

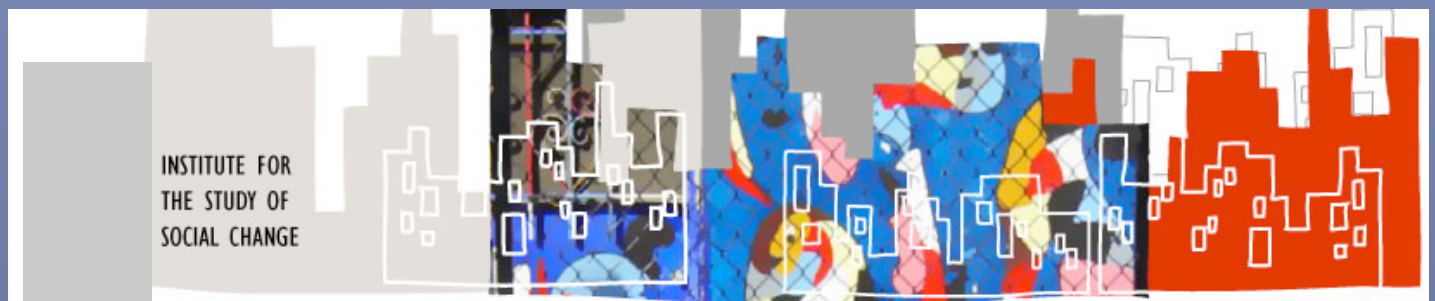


Institute for the Study of Social Change  
University of California, Berkeley

# The Diversity Project: Final Report

Second Edition

With a New Introduction by Troy Duster



# THE DIVERSITY PROJECT

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FINAL REPORT

SECOND EDITION

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION BY TROY DUSTER

INSTITUTE FOR THE  
STUDY OF SOCIAL CHANGE



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

### THE VIEW FROM 2009: CHANGES IN THE DIVERSITY LANDSCAPE AT BERKELEY

In the two decades from 1970 and 1990, the Berkeley campus of the University of California experienced one of the most dramatic transformations in the ethnic and racial composition of its undergraduate student body of any college in the country. For example, in 1968, whites constituted more than 75 per cent of the students. Blacks made up only 2.7 per cent – the Chicano/Latino population made up only 1.3 per cent, and while we lack precise figures on the percentage of Asian students, it is clear that their numbers never reached as high as 7 per cent. In stunning contrast, in 1989, whites were only half of the entering freshman class.

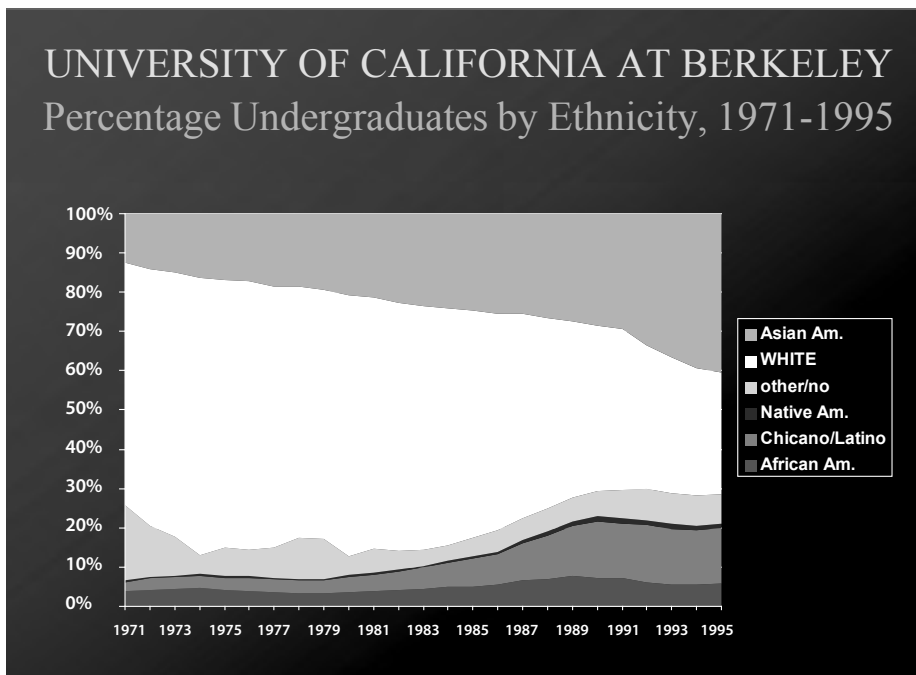
This change reflected in part the demographic shifts in the ethnic and racial composition of the state. The immigration laws of 1965 reversed eight decades of exclusionary practices against Asians, and within a dozen years California's Asian population surged from less than

3 per cent to more than 10 per cent. During this same period, sharp increases in immigration from Mexico and Central America would re-shape the landscape of the Central Valley and the main coastal cities.

But the new composition of Berkeley's students was not just a function of the inexorable march of these demographic changes. University admissions policies also played an important role – and grew out of a growing commitment to ethnic and racial diversity by the university administration under the Chancellorships of Ira Michael Heyman and Chang-Lin Tien.

A very pro-active affirmative action admissions program was initiated at Berkeley, under Chancellor Heyman in the 1980s. It was largely a response to the mismatch between the demographics of the state population and the composition of the student bodies that came to Berkeley. The active admissions policies were designed to make Berkeley more reflective of the composition of the population of state. However, these

moves would encounter increasing public opposition – most notably a primarily white backlash against affirmative action – reflecting public sentiments and the social and political organizing and mobilization strategies of a focused group of political activists. As more and more “students of color” enrolled at Berkeley, there was a push for curricular change that would better reflect the shifting composition. While this was true for many college campuses across the country, the Berkeley history and very prominent public presence made it a natural site and these times became a propitious period for



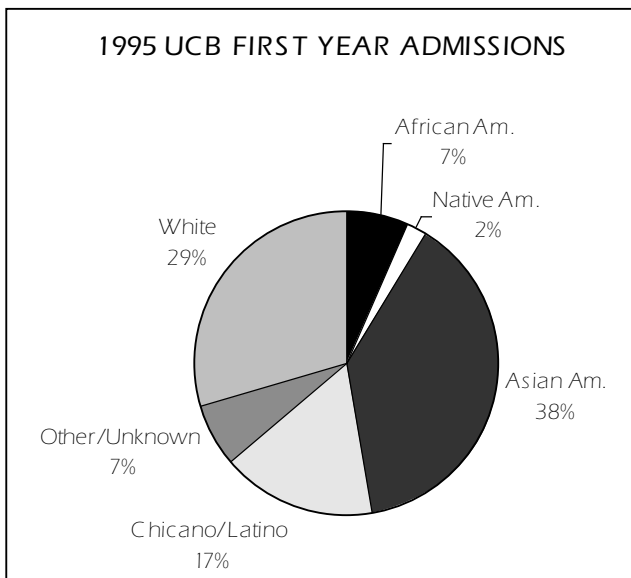
student activism. It was in this context that, in 1989, Chancellor Heyman commissioned a study by the Institute for the Study of Social Change to review the situation and report back on “campus climate”. Over the next 18 months, several hundred students were interviewed by a dozen faculty researchers, both in groups that were “homogeneous” and later, “heterogeneous.” The outcome was “The Diversity Project” – a short monograph that sold out two printings and “went national” when the *New York Times* devoted considerable space to the report in early October, 1990. *The Diversity Project* captured two aspects of high tension – on the one hand, students expressed their frustration of what many described as retreats (by other students, of course) into “balkanized enclaves” –but on the other hand, many provided accounts and experiences of circumstances and situations in which they felt that their educational experience had been enriched by being at a site that had them at least “brush up against” students from radically different social and cultural backgrounds. What they lamented was the failed opportunity for more class-room framed experiences.

Now, exactly two decades later, we look back over a comparable period of re-composition to a) mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original *Diversity Project*, and b) to document some of the impacts of that re-composition. In the years that followed the end of the Chancellorship of Chang-Lin Tien in 1997, there were again important shifts in the student body. In 1996 the California electorate passed a ballot Proposition (No. 209) that prohibited the use of race, sex, or ethnicity as a basis for providing preference for school or college admissions. The actual implementation of this law would not take place in UC admissions policies until the fall class of 1998. The explicitly liberal admission policies of the 1980s and early 1990s were suddenly replaced with policies which prohibited the consideration of race or ethnicity as factors in the selection of new college admits.<sup>1</sup>

PROPOSITION 209: PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION OR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY STATE AND OTHER PUBLIC ENTITIES. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

- Prohibits the state, local governments, districts, public universities, colleges, and schools, and other government instrumentalities from discriminating against or giving preferential treatment to any individual or group in public employment, public education, or public contracting on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.
- Does not prohibit reasonably necessary, bona fide qualifications based on sex and actions necessary for receipt of federal funds.
- Mandates enforcement to extent permitted by federal law.
- Requires uniform remedies for violations. Provides for severability of provisions if invalid.

The demographic composition of the new classes of freshmen at UCB changed dramatically after Proposition



DIVERSITY PROJECT

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

NEW FRESHMAN ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY										
FALL 1996 THROUGH FALL 2000										
Ethnicity	Fall 1996		Fall 1997		Fall 1998		Fall 1999		Fall 2000	
African-American	233	6.5%	257	7.3%	126	3.5%	126	3.6%	148	4.1%
American Indian	52	1.4%	23	0.7%	14	0.4%	22	0.6%	20	0.5%
Chicano/Latino	545	15.1%	470	13.4%	269	7.4%	329	9.3%	320	8.8%
Asian-American	1,431	39.7%	1,468	42.0%	1,562	42.8%	1,581	44.9%	1,629	44.7%
White	1,089	30.2%	1,017	29.1%	1,090	29.9%	1,110	31.5%	1,122	30.8%
Other	60	1.7%	76	2.2%	48	1.3%	61	1.7%	63	1.7%
Not Given	196	5.4%	187	5.3%	540	14.8%	295	8.4%	341	9.4%
Subtotal - Citizens & Immigrants	3,606		3,498		3,649		3,524		3,643	
International	102		75		86		94		92	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,708</b>		<b>3,573</b>		<b>3,735</b>		<b>3,618</b>		<b>3,735</b>	
Subtotal - African-American, American Indian, Chicano/Latino	830	23.0%	750	21.4%	409	11.2%	477	13.5%	488	13.4%

Sources: Office of Student Research, Office of Planning and Analysis, UC Berkeley

209 was implemented. As can be seen clearly in the table above, African-American and Chicano/Latino enrollment declined sharply in fall, 1998. For first-year admissions in the ten years following the implementation of Proposition 209, the percentage of African American and Chicano/Latino student admits never recovered significantly from the peak years in the mid 1990s, despite the growth in the proportion of Chicano/Latino students in the California public high school population.

The percentage of Hispanic (Chicano/Latino) public high school graduates, continued to increase during the period of 1998 through 2007. However, the initiatives and programs that were designed to make the University of California more representative of the ethnic and racial composition of the state's population were eliminated or reduced in the wake of Proposition 209. This ballot initiative was designed by its promoters to target ethnic and racial preferences that were core elements of California's affirmative action programs for school and college admissions, public employment, and government contracts. As Berkeley political scientists Bruce Cain and Jack Citrin pointed out, the passage of Proposition 209 was only one of several ballot initiatives designed to give political voices to public resistance among white voters

to policies that they perceived might alter the tangible or symbolic benefits enjoyed by various ethnic or racial groups.<sup>2</sup>

The passage of Proposition 209 in November 1996 was one of several occasions on which California voters have employed direct democracy to alter policies providing tangible or symbolic benefits to ethnic minorities. As long ago as 1964, they approved an initiative, later ruled unconstitutional, overturning the Rumford Fair Housing Act. In 1986, voters passed an English-only amendment to the state constitution. In 1994, they overwhelmingly adopted Proposition 187, a measure designed to restrict the access of illegal immigrants to most state services. And 1998 brought the victory of Proposition 227, an initiative requiring the elimination of most established bilingual education programs in public schools.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Cain, Jack Citrin, and Cara Wong, *Ethnic Context, Race Relations, and California Politics*, 2000. Public Policy Institute of California; San Francisco, CA. p.47

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> Official title and Summary prepared by the Office of the Attorney General, State of California. See <http://vote96.sos.ca.gov/BP/209.htm>

## INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

Perhaps the most significant impact of the changing student body was the demand for, and the ultimate implementation of curricular change that would better reflect the changing composition of the undergraduate population. The leading edge of this was the institutionalization of the American Cultures requirement – passed by the Academic Senate in the early 1990s. This was a policy change stipulating that every student take at least one course approved as “American Cultures” – the content of which was to be comparative of at least three of five broadly defined racial and ethnic groups. Over the next decade and half, more than four-hundred courses would be completely revised to meet the terms of this policy. Nowhere else in the country had such a broad experiment in comparative pedagogical innovation been instituted.

While the first few years met resistance by a minority of students who chafed at the idea of any requirement, this early period also witnessed the emergence of a new collegial engagement by scores of faculty who exchanged ideas and learned from each other in a series of summer seminars funded by the American Cultures Center. Many of these faculty would testify years later as to how these planning seminars had been the most intellectually challenging. In addition to the curricular innovation, there was also a strong push for what came to be called “engaged learning” – a general idea that advocates claimed as a superior way of student-participation in the learning experience. Some classes would build in a field research component, where students were required to go out into the community to gain first hand knowledge of subject matter that ranged from architecture to health policy, from criminal justice forensic techniques to museum curator backstage operations. Among the most successful and enduring was the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program, in which students could gain first-hand experience under the mentorship of a senior

faculty member in the course of the professor’s own research projects. Again, students who were enrolled in this program would provide rich testimonials as to how it shaped their intellectual interests along a trajectory that described how their apprenticeships often generated their own intellectual interests – motivating them to go on to graduate studies that permitted them to explore more fully subject matter they had begun to encounter during their time as undergraduate assistants. The institutionalization of these programs has been the enduring legacy of the new combinations of students and the kinds of interests they brought to the academic enterprise.

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

In an effort to make the Berkeley campus more representative of the composition of the state’s population, a pro-active admissions process (1983-96) made great progress in increasing the number and proportion of Blacks and Latinos among the undergraduate students. In the wake of these efforts stalled by the after effects of Proposition 209, advocates of a more representative student body have suggested that part of the burden for redress should focus on the K-12 system, providing more and new resources to increase its educational success in preparing more students from under-represented groups for admission to the university. Some of this energy has involved developing teaching methods and pedagogy that articulate with the interests and experiences of youth (e.g. providing after-school and summer programs which support academic advancement for underrepresented students) but these types of efforts have yielded limited results in the last decade.

The mission and mandate for the University of California as a land grant institution clearly states that its very reason for being is to bring education to the general public in an effort to strengthen the economy and polity of the state. This suggests that other avenues should be pursued to better align with this mission. A fundamental

policy change which has been pursued, but which could yield additional substantial results, is improving the articulation between community colleges and the UC system. This is not a novel idea. It has been the subject of reports and study by the California Post-Secondary Education Commission. It has also been one of the foci of University of California admissions policies around seeking to enhance the inclusiveness of the student body at the UC campuses. But the community college pipeline does offer the prospect of making further advances in increasing the diversity of admits to UC. The California State University system recruits over 50 per cent of its students from community college graduates. This contrasts with UC Berkeley, which recruits between 25 and 30 per cent of entering students from the community college system. If there is to be a continuing commitment to enhancing equity and inclusiveness, particularly in these difficult times, it requires a renewed commitment to implement the goal of the Master Plan – by increasing the articulation between the different hubs of the California public college and university system. Progress has been made in this area by UC, with full year community college transfers to the University California system increasing by about 40 per cent over the last decade, going from 10,177 in 1998/99 to 14,112 in 2008/09.<sup>4</sup>

With tuition increasing to over \$10,000 a semester next year and with enrollment reflecting an overwhelming majority of Whites and Asian Americans we would do well to be reminded of the situation that Governor Pat Brown faced at the beginning of the 1960s. That administration made the long range strategy to expand the access to inexpensive four year college and university training for the state's population. In these times, the public debate is far less on equity and access – but

instead has riveted attention upon those who have more resources and social capital now worrying about blocked opportunities and blocked futures for their own children.

In the long view, the state of California faces a future of increasing racial and ethnic apartheid in access to credentialed and skilled positions which require a minimum of a four year college or university training – the main opportunity track in this rapidly changing post-industrial economy. Latinos comprise 38 per cent of the high school graduates of the public high schools.<sup>5</sup> The trajectory is now very clear: the State of California and its higher education system can look forward to a two tier training and employment future – in which Whites and Asians have far more access to higher education, and a corresponding better access to economic and social opportunity. The vision of public serving, land grant universities driving and sustaining access to a growing economy, modified with an eye to civil rights and social justice in the 1980s and 90s, is now morphing into a newly configured (but historically reminiscent) ethnically, racially stratified political economy. The richness of the quilt of diversity as the locus of good education in a diverse society is a vision of diversity in higher education that is rapidly fading. It can still be rescued, but only with a re-invigorated and proactive social policy.

Troy Duster  
November, 2009

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<sup>4</sup> California Postsecondary Education Commission-Transfer Totals, <http://cpec.ca.gov/OnLineData/TransferTotals.asp?Seg=A>

<sup>5</sup> Graduates by Ethnicity State of California, 2007-08, California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office (CBEDS, sifc07 8/7/09)





## PREFACE

### TO THE FIRST EDITION

In June, 1990, the *Interim Report* of this project was released to then outgoing Chancellor Heyman, who had commissioned the study. While we still had some further data collection and analysis to complete, we had a firm enough sense of the data to issue an interim report of our major findings and early recommendations. Though understanding the wide interest in the project (having received requests from other campuses and universities, as well as from various media), we were still surprised by the level of attention given to the report. Within a few months, stories appeared in the *New York Times*,<sup>1</sup> a national wire story was released by the Associated Press,<sup>2</sup> and articles appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*,<sup>3</sup> six major newspapers in California and the *Washington Post*;<sup>4</sup> internationally, the report was picked up by *CNN*,<sup>5</sup> the *Economist* and the British Broadcasting Corporation.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, selected findings from the report found their way into such disparate places as the controversial new book by Dinesh D'Souza, *The Illiberal Education*, a syndicated column by journalist and political analyst George Will,<sup>7</sup> and even the proceedings of the accreditation group that accredits several hundred universities and colleges in the Western United States.<sup>8</sup> This is not the reception generally accorded reports of local campus life, and so some commentary here is warranted.<sup>9</sup>

New data just released indicates that the entering class of 1991 at the Berkeley campus of the University of California was 32 per cent Asian American, 30 per cent white, 20 per cent Chicano/Latino American, and 7.5 per cent African American. This report addresses a vital and constantly unfolding development emerging in American social life. The enormity of change is partially reflected in these dramatic figures, but goes far beyond a mere report of the percentages of different ethnic and racial groups admitted to college campuses. These large demographic shifts tug at the curriculum, jostle faculty turf and challenge the borders of that turf and even expertise. They also sharpen questions about the prospects for social life among peoples from differing racial and cultural groups living side-by-side. The familiar questions are these: are they isolated or inter-

acting, segregating or integrating, fighting or harmonizing, and who is getting ahead or falling behind? It may well be that the most important message in this report, over and above the significance of any set of findings or specific recommendations, is precisely that we have too narrowly conceived the options as *either/or*; that as a nation, we have cast the problem incompletely and thus incorrectly by posing the matter as either one of assimilation to a single, dominant culture where differences merge and disappear vs. a situation where isolated and self-segregated groups, retreating into ethnic and racial enclaves, defeat the very purpose of "attempting diversity."<sup>10</sup>

Our findings are strongly suggestive that these are not the only two alternatives before us. There are many avenues still possible. In this report, we present a vision of one of these avenues as a third and more viable conception, of a "third experience" of diversity. Albeit burdened with its own problems, this experience is not altogether new.

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<sup>1</sup> October 3, 1990

<sup>2</sup> September 10, 1990

<sup>3</sup> June 6, 1990

<sup>4</sup> May 26, 1991

<sup>5</sup> October, 1990

<sup>6</sup> early May, 1991

<sup>7</sup> May 24, 1991, *Los Angeles Times*

<sup>8</sup> Annual Meetings of the Accreditation Liaison Officers, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, April 2, 1991, San Diego, California

<sup>9</sup> This is just a partial listing.

<sup>10</sup> This is what the critics of these new developments have done. D'Souza, C. Vann Woodward, Eugene Genovese and George Will have chosen to emphasize only one half of the picture, what we called in the earlier report "the balkanized ethnic and racial enclaves" to which so many college campuses (and some high schools, professional schools, and selected workplaces) have borne witness. They have ignored the second half of the picture, which the Interim Report captured in equal measure, namely, the emerging conception of a new kind of society, with few models.

We have reports and fragmentary evidence that suggest there may be fairly widespread but unpublicized “good” experiences of diversity, while the media and the commentators have fixated only upon “what is wrong.” This “third experience” of diversity<sup>11</sup> is the simultaneous possibility of strong ethnic and racial identities (including ethnically homogeneous affiliations and friendships) *alongside* a public participation of multi-racial and multi-ethnic contacts that enriches the public and social sphere of life. This third experience is viable precisely because people bring to that public sphere the strengths of identity forged out of their unique experiences and “separateness.”

The controversy over diversity at Berkeley, much like the battle over the social studies curriculum in New York state, is a struggle over who gets to define the idea of America. Are we essentially a nation with a common, or at least dominant culture to which immigrants and “minorities” must adapt? Or is this a land in which ethnicity and difference are affirmed as part of the lived experience at the same time as we try to pursue a common heritage? In any event, the correct answer is not a static one, not to be taken as a snapshot at a single point in our history, not to be idealized, idolized, or ideologized to death as we ignore the unfolding, dynamic and ever-changing character of nation-building. Polemicists have too often dominated the discourse without any empirical data on how people are living the experience, seldom with any keen analysis.

“Evidence” has rarely been cited by the critics of diversity. There has hardly ever been a citation to any data base except in an impressionistic or anecdotal manner. Certainly these references have not contained any systematic analysis. We offer no simple one-dimensional picture. This report is based upon an extensive amount of data collected at Berkeley over a two-year period and is triangulated with two other major data sources from the campus. This is not to suggest that the data “speak for themselves.” Rather, what will be striking to anyone reading these materials is precisely how students come to the same experience and interpret it so differently. Metaphors about blind encounters with elephants and Rashomon<sup>12</sup> re-tellings from

different perspectives may seem tired to some, but they come alive once again here.

Some of our students, no less members of our society, see “self-segregation” as an assault upon the idea of and a potential realization of a common community. However, those in the experience of trying to forge an identity and support groups around matters of culture and race view the problem quite differently. This dismays and annoys them because their search for a common ground is interpreted through a single lens as “exclusionary” of others. In this report, we provide much more texture and, we hope, a better understanding of these two positions. Moreover, we will offer a potential resolution that is more appropriate to the end of the twentieth century than the kind of nostalgia for an earlier conception of community as assimilation to a “common American identity” that exists primarily in the imaginations of the critics.

Finally, a word about the collective nature of this research. In the most positive sense, this was a collective enterprise, fully an example of what is possible when people bring to a project the strengths of their own differing perspectives. As the Principal Investigator and principal author, I bear the heaviest burden of blame for trying to distill such a complex topic into this form. But everyone contributed to the writing and analysis, sometimes with whole segments, sometimes with strong editorial suggestions, sometimes with conceptual clarifications in our many joint meetings. Thus, any of the contributors is able to provide their own rendition of this project, and in the interest of the diversity that we actually enjoy, this deserves to be especially acknowledged and honored in this report. Indeed, several of the members of the project will be

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<sup>11</sup> along cultural and racial lines

<sup>12</sup> Rashomon is a Japanese folk tale which is the basis for Akira Kurosawa’s classic film “Rashoman.” The film presents a visual narrative of the same event from the perspective of three different participants.

issuing their own publications based upon data from this study. Data were collected from sixty-nine focus group interviews with 291 students participating. Transcriptions of more than 160 hours of these interviews have been generated, subject to many forms of data analysis and interpretation.

Since the *Interim Report* was so widely distributed and read, it will be useful if I try to provide a guide here to what is new, and from my point of view, essential matters to be re-visited even for those who have read the *Interim Report*. First, I would point to the segment on “internal differences, external sameness.” This discussion appears in Chapter IV. It is a more thorough and theoretically informed account of what so many students expressed about their experience of “diversity.” As such, it is pivotal to a better understanding of the phenomenon on this campus, and I believe, nationwide.<sup>13</sup> There is a new section which more self-consciously develops an interpretation and conceptual approach to the variable experiences of ethnic, racial and cultural diversity.<sup>14</sup> This section outlines a “stage” theory and offers a slightly different angle of vision on the future prospects and potential failures. This is followed immediately by a new segment on the “converging desire for ‘diversity’; but diverging conceptions” of what diversity means. This discussion is perhaps the best illumination of how and why students can talk past each other, using the same language to mean quite different things. It also provides a window of hope and a possible starting point for a new dialogue.

It is inevitable that some other points of view are less emphasized here, that significant segments of empirical work are not adequately fleshed out. As I have noted, the comfort that my colleagues can take from this is that each is quite capable of publishing on their own from the large body of data collected.

I would like to make a special note of thanks to four key contributors: First, to Austin Frank and Gregg Thomson of the Office of Student Research, who contributed through-

out with new runs on select survey items which complemented this research immeasurably. Second, to Janice Tanigawa, for her coordination of the entire project. Finally, to Mike Heyman, who had both the vision and the courage to pursue an uncharted path.

Thus, to title this document as the *Final Report* is ironic. This is to distinguish it from the *Interim Report*, which preceded it by a year. It also notes that we are completing our collective representation of these materials. A more appropriate title might have been *The Beginning Report*. It is our view that we are now only beginning to see the contours of the nature of social life on the globe for the next century. We need to have more humility about what works and what can work across ethnic, cultural, and racial divides. Perhaps Berkeley’s students are once again at the vanguard of an important social development with far reaching implications.

Troy Duster  
November, 1991

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<sup>13</sup> As a direct function of the publicity of the *Interim Report*, I have been asked to talk on many campuses around the country in the last seven months. While my impressions are hardly representative, I feel comfortable in reporting that the most vocal and active personnel and students who come to such discussions say the same kinds of things about “internal differences, external sameness” as we report here.

<sup>14</sup> Class and gender differences are as profound. However, American universities have had a longer history of addressing both these sets of differences, and while each factors inevitably into this report, there is always a matter of where to place the focus and thus the emphasis.



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In the brief two decades from 1970 to 1990, the Berkeley campus of the University of California went through the most dramatic transformation of the ethnic, cultural and racial composition of its undergraduate student body of any major university in the nation, perhaps the world. The campus was dominated from its beginnings in 1868 by Americans of European descent. As late as 1965, the “typical” Berkeley student was still white, reflecting both the historical racial stratification patterns of the state, and the long-term outcomes of the routine practices of several decades of legally mandated exclusion.<sup>1</sup> However, the decade of the 1970s unobtrusively ushered in an era in which this would no longer be true. That trend accelerated at a record-breaking pace in the 1980s, when in the space of a single decade the undergraduate student composition shifted from 66 per cent white in 1980 to 42 percent white in 1990 (Table 1; Figure 1, see next page).<sup>2</sup> This produced reverberations in every crevice and cranny of the institution.

Some of these reverberations have become public, available for scrutiny, analysis and criticism, but most remain outside the purview, grasp and comprehension of the increasingly diverse student body, and even of large pockets of the faculty and the administration. The early rumblings of change from the 70s gave way to a dramatically visible shift in a single decade. The rapid change brought with it the inevitable strains of growth and adjustment. Alongside the hope and optimism, parallel to both the rhetoric and the occasional reality of students from differing backgrounds having rich new experiences of each other, there were also illusion and disillusion, conflicts, tensions and retreat around issues of race and ethnicity.

This was to be expected. Any change in student body composition of the magnitude to be described brings with it a disruption of assumptions about relations between groups. Consensus-shattering social controversies and social movement activism was hardly new to the campus. It was Berkeley, after all, that served as a springboard for the emerging student movement of that era, the 1964 Free Speech Movement. This movement cascaded quickly not only into the anti-war movement, but further spun off into

steady streams of advocacy for causes that have ever since embroiled the campus in a series of political controversies around anti-war movements, the women’s movement, and movements of people of color to late 80’s concerns with environmental effects of biological experience and animal rights.

At the end of the 1980s, the newest national movement and social controversy to surface in American higher education was the demand for a changed curriculum and a more diverse faculty. The West Coast was in the vanguard once again, and the seeds were sown in the 1960s. A 1968 survey revealed that only 1.3 per cent of Berkeley’s undergraduates were Chicano/Latino students, and only 2.8 per cent were Black.<sup>3</sup> In 1969, a student strike was called on the Berkeley campus to create a new college to deal with issues more relevant to members of ethnic and racial groups.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, there are both interesting parallels and sharp differences between the forces and conditions that drove the demand for change at Berkeley in the 60s and the 90s.

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<sup>1</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred Chinese immigration, and the Immigration and Restriction Act of 1924 sealed the ethnic and racial makeup of the nation for the next half century so that it would reflect the population of the nation of 1880. For a detailed account of the labor history exclusion, see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movements in California* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), 1971. The relocation of Japanese Americans during the Second World War displaced thousands whose property was confiscated, and it was not until 1970 that a significant change in immigration laws would significantly reshape the landscape of opportunity for ethnic and racial competition in California.

<sup>2</sup> While race relations in the United States usually involved Americans of European and African descent, the ethnic and racial composition of the State of California and the University of California is far more heterogeneous. For example, both Asian Americans (almost 9 per cent) and Chicano/Latinos (more than 20 per cent) have greater representation in both the state, and at the university than do African Americans, who constitute only eight per cent of California’s population.

<sup>3</sup> University of California, Office of the Vice President — Planning and Analysis, “Summary of the Fall 1968 Ethnic Survey,” February 14, 1969

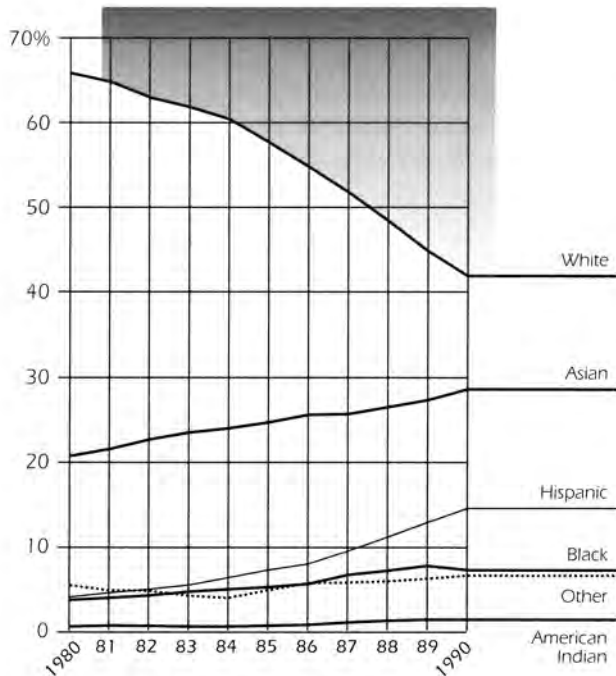
<sup>4</sup> The Third World Strike later produced a compromise, the Ethnic Studies Department at Berkeley. Thus, the campus history of coalition politics around matters of diversity is a long one.

DIVERSITY PROJECT

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FIGURE 1

PERCENT OF UNDERGRADUATE REGISTRANTS BY ETHNICITY, 1980-1989



Source: Adapted from Office of Student Research, Undergraduate Statistics at the University of California, Berkeley, Fall 1990, October 31, 1990

Clark Kerr had been Berkeley’s Chancellor in the 1950s, and later in the decade was appointed president of the University of California. In 1963, he delivered a series of important lectures at Harvard University on what he saw to be the newly emerging “uses of the university.” He envisioned the university as becoming more of a “multiversity,” increasingly responsive to the needs of the corporate world, and adjusting to the demands of technology and bureaucratic organization (Kerr, 1963). All of this would demand a procrustean fit with the university’s products, its students. One important dimension of the student movement of that period included protest and resistance to the march of those very forces that Kerr had described as essential features of the new university.<sup>5</sup> The requirements of Kerr’s technocratic multiversity would remain something of an abstraction for many of the 1960s Berkeley students. In contrast, this report suggests that, in the 1980s, the competition at the admissions gate has made

<sup>5</sup> Mario Savio’s most famous speech during the Berkeley Free Speech movement captured the image of students who would resist this version of themselves as malleable clay at the service of an impersonal technocracy.

TABLE 1

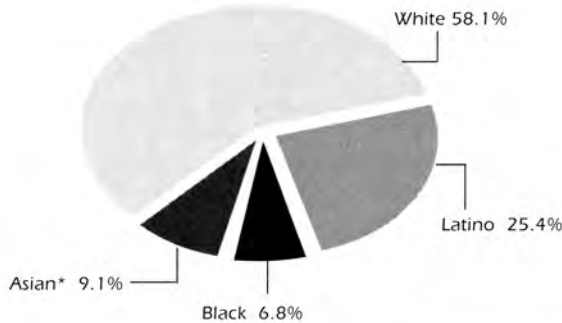
PERCENT OF UNDERGRADUATE REGISTRANTS BY ETHNICITY, FALL 1980-1989

Ethnicity	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
American Indian	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.3
Asian	20.7	21.5	22.7	23.5	24.0	24.7	25.5	25.6	26.5	27.3	28.6
Chinese	12.1	12.4	12.4	12.3	11.8	11.8	12.0	11.8	12.1	12.4	13.0
East Indian	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.8
Japanese	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.4	2.2	2.2
Korean	1.7	2.0	2.4	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.9	4.3	4.7
Filipino	1.7	2.0	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.5	4.4
Pacific Is.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other Asian	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.5
African American	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.9	5.1	5.5	6.5	7.0	7.7	7.2
Hispanic	3.9	4.4	4.9	5.4	6.2	7.1	7.8	9.4	11.1	12.8	14.4
Chicano	2.4	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.8	4.4	4.9	5.8	6.7	7.6	8.6
Latino	1.5	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.6	4.4	5.2	5.8
White	66.1	65.0	63.2	62.0	60.6	57.8	55.0	51.9	48.5	44.9	42.0
Other	2.5	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.6	2.5	2.4	1.8	1.4	1.3	1.0
No ethnic data	2.9	1.9	1.6	1.2	1.2	2.3	3.2	3.9	4.4	4.8	5.5
Citizen/Immigrant	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.5	97.7	97.4	97.1	96.7	96.6	96.7
Foreign	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.9	3.3	3.4	3.3

Source: Office of Student Research, Undergraduate Statistics at the University of California at Berkeley, Fall 1990, October 31, 1990

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**TABLE 2**  
1990 CALIFORNIA STATE POPULATION  
BY RACIAL COMPOSITION



\* Includes Native Americans, Eskimos, Aleutians, and Pacific Islanders.  
Source: California State Census Data Center

today's students hypersensitive to issues of diversification.

Twenty years later, the push for diversity would also come from external forces. This time, however, the driving forces would combine the push of demography with the pull of a globalized economy. David Gardner, Ira Michael Heyman, and Chang-Lin Tien<sup>6</sup> have each invoked these forces as a rationale for a new ethnic and racial diversity at the University of California. There are more than six and a half million Chicano/Latinos in California, nearly a quarter of the state's population.<sup>7</sup> Asian immigration has more than doubled the Asian population in California in only two decades, and they now constitute a larger bloc (about 8.5 per cent) than Blacks (about 7.5 per cent). Projections for the 1990 census indicate an even higher proportion of Asians to Blacks (Table 2). Well into the 1960s, almost every applicant to the Berkeley campus who met the eligibility requirements and who applied was admitted.<sup>8</sup> However, competition had become so fierce in the 1980s that, by the end of the decade, only 16 per cent of those applying and meeting the eligibility requirements were admitted.

The change in admissions is only the tip of a socio-political iceberg. It highlights a matter at the heart of the findings in this report, yet which is not well understood by the full campus community. In the fall of 1989, approximately 21,300 high school graduates applied to Berkeley. However, only 3,500 spots were open in the freshman class. To complicate matters, more than 5,800 of the 21,300 students who applied had straight A (4.0) averages. *Regardless of Affirmative Action, regardless of any kind of action, Berkeley did not have room for at least 2,300 straight A*

*students.*<sup>9</sup> This simple fact with its complex implications, well known to some administrators and a few faculty, is completely unknown to the typical student, unknown to most of the Berkeley Academic Senate, and not well understood by the Regents themselves.<sup>10</sup>

The median GPA of Black and Chicano/Latino freshman at Berkeley in 1990 was 3.52 (well above the 3.25 requirement, see Table 3), but the median Grade Point

**TABLE 3**  
MEDIAN HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGE  
ALL BERKELEY FRESHMEN 1979 THROUGH 1990  
BY ETHNICITY

Year	Asian*	Minority	White	ALL
1979	3.79	3.43	3.73	3.71
1980	3.76	3.40	3.72	3.70
1981	3.76	3.34	3.73	3.70
1982	3.75	3.38	3.69	3.67
1983	3.75	3.33	3.64	3.63
1984	3.94	3.42	3.79	3.76
1985	4.00	3.40	3.85	3.81
1986	4.00	3.50	3.88	3.83
1987	4.00	3.40	3.95	3.83
1988	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.89
1989	4.00	3.53	4.00	3.88
1990	4.00	3.52	4.00	3.94

\* Does not include Filipinos

Source: Office of Student Research

<sup>6</sup> David Gardner, President of University of California, Ira Michael Heyman, Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley (1980-1990), and Chang-Lin Tien, Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley, (1990-present).

<sup>7</sup> While more than 80 per cent originates in Mexico, Latinos are a reflection of the polycultural societies of Latin America, and include Central and South Americans and the Caribbean.

<sup>8</sup> *Freshman Admissions at Berkeley: A Policy for the 1990s and Beyond*. Professor Jerome Karabel, Chair, Report by the Committee on Admissions and Enrollment, Berkeley Division, Academic Senate, University of California, see p. 11

<sup>9</sup> In fact, the Berkeley campus turned away approximately 2,800 4.0s in the fall of 1989.

<sup>10</sup> The minutes of the May 17 meeting of the Regents in San Francisco will reveal that the members, who argued for nearly two hours about "reverse discrimination," were stunned into silence when President Gardner revealed the larger context of the Berkeley admissions situation by simply laying out the ratio of applicants with 4.0s to possible admits, and requesting advice about a better solution than the one currently in place.



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Average of white and Asian freshman admits to Berkeley in 1989 was 4.0. This 0.48 difference in the median Grade Point Average of Black and Chicano/Latino freshman admits (3.52), on the one hand, and the whites and Asian Americans, on the other (4.0), has a magnitude of social consequence far beyond what could have been imagined by the students of the 1960s. Not only is a rooted sense of superiority generated out of this fact among many whites and Asians, but charges of racism, reverse discrimination and a full panoply of recriminations and sensitivities revolve around the meanings and interpretations given to this difference. Strong emotive statements about fairness or unfairness as reflected in the current Affirmative Action admissions policy come from all sides. Indeed, the single incident of an admission of one of these "mere 3.5" students becomes the source of passionately told resentment stories which enter the folklore and the conventional wisdom.

Moreover, the fierce competition using only the Academic Index has pitted whites directly against Asians, and the whites are losing. According to a 1980 national survey, 78 percent of Asian/Pacific high school seniors expected to earn a 4-year college degree, compared to only 46 percent of white seniors. As the state with the largest Asian American population (1,247,000), California enrolled 43 percent (or 193,000) of the nation's 448,000 Asian American college students in 1980.<sup>11</sup> In 1986, 33 percent of the state's Asian American high school graduates were "academically eligible" for admission to the University of California, Berkeley, whereas only 16 percent of white high school graduates qualified. By the fall of 1987, Asian Americans made up 28% of all applicants; whites made up 54.9%. Thus, the white to Asian ratio is only 2:1, an extraordinary figure since white high school graduates in California outnumber Asian Americans by 6:1.<sup>12</sup>

When the administration and the Academic Senate Admissions and Enrollment Committee confronted this matter in 1988-89, they faced a very tough decision in which, no matter what they did (since they could not serve all legitimate competing interests), there would be unhappiness. The state legislature, through its *California Master Plan for Higher Education*, mandates service to a diverse student body. In *Assembly Concurrent Resolutions 151* (1974) and *83* (1983), and in the most recent (1988) *Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education*, the California state legislature has been clear that all segments of

higher education "strive to approximate by the year 2000 the general ethnic, gender, economic, and regional composition of recent high school graduates..." The Regents own resolution in 1988 concurred:

*The University seeks to enroll, on each of its campuses, a student body that, beyond meeting the University's eligibility requirements, demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of cultural, racial, geographic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and characteristics of California.*

The above directives and the high ratio of freshmen applicants at Berkeley in relation to possible positions makes for a rock and a hard place. Given that there is grade inflation, given that there are more than 1200 high schools in the State with high variation in grading procedures, given that less than 25 per cent of those high schools constitute the "feeder schools" for more than 70 per cent of Cal's students, a computer generated straight A admissions is hardly a defensible strategy, without even raising the question of whether a freshman class of only straight A students is pedagogically desirable. But there is the white heat of moral outrage of white and Asian families when one of their own is "displaced" by an applicant who has scored lower on the Academic Index. At the same time, Blacks and Chicano/Latinos know that no such rage and anger accompanies the side entrance of admissions of "alumni preference," the moral equivalent of a *grandfather's clause* for the right to vote, or admissions of white students that include considerations of geographical origin or special abilities (music, etc.).<sup>13</sup> Rage simmers on both sides of the great divide, and accounts for much inter-group tension. In American higher education, far more whites have en-

<sup>11</sup> Bob H. Suzuki, "Asian Americans in Higher Education: Impact of Changing Demographics and Other Social Forces," Paper Prepared for a National Symposium on the Changing Demographics of Higher Education, Ford Foundation, New York City, 1988

<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see L. Ling-Chi Wang, "Meritocracy and Diversity in Higher Education: Discrimination Against Asian Americans in the Post-Bakke Era," *The Urban Review* 20 (3): 1-21, 1988

<sup>13</sup> In 1989, for example, 24% of the white students were admitted based upon criteria other than or in addition to their Academic Index. Interview with Pamela Burnett, Associate Director, Office of Undergraduate Admission. October 17, 1991.

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tered the gates of the ten most elite institutions through “alumni preference” than the combined number of all the Blacks and Chicanos entering through Affirmative Action.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, new research by Jerome Karabel and David Karen has revealed that even today this is true at our most elite colleges. Analyzing the most recent available data for the entering freshman class at Harvard in 1988, alumni preference accounted for more admitees than all the African American, Mexican American, Native American, and Puerto Rican registrants combined.<sup>15</sup> The Office of Civil Rights, investigating the Harvard case, found that alumni preference, demonstrably a bloodline genealogy issue and not individual merit, was permissible.<sup>16</sup>

Because of the interplay of these forces, *students hold strongly conflicting and contradictory views about diversity and the policies necessary to achieve it*. This conflict is expressed in complex ways: alongside their deep dissatisfaction with certain perceived features of the diverse university, these same students also voice a reservoir of goodwill and sympathy for the goals of diversity. They are of two minds (often in one body), wavering back and forth between the rhetoric of opposing positions. While they often endorse the general idea and vision, Berkeley’s students,

whether of European or Asian or African or Native American descent, tend to see the various programs and practices that have generated this diversity as problematic. This report seeks to characterize this development more fully, and to make some better sense of it.

<sup>14</sup> Marcia Graham Synnott, *The Half-Opened Door: Discrimination and Admissions at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1900-1970* (Westport, Connecticut and London, England), 1979; Jerome Karabel, “Status-group Struggle, Organizational Interests, and the Limits of Institutional Autonomy: The Transformation of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1918-1940,” *Theory and Society* 13 (1): 1-40, January 1984; Dan A. Oren, *Joining the Club: A History of Jews at Yale* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1985; and David O. Levine, *The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 1915-1940* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press), 1986

<sup>15</sup> *New York Times*, “Go to Harvard, Give Your Kid A Break”, December 8, 1990.

<sup>16</sup> October 4, 1990, Office of Civil Rights of the U. S. Dept. of Education, Region 1, Thomas Hibino, Acting Regional Director, letter to President Derek Bok, summarizing the report. Also see Scott Jaschik, “U.S. Finds Harvard Did Not Exclude Asian Americans,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 17, 1990.



## CHAPTER II

# THE ADMINISTRATION RESPONDS TO A CHANGING STUDENT BODY

The campus administration responded in a number of different ways to address the concern for a “changing student body.” Specifically,

- 1) *A Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body* was created.
- 2) A new program in American Studies and American Cultures was funded.
- 3) The development of the focused energy of a group of administrators to deal in a hands-on manner with issues of diversity (the Multi-Cultural Action Team, of which a central component was *Project DARE* — Diversity Awareness through Resources and Education) was supported.
- 4) A study to examine some of the issues around the routine experiences of a shifting racial and cultural climate, the *Diversity Project* at the Institute for the Study of Social Change was commissioned

*The Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body*, chaired by Professor Christina Maslach, conducted a survey in the Spring of 1990 of a random sample of the entire student body. Individual interviews were conducted over the telephone, by professionals. Each interview covered scores of topics dealing with many aspects of student life. More than 2,600 students were sampled, and the study was completed in July, 1990.<sup>17</sup> This was a general inquiry that raised a wide variety of issues about student life. Only a few questions about the experience of racial and ethnic diversity were asked. Nonetheless, there were complementary data and notable convergences between key findings from the Maslach Report and what we will be reporting from this study.

In contrast to the general overview of student life from the *Commission*, it was the explicit purpose of the Diversity Project to find out, up close, how undergraduate students have been experiencing the new ethnic and racial diversity of the campus. That task seemed better suited to a social science research unit, the Institute for the Study of Social Change, committed to a strategy of investigation that tries to capture how people behave “in the natural setting.”

Ideally, this would mean close observation over long periods of the ways in which students relate and interact across and over and within racial, ethnic, and cultural boundaries.<sup>18</sup> It is our view that this kind of study can and should be done, but the investment of time and resources required for such a study are considerable.

Interviews conducted over time became the next best approximation. Institute faculty and senior research staff were seasoned interviewers with a long-demonstrated capability in this methodology. A partial listing of ISSC members makes this point, since among them are some established scholars and researchers in this kind of work.<sup>19</sup> Among the senior faculty and research fellows, there were

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<sup>17</sup> Both undergraduate and graduate students were interviewed. The full report is entitled, *Promoting Student Success at Berkeley: Guidelines for the Future*, and was released by the Chancellor's office in early 1991.

<sup>18</sup> One segment of the current study does make a small attempt to get at this issue by mapping the areas of campus in which there are clear demarcations of racial and ethnic “spaces,” areas where one or another group dominates in terms of who “hangs out there” or where other groups “vote with their feet” regarding spatial domination.

<sup>19</sup> They include Lillian Rubin, author of *Worlds of Pain*, and *Quiet Rage*; Bob Blauner, author of *Black Lives, White Lives*, and *Racial Oppression in America*; Tomas Almaguer, author of *Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific: Mexicans, Indians, and Asian Immigrants in Anglo California*; Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, author of *City Bound: Urban Life and Political Attitudes Among Chicano Youth*, and *Islands in the Street*; Russell Thornton, author of *American Indian Holocaust and Survival and The Cherokees*; David Wellman, author of *Portraits of White Racism*; Hardy Frye, author of *Black Political Parties*; Jerrold Takahashi, author of *Ethnic Identity, Culture and Politics: Japanese Americans and Social Change*; Gerald Berreman, author of *Caste and Other Inequities*; Deborah Woo, “The ‘Overrepresentation’ of Asian Americans: Red Herrings and Yellow Perils,” *Sage Race Relations Abstracts*, 15 (2), May 1990 and “The Socioeconomic Status of Asian American Women in the Labor Market: An Alternative View,” *Sociological Perspectives*, (July 1985); Troy Duster, “Conditions for the Variable Strategies of Cultural Minorities,” in *Vers des Societes Pluriculturelles: Etudes Comparatives et Situation en France*, Paris: Editions de L’Orstrom, 1987:516-524 and “Purpose and Bias in the Study of Stratified Communities,” *Society*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (January/February, 1987) and Norma Wikler, author of “Gender and Justice: Navigating Curves on the Road to Equality,” *Trial Magazine*, February, 1990, and “Water on Stone: Perspectives on the Movement to Eliminate Gender Bias in the Courts,” *State Court Journal*, 13, 3 (Summer) 1989.

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several social scientists who had attained considerable prominence from having dealt both with the substantive topic and the method of data collection, the partially-structured probing interview.

In addition, the staff decided on one other interesting and somewhat novel approach — to take *systematic* advantage of the fact that we were ourselves a very diverse group. Two Asian Americans, one Native American, three Chicanos, seven European Americans, and three African Americans comprised the senior staff. We would make use of this staff diversity in developing our research design for the study.

We knew that we would be treading into politically charged territory on the matter of how students were experiencing ethnic and racial and cultural diversity. On the one hand, the administration had engaged in a bold and controversial step in the early 1980s, the explicit decision to "diversify" the campus. This meant different things to different people, was thoroughly misunderstood by some, routinely mis-represented by others, and frequently deeply resented by still others. There was, in short, a lot of passion, advocacy, strong support, and also anger and hard feelings over "Affirmative Action in the admissions policy." In the mid-1980s, a group of Asian Americans had pressed the university to re-examine its admissions policy as it related to a pattern of apparent selective reduction in Asian American admissions (Wang, 1989; Woo, 1990). This

group had explicitly *not* attacked Affirmative Action for Chicano/Latinos and Blacks from a public stage, but sensitive observers knew that there would be privately held "concerns" about "Affirmative Action in the admissions policy." That there are formidable pockets of white resentment about Affirmative Action policy was already a part of American culture and folklore. Survey research by social scientists and Gallup and Newsweek polls dating back a full decade had chronicled the sharp disagreement between European and African Americans on the success and fairness of Affirmative Action.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, the Office of Student Research at the university conducts an annual survey of the entering freshman class. Among the questions asked is an opinion about the fairness and legitimacy of Affirmative Action in the admissions policy. We can see from Table 4 that there are sharp differences between students by ethnicity and race, just as one would have predicted from the body of research cited above.

Moreover, it was also common knowledge in late 1988 that student opinion on the "ethnic studies requirement" was sharply differentiated, with strong feelings on all sides

<sup>20</sup> Schumann, Steeh and Bobo (1985)

**TABLE 4**  
STUDENT RESPONSES TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ADMISSIONS POLICY

Berkeley's current admissions policy grants some special considerations to qualified applicants from racial and ethnic groups that historically have been underrepresented in higher education. Berkeley plans in the future to grant similar considerations to qualified applicants from economically and educationally disadvantaged families, regardless of race and ethnicity. Both policies are designed to enhance the diversity and representativeness of the Berkeley student body.

**Question 9. Do you agree with the current underrepresented ethnic minority admissions policy?**

	American Indian	African American	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Asian	White	Other	TOTAL
Definitely	35.7	61.5	4.6	40.2	14.9	12.1	10.6	12.6	21.5
Generally, but with some Reservations	35.7	28.2	37.0	36.2	47.9	40.7	44.3	35.0	39.9
Not Sure	14.3	8.5	10.9	8.7	18.1	16.5	12.7	14.7	13.5
Disagree, as currently practiced	3.6	1.7	4.9	12.6	11.7	19.7	19.6	18.2	15.3
Definitely disagree	10.7	0.0	2.7	2.4	7.4	11.0	12.9	19.6	9.7
TOTAL Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Office of Student Research, 1990 Freshman Survey: Berkeley's Ten Supplemental Questions by Ethnicity and Gender, February, 1991.

of the issue.<sup>21</sup> The official student groups, including the fraternities and sororities, had generally supported the requirement. Nonetheless, impassioned advocacy by the most activist students of color was matched by some layers of resentment from other students. These dissenting students were sometimes Blacks and Chicanos who had their own reservations about Affirmative Action; sometimes they were white and Asian students who preferred a "class-based" and "means-tested" Affirmative Action over race-based criteria. Thus, we knew that we were in the territory of passionate advocacy and dissent. *What we did not know was the way in which these passionate positions played themselves out in social relationships*, in the ways students related to (or avoided) each other, engaged in amenities, or were impersonal or hostile, or perhaps ignored each other.

Would a survey of attitudes suffice? We had good reason and supporting data to suggest that it would not. First, one of the classic studies of race, based on a combination of survey data and direct observation, dates back some half century. The results are counter-intuitive on the relationship between attitudes and behavior on matters of race. This is the famous La Piere work (1938), in which the researchers asked white restaurant owners months ahead of time how they would respond if Chinese showed up at their restaurant. The majority indicated that they had strong negative feelings, and would "discriminate," but when La Piere then toured these restaurants with a Chinese

group, he found very little in the way of active behavioral cues indicating discrimination. In contrast, more recent studies have revealed that college-educated white property owners whose questionnaire responses would suggest they have no prejudice and would not exhibit any discriminatory behavior to African Americans, have in the actual situations (housing sales and apartment rentals) engaged in routine racial discrimination. Researchers for the Department of Housing and Urban Development have documented systematic bias.<sup>22</sup> The relationship between attitudes and behavior in the area of racial and ethnic relations is one of the most uncertain in the scholarly literature. Only an empirical investigation close to the setting in which race relations take place would produce results with which one might have modest levels of confidence.

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<sup>21</sup> This latter became the American Cultures Requirement, when European Americans joined Native Americans, African Americans, Chicano/Latino Americans and Asian Americans as the fifth group, where at least three of the five must be covered in a comparative manner for the course to fulfill the requirement.

<sup>22</sup> T. Duster, D. Matza and D. Wellman, "Field Research and the Protection of Human Subjects," *American Sociologist*, August, 1979, Vol. 14, No. 3.



## CHAPTER III

### FINDINGS FROM THE VOICES OF THOSE AFFECTED

*Tom Peters, author of In Search of Excellence, has a very simple strategy for getting good ideas for how to improve efficiency from the shop floor: ask the people who work there. On the educational shop floor, educators could do better by asking the people who “work there...” the students, about the nature of their experience. We did. We asked every group what they would suggest as something that might be done to improve the experience of being on a campus of such extraordinarily rich ethnic and racial diversity. As with Peters’ workers on the shop floor, some of the suggestions are as simple as they are elegant and doable, with no more resources required. Some of the other suggestions would require resources, and that is always a matter of setting priorities. It is our view that the experiment in diversity at Berkeley is too important, too closely watched by those who wish to learn from our mistakes and successes, to simply “open up” and let such massive social change occur without monitoring, and without trying to improve, adjust, and engage in small pilot programs as well as some bold policy interventions.*

*Nearly 300 students were interviewed in more than 60 group sessions. More than 150 hours of taped materials were transcribed and subjected to a thematic analysis. Some of these analyses were done of a single grouping of students, some were done along selected themes across all groups. As such, we anticipate that several articles will come from this Project, so that these findings can be reported in greater detail. In this section, therefore, we merely summarize the major general themes around which the research team reached some consensus.*

#### SUMMARY OF GENERAL FINDINGS

First, a word about what the students routinely counseled *against* doing. The big dance, they said, won’t do. The various groups have too wide a gap in styles of entertainment, music, and enjoyment. The Blacks characterized the whites as wanting only to drink beer and sit around and talk, while Chicanos and Blacks are more likely to see a party as a dance party, alcohol playing a subsidiary role. As for types of music, the old cliché from West Side Story still persists: whose music is going to be played. Indeed, turf wars are likely to break out at such a huge inter-ethnic inter-racial university sponsored social or dance or party aimed at inter-ethnic *understanding*. It won’t work. At one point, for example, the university radio station went through troubled times because there was a fight over whether to play Salsa, Rap, Heavy Metal, or Rock and Roll during evening prime time.

Rather than seeing the radio battle as “racism” or “pathology” it is more fruitful to see this as a healthy battle over scarce resources. It is healthy because differing groups with differing interests are battling it out about who should have those resources. A fair and equitable solution is conceivable, even if it pleases no group. One can divvy up

prime time on any of a number of grounds.

The radio station incident is different in kind and form from other kinds of situations in which there are charges of “racism.” Political disagreements between white and Black students about such matters as an ethnic studies requirement end up with some Black students characterizing the whites as racist for not supporting the requirement. The white students strongly resent the charge of racism in such an instance, and even more resent the “squelching” elements of the tactic. In the last twelve months, this has emerged in the media as a battle over what is now called “political correctness.” But we have shown how there is a strong explanation for this development, especially insofar as we address the charge of “racism.” We have shown that white students tend to mean something quite different by the term — that the willingness to be friendly, indeed, “to be friends” at the *inter-personal* level is for these students *prima facie* evidence of their goodwill and lack of racism. But for the African American students, they tend to associate attitudes and behaviors about *organizational and institutional matters* as reflections of either “racism” or its absence (or substantial mitigation).



**GENERAL FINDING****1. External Sameness, Internal Differences;  
The Accordion-Like Character of Ethnic Homogeneity**

We have tried to come up with a systematic way to characterize the problem of group perception, and we have found a way through the unlikely literature on social movements. The closer one is to a social movement, the more likely one is to see internal variation. Indeed, there is an axiom: "No social movement is as incoherent as it appears from within, and no social movement is as coherent as it appears from without."

This axiom is transportable to the study of ethnicity and race in the following way. If one is "Asian American" one is very much aware of the numerous ways in which internal differences are profound and consequential. Thus, Japanese Americans know the important distinctions between the generations and their attitudes toward assimilation in America (Issei, Nisei, Sansei, and now Yonsei, with patterned and different views about intermarriage, voting, assimilation, etc.). Chinese Americans see important differences between Chinese from Taiwan and Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and the Mainland, San Francisco and Walnut Creek, first or second generation, and so on. Similarly, Koreans, Filipinos, Laotians, Cambodian, and Vietnamese also note internal variations amongst themselves. While Asian Americans are sensitive to their own internal differences, they are likely to hold stereotypical views of the homogeneous character of "others," collapsing gentiles and Jews, working-class Irish Catholics and upper-middle class Episcopalians as "white." Similarly, Blacks make astute internal distinctions between the street-wise urban and those who grew up in suburban settings with professional parents, those from a second generation who migrated from the south, and those from old-line southern elite families, between nationalist and assimilationist, etc. But these same African Americans who see internal differences in their own group are as likely to see "Asians" as a single, collapsed category. Conversely, Asians who see themselves as internally differentiated are more likely to see "Blacks" as a collapsed accordion.

Just as in the case of social movement members, therefore, the closer one is to the phenomenon, the more likely one is to see internal differences. This poses an interesting paradox. Namely, while observers from the outside are likely to impute "sameness" and "self-segregation," the "group" in question may be struggling with tremendous

internal differentiation, effortfully trying to forge a common identity or set of interests.

Ironically, critics of group proliferation mistake moves to achieve community (out of internally differentiated aggregates) as fragmentation and as an assault upon some larger common community. Some of this concern is misplaced, if not amusing. For example, upon closer inspection, groups such as the Asian Business Association and the Black Engineering and Science Student Association meet only a few hours a month. They have a hard time getting membership to come for just these few hours. Yet, they see themselves described in the media as a coherent force, excluding others from attendance. If D'Souza, George Will and the *Economist* were at all close to the phenomenon of "student associations" they would be far from "concerned" about a few hours here and again, where membership may be lagging or uncommitted from the point of view of the organizers.

**GENERAL FINDING****2. The Role of Associations**

A visitor to Sproul Plaza (during registration week), at the entrance of the University of California, Berkeley, is instantly struck by the large number of card tables, with their posterboard signs, which have been set up to advertise and promote a wide number of student groups and organizations. There are tables for the Hiking Club, the Chinese Students Association, the Vietnamese Students Association, MECHA (an organization of Chicano and Latino students), the Bicycle Club, Cal Adventures, etc. Some organizations are thus clearly targeted towards specific ethnic and racial groups, others to professional or academic interests, including such specializations as the Berkeley Campus Human Resources Council, and the undergraduate associations of Business, Mathematics, Sociology, and Engineering. The number of registered student organizations has increased noticeably over each of the past three years. And increasingly, the membership and appeal of the organizations or associations are linked to specifically designated student populations where ethnicity and race play an important role.

In an era in which mass political protests and organizations have declined, the Berkeley campus has veered to a decidedly organizational form. Cultural, social, professional, academic, self-help and interest group organizations

have emerged to respond to the diversity of unserved interests and concerns among the current multi-cultural student body. Like the trends that we report from our interviews and observations, these groups vary from strongly mono-ethnic or mono-cultural to very mixed and multi-cultural. This blossoming of informal associations is very much in an American tradition that was observed in an earlier era. Even in the 1830's, Tocqueville could comment on the widespread tendency to initiate and develop voluntary associations around a whole range of social, moral, and political purposes:

*In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America.... The citizen of the United States is taught from infancy to rely upon his own exertions in order to resist the evils and the difficulties of life...*<sup>23</sup>

Prior to the National Quota Origins Act of 1924 which placed stricter limits on immigration to the U.S., churches, clubs, and associations served as mediating organizations for the many immigrants who had come to America to find work. In 1920, 25 per cent of the population were foreign-born, and 55 per cent had at least one parent who was foreign-born. In this environment of predominantly white ethnic diversity, voluntary groups and organizations served as islands of friendship, affiliation, and as interest groups for ethnic segments of the population.<sup>24</sup> European ethnic groups did not disperse or merge into the mainstream until they developed sufficient economic and political power. Immigrants, in fact, tended to move to those places in the United States where there were already well-established ethnic communities from their home country, which provided a range of social, economic, and moral resources.<sup>25</sup>

The role of voluntary associations as mediating organizations in a multi-ethnic society thus has a venerable American tradition. To portray this development in terms of its recency and newness on a college campus is accurate only if one has the narrow time frame of a decade or two. This belies the fact that only two decades back, most American campuses were culturally and racially homogeneous, as were most fraternities and sororities.

### GENERAL FINDING

#### 3. Converging Desire for Diversity, but Diverging Conceptions

A remarkable seventy per cent of all undergraduate students at Berkeley agree<sup>26</sup> with the statement, "I'd like to meet more students from ethnic and cultural backgrounds that are different from my own." This finding is from the survey of undergraduate students by the *Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body*. Data from the *Diversity Project* corroborate this finding, but we need to be cautious in how we interpret it.<sup>27</sup> Negotiating the terrain of inter-ethnic relations in a situation where none is the majority is a new and emergent experience for most members of ethnic and racial groups on campus. While Berkeley's undergraduate students generally share the stated interest in having interracial experiences and contacts while at the university, on or off the campus, members of different ethnic and racial groups tend to chart this terrain in different ways. In general, this desire for diversity is not being sufficiently acknowledged, much less constructively addressed in any of the current debates around affirmative action, quotas, and self-segregation. This shared interest in diversity should be an important starting point. The focused concern of the *Diversity Project* revealed how expectations and disappointments in the realm of inter-ethnic relations are patterned, though by no means determined by

<sup>23</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol I, Vintage: New York, 1945, pp. 198-99

<sup>24</sup> "The 'Great Melting Pot' and the history of workplace diversity", presentation to the Sixth Annual Breakfast Meeting, Berkeley Campus Human Resources Council, April 25, 1991

<sup>25</sup> Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut, *Immigrant America: A Portrait* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1990

<sup>26</sup> See Table 4.7, "Attitudes toward Involvement with Those Having Different Cultural Backgrounds" — Strongly agree (36%) or Somewhat agree (34%)

<sup>27</sup> There is remarkable internal variation for any aggregate of students. The generalizations refer to where aggregates tend to cluster along a continuum. They should not be taken to mean that "most XXX students" hold these views. Rather, such generalizations refer themes or issues that tend to predominate in one group more than another. Thus, for example, white students are more likely to desire interaction with other racial groups and yet lament the relative absence of such experiences. This reflects that they are most likely to still be "in the first stage of diversity," with its assimilationist assumptions and underpinnings.

any single factor. Despite the variation and diversity within and across groups, there remain clear divisions or distinctions in how different groups of students construct, experience and understand their time at Berkeley and their expressions of interest in greater inter-ethnic/cultural contact.

Data from the Freshman survey of entering undergraduates in the Fall of 1990 (Table 5) provide fascinating summary responses concerning their interest in and support for programs to promote racial understanding. The data help clarify the differences in hopes and expectations of different ethnic groups with respect to inter-ethnic contacts.<sup>28</sup> More than 72 per cent of African American respondents are “interested” or “extremely interested” in special programs to promote racial understanding.<sup>29</sup> In sharp contrast, about 43 per cent of white respondents express such an interest, and nearly 30 per cent state that they are not that interested or probably will be too busy for such activities. In fact, survey data show whites to be the least interested of all groups in special programs promoting racial understandings.

Yet when such survey findings are compared to data from group interviews, an interesting difference in the responses by ethnic group surfaces. In the group interviews, white students, with much greater frequency than African Americans, routinely and consistently expressed interest in having more contact and friendships with African American students, whom they experienced as being cliquish and somewhat closed to interracial contact. In contrast, African American students most often (among all

ethnic groups) indicated a preference for same-group friendships, and for same-group social activities and organizations. They were most likely to report these experiences as more comfortable and resonant with shared values and experiences. To generalize from the combined findings (from the *Commission* survey of undergraduates, the Diversity Project, and the 1990 Freshman survey), while whites tend to express a willingness and desire to be friends with African Americans, they are less likely to want inter-racial contact in the context of special programs, courses, or activities that structure inter-ethnic contacts. At the other end, African Americans are far more likely to want special programs and activities but are less interested in developing cross-racial friendships and social activities.

The three data sets suggest that while *both* African American and white freshman students want more interracial experiences and contacts, *they want them on different terms*. African Americans want more classes and programs and institutional commitments and responses. Whites want more individual, personal contacts developed at their own time and leisure.

These data suggest again the emergent and polymorphous character of inter-ethnic relations on campus. They

<sup>28</sup> Office of Student Research, February 1991. Selected questions added to the Freshman Survey in cooperation with the Diversity Project.

<sup>29</sup> See Table 1, Interest in Extra-Curricular Programs and Activities.

**TABLE 5**

INTEREST IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

**Question 7. Would you be interested in participating in extra-curricular programs and student activities which promote understanding and cooperation among Berkeley students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds?**

	American Indian	African American	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Asain	White	Other	TOTAL
No, not that interested	7.1	2.5	2.7	7.9	2.1	3.0	13.0	6.8	6.6
No, probably will be too busy for such activities	10.7	3.4	6.5	3.9	7.4	13.3	15.9	15.1	11.7
Don't Know	21.4	22.0	25.9	23.6	24.5	29.0	27.7	31.5	27.2
Yes, interested	35.7	47.5	46.5	45.7	50.0	42.1	34.	31.5	40.3
Yes, extremely interested	25.0	24.6	18.4	18.9	16.0	12.7	9.4	15.1	14.3
TOTAL PERCENT	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Office of Student Research, 1990 Freshman Survey: Berkeley's Ten Supplemental Questions by Ethnicity and Gender, February, 1991.

affirm that to simply brand one group or faction as in favor of multi-culturalism and another as ethnocentric and separatist misses the point. The task is to provide all students with a range of safe environments and options where they can explore and develop terms which they find comfortable for inter-ethnic/cultural contacts.

In the absence of such opportunities, the tendencies remain (as expressed in both the focused groups and the survey of the undergraduate population) for different groups (whose main experience of the other is from a distance) to see the other in terms of images, stereotypes, stories and myths which are not contradicted by much direct contact and experience. One result of this process of seeing others from a distance and being seen from a distance is to reduce the other to a stereotype (and to be so reduced). The considerable frequency of being seen in terms of stereotypes was also noted in the undergraduate survey (*Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body*):

*No matter what the group (a fraternity, women athletes, a political organization, etc.) every one of them felt misunderstood and stereotyped by others. One consequence of this feeling is that people are even more likely to polarize into isolated groups that have less and less contact with each other—contact that could actually dispel some of the myths and stereotypes (whereas the lack of contact leaves the myths intact and may even reinforce them.)*<sup>30</sup>

#### GENERAL FINDING

#### 4. Diversity: Sometimes Zero-Sum, Sometimes Mutual Enhancement

The overwhelming sense of our group discussions with students is that the students are ambivalent and contradictory when it comes to the topic of increasing ethnic and racial diversity. This ambivalence is not only within groups, but often in the same person. Each group had its own emphasis about what is and what is not important regarding this topic. The reasoning that led to particular views was often based on assumptions about the relative relationship of groups to one another.

White students were the most likely of the groups to give voice to the zero-sum aspect of the new diversity. When whites think in terms of their *group interests* (racial or ethnic or color interests), they were most likely to feel squeezed out of what they considered their slice of the pie of admissions — squeezed, on the one hand, by

“undeserving” Affirmative Action admits and, on the other hand, by “overly competitive” Asian Americans. At the same time, some white students could also see that the issue of ethnic and racial diversity in their midst enhanced their own education and appreciation for living in an increasingly diverse society.

Asian American students were the most conflicted of all the groupings of students about a policy to diversify the student body.<sup>31</sup> By contrast, Chicano/Latino Americans, African Americans and Native Americans voiced the strongest support for an explicit policy of student diversification via Affirmative Action. Yet their knowledge of how and why such a policy operates was no greater than that of whites and Asian Americans. Moreover, they too expressed reservations that require greater explanation in the sections which follow. Thus, while it can be said that students could be divided into two camps of those for and against a policy of diversification, it would be ultimately inaccurate because it fails to capture the deep and gnawing reservations among the supporters, and some strong sympathy even among the detractors. We have, in short, a situation that cannot be summarized easily, and where policy implications must be drawn sensitively to the complexity of the situation.

Students from every group were divided about an Affirmative Action admissions policy, and even some students who expressed strongly positive or negative views were, upon closer examination, at variance. If there is a single pattern emerging from the study, it is that the students are deeply conflicted, disturbed, divided and confused about Affirmative Action as a policy, yet support the idea of diversity. It is the nature of how this value conflict unfolds in the day-to-day relations between and among students that was some of the richest materials in the study.

<sup>30</sup> *Promoting Student Success at Berkeley: Guidelines for the Future*. Christina Maslach, Chair. Report of the Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body. University of California, Berkeley, 1991

<sup>31</sup> More will be said about the nature of this ambivalence in the section on Asian American students.

**GENERAL FINDING****5. Atomization, Isolation, and the Discovery of Affinity**

The Berkeley campus is a large, anonymous environment where students routinely feel that they are isolated from what is happening on the rest of the campus. Waiting in the wings to take advantage of this social isolation are ready-made affinity groupings. Some of these groupings are based upon the self-selected interests of the students: the band, the choir, political organizations, and the like. The nearly universal observation and experience of undergraduate students is that ethnic and racial circles of sociability, friendship, and study groupings profoundly initiate the new student as he or she first arrives on campus. While there are certainly variations and exceptions, and while it is equally the case that one can *find* integrated tables or dances, the overwhelming pattern is the observation of enclaves. As we will show shortly, the way in which these enclaves are experienced varies by groups, and with some patterning.

Students in virtually every session mentioned such matters, varying from dormitory tables at dinner time, where all the Black students seemed to gather together, to the all Chicano/Latino dance, or simply patterns of congregation at various popular spots in the plazas. "Students of color" routinely reported both that they discovered or re-discovered ethnic affinity, and that this alternately was affirming and supportive, yet sometimes oppressive. Over time, they come to terms with the situation and make a choice.

The report documents these two very different processes in how students experience and adjust to their earliest period on campus and makes the recommendation that we widen the sense of choice, affirming the positive side of each choice when possible.

**GENERAL FINDING****6. Stereotypes, Sensitivities, and the Impoverished Vocabulary of Racism**

The charge that there is racism in select speech or behavior, from slurs to slights, from paying attention to ignoring, from the symbolic violence of caricatures to racial jokes — have all been heard in contemporary America. That they should be heard on a college campus is a puzzle to some. Why, they ask out loud, should our most edu-

cated youth at our most prestigious and elite universities be engaged in racist incidents? This in turn has triggered a debate well-known to criminologists who analyze fluctuating crime rates, namely, is this a change in *reporting behavior* or is this a change in the *frequency of the behavior*? There is yet another alternative, and that concerns whether what constitutes the behavior (or the interpretation of it) has changed. In order to address this question, and to more fully understand the contemporary charge of campus racism, it is necessary to place the matter in some historical context, if only of the last three decades.

In the early 1960s, before the Civil Rights Movement had launched changes in laws concerning access of Blacks to public accommodations, there were many public establishments in the United States in which proprietors refused service to people of color. This was not restricted to the South. Thus, the racism of selective access to restaurants and hotels, to bowling alleys and barber shops was clear and unequivocal. There was no need to wonder out loud about one's perception of the reality.

Today's students of color benefit from the lowering of the legal and routine discriminatory practices of this earlier period. They understand that they have "political citizenship" i.e., that they have equal rights to be at any public accommodation, go to any restaurant, even to any classroom. But for many, they wonder whether this political citizenship extends to an admissions policy which favored them, whether they were admitted as *bona fide* students, and it is on this matter that they express a feeling of lacking "cultural citizenship."<sup>32</sup> It is this latter condition or situation that needs to be more fully addressed, and which may begin to explain the subterranean rage, even surprising rage, of well-to-do members of racial and ethnic groups.

The media have given play to the rage, for example, of the emerging "underclass," and the homeless, while portraying Bill Cosby's Huxtables as affable, assimilated, and congenial. We suggest that the opposite may be true: namely, that the real rage and subterranean anger may be located in a locked up tension that has no language of

<sup>32</sup> This formulation is indebted to Professor Renato Resaldo of Stanford University, from a lecture inaugurating the Center for the Study of American Cultures in May, 1990.

legitimacy in the culture.<sup>33</sup> That is, when Blacks feel and experience that they are being stigmatized by an Affirmative Action brush, they also report that they experience subtle and indirect references to their lack of legitimate “cultural citizenship.”<sup>34</sup> In an earlier time when racism was blatant, legally mandated and socially ratified (no access to public accommodations, hotels, restaurants, bars, beaches, etc.), the charge of “racism” had currency throughout much of the society. However, in the current setting, the very absence of a textured and nuanced language to fit the newer and more subtly perceived forms of discomforting racism make the charge sound hollow in their own ears as they self-censor before they can give language to it.<sup>35</sup> This produces a level of anger and frustration that for many turns them back into the succor and relatively nurturant and relaxed “enclave” of other African Americans.

#### GENERAL FINDING

##### 7. The Academic Index: Ambivalence, Misinformation, Yet Reification

First, it must be noted that there is an extraordinary dearth of information about actual Affirmative Action admissions policy, coupled with strong, expressive, even visceral opinions about the policy. In all of the 69 groups, fewer than a handful of students had any firm understanding of the way the policy is actually implemented. Indeed, the combination of universally strongly held opinions alongside either misinformation or complete ignorance of the policy requires some explanation.

The State of California’s Master Plan for Higher Education mandates that the University of California will be the major research institution of the state. It further states that the top 12.5 per cent of the high school graduating class shall be eligible for admission to the university. With more than 1200 high schools in the state, *how* this “top 12.5 per cent” is to be determined is, of course, up for interpretation and negotiation. The use of the grade point average (GPA) is a convenient mechanism. However, there is considerable variation both within and between high schools with respect to grading procedures and the strength or weakness of a teaching program in any given field. Thus, the high school grade point average of 3.25 may mean one thing in High School X and quite another in High School Y. Moreover, even within a single high

school, a student who carefully navigates through the curriculum to achieve a 3.7 may not be a better or stronger student than one with a 3.6.

Historically, the mechanism that has been used to try to counter-balance this problem of highly differentiated high school standards/backgrounds was the standardized test. The debate over whether standardized tests are “standardized” against some abstract culture-free, class-free bias has been going on for decades, and will continue. The Karabel Report had to this to say about diversity and the use of these tests.

*One indicator that the far-ranging diversification of the student body that has taken place in the past decade has not been at the expense of conventional academic standards is the fact that the percentage of new freshmen with combined SATs less than or equal to 1000 declined from 24.8 per cent in 1978 to 20.5 per cent in 1987. During these same years, the proportion of freshmen with very high SATs (defined as 1400 or more) more than doubled...<sup>36</sup>*

Yet, this does not get at the matter of ethnic and racial differences in standardized test scores, and the level of legitimacy attached to those test rankings. For example, opponents of the current admissions policy have attacked it by pointing to the comparative SAT scores *between* racial and ethnic groups, and have used this to argue against the entitlement for admission of those with lower SAT scores.

As noted, grade inflation is only a part of the story. In the last decade, the median GPA has steadily increased as those already UC eligible (3.25 and above) were in competition for an increasingly scarce resource, admission to the freshman college class (see Table 3). Indeed, it will be

<sup>33</sup> The observation that rage among the Black middle class exists is not new, as Price Cobbs and William Grier noted two decades ago. More recently, Bob Blauner has commented that this may be more of a feature of the Black middle class than believed.

<sup>34</sup> This is certainly true on the campus, and may well extend to other arenas, including American corporate life, etc.

<sup>35</sup> One Black student turned to a Black professor who was leading the group of Black students to say more precisely what they meant by racism. “What were the behaviors, what did they do, what did they say?” Finally, one of the students blurted out in frustration: “You know, you know...they just act like you don’t belong here.”

<sup>36</sup> *Karabel Report*, p. 19

noted from this table that the median GPA climbed from 3.7 to 3.9 in this decade, with the Asian American and European American students climbing to a median of 4.0. Meanwhile, the median high school grade point average for African Americans and Chicano/Latino Americans hovered at 3.4 and 3.5 for the full decade, above the 3.25 eligibility requirement. Affirmative Action admissions at the Berkeley campus can only be understood in this context, where the great majority of Affirmative Action admissions are already in the top 12.5 per cent. The general misunderstanding of the policy has therefore two important features that must be noted if we are to fully understand the “heat and passion” on the topic that is coupled with the absence of information. The first bit of misinformation is that “minority students” (especially Black and Chicano/Latino) are coming from the “bottom 87.5 per cent” and are therefore **unqualified**. The second bit of misinformation, or at least contended turf, is the view that these minority students are *less qualified* than Asian American and white students. *In fact, in sheer numbers, there are more white students admitted to Berkeley’s freshman class with grade point averages below 3.6 than Blacks.* However, if a Black student with a grade point average of 3.8 applies to engineering and computer sciences, that student would be admitted to Berkeley, rather than be re-directed to another UC campus, because of the Affirmative Action admissions policy in place since 1984. One can now begin to see that what constitutes less or more qualified is “contested terrain.” Is 3.9 “more qualified” than a 3.8? Recall that there are more than 1200 high schools in the state with high variation in grading procedures.

A recent book by Dinesh D’Souza makes much of a particular case in Berkeley’s admission, and opens a chapter on the topic with the case of Yat-pang Au.<sup>37</sup> Here is how D’Souza reports the case:

*Yat-pang’s credentials were not in question. He graduated first in his class at San Jose’s Gunderson High School with a straight A average... SAT scores were 1,340... in the 98th percentile, considerably above the Berkeley average. (p. 24)*

D’Souza then goes on to inform us that

*Yat-pang discovered that ten other students from Gunderson High were accepted at Berkeley, none of them (with) Yat-pang’s roster of achievements. (p. 25)*

Since Yat-pang Au was valedictorian, and also had a long list of extracurricular achievements, one has the impression that since he was not admitted, an obvious injus-

tice was done. But we must remember two important things. First, that students apply to different majors for admission, and that some majors are extraordinarily competitive in terms of GPA and SAT scores. For example, in Computer Sciences and Engineering, even a 4.0 GPA would place Yat-pang in the lower half of those applying. Another student, applying to study in Music or Comparative Literature, for example, might be admitted with a “mere” 3.87 GPA. Second, recall that there are an additional 40 per cent more students with Straight A averages applying to enter the Berkeley freshman class than there are places in that class.

Since the great majority of the undergraduate students at Berkeley went to California high schools, they have some knowledge of this variation, even if this knowledge is limited. Thus, in the focus groups, they would often talk about their ambivalence to the use of the Academic Index (GPA and standardized test score) as if it were a definitive mark of competence, skill and accomplishments, let alone of an indication of *potential* for achievement or academic excellence.

Nonetheless, there was a strong tendency for many, even most of the students, to give an importance and solidity to the Academic Index as an indelible stratifying device. To the extent that they do so, they gave an independent reality to the Academic Index and developed the language of fairness and unfairness when they describe the Affirmative Action admissions policy.<sup>38</sup>

A theme heard frequently among white and Asian American students is that Affirmative Action undercuts the university’s traditional color blind, equal opportunity approach to recruitment by rewarding students of color for having too much “fun” in high school, and “goofing off.”

<sup>37</sup> Dinesh D’Souza, *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*, New York: Free Press, 1991.

<sup>38</sup> In fact, using the Academic Index, Berkeley is 4 to 5 times more “selective” than Harvard, who admit less than ten per cent of their students by Academic Index alone. If Harvard used only Academic Index, they would have only students with straight A grade point averages from high schools. In short, to mistake a student with a 3.7 grade point average as “better” or “more qualified” than a 3.6 student is a common fallacy of misplaced concreteness in the academy, and is the larger context for the discussion of the seething controversy over the Affirmative Action admissions policy.

This subverts the university's meritocratic principles and the policy is characterized as unfairly admitting "unqualified," "undeserving" students who thereby "steal" the spots to which qualified students are "entitled." Using the moral language of Protestantism, these students make distinctions between "deserving" and "undeserving" students based on the amount of effort exerted in high school.

Given this operating assumption among many of the white and Asian students that we interviewed, it is not surprising that Black, Chicano/Latino, and Native American students routinely expressed the feeling of "not belonging" at Cal. One African American undergraduate said, "I feel like I have 'Affirmative Action' stamped on my forehead." Yet another noted, "We're guilty until proven innocent." "There's no way to convince whites we belong here," said one African American student. "We do back flips and they still wouldn't accept us." When these students do well in class, they report their classmates and teachers frequently express surprise; or, through a process of exceptionalizing, portray them as being somehow differ-

ent from other students of color, an exception from the rule. "What is your SAT score?" is a question many freshmen resent when they feel that behind the question is the assumption that they have a low score.

It is precisely this reification of the Academic Index that makes some of the Black and Chicano/Latino students chafe at what they take to be the assumption on the part of whites that while the white and Asian Americans "belong on campus," Blacks and Chicano/Latinos are on the campus only because of Affirmative Action. It is in this sense that the general controversy over Affirmative Action<sup>39</sup> colors much of the substance of ethnic and racial relations within and between groups, and penetrates social and academic life in diffuse and indirect ways. Nonetheless, reference to the total legitimacy of the Academic Index wavered under select conditions. As will be noted, white students could and would shift grounds and question the index when "Asian over-representation" surfaced. At that point, "well-roundedness" emerged as a competing criterion to the Academic Index.

## SUMMARY OF GROUP INTERVIEWS

*Before an adequate policy that addresses and fits with the new experience of diversity can be developed and recommended, the perspective that informs the experiences needs to be explored. We turn now to a fuller discussion of each of the major "homogeneous" groupings.*

### NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

Native American students express the highest levels of internal tension and conflict between the demands of assimilation and accommodation to new cultural and social skills required for success in the university setting and maintaining the integrity of their cultural roots and connections. While African Americans and Chicano/Latino students also articulate this problem, it seems to take an even "purer form" among Native Americans:

*Those who succeed at Berkeley are those who learn to assimilate into the Berkeley mode. The way to survive for Indian people in Berkeley is to assimilate and assimilation is like the worst and evillest thing that you can do from the Indian point of view. So if you can do it and survive its great...*

*...every day, we have to give up a little more of ourselves to keep on being here and we have to replace it with something else and sometimes what we have to replace it with isn't as healthy for us as what we had before. So we have to compensate by trying to figure out how to do it.*

But staying at Berkeley and surviving this "foreign" education is also seen as a challenge which is both personally necessary and necessary for Native Americans as a people. As one student expressed:

*And since we live in a place where the powers that be don't include us then we gotta get ourselves in there. And the only way we're going to do it is by sticking through this bull shit. And its real hard to do. It's not easy at all. In fact, I, every time I see another Indian person, in my mind culture doesn't allow it nowadays, but I commend them because we're survivors.*

<sup>39</sup> Both in the society, and in the specific admissions policy



Native Americans asserted the paradox of seeking simultaneously to adjust bi-culturally to the “Indian point of view” and the dominant university orientation. They pointed out that it remains a struggle to continue in their studies, seeking to adjust to the environment and cultural orientation of the university.

They talk about a day-to-day struggle feeling separated and cut-off from their sources of social and cultural support. Many spoke of calling their home and family all the time. They report feeling a lot of pressure, from family and tribe, because they are here not only for themselves but as representatives of their group.

*I call my family all the time. I talk to my grandmother all the time. She always says.... I'm praying for you every day, have courage, be brave. It's like "oh my God." And I talk to my mom, I'm like mom, "Why am I here?" She says, "you're there because you need to be there because they are teaching you what you need to know. So that you can take it and use it against them." And it's true. I mean, you have to know the system before you can uproot it.*

They recognize the need to become bi-cultural in order to be able to move between the Indian “world” and the outside reality. Consider the following dialogue between three speakers:

*See, that's the same situation as one of my cousins. She went the route, Harvard and Stanford, and now she's looked upon as leader of Indians and you pretty much have to do that to get the recognition.*

*So you have to be successful in both...*

*In both worlds, yea.*

*Yea. Nobody else has to worry about that.*

*Yea.*

*To be acknowledged as , Y'know, somebody by whites, you have to have a piece of paper.*

They also talk about the time at the university as a necessity for certification, “to get the piece of paper.” But the time spent here, particularly for those with more rural roots from the reservations, is filled with a sense of cultural detachment and separation. One student suggested that,

*...the bones issue is a typical example of different value systems. It's like their main argument is that we're trying to help Native Americans. But the point is Native Americans don't want you to help them that way. They'd prefer that the bones be buried...our culture says that.*

The clash between the indigenous claims of Native Americans to ownership and control over their culture and history comes into conflict with the “humanitarian” and “science” claims of the university community. Bones for science vs. ancestral homage remains a symbolically unbridgeable gap which dramatizes the ambivalence and duality of the worlds occupied by the Native American students.

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**GROUP INTERVIEW/NATIVE AMERICAN**

Relations With Other Students

In their relations with other students on campus, they comment on the strong class and cultural differences apparent between Native American students and many others on campus. Several participants that even in relation to other students of color, they cannot avoid feeling the contrast between their relative economic poverty and the wealth that they attribute to most of the other students on campus.

This sense of difference and moral resentment is generated among activist Native American students by the observed tendency for many students to be admitted by self-identification as Native Americans who are not Native Americans or who have a “small amount of blood” way back. They point to the injustice of a listing of 300 Native American admittees when they can only identify 30 or so Native Americans of whom they have knowledge. Yet, the issue of identification produces a dilemma. One Native American student, for example, also objected to Bureau of Indian Affairs certification as a requirement for financial assistance.

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**GROUP INTERVIEW/NATIVE AMERICAN**

Racism on Campus

Speaking of white students, one Native American student commented:

*Most of the racism I've experienced daily is subliminal, subtle racism. I mean they don't have any idea they are being racist. Um I called it the look past me syndrome. I mean like they just don't see you, you don't count you know...*

Racism, according to another, surfaces in two contexts: either in the complete denial of responsibility by white students for any privilege that they enjoy, or their colossal ignorance about Native Americans. One student remarked:

*I mean they're just totally in shock of what the real history of this country is, and what really happened to Indian people. Some are in total denial. They say that's racist. That's sexist, y'know they totally go off because they can't deal with the truth. And then other people are just the opposite. They get real guilty and it's like, oh God. Y'know so we have these two effects. Neither one does us any good. You can't deal with guilt and you can't deal with hate. We need to get, y'know, we need to start from the basis of the racism that's ingrained in everybody and the way they've internalized the racism. But we don't do that here at Berkeley. We talk about the systems on the outside but we don't reach into what's really going on with people.*

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/NATIVE AMERICAN

##### The Relevance of the Curriculum

The Native American students see both subtle and blatant racism in the structuring of the curriculum at Berkeley. For example:

*There's nothing (in American history) except like objects in the way of white advancement.*

*Yea. So you're saying in terms of American history, Indians are kind of left out of American history?*

*In terms of everything. And how can they call it...a complete education. It's totally unfair, even in the white standards of education. If you are not learning the complete story, y'know, if you're not learning California politics and California history, then ...how can you be training people as an institution to be educated...?*

They support the value of some Ethnic Studies courses but indicate that most of the students taking these courses are students of color themselves "and not the ones who should be educated about it."

They recognize that there are corners of the curriculum acknowledging Native American contributions. For example, one student mentioned two constellations whose discovery was attributed to Native Americans in their Astronomy class, but they counterpose this to an emphasis in the same course on the constellations and frameworks of ancient Greece. From this perspective, they characterize the curriculum as largely devoid of an important or validated Native American role. One course in American Cultures, they say, is not likely to significantly impact the balance of the curriculum and its white European ethnocentrism.

This concern with the failure of the institution to validate their role and their history is in part an indictment of

the denial of the American Indian role in U.S. history, but it is also an expression of a concern voiced by other groups. Particularly those Native Americans raised in the urban settings, who have become cut off from many of their cultural traditions, see an important and legitimate role for a relevant institution to serve as a resource on Native American languages and traditions. These students point out that while Yiddish is taught and while there are experts on Native American languages, no courses are offered in Native American languages.

Their concerns about curriculum reflect in part their quest for an education that has dual relevance, that is, an education validating their traditions and traditional concerns while providing credentialing and access to the structures of knowledge of the larger society.

#### ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Several issues or themes that seem particularly unique to Asian Americans revolve around the multifaceted and complex nature of their experience. There is no simple, easy way to describe the subtle and not so subtle complexities because of the many elements involved. However, two points should be emphasized. First is the mistaken notion that Asian students are a homogenous group. Underlying the appearance of cohesiveness is an internal heterogeneity reflecting a wide range of ethnic groups, social and economic backgrounds, and levels of race consciousness. Second is the impact of stereotypes, particularly the cross-cutting aspects of the "model minority" image. Besides informing the views of students at large, this notion has also influenced Asian students' self-perception.

While the same issues (with different stereotypical images) are part of a much larger problem with the experience of discrimination and racial differences affecting all students of color whom we interviewed, the degree to which this tension is reflected by Asian students is illuminating. The general category of "Asian American" masks an internal diversity among Asians. Asian students do not share common assumptions about what it means to be Asian American as a "homogeneous" group. The internal distinction can be attributed to a multitude of factors, including ethnic-cultural differences, social class background, urban-rural residence, historical or generational differences, and immigration experience such as native-born or for-

eign-born status. It circumscribes their experiences of diversity on campus and their sense of who they are, their identity, group affiliations, and by extension, their attitudes towards Affirmative Action and other institutional issues. The tendency for those outside the Asian American experience to ignore or gloss over this complexity was frequently mentioned as a source of frustration. Indeed, the category Asian American is one which not only obscures the internal diversity of this group but offers an identity that does not always resonate with those so labeled. For these reasons, we can only begin to describe and characterize the Asian American experience by looking at how the overarching category of Asian American is both unifying and misleading.

Despite the group awareness and commonalities that Asian American students acknowledge, they felt the general category of Asian American is loaded with images and stereotypes that they need to both confront and negotiate. While there can be some benefits included in the sense of belonging that their academic success brings to them as a group, being indiscriminately lumped together results in their being subjected to a common stereotype and a common racism. The external image of the group focuses upon the positive "model minority" stereotype, diluting their internal experiences of social discrimination because of racial differences. Their reports of racial discrimination and hostility differ from other racial groups because Asian students emphasize a more subtle differential treatment in their academic activities that reflects divergences from the "model minority" image. They also reported that the "positive" general category was often used to pit them *against* other minorities in the struggle for scarce resources.

The need to mediate between their multiple realities clearly affects the identity of Asian students and is manifested in their political attitudes and behaviors. This requires negotiating a tight-rope of competing interests in specific situations. While this strategy allows them to balance apparent contradictions, it is not without consequence. Many of their attitudes and assertions appear inconsistent or confusing. This can lead one to characterize their actions in terms of "ambivalence" or even "duplicitous."

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/ASIAN AMERICAN

##### Adjustment to Campus Life:

##### The Tug-of-War for Group Affiliation

Compared to other minorities in the study, changes toward friendship and affiliation among Asian Americans are reported in a matter-of-fact way, not necessarily as causes for celebration or solidarity in the sense of renewed cultural nationalism. Yet, there is also the sense that even when efforts to be comfortable with an Asian American identity are successful, there remains significant tension over their choice of friends and the extent to which their social circle should be either exclusive or inclusive.

While Asian Americans try to have more culturally diverse friendships, they continually struggle against stereotypes and the conflicting pulls of different groups. One student describes how the taunting by her "Caucasian" friends made it difficult for her to maintain her Asian American friendships:

*... we have, you know, a lot of Caucasian friends and, and whenever my roommate who goes to a lot of the Asian functions, whenever she goes, they, they talk about the "Asian Hoedowns," and they just really make fun of it, and it's really hard to choose to be friends with, I think, one group, and then still be accepted in the other, and try and play middle of the road, because if you're with one group, you feel kind of funny because of the other group, and if you're with the other group, you feel kind of funny, because you kind of feel like, you know.*

Those more acculturated into mainstream white culture noted that white acquaintances would frequently make a distinction between them and other Asian Americans, usually through remarks such as, "you're not like other Asians." These remarks were viewed by those making the comment as being "complimentary." Thinking about his friendship associations, one student remarked, "... if I had to look for people who I was attracted to, Asians always come like second or last ... it's always like Caucasian people I like." These individuals were the ones most likely to comment negatively about Asians who kept to themselves, did not speak English among friends, or otherwise didn't seem to make efforts to "assimilate." Such students tended to be concerned about the image that whites might have of Asians being clannish. This clannishness directly relates to acceptance or non acceptance into white groups. An Asian American student made the following comment:

*I avoided Korean crowds also, and to me, when I look back at Koreans, the way they acted and how they always hung around together. And, it seems like they were isolating themselves, and, uh, it just didn't look that good. It feels like, I was kind of, I guess it has to do with maybe, an inferiority complex or something ... I figured, the first thing you have to do is assimilate as much as possible, but then there's this crowd of people, instead of trying to assimilate, they're kind of isolating themselves. And then, and then, it's like, and then, you're — I'm hating them for not being really totally, fully accepted in that white society. Thinking that the only reason I'm not being accepted is because there is this crowd who opposes, uh, that group or something. I kind of avoided any Korean interaction.. and I kind of looked down on them.*

The pressure from the Asian American side is no less insistent. A Chinese American male pointed to the dramatic contrast between himself and his more ethnically self-conscious Asian American roommate:

*People come to Berkeley and they come to appreciate their ethnicity a little more. Like I came from Walnut Creek which is totally American, white and middle-class, and my roommate's Asian and we went to high school together ... and he was totally non-Asian oriented and he was real gung ho all American kind of guy, and ( at Berkeley) he started taking an Asian American class like 20 A and now he has totally switched his world view about his ethnicity ... and he is pro-Asian and he supports all the Asian groups and he is really into his ethnicity. ... And I sort of haven't done that yet I'm sort of broad-based. I have friends from all different groups. He has sort of segregated himself off and I sort of notice that ... I sort of asked him why he did that and he said, ... I think its because I have been blinded for these years from living in a white suburban middle class area and I didn't see all the things the white man is doing ...*

When asked whether either of them felt pressured by the other's point of view, this same person confessed to experiencing some tension over this:

*I sort of feel a little pressure from him ..he asks, "Don't you want to go to the ABA (Asian Business Association) dance?" I'll be like, "Not really," and he looks at me ... talks to me in a little condescending way. Because he'll say, "Well, get hip with your race. Support Asians," and I do but I don't know. I'm not hip into joining ... I sort of think that goes against the purpose of integration.*

As a consequence of these attitudes, there is a pattern of segregation not only between different racial groups but a pattern of segregation among Asian Americans that gets reflected in an apparent contradictory pattern of friendships. For example, one student remarked:

*... people should get to know each other on the basis of their personalities and not of their skin color, ... but when it comes to inter-racial relationships there's a very strong color line ... it's, okay, fine, if (non-Asian) he's my friend. I want to hang out with him, that's fine, but (he) shouldn't be coming to an Asian dance. I mean, this is our, you know, opportunity to get to know, you know, people, ... guys and girls get together and don't want intruders kind of, and I feel that way ... I feel guilty feeling that, but, um, I mean, there are so few occasions, where, you, we can do things like that.*

While uncomfortable about inter-racial mixing in this context of events where Asians are trying to "get to know each other," they are, by contrast, enthusiastic and show no reservation about inviting other ethnic groups to join Asian clubs. Indeed, one student reported that the president of the Asian Business Association is a white female and that 5 or 6 non-Asians were on the cabinet.

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/ASIAN AMERICAN

##### Stereotypes, Critical Mass, and Learning to be Asian American

Many of the Asian American students in this study came from predominantly white and middle-class suburban communities. In these settings, they had limited exposure and limited opportunities for friendships and relationships with other Asians. By their own account, they adjusted with relative ease into these white suburban settings, were successful at school, had predominantly white friends, and were involved in a range of social and extracurricular activities.

When these students came to Berkeley, they report feeling a bit strange or awkward about being in an environment with so many Asian Americans. Given that the label Asian American is not a category with which these students readily identify, several talked about having to *learn what it means to be Asian American*. They typically expressed discomfort with this experience, at least for the first months on campus. Over a period of a year or so, they experimented with different groups or relationships until they found a niche or set of relationships that felt relatively comfortable socially, politically, or culturally.

An Asian American woman said that coming to Berkeley had the effect of shifting her interest away from gender issues to racial issues. At another point in the discussion, she made several important observations regarding how one's experience of diversity on campus depends on one's previous experience.

... I come from a city where there are very, very few Asian people. You pretty much know all of them (laughs) and um and coming here, you know, there's 25% Asian people on this campus, and it's, it's pretty scary at first, you know .... I looked around, wow, this is really weird, you know. It's kind of like being in Chinatown all the time (laughs) ...

... my roommate ... from San Francisco, she went to Lowell High school. There's a very high Asian population so she said when she came over here, she was shocked cuz there weren't any Asians (laughs). Because, compared to how many there (were) at Lowell, um, you know, it wasn't really that much. So she said for her it was different. But I think in general if you live in suburbia like I did, I think, I can understand why it would be a shock.

You know, um, this person from my high school was telling me that when he looked in the dorms, he was from Phoenix or something, and his roommate the first week was freaking. He says, "Wow, there's so many Black people on campus," and um, this guy from my high school, he said, "no there's not" (laughs), "you should have gone to high school with me." About 25% of our school was, I would say, Black, and he said, it was really odd for him because all of a sudden there were a lot of Asians and there weren't that many Blacks and there weren't that many Chicano people (laughs) ... I guess how you perceive it depends upon where you are coming from.

An Asian American male described his early experience as "really traumatic" and "overwhelming."

... for me, it was really traumatic because ... in trying to find a group, I, uh, my brother is already a student here — so I tried to hang around the groups he hangs around with. And, he's pretty well-established in I guess the Asian American community in that he's the social network ... I was totally unaccustomed to being in this social situation where only Asians were there. So I was completely lost. Seeing how I didn't know anybody but was trying to meet my brother's friends, it was really overwhelming. So I, ah, I kind of, in a way ... I got so frustrated, I rejected the whole, my Asian American identity and had a lot of Hispanic friends.

In the process of trying to socially locate themselves, Asian Americans discovered an array of stereotypes about themselves that constituted a double-edge: on the one hand, there is the very positive image of the studious, hard-working, achieving, successful minority group; but simultaneously, they hear the negative version of themselves as academically narrow, grade grubbers, parochial, clannish, forever consigned to be foreigners by a culture dominated by those of European descent, never fully Americans. These cross-cutting stereotypes alone produce an ambivalence about the category Asian American. When coupled with

other socially compelling factors, we have configurations and varieties of experience that continually overlap, diverge and make for a diversity that is not apparent on the surface.

One stereotype shaping their perspective and constraining their interaction that consistently emerged was the perception that almost all other students and faculty tend to respond to them in terms of the "model minority" stereotype. Generally, this stereotype implied excelling academically — being, in the words of one student, "so smart, you know, and if you're not as smart as the 'straight A' Asian student, then they're not really Asian so something's wrong with you." Many of the Asian Americans interviewed resented this stereotype because it belies the reality beneath, pre-empting real understanding, if not contributing to further misunderstanding.

... it makes me angry when a lot of these, these neo-conservative people, they always point to the Asians. We., look at the Chinese, look at the Japanese. Gee, they were discriminated against a lot. You know, they were beaten, lynched, everything. (laughs). But they're doing fine, and um, it makes me angry that they do that — they single (laughs) out the Asians and point to them ... You can't deny that some Asian groups are doing well ... (but) where you're trying to play off these different ethnic groups against each other, you know, and um that was really disturbing to me, you know ...

Some learn to adjust and live with the stereotype, consoled by the idea that it is at least a positive stereotype. Others, however, view themselves as "lazy," under-achieving, or just plain average students, not driven to be eternally competitive. Just as Blacks and Latinos might resent the fact that whenever select inner city "crime" or other social problems were mentioned, all eyes in the classroom would turn towards them, so there were Asian Americans who resented the pressure to excel or meet certain standards. Yet the stereotype can be so powerful — students are "so aware" of it, especially around professors — that they may find that they somehow "have to act out a certain behavior to fit into that stereotype." When one considers the various ways in which different stereotypes of Asian Americans create a double-edged experience, one begins to get a sense of the possible dilemmas.

The relations of Asian American students with different racial-ethnic groups are also shaped by stereotypes. If their relations are mainly with whites, they frequently adopt a perspective towards themselves and others that is largely refracted through the lenses of these "others." Even so,

there are other aspects of their social reality that may provide them with readily available alternate visions. Experiences of racial discrimination or a background of poverty are ever-present reminders of their different social or cultural histories, and the fact that their understandings, interests, affinities, or commonalities with others relate in a variety of ways. Thus, while Asian Americans may adjust to being “positively” stereotyped as academic achievers (fully aware that such an image may come back at them in negative portrayals as “grinds,” narrow in their interests, and socially awkward), they often express anger at how the success image has been manipulated so as to pit them against other racial-ethnic minorities.

The process of developing an identity, politics, or perspective that is consistent and coherent places a strain on friendships. After being around Cal for two or three years, students who were integrated into predominantly white worlds of friendship and association in high school report a shift towards having predominantly Asian American friends, roommates, or affiliations with an Asian American organization.<sup>40</sup> Although almost all students know about or have participated in Asian-only events, there is a strong ambivalence. On the one hand, they do not mind associating in certain contexts with other Asian Americans, but being grouped by others as being “Asian” narrowly demonstrates other people’s perceptions of them. Some Asian Americans, however, found Berkeley to be immediately affirming precisely because of the large numbers of Asian Americans. As one student explained:

*... coming to this school was real nice and comfortable sort of 'cause you see a lot of, you know, familiar type faces ... you don't feel like you're — like you stand out quite as much as if you went to an all white school or something ... it's like, not a shock, you know, because there's a nice, you know, Asian population up here.*

For others, it took more time to become involved with this population. A female student described how she avoided other Asian Americans in order to find her own identity first, after which she developed many Asian American friendships.

*Last year, I found that I didn't hang around Asian people at all. I kind of ... avoided them, you know... maybe to find my own identity or something. But, but then, this semester, it's, it's all changed. I find that most of my friends are Asian.*

Others with a certain pride in their ethnicity were eager at the outset to explore their cultural roots. As one student

explained:

*Coming to Cal was a pleasant experience ... you start thinking about, “Oh, this is really exciting that I can go to this cultural night and be at all the old dances that, you know, my parents had talked about and I'd never been exposed to,” and it's that kind of reawakening of knowing your own culture again.*

Coming to terms with the negative stereotypes associated with being Asian American is thus an important first step towards developing friendships in these circles. One student explained:

*... when I first came here, I mean, I was very, in a way, naive and I said, “Oh, I don't want to be an Asian grind,” and stuff like that, right. But then more and more I sort of like, I can sympathize with people that want to work hard, you know. It's their right to work hard so I don't see that distinction anymore. I, like, I find myself polarizing more and more towards Asians even though, like, my criteria in choosing friends is not, well, are they white or are they Asian or are they Black or whatever, but it's still, I find myself finding more in common with, like, Asians.*

In sum, there is no question that the presence of a sizable Asian American population heightens racial group consciousness. The specific adjustment process Asian American students go through, however, is highly variable depending on their previous experience of diversity. While students may have had difficulty identifying themselves as “Asian American,” there were others who sought out cultural experiences they felt they missed when they grew up. Regardless of their previous attitude towards their racial-cultural identity, Berkeley forced them to come to terms with their own racial identity in very new ways. There are positive aspects for those open to discovering this new, powerful, and socially meaningful sense of themselves; negative aspects for those desiring assimilation into mainstream, white culture. For those attempting to create for themselves a truly diverse set of friendships and affiliations, there is a tightrope to walk in the tug-of-war for group loyalty, identity, and affiliation.

<sup>40</sup> The Berkeley campus has over twenty Asian-based or oriented associations and organizations. Many of these are academically or career-oriented (e.g., the Asian Business Association), and many are represented in a coalition organization, such as the Asian Pacific Council.

**GROUP INTERVIEW/ASIAN AMERICAN****Racism: Subtle Experiences of Exclusion**

When it came to discussing racism on campus, Asians responded like many of the other racial groups, underscoring the subtle character of "racism." Everyone was familiar with the overt forms which racism could take, e.g. racial slurs, graffiti in the lavatories, fights or arguments in the dorms, anti-Asian violence, etc. While there were references to historical discrimination,<sup>41</sup> there was little discussion about institutional racism. Asian Americans seemed concerned about the fact that the American Cultures requirement might provoke a "backlash" and thus produce further white student resentment that minorities were being "forced" on them through the curriculum.

Since racism was almost uniformly discussed in terms of personal experiences, most described the more "subtle" forms of racism, such as perceptions or feelings of being excluded or ignored. This subtle racism includes experiences with professors who "give you looks," "don't want to talk to you in office hours," "ignore you," or seem to learn only the names of white students in their class. Social gatherings and parties are commonly mentioned as places where students feel ignored and excluded, unwelcome, where "whites made minimal efforts to interact."

Accompanying this subtle racism is a lot of self-doubt about whether they are actually being excluded or whether they are being oversensitive given that the norms of socio-cultural interaction may be different. "It's just a feeling ... it doesn't have to be anything overtly, you know, there's not a statement, but ... you have groups and you go over there and talk to them and, you know, they just don't seem to welcome you as much as someone who was white." While there is uncertainty over whether the exclusion they experience is real or all in their heads, a general problem shared by other Asian Americans or an individual one of their own, sometimes being privy to racist sentiments expressed towards other groups is a poignant indicator of how racism is often camouflaged. For one respondent, sports events confirm both the subtlety and overtness of racism in that he saw his white friends openly make racist remarks about Black players that they do not make in other social contexts.

Thus, a multiplicity of factors affects the relationships between Asian American students and other groups. An important feature is the diverse experiences of this group over and against the stereotypical images that are held up as

mirrors. There are also complexities which are characteristic of their unique historical experiences within the United States, their variable locations within the social structure at large, and the cultural experiences that are continually being transformed. In general, much of the subtle racism Asians say they experience has to do with social discomfort.

**GROUP INTERVIEW/ASIAN AMERICAN****On Affirmative Action**

The diversity reflected in their make-up was also evident in their views of such issues as affirmative action. The major patterns of response that emerged could be captured, in part, by the socioeconomic differences. The more affluent and assimilated Asian Americans appeared to be more politically "conservative." They talked of having strong concerns about the *practice* of Affirmative Action. This generally focused on issues of "academic standards," meritocratic criteria for evaluating achievement, and inherent problems with "race-based" policies. When the issues of greater or lesser privilege were discussed at length, however, even these students supported the notion of somehow creating opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Asian American students in general did not propose getting rid of Affirmative Action so much as they sought correction of apparent abuses. Often, if a student seemed too critical about Affirmative Action, this would engage others in a discussion of its merits. As was the case with other students in the study, the concept and practice of Affirmative Action at Berkeley was not well understood by Asian Americans. At the very best, some students tried to compare or distinguish Affirmative Action from Equal Opportunity or Special Action Programs. Generally, the students had little or vague information about the substantive features of these programs, and could only express the

<sup>41</sup> There were references to the fact that different Asian ethnic groups had different historical experiences in this regard. For example, Indians from India were seen as having been spared the "overt racism" experienced by Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans. Southeast Asians were mentioned as "fortunate" in being latecomers to the American scene, having arrived after "the period of most blatant racism in the country... at a time when it was...ok to assert your culture and still be considered American so we haven't had those same kind of problems... associated with the... other Asian groups on campus."

general sentiment that Affirmative Action had “*problems.*”

Nevertheless, there were lively discussions between a more conservative position where the bottom line is “qualifications” and “standards” and those who shared a more liberal or progressive view. These students were quite “angry” about being pitted against other minorities in ways that threaten Affirmative Action. The following student, for example, expressed a typical concern for how standards might be subverted by Affirmative Action policy.

*I think in a lot of ways Affirmative Action is great because it allows people who probably do not have the opportunity to further their horizons and to get better educated and to better themselves. But when it goes against someone who's qualified, that's when I, that's when I don't believe in it at all.*

There was also, however, a strong and vocal group of Asian Americans arguing on behalf of Affirmative Action for other minorities. They see Affirmative Action as an important wedge for undoing some of the effects of social and historical discrimination. For these students, their own personal experience may contribute to this political perspective. One student, for example, admitted coming from a poor school, and that being given “special consideration” gave him the opportunity to make it into the California Institute of Technology. This student indicated:

*I lived in a very poor area and the kind of education I was getting was just garbage. I didn't have physics, no chemistry, and if I weren't given special consideration, I would not have gotten into Cal Tech. You know, that's a very personal example which is why I think that that kind of Affirmative Action does do some good because I know in my case it did me a lot of good.*

In general, the Asian American students we interviewed did not focus or dwell on the issue of questioning standards or the fact that standardized test scores are themselves problematic. When asked, these students readily acknowledged the problems with these measurements. However, the question of standards was not a central concern for them because they tended to perform well in high school.

As a group, then, Asian Americans have views on Affirmative Action that are more subtle and complex than they first appear on the surface. While one can find strong sentiments against Affirmative Action, it would be too simplistic an account to state that it is merely meritocracy or qualifications that is at issue. Rather, insofar as Asian

Americans have had to struggle against the barriers imposed by race, culture, and a variety of social-historical experiences, education has presented itself as a major pathway for mobility, for escaping poverty, discrimination, and their relative powerlessness as political actors on the American scene. For such reasons, the emotions expressed are sentiments that must be understood within the framework of these other experiences. In short, the category Asian American acquires a meaning that is more “political” than “cultural,” and the politics of identity extend to the level of friendships and associations.

## BLACK STUDENTS

As with the many other students who participated in the group discussions, African American students reported their own expectations that Berkeley would be a liberal, “ethnically diverse but socially integrated” environment in which differences were accepted and respected. They too noted how much their actual experiences diverged dramatically from these expectations. Instead, they report how they encounter an environment in which racial and ethnic segregation is “everywhere” and where they perceive and experience what they term subtle and pervasive racism. Moreover, there is the widely held view among Blacks that students are “categorized,” “labeled,” and “stereotyped” according to their perceived group identity.

### GROUP INTERVIEW/BLACK STUDENTS

#### Expectations and Early Entry to Campus

As with Asian Americans, Chicano/Latinos, and Native Americans, the African American students who come to Berkeley fall into two distinct camps. First there are those who come from predominantly white high schools. It is in some sense counter-intuitive that these are the Black students who experience the greatest tension about racial identity when they arrive on the Berkeley campus. Though race was important in high school, as part of a tiny minority in the school they adapted by fitting in, or as one student put it, by “being white.” While they had casual and comfortable friendships with whites and members of other groups, they were also conscious of their racial difference. Here is how one student explained how he had learned in high school what it meant to be Black in a white society:



*...teachers would make racist jokes. Like one guy used to always walk up to this other student and pat him on the head and say, 'oh, brillo pad,' you know or something like that...there were three black students in this class and the other two always got this and I never got that so it was a really difficult situation because on the one hand I could escape it by being quiet.*

On arrival on the Berkeley campus, these students are surprised to discover themselves no longer the “token Black person,” burdened with constantly explaining what it is to be Black. Rather, they are one of a sizable population of African American students, invited to join clubs and organizations that celebrate and affirm select aspects of African American identity and culture. Several expressed how the new salience of race was unanticipated.

*Okay you know before I ever came here, I grew up, I went to private school my entire life until the tenth grade. Then I went to \_\_\_\_\_ which was basically an all white school. And I never felt any need to realize my African American descent and now I'm here, everybody put such a stress and importance on it, I am realizing that I am Black...I never saw a colored world until I got here and people started stressing the importance of color.*

These students experience a new kind of pressure: it comes from other African American students on campus, and it is experienced as pressure to make decisions about friends, social networks, even who you sit with at lunch, on the basis of race:

*...a kind of external pressure put on me to act a certain way, speak a certain way. Because always in high school you talk white, you act white, they think you're white, you're white. (laughs) So when I got here it was just everyone running around trying to be blacker than thou and so I kind of gave into that.*

This pressure can be detrimental to some students' ability to settle down to academic work. One student who dropped out after two semesters before returning to continue his studies points to his search for a community as a significant ingredient in his early failure:

*I really felt marginal...wasn't accepted by whites and not really by my own group so I think that had a lot to do with my academic success you know, not really knowing — do I belong here?*

The majority, however, manage the situation remarkably well, negotiating unfamiliar opportunities as well as new and changing boundaries. Some retreat into their own worlds. Some gravitate to social groupings of Blacks. A

few consciously cultivate friendships and associations across racial and ethnic groups. One woman related how she managed this:

*I have other Black acquaintances and I've been interested in actually getting more involved in the Black scene on campus cause it's sort of like something that I should be a part of. But, it's not that I feel uncomfortable, it's just strange to me, cause I'm not used to being in a place that's totally ethnocentric...I tend to shy away from it, cause I'm a 'include everybody' type of person, you know, no matter what the color.*

Most, even those who resent and resist pressures to conform, speak positively about the opportunity to discover and explore their racial identity with groups of other African Americans. This process of self-discovery is seen as essential; prior to interacting on any meaningful level intra-group. One woman described what it meant to her:

*I know this is a real diverse school but where do I fit in and where are my people and what are my support groups...you have to find out where you are in this big scheme of the picture before you start looking at the whole thing. You know — where do I fit in?*

and:

*I felt kind of disjointed from the black race and I wanted to kind of get back into that, cause I felt separated. So it was more of a conscious decision for me.*

The second category of African American student, a substantially smaller proportion of the total, comes from an integrated urban high school, or from a predominantly Black high school. They actually find an easier adjustment to the racialized social groupings at Cal.

The Black students who come to Berkeley are likely to have come from backgrounds in which they either are brimming with confidence about their abilities and who regard “getting help” as something for the “other” students who need it; or conversely, they may come with an attitude that Cal will be a new level of competition. In the former case, many of these students are arriving with very successful academic backgrounds, having been A or A- students throughout high school. They have a sensitivity to the potential “stigma” of being characterized as “an Affirmative Action admit.” Thus, rather than seeking out study groups or finding assistance from a teaching assistant or arriving at the Student Learning Center, they may retreat to their individual study patterns. In the second case, students arrive “knowing that they are going to have to reach out for help” wherever they can find it. In the most subtle ways,

the atmosphere around race and the putative imputations about the implications of a policy of diversity in admissions reverberates into such small crevices as to a choice of study habits. Asian American students who routinely study together in groups, even when they are doing relatively well, apparently have less of a problem showing up and asking for help from an instructor, or even going to the Learning Center. For a number of African American students, their sensitivity to the potential characterization that they are “of course in need of help” makes them block and put up a barrier to the kind of help-seeking or collective work that might otherwise be the source of rich and rewarding experiences intellectually, personally, and socially.

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/BLACK STUDENTS

##### Finding Academic and Social Support

African American students talked the most starkly about the problems of academic adjustment at Cal in terms of their high visibility in classes, the sense that they were subjects of scrutiny and silent discrimination by professors, TA's and other students, and the lack of a cohort of other Blacks (particularly in the biological and physical sciences) that might provide a sense of support. As one male student expressed:

*I'd say...there's maybe two or three other Blacks in my field [some pre-med science] and we know each other and it, we walk into the class and a lot of times it's like maybe 60% white and maybe 39% Asian or the other way around and it, the professor might mention something, it happens to be a small class and you're the only Black there, you know, everyone might look, you know, I catch, you know people looking you know over at, over my way and making sure you know, do you understand what he's saying? Uh, hand back a test, professor writes the scores down. I had one class I had taken, professor wrote down all the scores and uh, he just lists the lowest score and average score, and then the highest score and I had sensed another student had figured that I had gotten the lowest score. It was because I was the only Black in the class. I don't know, I would say I really, really notice that there's, there's, um, racial segregation in the sciences here at Berkeley, something.*

Other students made clear that the problem centers around the development of social support groups that will assist students in sustaining their academic trajectory in the sciences, the bio-sciences, or the social sciences. One student commented on the emergence of race based associations in engineering and the health sciences. He viewed the

formation of these groups as a response by ethnic minorities who found themselves as small minorities in certain academic fields, coming together to gain social support and to get mutual aid in the academic studies to successfully pursue their studies.

In general terms, the issue of social support, both “social” and “academic” seem to be a relatively salient issue for Black students overall. Its importance is highlighted in the experience of one Black male student who reflected on the absence of support once he left the first year world of the dorms:

*I think there's a lot of reasons. Um, number one, for you to do well in anything anywhere you have to feel comfortable and you know that just speaks to the, to the fact that um, a lot of Black students feel alienated on the campus. And if you're not um, plugged into a support group then chances are, um you're not going to find the support you need. You've left, you left your um, your support network at home that was always there for you no matter what. And um, you get there and that's, that's not readily available for you anymore. And when you, especially when you move outside of the dorms after the first year. ...You don't have that support group that you had in the past.*

Berkeley is problematic for all students, in terms of mediating an environment of a large institution, large classes, and relatively intense competition for academic rewards. This is heightened for anyone who either experiences his/her situation as marginal, or in the language of some of the students, still needs to acquire writing and other skills necessary to academic success at Cal. Blacks, in their assertion of the need for more Black faculty, and in their expressed concern over the inadequacy of existing social and academic supports, seem to be challenging the university with a view that if you go and recruit us to come here you also have a responsibility to help provide the kinds of support services that will encourage academic retention and graduation.

Just as Asian Americans came to Berkeley to learn to be Asian Americans, African Americans frequently report their baptism into matters of ethnic and racial politics on the Berkeley campus. The first encounters, like those of the Chicano/Latino students, often come as a senior in high school when they learn of their successful admission to Berkeley. They begin to hear stories about how Cal is not the most hospitable place for Blacks.

Once on campus, the first weeks of the student experience do provide some orientation to the social require-

ments of campus life. Academic studies and the new adjustments to college life are difficult enough in those first months, but African American students who are new to the campus have the added problem of choosing “what kind of Black” are they going to be.

*... my high school, well junior high school and high school was 98% Mexican or Hispanic background. And so I had friends from all, I mean just all over in terms of background and everything. So, when I came here I figured I'd find the exact same thing. Of course, I was wrong.... When I went to Putnam (a dormitory) and I began the year, I felt like I was expected to join this group of Blacks because I noticed that they were all sitting at the same table. This was the first night I went to dinner. All sitting at the same table near one corner of the dining commons and, I had met my roommate who was Asian. I had different friends. I mean I had met all the guys on the floor and I was thinking to myself, ok am I going to go sit with the guys from up on the floor or go sit with the Blacks. And I felt this pulling in both directions and I was confused. I didn't know what to do and um, I stopped and looked and they all looked up and saw me and I was just standing there. I didn't really know what to say and my roommate said, oh we're sitting over here. And I looked over there and they're sitting over there waiting for me and I'm standing their in the middle of the dinning commons going "Great!" So, I went and sat somewhere else.*

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/BLACK STUDENTS

##### Campus Racism and Affirmative Action

For some African American students the excitement and pride they experience upon learning that they have been accepted into Berkeley can be squelched when they share their acceptance with “other” high school friends and teachers. Several students recounted the reactions of their Asian and white friends when they informed them that they had been accepted into the freshman class at Berkeley. Instead of sharing in their joy, these friends cited examples or found other ways of alluding to white or Asian friends with 4.0 GPAs and high test scores who did not get into Cal. The acceptance of African American students by the University was invariably attributed to Affirmative Action. One student told the following story:

*... I've been um directly told that I've only gotten here because of Affirmative Action. I was told, I was told by a teacher in high school. You know, I went to her and said, well I got into Berkeley. And she's like oh, you only got in.. under Affirmative Action. And I'm like okay, “thank you, bye!” And then, um, and then you know, I came up here and people, they try to, I mean they try to water it down... I came*

*up here and another white friend, you know, he tried to water it down, (he said) most “Black people get in, you know, under Affirmative Action” because they don't really get good grades, because they don't study or stuff like that...*

As the above quote illustrates, prior to their arrival at Berkeley, some African American students have already had their hard work negated, and once on campus, they have to continually prove that they “deserve” to be at Berkeley. One student stated that no matter how long he studied, his Asian American roommate perceived him as “lazy” and not studying “hard enough.” Another student said that he was told by an Asian student that African Americans and other minorities don't have to work hard because they know that they have Affirmative Action. The act of constantly having to justify one's right to be on campus engenders self-doubt and defensiveness. For many African American students, this creates a desire to stick with one's own, to seek affinity where one is less likely to get hurt by the perceived stigma.

An African American student related the following incident.

*I think they [Asian Americans] also harbor the same stereotypes about.. other groups. I took an Asian American studies courses, it was 2B which is the reading and writing, reading and composition and just some of the things that came out of their mouths. ...everyone in the class was, you know, a student of color but I was like, you know this isn't different on you know... I was like I could just close my eyes and really couldn't imagine who was talking... save the accent..*

While these incidents may be rare, the knowledge that negative stereotypes prevail among certain groups towards other groups is known by students and has an impact upon them. One African American student summarized this impact.

*I know there's a perception amongst Black students that they, the Asian students, more so than even the white students, look down upon us or our capabilities or there's a kind of silent air against, maybe at times, about them.*

In an environment of polarized race relations simple questions such as dress take on new meaning. Yet another African American student commented on this topic.

*The reverse stereotypes, Mexican to the Blacks is that Blacks are normally big, loud, strong, forceful, musically inclined, athletically inclined, intimidating and it's kind of weird when, say, for instance, you're walking down the street and they have these stereotypes about you and certain things they can see that are true about you. You are big. If you happen*

*to be wearing sweats you look... and high top tennis shoes, you look like you're athletic and playing on those they say, "Well, you know this person is big, he is Black, he's wearing his sweats and his tennis shoes. He must be going from bask.... coming from a basketball game or something like that.*

More importantly, students, particularly African Americans and Chicano/Latinos, report having to justify their presence at the university. This places added pressure on individual students to define the meaning of their specific racial/ethnic identity. Indeed, failure to conform to expectations may cause considerable confusion among other groups.

### CHICANO/LATINO STUDENTS

The Chicano/Latino students interviewed in this study are a diverse group yet they report facing a set of identity issues which are similar to the issues of identity and adjustment problems confronting other students of color at Berkeley. They are drawn from various class backgrounds, nationalities, regions of the country, and geographic regions within the state. Yet, the largest single predominant group among Latinos is the Mexican origin population. Chicano/Latino students are more likely than other groups to come to terms with their ethnicity in complex ways. Three critical factors that strongly differentiate Chicano/Latino students are their bi-lingual background, their appreciation of Mexican or various Latin American cultures, and their physical appearance as it relates to how they are arrayed in appearance along a continuum of varying degrees of fairness or color. Moreover, the salience of a near bi-modal class situation among the Chicano/Latino community insures a variety of experiences creating a range and diversity among the campus experiences of "Chicano" and "Latino" students.

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/CHICANO/LATINO

##### The Discovery of Identity

Despite their internal diversity, there are a few distinctive features about Chicano/Latino students that merit brief discussion and provide an important context for understanding their campus experience. First, the overall Chicano/Latino undergraduate population has more than quadrupled between 1980 and 1990, from a mere 3.9 per

cent of the total undergraduate student body to nearly 16 per cent of the total student body this past year. This increase, however, has been greater for Latinos than for Chicanos.<sup>42</sup> Although the combined Hispanic population has increased significantly in the last decade, it is noteworthy that, in proportion to their population in the state, Chicano students still remain an underrepresented constituency on this campus.<sup>43</sup>

Although they share a similar ensemble of culture, Chicano and Latino students often come from different backgrounds, have different needs, and generally experience Berkeley in different ways. Chicano undergraduates, for instance, are more likely than Latinos (or other groups on campus) to be drawn from low-income earning families with students at U.C. Berkeley. Fifty percent of the entering Chicano freshmen class in 1989 came from families whose annual income was below \$32,500 a year.<sup>44</sup> At the other end of the class spectrum, only 10 per cent of the Chicano freshmen class in 1987 were from families whose annual income was over \$75,000 a year.<sup>45</sup> Another way of reflecting this is through comparisons between Chicanos and other groups at various income levels (see Figure 2, next page). At the 25th percentile, for instance, the estimated annual parental income of the 1989 Chicano freshmen class was only \$17,554 — nearly half that of the entire

<sup>42</sup> The Chicano undergraduate population rose from 2.4% of the total student body at Berkeley in 1980 to 7.6% in 1989. The number of Latino students, on the other hand, increased from 1.5% to 5.2% of the total undergraduate population during the same period. Office of Student Research, November 30, 1989.

<sup>43</sup> This is readily apparent when one compares these figures to the overall percentage of the state's Chicano population (which now hovers around 25% of the total population) and the large number of Chicano students in various school districts (which exceeds 50% in some school districts). See David E. Hayes-Bautista, Werner O. Schink, and Jorge Chapa, *The Burden of Support: Young Latinos in an Aging Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

<sup>44</sup> This compares with 34% of the Black, 24% of the Asian-American and Native American, and only 11% of the White entering freshman class that year. CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey, Fall 1987.

<sup>45</sup> This compares to 40% of the White, 25% of the Asian, 24% of the Native American, and 13% of the Black cohort. CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey, Fall 1987. (See Figure 2)

freshman class at that percentile (\$35,709). They also lagged far behind all groups at both the 50th and 75th percentile, with parental incomes only 60 per cent of white students' and in some cases appreciably lower than those of other people of color.<sup>46</sup>

One might expect that the predominantly urban, ethnic backgrounds of many Chicano/Latino students would inculcate a strong sense of ethnic identity and insulate them from some of the identity challenges that other students of color confront at Berkeley. This, however, is not the case. Like other minority students, Chicano undergraduates also negotiate an array of identity issues. These identity issues were often exacerbated by coming to Cal from experiences in secondary schools in relatively isolated or sheltered urban or rural settings. For many, their inability to speak Spanish, their fair appearance, and their experiences of a confusing tension between cultural assimilation to the dominant white society and pressure from peers at Cal to adopt a Chicano/Latino identity pose problems.

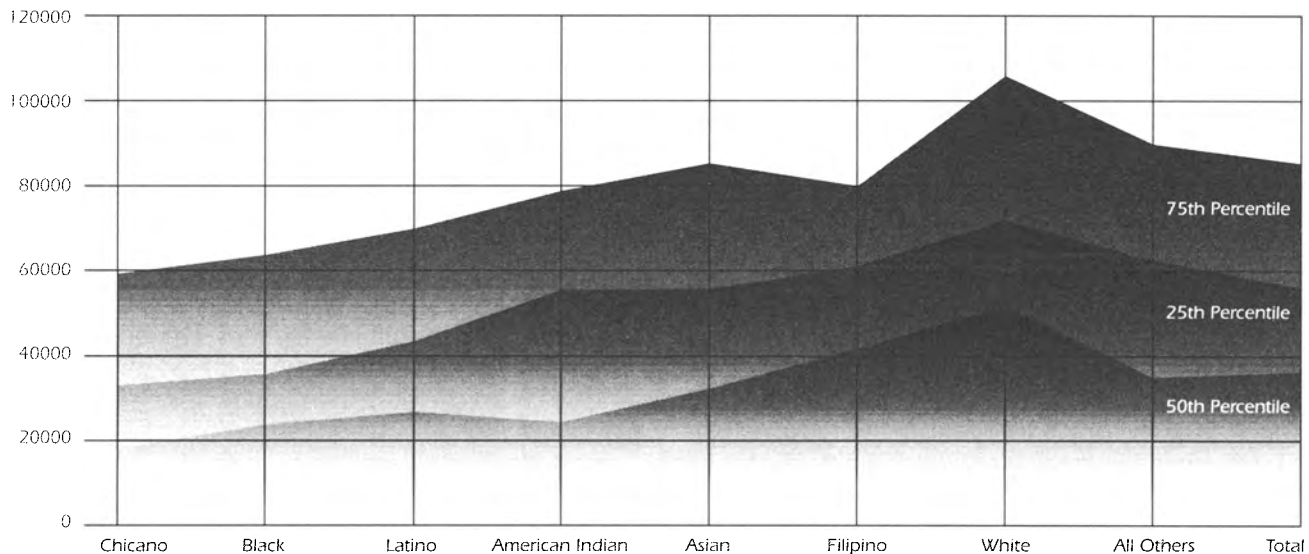
The dilemma over ethnicity is often more difficult to navigate for Chicanos from predominantly white non-

urban communities than for students from larger metropolitan communities and more working class backgrounds. Many middle class Chicano students commented that they were among only a handful of minority students in college preparatory courses during high school and often the first in their families to attend college. This sense of isolation and being the "first one" to pursue higher education had predictable consequences. One undergraduate student from a conservative, predominantly white community in San Luis Obispo county had no concept of what it meant to be Mexican — even the word Chicano was new to her. Her arrival at the Berkeley campus was described as "a cultural shock" that she eventually resolved after some difficulty.

Another student from a similar background also spoke to the salience of ethnicity as a basis of group identity at the university when she expressed surprise over being intro-

<sup>46</sup> Office of Student Research Annual Survey, Fall 1989 Freshman class.

**FIGURE 2**  
ESTIMATED PARENTAL INCOME BY ETHNICITY  
1989 FRESHMEN



Source: CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey, UC Berkeley Freshman (see Table 6)

duced as a classmate's "Mexican friend." It had never occurred to her that she was "a minority" person or "a Mexican." Similarly, but in more apocalyptic terms, another Chicano undergraduate claimed that he was actually "born again here at Berkeley."

Even middle class students from more ethnically diverse high schools spoke candidly of the troublesome identity issues they confronted at Berkeley. One student who attended a high school in a region of Southern California with a large Mexican, Asian, and white student body, described her predicament in the following way:

*When I was there, I never thought of them as Asian or white. And then I came here and it's like I should have been thinking that way, that's the message I was getting. Right now I'm in the middle of the road, I don't want to totally assimilate and be white but I don't see myself totally fitting in with MECHA either. I started going to MECHA meetings but never felt welcome. I wasn't Mexican in the same way they were...I haven't come through their experiences, haven't come from a working class family.*

These students' adjustment to life at Berkeley is ever more difficult if they are fair-complexioned or lack an identifiable badge of ethnicity, such as having an accent or being able to understand and speak Spanish. Such students were more likely to speak of embracing "Anglicized" versions of their names (like Armand instead of Armando), of being unable to appreciate Mexican music, and of not being able to follow discussions carried-out in both English and Spanish.

Many of these undergraduates also related the unsettling experience of having to explain to other students at Cal that they were not "Italian" or "Spanish," both terms implying "being superior" to or different than more dark-complexioned Chicano/Latinos. One Chicano undergraduate captured the significance of somatic features as a basis for Chicano identity in the following way:

*Maybe appearances bring Blacks and Asians more together, cause you see Latinos and you can't tell what they are. Some of them look white, some of them look Asian, some of them look Middle Eastern...I think that's one of the reasons why we're more divided, because some of us are more accepted than others so that affects how a person really perceives society.*

The impact of their physical appearance on how Chicano/Latino students were perceived and spoken to often had unsettling consequences. One Chicana, for

example, related with some consternation that a white student in one of her classes mistook her for white because she "didn't look Mexican." She explained to this student (who actually thought she was paying her a compliment) that she was indeed Chicana and later after class accepted an apology.

Another undergraduate spoke of being offended by a professor in the math department who "called me Spanish because he can't even use the word Latino." This ethnic ambiguity was not limited to white students and professors, however, for Chicano students are equally unsure about each other's ethnicity and are not adverse to occasionally questioning one another about this point.

How a Chicano/Latino student resolves their ability to "pass" as white varies from person to person. One fair-complexioned Chicano student candidly stated that "because I don't look as Latino as other people I'm marginal, could go one way or another." His solution to this situation was simply to define himself as "being an American, not white or anything but just as American as possible." Others resolve this quandary by moving in the other direction: by enthusiastically embracing their newly-discovered ethnicity and actively joining one of the eighteen Chicano student organizations on campus.

Although identity questions prove vexatious for the middle class Latino students, even Chicano undergraduates from more ethnically diverse, working class communities experienced these problems while at Berkeley. This was especially true for those whose parents sent them to parochial schools to receive the best education their modest incomes could provide. A Chicano undergraduate who attended a Catholic college preparatory high school in Los Angeles, for example, remarked that its minority student body was "pretty white washed" and that most of the Chicanos who attended spoke "perfect English." He recounted that most white students at this school saw him as "different" than other Mexicans and as being "pretty much assimilated." Their confidence about this led them to even tell jokes about Mexicans without thinking that he might take offense. This was a common problem for lighter skinned Latinos who could pass for white. They were confronted with situations where racial epithets were used and racial jokes were told in their presence. They then felt the burden of calling out the racism among their predominantly white peers.

Similarly, a Chicana student who came to U.C. Berkeley from an ethnically diverse Catholic school in Oakland complained that all of the faculty there were white and that they never “touched upon racism and stuff like that.” She acknowledged being completely “unaware of all the things that have been going on with our people, all the injustice we’ve suffered, how the world really is. I thought racism didn’t exist and here, you know, it just comes to light.”

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/CHICANO/LATINO

##### Friendship Patterns

Our interviews suggest that there is apparently more of an affinity between Chicano/Latino students and Blacks than with any other group on campus. The Chicano students felt that Black students came from similar backgrounds, faced common issues, and that they consequently got together more often for cultural and social events. The following quotation speaks to this special bond. According to one Chicano:

*Between Chicanos and Blacks there’s more of a sort of like a parallel, a brotherhood sort of a thing. Again, I think, I’m not really sure why. I, maybe it’s because both the Chicano community and the Black community kind of have come from similar experiences. A lot are economically disadvantaged. I went to a poetry reading where there was a Chicano poet and a Black poet and they are, you know it was really a big get together, like, “This is a brotherhood thing and we should get out there and really fight to change things, you know. We’re both being oppressed by the same system, let’s get out there and change it.”*

Another student added that this affinity even affected decisions about courses in which he enrolled. He stated that:

*I’m taking the African American class because African American students unlike Asian students, have a strong sense of ethnic identity and that’s real important to me....*

Others, of course, experience Berkeley differently. Some Chicano undergraduates discuss having a very diverse friendship circle that is often an extension of a similar pattern in high school. They talk about attending ethnically mixed parties where “everybody is laughing, everybody smiles at everybody.” Unlike fraternity parties, where students primarily drink and are “real plastic,” minority parties are characterized as being “more personal, more comfortable ‘cause everybody’s just trying to meet people.”

Although there was no consensus on this point, a few Chicano/Latino students saw Asian Americans as “exclusionary,” “isolationist,” and as wanting to distinguish themselves from the more pointedly stigmatized Chicano and Black “affirmative action” students. Others, on the other hand, noted that Asian students were among their first friends on campus and that many initially had Asian roommates while in the dorms. A few also made special mention of their close relationships with many Filipino students on campus.

When Chicano/Latino students arrive on campus, they need to make friends in order to feel a sense of connectedness and having a place at Berkeley. Many turn primarily to ethnic organizations and minority-based programs as a basis for collective identification and individual support. Despite posing problems for some Chicano/Latino students, many acknowledged that organizations such as MECHA, Raza Recruitment, Mujeres en Marcha, La Familia, and the Chicano/Latino Association of Sociology Students provide an important vehicle for developing friendship patterns, mentorship relationships, and a collective sense of identity. These organizations also give both Chicano and Latino students an opportunity to work jointly and to often receive their first massive dose of ethnic pride and political awakening. However, some Latinos, of non-Mexican origin, commented that there is a lack of organizations to bring them together and to address their particular cultural and national backgrounds and experiences. They reflect that most of the Latino organizations have origins as organizations for the Chicano/Mexicano students.

One Chicano undergraduate from a predominantly white, upper class high school in Santa Monica, for example, recalled arriving at Berkeley with low self-esteem. He noted the racism he felt while in high school was so intense that he wouldn’t even raise his hand in class to ask questions. All this changed, however, after he was given the opportunity at Cal to attend a Chicano leadership conference and was “pounded with self-esteem and history.” Similarly, those who attended the summer bridge program reported being better prepared for the initially overwhelming experience of their first semester. As a result of participating in this program, one Chicano student knew his way around campus and had a number of friends who also enrolled in a lecture course of 1500 students his

first semester. This early introduction to campus life eased his adjustment to Cal and provided him with an immediate affinity group and network of supportive friends.

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/CHICANO/LATINO

##### Racism

Because of the mediating role that class and skin color plays as an ethnic marker for Chicano students, the issue of their experience of being “invisible” on campus came up repeatedly in our interviews. Paradoxically, given their close friendship patterns with African American students, Chicano/Latino students often resented discussions of racism on campus being narrowly framed as a Black/white issue.

One Chicano/Latino student spoke to this issue in the following way:

*... they [African American students] talk about racism and then a Chicano/Latino will go, “Oh yea, I know what you mean,” and they’ll just look at you or you know or if you’re not dark enough they don’t think you’ve experienced it and I’ve come out and say, “Well, Chicano/Latinos face racism, too.” But, also I always have to remind them: maybe you have a color barrier, but a lot of Chicano/Latinos have a language barrier. I mean, for them it’s color no matter, they can’t hide away from that. A lot of times, Chicano/Latinos, they have a language barrier and it’s always there.*

Another Chicano student also related the following unsettling incident:

*Well, I remember one time in my English 1A class, there was an Asian boy in there and I remember we were describing ourselves and our teacher was like, “Well, is there anything else you want to say.” And I’m like, “Oh, well, I’m Mexican American,” and he laughed and I didn’t know why he laughed, but he laughed and I have no idea what the reason was, but him and this other boy, they just burst out and I don’t understand why.*

*Yea, um, I think there was just a certain arrogance in his attitude about uh uh, I don’t know, a certain superiority and it intimidated me, definitely, but I do think that there is there was a lot of racism in that laugh.*

As in the case of other discussions with students of color, questions about the subtle form of the new racism Chicanos confront on campus were often difficult to pinpoint. There was much talk about certain facial expressions, or the way people look, and how white students “take over the class” and speak past you.

Almost universally, these individual behaviors were defined by the Chicano/Latino students as attributable to “the problem of ignorance.” White students were characterized as simply not having been exposed to or unable to be sensitive to the Chicano experience. This insensitivity even applied to white faculty on campus. As one student put it:

*It’s not that they’re prejudiced or racist but it’s just that they don’t know. They’re not sensitive on issues.*

Another Chicana undergraduate, who also described the situation as one being rooted in “ignorance,” framed the problem in these terms: “it’s not so much that people go up to you and like hold you back, but it’s the attitudes they have, I mean they kick you here, they kick there.”

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/CHICANO/LATINO

##### Affirmative Action

Given what we know about the Chicano/Latino experience at Berkeley, it is our view that the best way to handle the new language of racism is through an analysis of the attitudes, behavior, prevailing assumptions, and myths about the campus Affirmative Action admissions policy. From the moment that others learn of their admission to Berkeley, Chicano/Latino students become aware of white perceptions that they are at Cal not because of their talent and personal achievements but because of Affirmative Action. Not surprisingly, these students come to fear that others might be correct in their estimation about them — that whites are indeed more intelligent and capable than they are. Many Chicano/Latino students candidly acknowledged that this denigrating attitude deeply affected them and had a debilitating impact on their adjustment to student life at Berkeley. They openly discussed how these comments devastated them emotionally, lowered their self esteem, and often made them internalize other’s perceptions of them.

One student embarrassingly acknowledged that he once “bought into that thing” and was made to feel that the only reason he got accepted at Berkeley was “because I’m a Latino.” This Latino student admitted that a comment by a white student about his being an Affirmative Action admit “really hurt me. It took the whole first semester to get over it.” In a similar incident, the best friend of another



Latino student suggested that the only reason he was admitted at Berkeley was to fill a quota. Then there is the recurrent story of the Chicano student who runs into a white high school friend who expresses surprise that he/she hasn't flunked out yet. Variations on this story are repeated so often that they have become a cliché among Chicano/Latino students.

Given the diverse nature of the Chicano/Latino experience on this campus, it is nonetheless surprising that a number of common themes arose with respect to making Berkeley a more supportive environment for them. Aside from the integrative and supportive function provided by Chicano/Latino student organizations, another factor that facilitated student adjustment to campus life was their positive experiences with Chicano faculty members, staff, and administrators.

One undergraduate student who took a course from a lecturer in the Chicano Studies program spoke appreciatively about this experience. Unlike his impersonal encounters with white faculty on campus, this student stated: "I was able to do a lot better in that class because I felt more comfortable. He gave a lot of encouragement ... Even if the class doesn't relate to your ethnicity, it's comforting to see a brown face up there." Another student admitted that they had only spoken to one professor while on campus: a Chicano professor in a traditional department who made him feel comfortable during office hours and expressed a sincere interest in his doing well in his course.

A number of other students also affirmed the value of such interaction but pointedly complained that "Affirmative Action for students is not followed up by diversifying the faculty." These students echoed the need for more faculty diversity so that "you don't have an education from one perspective." One Chicano student also spoke of the need for "more of our people to get in there and...hold positions that are more ingrained in the university." He believed it essential in order to insure that Chicanos develop a greater "sense of belonging."

A final factor that gave many students reason for optimism over becoming a more integral part of the Berkeley campus was the recent enactment of the American Cultures requirement. In particular, the Chicano/Latino students enthusiastically supported this particular effort at the diversification of the undergraduate curriculum as a way of penetrating the otherwise "invisibility" of their history and

experience. By the early winter of 1990, they had begun to express the hope that the American Cultures development would validate their place on campus and help undermine "the problem of ignorance" discussed above.

In sum, the overriding message conveyed by many of the Chicano/Latino students participating in this study was their desire to feel that they have a right to be at Berkeley. Despite some differences of opinion among themselves regarding Affirmative Action, they overwhelmingly agreed that it was an important way of insuring that "those people with potential come into the institution" and, thereby, creating a situation in which "Affirmative Action won't be needed anymore."

## WHITE STUDENTS

Heightened racial consciousness permeated the interviews of white students just as it did with other students. Perhaps more than at any other time in their lives, a majority expresses the view that "being white" matters. In other settings, the students acknowledge that "being white" tends to be a taken-for-granted part of the normal landscape. At Berkeley, both the objective demography that frequently makes them the numerical minority and the perception that there is considerable emphasis and concern on campus about diversity helps to transform their consciousness of "whiteness."

Encouraged to express their feelings about this, there is a widespread sense among whites that the fruits of diversity are far from realized. They complain that the current celebration of ethnic and racial diversity does not include whites, and in the case of Affirmative Action, is biased against them.

### GROUP INTERVIEW/WHITE STUDENTS

#### Early Entry, Racial Consciousness and Stereotypes

As far as their early expectations of what they would find at Berkeley, we frequently heard how Berkeley was chosen because of its diversity. Whether or not they had experienced it previously, this was at least partly what they anticipated and partly what they wanted. About two-

thirds came from high schools where whites dominated, and more than half of these from high schools with less than 10 percent members of ethnic and racial minorities. Berkeley was valued for both its history and for its present rich diversity. Many of the students valued and wanted to “experience” that diversity. They were not especially articulate about it, did not quite have a language for it, and frequently could not say in any detail what it was they meant by “experiencing diversity.” But they expressed both a longing for it and, later, a lament that strong social forces prevented them from penetrating the barriers that they perceived these “others” were creating.

They arrive on the Berkeley campus with something several analysts of these data describe as a “naive good will.” They are disturbed by the “racialization,” the heightened awareness of many aspects of life as having a racial element (Omi and Winant, 1986). As distinguished from racism, racialization refers to the consciousness and awareness that race can come to occupy a dominant status, where even one’s identity is explained in terms of race. When racialization involves questions of identity for white students, it is often a negative experience. For the first time, they report that “white” becomes an uncomfortable category.

Like the other ethnic-racial groups discussed in this report, white students are themselves quite diverse, though there are a unique set of attitudes which cluster precisely because of their social position. Being white, for example, carries with it the strong sense that they have been summarily categorized as “the oppressors” or “racists.” As one student succinctly expressed it,

*If you want to go with the stereotypes, Asians are the smart people, the Blacks are great athletes, what is white? We’re just here. We’re the oppressors of the nation.*

*At Berkeley being white is having to constantly be on my toes about not offending other races not saying something to be construed as I am continuing to be the oppressor of America.*

Being white also meant being without identity, without culture, “without color” — “neutral, watery, or pasty.” Whiteness is experienced as a void, a lack of ethnicity, a lack of affirmation of identity in a world of other students affirming their own identity via ethnic and racial support groups.

*Many whites don’t feel like they have an ethnic identity at all and I pretty much feel that way too. It’s not something that bothers me tremendously but I think that maybe I could be missing something that other people have, that I am not experiencing.*

*There you are. So that made me come and also the fact that right after someone told me what this is all about I had the immediate thought, ‘Well, man, I’ve got nothing to contribute. I’m a crazy white kid that has no culture whatsoever,’ and then I immediately lashed out at myself and said ‘hey, that’s a stereotype, you know, maybe you do have something to contribute,’ and that’s what made me come ‘cause I was foolish enough to think for a second, that you know, I’m a white kid, don’t know nothing, don’t go.*

*I find myself embarrassed that I’m white a lot of times... (in small, highly diverse class) I feel like I don’t know anything because I am white. They say “how do you know how we feel? how could you ever know?” Even though I try, I really want to be aware. I just feel like there is this big barrier stopping me.*

Being white is also experienced as a category of deprivation. “Being white,” said one student, “means you don’t qualify for Affirmative Action.” “It’s not a good box to check,” said another. Another student, summing up the feelings of many white students, had this to say:

*Being white means that you’re less likely to get financial aid...It means that there are all sorts of tutoring groups and special programs that you can’t get into, because you’re not a minority.*

In articulating their understandings about the current situation of ethnic-racial diversity, no students expressed anything resembling racial hatred or any visceral animosity. Rather, in these interviews, few examples of the “old racism” were discernible, that is, no overtly expressed hostility towards other groups surfaced. Instead, the discussions were brimming with examples of the confusion and discomfort surrounding their attitudes about race relations. It must also be noted that some whites also mentioned strong feelings of good will. However, the campus climate, punctuated by the proliferation of organizations along racial-ethnic lines, heightened racial consciousness, making it difficult for those seeking mixed, integrated, or diverse groups to find such affiliations.

*...even though we’re striving to have ethnic integration [at Berkeley] and have a really good mix and this is the objective of things like Affirmative Action and programs like that, but*

*people, even when you throw them all together into situations they still separate themselves and it is not desired, I mean that's not the way I would want it, I would rather have a better mix. Just think it would make life a lot more interesting if I could feel comfortable talking to a Black person and you know, find out what their situation is like and how they feel these things that you know, you can't, you can't comfortably ask someone. Being a white person I can't go up and say, "how do you feel about racism on this campus?" But we, we all want to be integrated but at the same time all the different groups like you were saying, Raza and, uh all them what the undergraduate minorities associations and stuff like that. It just, it tends to make people identify even more strongly with their own race rather than trying to mix better. And I think it's that, it's, I think it's really good to have those groups but at the same time it makes integration a little more difficult.*

Any affirmation of whiteness risks being tantamount to "racist behavior." White students who would band together to form a whites-only group (as at Temple University) are poignantly aware that this would be seen as racist. Berkeley's white students have the sophistication to comprehend that such a move, against a backdrop of historically salient white-skin privilege (voting, public accommodations, immigration laws, etc.), is hardly socially or politically feasible. Ethnicity is another matter. Jewish, Italian, or Irish students with an easy trace to their ethnic backgrounds might find such affinities, and recognize this as socially and politically acceptable. But for many white students, the search for ethnic identity is easier said than done. They come from backgrounds in which several generations from different European nations are intermixed. For these students, the sense of white as a "residual category" is strong and difficult to elude.

In contrast, white students who were members of the Greek system were exceptional in that they stressed that it was natural and positive for people to have an affinity for their own. As Greeks, they felt under siege and attack by everyone. Even those Greeks trying to be more diverse in their membership by actively seeking to have more non-whites join their fraternity or sorority expressed a regret that their motives were questioned, and their successes fewer than their rebuffs.

White students have a great deal of confusion over what it means to not be racist. As members of a society in which race remains a salient category of social life, they carry around a reservoir of racial stereotypes. Yet, they differ in the degree to which they are aware of them, subscribe to

them, or are trying to overcome them. The following student is among those attempting to be more self-aware:

*Everyone kind of has prejudices and biases what you don't really admit or you're not really conscious of, so you...have to keep looking at what you're thinking and how you are judging... Much as you can say 'I'm not racist, I don't have any preconceived ideas...you do, there's no way around it.'" So I think that it takes any experience like living with someone and working with someone, and .. each step you ... break down your own beliefs.*

Racial superiority, to the extent that it is expressed, is subtle and almost unconscious. The attitudes that whites have of being rebuffed by minorities is the tip of this iceberg, for underlying the feeling of being "rebuffed" is the view that they as whites are extending themselves to help those more disadvantaged. Rebuff from such quarters has a particular kind of sting. It is in their juxtaposition against Blacks that whites feel their whiteness comes to the forefront of their consciousness, and is in its sharpest relief. For those white students who report that they have sought out friendships and associations among Blacks, they report that it is for them the source of frustration and resentment that they feel rebuffed by Blacks. Black students are described as the most clannish and hostile. One student thus expressed the following frustration over how equality and integration now seemed incompatible.

*[Referring to the cliquishness] I sometimes really get frustrated with that because they are arguing for equality and everything but they refuse to integrate on a large scale. They want to keep that separateness so much that it intimidates other groups.*

Whites who speak of how they understand their privilege do so in very broad and vague terms, referring to a history of discrimination behind contemporary disadvantage, or knowing that economic background is somehow related to achievement and success. That is, they tend to convey their understanding of social inequalities primarily in the abstract, from a distance. What is beyond their comprehension, indeed their perception and, hence, consciousness, is what it means to cope with being in a stigmatized racial category on a daily, routine basis. For example, it was not uncommon to hear white students comment on the unusual experience of suddenly finding themselves a "minority" in a classroom, at a party, or at a political gathering. They express this in terms of how they "under-

stand” minority status. However, largely because those students are able to leave situations in which they are a “minority,” they are unaware of how their skin color enables them to move fluidly for the most part through many minute social interactions in daily life, permeating into a state of mind that affects self-confidence and other taken-for-granted attitudes and feelings.

In general, the search for cultural identity for whites has none of the rewards of cultural discovery and enrichment that it seems to have for other groups. Although they may try to leave the racial category and rescue an ethnic identity, they still risk being labeled racist. For example, insofar as they venture to interact as if “color does not matter,” they are in danger of being pitted against non-whites for whom color matters a great deal. To be racially sensitive, in this context, means to acknowledge racial-ethnic stratification while attempting somehow to approximate racial equality in social relations. The following two sorority women — one Black, one white — managed to bridge the gap in trust as they conversed about how their respective realities were different. This exchange is illustrative of how whites can only faintly comprehend how the world is biased in their favor on a routine, daily basis.

*It could be anyone because um I said, “Well, \_\_\_\_ why do they have,” she’s Black, okay, “Why, you know, why do they have these special things and why do they have these certain unions for Black people and stuff?” And she says, “Well, because everything is everything else. I mean, you ...” “You know,” I said, “why don’t they have the white bowl night or something?” And she said, “Well, because every night is white bowl night.”*

Thus, even if whites try to be racially or culturally sensitive about how other groups experience racial or color lines, they are told they can never know what it means to be a minority precisely because they are white. The risk of being ignorant on issues of race, less than skilled in cross-cultural interaction, can be a source of anxiety and bewilderment. Many are fearful of offending out of ignorance. Whites are confused by Blacks who use the word “nigger” themselves, as in the name of the popular rap group NWA (Niggahs With Attitudes) or in the current crop of Hollywood movies by Blacks. This “cultural ignorance” carries over to other groups, and it confuses them. While whites reported feeling more comfortable with Chicano/Latinos,

there was also the sense that whites found them far less visible. For those who interact up close, however, there is a sharp awareness that one must tread carefully. The following student, for example, notes the significance of properly referring to individuals in these groups by the culturally acceptable term at the time:

*It’s Chicano now or Chicana, Mexican, Latina, Hispanic, I mean I just [laughter] every year it changes, I just, I mean I don’t know what to say. I mean if you say the wrong thing you’re either a racist or they yell at you. I mean I don’t know, it’s so frustrating, but we’re always the white honky, y’know we don’t, we don’t get to change our name every year.*

One student noted that Asian Americans handed out flyers for dances only to Asian Americans. Whites who attempted to attend felt unwelcome.

*It was like the Red Sea parted when I walked in. [Student (white) who attended an “Asian” dance.]*

The one area where whites say they are able to establish easy relations are with Asians and Blacks who did not “stick out” because they were from the same background: “They weren’t like a poor class or anything like that...race wasn’t a big issue because we all came from the same background.” Social class, in this instance, became a bonding agent because there were underlying values here that they could share.

When the values of diversity, meritocracy, and equality are placed side-by-side, the conflict between these values becomes stark. Each may indeed be valued, but together they present dilemmas. For the sake of diversity and equality, whites feel they are expected to accept what they characterize as their deprivation — not having access to certain “perks” on campus. Many accept some version of compensation, but at the same time resent that they are not credited for holding such liberal views. The oppressor role is supposed to be sufficient explanation.

*I think, also that... as the white person your whole moral worth is based on how much you feel sorry for other racial groups.*

This explanation works to a certain extent, but feeds into a growing river of resentment.

## GROUP INTERVIEW/WHITE STUDENTS

## Racism and Affirmative Action

The subject of Affirmative Action is a pivotal issue in terms of how whites see themselves in relationship to other groups. As we probed for the feelings behind either resentment or support of Affirmative Action, students air their views with an awareness of controversy, a controversy which reflects the fact that **a compelling and resonant justification for Affirmative Action has not been developed by the administration, by the courts, nor by society** — regardless of “which side” one takes.

Regardless of their position with respect to Affirmative Action, there is the prevailing stereotype that Affirmative Action students are somehow “less qualified,” not the recognition that they are among the elite of all high school graduates. Moreover, such stereotypes are generally attached to Blacks and Chicano students, not Asian and white students. For example, the following is a very frank, self-conscious and self-critical observation from a sorority member:

*Every time I see a Black person, not an Asian, but any other person of color walk by, I think, ‘Affirmative Action.’ It’s like that’s your first instinct. It’s not, maybe that person really was smart; it’s gotta be Affirmative Action. They don’t even belong here. It’s like you kinda think, well, they don’t belong here because they haven’t earned it as much as we did. I know there’s some people who have 4.0+’s in high school that happen to be Black too, but I immediately assume that they’re a less quality student just because I immediately jump to the conclusion that they’re Affirmative Action, whether they are or not.*

Discussions about Affirmative Action create one of the few contexts in which self-consciousness about their own negative stereotyping and defensiveness recedes. We heard numerous accounts of worthy white applicants with high grade point averages (4.0) being rejected, while a Black or Chicano/Latino with a GPA of 3.0, or even 2.8 was admitted. Referring to the perceived advantages of being a minority applying to law school, one white student expressed her outrage as follows:

*To me, that whole system is absolutely and totally appalling. It should really completely and totally be a question of your ability and not have to do with your color or your race or your sex.*

Whites who were against Affirmative Action framed their objections as if they were based on neutral criteria (e.g. favoring a system based on meritocracy, qualifications,

ability). Yet in those instances where they are able to perceive Affirmative Action as potentially operating in their own self-interest, there is a remarkable shift in their political views. Thus, the following student commented on how her entire attitude towards Affirmative Action entirely changed when she realized she qualified for some sort of special treatment because she was an athlete.

*My idea of what the whole plan is about has completely changed. I mean, I was first angered by Affirmative Action when I was applying for schools, ‘cause I would take the very step that would say, um, “Y’know, I’m not gonna get into Berkeley because I’m a White woman, and that’s like really bad chances. And I, y’know, I’m lower middle class, and I would just y’know get mad because of that. But then I got up here and realized what Affirmative Action ...was...I’m an athlete myself.. and Affirmative Action is helping White people more than it’s helping minorities.*

Similarly, when Affirmative Action is seen to help whites, “appropriate” justifications for the policy are forthcoming. Thus, in a discussion where students are questioning the qualifications of athletes (whom many assume are Black), the following white student responded defensively, revealing her own status as an athlete.

*Well, usually athletes have some measure of um, um, um, organizational qualities, but they’re — I can’t remember the word — but a lot of them deserve to go to a university, maybe because they, they spend half, in high school, maybe instead of working entirely for the 4.0, you know, all the way, maybe they settled for the 3.4, but excelled in their sport...*

*...discipline, that’s what I was trying to say. Athletes have a certain measure of discipline, and so I think ...that also adds to the diversity of the campus...*

In general, whether the issue is Affirmative Action or meritocracy, whites feel squeezed from both ends. Both Affirmative Action and the high rate of Asian American enrollment are perceived as threatening white enrollment, reducing white competitiveness, impacting upon their numbers, and consequently furthering “white flight.”

In criticizing Affirmative Action, whites were most likely to take the view that residues of historical discrimination are not relevant to today’s social policy. With few exceptions, there was the strong sentiment that they as “individuals” should not be expected to pay the price for past injustices, committed by others, before their time. In articulating their views about “fairness,” they generally asserted their higher qualifications (vis-a-vis Chicano/Latinos and Blacks) in terms of the Academic Index (GPA and test

score performance). Renouncing Affirmative Action, they were most likely to advocate admitting students purely on the basis of grades and test scores. The following student commented on the fact that the university was doing a disservice to all students in this regard, in that Affirmative Action students were set up to fail and that the rest of the class was slowed down.

*I think it's a real disadvantage to let people into this school because of their ethnicity. And it's a terrible disadvantage to me and everybody else who goes to this school. One it drags the class down; and two, it sets them up to fail. They weren't prepared to be here.*

However, when asked how they would feel if Asian Americans performed more successfully than whites, they reacted with less enthusiasm than resignation ("So be it."), or else with an elaborated discussion of other criteria that might be valued. Thus, the stereotype of Asian Americans as "studious" became the basis for questioning whether they were sufficiently "well-rounded."

*Being, going to school, going to class, and maybe being in the Asian business community — I don't think it's gonna give you a really well-rounded, y'know. I just think that you gotta get out and do a lot of things. Since I work part-time, and this sorority is a relatively diverse group, y'know, I do tons of different things on campus and I also get to class usually. (Laughter) No, I mean, it's just like, I think I'm getting much more well-rounded. I mean, my grades might not be top-notch, but I think that when it gets right down to it, I'm gonna be better prepared for life...*

Similarly, the fact that Asian Americans seem to be concentrated in engineering became the grounds for criticizing their leadership potential.

*...it depends what you mean by "qualified." Now, if you're talking about getting into an engineering school, then sure, you have to know the math and everything. That's entirely different from educating like our nation's leaders or something, unless you're talking about making a really good scientist, because there's tons of people I know, who really, um, they really, they don't like math. They're not very good at it, but they're really good at other stuff, and they're some people who'd make really good leaders and stuff...*

In short, insofar as whites perceived themselves as losing ground vis-a-vis Asian Americans, they were willing to move away from the Academic Index as a standard and, indeed, challenge it and invoke other criteria for measuring ability, or invoke other stereotypes (Asian Americans as the "new nerds," "grade grubbers," or "study gnomes") that cast whites in a more favorable light.

Opinions, in short, were by no means rigid. Students develop and crystallize their attitudes after they arrive at Cal. One sorority member who reported being "really upset" about Affirmative Action when she arrived on campus recalled how she subsequently changed her mind.

*I've thought about it a lot and what it comes down to is essentially it's needed...because minorities haven't had the same opportunity for education as white people. And if we're ever expected to really desegregate, then it's gotta be with some policy like that where they're given some opportunity for education if they can't afford it.*

Thus, over and against the strong theme of fervent opposition to Affirmative Action, there is also a counter-current of opinion supporting it. Such students are more willing to question the validity of test scores as measures of intelligence.

*I always defend Affirmative Action... I'm kind of an idealist, but I think there is so much to be offered when you see someone who is culturally, from the White sense, illiterate, who probably had a 350 on their SAT score and see that because they're interested in some issues, and they have their own experience to draw upon, they can make such a good, strong, valid argument, you realized that, you know, intelligence goes way beyond just what the test scores (indicate).*

Having friends who were admitted through Affirmative Action often quells any doubts whites have about the qualifications of minority students or about how the system "works":

*...some of my friends have gotten into school through Affirmative Action, but I don't think it's a negative thing. I think that they deserve to be here. I think that it's a system that works. It does what it's supposed to do, and I can't think of anybody here who or anybody that I know who's been advanced with that doesn't deserve it, you know. And it's something that's sorely needed in this society.*

Another important consideration is the perception that opportunity structures are still biased against minorities. Affirmative Action is seen as an appropriate form of redress for historical and present discrimination. The reasons most often given for favoring Affirmative Action have to do with the legacy of the historical enslavement of Blacks, or the fact that "Anglos" took California from Mexico and oppressed a cheap labor force, or that Blacks and Chicanos live in poor neighborhoods without access to quality educational institutions.

Sometimes, this awareness of the obstacles minorities face grows naturally out of being in a city where they are

exposed to poverty they have never seen before.

*I used to think that whatever you were up against, you could make it. Then I came to Cal and I began to see homeless on the streets—kids. And I began to think what chance does that kid have? A lot of different other things and I began to realize that background does have an effect.*

For the sake of diversity and equality, many of these white students said they were willing to accept certain “sacrifices.” For example, the following student felt that social change would never occur unless there was some realization that in the big picture, the system had never given minorities a chance.

*I honestly think that in some cases I might be the one ending up getting screwed if you want to put it that way because of the system, but I agree with it because, the way I see it, in a lot of cases, let's say, Afro-American students come from a certain area, they don't have the chance of getting the same education. They've been screwed for so long it's a completely different ballgame so in order to somehow reverse the system you have to give them a break else it's never going to change, and so that's why I'm so in favor Affirmative Action.*

In short, those students who understood that social and cultural disadvantage (poor neighborhoods, lack of access to quality education, etc.) translate into things like test scores tended to favor Affirmative Action.

#### GROUP INTERVIEW/WHITE STUDENTS

##### Dealing with a New Status

Despite all the interest group conflict, white students continue to express support for diversity as an idea. These students tended to be strongly in favor of diversity when they knew individuals from other racial or ethnic groups more personally. Short of this, they enjoyed certain special classes they had taken on race relations that could give them some insight into these other social worlds. Even when learning in these contexts was not without its discomfort, there was an overall appreciation for how such courses could broaden one's education. The following two students, for example, commented on how such courses fulfilled a real need.

*Um, yeah, I guess I feel a little uncomfortable in a situation like that but, um, I think, I think it would really help to read about it and also to, well like that race relations class I took, that was such an eye opener to, to be a minority and to suddenly be able to kind of in a way understand the way they felt.*

*... yeah I mean like three discussions a week where you have to be there for an hour listening to different people talk. I mean if we had something like this every day or every other day. — Yeah, our first paper was writing about how we got to Cal, um through our socioeconomic background and our gender as well.*

This empathy extended to other arenas. Thus, whites expressed a sensitivity to the very things that other minorities needed to enhance their educational lives, e.g. faculty diversification.

*I think faculty diversity is really important, too, ...for example I've noticed that my girl friend does a lot better in classes that have women teachers and she's actually managed to have like a rapport with her female professors, not to the extent with her male professors and I think that probably can be generalized to, you know, racial groups, to a very large extent and I really see it with her and I can assume that it happens with everyone else. The fact that there are so few people of color in the faculty is probably a very big part of the reason why the retention rate is so low.*

There is even tolerance and acceptance of the fact that other minority groups may need to have their own place or space in which to feel comfortable. Some, not all, are aware of how everyday interaction is premised on ways of operating that make it simply easier to navigate if you are white. Thus, one student commented: “If you think about it, the whole world is a white support system.” Other whites had problems with understanding why other racial-ethnic groups would want to have their own separate events. As noted previously, one woman explained how she came to understand through her Black female acquaintance why Blacks might want their own separate night to go bowling.

If whites sense or suspect these others need to develop their own space and unity, this may be one reason why they refrain from extending themselves to individuals in other groups

*One good thing on the side of segregation is that the Blacks need to see Afro-Americans who are doing well. They don't want to just come to school — may have seen Blacks in their area who do not share their goals. They feel a good sense of self worth sticking together. I have a good friend (Black) who chose Howard to see more Blacks who were not drug dealers like back home.*

In general, though, as the social and cultural landscape shifts all around, whites, too, are attempting to come to terms with their new status. As noted earlier, inter-racial interaction is impeded by the risk of seeming ignorant on issues of race, of being less than skilled in cross-cultural

interaction, and offending out of ignorance.

White students, like most white Americans, display little, if any, of the heavier racist baggage of other generations, and are struggling to develop a new sensitivity. A few acknowledge their privilege and believe that there should be redress of past injustices. While some actively support institutional and structural efforts to improve race relations, others talked about their individual efforts to be racially more sensitive.

Students might go to great lengths to avoid referring to someone even “descriptively” by race since any such comment “having to do with color, relating to color” can be misinterpreted and construed as racist. For example, a sorority member reported the following:

*Like during rush, people ask for physical descriptions. And I felt awkward saying she's Asian. I'd say, she has dark hair, that's to here, and y'know, I would be very grateful if someone else said, Uh, is she, she's the Asian one who was wearing the pink dress or whatever, and I'd say, yes... same goes for saying if she's Black...it is a descriptive term, but I don't want people calling me racist.*

Other whites try to break down barriers by adjusting their own behavior or extend themselves a little more than they might usually. Thus, one student who described himself as a “social chameleon” related how he adjusted his style of speaking.

*I try to be like a social chameleon. I try to let my grammar be my guide. I go to people I perceive as not being quite as intelligent... and I'll change the way I act, and I think, I think it's a good thing.*

*...if someone's talking about something, I'd try harder to start up a conversation because I think just because, I want to get to know these people... I perceive there to be more difficulty in me getting to know these people, and maybe that's true and maybe that's not true actually, but I try a little bit harder.*

In some instances, negative first impressions of other groups are tempered by efforts to take the role of the other, to imagine themselves in a comparable situation. Thus, for example, annoyance over the fact that many Asian immigrants speak their native language on campus might, upon self-reflection, evoke empathy when considering what their own reaction might be in a situation of limited language skills.

*...when I hear like a group of like people speaking Chinese, I mean Mandarin or Cantonese or whatever — and I sort of sit there and think, “God, you're in America, you know,*

*why don't you speak English?” but then I think, if I was like studying abroad in France, I'd know French. If I found people who knew English, I know damn well I'd be talking to 'em. ...So, I mean, it's something I'm conscious that I think about, but I realize that in the same situation I'd do the same thing. If I went to China, I'm sure I'd seek out the American student union.*

Attending to one's language or speech seems to be the major way that sensitivity is shown towards other groups. A male student argued,

*...I think it's good for people to be very aware of race and, um, racism and sexism, and um, what have you, and I know that I'm, I'm a very avid feminist, I guess, and I get upset when people call women girls, even though I do it myself sometimes, and, um, I think that... language is very indicative of how one feels and those subtleties are very important, and I think that people are in the position of a minority are especially aware of that and for people aren't, who are White ...they might not understand.*

## MIXED GROUPS, MAJOR THEMES

The discussion and dialogue in the mixed groups helped to clarify the nature of the students' conflicting beliefs and confrontation of values regarding experiences of diversity on campus. In the mixed group, participants were less likely to focus upon the problematic character of ethnic or racial identification with their own group. However, the mixed groups also helped to reveal the extent to which racially and ethnically diverse groups and individuals at Berkeley are able to maintain the integrity of their own individual and group beliefs in settings with other students of differing race and ethnicity who may have very different views.

We expected that the discussion in mixed groups would differ, at least in degree, from the discussion in the homogeneous groups in terms of the freedom and candor which participants exhibited in expressing opinions that could be experienced as antagonistic and/or threatening by other group members. What we expected to find was some version of a private discourse of greater openness and directness in the homogeneous groups and a public discourse of greater politeness and lessor candor in the mixed groups. We expected that students from different ethnic and racial groups, particularly those with conflicting views on Affirmative Action and the racial climate on campus, would tone down or censor their speech to avoid open confrontations over conflicting realities and viewpoints. While there



were some differences in the substantive concerns that were most salient in the two different settings, we did not find a suppression of issues and beliefs that involved inter-racial and intra-racial conflict in the mixed groups. Students of different races and ethnicities were willing to openly discuss their conflicting views of Affirmative Action, racially/ethnically based clubs and organizations, and their experiences with social segregation on campus. In the mixed groups, there was less discussion of the relations between one's own group and other ethnically and racially based groupings. There was also less discussion of the experience of subtle, ineffable "silent" or "look through you" forms of racism.

The quality of relatively open and frank discussion in the mixed groups suggests that the environment of diversity and the policies which created it have had some impact. They have created a situation in which students feel relatively secure and protected about articulating conflicting opinions, and viewpoints, even as in the case of Affirmative Action, where these differences may seem to pit one group against another in terms of their personal or group interests. For example, in one group several white students were expressing their concern about the hypersensitivity that had developed on campus around race; they articulated their concern that this atmosphere would inevitably increase the sense of conflict on campus. A Chicano/Latino student responded with the assertion that change might not always come easily but it was necessary and just. He said, "If you have to shake it up to create change, let's shake it up." In effect, the students were not backing away from the assertion of conflicting opinions.

However, there was some difference in the expression of certain themes in the mixed vs. the homogeneous groups. There was less discussion of experiences of racism with other students, faculty or in one's living situation. This was "balanced" by more discussion of ways in which faculty, curriculum or changes in hiring and tenure should be made to accommodate the joint interests of a diverse student community. Indeed, the mixed groups frequently generated an attitude of co-operation and reconciliation along with the expression of conflicting and antagonistic positions. One of the important findings was the convergence of the mixed groups around the need for a more diverse faculty, by gender, race and ethnicity.

There was a quality of cooperation expressed in the mixed groups, with students from different backgrounds

looking for some kinds of common solutions or at least for a friendlier discussion around issues like social segregation on campus or how different policies might encourage more inter-mingling of different ethnic and racial groups.

#### MIXED GROUP INTERVIEW/MAJOR THEMES

##### Racialization, Organization and Group Formation

A repeated theme in both the homogeneous and mixed groups is the acknowledgment, sometimes in voices of affirmation and sometimes in voices of concern, that a process of racial and ethnic crystallization takes place at Berkeley. This process may be described in terms of the current literature on race as one of **racialization**, *a development where social relations that were formerly defined in terms of factors other than race come to be defined in racial terms* (Omi and Winant, 1986). We have already noted how the increased ethnic and racial diversity of the student body has stimulated an awareness of a range of social and academic relationships in terms of racial and ethnic categories. This has also engendered a concern, articulated most strongly by the white students, that balkanized and segregated race-based social clubs, political groups, and academic and professional organizations have proliferated within the student community. There is an expression of doubt about the necessity of the race-based character of many campus organizations, their purpose, their divisiveness, etc. We further saw a theme among white students about their feeling excluded from a sense of belonging within the campus community.

For the most part, this is a choice among what are regarded as limited options. Ethnic students may feel a desire to be more affiliated or integrated, but they do not (as yet) identify with the organizations that are available for them to join. The sense of uncertainty or reluctance to join-up that is reflected in the literature on American society and American political culture is reflected in the comments of students about the politicized ethnic and racially based organizations. More particularly:

1. Organizations do not fit with the cultural experience or backgrounds of some ethnic students. For example, Latinos say that there is currently no organization for Latinos on campus, and Latinos express a sense of different experience, orientation and concerns from the Chicano students represented by MECHA.

2. Newer immigrant populations may see the cultural political organizations as directed at the second, third, and fourth generation who are trying to find their ethnic identity. This is a different issue and concern from the more academic and practical orientation of many of the foreign born students.

A Mexicana student comments (commuting from Richmond): *I don't need to join a organization to find out about being Mexican. I know who I am. I speak Spanish. I go to Mexico every year...*

3. Other ethnic students reflect the trajectory of many students on campus: in the beginning years they may have investigated the race-based cultural and social organizations; now their focus is on doing their studying and getting out into the world. They do not feel a strong need or desire to belong to the current array of organized groups.

Perhaps the most salient features of the mixed groups were the extent to which they were a forum for the expression of seemingly conflicting or ambivalent views on a) the diversity environment at Berkeley, b) group segmentation/balkanization vs. ethnic and racial inter-mingling, c) Affirmative Action as flawed or unfair but also necessary and justified, and on d) the source of support and solidarity that comes from same-group friendships vs. the benefits of being involved in inter-cultural contacts.

#### MIXED GROUP INTERVIEW/MAJOR THEMES

##### Accommodation and Assimilation at Berkeley

Black and Chicano students particularly reported developing friendships, socializing and hanging out with those of similar ethnicity.

*I feel most comfortable with my own people because they understand me. We have similar experiences and backgrounds....*

But we find from the same student an affirmation of the learning and enrichment that can come from a co-mingling of experiences and cultural groupings, and the recognition that success at the university and in the job/real world environment requires the development of multi-cultural modes of being and understanding.

The following words come from a Chicana student from the East Los Angeles Barrio:

*To succeed at the university you need to learn the codes, you need to learn how to approach professors, how to get help, how to struggle over your grades, if you feel that you have received an unfair mark. These aren't skills and ways of being that are natural to the experience of people from my type of background.*

*Learning the language of academia is a real good way to breeze through school. Unfortunately I have had to learn three different languages depending on where I am sitting...So I have to learn to play the game there... like who gets to talk. Nothing is ever written down...as anything there are certain behavior patterns that are accepted and unaccepted whatever setting you are in. If you come from a certain background or have certain life experiences that have hindered you in reading the patterns you're not going to learn how to play the game. You're going to get fired or you're not going to be able to do the work. But in terms of getting to know your professors and getting help and being an assertive person that you might not have been if you had gone to another school where they had more personalized attention. When I go home I can be hopefully who I really am ... But when I am working (or going to Berkeley) I have to remember to switch vocabulary ... That's why I came to this campus because it seemed like a little metropolitan area where I could get to know people from all over the world and I loved it...But unfortunately for myself what has worked is to learn to be multi-cultural and to recognize when I have to switch out of one mode and into another to play it right.*

#### MIXED GROUP INTERVIEW/MAJOR THEMES

##### Balkanization

Many of the participants in the groups have commented upon the racial segregation, racial separation, and racial crystallization seemingly permeating the different aspects of campus life. But some of the more astute observers distinguish between the sense of racial separatism and segregation that has developed around academic, careerist, and professional organizations and the social segregation or balkanization apparently pervading the social scene around friendships, dating, partying, football games, and other recreational endeavors. In fact, these students note that social separation is an old and more transcendent phenomenon but assert that the development of racially or ethnically based academic and professional groups seems like a growing trend.

Several students in mixed groups remarked on the recent emergence of race-based professional organizations in the social sciences. During one session, a white sociology student talked with dismay about the fledgling year-old Black Sociology Student Association and also the two-year old Latino Sociology Organization. A Black male majoring in the biological sciences reported his experience that race-based organizations are an increasing trend on campus, and that they arise to meet a very specific need.

*I've been here for a little while and I don't think that there has been very much racial segregation, until recently except socially, socially it has been around... I think what happens is that people get into a particular department or a particular school. And they see that there aren't that many Blacks in that particular school or that particular department and they see that it's real easy to meet other Blacks or other Latinos socially from different departments. But when you are in your department, there's not very many of you and a lot of times it's not very easy to meet others people of your own race and groups like the Black students in health association were formed. You find that you are the only minority and then you begin to wonder and you look for minorities and you begin to hang out together. You get into a class and you find that you may be the only Black in a class so you start looking and when you find others you may start looking and find others and maybe start an organization and develop friendships and start hanging around together. I'd go to a dance and there'd be five hundred or a thousand students (presumably many of color) and I'd leave and wonder where they'd all come from... Particularly, when I'd be in a class and I'd be the only Black student, actually the only student of color in the class.*

From this perspective, race-based organizations for minority students in the sciences provide a basis of support and reinforce the experience that one is not alone, not just one exceptional minority in a predominantly white world.

Simultaneously, the extension of ethnic and racial professional and academic organizations into the social sphere reinforces the feeling of exclusion among some whites, particularly those from liberal backgrounds who came to Berkeley in quest of a liberal, political, multi-cultural experience. Whites coming from this kind of background comment, with particular bitterness, on experiences of exclusion in the social realm. It is interesting to note that it was in the mixed groups that some students of color affirmed the whites who cited experiences of social separatism. In the following quotes, these students from ethnic and racial groups ponder what might be done to address the situation.

*One night last week I took a walk from the Bear's Lair to the I House. In the Bear's Lair there was a dance with all Blacks and in the I House there was a dance with all Asians. I mean something's wrong. We may be diverse but we are segregated whether its intended or unintended.*

*Maybe we should have projects...more functions where there's less emphasis on race and on just the functions themselves.*

*A lot of those events are put on by different (race-based) groups. Like the ABA dance...*

*A friend of mine, he's white, and he complains that there's no clubs for people of the white culture... We have Black clubs, we have Asian clubs, we have Chicano clubs, but the only clubs for white people, like the only white clubs are the Greek system. A lot of it has to do with the way people like to enjoy themselves. I go to the frat parties and you know people will just drink and I don't like their music because you can't dance to it. People generally can't dance (laughter). No I'm serious, that's my experience (Chicano male).*

This affirmation that whites "don't know how to party" drew a sharp reaction from a white female in the same group:

*I hate that whole thing about dancing. I mean just because we dance different doesn't mean it's inferior (dancing).*

Which in turn drew a rejoinder from a Black student on dance being an important and competitive part of his culture:

*Where I grew up you had to be a badass dancer by the time you were five...when I go to a like Calso party...people are just dancing like crazy...there is a cultural reason why dance is celebrated...*

While it may seem too narrow to focus so much upon this exchange, some critical insights ensued later, when the Chicano male who commented that "whites can't dance" returned to a theme that emerged in a large number of the earlier homogeneous groups: that white parties are more focused around drinking, while parties of color are more focused around dancing.

*Like at the Greek parties that I go to the social life is around the keg while at the ethnic parties the social life is around the dancing. (Chicano male).*

As with the comment on political and cultural organizations, it is important to place these statements in a larger context. The same Chicano male who asserts that whites can't party acknowledged that his last two girlfriends were white. The group then asked where they fit in his social worlds. *He distinguished between his partying friends and*

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*other friends. He indicated that he talks to his white friends in class or on the phone but hangs out with people of color in his social life.*

In another pattern emerging in mixed groups, a dialogue sharpened the differing perceptions of the need (or lack thereof) for special race-based associations. A white student complained:

*Black Engineering Society... Hispanic Engineering Society, Society of Women Engineers, the people who work with HESA and BESA do not come into the mainstream organi-*

*zations and activities. I see the need for support groups but why not be involved in both BESA and in ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers)?*

A Black female engineering major counters:

*... the focus of the organizations is different. BESA has different goals. The white organization is organized more around social functions and activities. The goals of BESA are to recruit and retrain African American students in engineering.. Now a dance doesn't do that. A lot of people at EJC ask why don't students of color get involved in these engineering professional organizations... (We've got limited time.)*

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*We noted above that it is often very useful to "go to the shop floor" to get the best local input. What, then, did the students suggest "from the shop floor"?*

*Students routinely suggested that the university sponsor events where ethnicity and racial harmony and exchange are "side effects" of the event. Perhaps the best examples are the band or choir and the fund-raiser for children's camps. In these settings, something else occupies the primary attention, and the students look over and see that the student next to them is of a different group. It is in these settings, they said, that they had their best encounters, their best experiences, and often achieved their closest understandings of real diversity.*

A related suggestion came out of an experience. A student said that he had spent three years at Berkeley, and had never struck up an acquaintance with a member of any other group but his own. Then, one day a professor asked the students to break into small groups of three to solve a particular problem and discuss it. But rather than leaving it up to the students, the professor assigned random numbers and, therefore, forced a kind of interaction which had its own logic and legitimacy. "Forced" by legitimate educational requirements to discuss and interact, this student said he became friends with an Asian student, who in turn introduced him into a small circle of acquaintances that greatly broadened his experience of undergraduate life.

Three themes frame this kind of experience:

1. concerns for the human scale and social support,
2. assessment of experience with current policies,
- and
3. understanding of affirmative action.

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Human Scale and Social Support

Many of the concerns expressed by ethnic and racial minority students and by white students relate to the problem of making friends, finding financial support, getting advice about courses and programs, learning how to deal with professors and the academic bureaucracy. Many of these concerns reflect a range of issues and concerns that has emerged with different voices and in different settings at Berkeley since the 1960's. From the early days of the Tussman College and other experiments at a smaller scale inter-disciplinary undergraduate curriculum and environment, to the recent report by the Smelser Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum, to current plans for increasing the availability of campus supported student housing, these considerations reflect a concern with making undergraduate education more humane and accessible while integrating residential life with academic studies.

The report of the Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body (Maslach, 1991) reinforces the findings

and concerns which were articulated by the research of the Diversity Project. The Maslach Report expressed a concern with making classes, faculty, and the curriculum more accessible and interactive for undergraduate students at Berkeley — particularly in the first two years. This dovetails with the recommendations that emerge from the views of students interviewed for this study.

The Maslach Report notes that the “sink- or-swim academic environment [at Berkeley] is a highly competitive one”.<sup>47</sup> However, the findings of the Commission and our study suggest that, particularly in an increasingly diverse student body:

*... if the educational goal is to maximize learning for all students, then there is much evidence that...[the current] competitive learning environment pits students against each other — one person's success is greater if another person fails. This kind of competitive comparison makes enemies of one's peers, and fosters negative stereotyping.*<sup>48</sup>

This identifies the relationship which produces what we describe as a “zero-sum environment” in which the benefits and successes of one student or of *one ethnic or racial or cultural grouping of students* are experienced as occurring only where there is a loss or relative failure on the part of another student or group of students. Both our findings and the work of the Commission suggest that there are ways of changing the structural frame of student-student, and student-faculty relations which will encourage and support cooperative and collaborative learning. Most important, we must begin to proactively explore collaborative efforts which support the academic and social worlds of students from differing backgrounds.

These converging suggestions mandate changes in the following frames:

1. Increase opportunities for educational experiences which emphasize and promote small group settings.
2. Promote active inter-change rather than one-way communication between students and faculty.
3. Create a common introductory orientation course for new students.
4. Involve students in cooperative and collaborative research efforts; ideally in ways in which they can make real and substantive contributions to needed educational materials or curriculum, or contribute to substantive research efforts.
5. Strengthen the ties between special programs, ethnic

studies, inter-disciplinary programs and traditional departments in order to extend the integration of new approaches and new points of view around a diverse curriculum into the mainstream of academic studies.

6. Increase formal and informal opportunities for students to “meet and interact with people who have experience, talents, and ideas different from one's own.”<sup>49</sup> *A majority of respondents to both studies, reported positive responses to cross-cultural experiences when they occurred in a supportive and co-operative terrain.*
7. Provide new students with orientation resources and staff support for courses, particularly in the first two years.
8. Consider placing orientation and learning support services in the residential dorm environment to make them more accessible and integrated with patterns of residence and friendship.

The following policy themes flow from this same tradition of concerns: humanizing and making the campus environment more accessible and richer for first and second year students.

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

### Feedback on Current Policies and Programs

Student experiences with existing programs offered further clues for developing future policies. The creation of informal meeting areas and other programs designed to integrate students into the larger campus provide invaluable models or metaphors for building other programs. Three examples are Summer Bridge, Disabled Students Program, and informal services.

### CULTURAL BRIDGES: SUMMER BRIDGE AS A METAPHOR

A number of students talked about being participants in the Summer Bridge program. They had generally positive comments on the program but from the policy perspective, their experiences seem important for what they reveal about

<sup>47</sup> Maslach, 1991, p. 12

<sup>48</sup> Maslach, 1991, p. 12

<sup>49</sup> Maslach, 1991, p. 19

how friendship/support groups may be encouraged by university policy. Several commented that they met close friends and potential roommates through the program.

Similarly, a Chicana from Los Angeles commented on the friendship and support that developed out of a satellite program at Holy Names College where she was the only minority among 42 women. However, she indicated it was not a problem. And now three years later, her best friends and her current roommate come from among people she met in this program.

In the dorms, there are mixed reports of the experiences that people had in terms of developing friendships, racial intermingling vs. racial separation and in-groups and out-groups. But those who reported good experiences (and some with bad experiences) talked about the friendships and social exchange among people on their dorm floors. The dorm floor seemed to be the effective unit that determined whether people had a positive or a somewhat troubling experience in the dorm environment.

What each of these frames have in common is the grounding of satisfying experiences around academic and social adjustment and around diversity, as rooted in small group interactions around the living environment.

The implication for policy is the need to explore ways of supporting small group solidarity and friendships in the orientation programs and physical design of residential living experiences for in-coming students.

**THE MULTI-SERVICE ENVIRONMENT DISABLED STUDENTS PROGRAM AS MODEL OR METAPHOR**

One of the focus group participants (an Asian student from out of state) spoke about the organization of services for disabled students as a possible model for the direction of regular undergraduate student services. The disabled students are provided with a full range of counseling, social support, academic consulting, and financial aid services in one setting.

A leaner model of this approach might be integrated with plans for new residential development for student dormitories. The fundamental feature here is that the human and accessible character of the services transforms the experience of the entering student, provides grounding and support, and creates a natural magnetic center for inter-mingling across age, gender, race, and class lines.

**CREATING SETTINGS WHICH SUPPORT STUDENT MINGLING AND INTERACTION**

The Plaza outside the Bechtel Center, the plaza and restaurant outside Wurster Hall and the new Plaza between the Public Health and Biochemistry facilities at the north-west corner of campus all offer examples of using physical design, landscape design, and related services (food, drinks, etc.) to encourage informal interchange and mingling among students and faculty. Using public service design elements along with planned residential and first floor retail uses for planned dorms along Shattuck Avenue and at other locations could support opportunities for inter-cultural contact among undergraduate students.

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**Reformulating the Discourse on Affirmative Action**

The university administration should actively clarify certain issues pertaining to its Affirmative Action policies. A campaign might be waged to reformulate the discourse about Affirmative Action making the following points:

1) While the motto of “diversity and excellence” is widely used, it is not widely believed. The university needs to be far more textured and compelling if it is to convince the campus that it is not choosing between “quality” and “diversity.” It is not enough to say that these two goals are not mutually exclusive, and even the rhetoric that one cannot have excellence without diversity has not been effective. *It is necessary and possible to make a stronger, intellectually and politically compelling case that the university can not be “excellent at achieving its full mission” without serving, indeed teaching and preparing, a wide band of the citizenry of the state for leadership in a globalizing economy.*

2) The principle of the singular use of the Academic Index, while appropriate in certain contexts, can be and is used in other contexts to exclude groups of people from access to social resources. It is one principle of excellence, but it has its own flaws, and it is certainly not the singular strategy for determining “merit” even in a pure “meritocracy.”

There are other principles:

3) Students differ among themselves over the issue of what a university should be. Some have a rather sophisti-

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cated point of view which recognizes that a university should educate people for living in a diversified society. Others feel the university should uphold the abstract principle of meritocracy. The administration might support the first point of view, and in the process, move the discussion away from the issue of pro- vs. anti-Affirmative Action to a discussion of what a university might be.

4) The University needs to create an effective way to communicate to students that American society is stratified along racial, as well as class and gender lines. Where one is located in that system of stratification is critical in determining one's chances for access to social resources like a public university. The administration might explicitly put the University's Affirmative Action policies in this context. It is a strategy to alter the consequences of stratification in order to more effectively represent the diverse populations in the State of California.

5) The administration might reconsider its policy of putting all students of color in the category of AA/EOP. Students of color with 4.0 GPA's and wealthy parents might be omitted from that category.

6) As one Hispanic/Latina student suggested, a pamphlet might be written for high school students who have been accepted to Cal addressing popular misconceptions about Affirmative Action. "That way," she said, "they'll start to deal with the whole conceptual idea of Affirmative Action and they'll start to think, "Yea, I do belong at Cal. Affirmative Action may have helped me get my foot in the door, but I walked through the door by myself."

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*Class-Based Affirmative Action and Implications for Diversity*

There is an increasingly popular notion that a class-based Affirmative Action would be far more legitimate than a race-based strategy. This view is popular with many students, even as its possible implications for diversity are dire. Notice in Table 6 that the median family income of white freshman entering Berkeley in 1987 was \$67,000, while the median family income for Blacks was only \$39,000 that year. In 1989, the median for Blacks had dropped to about \$35,000 but had climbed for whites to \$71,000 (Table 7). Even more striking, at the 75th per-

centile, the median white family income for entering freshmen was \$105,000 but less than half that for Blacks. At first glance, it would appear that a class-based strategy would benefit Blacks.

However, since Blacks constitute only about eight per cent of the population of the State of California (there are at least seven times more whites, see Table 2), there are actually more whites in economic distress than Blacks. To move to a class-based Affirmative Action admissions would therefore be likely to cut deeply into the racial diversity of the campus.

**TABLE 6**

STUDENT ESTIMATED ANNUAL PARENTAL INCOME  
FALL 1987 ENTERING FRESHMEN

Income	White	Asian*	Black	Chicano	ALL
Under \$30,000	11%	24	34	40	22
\$30,000 - 49,999	18	25	24	31	24
\$40,000 - 74,999	31	27	29	19	28
\$75,000/above	40	25	13	10	27
Median Income	67K	51K	39K	34K	53.5K
Sample Number	(503)	(306)	(161)	(208)	(1360)

Source: CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey - UC Berkeley Freshman  
\*Asian includes Filipino

**TABLE 7**

STUDENT ESTIMATED ANNUAL PARENTAL INCOME  
FALL 1989 ENTERING FRESHMEN

Income	White	Asian*	Black	Chicano	ALL
Under \$30,000	7%	21	39	39	22
\$30,000 - 49,999	16	22	25	24	21
\$40,000 - 74,999	32	27	22	20	26
\$75,000/above	45	30	14	17	29
Median Income	71K	55K	35K	32K	55.5K
Sample Number	(443)	(465)	(205)	(368)	(1642)

Source: CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey - UC Berkeley Freshman  
\*Asian includes Filipino

## CHAPTER IV

### REFORMULATING THE EXPERIENCES OF DIVERSITY

For most of the nation's history, American college campuses typically have been remarkably homogeneous. On the matter of racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, the major pattern has been to have an overwhelming majority of one group or another as dominant. Whether it was the Ivy League, the large public land-grant universities, or the small traditionally Black colleges, racial homogeneity has been the rule. With respect to gender and religion, there has been a parallel history, with an early predominance of either all-male or all-female schools.<sup>50</sup> In the last three decades, this homogeneity has begun to break down, albeit in varying degrees and with variable speed in different sectors. Yet, many of our domain assumptions are hold-overs from another era, including our views about fundamental pedagogy, learning styles and communicative expression in the classroom and seminars, and of course, the very nature and quality of civil and appropriate student life.

The data reported in the previous pages describes the social dynamics that characterizes Berkeley's recent experience of diversity. This experience can also be viewed as a microcosm of society at a particular "stage."

The notion of "stage" does not imply inevitable or linear evolution. But if this is a matter of "increasing diversification" over time, then it is of more than heuristic value to consider how the mere growth in numbers of previously underrepresented groups might influence and change the nature and character of relations between groups. The following discussion shows how group relations can be experienced in three ways:

- a) "diversity" as an option;
- b) "diversity" as separate and competitive enclaves;  
and finally,
- c) "diversity" as mutual enhancement.

Although individuals may already be familiar with these possibilities, the point of this discussion is to show how individuals-as-group-members have patterned social interaction with other groups that is largely shaped by the relative size, presence, and power of those groups.

#### THE EARLY AUSTRALIAN MODEL: EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY AS AN OPTION

As late as 1940, Australia had a total population of about four million, with only a small fraction who were "other" than part of the white Australian majority. In this situation, white Australians could for the most part control their experience of ethnic and racial diversity, the nature and degree of interaction with the ethnic minority population of "others." They could choose to venture (or not) into an "ethnic world" via purchasing artifacts, listening to "their music," or sampling ethnic cuisine. Since most settings were culturally and racially homogeneous, being in the majority (in this case, being white and English-speaking) was something taken-for-granted.

The central element or feature of this experience for majority members is that *they typically have the choice of either ignoring or relating to the minority*. Minority members, by contrast, are typically restricted in their options: they must either fade or assimilate into the dominant culture, or risk marginal status. This experience has been referred to by some social scientists as the era of "Anglo-conformity" (Gordon, 1964).

In the United States, Anglo-conformity means that for every group except northern Europeans, becoming an "American" requires shedding distinctive cultural ways of being and acting according to the implicit and explicit rules of Anglo-Saxon culture. For racial, ethnic, and political minorities, however, it has not always been possible (particularly in the case of racial minorities) or desirable, to live according to these codes. Their lived experience has quite often been a difficult one of navigating two worlds. Behavior which does not conform to prevailing cultural rules has been either marginalized or not tolerated. In some contexts, resistance to conformity was considered subversive, and in the political arena, such individuals have been attacked as "un-American."

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<sup>50</sup> The very beginnings of higher education were, of course, quite homogeneous sectarian religious study.



Being culturally competent in the context of Anglo-conformity<sup>51</sup> has always meant being able to participate in a mono-cultural (Anglo-Saxon) world. For majority group members, this presents fewer problems. Indeed, it can be viewed as an advantage conferred at birth. For members of underrepresented groups, however, the very process of becoming competent in the culture of the dominant group is itself an obstacle, a barrier. Failure to learn and effectively use a repertoire of foreign skills has been the grounds for exclusion or marginalized participation in the society's key institutions.

Berkeley in the 1960s had a similar demographic profile to the "early Australian" experience in that it basically reflected linguistic, cultural, ethnic and racial homogeneity. There was an overwhelming majority of one racial or cultural group, and thus a very small "minority" presence. We noted in the opening pages that a 1968 study of campus ethnic composition reported that only 1.3 per cent of the students were Chicano/Latino, and only 2.8 per cent were Black. The typical relationship of the white students to "diversity" was minimal. Most students did not have "bad experiences" or "good experiences" with ethnic diversity. They had *no experience* of any length, substance, or depth. Since even into the late 1960s, only 2.8 percent of Berkeley undergraduates were Black, when a small minority of white students were actively engaged with either these students or a smaller fraction of Native Americans or Chicano/Latinos, it was on a voluntary basis.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, it was often related to their involvement in progressive social and political action around the Civil Rights Movements. It was in this kind of setting, where the marginalization of racial minorities emerged as a political issue that Berkeley's students achieved their reputation for liberal views on race.

### BALKANIZATION, SELF-SEGREGATION AND ZERO-SUM CONFLICT OVER SCARCE RESOURCES

The second experience of diversity is one in which no one group dominates, either in number or in the style, character, or content of what goes on in the public arena of social life. While the "typical" Berkeley undergraduate in 1968 was white, we have noted that the entering class of 1991 at the Berkeley campus of the University of California will be 32 per cent Asian American, 30 per cent white,

20 per cent Chicano/Latino American, and 7.5 per cent African American. This scale is new, and new ways of relating emerge from the situation. In addition to the scarce resource of a spot in the freshman class, other campus conflicts include the predictable fights over other resources, such as university space and time.

This is the zero-sum version of diversity, and it is always accompanied by strife, tensions and hostilities, as well as some compromises, adjustments, mediated settlements, and sometimes just plain accommodated living together in a situation of *détente*. But the situation is volatile. *Détente* can be easily explode into open hostility. In the last five years, there have been numerous incidents of racist graffiti, jokes, anonymous hate notes or brawls at an estimated 175 American campuses including prestigious schools like Smith College, Brown University, Colby College and the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin. Howard J. Ehrlich, research director of the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence, reports that turmoil on this scale has not been seen since the 1960s.<sup>53</sup>

The current friction differs from the disputes of the 1960s when conflict typically arose between students and administrators. Recent clashes have been between students of color and white students. These tensions are not so difficult to explain. Given the decrease in slots available to previously over-represented majorities, and the increase in positions open to formerly underrepresented groups, some of this conflict was as inevitable and predictable as it was healthy. This is not to celebrate conflict. The situation described here can be uneasy, and is always potentially unsettling. But the new mix of students can also provide a remarkable educational experience. Unlike other situations and settings around the globe where there is conflict over the definitively vital scarce resources such as land, a

<sup>51</sup> Cultural competence means more than linguistic skills. It refers to the entire range of activities associated with being a competent actor in a particular cultural world: knowing what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior; being able to "read" subtle cultural cues like body language, "hidden meanings," and unannounced agendas.

<sup>52</sup> In sharp contrast, the minority students were far more likely to have experiences of "other."

<sup>53</sup> National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence, Baltimore, MD

singular religious orthodoxy or style of government where death usually accompanies the conflicts, students are fighting over who controls the kind of music played on the radio station, who runs student government, the student newspaper, a particular club or organization, etc.

The meaning of being an educated, culturally literate or competent person in this context is being contested. For groups whose ethnicity previously defined the character and content of the curriculum, “*other*” voices and perspectives are heard and experienced as an assault upon long-standing tradition. The diminishing “majority” feels they are being forced to “give-up” one identity and adopt a new one which has yet to be defined. Thus, as one student expressed it, “being white means having no box to check on admission forms.”

For groups previously expected to conform or assimilate to Anglo-Saxon culture, this new context is experienced as a long overdue opportunity to reshape American identity so that it is more inclusive and accurate in its reflection of their experiences and history. Thus, the call for new approaches to the humanities and social sciences is heard; cultural requirements that were previously taken for granted become problematic; paradigms that were unquestioned are the focus of challenge and debate.

What it means to be culturally competent in this context is less than clear, partly because it is being contested, and partly because new rules have yet to be accepted. This ambiguity contributes to the volatility of the situation. What is clear is that new expectations are emerging in the form of rules for acceptable speech and behavior as well as additional requirements for graduation which include knowledge of groups different from one’s own.

These new expectations for a new kind of cultural competence are, in part, responsible for the hostility white students express toward what they see as the current rhetoric and practice of diversity. Not only are they being forced to give up a mono-cultural notion of competence, but they are also being expected to learn a new, multi-cultural competence. Students from previously underrepresented communities experience this situation as both an asset and liability. On the one hand, they are encouraged by the recognition of diversity contained in emerging rules for cultural competence. But they also resent being called upon to explain the ethnic or racial experience, and they worry about the possibility of cultural co-optation.

When students experience this “second form” of diversity, especially those who come to Berkeley with a naive and idealistic view of what cross-cultural interaction might bring, they are likely to be disappointed and disillusioned. Moreover, students from different backgrounds are quite different in how they experience this zero-sum period, with some patterning along racial and ethnic lines. It is necessary to increase our understanding of these dissimilarities, if we are to adequately respond to the estrangement. This may ultimately prove both educational and, for some of the conflicts and differences, resolvable, even perhaps to the enhancement of the general public sphere. This can fuse into, and sometimes even overlap with the next, or third potential experience. Some of this will be discussed below.

### MUTUAL ENHANCEMENT AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

The third experience of diversity is both idealistic and sometimes realized: it is the experience in which people come together across different cultural experiences, and in that coming together produce an experience that is transcendent, greater than the sum of the individual parts. It is the peculiar and unique blend of human perspectives and experiences, of insights and problem-solving strategies, of orientations and styles, that can sometimes blend in a synergistic manner. It is considerably more than the sampling of the cuisines of other cultures, listening to “their music” for a change, or watching others dress or talk differently. It is partly the accommodations and adjustments, but more importantly, it is a potential mutual enhancement which minimizes the issue of scarce resources. *People can come to see one another as resources, recognizing different and complementary competencies.*

What it means to be an educated American in this context is emergent, and only recently has it been possible to see some of the possible contours of this identity. The meaning of being a citizen in a diverse society cannot be based on mindless homogenization, assimilation, or “melted down” integration. It will revolve instead around new meanings of diversity, perhaps something close to the meaning of pluralism.

Horace Kallen, the man who introduced the concept of cultural pluralism into the American vocabulary in 1956,

used the image of the orchestra to describe the United States<sup>54</sup>. Just as each instrument in the orchestra makes a distinct contribution to the whole music experience, each group makes its particular contribution to American society. Kallen's visionary ideal conceived each instrument — each group — as participating fully in the nation's "orchestration of social and cultural life."

Until quite recently, this version of pluralism in America has been only a distant goal. One of the most promising features of the idea of a third experience of diversity is that it might assist the nation in the greater realization of its pluralist ideals. In such a pluralist society, ethnic and racial groups can maintain distinctive cultures, organizations, and identities while participating in the larger community. Individual members of ethnic and racial groups live in delimited communities, marry within their own group, and sometimes even work at similar occupations. While this sustains and promotes their ethnic identity and culture, they also relate to others. This interaction is often less intimate and occurs in the realm of politics, economics and education.

Competence in the context of actual pluralism will mean being able to participate effectively in a multi-cultural world. It will mean being "bi-cultural" as well as bilingual. It will mean knowing how to operate as a competent actor in more than one cultural world; knowing what's appropriate and what's inappropriate, what's acceptable and unacceptable in behavior and speech in cultures that differ quite radically from one's own. Competence in a pluralist world will mean being able to function effectively in contexts people had previously only read about, or seen on television. It will mean knowing how to be "different" and feeling comfortable about it; being able to be the "insider" in one situation and the "outsider" in another.

Defined this way, pluralism in America can only be achieved if everyone does some changing. Every group will need to learn new ways of navigating into territories in which they do not have the power or control to define what is normal. No one will be immune from this process. For some groups of color, this will mean learning how to be "the majority." For whites in California, it may sometimes mean learning how to be "a minority." Addressing these issues will be an important aspect of a university education in the coming decade.

When they give voice to their idealism, this is what Berkeley's undergraduates say they want. Despite "the

reservoir of good will" with which they arrive on campus in that first semester, they most often come up against the second stage of diversity, the zero-summing, the socially-formed sense of enclaves that are difficult to penetrate. They would, of course, prefer to get to what we have called the "third experience" and just bypass the second. From this perspective, it may well be that a period of "self-segregation" or "balkanization" may strengthen identity and community that is a prerequisite to being able to bring that strength to the larger collective or communal experience.

In this third experience of diversity, the public sphere is enriched precisely because members come from heterogeneous backgrounds, ways of thinking, ways of problem-formulation or ways of problem-solving. *A special value is placed upon a contribution to the whole, or to the common collective experience, because contributing members bring something to that experience that is unique.* In order to have a stage three of diversity and in order to get to that third stage where people are able to have this experience of other, that is, where people will come together across their differing ethnic-cultural-racial experiences and create something which is more than a sum of the parts, *each group must be able to draw upon the integrity of their own cultural experience.* They must have a sense of *distinct* cultural identity and carry the *distinctiveness* of culture, experience, space, place, perspective, orientation, etc., as this will enhance their ability to make a particular contribution to a larger collective enterprise.

## THE MUTING OF THE BINARY VIEW OF RACE RELATIONS

For most of the nation's history, racial and ethnic relations have been primarily dominated by the relations between Blacks and whites. For the last two centuries, Blacks have been the largest single minority. However, during the last two decades, Asian immigration and Chicano/Latino immigration/migration have increasingly come to occupy an important role in the nation's consciousness. The two

<sup>54</sup> Kallen, Horace Meyer, *Cultural Pluralism and the American Idea*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1956.

largest states, California and New York, are also among the most ethnically and racially heterogeneous. Approximately one in every five Americans lives in either California or New York. These states have the heaviest concentration of Asians and a large proportion of the Chicano/Latino population. Indeed, given the immigration/migration patterns noted above, in California, Blacks are now behind not only Chicano/Latinos, but Asians as well, and now constitute only the fourth largest grouping.

This development is remarkable in its significance for the transformation of consciousness about the meaning of race in these states, and ultimately, nationwide. So long as there have only been two major groups, Blacks and whites, there has been a very circumscribed and largely dualistic thought dominating the American landscape. This discourse has influenced most of the empirical research on the topic of race and ethnicity and has shaped the public policy debates about special programs or their elimination, educational policy or its absence, etc.

The data in this report suggest the emergent and polymorphous character of inter-ethnic relations on campus. As Asians and Chicano/Latinos have come to increasingly intrude into this landscape, the old assumptions, the old dance of two has been completely transformed. A trio, a quartet, even a quintet of ethnic and racial groups mixing changes vital and important conceptions of issues of race and ethnicity for both Blacks and whites.

For example, Black students who come from suburban areas with professional parents are sometimes accused of "acting white" by their urban peers. In a world configured by complementary identities "being Black" is partially achieved by "not acting white," then African American racial identity is partly defined and framed in terms of this negative relief. In its extreme and pathological form, this can take the shape of "academic success" (in grammar school and secondary school especially) defined as "white behavior," necessitating an affirmation of "Black" racial identity in terms which avoid behavior that would produce academic success. However, when Asians and Chicano/Latinos are a part of the matrix, all this changes. For starters, academic success, which was once regarded as dominated by, if not the province of whites, has now shifted to Asians. Asians have more than double the rate of

eligibility for admission to the University of California than whites. Chicano/Latinos, on the other hand, share with Blacks the problem of lower rates of college eligibility and high drop out rates from high schools. African Americans and European Americans are thus suddenly in a situation on matters of academic success in which one is no longer the sole audience for the other. "Being Black" becomes much more complex in such a newly developed multi-cultural or multi-racial situation. Indeed, the quest for identity must move from the negative of "not acting white" to some form of affirmation of the positive of a substantive identity. This, in part, might help explain the re-emergence of Afro-centrism in segments of the Black community.

The entry of third and fourth parties decidedly affects whites as well. Once Asian Americans are in this new mix, whites are forced to re-define and re-think a unidimensional conception of "academic success." Just as gentiles had done some eighty years ago with newly arriving immigrant Jews, there now exists on the Berkeley campus an open questioning of the value of only getting straight A's and having high GPAs, as if that were the definitive and unidimensional measure of entitlement to study at the university. But white gentiles are caught in a contradiction on this. Many would like to insist on admission based solely upon GPA and standardized tests. But with Asian Americans excelling on this score, they find themselves arguing for "other criteria" to round out the application. This is broadly what happened in a contradiction at Yale in the 1960s, when Black demands for affirmative action produced the counter assertion of the requirements to admit (students) and hire (faculty) on their "individual merit and achievements."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> A century of virulent anti-Semitism at Yale was forever breached in faculty hiring and undergraduate admissions. This benefitted Jews, at the expense of gentiles. We are seeing a new playing out of this situation in California, where approximately 40 per cent of the freshman class at UCLA and where approximately 45 per cent of the freshman class at University of California, Irvine in 1990 were Asian.

NEW WAYS OF THINKING  
ABOUT COMPETENCE

Given interest group conflict and the ensuing debates about legitimate criteria for admissions and employment, it is possible to begin to rethink the value of diversity, and to re-evaluate pedagogical methods, re-assessing those who can teach in a diverse setting.

For example, in the American seminar room, undergraduate or graduate, professors tend to positively evaluate dialogue, exchange and feedback with the students. Jewish students do comparatively well in these environments, in part because they are more likely to come from home and cultural environments in which there is a tradition of a challenging examination of issues, dialogue and inquisitiveness. This sometimes appears as a direct challenge to authority. In sharp contrast, Americans of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean ancestry are more likely to come from backgrounds in which the challenge to elders in positions of formal authority and power is rarely direct, hardly ever argumentative. Such behavior is perceived as disrespectful and contentious, and to even "appear to argue with a professor" is unthinkable.

In the first experience of diversity, the "Early Australian Model" of an assumed homogeneity of style, Asian students seen from the perspective of the dominant group will come across as lacking in ideas, certainly deficient in the "cultural" skills to engage in certain kinds of lively seminar exchanges. For example, they are more likely to come across as insufficiently assertive, unable to express and defend their ideas. If the faculty has reified this model as the only one, then of course those who have "cultural" skills will be regarded as "brighter."

The new situation of the multicultural setting for a seminar requires a new competence from the professor. S/he can claim that competence only to the extent that s/he can engage both the "assertive" student and those with other styles of expression and learning. This helps to explain the resistance of the current faculty to the challenge of diversity. But as we move to a more diverse environment (one-third of the entering class at Berkeley is Asian), the call for a "more diverse faculty" who might have the capacity to encompass these differences becomes more comprehensible — a real need for pedagogical talents that

cannot be merely reduced to "mere political concerns" to reflect the state's demography. The task of educating, promoting and encouraging competencies, on the part of both students and faculty, is thus far more complex than has been represented by critics of diversity.

There is a parallel development in the corporate world on this issue of diversity and competence. In the 1950s, corporate America was characterized as an environment that was so homogeneous as to be oppressive in its intolerance of difference. Such works as *The Organization Man* and *The Young Man in the Grey Flannel Suit* characterized the lock-step conformity required of dress codes, manners, ways of relating to line office superiors in a rigid hierarchy of communication, etc. In such a world, "competence" was more likely to be read along a single dimension.

In sharp contrast, Apple Computer, Sun, and other innovative corporations have had considerable success in breaking down this style of communication within a status hierarchy. Members of different status groups sit around a table, or even in relaxed settings on couches, etc., and let their different styles become a collective strength in pushing ideas forward. Today's corporate leadership is starting to re-conceptualize what it means to be a competent manager of diversity in the workplace, and of the workforce. They have tried to get around the problem of competition among those with similar competencies by rewarding different kinds of contributions.

Unlike the world of corporate managers with the requirement to be responsive to changing workforce and shifting consumer markets, university faculty still has a 1950s version of the canon, unidimensional images of what it means to be a good student. The more conservative faculty, unlike corporate managers, are still reluctant to acknowledge that there may be a need to adjust to different learning styles. They are defensive about adjustments of the curriculum. The stated fear concerning the latter is a remarkably uncreative response, a narrowly conceived zero-sum version of what could instead be the rich "third experience" of diversity, a concern that dilution of Western Civilization would occur by conjuring up a substitution of Alice Walker for William Shakespeare. But surely that is a hardly necessary, certainly unlikely. Moreover, texts can be complementary in the "third experience" and not mutually exclusive.

REFORMULATING THE EXPERIENCES OF DIVERSITY

While the corporate world is perforce responsive to the new demography and the new diversity which it portends, a significant and visible proportion of faculty at our major institutions are circling the wagons in what they see as a last ditch effort to fend off multiculturalism and diversity.<sup>56</sup> Over half the students at Berkeley are students of color. Meanwhile, the Berkeley faculty is 89 per cent white. While the corporate world is changing, because of its required adaptation, and while the student body has changed, the faculty has remained relatively static. Many of them grew up in a world that looked rather much like the "Early Australian Model" discussed earlier. At Berkeley and at many other campuses, there is a tension building between a faculty that has remained overwhelmingly white and male

for 30 years and a student body that has remarkably transformed and will increasingly demand changes.

The task for administrators, faculty, staff, and students is to provide all students with a greater range of safe environments and options where they can explore and develop an increased competence for dealing with a globalizing world.

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<sup>56</sup> See Irving Kristol, "The Tragedy of Multiculturalism," *Wall Street Journal*, July 31, 1991



## CHAPTER V

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Students had many suggestions for change that would promote and improve inter-ethnic relations. The most important and notable convergence was around the idea that relations among and between students of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds develop “naturally” through the education process itself.<sup>57</sup> This meant several things:

First, that relations between students be developed with greater sensitivity to reducing racial-ethnic confrontation. Instructors in courses which deal specifically with such subject matter (e.g. ethnic studies courses, race relations classes, or American cultures courses) need to be particularly sensitive in how they cover such material, *in that they are likely to be held to a standard different from their instructional style with other courses*. Passionate presentation with rhetorical flourish enlivens the regular curriculum, and is usually much appreciated by the students. However, when the content is racial, ethnic history or ethnic politics, strong rhetoric is likely to be experienced by some as preachy.

Second, apart from courses having an ethnic or racial subject matter, students report their receptiveness to the incorporation of diverse ethnic perspectives into the regular curriculum, e.g. in “basic” classes such as introduction to literature.

Third, students expressed quite positive sentiments about the prospect of doing community projects together (e.g. Big Brothers or Big Sisters, helping Berkeley or Oakland build a playground; A-Fi-L Fraternity was mentioned as a “service fraternity” where people come together to do such community projects). Group projects provided a neutral context in which students of different ethnic-racial backgrounds might work together constructively towards solving a common problem, curricular or extra-curricular.

Finally, students sought the assistance of university authorities or policy-makers in transcending the impersonal life of the campus, which they said exacerbates a sense of isolation and anonymity, which in turn heightens racial barriers. In short, group segmentation could not be easily separated from the alienation associated with a competitive atmosphere and the fact that the routine functioning of an impersonal bureaucracy failed to provide sufficient social support.

In keeping with the expressed needs and interests of the students, this report makes the following recommendations:

1. **That, over the course of the first semester, the university create and sustain small groups of students (10-15) who meet at intervals of no more than two weeks, the purpose of the meeting being to address problems of orientation, adjustment, and integration into campus life. This could take the form of a freshman (or first year on campus) seminar, or some such requirement, the institutional arrangement to be worked out.**

The first few months of orientation on campus are critical. Although students acknowledge receiving lots of information regarding activities, programs, and courses through the mail prior to their arrival, the need to absorb and sort through such material is not felt until they actually set foot on campus. Many voiced the need for some kind of *group orientation* on a weekly or bimonthly basis over a period of the first six months. Three-week intervals were considered too long. Indeed, given the overwhelming experience of the first few weeks, most students were concerned that such an opportunity might be overlooked or missed entirely if it were not somehow brought to their attention. There were a number of suggestions for ways to do this: making it a requirement with 1 unit of credit, P/ NP; not a requirement but providing some kind of bonus; offering free food (pizza) as an incentive for participation; advertising through Calso, Summer Bridge, or through the ACE form, framed as a general overall introduction and orientation to the University.

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<sup>57</sup> A number of student groups on campus (e.g. Student Action Union, United People of Color, Campaign Against Apartheid, a multi-racial women's coalition, Students Against Intervention in Central America, CISPI and Pledge of Resistance) were mentioned as functioning as vehicles for interacting across racial-ethnic lines on behalf of some transcendent cause.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This orientation would be primarily academic,<sup>58</sup> offering a general and broad introduction to the array of services that the University offers, particularly those directly connected with possible academic career interests. For example, the group sessions might include a series of speakers (department heads or graduate students from different departments or professional schools), who might speak informally about planning for a major and entering into certain areas of disciplinary study. The Berkeley campus is highly rated as an educational institution, and students are anxious to maximize their ability to sort through various career possibilities.

These suggestions would deal simultaneously with the problems of the social isolation and alienation which inheres in a large, impersonal campus environment. They also address the context in which students from different backgrounds could attend to such common problems as enrollment, course load, academic advising, and career development.

2. **Give institutional support which appears on the surface to have contradictory aims, i.e, support both a) ethnic "support groups" and b) groups which explicitly wish to form across ethnic and racial boundaries in behalf of some common purpose.**

Many of the students coming to Berkeley experience affirmation, for the first time, of their national, ethnic, racial or cultural identity. They feel empowered and enhanced by this development. As noted in the body of the text, many students from ethnic and racial groups feel affirmed by their engagement in these social circles. They should be supported in this. In addition, white students who wish to rescue an ethnic heritage should be encouraged to do so without risk or fear of the charge of racism.

At the same time that we note the values of ethnic affinity, we emphasize how many students feel deprived of the experience of meeting and knowing and learning about other students from diverse backgrounds. This too, needs to be affirmed and expressly and explicitly supported. This could take the form of the allocation of resources to students who come forward to form a group for some short or long-term purpose.

3. **Widely publicize and make sure that each student (and faculty member) gets a one-page summary of the admissions policy with specific reference to a) the relationship between the proportion of applicants with 4.0 GPAs vs. admission slots and the implications of this for the reflexive use of the academic index, and b) the implications of a class-based Affirmative Action policy for the goal of diversity.**

Many students, but especially those from European and Asian American backgrounds, expressed their dismay, frustration, and reservations about a race-based Affirmative Action that did not take class or socioeconomic status into account. We heard the leitmotif of resentment, or the refrain of the "lack of fairness" when a middle-class Black or Chicano/Latino was admitted, while either a white or Asian with a better academic index score or a poor white or Asian was not. A review of Figure 2 indicates the problem. There is a tension between people's subjective experience that middle-class Chicano/Latinos and Blacks are given unfair preference for their admission to Berkeley and the reality that as a whole, white and Asian students come from families with significantly greater economic resources than do African American and Latino students.

The students who voiced this objection to a race-based Affirmative Action policy did so on an individual basis. That is, the relevant unit is the individual, not her or his ethnic or racial background. But since there are more poor white people in the United States than middle-class people of color, a class-based Affirmative Action policy would necessarily bring in more whites unless such a policy explicitly "bumped" wealthier whites, it would reduce the number and proportion of people of color. Thus, the historical advantage of whites, codified in law and practice for more

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<sup>58</sup> There was also student interest in information that oriented them to social living in Berkeley (e.g. information related to local transportation, events and activities in and around town, from affordable restaurants to leisure group activities). While meeting in small groups might not excluding the possibility of sociability, a systematic introduction to the academic setting was a major concern all around.

than a century is revisited by such a policy. It does not address the “advantage” of a diverse environment, what we have called the “third experience.”

**4. Find a greater role for the faculty in encouraging interaction between students around the curriculum.**

One of the more interesting ideas to come from the students was that the faculty (or their teaching assistants) could play a more direct and positive role in the classroom or discussion sessions.

The recommendation requires a minimum investment of time or resources. In some instances, a class assignment that randomly grouped students on behalf of solving a problem *in the curriculum* is all that would be needed. This would provide students with the necessary impetus needed to meet and relate to others, facilitated by the authority of the instructor and the integrity of the academic enterprise.<sup>59</sup> Minimal costs would be associated with the implementation of this recommendation, and yet the rewards may be considerable.

This recommendation incorporates some of the best suggestions and ideas of the students themselves. First, since students come to the university to learn, centering interaction among students of diverse backgrounds around the learning experience is both a “natural” and especially attractive option since such activities center around the very purpose of their being at the university. Race and ethnicity are not the self-conscious or explicit reasons for an

interchange, and may be irrelevant. But students are at least provided the opportunity to explore *either their common interests or their differences*.

American Cultures courses could lend themselves particularly well to a new pedagogical format. Given that these lectures are being newly formed and developed around the idea of comparative ethnic-racial perspectives, instructors need to be open to the idea that both they and their students are simultaneously engaged in a learning process that aims at being explicitly comparative. While the instructor is responsible for providing a disciplinary framework or perspective for reviewing certain substantive course material, student contributions which draw upon relevant aspects of their own experience could enhance the educational process. Students might be encouraged to bring relevant experiences from their own background to small group discussion, to particular writing assignments, or to participation in a collective project. The subject matter will not only be enlivened in this way, but the diversity of perspectives may be more fully realized and appreciated

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<sup>59</sup> Yet, we are clear that students should not be grouped or paired because of ethnic or racial background, whether homogeneous or heterogeneous.



## APPENDIX I

### METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

*The Diversity Project* research staff met several times to discuss a methodological strategy to address these concerns. The existing demographic, social and political categories on the campus arbitrarily assign a student into groupings like Asian-American or Chicano-Latino. Yet these categories, like all such taxonomies, tend to smother and hide significant internal variation. For example, the category Asian-American lumps together foreign-born with native-born, a distinction as vital and consequential as that between groupings of Chinese-Americans and Korean-Americans, of Filipino-Americans and Vietnamese-Americans; differences as sharp as that between the recently arrived son of a Hong Kong businessman and the fourth-generation son of an impoverished seamstress in a San Francisco Chinatown sewing shop. These “lumpings” make no sense to a social anthropologist.

The category “Asian-American” further obscured an important demographic reality. In the short space of one decade, Asian Americans had increased from 20 to 27 per cent of the Berkeley undergraduate student body. However, the internal

differentiation of Asian Americans tells a fascinating story. The Japanese American enrollment dropped from 885 in 1980 to 481 in 1989, a drop of 46 per cent. In contrast, during the same period, the Koreans nearly tripled their numbers, from 352 to 933 (Table 8), while the Chinese experienced only a very modest shift from 2563 to 2663. Much of this demographic change is attributable to recent immigration patterns from Asia. From 1970 to 1980 alone, Koreans doubled their proportion of the Asian population of the country due almost entirely to immigration, but very few Japanese immigrated in the last two decades.

Despite this variation across the different Asian ethnic groups, there remains a logic, even a compelling logic, that “forces” the category upon these students. That, of course, is the “perspective from without,” the over-arching feature of European American culture which has characterized all Americans of Asian descent as “other” where they often report never being “fully” perceived as just plain Americans. In short, in spite of their extraordinary internal variability, what bonds them together as

**TABLE 8**  
NUMBER OF UNDERGRADUATE REGISTRANTS BY ETHNICITY, FALL 1980-1989

<b>Ethnicity</b>	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
American Indian	91	102	93	89	93	108	131	196	241	269	261
Asian	4367	4399	4536	4879	5126	5384	5509	5665	5803	5870	5962
Chinese	2563	2540	2491	2547	2522	2568	2578	2608	2663	2663	2706
East Indian	103	106	129	154	197	235	265	304	335	355	368
Japanese	855	771	760	742	759	749	705	631	537	481	455
Korean	352	417	477	568	635	712	766	804	859	933	974
Filipino	354	407	444	550	644	713	767	882	939	961	912
Pacific Is.	12	11	19	24	20	18	20	13	14	14	21
Other Asian	128	147	216	294	349	389	408	423	456	463	526
African American	758	786	827	944	1040	1115	1182	1448	1542	1647	1492
Hispanic	823	904	975	1115	1332	1554	1692	2075	2430	2748	3024
Chicano	498	566	593	680	813	951	1048	1281	1473	1636	1804
Latino	325	338	382	435	519	603	644	794	957	1112	1220
White	13948	13317	12653	12882	12944	12614	11850	11472	10635	9652	8762
Other	519	590	608	600	561	539	512	400	305	272	208
No Ethnic Data	604	379	325	252	258	494	689	852	969	1040	1151
Citizen/Immigrant	21110	20477	20017	20761	21354	21808	21565	22108	21925	21498	20860
Foreign	517	500	490	506	553	513	566	666	746	764	730
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21110</b>	<b>20477</b>	<b>20017</b>	<b>20761</b>	<b>21354</b>	<b>21808</b>	<b>21565</b>	<b>22108</b>	<b>21925</b>	<b>21498</b>	<b>21590</b>

Source: Office of Student Research, Undergraduate Statistics at the University of California at Berkeley, Fall 1990, October 31, 1990

“Asian Americans” is their common “otherness” to “other” Americans. This development has clear political consequences. As one of the members of the Diversity Project has pointed out in a recently published article, the very collapse of the category Asian American permits a conception of their “over-representation” in the University.<sup>1</sup> With all these caveats, and despite all these problems, after several sessions, we concluded that even though there were a number of problems lumping Asian Americans together, it was justified by what any American of Asian descent might well “experience” as “from without.”

We reasoned, similarly, with Native Americans. Why lump together a member of a tribal council who grew up on a reservation with someone from an urban area who “discovers” that they are one-quarter Native American? Here, the problems of visibility via skin color and physical features are not as severe as with Asian Americans.<sup>2</sup> Chicano/Latino has some of the same uncertain features of each of the other categories: for example, as with Asian Americans, the native versus foreign-born distinction is important. Moreover, there are obvious problems with the possible collapse of the socio-economic category to include both the son of a wealthy Argentinean of European heritage with the daughter of a first generation, minimum-wage farm worker in the Delano Valley.<sup>3</sup>

Since whites have never thought of themselves as a “minority” in America, whiteness is more a racial than an ethnic category. Indeed, when whites become a numerical minority, in an important way they can experience it as a residual category meaning “without color.” When whites reach back for cultural lineage, it becomes ethnic: Italian or Irish, Swedish or German, Polish or Jewish, etc., etc. Thus the surface elements of cultural diversity among whites in America are much less profound than for the other groups. Internal variation can be substantial of course, not the least of which are class, regional, and religious differences. However, on campus, class variation at Berkeley has never been substantial, and in the last two decades, less and less important. The median family income for whites in 1987 was about \$67,000, and in 1989, \$71,000 (see Table 6 and Figure 2). Thus, whites come from greater wealth and privilege. The median family income for white students is nearly double that for Blacks. For whites at least, whether one was in a fraternity or sorority, whether one was politically active, whether one was an athlete or musician or engineer or philosophy major, these economic background factors may well be better guides to understanding how they approach campus diversity than whether one was from an Italian or Irish or German cultural lineage.

## NUMBERS OF SUBJECTS, NUMBERS OF GROUPINGS, AND BIAS

Subjects for the study were drawn from five sources:

### 1. Dean of Students list

In the spring semester of 1989, the Dean of Students supplied the ISSC with a list of students selected from student organizations.

### 2. Dormitories

In consultation with the campus housing office, dormitory officers in several locations were contacted. Each supplied a list of students who were willing to be interviewed.

### 3. Fraternities and Sororities

In consultation with the Greek Council, several locations were contacted. Each supplied a list of students who were willing to be interviewed.

### 4. Classrooms

Volunteers were solicited through sign-up sheets from different sections of the campus and different majors.

### 5. A “snowball” sample

These were derived from those already interviewed who would recommend names of other individuals.

These students were telephoned and asked about their willingness and availability to participate in a study to elicit their views on their experiences with the increasing diversity of the campus undergraduate student population. They were informed that they would meet in small focus groups with a faculty member or a senior research staff person leading the group discussion. Most students on the Dean’s list were aware that they could be called for an interview. Others had completed “sign-up” sheets in classes or in dorms or had been

<sup>1</sup> See Deborah Woo, “The ‘Overrepresentation’ of Asian Americans: Red Herring and Yellow Perils,” *Sage Race Relations Abstracts*, 15 (2), May 1990

<sup>2</sup> But self-identification plays an important role with this group, and so the category, with all of its flaws, remains. The category African-Americans, along with Asian Americans, the least socially problematic of the categories, itself covers substantial internal differentiation, which will be the subject of further commentary in the section reporting the findings.

<sup>3</sup> This is no less a problem than collapsing the son of the member of the California legislature with a poor immigrant from Salvador, Nicaragua, or Venezuela. In short, there is often more diversity within these arbitrary categories than within our next category of whites, or European Americans.

APPENDIX I : METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

recommended as possible participants from others already interviewed.<sup>4</sup>

During the 26 months in which this study was conducted (February, 1989 — April, 1991), 69 groups were convened: 12 Asian American, 11 Black, 10 Chicano/Latino, 18 European American, one Native American, two self-indicating “mixed” ethnicity/race; and 14 Mixed Groups (i.e., where three or four different groups were represented in the group). A total of 291 students participated, with some 65-75<sup>5</sup> students participating twice (i.e., those who returned to participate in the “mixed” or “heterogeneous groups”). The typical homogeneous group consisted of 4-5 students, while the typical mixed group consisted of 7-8 students.

The first set of groups were convened between February, 1989 and May, 1990, and constituted the data base for the *Interim Report*. From October, 1990 through April, 1991, an additional eleven groups were convened, with the explicit purpose of assessing student responses to the *Interim Report* and its findings and recommendations.

Because of the sampling strategies and the self-selection of students to these groups, no claims can be made to the representativeness of the students. However, we compared key demographic indicators for our sample with comparable data for the larger undergraduate student population. For example, we know that the self-reported median income of Asian American freshman for 1987 was \$51,000, while the median for Asian Americans in our sample was \$71,000. In contrast, the self-reported median income of African American freshman for

1987 was \$39,000, while the median for African Americans in our sample was \$44,000. Thus, we can conclude that the Asian Americans we interviewed came from more affluent family backgrounds, while the African American students were more typical, at least on this dimension. Our checks for systematic bias also suggest that the students we interviewed were probably more activist than the “typical” student. But by no means were we drawing primarily from the activist segment. Thus, while we can make no claim to representativeness, we are able to rule out systematic bias in our sample by checking the social characteristics of interviewees with the general undergraduate student population.<sup>6</sup>

STAGE ONE INTERVIEWS  
HOMOGENEOUS GROUPINGS

In spite of the fact that we explicitly acknowledged the arbitrary character of the ethnic/racial categories (i.e. Asian American, Chicano/Latino, etc.) in relationship to the subjective experience of the five groups, we decided to proceed with a strategy that honored these five categories.<sup>7</sup> We decided to tap the strength of our own heterogeneity: by matching staff of one ethnicity/race with students from the same category. Armed with this combination of expertise and social demography, and fully realizing that we were tapping into an area of political heat and turmoil, we decided upon a two-stage strategy of investigation:

First, we would bring together groups of students who were “homogeneous” for one of the five categories. That group would consist of 4-8 students. The person leading the group discussion, and acting as an interviewer would be the Professor

TABLE 9

NUMBER OF GROUPS BY SEMESTER AND ETHNICITY

Group	SP 1989	FL 1989	SP 1990	SP 1991	Total	%
Asian	6	3	0	3	12	17.4
Black	4	4	0	3	11	15.9
Latino	4	3	0	3	10	14.5
Native	0	1	0	0	1	1.4
White	4	11	0	3	18	26.1
Multi	0	1	0	1	2	2.9
RA	0	1	0	0	1	1.4
MIXED	1	0	12	1	14	20.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>99.9</b>

**Multi** = students with reported parents of different ethnicity.  
**Mixed** = students of different ethnicity in one group.  
**RA** = Resident Assistants in the residence halls

\* Number based on reported group data only

<sup>4</sup> The telephone contact person's major task was to fit students together in mutually convenient time slots.

<sup>5</sup> In some instances, students who had not participated in the first round of homogeneous groups were invited to the mixed groups in order to achieve the balance needed. Logistically, it was not always possible to achieve this balance with the availability of students for any given session. The rationale for permitting “first timers” into the second session was that we preferred to have sufficient ethnic balance in these sessions, even at the expense of some small number not having been present for the first session.

<sup>6</sup> Or make adjustments and cautionary notes of interpretation if and when we picked up that bias (e.g., the tendency to greater affluence of Asian Americans in our sample).

<sup>7</sup> Later in the study we conducted two “homogenous” interviews with students who self-identified as coming from “mixed-race” backgrounds.

or Senior Researcher, *who also would be from that ethnic/racial group*. We felt that these two strategies would maximize the degree of candor by the students. They could feel comfortable talking about politically controversial materials with peers “from their own group”, and also the group would be led by a senior researcher who was also from that group.

As to content, we agreed upon a relatively loose format of a group interview in which questions would be raised about the following issues:

1. Prior expectations and early entry to student life.
2. Study patterns, social affiliations and patterns of friendship with particular attention to racial and ethnic relations, homogeneous or heterogeneous groupings, explorations, adventurous forays, or lack of same.
3. Experiences of or attitudes towards the concept of “racism” with particular interest in attitudes towards the university policy of increasing student diversity by using an admissions policy to explicitly enhance that diversity. Here, the issue of Affirmative Action in the admissions policy either emerged naturally, or was introduced by the interviewer, as was the current topic (spring, 1989) of the American Cultures course requirement.
4. Pragmatic suggestions for how to improve the campus climate, and achieve general “enhancement of the experience of ethnic, racial, or cultural diversity.”

### STAGE TWO INTERVIEWS HETEROGENEOUS GROUPINGS

Next, we wanted to tap the public arena of ethnic, racial and cultural exchange. As noted earlier, the ideal study would involve long-term observation “in the natural setting.” We had neither the staff time nor resources for this kind of ethnographic study, although each of the members of the Diversity Project brought to the seminars and planning meetings a wealth of personal experience and close observations from their own scrutiny of the campus life, at least its most public forums and public spheres. But we were after something more. We wanted to discover how students experience this development. Did they passively accept diversity, did they vigorously oppose or support it, or was it part of the sentient cognitive landscape at all? As for the matter of “racism,” many of us already knew that the concept was both a) in frequent use, and b) frequently challenged as inapplicable and untrue. Under what conditions did the students think that the term made sense? Was it relevant to

their experiences, did they use it, if so under what circumstances? Short of the ideal of long-term observation “in the natural setting,” we tried to make use of a two-stage interview approach: the heterogeneous inter-active group interview that was grounded in the previous experience of the “homogeneous interview.”

### METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

After explaining to all participants that the purpose of the study was to find out about how they were experiencing academic life on the campus in the context of this new ethnic and racial diversity, we asked for and universally obtained their permission to voice-record each session. Each tape was transcribed and made available to the full team of researchers. At a series of nine meetings, the team reviewed a series of transcripts, with the explicit purpose of trying to discern patterns and themes. The search for these themes was oriented around the four major areas in which questions were asked. This was done both for the first set of interviews involving homogeneous groups, and again in stage two, for the mixed groups.

For the homogeneous groups, there was a further delineation and division of labor. While the sets of transcripts and voice recordings of the session were available to all members of the research team, a small team of 2-4 researchers would pay special attention to one of the homogeneous groupings. For example, Asian Americans were analyzed more intensely by Woo, Takahashi, and an assistant. This also made practical sense because the analysts had been involved in the original interviews.

Regarding the data analysis by the small teams of 2-4 persons, each group reviewed both the audio tape and the written transcripts for recurring themes and patterns in the four areas of investigation. Group discussions of both the small team and the full group further identified and delineated the themes. Since every member of the research team had access to the full 69 tapes and 69 transcripts (55 homogeneous groups, 14 mixed groups, see Table 9), it was possible to return to the raw material to check the empirical basis for themes. For example, where there was occasional disagreement and some controversy over interpretation or analysis, the “check” on bias was in the fact that raw data were available for scrutiny and review by any member of the team. A fuller and richer account was generally the product of such challenges and exchanges.

## APPENDIX II

### OTHER RELEVANT REPORTS AND REFERENCES

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*Building A Multiracial, Multicultural Community.* Stanford University, 1989

*California Faces...California's Future: Education For Citizenship In A Multicultural Community.* 1988

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*Explorations With Students And Faculty About Teaching, Learning And Student Life.* Harvard University, 1990

*Freshman Admissions At Berkeley: A Policy For The 1990's And Beyond.* University Of California, Berkeley, 1989

*Minorities On Campus: A Handbook For Enhancing Diversity.* American Council On Education, 1989

*Proposal For An American Cultures Breadth Requirement.* University Of California, Berkeley, 1989

*Recommendations Of The Black Student Retention Action Group.* University Of California, Berkeley, 1987

*Report Of The 1990 All-University Faculty Conference On Graduate Student And Faculty Affirmative Action.* University Of California, 1990

*Promoting Student Success At Berkeley: Guidelines For The Future: Report Of The Commission On Responses To A Changing Student Body.* University of California, Berkeley, 1991

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