’s
recommendation would be to allow patrons who tip at least 15% to draw a playing card out of a
bucket. The cards collected from previous visits could then be combined to create a poker hand
that could be exchanged for free food on subsequent visits. Restaurant officials should also
consider these strategies for they would not only promote awareness of tipping norms but also
should encourage repeat patronage and with time reduce discriminatory server behaviors that
emerge out of racial differences in tipping practices.
revenue-based statistical discrimination and feeling of equity would no longer be tied to tipping differences across social groups. Adding service charges to customers’ bill in combination with a guaranteed minimum wage may be the most successful way to eradicate the portion of discriminatory server behaviors associated with their negativity toward blacks’ tipping practices.

Adding a mandatory service charge and providing servers with higher guaranteed minimum wages, however, will not likely curb the portion of differential service caused by servers’ negativity toward the dining behaviors of blacks. While further research is needed, this analysis findings suggest that racially biased servers, to some extent, may utilize stereotypes surrounding the dining behaviors of blacks to inform the quality of their service. If this is the case, perhaps the only remedy is to challenge actively such stereotypes via a multifaceted industry wide campaign designed to educate servers on the nature and consequences of such anti-black stereotypes. If future research shows that there are indeed, no racial differences in how difficult tables are to wait on then the dissemination of such knowledge might force servers to confront their own adherence to such stereotypes. This would especially be the case if it could be demonstrated that servers adherence to such racist stereotypes is financially costly in the form of reduced tips from these guests—as most research indicates (e.g., Barkan and Israeli 2004; Brewster and Mallinson 2009; Dirks and Rice 2004; Dombrowski et al. 2006).

These findings suggest that restaurant officials should also direct their attention towards discrimination against tables with kids and customers who are not young adults. Kids constitute a cost in the form of extra work for servers that they admittedly dislike
and attempt to minimize, most likely via a reduction in the attention given to such tables. Conversely, restaurant managers should consider the implications underlying servers’ preference to serve young adult customers (21-35 years of age). Servers are likely to prefer waiting on young adults (21-35 years of age) for several reasons. First, this population is of legal age to consume alcohol and thus tend to have higher bills. Second, this group has recently entered the labor force and thus has more disposable income but continue to lack major economic responsibilities (e.g., kids). Third, this group is of a similar age as many of restaurants’ wait staff. Finally, young adults are comparatively more likely to be currently working in the restaurant industry or alternatively have done so in the recent past (i.e., while in college). Because of these factors, as these findings demonstrate, servers are providing preferential treatment to this age group and such treatment is at the expense of African Americans. Lastly, restaurant officials should address the increased propensity for male servers to discriminate relative to their female counterparts.

Regardless of the approach taken by industry leaders to reduce the differential treatment of restaurant guests the complexities of the issue will make any effort a difficult task (Phomphakdy and Kleiner 1999). Owing to the limitations of this analysis, the implications outlined in this section should be taken with caution. Moreover, considerable more research is needed in this area before restaurant officials can confidently begin implementing policies and procedures designed to further ensure that all customers have equal opportunity for enjoyable dining experiences in our nation’s restaurants.
7.6 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As with all of the analyses in this dissertation, I rely on a small sample of servers embedded in a smaller sample of restaurants that were not selected from the national population of all restaurants and thus, any type of broad generalizations should be made with caution. Second, it is possible that these results are biased because of subjects’ inclination to report in a socially desirable manner (Blank et al. 2001; also see Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000). There are surely respondents who reportedly never discriminate but in reality do, thereby biasing these results. Future research should assess the validity of these findings using objective measures of discrimination. Researchers might consider collecting data via video tape recordings of customer/server interactions and then conduct a content analysis of these recordings focusing specifically on variability in the subtle servers’ behaviors (e.g., smiling, joking, etc.) that have been shown to add value to service encounters (Albrecht and Zemke 1985, p. 20). Such a research design would not only eliminate sources of error associated with reporting biases but would also allow researchers to definitively determine the character of the self-reported discrimination documented in this study.

Future research will also need to test empirically the mediating effects of perceptions of equity in the documented relationships between servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors and self-reported discrimination. While there are

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57 However, this limitation, to some degree, is addressed by controlling for subjects’ racial biases. In the multivariate analysis, subjects who consistently reported no racial preference with regard to who they provide service to were used as a baseline group against which those who reported a racial preference were compared. In doing so, the effects of social desirability are partially controlled. Admittedly, this is not a good control for social desirability biases.
theoretical justifications for positing the importance of perceptions of equity/inequity, these data do not allow this possibility to be assessed empirically. Further research on the role of racial prejudices in the explanatory process outlined in this chapter is also needed. Admittedly, my measure of racial prejudice is crude and may not be capturing subjects’ global racial ideology but rather may simply reflect biases associated specifically with subjects’ organizational roles as servers. Because of this limitation, the direction of causality is unclear with regard to the observed relationship between servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors and the frequency in which they report discriminating in their service delivery. In short, this analysis is unable to determine if servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors are products of societal racism or rather if such perceptions cause racial preferences to whom they provide service.

More research identifying and understanding the intricate and broad reaching features of the racial tipping differences are needed (Fernandez 2006). What factors, currently and historically, contribute to blacks’ unwillingness or inability to tip in accordance with U.S. tipping norms? If blacks lack familiarity with tipping norms, what factors contribute to this unfamiliarity? If tips are partially based service quality, what does “good service” mean for blacks as compared to whites? Can some of the racial differences in tipping be attributed to racial differences in math skills, net of education level (Fernandez 2006)? How does religiosity influence the tipping behaviors of whites and blacks? Research has consistently shown that relative to whites, African Americans are statistically more likely to attend church services regularly (Taylor, Chatters, Jayakody, and Leven 1996). As such, black restaurant patrons may have a comparatively
more difficult time reconciling the service industry asking for 15-20% gratuities when the church only requests that they tithe 10% of their yearly income. How does geographic location affect the tipping practices of blacks? Perhaps blacks in the “Jim Crow” south perceive service quality and tipping differently from their counterparts in the north. Future research should also inquire into inter-racial ideological differences concerning the responsibility of companies to pay their employees a livable wage. Many blacks feel that by relying on the institution of tipping, restaurants are avoiding their financial responsibilities to their employees at the expense of their customers (Fernandez 2006). How does this ideology affect how blacks feel about dining in full-service restaurants where they are expected to leave gratuities? How would service delivery change if the voluntary tipping system was abolished, as it was in the early 1900s? Would blacks be seen as undesirable for other reasons or would all negative perceptions of blacks by servers disappear?

Seeking answers to some or all of these questions will contribute to a more complete understanding of the findings, I have presented in this chapter. That the current arrangement harms blacks and disturbs their ability to enjoy pleasurable dining experiences in America’s restaurants as a matter of course is reason enough to make efforts to diminish the pervasiveness of server discrimination in restaurants. Race in the United States is, and has been, a controversial area of inquiry so seeking answers to the above questions will not likely to an easy endeavor. Nevertheless, I concur with Lynn in that: “…Pretending that Black-White differences in tipping [or service] do not exist or refusing to discuss [these] difference[s] does not help anyone. Rather, it perpetuates a
status quo that harms Black consumers” (Lynn 2004b, p. 2269).

Finally, future research should continue working towards identifying other explanatory factors implicated in server discrimination. Statistical server inferences concerning the profitability of waiting on black tables explains only a small portion servers’ self-reported discrimination. In fact, server inferences about the tipping and dining behaviors of blacks are statistically able to explain a mere 2-3% of the variability in self-reports of discriminate service. Other factors not explored in this analysis are clearly operating and should be explored. Dirks and Rice (2004), for instance, argue that sever discrimination is, in part, a manifestation of anti-black restaurant cultures characterized by racist discourse among predominately white wait staffs. In the following chapter, I statistically assess the explanatory importance of a cultural framework towards understanding server discrimination.
CHAPTER 8
RESTURANT CULTURE: ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF RACIALIZED WORKPLACE DISCOURSE ON SERVERS’ SELF-REPORTED DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIORS

8.1 Introduction

The results of the previous analysis, presented in Chapter 7, indicate that discriminatory server behaviors emerge, in part, out of fiscal concerns associated with black patrons’ tipping and dining behaviors. In short, servers discriminate against black diners because they perceive these diners to be on average more difficult to wait on and less likely to leave what is commonly perceived to be a fair tip. The statistical discrimination framework, however, accounted for only a small amount of the variability in servers’ self-reports of discrimination. In fact, server inferences about the tipping and dining behaviors of blacks explained a mere 2-3% of the variability in self-reports of discrimination. The relative inability of a statistical discrimination framework to explain server discrimination indicates that other explanatory processes may be operating. Thus, in this analysis, I extend the scope of inquiry into discriminatory server behaviors by assessing the predictive power of variables measuring aspects of servers’ work environments. Specifically, in this analysis, I draw off the literature on organizational culture—reviewed in Chapter 4—to derive and test a series of hypotheses predicting discriminatory server behaviors.
In the following section, I describe the measurement of all the variables analyzed in this chapter. In section 8.3, I present summary statistics for the analytic sample utilized in this analysis. In section 8.4, I present both bivariate and multivariate results. Finally, in section 8.5, I discuss findings in more detail and outline implications of these findings for restaurant officials. Finally, in section 8.6, I conclude by discussing the limitations of my approach along with suggested directions for future research.

8.2 Measurement of Variables

Dependent Variable. Self-reported racial discrimination is assessed with both a direct and an indirect item. The direct measure of self-reported racial discrimination consists of a question asking subjects to report the frequency in which the quality of their service varies according to customers’ race (see Appendix A for exact question wording). Based on extant research demonstrating the widely held perception that racial minorities in general and blacks in particular tip below average, I also assess racial discrimination indirectly by asking respondents to report how often they “give customers poor service because” they “think they will not tip well?” Response categories for both items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Subjects’ responses to the aforementioned items were summed and averaged to create a scale ranging from 1 to 4 with a value of 1 indicating no discriminatory behavior and a value of 4 indicating that the respondent’s service always varies according to customer’s race and perceived likelihood of being tipped fairly. The internal reliability of the self-reported
discrimination measure is acceptable ($\alpha=.74$).

**Workplace Culture Variables.**

To assess the effects of workplace culture variables on servers’ self-reported discrimination, I rely on three survey questions designed to ascertain the frequency in which subjects observe racialized discourse in their workplaces. The questions are similar to those used by Dirks and Rice (2004) to guide their qualitative exploration into the racial climate of restaurants. Specifically, respondents were asked to report the frequency in which they observe racist comments made about customers by co-workers; frequency in which they observe racist comments made by their managers; and the frequency in which they observe their coworkers using “code” words/language to describe customers. Response categories for all the three of the questions measuring racist workplace discourse were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). The saliency of race as a categorization scheme for servers was assessed by asking respondents to report the

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58 Five cases were missing data on both items used to create the scale measuring self-reported discrimination. For these cases values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Specifically, values for missing cases were predicted using information from three questions ascertaining subjects’ racial preferences in their customers. Subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (0), a different race (0), or had no preference (1). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These latter two questions were recoded to reflect a racial preference (0) versus no preference (1). The three dummy variables were all significantly correlated with the two measures of self-reported discrimination in the theoretically predicted direction.

59 Nine cases were missing values on the question ascertaining the frequency in which subjects report observing coworkers making racist comments and eight cases were missing values on the question regarding observed racist manager comments. When possible, estimates for these missing cases were imputed using an OLS regression technique that generates a predicted value using information from subjects’ responses to questions asking them to report the frequency in which they observe “negative behind the scenes comments about customers,” and “derogatory terms/phrases to describe customers.”
frequency in which they discuss the race of their customers with their coworkers. Response categories include never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4).

In an attempt to demarcate the effects of racialized workplace discourse on the dependent variable from those attributed to discriminatory coworker behaviors, I also include a measure of observed coworker discrimination in this analysis. I measure observed discrimination with two survey questions that asked respondents to report the frequency in which they observe “poor treatment of black/Hispanic customers by coworkers.” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Subjects’ responses to the these two items were summed and averaged to create a scale ranging from 1 to 4 with a value of 1 indicating no observed discriminatory behavior and a value of 4 indicating that the respondent always observes Hispanics and Black customers being treated poorly. The internal reliability of the responses is quite high (alpha=.86).

For the Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) component of this analysis, an organizational measure of each of the three questions ascertaining evidence of anti-minority workplace discourse was constructed. Specifically, I computed organizational measures of observed racist coworker comments, racist manger comments, and coded argot by calculating a within restaurant mean for each of these variables. Aggregating the

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60 Nine cases were missing data on the question ascertaining the frequency in which coworkers are observed treating black customers poorly while twelve cases were missing data on the questions assessing the frequency in which coworkers are observed treating Hispanic guests poorly. For these cases values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002), wherein values for missing cases were predicted using information from two related questions ascertaining the degree to which subjects perceive that their coworkers treat customers poorly because of the customers’ race and/or because they feel they will not be tipped fairly.
racialized discourse measures to the organizational-level effectively reduces a considerable amount of the random errors and personal biases innate to subjects’ perceptions (Glick 1985). As a result, these organizational-level measures of racist workplace discourse are more objective and thus should theoretically be closer, albeit still imperfect, representations of the cultural reality within restaurant establishments.

While the individual-level and organizational-level measures of anti-minority workplace discourse are expected to share some variance, they are also likely to be, partially independent for several reasons. First, perceptual incongruence between servers within organizations is likely to occur because perceptions are shaped by previous experiences in similar settings. A server, for instance, may not perceive subtle racist comments by his manager to be racist in nature because while working in another restaurant his managers routinely made blatant racist remarks. This does not negate the fact that subtle racist comments are nevertheless racist and in fact, such subtlety is consistent with contemporary race talk (Bonilla-Silva 2003). Perceptions between servers within restaurants may also be incongruent because information is not always equally available to all servers. Servers may, for example, work in a workplace characterized by high levels of racist discourse and yet perceive there to be low levels of such discourse because they simply are not privy to such comments. It is highly probable that employees who utilize racialized discourse at work do so selectively for fear of the potential repercussions associated with the “wrong” person hearing such comments. In other words, the pervasiveness of such discourse is also likely to vary according to the dynamics of workplace cliques. In short, and expressed succinctly by Tittle (1995, p.
“People do not always see the world around them as it actually is. Sometimes they lack appropriate information to judge reality correctly, and at other times, they simply misperceive or misinterpret information to which they are exposed.” Owing to these sources of perceptual incongruence, there may be net individual-level and organizational-level effects of racialized workplace discourse on self-reported server discrimination.

Numerical representation of minority servers, also an organizational-level variable, is determined by dividing the number of racial minority servers by the total number of servers within each of the 18 sampled restaurants. This information was determined by asking one manager from each of the 18 sampled restaurants to report the race/ethnicity and sex of employees working in each position within their respective restaurant (see Appendix B). Minority server representation is measured as a proportion rather than an absolute value to control for variability in the number of “front of the house” employees between restaurants.

*Statistical Discrimination Control Variables*. In this analysis, I control for the effects of variables that were shown in the previous chapter to be salient predictors of server discrimination. Specifically, I control for the effects of subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors on self-reported discrimination. I also control for the effects of subjects’ professed racial prejudices, biases against tables with children, and preferences for young adult customers. Subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices is measured by way of directing respondents to assume that an average tip is 15% of the

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61 See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion of the statistical discrimination measures included in this analysis.
bill total and then asking them to consider five scenarios and, in terms of tipping, choose whether they think these customers tend to be very bad (=1), below average (=2), average (=3), above average (=4), or very good (=5) tippers. Subjects’ responses to these five questions were summed and averaged to create a scale measuring servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping practices. The scale could thus theoretically range from 1 to 5 with a value of 1 indicating extremely negative perceptions (very bad tips across all five scenarios) and a value of 5 indicating extremely positive perceptions (very good tips in all five scenarios). The internal reliability of the tipping perception scale is acceptably high (α = .85). Servers’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors were measured in a similar fashion. The summed and averaged scale measuring servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors could again range from 1 to 5 with a value of 1 indicating extremely negative perceptions (very bad, in terms of dining behaviors, across all five scenarios) and a value of 5 indicating extremely positive perceptions (very good, in terms of behavior, across all five scenarios). The internal reliability of the perceived dining behaviors scale is acceptably high (α = .80).²

²Between 2 and 4.5% of cases were missing data across the ten variables used to assess the effects of revenue (perceived tipping) and cost-based (perceived dining behaviors) server inferences. For these cases, values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002), although findings were substantively unaltered even when these cases were excluded from the analysis. Values were estimated using information from three questions ascertaining subjects’ racial preferences. Subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (=1), a different race (=1), or had no preference (=0). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These last two questions were recoded to reflect a preference (=1) versus no preference (=0). The variables used to estimate values for missing cases were without exception significantly correlated with the perceived tipping and dining behavior variables in the theoretically predicted direction. Subjects, for instance, who reported no racial preferences, were significantly more likely to report positive perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors compared with respondents who reported having a preference.
The effects of subjects’ biases toward tables with children on self-reported discrimination are assessed with a dummy variable comparing subjects’ reporting no preference (=0) or a preference for children (=0) with those reporting to prefer tables without small children (=1). The effects of professed preferences for young adult customers’ on self-reported server discrimination are assessed with a survey question that asked respondents to rank order a series of customer age groups according to their preferences. The groups that respondents considered were under 21, 21-35, 36-45, 46-60, and over 61 years of age. To control for servers’ preference for customers who are of legal age to consume alcohol and whom recently entered the labor force (i.e., young adults), a dummy variable was created comparing respondents who ranked customers between 21 and 35 years of age as their most desirable customers (=1) with all other age group rankings (second, third, fourth, and fifth=0). Finally, I control for the effects of subjects’ racial prejudices with a dummy variable constructed from subjects’ responses to three questions concerning their racial preferences according to customers’ social class. Specifically, respondents were asked to “assume there is a group at your table who are obviously poor/wealthy/middle class. Which would you rather they be?” Response categories include white, black, Hispanic, Asian, other, or no preference.

63 The dummy variable measuring subjects’ preference for 21-35 year old customers was missing data on 9.5% of the cases. For these cases, values were estimated using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Specifically, imputed values were estimated using information from subjects’ ranking of all other designated age ranges as well as their response to a question asking them to identify the age of their ideal customer (see survey questions 6 and 8a in Appendix A).

64 Admittedly, this is a crude proxy for racial prejudices that transcend the work environment. It is possible—and likely—that a portion of servers’ professed racial preferences stem from economic concerns associated with blacks’ tipping rather than racial animus.
reporting a racial preference on any of these variables were coded as prejudiced (=1) while those reporting no preference across all three scenarios were considered non-prejudiced (=0).\(^{65}\)

**Demographic Control Variables.** In all of the analyses presented in this chapter, I also statistically control for the effects of demographic variables that research implicates in predicting racial prejudices and discriminatory behaviors—respondents’ sex, race, educational attainment, and age (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Feagin 2006, p. 252; Feagin 2001; Quillian 1996). Respondents’ sex is dummy coded as female (=1) and male (=0). Respondents’ race is dummy coded as white (=1) and non-white (=0) (i.e., black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, and other)\(^{66}\). Respondents’ educational attainment is treated as a continuous variable and response categories include less than high school (=1), high school (=2), some college—no degree (=3), Associates Degree (=4), Bachelors degree (=5), and Masters Degree (=6). I also control for the effects of subjects age in years, as it has been previously shown to be positively associated with anti-black attitudes and behaviors (Bonilla-Silva 2003)\(^{67}\).

### 8.3. Summary Statistics

Table 8.1 provides summary statistics for the analytic sample used for the workplace culture analysis. All of the statistics presented in Table 8.1 reflect the

\(^{65}\) Values for cases with missing data on any of the three variables used to construct my measure of racial prejudices were imputed using information ascertained from subjects’ responses about the race of their “ideal” and “least ideal” tables.

\(^{66}\) Modal values were imputed for five cases that were missing data on the sex and race variables.

\(^{67}\) Variable mean values were used to impute values for six cases with missing data on the educational attainment variable and eight cases on the age variable.
imputations made for cases missing data on both independent and the dependent variables. The imputation procedures described in footnotes 1 through 6 yielded an analytic sample consisting of 193 individuals working as restaurant servers in the summer of 2004. As shown in Table 8.1, the average respondent admittedly discriminates, at least sometimes, in their service delivery. In general, respondents also perceive African Americans’ tipping practices to be below average and to a lesser extent, the same pattern is observed with regard to the perceived dining behaviors of blacks. The majority of sampled respondents expressed biases associated with the presence of small children (71%). In addition, 55% of sampled subjects expressed a strong preference for customers between 21 and 35 years of age (e.g., ranked as most ideal age group). The sample is 61% female and 87% white. The average subject has completed at least some college and is 24.42 years of age.

8.4 Bivariate and Multivariate Results

Bivariate Results. Table 8.2 presents zero order correlations for all the variables in this analysis. As evident in table 8.2, and consistent with the bivariate findings presented in Chapter 7, the only demographic characteristic statistically associated with self-reported discrimination is the sex of the respondent (p<.05). In this case, being female is associated with less self-reported discrimination. With regard to the statistical discrimination variables, having biases toward customers’ sex (p<.05), expressing negativity towards tables with children (p<.05), and expressing racial prejudices (p<.05) are all statistically associated with increased discriminatory behaviors. Finally, positive
perceptions toward African Americans’ tipping practices and dining behaviors (p<.05) are again both associated with less self-reported discrimination.

Results in Table 8.2 also reveal statistically strong relationships between subjects’ self-reported discrimination and variables measuring racialized workplace discourse. Specifically, observing racist coworker comments (.38), racist manager comments (.41), or coded language (.34) in the workplace are all associated with increased self-reported discriminatory behaviors. The frequency in which respondents discuss the race of their customers with coworkers (e.g., racial saliency) is also strongly associated with increased self-reported discrimination (.48). Finally, bivariate results show that all of the organizational-level variables are statistically associated with increased self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

These bivariate results lend initial credence to the posited importance of workplace discourse towards understanding the processes underlying servers’ proclivity to discriminate against African American patrons. In fact, with one exception all of the workplace discourse measures are associated with self-reported discrimination in the predicted direction. The exception is observed in the relationship between discrimination and minority server representation. In this case, contrary to what I expected, an increase the proportion of minority servers is associated with more self-reported discrimination. In following section, I further explore these bivariate relationships by separately regressing my measure of self-reported discrimination on respondents’ reports of observing racist workplace discourse. In the following analysis, I control for subjects’ demographic characteristics and variables that were shown to be salient predictors of discrimination in
Chapter 7 (e.g., perceptions of blacks tipping/dining behaviors, biases toward customers’ sex, age, presence of kids, and racial prejudices).

**OLS Multivariate Regression Results.** In accordance with Bryk and Raudenbush (1992, p. 201), I employ a “step-up” model building strategy by first utilizing Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses to identify salient level-1 predictors of self-reported discrimination. As such, the OLS models contain only server-level variables. To provide a baseline against which other models can be compared, I begin (Model 1 of Table 8.3) by regressing self-reported discrimination on subjects’ demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, and educational attainment) and salient statistical discrimination controls. In Models 2-4, I test hypotheses 3a-3c by separately assessing the predictive power of individual-level measures of observed racist coworker discourse, racist manager discourse, and use of racialized code words. To discern the independence of these effects, in Model 5, I include all three individual-level discourse measures (e.g., racist coworker comments, racist manager comments, and use of code words). In Models 6-8, I separately assess the moderating role of racial saliency in the relationships between measures of racist workplace discourse and self-reported discriminatory behaviors (Hypotheses 4a-4c). Next, I model the effects (Model 9) of salient interaction terms (i.e., statistically significant interaction terms observed in Models 6-8) on subjects’ reports of

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68 Owing to the small analytic sample used in this analysis, the net importance of the predictor variables will be discussed if they are statistically significant at or beyond an alpha level of .10, as opposed to the conventional .05 level. Unless otherwise noted, standardized coefficients will be referenced throughout this section. Adjusted $R^2$ coefficients will be examined in order to assess the relative explanatory power of the models presented in this analysis.
discriminating while controlling for the effects of observed coworker discrimination. Finally, I present a trimmed model including only variables that determined in previous models to exert statistically salient effects on servers’ self-reported discrimination.

When the effects of subjects’ demographic characteristics and statistical discrimination control variables (e.g., perceptions of blacks’ tipping/dining behaviors, biases against tables with kids, and age preferences) are simultaneously considered, being female (-.12, p<.10), and expressing biases toward tables with children (.14, p<.10) are both marginally significant predictors of discriminatory server behaviors. However, this baseline model is only able to explain 8% of the variability in self-reported discrimination (adjusted $R^2 = .079$).

In Model 2 (Table 8.3), I test my first hypothesis of this analysis (H$_{3a}$), which posits a positive net effect of observing racist coworker comments on self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Results indicate that observing such racist coworker comments is statistically significant (.34, p<.001) and positively associated with self-reported discrimination. When the effects of observed racist coworker discourse are taken into account the effect of being female is reduced to nonsignificance while the effect of biases toward tables with kids remained marginally significant (p<.10). The variables included in Model 2 account for 19% of the variation in servers’ self-reported discrimination and nearly 60% of this explained variation is attributed to the effect of observed racist coworker comments. In fact, observing coworkers making racist comments is the single strongest predictor of self-reported discrimination included in Model 2.

In Model 3 (Table 8.3), I test the second hypothesis of this analysis (H$_{3b}$), by
adding to the baseline model a single variable measuring observed racist comments made by managers. As predicted, subjects’ self-reported discrimination is also strongly contingent on the frequency in which servers’ observe their managers making racist comments (.38, p<.001). Relative to the baseline model (Model 1), taking into account the effects of observing racist manager discourse enhances the model’s predictive power (adjusted $R^2 = .212$). The measure of observed racist manager comments is by itself able to explain 13% of the overall variation in self-reported discrimination. Including the measure of observed racist manager discourse to the model attenuates the effect of being female to a level of nonsignificance but the positive effect of professing biases towards tables with children remained marginally significant (p<.10).

In Model 4, I test the predicted positive effects of observing workplace code words on self-reported discrimination ($H_{3c}$). Consistent with hypothesis $3_c$, observing the use of coded language in the workplace is a salient predictor of subjects’ self-reported discrimination. In fact, the effect of observed coded discourse is the only statistically significant effect observed in Model 4. Relative to the baseline model (Model 1), taking into account the effects of observing coded workplace discourse enhances the model’s predictive power (adjusted $R^2 = .148$). The measure of observed coded workplace language explains 7% of the overall variation in self-reported discrimination and constitutes the strongest effect observed in Model 4 (.29). In Model 5, I simultaneously consider the effects of all three racist workplace discourse measures on servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. Findings indicate that all three racist discourse measures are statistically significant and independent predictors of self-reported discrimination.
discrimination. The additive effects of the variables included in Model 5, explain 28% of the variation in self-reported discrimination ($R^2 = .28$) and 20% of this explained variation is attributed to the three anti-minority workplace discourse variables.

To explore the hypothesized (H$_{4a}$-H$_{4c}$) moderating effects of racial saliency in the relationship between observed racist workplace discourse and self-reported discriminatory behaviors, I separately model the effects of the following interaction terms: Discuss Race X observe coworkers making racist comments (Model 6), Discuss Race X Observe managers making racist comments (Model 7), and Discuss Race X Observe the use of code words (Model 8). Results of Model 6 reveal a statistically significant interaction effect between subjects’ racial saliency and observed racist coworker discourse on respondents’ reported discrimination. Consistent with Hypothesis 4$_a$, and as shown in Figure 8.1a, the effects of observing coworkers making racist comments on self-reported discrimination are stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion. In fact, there is virtually no effect of observed racist coworker comments when subjects’ report refraining from engaging in discussions about the race of their customers. Compared with Model 5, taking into account the main effect of racial saliency and the interaction term results in a modest but statistically significant contribution towards explaining variation in self-reported discrimination ($R^2 = .33$). The effects of observing managers making racist comments continues to be a salient predictor of server discrimination in Model 6, however, the effects of observing coded workplace discourse is reduced to nonsignificance.
Similar results are observed in Model 7, wherein a marginally significant (p<.10) interaction effect between racial saliency and observing managers making racist comments on self-reported server discrimination is observed. As shown in Figure 8.1b, the effects of observing such racist discourse on self-reported discrimination are stronger as a function of the frequency in which subjects’ report engaging in discussions about customers’ race with coworkers (e.g., racial saliency). In Model 7, the main effects of racial saliency, observed racist comments by managers, and observed coded discourse are all statistically significant predictors of self-reported discrimination (p<.10). In Model 8, I assess the moderating effect of racial saliency in the relationship between observed coded workplace discourse and discriminatory server behaviors. Contrary to Hypothesis 4c, the effects of observed coded workplace discourse are not contingent on subjects’ tendency to discuss the race of their customers with coworkers. The main effects of racial saliency and observing racist manager comments, however, continue to be statistically significant predictors of self-reported discrimination in this model.

When the findings presented in Models 2-8 (Table 8.3) are taken as a whole, considerable support is found for the hypothesized relationships between racist workplace discourse and self-reported server discrimination and these relationship are largely moderated by the degree to which servers report customers’ race to be a salient attribute worthy of discussion. These results, however, could reflect the effects of servers observing their coworkers engaging in discriminatory behaviors rather than the posited effects of observing racist workplace discourse. This possibility is statistically explored in Model 9, wherein results of the regression analysis modeling the effects of workplace
discourse and salient interaction effects (racist coworker comments X racial saliency and racist manager comments X racial saliency) on self-reports of racial discrimination are presented, controlling for the individual-level effects of observed discriminatory coworker behaviors.

It should not be surprising that the results of Model 9 (Table 8.3) highlight the predictive power of observing discriminatory coworker behaviors. In fact, the effect of observing discriminatory behaviors is the single strongest predictor of self-reported server discrimination in Model 9 (.34, p<.001). When the effects of observed coworker behaviors are considered, the main effects of observing racist manager comments and racial saliency both exert statistically significant net effects on subjects’ self-reported discrimination, although the interaction term between these two measures is not significant. However, the effect of the interaction between observing racist coworker comments and racial saliency remains a statistically significant predictor of self-reported discrimination even after controlling for the effects of observed discrimination.

Surprisingly, when the effects of observed discrimination and the interaction terms between racial saliency and racist coworker/manager comments are simultaneously considered, the effects of subjects’ perceptions of blacks dining behaviors emerges as a marginally significant (p< .10) predictor of self-reported discrimination.69 The variables

69 This finding suggests that observed discrimination functions as a suppressor variable for perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors. According to Conger (1974, p. 36-37), “A suppressor variables is defined to be a variable which increases the predictive validity of another variable (or set of variables) by its inclusion in a regression equation. This variable is a suppressor only for those variables whose regression weights are increased.” As applied to this case, the effects of subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors emerged as a marginally
in Model 9 account for nearly 40% of the variation in self-reported discrimination ($R^2 = .396$). Finally, in Model 10, I present a trimmed model including only variables shown in previous models to be salient predictors of server discrimination. Compared with Model 9, the variables in Model 10 account for essentially the same amount of variation in self-reported discrimination with roughly half the parameters.

In accordance with the step-up model building approach suggested by Bryk and Raudenbush (1992, p. 201), I have identified the best fitting server-level model in the above OLS regression analyses. I proceed in the following section by utilizing a hierarchical linear modeling statistical technique (HLM) to develop further the restaurant-level model of server self-reported discriminatory behaviors. In short, I “step-up” and assess the effects of organizational-level variables on between-restaurant and within-restaurant variation in server discrimination.

*Hierarchical Linear Modeling Results.* To establish the need for a hierarchical modeling approach, I begin this analysis by conducting a one-way ANOVA model of self-reported server discrimination. If I find there to be significant between-restaurant variation in self-reported discrimination, I proceed by separately modeling the effects of my restaurant-level measures of racialized discourse and minority representation, after group mean centering all of the server-level variables previously shown to be salient predictors of self-reported discrimination. Group mean centering these server-level

significant predictor of self-reported discrimination, in Model 9, because the inclusion of the suppressor (i.e., observed discrimination) functioned to remove a portion of the irrelevant predictive variance of the suppressed variable (i.e., perceptions of blacks’ dining behavior).
variables allows me to examine separately the between-restaurant and within-restaurant variation in self-report server discrimination. For instance, group mean centering server-level variables allows for separate examination of the between-restaurant and within-restaurant effects of racist discourse variables on self-report server discrimination, or examination of the effects of differences across restaurants and differences across people within restaurants in reports of observed racist discourse. I conclude this analysis by modeling the effects of restaurant-level variables on self-reported discrimination after grand mean centering all of the salient level-1 variables. Grand mean centering the server-level variables allow me to determine whether any documented restaurant-level effects on self-reported server discrimination reflect compositional or rather contextual differences across restaurant establishments (Bryke and Raudenbush 1992, pp. 121-123).

Table 8.4 presents the results for the one-way ANOVA model of self-reported server discrimination. The results indicate that there is significant variation in servers’ self-reported discrimination across restaurants ($\chi^2 = 45.42, \text{df} = 17, p < .001$). To determine the exact percentage of the variance in server discrimination that is located between-restaurants an interclass correlation ($\rho$) is calculated using the following formula: $\rho = \frac{\tau_{00}}{\left(\tau_{00} + \sigma^2\right)}$, where $\tau_{00}$ is the restaurant-level variance and $\sigma^2$ is the server-level variance. Results indicate that 11% of the variation in servers’ self-reported discrimination exists between-restaurants ($\rho = .114$).

Table 8.5 shows the HLM results predicting self-reported server discrimination. The first model contains only group mean centered server-level variables that were previously shown to be salient in the OLS regression analysis (Model 10 of Table 8.3).
Model 1 provides a baseline model that controls for within-restaurant processes. Results show that all of the server-level control variables are statistically significant (p < .10). Consistent with the OLS results, subjects who report positive perceptions of African Americans’ dining behaviors are less likely to report discriminating in their service delivery. On the other hand, respondents who report observing workplace discrimination, coded language, or racist manager comments are also more likely to report engaging in above average discriminatory behaviors. Within-restaurant findings also reveal a statistically significant interaction effect between observing racist coworker comments and racial saliency, such that the effects of observing coworkers making racist comments on self-reported discrimination are stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects’ consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion. Comparing the level-one variance estimate in the one-way ANOVA model with the level-1 variance estimate in Model 1 (Table 8.5) indicates that roughly 35% of the within-restaurant variation is accounted for by the server-level control variables included in this analysis. In all of the subsequent models in Table 8.5, the level-1 equation remains the same.

Models 2-4 show the HLM results testing the restaurant-level hypotheses predicting self-reported server discrimination (H5a-H6). In Model 2, I add a single restaurant-level measure of average racist coworker comments. Consistent with Hypothesis 5a, results show that servers who work in restaurants characterized by above average levels of racist coworker comments report engaging in more discrimination on average compared with those who work in restaurants with below average levels of such discourse. Restaurant-level racist coworker comments accounts for 86% of the between-
restaurant variation in servers’ self-reported discrimination and essentially renders the L-2 variance non-significant. In Model 3, I assess the restaurant-level effects of observing managers making racist comments on server discrimination. In accordance with Hypothesis 5b, results reveal a statically significant effect of the restaurant-level measure of racist manager comments, such that servers who work in restaurants where above average levels of racist manager comments are observed, report to engage in more discrimination on average compared with those who work in restaurants with below average levels of such discourse. The restaurant-level measure of racist manager discourse accounts for 61% of the between-restaurant variation in the outcome variable.

In Model 4, I present results assessing the restaurant-level effects of observing coded workplace discourse on servers’ self-reported race-based discrimination. Results reveal support for Hypothesis 5c and indicate that 36% of the between-restaurant variation in discriminatory server behaviors is accounted for by average between-restaurant differences in observed use of coded workplace discourse.

In Model 5, I test Hypothesis 6 by including a restaurant-level measure of the proportional representation of racial minority servers to the baseline server-level model. Contrary to the predicted inverse relationship between minority representation within restaurants and server discrimination, results reveal no statistically significant effect of the percent of minority servers on the outcome variable. As such, Hypotheses 7a-c, predicting that the relationship between minority representation and server discrimination would be mediated by restaurant-level measures of racist discourse, are also not supported (see Model 6). Finally, in Model 6, I simultaneously consider the effects of all
four restaurant-level variables on self-reported server discrimination. In this Model, statistically significant net effects are observed for both restaurant-level measures of racist coworker comments (.408, p < .05) and racist manager comments (.363, p < .10). As expected, the inclusion of all four restaurant-level variables in Model 6 accounts for all of the explainable between-restaurant variation in server discrimination.

The statistically significant effects of the restaurant-level racist discourse measures that were documented in Models 2-4 may be attributed to either contextual (e.g., unique effects of the restaurant culture on individuals’ self-reported discrimination) or compositional (i.e., clustering of more racist employees in some restaurants) differences existing across restaurant establishments (i.e., clustering of more racist employees in some restaurants). To explore further the nature of these restaurant-level effects, I re-estimated Models 2-4 after grand-mean centering all of the server-level variables included in Model 1 of Table 8.5 (analysis not shown). By grand-mean centering the server-level variables the amount of between-restaurant variation attributed to contextual differences across restaurants is directly estimated (see Bryke and Raudenbush 1992, pp. 121-123). Because results revealed no between-restaurant variation in servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors, after controlling for the effects of salient grand-mean centered server-level variables, it can be concluded that the 11% of variation in discriminatory server behaviors that exists across restaurants is attributed to compositional differences or the clustering of servers with certain attributes within some restaurants and not others.
8.5 Summary and Discussion

In this Chapter, I have utilized Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses and Hierarchical Linear Modeling to assess statistically the explanatory power of both relational and structural dimensions of restaurant cultures towards understanding variability in servers’ proclivities to discriminate against African American patrons. By delineating the processes by which anti-black discourse, in particular, encourages discriminatory actions, this analysis’ findings further contribute to the larger literature on everyday racism. Findings, more specifically, add to the growing body of literature on racial discrimination perpetrated by servers in the context of full-service restaurants. In this section, I discuss these results in more detail, highlight the implications of these findings for the restaurant industry, and conclude by discussing the analysis’ limitations along with suggestions for future research.

Discussion of Findings. Existing research has highlighted some of the discursive characteristics of everyday interaction within the context of restaurant establishments (Dirks and Rice 2004; Feagin 1991, 2000; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Rusche and Brewster 2008). These studies have shown that the everyday interaction between restaurant servers, in particular, is often implicitly (i.e., code words) and/or explicitly (i.e., racist comments) racialized in nature. This research, however, constitutes the first attempt at quantitatively assessing the relationship between such anti-black discourse and servers’ discriminatory actions. In accordance with Dirks and Rice (2004; and others), this analysis’ findings demonstrate that server discrimination is indeed a partial manifestation of anti-black workplace discourse among predominately white wait staffs. Specifically,
findings show that observing coded language and/or racist workplace comments by coworkers and/or managers is predictive of increased self-reported discriminatory server behaviors. In fact, the three anti-black discourse measures (code words, racist coworker comments, and racist manager comments) considered together account for nearly 20% of the variation in servers’ discriminatory behaviors.

The effects of racialized restaurant discourse on servers’ behaviors is interpreted as reflecting cultural processes wherein the outward expression of anti-black sentiments in the workplace function to produce and reproduce racially biased categorization schemes in the cognitions of servers (Fiske and Taylor 1984; Schaller 1991; Van Dijk 1995). Thus, when servers encounter African American customers they are likely to access these culturally constructed race-based categorical distinctions to inform the nature of interaction with these customers. Because these categorization schemas are constructed around racial stereotypes that are discursively promulgated throughout the restaurant culture, and to varying degrees internalized by the wait staffs, the stereotypes themselves subsequently become manifested in the quality of service extend to African American customers—a level of quality that is inferior to that which is extended to white patrons. More generally, the use of code words, and other implicit forms of racialized discourse, provide us with a vivid example of what Bonilla Silva (2003) called “racism without racists.” By using coded language to disparage black patrons, servers are able to avoid appearing openly racist (see also Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Mallinson and Brewster 2005), while simultaneously engaging in discriminatory behaviors.

These findings also lend credence to the research of others (e.g., Devine 1989;
Fiske 2000, 2004) who have demonstrated actors’ abilities to resist the adverse effects of prejudice discourses, if they desire to do so. Specifically, results indicate that the effects of observing coworkers making racist comments on self-reported discrimination are stronger as a function of the degree to which subjects’ consider customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion. In fact, respondents who do not consider their customers’ race salient enough to discuss are unaffected by the outward expression of racism by those around them. This finding thus suggests that the effects of racist coworker comments, in particular, on racially motivated discriminate service delivery are largely contingent on servers’ willingness to participate in the production and reproduction of prejudice workplace discourse.

This finding is good news for restaurant officials, as it suggests that racist employees are not fully successful in legitimating and thus institutionalizing race-based service discrimination in restaurant workplaces (see Dirks & Rice 2004). To the contrary, servers who do not consider customers’ race salient and yet observe high levels of racist coworker discourse may, at minimum, implicitly challenge their coworkers’ racist verbal and nonverbal expressions by modeling equity in their own service delivery. If this is the case, with time (and numbers) these individuals may effectively alter the very culture out of which discriminatory server behaviors emerge (see Green 2005).

In addition to the relational or within-restaurant processes associated with restaurant cultures, I also explored some of the structural or restaurant-level processes that have been theoretically implicated in server discrimination. The multilevel component of this analysis constitutes the first examination of between-restaurant
differences in discriminatory server behaviors. As such, these findings make several preliminary contributions to our existing knowledge of race-based discriminatory service delivery within the context of restaurant establishments. First, while there is certainly a considerable amount of variability in restaurant cultures across segments of the industry (e.g., fast food, full-service, cafeteria, etc.), prior research has shown substantial uniformity within segments in terms of core beliefs, values, norms, and language (Woods 1989). Since server discrimination is, in part, a byproduct of such core beliefs, values, norms and organizational language (i.e., culture) it is not surprising that these findings reveal a considerable amount of consistency in discriminatory behaviors across sampled restaurants. In fact, as previously pointed out, only 11% of the variation in sampled subjects’ self-reports of discrimination exist between restaurants.

Second, contrary to my predictions, these findings have determined the limited amount of between-restaurant variation in server discrimination to be a reflection of compositional differences as opposed to contextual differences. In other words, between-restaurant variability in server discrimination exists because of the clustering of servers within those restaurants who report observing higher than average racist discourse. This finding can also be interpreted as an additional piece of positive news for restaurant officials because it indicates that there are no ambient or true contextual effects of restaurant cultures that are plagued with racialized discourse. Servers, for instance, who work in restaurants with high levels of racist discourse are not affected by such an ambiance beyond which they are affected by their own observations or and/or participation in the production and reproduction of such discourse.
Finally, in this analysis I assessed the organizational-level effects of minority numerical representation on discriminatory server behaviors. Contrary to my predictions, an increase in minorities occupying serving positions had no effect on servers’ proclivity to report discriminating in their service delivery. It is possible that there are simply too few minority servers working in restaurants to be influential in shaping the workplace culture. Alternatively, this finding may reflect black servers’ participation in the production and reproduction of the anti-black sentiments evidenced among restaurant wait staffs. For instance, in contrast to Dirks and Rice (2004a, 2004b), who find that white servers purposely exclude their racial minority coworkers from their racist workplace language and joking, anecdotal evidence has suggested that black servers express the same critical sentiments toward black patrons tipping behaviors as expressed by white servers (Large 2006; Mallinson and Brewster 2005; Rusche 2003). An anonymous remark on an online discussion board (www.tipping.org; quoted in Brewster and Mallinson 2009) illustrates this point:

First of all, without exception, each and every restaurant owner and manager with whom we work has made this observation. Most of them have been in food service all of their lives. You should also know that one owner and another manager in different cities happen to be African Americans. We have also spoken

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70 This posting, which was most likely made by a white individual, can also interpreted as constituting a linguistic characteristic of contemporary racism, or racetalk (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2002, 2003; Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Mallinson and Brewster 2005). For instance, by arguing that black servers would corroborate his/her assertions, the speaker implies that he/she is not racist or biased—a strategy of positive self-presentation that also functions to add weight to his/her argument by conveying credibility. Thus, the actor linguistically justifies his/her race-based assertions while simultaneously shielding his/her talk from potential inferences that it is racist in nature. The validity of his/her posting, interpreted in this light, can obviously be called into question. However, as I subsequently discuss, there are reasons to believe that black and white servers harbor similar anti-black sentiments.
to quite a few Black servers as well. It is unanimous among restaurant workers of all races: Most Black people either do not tip at all—or give very low tips.

In light of recent research showing that irrespective of service quality, both black and white restaurant customers tip black servers statistically less than comparable white servers (Lynn et al. 2008; see also Ayres et al. 2005; Brewster and Mallinson 2009), it is likely that black servers may also adhere to some of racial stereotypes that permeate the restaurant workplace. If this is the case, it is understandable why these findings revealed no relationship between an increase in minority representation and discriminatory server behaviors. It is also possible that this null finding reflects a methodological limitation. I was unable to control for the proportion of restaurants’ customer-base whom are racial minorities. An increase in black patronage, for instance, is likely to be observed concomitantly with a greater proportion of minority servers. If this is the case, the positive effects associated with an increase in opportunistic discriminatory behaviors, which accompany an increase in black patronage, may offset any negative effect of minority server representation on servers’ self-reports of discrimination.

71 The zero order correlations between subjects’ race (white / nonwhite) and perceptions of customers’ tipping and dining behaviors highlight the limitations of this statement. Findings show that relative to nonwhites, white respondents report less favorable attitudes towards the tipping and dining behaviors of black restaurant clientele. Thus, the fact that both black and white patrons tip black servers less than they do white servers constitutes only a small piece of an otherwise complex process culminating in black servers adherence to the racial stereotypes that permeate the restaurant workplace.

72 It should also be noted that in all of the multivariate models, the race dummy variable comparing white respondents’ self-reported discrimination with the non-white baseline category failed to ever reach even a marginal level of statistical significance, thus providing further evidence of the predictive insignificance of minority representation in restaurants.
Finally, the statistical insignificance of minority representation may reflect too few minority servers in these data to make a difference. In other words, there may be a threshold above which an increase in minority representation would be sufficient to suppress server discrimination and this threshold may not be observed in these data.\textsuperscript{73} For instance, the overwhelming majority of respondents (80.5\%) worked in restaurants where less than 20\% of their front of the house coworkers were nonwhite. That is, only 17\% (n=3) of the restaurants that participated in this research reported that racial minorities make up more than 20\% of their front of the house labor force. Owing to the above limitations, readers should interpret findings concerning minority representation with caution.

\textit{Implications for the restaurant industry.} As noted previously\textsuperscript{74}, racial discrimination, regardless of the motives, is not only harmful to minority consumers but also detrimental to the success of restaurant establishments. So what should industry leaders do with these findings?\textsuperscript{75} Most restaurants already have policies that forbid discriminatory behaviors. As these findings suggest, however, these policies are largely

\textsuperscript{73} The existence of a threshold effect was statistically explored by adding a squared term for percent minority to Model 5 of Table 8.5. The second order effect of percent minority servers was not statistically significant but the relationship was in the predicted negative direction. Thus, there is reason to believe that a threshold may exist but not observed in these data.

\textsuperscript{74} This is the case for several reasons beginning with reduced minority restaurant patronage. In addition to the potential revenue lost via the reduction in patronage of minority guests, Lynn (2004a) argues that servers’ anti-black attitudes and behaviors also contribute to lawsuits and high server turnover rates in restaurants largely frequented by blacks. These factors, in turn, make markets in predominately black communities unattractive for restaurant development. These consequences are not only economically costly to the restaurant industry but they are also damaging to the industry’s public image.

\textsuperscript{75} Owing to the limitations of this analysis, outlined in the following section, restaurant officials should consider these policy suggestions with caution.
ineffective or simply not being enforced, in part, because management is unable to monitor patron/server interaction with any degree of efficiency (Brewster and Mallinson 2009; Leidner 1993; Lynn 2004a; Ogbonna and Harris 2002; Paules 1991; Scheider, Bowen, Ehrhart, and Holcombe 2000). Owing to the subtlety of contemporary racism, managers would likely not be able to detect most differential service even if they expended a considerable amount of effort trying to do so. As such, with some degree of certainty restaurant officials can conclude that most discriminatory server behaviors go unnoticed, undocumented, unpunished, and thus unaddressed.

Restaurant officials, as previously suggested, will need to direct their attention towards altering the underlying causes of tableside discrimination. As this analysis has shown, discriminate service partially emerges out of the racialized discourse that as I have shown permeates restaurant cultures. Restaurant officials should thus make a concerted effort to eliminate the use of coded, stereotypical, and racist language from the workplace. Specifically, I suggest that industry officials begin working toward developing, implementing, and subsequently enforcing a zero tolerance policy forbidding the use of such language. If employees are observed using such language—and this includes the use of “code words”—they should be reprimanded and potentially even terminated. Aside from situations that warrant the use of race as a descriptive adjective

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76 There is also a possibility that managers would ignore discriminatory server behaviors even if they did detect such behaviors (see Dixon et al. 2002; Slonaker et al. 2007).
77 See Dirks and Rice (2004) for an example of policies forbidding racialized discourse, which according to their respondents are not enforced.
78 Such a policy was an element of a much larger diversity initiative implemented by Denny’s in
(i.e., the black/white/Asian/etc. couple at table nine), I see no reason why servers (or managers) would have any reason to discuss or comment on the race of restaurant customers. If such discussions are taking place, these findings suggest that discrimination is concomitantly occurring. In fact, those observed discussing the race of their customers appear to be the primary perpetrators of discrimination within the restaurant context. Any policy of this sort also requires that managers be held accountable for their role in perpetrating race-based service discrimination.

A sizable minority of sampled subjects reported to hear at least some times their managers making racist comments and this analysis has shown that these comments exert a strong effect on servers’ proclivity to discriminate in their service delivery. Racist behaviors and comments among managers could be reduced by implementing and advertising a system wherein employees’ had the opportunity to anonymously report such behaviors to officials further up the organizational hierarchy without fear of reprisal. Owing to managers’ instrumental role in shaping the ethos of organizations (Simons et al. 2008; Tidball 1988), actively recruiting restaurant executives with a strong commitment to diversity and equality may also be an effective strategy towards curtailing discriminatory server behaviors. In fact, Gilbert and Ivancevich (2000) argue that the success of any diversity program is largely contingent on whether or not the company’s Chief Executive Officer initiated the program. CEOs not only have the authority to make
diversity a priority within the organization but they also are able to allocate resources to support and sustain inclusionary programs.

The implementation of a zero tolerance policy against racialized and stereotypical server/manager discourse is something that industry officials can begin working on immediately and is, in my opinion, a step in the right direction. Eliminating such discourse from the workplace would make it difficult for servers to feel confident that their peers share their racist beliefs and as such, they would have no way of anticipating how their fellow employees and/or managers would react to discriminatory actions. Such a policy is, however, unlikely to eradicate the differential treatment of African American restaurant patrons, in part, because eliminating the outward display of anti-black sentiments will not necessarily eliminate the sentiments. As such, any policy designed to curtail the use of racialized workplace discourse will need to be part of a larger holistic initiative directed towards the cultivation of organizational philosophies centered on the promotion of racial equity in service.79 While delineating the details of what such an initiative should look like is beyond the scope of this discussion, I encourage industry leaders to take action now and not wait for allegations of discrimination to surface.

While most corporate restaurant chains already have diversity programs in place, these programs are directed primarily toward the management and embracement of workforce diversity (e.g., Gilbert and Ivancevich 2000; Iverson 2000; Robinson and

79 While a long-term goal of industry officials should be to eliminate the anti-black attitudes that become manifested in racialized server discourse, considering the history of race relations in the United States, this will obviously be a difficult task to accomplish. However, aside from the daunting task of altering the components of servers’ racial ideologies, which are shaped and sustained by larger structures of societal racism, industry leaders can effectively “engineer” the workplace culture to increase equitable service delivery (see Kunda 1992).
Managing workforce diversity is obviously important, but as these findings suggest, it is alone insufficient towards eradicating or even reducing inequities in the quality of service extended to racial minority restaurant customers. I thus suggest that restaurant leaders incorporate into their existing diversity programs an explicit emphasis on racial equity in service quality. It is particularly important that this emphasis reach and infiltrate the daily working lives of front-line restaurant employees. A multifaceted front-line initiative could effectively promote the sharing and spreading of new status beliefs about minority patrons that do not trigger the conscious or unconscious activation of negative stereotypes. Admittedly, cognitive biases are difficult to dismantle but they can be changed and according to Fiske and Taylor (1984, p. 177) the most common catalyst for such change is being confronted with discrepant information about the categorized “other.” As servers become aware of their own cognitive biases and adherence to racial stereotypes they may also be motivated to suppress the adverse effects of such biases on their behaviors (Devine 1989). Towards this end, restaurant operators should identify and co-opt those servers with a demonstrated commitment to racial equity in customer service. These servers will immediately embrace any equity initiative and as such should be utilized as “change leaders” to frame the initiative in a manner that communicates its importance to initiative resisters (i.e., convey the need and importance of change; see Ford, Heisler, and McCreary 2008, p199). However, despite these potential benefits, an

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80 The program implemented by Denny’s Family restaurant following their 54.4 million dollar 1994 discrimination settlement (see Adamson 2000 for a detailed discussion of this initiative) demonstrates the potential effectiveness of such initiatives. After being an icon of racism in the 1990s, today Denny’s is consistently recognized as being among the best companies in America for Asians, Hispanics, and Blacks to work (Knowledge@Wharton 2006).
explicit emphasis on racial equity in service quality appear to be absent from existing diversity programs in the restaurant industry.

Red Lobster, for instance, is a subsidiary of Darden Restaurants Incorporated and has been recognized for its commitment to diversity (Knowledge@Wharton 2006). However, an analysis of Red Lobster’s Compass reveals no mention of “race” or “diversity.” The absence of any explicit discussion of racial diversity in their Compass is particularly telling given the professed importance of the document. The Compass, according to the Red Lobster, outlines the company’s guiding principles that employees must know, embrace, and recite upon request. The organizational significance of the Red Lobster’s Compass is evidenced in the following description of the document for prospective interns:\(^81\):

You’ll also receive a copy of Red Lobster's call to action, Our Compass. Our Compass articulates our goals for all aspects of our enterprise. Our Compass lets everyone work toward the same goal with the same vision. Your General Manager will review Our Compass often. It’s our way of life at Red Lobster; use all of it—often! To grow and be successful with Red Lobster, learn and live Our Compass.

If a diversity award-winning company, like Darden, is not explicit about the importance of extending high quality service to racial minority patrons one can only speculate that the majority of the full-service restaurant population is also failing to do so. The absence of an explicit emphasis on racial equity at the point of service delivery results in an implicit refusal to acknowledge, discuss, and combat racially motivated discriminate service (see Lynn 2004b). Server discrimination is thus likely to continue.

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until industry leaders make an ideological and monetary investment in the cultural
dissemination of implicit and explicit messages that foster the belief within servers that
satisfying minority customers is not only legally mandated but more importantly a
“worthwhile personal accomplishment” (LeBlanc and Mills 1995, p. 23).

Regardless of the approach taken by industry leaders to reduce the differential
treatment of restaurant guests, the complexities of the issue will make any effort a
difficult task. As such, considerable more research is needed before restaurant officials
can confidently begin implementing wide scale policies and procedures designed to
further ensure that all customers have equal opportunity for enjoyable dining experiences
in our nation’s restaurants. That the current arrangement harms blacks and disturbs their
ability to enjoy pleasurable dining experiences as a matter of course is reason enough to
continue researching racial disparities in service. In the following section, I suggest some
of the potential directions for future research and identify the limitations of this analysis.

8.6 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As with all of the analyses in this dissertation, I rely on a small sample of servers
embedded in a smaller sample of restaurants that were not selected from the national
population of all restaurants and thus, any type of broad generalizations should be made
with caution. Second, it is possible that these results are biased because of subjects’
inclination to report in a socially desirable manner (Blank et al. 2001; also see Bonilla-
Silva and Forman 2000). There are surely respondents who reportedly never discriminate
but in reality do, thereby biasing these results. Moreover, because I measure
discrimination utilizing generic and indirect proxies (i.e., “discrimination based on race,” “discrimination based on likelihood of receiving a fair tip”), the targets of servers self-reported discrimination cannot be determined definitively. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, it is likely that the majority of servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors are directed towards African American diners. However, some respondents may report discriminating according to customers’ race and be speaking primarily about the differential service they extend to Latinos and Mexican American patrons. Likewise, some respondents may have in mind the southern white “redneck” or “bubba” social type when reporting on the frequency in which they discriminate according to patrons’ race (Mallison and Brewster 2005). The indirect measure of racial discrimination (e.g., How often do you give customers poor service because you think they will not tip well?), may also introduce reporting biases, as it is likely to pick up on other customers perceived to be below average tippers (e.g., the elderly) rather than exclusively racial minorities.

In response to these limitations, and as noted in Chapter 7, researchers might consider collecting data via video tape recordings of customer/server interactions. A

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82 One of the most heavily stigmatized nonstandard social dialects, not only historically but also in contemporary America, is Southern vernacular English. As research by Preston (1982, 1993) reveals, Southern English is frequently labeled as “incorrect” and “bad” English; moreover, individuals often transfer their language prejudices about this stigmatized dialect to its speakers. For example, the perception of Southern English speech as slow and incorrect may lead to a perception of the speaker as ignorant or intellectually limited; and the qualities of being ignorant and lazy—in actions, thoughts, and speech—are considered two of the chief indices of the “redneck” white native Southern social type (Reed 1986: 38-43, Hartigan 2003). The Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE) defines “redneck” as a “poor, White, rural Southerner—used with a very wide range of connotations, but now [especially] applied as a [derogatory] term for a White person perceived as ignorant, narrow-minded, boorish, or racist.” DARE does not include an entry for “bubba.” However, the American Heritage Dictionary 4th edition lists it as a regionalism and a slang term and defines it as “a white working-class man of the southern United States, stereotypically regarded as uneducated and gregarious with his peers.”
content analysis of these recordings would permit researchers to accomplish several goals. First, the primary targets of servers’ discriminatory behaviors could be definitively determined. With Hispanics being the largest minority group in the U.S., it is particularly important that researchers begin focusing on the treatment this population is marketplace. Recall from Chapter 5, a sizable number of sampled subjects in this research reported to observe at least some times their coworkers treating Hispanic customers poorly. Discrimination targeted at Hispanic patrons may reflect servers’ animus towards the tipping practices of these patrons (Mallinson and Brewster 2005). Ironically, the limited amount of research that has examined the tipping practices of Hispanic patrons indicates that on average they do not tip less than their white counterparts (Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003). Clearly, further research is need to understand similarities and difference in not only the pervasiveness of discrimination targeting black and Hispanic patrons but also the motivations underlying such differential treatment.

Collecting data via video tape recordings of customer/server interactions would also permit researchers to ascertain the subtle nature (e.g., smiling, joking, etc.) of such discrimination, including the unconscious variability in actors’ facial affect, which emerge out of cognitive biases. By measuring discrimination objectively, researchers could eliminate sources of error associated with reporting biases. An objective measure of server discrimination would also provide the “gold standard” against which the validity of servers’ self-reported behaviors could be judged. Finally, by also ascertaining information about bill and tip size, the effects of discriminatory service on tipping
behaviors could be directly assessed and thereby shed additional light on the causal factors underlying the documented black/white tipping disparity (Brewster and Mallinson 2009; Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2004a, 2004b, 2006).

Owing to the cross sectional nature of these data, researchers could also question the causal relationships delineated in this analysis. While there are theoretical justifications to posit causality in the relationship between racialized workplace discourse and server discrimination, a longitudinal research design is needed to substantiate these findings. If future research determines that variability in subjects’ discriminatory behaviors is a function of changes in the level of observed racialized workplace discourse over time, additional credence can be given to the causal argument presented in this chapter. Ideally, such a design would also have a baseline measure of subjects’ racial ideology prior to gaining employment with the restaurant industry. Controlling for subjects’ global racial ideologies would permit researchers to isolate the effects of workplace specific factors (e.g., racist discourse) on server behaviors from those attributed to larger structures of societal racism.

Future research should also continue working towards identifying and understanding the effects of organizational-level variables on server behaviors. One potentially fruitful line of organizational-level research is to assess the effects of minority representation among restaurants’ clientele on server discrimination. Server discrimination, in part, may be a behavior that emerges out of opportunity. In other words, if a restaurant has a limited number of clientele who are minorities, there is likely to be less racialized discourse and thus less discriminatory behaviors. Alternatively, an increase in clientele who are minorities may function to challenge the stereotypes that support discriminatory server behaviors. While subjects’ adherence to racial stereotypes
can be difficult to dismantle, Fiske and Taylor (1984 p. 171-177) suggest that being confronted with discrepant information (i.e., positive interactions with black patrons) is the most common catalysts for the construction of new non-racist cognitive schemata.

Considering the enduring and changing nature of racism in the U.S. the need for future research on everyday forms of discrimination, in general, will continue to be called for. I encourage future researchers to devote a portion of their energies toward further developing our understanding of tableside racism in particular—an area of inquiry that has only recently been given serious attention. Moreover, because of the complexities inherent in the study of racial inequities, an interdisciplinary and comprehensive study utilizing multiple methods of data collection and multiple levels of analyses is desirable. Such a study could serve as a benchmark for subsequent inquires into everyday racism that unfolds in America’s restaurants. I hope that the current research contributes to the dialogue needed to move research in this area forward.
CHAPTER 9

RESTURANT CULTURE: ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF RACIALIZED WORKPLACE DISCOURSE ON OBSERVED DISCRIMINATORY SERVER BEHAVIORS

9.1 Introduction

To provide a more thorough understanding into racially motivated discriminate service, in this chapter, I assess the power of micro/macro aspects of restaurant cultures to explain variability in subjects’ reports of observing their coworkers treating black and/or Hispanic patrons poorly. Predicting observed server discrimination is important for several reasons. First, modeling the effects of racialized workplace discourse, in particular, on observed discrimination is important because it serves as robustness check on the analysis predicting self-reported discrimination (Chapter 8). The processes by which observed racist workplace discourse contributes to servers’ proclivity to discriminate in their service delivery should theoretically be consistent with regard to subjects’ own behaviors as well as the behaviors of their coworkers. In other words, a server who observes a considerable amount of racist discourse in their restaurant’s culture should not only report discriminating more themselves (relative to others who observe less racialized discourse) but should also report observing more discrimination amongst their coworkers, in part, because their coworkers are being affected by the same micro and macro-level workplace culture processes. As such, I expect that the effects of racist workplace discourse to be similar across both the outcomes modeled in this research.
Second, when responding to questions about the discriminatory behaviors of coworkers some respondents may, as a function of social desirability bias, be projecting their own attitudes and behaviors into their responses to these questions (see Fisher and Tellis 1998). For instance, some respondents may discriminate but will not report doing so because they perceive it to be socially desirable to present themselves as non-biased to researchers (see discussion in section 5.5). When, on the other hand, they are asked to report on the behaviors of similar others (e.g., other servers), they may be inclined do so more honestly because they are able to answer behind “a façade of impersonality (Simon and Simon 1975, p. 586). As such, it is likely that some observed discrimination is in reality self-reported discrimination that respondents are projecting onto their coworkers.

Finally, it is important to note that subjects’ self-reported discrimination, modeled in analysis 3 (Chapter 7 & 8), is discrimination that respondents are consciously aware of in the context of their own behaviors. As such, servers’ self-reports of discrimination are likely to be conservative estimates of actual discriminatory behaviors in restaurants. This is, in part, the case because servers’ self-reports do not reflect discriminatory behaviors that emerge out of subjects’ unconscious cognitive biases (Kawakami et al. 2002; Bargh et al. 1996; Feagin 2006). If this is the case, these respondents may report with honesty that they do not discriminate when in reality they do so unconsciously. However, respondents’ unconscious discriminatory behaviors can potentially be observed and

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83 Research, for instance, has documented statistical differences in whites’ facial expressions during inter-race interactions, such that when interacting with African Americans white subjects display fewer positive facial expressions (Vanman et al. 1997; Vanman et al. 2004; Vrana and Rollock 1998). It is likely that astute servers would be able to recognize some of the subtle differences in their coworkers’ behaviors when waiting on black or Hispanic patrons.
thus reported by their coworkers. In this sense, discrimination driven by unconscious manifestations of cognitive biases should emerge in respondents’ reports of observed discriminatory behaviors thereby adding to a more general understanding of the everyday racism in restaurants.

In the following section, I describe the measurement of all the variables analyzed in this chapter. In section 9.3, I present both bivariate and multivariate results predicting observed server discrimination. Finally, in section 9.4, I conclude with a brief summary of this analysis findings.

9.2 Measurement of Variables

Dependent Variable. Observed racial discrimination is measured with two survey questions asking respondents to report the frequency in which they observe “poor treatment of black/Hispanic customers by coworkers.” Response categories for these items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Subjects’ responses to the these two items were summed and averaged to create a scale ranging from 1 to 4 with a value of 1 indicating no observed discriminatory behavior and a value of 4 indicating that the respondent always observe Hispanic and Black customers being treated poorly by their coworkers. The internal reliability of the responses is quite high (alpha=.86).

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84 Refer to Chapter 8 for a detailed description of the measurements of variables in this analysis.
85 Nine cases were missing data on the question ascertaining the frequency in which coworkers are observed treating black customers poorly while twelve cases were missing data on the questions assessing the frequency in which coworkers are observed treating Hispanic guests poorly. For these cases values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002), wherein values for missing cases were predicted using information from two related questions ascertaining the degree to which subjects perceive that their coworkers treat customers poorly because of the customers’ race and/or because they feel they will not be tipped fairly.
Workplace Culture Variables.

To assess the effects of workplace culture variables on observed discrimination, I rely on three survey questions that ascertain the frequency in which subjects’ observe racialized discourse in their workplaces (racist coworker/manger comments and the use of code words). Response categories for all the three of the questions measuring racist workplace discourse were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). In an attempt to demarcate the effects of racialized workplace discourse on observed discrimination from those attributed to subjects’ own prejudiced behaviors, I also include a measure of subjects’ self-reported discrimination in this analysis. Self-reported racial discrimination is measured with two items. First, subjects were asked to report the frequency in which their service varies according to the race of their customers. Second, subjects were asked to report how often they “give customers poor service because” they “think they will not tip well?” Response categories for both items were never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). Subjects’ responses to these questions were summed and averaged to create a scale ranging from 1 (never discriminate) to 4 (always discriminate). The internal reliability of the self-reported discrimination measure is acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).\(^{86}\)

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\(^{86}\) Five cases were missing data on both items used to create the scale measuring self-reported discrimination. For these cases values were imputed using an ordinary least squares regression technique (see Cohen et al. 2002). Specifically, values for missing cases were predicted using information from three questions ascertaining subjects’ racial preferences in their customers. Subjects were asked to report if they prefer to serve customers who are the same race as themselves (=0), a different race (=0), or had no preference (=1). Subjects were also asked to report the race of their ideal and least ideal table. These latter two questions were recoded to reflect a racial preference (=0) versus no preference (=1). The three dummy variables were all
For the Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) component of this analysis, organizational-level measures of each of the three questions ascertaining evidence of anti-minority workplace discourse were constructed. Numerical representation of minority servers, also an organizational-level variable, is determined by dividing the number of racial minority servers by the total number of servers within each of the 18 sampled restaurants.  

Control Variables. In this analysis, I statistically control for the effects of demographic variables that research implicates in predicting racial prejudices and discriminatory behaviors—respondents’ sex, race, educational attainment, and age (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Feagin 2006, p. 252; Feagin 2001; Quillian 1996). Respondents’ sex is dummy coded as female (=1) and male (=0). Respondents’ race is dummy coded as white (=1) and non-white (=0) (i.e., black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, and other) \(^{88}\). Respondents’ educational attainment is treated as a continuous variable and response categories include less than high school (=1), high school (=2), some college—no degree (=3), Associates Degree (=4), Bachelors degree (=5), and Masters Degree (=6).
I also control for the effects of subjects age in years, as it has been previously shown to be positively associated with anti-black attitudes and behaviors (Bonilla-Silva 2003).  

9.3. Bivariate and Multivariate Results

Table 9.1 provides summary statistics for the analytic sample used for this analysis. All of the statistics presented in Table 9.1 reflect the imputations made for cases missing data on both independent and the dependent variables. The imputation procedures yielded an analytic sample consisting of 193 individuals working as restaurant servers in the summer of 2004. As shown in Table 9.1, the average respondent not only self-reports to engage in discriminatory behaviors but also to at least some times observe their coworkers treating minority customers poorly.

Bivariate Results. Table 9.2 presents zero order correlations for all the variables in this analysis. As evident in table 9.2, and consistent with the bivariate findings presented in Chapter 7 & 8, the only demographic characteristic statistically associated with server discrimination is the sex of the respondent (p<.05). In this case, females not only self-reported less discrimination but also are less likely to observe their coworkers engaging in such behaviors. Results in Table 9.2 also reveal statistically strong relationships between subjects’ reports of observing workplace discrimination and variables measuring racialized workplace discourse. Specifically, observing racist coworker comments (.58), racist manager comments (.31), or coded words (.22) in the workplace are all associated

89 Variable mean values were used to impute values for six cases with missing data on the educational attainment variable and eight cases on the age variable.
with increased observed discriminatory server behaviors. Theses bivariate results also show that all of the organizational-level variables measuring racialized discourse are statistically associated with increased observed discriminatory behaviors.

These bivariate results parallel those presented in Chapter 8 and thus additional credence is given to the posited importance of workplace discourse towards understanding the processes underlying servers’ proclivity to discriminate against African American patrons. In following section, I further explore these bivariate relationships by separately regressing, my measure of observed discrimination on respondents’ reports of observing racist workplace discourse. In the following analysis, I only control for subjects’ demographic characteristics.

*OLS Multivariate Regression Results.* I conduct multivariate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses on the sample data to assess the power of server-level racialized workplace discourse measures to explain variability in servers’ reports of observing their coworkers treat Hispanic or African American customers poorly. To provide a baseline against which other models can be compared, I begin (Model 1 of Table 9.3) by regressing observed discrimination on subjects’ demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, and educational attainment). In Models 2-4, I test hypotheses 8a-8c by separately assessing the predictive power of observed racist coworker discourse, racist manager discourse, and use of racialized code words. To

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⁹⁰ Owing to the small analytic sample used in this analysis, the net importance of the predictor variables will be discussed if they are statistically significant at or beyond an alpha level of .10, as opposed to the conventional .05 level. Unless otherwise noted, standardized coefficients will be referenced throughout this section. Adjusted $R^2$ coefficients will be examined in order to assess the relative explanatory power of the models presented in this analysis.
discern the independence of these effects, in Model 5, I include all three discourse measures (e.g., racist coworker comments, racist manager comments, and use of code words). In Models 6, I add a single variable measuring subjects’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

When the effects of subjects’ demographic characteristics are considered, being white (-1.13, p<.10) and female (-1.15, p<.05) are both marginally statistically significant predictors of observed discrimination. However, this baseline model is only able to explain 2% of the variability in observed discriminatory server behavior (adjusted $R^2 = .024$). In Model 2 (Table 9.3), I add a single variable measuring the frequency in which subjects’ report observing their coworkers making racist comments. As expected, and consistent with $H_{8a}$, results indicate that observing racist coworker comments is statistically significant (.34, p<.001) and positively associated with observing coworkers treating Hispanic/Black patrons poorly. In fact, this variable alone is able to explain roughly 33% of the variability in observed discrimination (adjusted $R^2 = .351$). Both the race and gender dummy variables continue to be statistically significant predictors in Model 2.

In Model 3 (Table 9.3), I add to the baseline model a single variable measuring observed racist comments made by managers. As predicted ($H_{8b}$), subjects’ reports of observing their coworkers treat minority patrons poorly is also strongly contingent on the frequency in which they observe their managers making racist comments (.29, p<.001). Relative to the baseline model (Model 1), taking into account the effects of observing racist manager discourse enhances the model’s predictive power (adjusted $R^2 = .101$).
Including the measure of observed racist manager discourse to the model slightly attenuates the effects of race and gender, although both variables continue to be marginally significant (p<.10). In Model 4, I assess the effects of observing workplace code words on observed discrimination (H8c). As predicted, observing coded language in the workplace is also a salient predictor of subjects’ reports of observing the poor treatment of Black/Hispanic patrons. Relative to the baseline model (Model 1), taking into account the effects of observing coded workplace discourse enhances the model’s predictive power (adjusted R² = .068).

In Model 5, I simultaneously consider the effects of all three racist workplace discourse measures. Results indicate that there are no net of effects of observing code words and racist manager comments on observed discrimination after controlling for observed racist coworker comments. In fact, comparing Models 2 & 5 demonstrates that adding measures of racist manager comments and use of code words adds nothing to Model’s predictive power. Finally, in Model 6, I add a single measure of subjects’ self-reported discrimination. Results show that observing coworkers treating minority customers poorly is strongly contingent on subjects proclivity to discriminate themselves (.27, p<.001) but the frequency in which they observe their coworkers making racist comments continues exert statistically significant net effects (.50, p<.001). Results in Model 6 thus demonstrate that the effects of observed racist workplace discourse are not confounded by subjects’ racial prejudices and actions. The additive effects of the variables included in Model 6, explain 40% of the variation in observed server discrimination (R² = .399) and all but 7% of this explained variation is attributed to the
measure of observed racist coworker comments. In the following section, I assess the between-restaurant differences in observed server discrimination while holding within restaurant processes constant.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling Results. The results of the one-way ANOVA model, in Table 9.4, indicate that there is significant between-restaurant variation in servers’ reports of observing the poor treatment of Hispanic and black customers ($\chi^2 = 46.92$, df = 17, $p < .001$). To determine the exact percentage of the variance in observed server discrimination that is located between-restaurants an interclass correlation ($\rho$) is calculated using the following formula: $\rho = \tau_{00} / (\tau_{00} + \sigma^2)$, where $\tau_{00}$ is the restaurant-level variance and $\sigma^2$ is the server-level variance. Results indicate that 13% of the variation in observed server discrimination exists between-restaurants ($\rho = .125$).

Table 9.5 shows the HLM results predicting observed discrimination. The first model contains only server-level variables that were previously shown to be salient in the OLS regression analysis. All of the server-level variables included in Model 1 were group mean centered to allow for separate examination of the between-restaurant and within-restaurant effects of racist discourse variables on observed discrimination. Consistent with the OLS results, subjects’ who report observing racist coworker comments and who self-report to discriminate are more likely to report observing their coworkers treating Hispanic/Black customers poorly. On the other hand, female and white respondents report observing less discrimination compared with male and nonwhite respondents. In all of the subsequent models in Table 9.5, the level-1 equation remains constant.

Models 2-5 show the HLM results testing the restaurant-level hypotheses
predicting observed server discrimination (H_{9a} \text{-} H_{10}). In Model 2, I add a single restaurant-level measure of average racist coworker comments. Consistent with Hypothesis 9a, results show that servers who work in restaurants characterized by above average levels of racist coworker comments report observing more discrimination on average compared with those who work in restaurants with below average levels of such discourse. Not surprisingly, the restaurant-level measure of racist coworker comments is able to account for all of the variation in observed discrimination that exist between-restaurants. I also find support for hypotheses H_{9b} \text{-} H_{10}, positing restaurant-level effects of observing racist manager comments and use of coded workplace argot. Findings show that servers who work in restaurants where above average levels of racist manager comments or coded language, also report to on average observe more discrimination compared with those who work in restaurants with below average levels of such discourse. Neither of these restaurant-level measures, however, renders the between-restaurant variation statistically insignificant. The restaurant-level measure of racist manager comments and coded argot account for 32% and 37%, respectively, of the between-restaurant variation in observed discrimination.

In Model 5, I test Hypothesis 10 by including a restaurant-level measure of the proportional representation of racial minority servers to the baseline server-level model. Contrary my prediction and consistent with analyses predicting self-reported discrimination, minority representation in the front of the house of restaurants is not predictive of observed server discrimination. As such, I also fail to find support for Hypotheses 11_{a-c} (see Model 5). Finally, in Model 6, I simultaneously consider the
effects of all four restaurant-level variables on servers’ reports of observing their coworkers treating Hispanic/black customers poorly. Considering the magnitude of the restaurant-level effects of observing racist coworker comments, it is not surprising that this is the only statistically significant restaurant-level effect observed in this model.

As was the case in the previous analysis predicting self-reported discrimination (Chapter 8), the documented effects of the restaurant-level racist discourse measures may be attributed to either contextual (e.g., unique effects of the restaurant culture on individuals’ self-reported discrimination) or compositional (i.e., clustering of more racist employees in some restaurants) differences existing across restaurant establishments. To explore further the nature of these restaurant-level effects, I re-estimated the baseline model after grand-mean centering all of the server-level variables, which were determined to be salient in the OLS analysis (analysis not shown). By grand-mean centering the server-level variables the amount of between-restaurant variation attributed to contextual differences across restaurants is directly estimated (see Bryke and Raudenbush 1992, pp. 121-123). Contrary to my initial predictions, results revealed no between-restaurant variation in observed server discrimination, after controlling for the effects of salient grand-mean centered server-level variables, and as such it can be concluded that the 13% of variation in observed discrimination that exists across restaurants is attributed to compositional differences or the clustering of servers with certain attributes within some restaurants and not others.
9.4 Summary and Discussion

To gain further insights into server discrimination, I have utilized Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses and Hierarchical Linear Modeling to identify salient predictors of subjects’ reports of observing their coworkers treating Hispanic/black customers poorly. Findings indicate that variability in subjects’ reports of observing their coworkers behaving with racial prejudice is largely contingent on their awareness of stereotypical and racist restaurant argot. Specifically, respondents who report observing racist workplace discourse, including the use of coded language, also report observing their coworkers treating Hispanic and black customers poorly. Not surprising, these findings also show that restaurants wherein there is high levels of observed racialized discourse also have on average higher levels of discriminatory server behaviors. While these findings add to our knowledge of everyday racism within the context of full-service restaurants, there are limitations unique to the analysis that readers should note.

First, asking people to report on others’ behavior can lead to bias results. Subjects’ political and racial ideologies are likely to affect their interpretation of what constitutes “poor treatment” or “racist comments.” Moreover, it is difficult to speculate how subjects’ cognitively demarcate their coworkers’ talk and actions. For instance, subjects may interpret racist comments about blacks as an indication of the poor treatment these customers are receiving and yet never actually observe their coworkers behave discriminatorily. Thus, a portion of the documented predictive power of observed racialized workplace discourse is likely to be a manifestation of subjects’ failure to
discern their coworkers’ prejudiced discourse (e.g., racist comments and use of code words) from their discriminatory treatment of black and Hispanic customers.\textsuperscript{91}

These limitations aside, the findings presented in this analytical chapter lend additional credence to those presented in Chapter 8. First, like self-reported discrimination, these findings highlight the importance of workplace language as a mechanism producing and reproducing patterns of racial inequities in customer service within the context of full-service restaurant establishments. Second, consistent with the analysis predicting self-reported discrimination, this analysis also reveals a negligible amount of variation in server discrimination across restaurants. In fact, the similarity in between-restaurant variation in self-reported discrimination (11.4%) and observed discrimination (12.5%) provides further support for Woods’ (1989) contention that restaurant cultures are “more alike than different.”

Moreover and in accordance with the previous analysis, the between-restaurant variation that does exist reflects compositional as opposed to contextual differences. In other words, because some restaurants have comparatively high levels of racialized discourse these establishments also have on average higher levels of reported poor treatment of black and Hispanic customers. Finally, these findings underscore the explanatory insignificance of minority proportional representation towards understanding

\textsuperscript{91} This source of reporting error, however, would not logically affect the documented relationship between observing racist managerial comments and observed poor treatment of black/Hispanic patrons. Owing to the documented statistical effect of my measure of racist manager comments on the outcome variable it appears that, the biases that emerge as a consequence of subjects failure to differentiate prejudice discourse and discriminatory behaviors are negligible and isolated to individual-level measures of racist coworker comments and observed use of code words.
server discrimination. However, as I have mentioned previously, readers should interpret this findings with caution. The statistical insignificance of minority representation towards explaining between-restaurant variability in servers’ reported discrimination may reflect methodological (i.e., failure to control for racial composition of customers) and/or data (too few minorities to ascertain if there is a threshold above which minority presence makes a difference) limitations.

Owing to subjects’ proclivity to project their own attitudes and behaviors onto their coworkers and the unconscious manifestations of subjects’ cognitive biases, the findings presented in this chapter should be considered in concert with those presented in the Chapter 8. Considering these findings together facilitates for a more holistic understanding into the characteristics of restaurant cultures that are responsible for producing and sustaining racial disparities in customer service.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT EVERYDAY RACISM IN THE CONTEXT OF FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

10.1 Introduction

Despite considerable progress towards eradicating racial inequities in the United States (Tomaskovic-Devey 1993; Tomaskovic-Devey, Mason, and Zingraff 2004; Fiske 2000), racial minorities continue to experience disparate treatment, across a variety of contexts, relative to their white counterparts. In some cases, the discrimination that racial minorities encounter is overt and unmistakably driven by racial animus. Such blatant examples of disparate treatment provide us with periodic reminders of the legally sanctioned racism that characterized the Jim Crow era of our nation’s history. While the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has effectively curtailed much of these obvious manifestations of racism, the subtle, covert, and otherwise less obvious manifestations continue to permeate the institutions of our society (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Coates 2008).

Racial minorities are particularly vulnerable to such subtle and covert forms of discriminatory treatment when engaging in everyday commercial transactions (Feagin and Sikes 1994; Feagin 1991, 2000). Surprisingly, however, there has been comparatively little systematic research into the extent and nature of racial discrimination in the context of everyday consumption (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2006; Siegelman 1998, p. 70; Yinger 1998). The dearth of scholarship on everyday racism (see Esssed 1991) in
such settings is particularly apparent in the context of restaurant establishments wherein incidents of racial discrimination continue to surface (Carton and Kleiner 2001, p. 128; Curry and Kleiner. 2005; Riesch and Kleiner 2005; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, and Bylsma 2003).

In response to the relative dearth of extant studies on race-based consumer discrimination in restaurant settings, this research has analyzed survey responses from 200 restaurant servers to ascertain the extent and nature of restaurant servers’ proclivity to discriminate against their racial minority customers—particularly African Americans. I specifically explored the following broad research questions:

3. How prevalent is anti-black discourse and discriminatory behaviors among restaurant servers?

4. What are the causal factors implicated in discriminatory server behaviors?

In the next section of this chapter, I review this study’s findings and conclude in section 10.3 with a few final remarks on this study’s findings.

10.2 Summary of Study Findings

In response to the relative absence of empirical studies on race-based consumer discrimination within restaurant settings, I conducted four separate analyses assessing not only the pervasiveness of anti-minority server sentiments and actions—anti-black in particular—but also the causal processes underlying their proclivity to extend service that is informed by customers’ race. In the following paragraphs, I provide a brief summary of each of these four analyses.
Pervasiveness of Anti-Minority Sentiments and Actions

In my first analysis, I examined the pervasiveness of anti-minority discourse within restaurants and discriminatory behaviors among servers. I also explored servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors. I expected to find evidence of racialized discourse and discriminatory server behaviors as well as reports of negativity towards blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors. A considerable amount of support was found for these predictions. Specifically, most sampled subjects reported to at least sometimes observe racialized and stereotypical argot in their place of employment. In fact, very few respondents reported to never observe such discourse (n=20, 10.5%). I also found both self-reported and observed discriminatory behaviors to be moderately common among restaurant servers. Nearly three-quarters (73.5%) of sampled subjects reported that they discriminate racially in their service delivery or observe their coworkers doing so. This finding demonstrates that a sizable number of customers are receiving service in restaurant establishments that is unlawfully informed by their race.

This analysis also adds to our existing knowledgebase by examining servers’ perceptions of black parties’ tipping behaviors relative to comparable white parties’ (e.g., age, gender, party size, etc.). I found support for existing studies that have documented negative server perceptions toward the tipping practices of black patrons (Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004; also see Lynn and Graves 1996; Lynn, Le, and Sherwyn 1998; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Lynn 2004a, 2004b). I also found that servers’ negativity towards African Americans is not limited to issues surrounding tipping but rather extend to blacks’ dining behaviors. While there is extant anecdotal
evidence suggesting that black patrons are perceived by servers to be comparatively more difficult to wait on, this study constitutes the first statistical assessment of such claims. The validity of such claims, however, remains unclear. It is likely that negative server perceptions reflect racial prejudice rather than an empirical reality (see Shuptrine and Wenglorz 1980; Singh 1990). Findings from this analysis, taken as a whole, reveal a moderate amount of anti-black server discourse and perceptions, which are accompanied by self-reported and observed discriminatory behaviors.

Statistical Discrimination Analysis Results

As discussed in Chapter 3, servers are economically reliant on tips (Azar 2003; Bulter and Skipper 1980; Lynn 2006a), and as such, there were theoretical grounds for expecting servers’ to discriminate statistically in their service delivery according to perceived racial differences in likelihood that service encounters will end profitably. Existing research—substantiated in the first analysis of this study (Chapter 5)—has highlighted two primary reasons why African American patrons, in particular, are perceived by servers to be comparatively less profitable to wait on. They are perceived to be below average tippers (Harris 1995; Lynn 2000; Noll and Arnold 2004; Lynn and Graves 1996; Lynn, Le, and Sherwyn 1998; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Lynn 2004a, 2004b) and to be comparatively more difficult customers to wait on (see Dirks and Rice 2004b; Mallinson and Brewster 2005).

These negative perceptions were theoretically posited to cause servers to characterize their relationships with black patrons as inequitable (Adams 1963, 1965; also see Cook and Hegtvedt 1983; Greenberg 1982). In response to feelings of inequity, servers were
predicted to discriminate statistically (Ayres, Vars, and Zakariya 2005; Foschi, Lai, and Sigerson 1994; Ridgeway 1997; Waldinger and Lichter 2003) in their service delivery according to customers’ race. In this analysis, I assess the explanatory power of the theoretically informed predictions concerning the relationships between servers’ perceptions of African Americans’ tipping and dining behaviors and self-reported discriminatory behaviors.

Consistent with my predictions, I found that servers who express more positivity toward the tipping and dining behaviors of black diners do indeed self-report less discriminatory behaviors. This relationship was observed net of a host of other variables measuring observable tableside factors that servers may use to inform the quality of service they provide to their guests (e.g., customers gender, age, presence of children, etc.). The explanatory power of the two variables measuring servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors, however, is modest. In fact, perceptions of blacks’ tipping practices and dining behaviors only explain roughly 3% and 2%, respectively, of the overall variation in self-reported discrimination. Moreover, when considering the effects of subjects’ perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors, I found that the inverse relationship was mediated by subjects’ racial prejudices. It is thus possible that the initial effect of perceptions of blacks’ dining behaviors was an artifact of subjects’ adherence to racial stereotypes that develop external to the workplace and not, as I posited, a perceived rational adaptation to the economic uncertainty inherent in the institution of tipping. Consistent with this possibility are findings from a large body of attitudinal studies highlighting the persistence and historical fluidity in the way racial stereotypes are
expressed and justified by the white majority (Apostle, Glock, Piazza, and Suelzle 1983; Bobo 2001; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Bobo and Smith 1998; Bonilla Silva 2002, 2003). In sum, results from this analysis demonstrate limited utility of a statistical discrimination framework towards understanding variability in servers’ discriminatory behaviors.

Restaurant Culture Analysis Results Predicting Self-Reported Discrimination

In this analysis, I examined the effects of workplace culture on self-reported discrimination. I was specifically interested in assessing the effects of racialized workplace discourse on servers’ proclivity to report providing discriminate service according to the race of their patrons. The literature reviewed in Chapter 4—and substantiated in analysis 1—provides evidence of racist and stereotypical discourse within restaurant workplaces (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Mallinson and Brewster 2005; Rusche and Brewster 2008). Such discourse functions to disseminate stereotypes about African Americans throughout the subculture of serving and consequently servers’ interactions with black customers become consciously and unconsciously informed by such stereotypes. Anti-black discourse was thus predicted to shape the way in which servers categorize and subsequently interact with their black patrons. I also expected this relationship to be nonadditive, such that the effects of racist comments and coded argot would be stronger as a function of the degree to which servers’ considered customers’ race a salient attribute worthy of discussion.

I found considerable support for these predictions. Specifically, I found that observing racist manager comments, racist coworker remarks, and coded workplace argot
were all salient predictors of self-reported discrimination. The additive effects of these measures of racialized workplace discourse accounted for 20% of the overall variation in servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. As predicted, the positive effects of observing racist comments by managers or coworkers on subjects’ reports of discriminating were moderated by the saliency to which subjects considered their customers’ race. In fact, respondents who do not consider their customers race a salient attribute worthy of discussion are not affected by the racist workplace discourse that surrounds them. However, contrary to my predictions the saliency to which subjects considered their customers’ race did not moderate the relationship between observed use of coded workplace argot and self-reported discrimination. To the contrary, the main effects of observing coded discourse were shown to no longer be statistically important once taking into account the conditional effects of observing racist coworker comments. Subjects who discuss the race of their customers with coworkers thus appear to also interpret and report coded language as racist comments thereby rendering the effect of coded argot insignificant.

In this analysis, I also utilized hierarchical linear modeling to explore between-restaurant variability in servers’ self-reported discriminatory behaviors. In accordance with existing research (e.g., Woods 1989), I found little variability in self-reported discrimination across restaurants. In fact, only 11% of the overall variation in server discrimination was located between-restaurants. All of this variation was subsequently shown to be attributed to the clustering of racially prejudiced servers, evidenced in higher average levels of racialized discourse, in some restaurants more than others (i.e.,
compositional effect). Finally, drawing off theories of organizational inequality, I predicted an inverse relationship between minority representation and self-reported discrimination. Contrary to my expectations, the proportional representation of minorities working in front of the house positions was not predictive of server discrimination. As discussed in Chapter 8, this null finding may reflect black servers’ participation in the spreading, as opposed to challenging, the anti-black sentiments evidenced among restaurant wait staffs (Dirks and Rice 2004a, 2004b; Large 2006; Mallinson and Brewster 2005; Rusche 2003). In fact, because back servers are tipped comparatively less by their same-race counterparts (Lynn et al. 2008; see also Ayres et al. 2005), it is possible that under some conditions they will be even more critical of African American diners relative to their white coworkers. Alternatively, the non-significant minority representation effect may reflect the methodological shortcoming of failing to control for the proportion of restaurants’ customer-base whom are racial minorities.

*Restaurant Culture Analysis Results Predicting Observed Discrimination*

To provide a more thorough understanding of racially motivated discriminate service in restaurants, in this analysis, I examined the effects of racialized discourse and minority representation on servers’ reports of observing their coworkers treating black and/or Hispanic patrons poorly. The processes by which observed racist workplace discourse and minority representation contributes to servers’ proclivity to discriminate in their service delivery should theoretically be consistent with regard to subjects’ own
behaviors as well as the behaviors of their coworkers. As such, I expected to find similar results as those documented in the previous analysis predicting self-reported discrimination.

I found considerable support for my expectations and in doing so demonstrate that the effects of the micro/macro characteristics of restaurant cultures that I assess are quite robust. Specifically, I found a positive relationship between observing stereotypical and racist restaurant argot and subjects’ reports of observing their coworkers treating Hispanic and black customers poorly. In accordance with the analysis predicting self-reported discrimination, these findings also demonstrate that restaurants wherein there are high levels of observed racialized discourse also have on average higher levels of observed discriminatory server behaviors. Also consistent with analysis three, but contrary to my initial expectations, I found no relationship between minority proportional representation and servers’ reports of observing their coworkers treating black and/or Hispanic customers poorly.

10.3 Concluding Remarks on Everyday Racism in Full-Service Restaurants

In response to the relative absence of studies on everyday racism (Essed 1991), in general, and “tableside racism” (see Rusche and Brewster 2008), in particular, I have examined empirically the pervasiveness and predictors of server discrimination. Findings

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92 In contrast to self-reported discrimination, observed server discrimination is not influenced by unconscious behaviors that emerge out of cognitive biases (Bargh et al. 1996; Kawakami et al. 2002; Feagin 2006). In other words, discriminatory server behaviors may be observed even when the perpetrators are not aware of their own actions.
provide convincing evidence of the continuing significance of race in the United States (Feagin 1991). First and foremost, results show that despite 1964 legislation making it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race in settings of public accommodations (Title II, Civil Rights Act of 1964), racial minorities—particularly African Americans—continue to encounter disparate treatment while dining in restaurant establishments; a phenomenon commonly referred to as dining while black or tableside racism.

Considering the historical enduring nature of racism in the U.S., it is perhaps not surprising that federal antidiscrimination legislation continues to be subverted. When describing store and bar owners immediately after Jim Crow segregation was overturned, Timothy Tyson (2004), for instance, quoted an interviewee who explained: “They didn’t just open the door up and say, ‘Y’all come in, integration done come.’ Somebody was bruised and kicked and knocked around — you better believe it.” While African Americans are, by and large, fortunately no longer subjected to such blatant forms of maltreatment they nevertheless continue to be met with disrespect and inferior service of the subtle and covert sort that exemplifies the contemporary racial ideology of colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2003; Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000).

Within the ideology of colorblindness, racism and discrimination are seen as past realities for black Americans (Gallagher 2003; Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2003). Consequentially, contemporary racism is perhaps more damaging in some ways than the overt racism of the past (Gallagher 2003). If people, including sympathetic whites, believe that all racial barriers to success (and to dining privileges) have been removed, the blame for lack of success (and poor service) can thus be attributed to “anything but
race.” Indeed, as Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2003, p.62) has shown, the denial of race as a salient attribute affecting people’s lives is a common discursive move utilized by whites to explain away racial disparities in a colorblind fashion. Under this ideological rubric, racially homogenous neighborhoods, schools, and jobs no longer reflect people’s race but rather their economic circumstances—circumstances that blacks could improve if they only worked harder and made better decisions. Within the context of such a laissez-faire ideology, the racialized nature of the social order appears justified (see Bobo 2001; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Bobo and Kluegel 1997).

Not surprisingly, the color blindness and laissez-faire characteristics of the contemporary racial ideology are also evident in the context of tableside racism. White restaurant servers discriminate against African American customers, not because of racial bigotry, but rather because black patrons are “difficult to wait on” and “don’t tips.” On the surface, such claims make sense and have sound theoretical roots. Servers are after all economically dependent on tips for the majority of their income. While the economic motivations underlying discrimination are not completely moot, the documented relative insignificance of servers’ perceptions of blacks’ tipping and dining behaviors towards explaining their confessed discriminatory actions speaks to the validity of such claims. Rather than open and honest concerns about their economic livelihoods, the “anything but race” rationalizations (e.g., blacks don’t tip, blacks are demanding, etc.) that characterize the dominant colorblind, laissez-faire racist ideology of today can largely be interpreted as rhetorical moves utilized by white servers to “mend racial fissures, to restore a color-blind image when whiteness seeps through discursive cracks” (Bonilla-Silva 2003, p. 70).
A female server in Dirks and Rice’s (2004a, p. 43) study provided a very pointed illustration of the semantics underlying the “anything but race” discursive move. The server had conveyed a commitment to equality and professed favorable views towards black clientele. Later in the interview, however, the researchers learned that she had refused to wait on a table of two black women who on an earlier occasion allegedly “ran her” and “returned everything to the kitchen.” The researchers probed her for additional insights into her confessed act of discrimination. After pausing for a moment the server exclaimed, “It’s not ‘cause they’re black! It’s because they’re a pain in my ass!” In the context of a laissez-faire racist ideology, this server obviously felt that her refusal to wait on these black women was justified and by attributing her blatant and unlawful discriminatory behavior to nonracial factors, she was able to maintain herself as nonprejudiced and colorblind despite her confessed racial biases and discriminatory behaviors.93 The use of code words is yet another vivid illustration of the dominant colorblind ideology surrounding race in America (Feagin 2006) that is mirrored in the restaurant context. By using racial coded language, servers are able to avoid appearing openly racist, while simultaneously expressing their racial prejudices (see also Bonilla-

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93 Brewster and Mallinson (2009, p. 7) recently critiqued Dirks and Rice’s (2004a, p. 43) decision to disregard the respondent’s economic based explanation for refusing to wait on the two black women and instead attribute her behavior to underlying racist sentiments. Owing to the fact that the server had previously waited on these customers and had categorized them as poor tippers and demanding patrons, an economic-based interpretation, in our opinion, could not be ruled out. These findings, however, lend credence to Dirks and Rice’s interpretation. Many scholars (e.g., Lynn 2004a, 2004b; Lynn 2006b; Lynn and Thomas-Haysbert 2003; Margalioth 2006), including Brewster and Mallinson (2009), appear to be overestimating the explanatory power of economic related motivations that are posited to underlie servers’ discriminatory behaviors.
Silva and Forman 2000), which in some form become manifested in the service extended to black patrons.

In short, rather than reflecting economic related processes (e.g., statistical discrimination), this study’s findings suggest that server discrimination is comparatively better understood as a response to a restaurant culture that shapes and is shaped by the racialized server discourse that permeates the restaurant workplace. The racialized nature of restaurant cultures is, in part, responsible for the production and reproduction of racial stereotypes. As servers categorize customers based on easily observable attributes such as race, they evoke and subsequently rely upon these exaggerated stereotypes (e.g., blacks’ tipping) to inform and justify the quality of service they provide to their black guests.

When whites engage in the processes of stereotyping and categorizing ethnic minority group members, they tend to accompany these actions with ‘racetalk’, a structured form of discourse that appears to cast the speaker as ‘color blind’ but that actually serves to justify his or her racial stereotypes, attitudes, and discrimination (Bonilla Silva 2003, Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000, Dirks and Rice 2004b, Mallinson and Brewster 2005). As these discourses are perpetuated, they reinforce the underlying stereotypes in the cognition of others who share their workspace thus ensuring the continuation of racial discriminate service. As Dirks and Rice [2004a: 260] explain, “Servers’ perceived experiences generate discourse among the collectivity, helping to shape future employees’ belief structures.”

Unfortunately, discriminatory server behaviors will likely continue, irrespective of the policies, formal or informal (see sections 7.5 and 8.5), implemented by restaurant
companies to curb such behaviors. As a consequence of the systemic nature of racism (Feagin 1991, 2000, 2006), servers will continue making attribution errors when interacting with African Americans—both in and outside of the workplace. The ‘ultimate attribution error,’ according to Pettigrew (1979), occurs when desirable behaviors of in-group members are attributed to internal factors such as personality and undesirable behaviors are attributed to external factors, such as the weather or the fact that the actor in question might be having a bad day. Conversely, where out-group members are concerned, undesirable behaviors are attributed to internal factors such as personality, while desirable behaviors are linked to external factors. For example, a white customer who tips a white server poorly or is difficult to wait on may have these behaviors attributed to poor service quality or the financial inability to leave a tip. On the other hand, when black customers behave similarly, the customers’ personal character is questioned (e.g., “rude,” “mean,” “impolite,” etc.). Furthermore, when whites tip poorly or exhibit difficult dining behaviors (e.g., demanding, complaints, etc.), their actions are rarely, if ever, attributed to their race, but for blacks, similar actions are frequently, if not always, attributed solely to their race (see Mallinson and Brewster 2005).

In this process of attribution, servers make sense of customers’ behavior by drawing upon the schemas they have acquired not only from the culture of their workplace but more importantly from a larger ideology of white supremacy, that has dominated past and present society. In the context of an anti-black society, it ‘makes sense’ to attribute undesirable behaviors to blackness and thereby sustain the ideology out of which racial stereotypes and discriminatory behaviors emerge. One server conveys this
point succinctly: ‘Most of us here extremely dislike waiting on large tables of black people ... because they seem to believe that tipping is optional and are usually rude to us” (Rusche and Brewster 2008, p. 2023). Another server went beyond the tipping stereotype to attribute other behaviors to black customers’ race: ‘They [blacks] *always* want things their way and *always* have something to complain about’ [emphasis added].

Moreover, when whites tip well, they are seen as simply fulfilling their expectations, but when blacks tip well, servers are often surprised and may chalk it up to their own good performance (‘they must have thought I was a really great server’), or say things like, ‘that was a really good tip for a black person’ (Rusche and Brewster 2008, p. 2023). A server in Mallinson and Brewster’s (2005) study further substantiates this point in the following statement: ‘... if I get a good tip from a black person, I’m surprised, or even a decent tip, I’m surprised generally’ (p. 3). This surprise illustrates the difficulty in dismantling racial biases; they are often times impervious to correction or adjustment even when actors are confronted with new and contrary information about the racial minority group in question (Fiske and Taylor 1984; Mallinson and Brewster 2005).

The processes contributing to racially motivated server discrimination, outlined in this study, admittedly do not unfold in a vacuum but rather are influenced by and emerge

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94 Conversely, utilizing categorization schemes may serve, to an extent, as socio-psychological buffers thereby making it even more difficult to eradicate discriminatory server behaviors. For instance, if servers receive a poor tip from blacks, perhaps they draw on their preexisting stereotypes and categorizations to rationalize the unsuccessful interaction, thereby avoiding having to analyze the situation or even locate the source of the poor tip in factors related to their own behaviors and adherence to racial stereotypes (Mallinson and Brewster 2005). Although servers’ prejudice discourse and actions are inexcusable, they are also likely to persist, in part, because they serve a social function for servers trying to assert some measure of occupational agency—or, alternatively, *perceived* agency—in an otherwise rationalized service industry that exist within a racialized society (Brewster and Mallinson 2009).
out of larger societal level processes. While such structural or societal level processes have not been completely neglected in this research they nevertheless have “taken a back seat” to those processes specific to the restaurant context. As such, it is fitting to conclude by placing the stubborn and enduring nature of racial prejudice and discrimination within a larger societal framework. While there are many structural level theories that purport to explain the enduring nature of racial conflict, those that focus on the organization of our political economy are particularly useful, in part, because of the salient role that these institutions play in the distribution of resources.

While there are many theories that, to varying degrees, fit this bill (e.g., Blalock 1967; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Bonacich 1972; Du Bois 1967, 1969; Wilson 1973, 1980; also see Della Fave 2008 for a review of such theories), recent work by L. Richard Della Fave (2008) is arguably the most comprehensive theory of racial conflict to-date and as such will be the focus of these concluding remarks.

Della Fave (2008) approaches race relations from a Marxist perspective and draws from the work of influential black scholars— including W.E.B DuBois, C. L. R. James, Oliver C. Cox, Angela Y. Davis, and Manning Marable—to identify an internal contradiction of capitalism that not only encourages racial inequities but also requires that such inequities be maintained so that the system may continue to function. On the one hand, the goal of capitalism is to generate high margins of economic surplus. On the other hand, the competitive forces inherent in free markets continually exert downward

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95 Despite the contributions made by these scholars, Della Fave reminds readers that they have been largely ignored by the mainstream academic community. As such, one of the secondary goals of Della Fave’s work is to highlight these scholars’ work in hopes that it will “inspire others how are now unfamiliar with it to draw upon it as well” (2008, p. 108).
pressure on rates of profit and this is especially the case in the increasingly globalized economy of today. Capitalists respond to this internal contradiction of capitalism by purposively pitting racial groups, particularly blacks and whites, against one another. Doing so, as Della Fave (2008) convincingly argues, not only increases the rate of profits by driving down wages but also effectively impedes the type of interracial coalition that would be necessary to mount a serious challenge to the existing arrangements—arrangements that primarily have served and continue to serve the material interest of a small capitalist class at the expense of the working masses. In the paragraphs that follow, I provide an abbreviated summation of this argument.

Historically capitalist have utilized a variety of techniques to maintain the racial schism in U.S. society. Arguably, the most dominate and sustained techniques have been those intended to keep the racial groups physically and ideologically separate and those intended to induce fear and indignation among poor white workers, in particular. Maintaining racial boundaries was most obvious under Jim Crow but such boundaries can still be readily observed today simply by looking at the racial composition of American neighborhoods. As Della Fave (2008, p. 18) points out, “Even though black and whites are more likely than ever before to work together and go to school together, we don’t tend to go home together.” Rather, white and blacks alike continue to “go home” to racially homogenous neighborhoods (Hacker 2003). The key difference, however, is that whites disproportionately reside in more affluent neighborhood where they have access to

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96 While blacks and whites are indeed more likely to work together under the same organizational roof they continue to be segregated according to occupational positions with the better paying and more rewarding positions being occupied by whites.
better schools, superior jobs, safer streets, and better public accommodations. This racially segregated characteristic of social life in the United States ensures that black and white workers remain “strangers to each other” (Shipler 1997, p. x).

Capitalist have also discouraged interracial alliances by promulgating fear and indignation among poor white workers. While the spreading of fear amongst white workers has taken many different forms (i.e., fear of the black male rapist or indignation toward single black mother on welfare, just to name two among an endless number of possible examples) it always involves an underlying fear of loss. For instance, within a capitalist political economy, whites are encouraged to view racial minorities as a competitive threat to their livelihood—as menial and deprived as their livelihoods may be. Given the gross class inequities that capitalism breeds, such fears are founded. This point is echoed by Della Fave (2008, p. 35) who recognizes that “…if we had true racial equality, while leaving the country’s unequal income distribution as it is, many more whites would have to share the unenviable fate of those at the bottom of that distribution, who are now disproportionately people of color.”

Thus, within the current political and economic climate of the U.S., African Americans not only serve as a reserve army of labor for employers to access when needed, that is when all of the whites are employed or when the white reservation wage becomes to high (see Della Fave 2008, p. 146), but they also provide a buffer that protects the poorest members of the dominate group from falling into the depths of privation. The production, reproduction, and dissemination of racial stereotypes, particularly those that portray black behavior as contradicting meritocratic ideals of
individualism and self-reliance (see Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Bobo and Kluegel 1997), makes such racial separation and white fear of loss appear ideologically natural and just. Thus, under normal economic conditions where there is moderate unemployment and high levels of competition, exacerbated by globalization, racial discrimination will prevail namely because discrimination has the aforementioned tangible benefits to both capitalist and the dominant racial group.

Thus, viewed from this perceptive, eradicating racial prejudice and discrimination from the fabric of our society, including that which unfolds in the restaurant context, will require a fundamental overhauling of the existing economic and political arrangements out of which such inequities grow. While Della Fave’s (2008) work reminds us that such a task is not impossible it nevertheless will require a prolonged and organized social movement that is capable of capitalizing on opportunities that are only likely to emerge out of prolonged economic downturns. In such economic conditions, resources will become scarce enough that the short-term benefits of racial discrimination will be undermined and the long-term benefits of interracial cooperation realized. Only under such conditions, according to Della Fave (2008), will there be a real chance of altering the rules of the political economy to achieve racial equality.

Owing to the unlikelihood of easily eradicating racial discrimination from our society’s institutions, the need for future research on everyday forms of discrimination will continue to be called for. Recently Gerry Fernandez, president of Multicultural Foodservice and Hospitality Alliance, made the following terse statement: “Race matters in America and I am confident that it matters in America’s restaurants” (Fernandez 2006,
This study’s findings affirm Fernandez’s confidence and as such, I encourage future researchers to devote a portion of their energies toward further developing our understanding of tableside racism—an area of inquiry that is not well understood and which has only recently been given serious attention.
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Table 6.1 Frequencies and Percentages for Discrimination and Anti-Minority Discourse Measurements

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<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
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<th>N</th>
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<td><strong>Self-Reported Discrimination</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor service due to perceived tip</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>195</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(50.8)</td>
<td>(42.1)</td>
<td>(5.6)</td>
<td>(1.5)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service varies according to race</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(61.5)</td>
<td>(31.8)</td>
<td>(4.6)</td>
<td>(2.1)</td>
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<td><strong>Observed Discrimination</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor service due to perceived tip</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>196</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10.7)</td>
<td>(59.7)</td>
<td>(16.3)</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
<td>(10.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor service due to race</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17.9)</td>
<td>(54.4)</td>
<td>(9.7)</td>
<td>(1.5)</td>
<td>(16.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor treatment of black patrons</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(47.1)</td>
<td>(38.7)</td>
<td>(8.9)</td>
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<td>Poor treatment of Hispanic patrons</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(53.2)</td>
<td>(39.4)</td>
<td>(5.3)</td>
<td>(2.1)</td>
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<td><strong>Anti-Minority Culture</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Racist Comments by Coworkers</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(36.6)</td>
<td>(46.1)</td>
<td>(13.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racist Comments by Managers</td>
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<td>(74)</td>
<td>(22.4)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of code words</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(30.4)</td>
<td>(38.1)</td>
<td>(22.7)</td>
<td>(8.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss the race of Customers</td>
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<td>195</td>
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<td>(24.6)</td>
<td>(59.0)</td>
<td>(14.9)</td>
<td>(1.5)</td>
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</table>

Note: cell percentages in parentheses
Table 6.2 Results of Paired Sample T-Tests Comparing Respondents’ Perceptions of Restaurant Customers’ Tipping Practices According to Customer Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>T-Statistic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four white women with 2 children</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>13.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four black women with 2 children</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White family of 8 with adult children</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>15.18***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black family of 8 with adult children</td>
<td>2.45</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two white heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>11.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two black heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four elderly white women</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>5.31***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three elderly black women</td>
<td>1.98</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001  
Response categories range from very bad (1) to very good (5).
Table 6.3 Results of Paired Sample T-Tests Comparing Respondents’ Perceptions of Restaurant Customers’ Dining Behaviors According to Customer Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>T-Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four white women with 2 children</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>7.64***</td>
</tr>
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<td>Four black women with 2 children</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White family of 8 with adult children</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>10.47**</td>
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<td>Black family of 8 with adult children</td>
<td>2.65</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Two white heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>9.87***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two black heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>2.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four elderly white women</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>4.31***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three elderly black women</td>
<td>2.78</td>
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* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001   Response categories range from very bad (1) to very good (5).
Table 7.1 Summary Statistics for Statistical Discrimination Analysis Variables
(N=196)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean or %</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reported Discrimination</td>
<td>1.53</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Tipping (blacks)</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.690</td>
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<td>Perceived Dining Behaviors (blacks)</td>
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<td>.682</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Bias</td>
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a Youth defined as under 21 years of age. b Young adults defined as 21-35 years of age.
Table 7.2 Pearson Product Correlations for all Statistical Discrimination Analysis Variables (N=196)

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† p < .10; *p<.05; (two tailed)
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*p < .10; **p < .05, ***p < .01; Notes: Standardized coefficients are in parentheses. a To facilitate interpretation and to reduce multicollinearity these variables are centered at their mean values (see Cohen et al. 2002). b Young defined as under 21 years of age. c Young adults defined as 21-35 years of age. d All models were also estimated without imputing values for missing data (N=152). The interpretations of these results were unchanged with the exception of the marginally significant effect of subjects’ gender. In analyses without imputations, this effect was not statistically significant. Owing to the instability of the gender effect, readers should use caution when considering the implications and interpretation of this effect.
Table 8.1 Summary Statistics for Workplace Culture Analysis Variables (N=193)

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<td>White</td>
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\(^a\) Young adults defined as 21-35 years of age. Note: Standard deviations for aggregate measures of racialized workplace discourse are in parentheses.
Table 8.2  Zero Order Correlations for all Workplace Culture Variables Predicting Self-Reported Discrimination (N=193)

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*p<.05; (two tailed)
Table 8.3  Metric and Standardized Coefficients from Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analyses of Self-Reported Server Discrimination on Racist Workplace Discourse Variables (N=193)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
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<tr>
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<td>.185</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.275</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
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<td>5.36***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.42***</td>
<td>1.40***</td>
<td>1.44***</td>
<td>1.47***</td>
<td>1.46***</td>
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<tr>
<td>White (=1)</td>
<td>-.10 (-.06)</td>
<td>-.07 (-.04)</td>
<td>-.05 (-.03)</td>
<td>-.15 (-.08)</td>
<td>-.08 (-.05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female (=1)</td>
<td>-.15† (-.12)</td>
<td>-.14 (-.11)</td>
<td>-.10 (-.08)</td>
<td>-.10 (-.08)</td>
<td>-.07 (-.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educationa</td>
<td>-.04 (-.07)</td>
<td>-.04 (-.07)</td>
<td>-.06 (-.11)</td>
<td>-.03 (-.06)</td>
<td>-.05 (-.09)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.00 (-.02)</td>
<td>-.00 (-.02)</td>
<td>-.00 (-.02)</td>
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<td>Kid Bias (=1)</td>
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<td>.17† (.13)</td>
<td>.17† (.12)</td>
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<td>.15 (.11)</td>
<td>.06 (.04)</td>
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<td>Young Adult Preference b (=1)</td>
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<td>.10 (.08)</td>
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<td>.01 (.02)</td>
<td>-.06 (-.07)</td>
<td>-.07 (-.08)</td>
<td>.00 (.00)</td>
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<td>Positive Perceptions of Blacks’ Dining Behaviors</td>
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<td>-.08 (-.09)</td>
<td>-.09 (-.11)</td>
<td>-.02 (-.03)</td>
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<td>.31*** (.30)</td>
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<td>Racist Coworker X Racial Saliency</td>
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<td>Racist Managers X Racial Saliency</td>
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<td>Code Words X Racial Saliency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Coworker Discrimination</td>
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Table 8.3 (Continued) Metric and Standardized Coefficients from Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analyses of Self-Reported Server Discrimination on Racist Workplace Discourse Variables (N=193)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 6</th>
<th>Model 7</th>
<th>Model 8</th>
<th>Model 9</th>
<th>Model 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
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<td>.302</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>.409</td>
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<td>Model F</td>
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<td>7.25***</td>
<td>6.93***</td>
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<td>1.42***</td>
<td>1.32***</td>
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<td>-.06 (-.04)</td>
<td>.03 (.01)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female (=1)</td>
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<td>-.06 (-.04)</td>
<td>-.06 (-.05)</td>
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<td>-.03 (-.06)</td>
<td>-.04 (-.07)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young Adult Preference (=1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive Perceptions of Blacks’ Tipping</td>
<td>.04 (.05)</td>
<td>.04 (.04)</td>
<td>.04 (.05)</td>
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<td>Practices Positive Perceptions of Blacks’ Dining Behaviors</td>
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<td>-.13⁺ (-.15)</td>
<td>-.14** (-.16)</td>
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<td>.07 (.09)</td>
<td>.06 (.07)</td>
<td>-.10 (-.13)</td>
<td>-.12⁺ (-.16)</td>
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<td>Racist Managers</td>
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<td>.21* (.20)</td>
<td>.29**(.27)</td>
<td>.23** (.21)</td>
<td>.26*** (.25)</td>
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<td>Code Words</td>
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<td>.21** (.23)</td>
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<td>Racist Coworker X Racial Saliency</td>
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<td>.29**(.34)</td>
<td>.30**(.35)</td>
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⁺ p < .10; * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; Notes: Standard coefficients are in parentheses. a To facilitate interpretation and to reduce multicollinearity, all continuous variables are centered at their mean values (see Cohen et al. 2002). b Young adults defined as 21-35 years of age.
Table 8.4 One-Way ANOVA Results for Servers’ Self-Reported Discrimination

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<tr>
<th>Fixed Effects</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
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<td>Grand Mean</td>
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<th>$\chi^2$ (df)</th>
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<td>Within Restaurants</td>
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<td>Interclass Correlation (ρ)</td>
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***p < .001; Note: N=193 observations (L1) nested in 18 restaurants (L2).
Table 8.5 Metric Regression Coefficients from HLM Analyses of Self-Reported Server Discrimination on Racist Workplace Discourse Variables

<table>
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<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
<th>Model 6</th>
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<td>-.110† (.062)</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

† p < .10; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001; **Note:** N=193 observations (L1) nested in 18 restaurants (L2). Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard error in parentheses). L1 variables are group mean centered and L2 variables are centered at the grand restaurant mean.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean or %</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observed Coworker Discrimination</td>
<td>1.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reported Discrimination</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.605</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>24.42</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist Coworker Comments</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.790 (.309)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist Manager Comments</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.572 (.226)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Code Words</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.939 (.989)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Minority Server</td>
<td>16.65</td>
<td>.154</td>
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</table>

Note: Standard deviations for aggregate measures of racialized workplace discourse are in parentheses.
Table 9.2  Zero Order Correlations for all Workplace Culture Variables Predicting Observed Discrimination (N=193)

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<th></th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
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<th>5.</th>
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<th>10.</th>
<th>11.</th>
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<th>13.</th>
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<td>-.16*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>.22*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
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<td>.41*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
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<td>.16*</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>.15*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>.11</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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<td>.39*</td>
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<td>Average Racist Manager Comments</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Average Use of Code Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Percent Minority Server</td>
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</table>

275
Table 9.3 Metric and Standardized Coefficients from Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analyses of Observed Server Discrimination on Racist Workplace Discourse Variables (N=193)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
<th>Model 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.348</td>
<td>.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
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<td>21.79***</td>
<td>5.29***</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>15.61***</td>
<td>16.95***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.01***</td>
<td>1.98***</td>
<td>1.96***</td>
<td>2.03***</td>
<td>1.97***</td>
<td>1.93***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (=1)</td>
<td>-.28†</td>
<td>-.27*</td>
<td>-.25†</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.13)</td>
<td>(-.13)</td>
<td>(-.12)</td>
<td>(-.16)</td>
<td>(-.13)</td>
<td>(-.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (=1)</td>
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<td>-.17*</td>
<td>-.16†</td>
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<td>-.16†</td>
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<td>(.03)</td>
<td>(.05)</td>
<td>(.05)</td>
<td>(.03)</td>
<td>(.05)</td>
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<td>.45***</td>
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<td>Racist Managers</td>
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<td>(.00)</td>
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<td>Self-Reported Discrimination</td>
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<td>(.27)</td>
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</table>

† p < .10; * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; Notes: Standard coefficients are in parentheses. a To facilitate interpretation and to reduce multicollinearity, all continuous variables are centered at their mean values (see Cohen et al. 2002).
### Table 9.4 One-Way ANOVA Results for Servers’ Reported Observed Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Reported Discrimination</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed Effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Restaurants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Mean</td>
<td>1.62*** 0.076</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Random Effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Between Restaurants</td>
<td>0.063 46.92*** (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Restaurants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interclass Correlation (p)</td>
<td>0.125</td>
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***p< .001; Note: N=193 observations (L1) nested in 18 restaurants (L2).
Table 9.5  Metric Regression Coefficients from HLM Analyses of Observed Server Discrimination on Racist Workplace Discourse and Salient Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effects</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
<th>Model 6</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intercept ($\beta_{00}$)</td>
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<td>1.94***</td>
<td>1.94***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(.033)</td>
<td>(.132)</td>
<td>(.139)</td>
<td>(.121)</td>
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<td>-.152†</td>
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<td>-.160†</td>
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<td>(.080)</td>
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<td>(.084)</td>
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<td>-.261*</td>
<td>-.273*</td>
<td>-.251*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.121)</td>
<td>(.115)</td>
<td>(.120)</td>
<td>(.121)</td>
<td>(.122)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reported Workplace Discrimination ($\beta_{10}$)</td>
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<td>.220**</td>
<td>.219**</td>
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<td>(.216)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(.136)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent Minority Server ($\beta_{04}$)</td>
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<td>.001</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.003</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Random Effects:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level-1 variance estimate ($\sigma^2_i$)</td>
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<td>.289</td>
<td>.290</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>.289</td>
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<td>Level-2 variance estimate ($\sigma^2_j$)</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.054***</td>
<td>.050***</td>
<td>.078***</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Explainable L2 Variance Accounted For by Model</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

† p < .10; * p < .05; ** p < .01, *** p < .001;  Note: N=193 observations (L1) nested in 18 restaurants (L2). Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard error in parentheses). L1 variables are group mean centered and L2 variables are centered at the grand restaurant mean.
**Figure 8.1 The Effects of Racist Coworker/Manager Comments on Self-Reported Discrimination Moderated by Racial Saliency**

*a.*

![Graph showing the effects of racist coworker comments on self-reported discrimination moderated by racial saliency. The graph includes three lines representing -1 sd Racial Saliency, Mean Racial Saliency, and +1 sd Racial Saliency.](image)

**b.*

![Graph showing the effects of racist manager comments on self-reported discrimination moderated by racial saliency. The graph includes three lines representing -1 sd Racial Saliency, Mean Racial Saliency, and +1 sd Racial Saliency.](image)

Note: Figures 8.1a and 8.1b are based on results from Models 6 and 7 in Table 8.3.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

Restaurant Servers and Their Customers
Survey
North Carolina State University

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between restaurant servers and restaurant patrons from the point of view of the servers. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you do not wish to participate you may return a blank survey to the researcher on site. All responses are confidential. To ensure your anonymity, DO NOT write your name anywhere on this form. No one outside of our research team will see your answers.

This survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete. Please read each question carefully and please be open and honest in your responses.

When you are finished, please place the booklet in the envelope provided, seal it, and return it to the researcher on site. If for some reason you are unable to complete the survey on site, but would like to finish, please ask the researcher for a stamped envelope and mail the completed questionnaire to us at your earliest convenience.
Thank you very much for your time.
Customers

1. I prefer to serve customers who are the…
   _____same sex as me  _____different sex  _____no preference

2. I prefer to serve customers who are ….
   _____the same race as me  _____a different race  _____no preference

3. I would rather serve a family that appears to be….
   _____wealthy  _____middle class  _____working class
   _____poor  _____no preference

4. I prefer to serve customers who appear to be…
   _____heterosexual  _____homosexual  _____no preference

5. Which of the following pairs do you prefer to wait on? Please rank the items below in terms of your preference using 1 for most preferred, and 3 for least preferred.
   _____2 men  _____a man and a woman  _____2 women

6. Which of the following age groups do you prefer to wait on? Please rank the items below in terms of your preference using 1 for most preferred, and 5 for least preferred.
   _____under 21  _____21-35  _____36-45
   _____46-60  _____over 61

7. Do you prefer to serve families with small children or customers without small children?
   _____with children  _____without children  _____no preference
8. Think about your ideal table. Describe the characteristics of your *ideal* table in the lines below.

8a. How old are your ideal customers? _________
8b. What race are your ideal customers? _________
8c. What is the general make up of your ideal table? ___________________
   (e.g. couple, family, friends, etc.)
8d. Why are these your ideal customers?

9. Think about your least ideal table. Describe the characteristics of your *least ideal* table in the lines below.

9a. How old are your least ideal customers? _________
9b. What race are your least ideal customers? _________
9c. What is the general make up of your least ideal table? ___________________
   (e.g. couple, family, friends, etc.)
9d. Why are these your least ideal customers?

10. How often do you alter your behavior at the table based on your customers’ appearance (e.g. dress, race, age, etc.)
   _____ Never   _____ Sometimes   _____ Often

_Tipping_

11. How important are tips to your income from serving tables?
   _____ Extremely important   _____ Somewhat important   _____ Not important

12. On average, how much money do you earn in tips working a **lunch** shift?
   ____
13. On average, how much money do you earn in tips working a dinner shift? ___

14. At your restaurant, do you earn and keep your own tips or do you “pool” tips? _____Get own tips _____Pool Tips

15. Are you required to “tip out” cooks, bussers, bartenders, or other co-workers?
Who are you required to tip out? Check all that apply.
   _____Cooks _____Bussers _____Bartenders
   _____Other _____No one

15b. What percentage of your total tips per shift are you required to “tip out”? ____

16. What type of customers do you think tip the most?
______________________

17. What type of customers do you think tip the least?
______________________

18. What do you think an average tip is in this restaurant?
   _____10% _____15% _____20% _____More than 20%

19. Look at the scenarios below and, in terms of tipping, choose whether you think these customers tend to be very bad, below average, average, above average, or very good tippers. Assume an average tip is 15% of the bill total. Please circle your response for each item below.
### Tipping Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Make Up</th>
<th>Very Bad</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Three white college-age men</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Four black women with two small children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A white family of eight with adult children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. A group of five Asian men and women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Two black heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Three Hispanic teenagers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Two white heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Three elderly black women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Four white women with two small children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Four Hispanic college-age women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. A group of five black men and women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. Four elderly white women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Three white college-age women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tipping Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Make Up</th>
<th>Very Bad</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n. Three white teenagers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. A black family of eight with adult children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Two elderly couples</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Four openly gay men; mixed races</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Four openly gay women; mixed races</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Assume there is a group at your table who are obviously poor. Which would you rather they be?

_____White    _____Black    _____Hispanic
_____Asian    _____No Preference    _____Other (Please specify)

21. Assume there is a group at your table who are obviously wealthy. Which would you rather they be?

_____White    _____Black    _____Hispanic
_____Asian    _____No Preference    _____Other (Please specify)

22. Assume there is a group at your table who appear to be middle class. Which would you rather they be?

_____White    _____Black    _____Hispanic
_____Asian    _____No Preference    _____Other (Please specify)
**Customer Behavior**

23. On average, how many customers would you say you serve per shift? 
_____

24. On average, how many times per shift would you say that you and your coworkers complain about customers?

- _____ More than 10 times
- _____ 5-9 times
- _____ 1-4 times
- _____ 0 times

25. When you or your coworkers complain about customers, what are the complaints usually about?

- _____ Tips
- _____ Customer Behavior
- _____ Both
- _____ Neither

IF NEITHER, what are complaints usually about?

26. When customers complain, which of the following is *most often* the source of dissatisfaction?

- _____ Service
- _____ Drinks
- _____ Food
- _____ Management
- _____ Other (specify)

27. How often are items removed from the customers’ bill because they are dissatisfied?

- _____ Never
- _____ Sometimes
- _____ Often
- _____ Always

28. List some characteristics of a “good customer” in terms of their behavior at the table.

28a. According to your description in question 28, about what percentage of your customers per shift would you say are “good customers”?  __________% 

29. List some characteristics of a “bad customer” in terms of their behavior at the table.

29a. According to your description in question 29, about what percentage of your customers per shift would you say are “bad customers”?  __________%
30. Keeping in mind your answers about “good” and “bad” customer behavior, look at the scenarios below and choose which you think, in terms of customer behavior, are very bad, below average, average, above average, or very good customers. Please circle your response for each item below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Behavior</th>
<th>Very Bad</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Three white college-age men</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Four black women with two small children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A white family of eight with adult children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. A group of five Asian men and women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Two black heterosexual couples in their 30s</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Three Hispanic teenagers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>h. Three elderly black women</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>j. Four Hispanic college-age women</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. A group of five black men and women</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Four elderly white women
2. Three white college-age women
3. Three white teenagers
4. A black family of eight with adult children
5. Two elderly couples
6. Four openly gay men; mixed races
7. Four openly gay women; mixed races

Co-Workers
31. How frequently do you observe the following behaviors in your workplace?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Behaviors</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Friendly chatting with customers by servers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Servers flirting with customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Customers flirting with servers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Servers flirting with co-workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Derogatory terms/phrases used to describe customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Negative “behind the scenes” comments about customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Poor treatment of black customers by co-workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observed Behaviors</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Referring to customers using “code” words/language</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Sexist comments about customers by co-workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Sexist comments about customers by managers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Comments referring to customers’ social class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s. Servers being nice to “bad” customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. Servers being rude to “bad” customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. How often do you think your co-workers give customers poor service because they think they will not tip well?

_____Never   _____Sometimes   _____Often  _____Always
_____Don’t Know
33. How often do you think your co-workers give customers poorer service than other customers based on the customers’ race?

    _____Never     _____Sometimes     _____Often     _____Always
    _____Don’t Know

34. How often do you give customers outstanding service because you think they will tip exceptionally?

    _____Never     _____Sometimes     _____Often     _____Always

35. How often do you give customers poor service because you think they will not tip well?

    _____Never     _____Sometimes     _____Often     _____Always

36. How often does the quality of service that you provide vary according to the customers’ race?

    _____Never     _____Sometimes     _____Often     _____Always

37. How often would you say that you and your coworkers discuss the race of your customers?

    _____Never     _____Sometimes     _____Often     _____Always

**Your Restaurant Background**

38. In how many restaurants have you worked?   

39. How many years have you worked in the restaurant business?  
   (If less than 1 year, indicate how many months)

   
   

40. Please list all other positions other than server that you hold in this restaurant.
41. What type of formal training for restaurant work have you received?
(Check all that apply)

_____None      _____Culinary School      _____Bartending School
_____Food Service Training          _____Other (please specify)

42. In your restaurant experience, how many black servers have you worked with?

_____None      _____1-9       _____10-19       _____20-29       _____More than 30

43. In your restaurant experience, how many black managers have you worked for?

_____None      _____1-4       _____5-9       _____More than 10

44. In your restaurant experience, how many Hispanic servers have you worked with?

_____None      _____1-9       _____10-19       _____20-29       _____More than 30

45. In your restaurant experience, how many Hispanic managers have you worked for?

_____None      _____1-4       _____5-9       _____More than 10

46. In your restaurant experience, how many female servers have you worked with?

_____None      _____1-9       _____10-19       _____20-29       _____More than 30

47. In your restaurant experience, how many female managers have you worked for?

_____None      _____1-4       _____5-9       _____More than 10
48. In your restaurant experience how many male servers have you worked with?

    _____None  _____1-9  _____10-19  
    _____20-29  _____More than 30

49. In your restaurant experience, how many male managers have you worked for?

    _____None  _____1-4  _____5-9  _____More than 10

**This Restaurant**

50. How long have you been employed in this restaurant?

    __________

51. Is there a company handbook for this restaurant?

    _____Yes  _____No  _____Don’t Know

52. Is there a company training video for this restaurant?

    _____Yes  _____No  _____Don’t Know

53. How long was the training period at your current restaurant?

    _____None  _____One shift  _____Less than one week  
    _____1-2 weeks  _____3-4 weeks  _____More than 4 weeks

53a. Who trained you? Check all that apply. Do not write anyone’s name.

    _____A manager  _____Another server  _____A company trainer  
    _____Other (please specify)

53b. Did this training include how to interact with customers?

    _____Yes  _____No  _____Don’t Know

53c. Did this training include how to deal with customers who behave badly?

    _____Yes  _____No  _____Don’t Know
53d. Did this training include ways to handle work-related stress?

_____Yes  _____No  _____Don’t Know

53e. Did this restaurant-based training include any race sensitivity training?

_____Yes  _____No (skip to 54)  _____Don’t Know (skip to 54)

53f. Did this sensitivity training concern customers, co-workers, or both?

_____Customers  _____Co-workers  _____Both

**About You**

54. What is your highest level of education completed?

_____No High School Degree  _____High School or GED

_____Some College  _____Associate/2-year degree

_____Bachelor’s Degree  _____Other

55. How old were you on your last birthday?  

56. What is your race/ethnicity?

_____White, Non-Hispanic  _____Black or African American

_____Native American  _____Hispanic/Latino

_____Asian  _____Other (please specify)

57. Were you born in the United States?

_____Yes  _____No

58. What is your sex?

_____ Male  _____Female

59. What is your sexual orientation?

_____ Heterosexual  _____Homosexual  _____Bisexual

60. What is your marital status?

_____Never Married  _____Married  _____Living Together, not married

_____Separated  _____Divorced  _____Widowed
61. How many children do you have? (if none, mark 0) _______

62. How would you rate your overall physical health?
   _____Excellent   _____Good   _____Fair   _____Poor

63. How would you rate your overall mental health?
   _____Excellent   _____Good   _____Fair   _____Poor

Thank you very much for your time today. If you are interested in providing any additional comments about your experiences as a restaurant server, feel free to write them below. If you are interested in being contacted for further research, please include your contact information below (street address or email address). Your help is much appreciated. Thanks again!
Appendix B

Restaurant Manager Survey
North Carolina State University

Please answer the following questions. This should only take about 5 minutes of your time. When you are finished, please place the questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it to the researcher on site.

1. What is your official job title at this restaurant? ___________________

2. What is the customer check average during lunch? $________

3. What is the customer check average during dinner? $________

4. What is the average hourly wage for wait staff at this restaurant? $________

5. What is the average hourly wage for bartenders at this restaurant? $________

6. On average how many new servers do you hire each month? ______________

7. What is the average weekly guest count for this restaurant? __________

8. Who owns this restaurant?

    ________Corporate Owned (name of corporation) ____________
    ________Franchise ____________________Privately Owned

9. What are the race/ethnicity and sex of employees at this restaurant? Please estimate how many people work in these positions at your current restaurant workplace (e.g. how many managers are white males? Black females?). If “zero” please leave blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Managers</th>
<th>Servers</th>
<th>Bartenders</th>
<th>Hosts</th>
<th>Cooks</th>
<th>Dishwashers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>White Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>White Females</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Black Males</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Black Females</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Hispanic Males</td>
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<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Hispanic Females</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Asian Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>Asian Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Other Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td>Other Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>