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In-Group Effects of News Use on African Americans

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IN-GROUP EFFECTS OF NEWS USE ON AFRICAN AMERICANS

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The topic of this thesis is how frequent news exposure affects the Black community's perceptions of the world and trust in institutions. The purpose of this thesis is to uncover whether African Americans with more news exposure are more likely to view the world with skepticism and fear when compared to those with less news exposure. My hypotheses predicted that African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news will perceive the world as a meaner and scarier place (H1), will exhibit less trust in police officers (H2), and will exhibit less trust in news media (H3) than those who have had less news exposure. I also took into account how strength of racial identity and prior contact with law enforcement moderated these relationships. I ran a series of regression tests that revealed support for H1 and H2, but no support for H3. I found that higher levels of news exposure for African Americans predicts mean world perceptions and feelings of paranoia around police officers, but does not predict lack trust in the news media. I also found that racial identity and prior contact with law enforcement partially moderated these relationships. The possibility that participants who consume news frequently do so because they have a lot of trust in the news media is discussed, as well as other implications. Limitations and opportunities for future study are also considered.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

About a month before I moved to Louisiana to begin graduate study at Louisiana State University, Sandra Bland mysteriously died in her jail cell. The supposed cause of death that was widely circulated and believed was suicide. Based on the numerous articles and evidence that were released, it did not make sense to many, including me that Bland would kill herself; it did not even seem feasible. The more realistic explanation was that she was killed by police officers, and framed as killing herself. Regardless of the real way Bland died, this was incredibly eye opening and led to a host of psychological instability for me. The realization that the racial discrimination that led to Bland's arrest and mysterious death could happen to any Black person, even me, became palpable. I started to pay attention to how other Black people were talking about these issues, and realized that they had similar reactions to mine. Moving to Louisiana made me fear the reality of racism even more because I was leaving the comfort of my more liberal and socially progressive Northern California home. While I acknowledge racism exists in California and nationwide, I had learned that nothing compared to the South's history and ongoing struggle with racism. Being here has opened my eyes to the structural injustices that African Americans, other racial minorities, and many other marginalized groups still face. Living in Baton Rouge when Alton Sterling was shot, participating in the vigils and marches, and seeing first-hand how his murder affected the community shook me up even more.

In addition to what is happening in the streets, I grew frustrated with the way the news media was handling these cases. I noticed White news subjects, even when guilty of a crime, got better, more forgiving treatment by both law enforcement and news organizations than Black news subjects, even when they were innocent victims of a crime. I was not the only one who perceived this biased news reporting; people in the community whose opinions and perspectives

I respected were voicing their frustration with the way news organizations were treating these stories as well. This is what led me to conduct this research. The purpose of this study is to determine how frequent exposure to news affects the Black community's perceptions and trust of these two institutions – law enforcement and the news media.

Law enforcement in the United States has a history of using excessive force when dealing with minority and disadvantaged communities, especially African American communities (Alexander, 2012; Annamma, 2015; Ayers & Ayers, 2015). There has always been a system of oppression over African slaves and African Americans in the United States. It started with slavery, then Jim Crow, now mass incarceration (Alexander, 2012; Tolliver, Hadden, Snowden, & Brown-Manning, 2016). Under these systems, law enforcement and other institutions and social groups in power have been able to freely violate and mistreat African Americans without consequence (Alexander, 2012). Discrimination by law enforcement is an example of systemic or institutional racism (Chaudhry, 2016; Epp, Maynard-Moody, & Haider-Markel, 2014), which refers to inequalities that people of color are subjected to by major societal institutions based on their race. These institutions implement policies that directly or indirectly disadvantage and oppress people of color while granting Whites privilege to move through the system (Chaudhry, 2016). Tolliver and colleagues (2016) remind us that the United States was founded on White supremacy and it is this ideology that allows systemic racism to continue today. The idea that Whites are superior led to the belief that Africans and African Americans needed to be kept in their place, especially during slavery and the Jim Crow era (Tolliver et al., 2016).

During slavery, free African descendants were regularly targeted as runaway slaves and harassed by law enforcement (Alexander, 2012). During the Jim Crow era, lynching was a tactic used to keep African descendants and African Americans at their inferior social status after

slavery was abolished (DeGruy, 2005; Tolliver et al., 2016). African Americans were targeted for a number of reasons during this era, including being involved in Black activism efforts (DuVernay, 2014; Fager, 1985), being in interracial relationships (Nichols, 2016; Powell, 2017), even for simply upsetting the White people they worked for or encountered day to day (Stockett, 2009). Not only were these Black men, women, and children lynched, they were castrated, mutilated, shot, and endured other acts of state-sanctioned violence. One study revealed that over 3,445 African descendants were lynched in the United States between 1882 and 1964 (Tolliver et al., 2016). President Reagan's War on Drugs led to a lot of police violence during the beginning of the mass incarceration era. Law enforcement targeted Black communities after being framed for having a drug dealing and using problem (even though Whites used and dealt drugs at similar and sometimes higher rates than Blacks). Police departments were given extra funding and were encouraged to tackle this drug issue by any means necessary. This lead to countless cases of police assaults of African Americans in order to catch these "criminals," many of which were completely innocent of any drug-related or violent crime. SWAT raids of people's homes regularly resulted in murders of innocent and even elderly individuals. Those who survived the raids often suffered from psychological trauma. The officers involved were not held accountable for their acts of brutality; they were in fact rewarded and continually encouraged (Alexander, 2012).

Current statistics on police violence demonstrate that African Americans are still dying at the hands of police. A report from the Washington Post in 2015 stated that there were approximately two officer involved fatal shootings per day, a statistic that has increased significantly from the past decade (Kindy, 2015; Wong, 2015). Another report by The Guardian found that an average of three people were killed by police per day during the first half of 2015

(Laughland, Swaine, & Lartey, 2015; Wong, 2015). Arrest-related deaths ranged between 87 and 156 per month, with an average of 135 deaths per month between June 2015 and March 2016. Another study found 12% more arrest-related deaths, calculating 425 total deaths between June and August 2015 (whereas the previously mentioned study calculated 379 arrest-related deaths between June and August 2015) (Banks, Ruddle, Kennedy, & Planty, 2016). More specifically, African Americans are killed at approximately three times the rate of all other demographics, including Whites (Mapping Police Violence, 2017; Wong, 2015). Mapping Police Violence (2017) found that police killed an estimated 303 Black people in 2016, and 346 Black people in 2015. Others have estimated that police in the United States kill one African American every 28 hours (Ayers & Ayers, 2015). Less than 1 in 3 Black victims of police homicide in 2016 were armed or suspected criminals (Mapping Police Violence, 2017). Between 97% and 99% of police involved in civilian homicides are not convicted of any crime (Cop Crisis, n.d.; Mapping Police Violence, 2017; Wong, 2015). Officers have even admitted that excessive force is used in unnecessary situations. The Department of Justice found that 43% of officers feel it is necessary to break the rules in order to get the job done, 52% of officers say it is normal for fellow officers to ignore improper conduct by their co-workers, 61% of officers do not always report when they witness fellow officers being abusive, and 84% of officers admitted to witnessing fellow officers using more force than was necessary for the situation (Cop Crisis, n.d; Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, Williams, & Bryant, 2000).

Some recent high profile police homicides that have taken place include Amadou Diallo, who was a 22-year-old Black man killed by law enforcement in February 1999. He was shot 41 times in front of his house after being followed by four police officers. The officers mistook his wallet for a gun and reacted prematurely. Diallo was unarmed and had no criminal record

(Alexander, 2012). Rekia Boyd was an unarmed Black woman killed by an off-duty police officer in Chicago in early 2012. The officer confronted Boyd and her friends in an unmarked vehicle for making too much noise and after a verbal altercation, the officer shot Boyd and one of her friends on the scene. Boyd died soon after the incident (Adesanya, 2016; Erbentraut, 2012). Mike Brown was another unarmed Black man killed by a police officer in August 2014 on a suburban street in broad daylight in Ferguson, Missouri. Brown was suspected of stealing from a nearby convenience store and even though several witnesses recall he was compliant when confronted by the officer, he was fatally shot (Chaudhry, 2016; McLaughlin, 2014; Telafaro, 2016). There has been a surge in news reports on police brutality very similar to these (Griffin, 2015), potentially leading to paranoia about the motives of police officers and perceptions by Black news consumers that the world is a dangerous place. News reports on police brutality are also often times perceived as treating Black subjects unfairly (Obasogie & Newman, 2016), possibly leading to lack of trust in the news media.

Cultivation theory tells us that more exposure to television, especially depictions of violence, leads to the perception that it is representative of the real world and leads to feelings of skepticism and lack of trust in the outside world (Gerbner, 1998). Furthermore, media framing theory describes the different ways that stories are told in media in order to make certain aspects more or less salient (Entman, 1993). There is research that shows that the news media displays bias by framing issues concerning Black subjects differently than issues concerning White subjects (Alexander, 2012; Dixon, 2008; Mastro, Lapinski, Kopacz, & Behm-Morawitz, 2009; Obasogie & Newman, 2016; Rothman, 2014). African Americans' perception of unfair treatment may result in lack of trust in news organizations. I use these two theories to predict that African

Americans' frequent exposure to news will lead to perceptions of a scary and dangerous world, paranoia toward law enforcement, and lack of trust in news media.

Participants' strength of racial identity and prior contact with law enforcement may influence these connections. Strength of racial identity refers to how strongly one's identity is connected to their racial group. In other words, it is how important one's race is to them and how they identify themselves (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010). Because of the perception that police brutality is largely a race issue, the effects of this type of news content may be different for African Americans whose racial identity is very weak compared to those with strong racial identity. Based on studies that have demonstrated that people with stronger racial identity are better able to recognize racism when it happens than people with weaker racial identity (Carter et al., 2017), Black individuals with strong racial identity may be more likely to perceive this type of news content as racially discriminatory or prejudice than Black individuals with weak racial identity, who may be more forgiving or not perceive the incident as discriminatory at all. Furthermore, previous direct contact with law enforcement may play a role in the effect news content has on African Americans. Studies show that real life experiences are stronger at shaping perceptions than mediated experiences (Callanan, 2012). African Americans are likely to perceive their interactions with police as negative, and therefore develop negative evaluations of law enforcement (Epp et al., 2014). This may lead to stronger effects from viewing news that contains police violence.

This research is important because it is relevant to today's current events. Police violence against African Americans has been heavily reported on in the last several years, and while this is not a new issue, this is the first time it has gotten this amount of national attention thanks to developments in technology and news media resources (Griffin, 2015). From Rodney King,

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whose case was the very first well-known police beating caught on tape and televised, to the African Americans killed more recently including Alton Sterling, Tanisha Anderson, Philando Castile, and Deeniquia Dodds, the high circulation of these news stories has brought police violence against African Americans to the public's attention.

This research is also important because there is not a lot of research that looks at the in-group effects of negative media depictions. A lot of studies look at how stereotypically negative depictions of minorities influence majority culture's perceptions of those groups, and even fuels their prejudices. There is significantly less research that discusses how these depictions affect the in-group (Sanders & Banjo, 2013). Additionally, I was curious about the news media specifically because audiences are aware that it is depicting real life and not fiction. Therefore audiences know that the discrimination and negative depictions they are seeing are real. I seek to contribute to this area of scholarship with this paper.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

News Exposure

This study explores how frequent exposure to news will affect Black Americans. I use cultivation theory to explain the potential relationship between perceived racial violence in news and negative outlooks on reality.

When television became available to the masses, it introduced mass produced and unfamiliar narratives and messages that often altered people's views and realities (Gerbner, 1998). Gerbner (1998) thus defines television as "a centralized system of story-telling" (p. 177). Gerbner and colleagues' started their Cultural Indicators research project in 1974, which looked at the consequences of growing up with television (Gerbner, 1973; Gerbner, 1998). Cultural Indicators focused on three areas of analysis – institutions, messages, and publics – in order to determine the most consistent and pervasive images depicted on television over long periods of time (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). The institutional process analysis investigated "the organizational forms, power relations, and decision-making pressures and processes of the institutions that produce mass-mediated messages," while the message system analysis focused on "broad structures and consistent patterns in large bodies of those messages in the aggregate" (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010, p. 338). Cultivation analysis was concerned with the relationship between institutions, messages, and what perspectives the public cultivated (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). This branch of the Cultural Indicators project is what led to today's cultivation theory.

Television offered the same types of messages and stories to everyone who watched it. Therefore diverse publics were being cultivated into viewing the real world in similar ways (Gerbner, 1998; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Cultivation, then, was defined as "the independent

contributions television viewing makes to viewer conceptions of social reality" (Gerbner, 1998, p. 180; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2009). The goal of cultivation analysis is to see whether heavy television viewers are more likely to view the world/social reality as a reflection of the stories and messages on television than light television viewers (Gerbner, 1998; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Over 500 cultivation studies have been published and cultivation studies have been conducted in over 24 countries. These studies have investigated the effects of heavy television viewing on beliefs about politics (Eveland & Shah, 2003; Otto & Maier, 2016), body image (Eisend & Möller, 2007), the environment (Dahlstrom & Scheufele, 2010), sexuality (Kris, Rossmann, & Frueh, 2007), racial minorities and crime (Arendt & Northup, 2015; Callanan, 2012; Dixon, 2008), religious minorities (Khan & Bruschke, 2016), marriage and family (Signorielli, 1991), and poverty (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006) among other topics. The impact television makes on viewers' perspectives is not very large but remains significant and consistent (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Individuals are able to receive and process television messages with the help of heuristics (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Heuristics are mental short cuts used by heavy viewers to access the messages stored in their minds in order to make related social reality judgments. These heuristics are based on frequency of viewing, recency of viewing, or vividness of the message or depiction (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Riddle, 2010; Shrum, 1996). Riddle (2010) applied this heuristic model of cultivation and found that prolonged or frequent exposure to vivid depictions of violence leads to an exaggerated perception of crime and violence in reality.

One criticism of early cultivation studies is that scholars did not take into account different genres. These studies assumed that the same cultivation effects would occur whether individuals watched comedy, action, thriller or drama. The argument is that television may

cultivate different perspectives or conceptions of reality based on what genre is being watched more heavily. The response to this criticism is that cultivation is looking at the overall effects of the systemic messages that are being shared via television. Different programs and genres have subtle but systemic commonalities. For example, White people may be at the forefront of television shows with diverse portrayals while Black people are underrepresented and only depicted in stereotypical roles. Cultivation theory emphasizes that these baseline similarities are present and influence viewers' beliefs about the real world (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Three concepts that have come from cultivation studies are resonance, mainstreaming, and mean world syndrome. Resonance refers to cultivation effects being stronger for individuals whose reality or experiences are consistent with what they are seeing on television. For example, if someone has witnessed or experienced excessive force by the police, depictions of police violence on television are more likely to resonate with them (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). This concept will be revisited in another section of this literature review. Mainstreaming refers to diverse publics who would otherwise have different conceptions of reality, viewing the same types of messages on television and developing the same outlook and perceptions about reality. For example, conservative individuals may be more tolerant of same sex marriage if there are frequent depictions of same sex couples on television (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Mean world syndrome tells us that heavy television viewers are more likely to perceive the world as mean, dangerous, and scary. This is directly related to the frequent depictions and normalization of violence on television. Mean world syndrome has also led to the perception that people need more protection from violence and that others cannot be trusted since people are generally only looking out for themselves (Gerbner, 1998). This concept will be elaborated on further in the next section.

Inaccurate and stereotypical media depictions of African Americans are very common, not only in news, but throughout the media landscape in general (Ramasubramanian, 2007; Sanders & Banjo, 2013). For example, the state of Washington reported that Black offenders committed crimes because of internal flaws that they choose not to maintain control over, while White offenders committed crimes because of external conditions beyond their control (Alexander, 2012). African Americans are subject to this unfair reporting even when they are not perpetrators, but victims of crimes (Obasogie & Newman, 2016). After many of the most recent police shootings, the news media reported disparaging and irrelevant information about the Black victims. The information did not justify the fact that these victims were killed (Bridgeman, 2015). Trayvon Martin, for example, was an unarmed innocent Black teenager who was murdered by a security guard while walking home from the store. The press quickly revealed his school suspension record and the fact that he may have consumed marijuana in the past. On the other hand, a White drug dealer was arrested for possession of high amounts of marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, acid and methamphetamines. Several news outlets referred to her as "the most adorable drug kingpin" (Abrams, 2015; Adesanya, 2016; Blanchard, 2015; Flynn, 2015; Merlan, 2015). There are a number of studies that demonstrate that the media inaccurately and disproportionately frame African Americans as criminal and menacing (Dixon, 2008; Mastro et al., 2009; Rothman, 2014; Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000). Black males are depicted as criminals more often than they actually commit crimes in reality, and more often than their White counterparts (Callanan, 2012; Entman, 1994; Mastro et al., 2009). Black males are also depicted as victims less often than they are victims in reality, perpetuating inaccurate stereotypes (Mastro et al., 2009). Black males are more likely to be depicted as "nameless, menacing, and in the grasp of police" than other demographics (Mastro et al., 2009, p. 616). News with African

American suspects are more likely to be accompanied by prejudicial and irrelevant information including prior arrests, and are more likely to show a mug shot, the subject in handcuffs, or resisting arrest than news with White suspects (Callanan, 2012; Mastro et al., 2009). Obasogie and Newman (2016) found that when news organizations report on Black victims of police violence, they do so in a way that "minimizes the lives lost and overstates the legitimacy of police use of deadly force" (p. 541-542). They describe a common "respectability" narrative that states that if this civilian had presented themself better, dressed differently, or acted in a way that made others more comfortable, they would not have been brutalized (Obasogie & Newman, 2016).

These and other studies demonstrate how news organizations can be misleading when reporting on Black subjects. While constant exposure to stereotypical media depictions leads to out-groups internalizing those perspectives and developing prejudice feelings toward the misrepresented groups (Sanders & Banjo, 2013), I predict in-group members will have a different reaction. The perception of discrimination or biased treatment against one's own racial group by major institutions including news media may lead to low levels or trust in those institutions.

It is important to note that cultivation theory was developed to address television viewing specifically. I would like to expand it to the broader news media landscape to see if there are similar effects from general news consumption (i.e. from television, social media, Internet, etc.). There have been some studies that look at cultivation effects of different media outlets besides television. Scholars have found that reading the newspaper influences real world perceptions similar to television (Callanan, 2012; Vergeer, Lubbers, & Scheepers, 2000). Another study found support for cultivation theory's application to social media (Cheng, Mitomo, Otsuka, &

Jeon, 2016). However, there has not been much work done applying cultivation theory to other news media outlets, and that is what I plan to do in this study.

Mean World Syndrome

Cultivation effects are particularly present when the media is depicting violence (Callanan, 2012; Morgan et al., 2009; Riddle, 2010; Shrum & Bischak, 2001). As was previously mentioned, mean world syndrome is a concept that developed out of cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1998). Gerbner found that long-term exposure to violence on television cultivates a belief in a mean, scary and dangerous world (Gerbner, 1998; Morgan et al., 2009). Scholars have since found that higher consumption of violence on television, including fictional crime dramas and reality police shows, leads to a greater perception that one is at risk of becoming a victim of violence, even if other credible sources say the risk is unlikely (Callanan, 2012; Gerbner, 1998; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Shrum & Bischak, 2001). Even heavy television viewers in general (those who are not necessarily watching violent content) are more likely to believe that crime is a bigger societal issue and personal threat than it actually is, that juvenile crime is more pervasive than it actually is, and that prison is a better option than rehabilitation (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Heavy television viewers are also more likely to say they cannot trust most people and imply that it is best to keep your guard up when encountering others (Gerbner, 1998; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2009). Parents who watch crime related television are more likely to discuss the realities of crime with their children and warn them of the potential dangers in the real world, thus making their children overly aware of potential crime (Busselle, 2003; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2009).

While these and other effects are present from general television viewing and fictional depictions of crime, cultivation effects are stronger when viewing non-fiction depictions of crime

and violence (i.e. news) (Callanan, 2012; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Riddle, 2010). Studies that apply cultivation theory to television news find that news viewers develop a fear of crime and violent interactions, and that this relationship is not at all related to actual crime rates (i.e. people who watch a lot of news fear crime regardless of how much crime there actually is in real life) (Holbert, Shah, & Kwak, 2004; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2009). These viewers are also likely to believe that crime is the most salient issue where they live. Resonance studies have found that viewing television news heightened fear of crime specifically for African Americans, those in high crime areas, and those who live in areas with high percentages of African Americans (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Scholars have not yet applied mean world syndrome to news on police violence specifically. I believe that based on the cultivation work that has already been done, there is evidence that frequent exposure to news on police violence can lead to the perception of the world as a mean and scary place. The first hypothesis is:

> H1: African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news will perceive the world as a meaner and scarier place than those who have had less news exposure.

Paranoia toward Law Enforcement

As was previously discussed, cultivation theory states that individuals who consume media at a higher rate will believe what they are viewing is representative of the outside world (Gerbner, 1998). Based on this definition of cultivation, another potential effect of frequent exposure to police violence in news is paranoia toward law enforcement. If an individual is constantly seeing depictions of violence toward their ingroup members in the media, they may fear that the same will happen to them in real life and become paranoid toward the aggressor (in this case, law enforcement) (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Sue (2010) and colleagues describe paranoia as a justified sense of skepticism, mistrust or fear of certain people or institutions that

have demonstrated disrespect, unfair treatment, and/or discrimination toward oneself or one's in-group. This is not to be confused with any diagnosable mental health disorder involving paranoia, just a general feeling of paranoia around certain people or groups. Other reactions synonymous to this type of paranoia besides skepticism and mistrust are suspiciousness and hypervigilance (Sue, 2010).

This definition is inspired by Sue's (2010) Microaggression Process Model. Sue and colleagues developed the Microaggression Process Model in order to determine the psychological response to microaggressions from beginning to end. This model was developed after two studies were conducted on two different groups, one with all Black participants, and the other with a mixed group of people of color. This model was developed primarily to address racial microaggressions, however it may also be applicable to gender and sexual orientation microaggressions (Sue, 2010).

The Microaggression Process Model holds that there are five phases that are likely to occur when a racial microaggression takes place. Phase one is the incident, or the actual microaggression. Incidents can be ongoing (i.e. conversations with others), passive (i.e. overhearing another conversation), or environmental (i.e. working at a company where all executives are White and all custodians/maintenance people are Black). They can also be verbal (explicitly stated) or nonverbal (i.e. a White woman clutching her purse when a Black man walks past). Phase two is perception, or how the victim perceived the incident. They may acknowledge the incident as microaggressive immediately, they may decide the incident was not microaggressive, they may be unclear of whether or not the incident was microaggressive, or they may remain in a state of questioning how to properly perceive the incident. Phase three is the reaction, referring to the victim's response to the incident. Reactions can be cognitive

(involving spoken or written thought processes), behavioral (involving some action), or emotional. Phase four is interpretation, which is the process of making meaning of the situation. In other words, the victim tries to make sense of why this incident happened, what it means, what the aggressor's intentions were, and so on (Sue, 2010). The final phase is consequence, which refers to "behavioral, emotive, or thought processes which develop over time as a result of [the] incident" (Sue, 2010, p. 69). Victims may decide they need to shield themselves from people who would put them in a similar situation in the future, they may decide how they would like to handle similar situations in the future, etc. These decisions will affect the victim's interpersonal interactions going forward (Sue, 2010).

As was previously stated, phase three of the Microaggression Process Model is the reaction, where the victim goes through "an inner struggle that evokes strong, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional reactions" (Sue, 2010, p. 73). Paranoia is one of these reactions. Similar to Sue (2010) and colleague's definition, paranoia is referred to here as the reasonable suspicion that members of majority culture have intent to harm or members of the minority. This paranoia is developed as a result of realizing the reality of prejudice and discrimination against marginalized peoples. A person belonging to a marginalized social group who is constantly exposed to discrimination and has not developed this specific type of paranoia finds themself constantly questioning whether a subtle discriminatory act was in fact discrimination. This state of questioning is stressful and emotionally depleting. Therefore the development of paranoia can also be interpreted as a coping or preventative strategy (Sue, 2010). This behavior has also been described as "anticipatory racism reaction," which is also adopted as a result of continuous experiences with being stereotyped and a victim of prejudice and discrimination (Ponterotto, Utsey, Lance, & Pedersen, 2006).

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There is already research that demonstrates that African Americans may experience

paranoia toward law enforcement (Callanan, 2012; Epp et al., 2014). One study that examined

police traffic stops, for example, found that African Americans in general fear and distrust police

more than Whites (Epp et al., 2014). More specifically, Black respondents reported that they felt

police were "out to get people like me," that they were not comfortable calling the police in an

emergency, have little confidence in the police to do the right thing or to not discriminate, they

have not been treated fairly by police, and that the police are not concerned about the safety of

"people like me" (Epp et al., 2014, p. 141-143). I want to contribute to this line of research by

exploring paranoia as a reaction to frequent news exposure. The second hypothesis is:

> H2: African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news will experience
> paranoia around police officers compared to those who have had less news exposure.

Mistrust of News

The news media has played a role in the discrimination against Black victims with biased

news frames (Obasogie & Newman, 2016). Frames can occur in four different locations during

communication: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture (Entman, 1993). I am

primarily concerned with frames found within a communicating text. Framing from this

perspective is the act of choosing certain aspects or sides of a story to make more or less salient

(noticeable, memorable, or meaningful) in media in order to represent a group in a certain way or

encourage a particular interpretation (Entman, 1993; Entman, 2007; Hannah & Cafferty, 2006).

Their purpose is to draw attention toward certain aspects of a story and away from other aspects,

by addition, omission, emphasis, or elaboration, which can influence subsequent judgments,

opinions or decisions (Entman, 1993; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984; Ryan, Carragee &

Meinhofer, 2001; Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss & Ghanem, 1991). Entman (1993)

further explains how frames function within their context:

Frames, then, *define problems* – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; *diagnose causes* – identify the forces creating the problem; *make moral judgments* – evaluate causal agents and their effects; and *suggest remedies* – offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects (p. 52).

A frame may do one, some, or all of these functions. The world and our societies have a number of truths that exist, it is a matter of how these truths are framed that determines what will be revealed and perpetuated (Edelman, 1993).

Furthermore, framing has been linked to bias, in that it can give one side of the story but not the other, falsify reality, or happens as a result of journalists' personal preferences (Entman, 2007). Journalists determine what details are relevant to the story and which are not. In this way journalists play a role in determining what society considers meaningful and/or valuable (Ryan et al., 2001). News tends to display consistent frames on some issues, and competing frames on other issues. Sometimes journalists will have to choose between challenging a dominant frame and presenting a consistent frame. It may be easier for journalists to be consistent and maintain the dominant frame (Entman, 1993), even if that is a negative or controversial one. Journalists are influenced by political and corporate elites, issue advocates, relevant social movements, and other news organizations when creating their frames. Frames are generally in favor of political, economic, and corporate elites. In that way, American journalism is a reflection of the opinions and views of elites and those in power, while going against marginalized groups. Frames often take the voices away from average citizens. They present news in a way that assumes individuals need these journalists to tell their stories for them instead of acknowledging that citizens can voice their own stories and opinions, using their own more accurate frame. It is very unlikely that the frames of marginalized individuals involved in a particular news story will be represented in

that news story (Ryan et al., 2001). This is demonstrative of the bias that is inherent in journalism and news reporting.

There are some distinct ways of framing in order to attribute cause or responsibility. Responsibility framing is framing an event or a story in a way that will influence perceptions of responsibility or causal attribution (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). These frames suggest who is at fault or responsible for the situation (DeFleur, 2015; Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). There are two types of responsibility frames – thematic frames and episodic frames (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Thematic frames are abstract and impersonal, focusing on issues in their broader context (Gross, 2008; Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). These frames may imply that societal factors are the cause and the circumstances are beyond the individual's control (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Episodic frames are personal and specific, focusing on a particular example, narrative, person, or situation (Gross, 2008; Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). These frames may imply that the fault is on the individual who presumably had full control over their situation (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Episodic frames are often used to evoke some sort of emotional reaction from audiences, whether that emotional reaction is positive or negative. Individuals can determine what kind of emotional reaction is likely to follow by looking first at the frame (Gross, 2008).

Responsibility framing is commonly used in stories regarding racial inequality and crime. When individuals or groups are suffering or experiencing adversity, information framed and perceived thematically, are perceived as having no control over their situation and audiences tend to be more empathetic and forgiving (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Individuals in need who are framed and perceived episodically leads to an audience's belief that the circumstance was under the victims' control and is thus their responsibility, leading to less empathy, neglect, and feelings of disgust and anger (Gross, 2008; Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Furthermore, research suggests

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that episodic frames are easier to remember, recall and receive more attention than thematic (Gross, 2008), possibly implying that news subjects who are framed more forgivably (attributing their situation to societal causes) will be forgotten sooner and not dwelled upon, whereas those who are framed episodically, attributing their situation to personal flaws, will more likely be remembered and recalled in future discussions of that general issue. Episodic framing can distract from a societal issue that needs attention because audiences are attributing the situation to that specific individual rather than realizing that there is a societal issue that needs to be addressed (Gross, 2008).

Frames are able to have an effect on audiences because of availability heuristics, which is a mechanism that relies on frequency of exposure. As was previously mentioned, the more frequently audiences are exposed to frames, the more likely they are to be able to retrieve that information later and make consequent associations (Hannah & Cafferty, 2006). Frames tend to have a common effect on many of its audience, but the effects generally are not universal (Entman, 1993).

As was discussed earlier, negative stereotypical depictions of African Americans in the media are not uncommon (Ramasubramanian, 2007; Sanders & Banjo, 2013). Research tells us that crime news involving a White criminal is more likely to be attributed to societal causes than crime news involving a Black criminal (Gross, 2008). African Americans are more likely to be depicted as criminal, menacing, and guilty in the news media than they are to be depicted as innocent or respectable, even though this is not consistent with real world statistics (Bridgeman, 2015; Callanan, 2012; Dixon, 2008; Mastro et al., 2009; Obasogie & Newman, 2016; Ramasubramanian, 2007; Rothman, 2014; Sanders & Banjo, 2013; Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000). Moreover, African Americans have been historically framed episodically in order to

evoke anger and disgust. One example is Ronald Reagan's "welfare queen," where Black women were framed as taking advantage of the welfare system for their own selfish and extravagant gain (Gross, 2008). African Americans were also framed as extremely violent, criminal and even barbaric under Reagan's administration (Alexander, 2012). Studies have additionally found differences in emotional reactions toward episodic frames based on the race of the individual in the story (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). This type of framing is relevant because continuously viewing news topics such as crime, racial discrimination, and social inequalities framed episodically makes it difficult for audiences to realize that these issues are societal and connected. Framing these issues episodically perpetuates that these are isolated incidents that have no connection to one another (Gross, 2008). Individuals who know that these depictions are inaccurate may be more likely to find the journalists and news organizations perpetuating these images as untrustworthy. I believe that in-group members' perception of themselves as dynamic and diverse members of society, who do not all fit the negative stereotypical frames that the media perpetuate, will lead to a general feeling within the Black community that the news media do not have African Americans' best interest at heart. African Americans who view these negative depictions more frequently will have lower levels of trust toward the news media.

After frequent exposure to negative and inaccurate frames about one's in-group members, I predict levels of trust will be very low. Therefore, my last hypothesis is:

> H3: African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news will exhibit less trust in news than those who have had less news exposure.

Racial Identity

The next variable is racial identity and acts as a moderator for this study. This variable comes from Social Identity Theory. Social identity theory was coined by Henri Tajfel in 1978

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and discusses the relationship between self-esteem and membership in social groups (Rodriguez, 2016). The theory is concerned with people's self-concept, or their perception of how they fit into society's standards of acceptability (Rodriguez, 2016; Sanders & Banjo, 2013). Self-concept is made up of one's personal identity and their social identity. Personal identity includes a person's characteristics, accomplishments and qualities (Rodriguez, 2016). Social identity is the group affiliations that one recognizes as being part of the self. Social identity theory is concerned with the latter (Rodriguez, 2016; Schneider, 2004). The theory refers to an individuals' knowledge and acknowledgement of their membership to particular social groups, the emotional significance they assign to that membership and the ability to determine which groups most accurately represent the individual (Amiot & Aubin, 2013; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Sanders & Banjo, 2013; Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel, 1978).

One's identity is derived from social categorization (Rodriguez, 2016) and is developed and strengthened by experiences, society, culture and the media (Sanders & Banjo, 2013). Social categorization refers to the way individuals group themselves and others based on different criteria, including race, gender, political orientation, age, etc. (Rodriguez, 2016; Schneider, 2004). An individual identifies with particular ingroups that they are inherently a part of or have chosen to join, and consequently rejects outgroups, or groups they do not belong to (Rodriguez, 2016). People strive to distinguish themselves and their ingroup from outgroups and maintain a positive image of their ingroup, since their group membership is a representation of the self (Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Rodriguez, 2016; Sanders & Banjo, 2013; Schneider, 2004). This sometimes results in derogation of outgroups, but this is not an inherent quality of the theory (Schneider, 2004). If comparison between one's ingroup and an outgroup's results in the ingroup being perceived as inferior, or less positive or valuable, then the individual is

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motivated to improve that image, since it is a reflection of themselves. If comparison between two groups leads to a positive, valuable, and superior outlook of one's ingroup, that group becomes a significant part of the individual's social identity (Rodriguez, 2016).

There are different levels or strengths of social identity, meaning group members may have a stronger or weaker connection to that particular group (Amiot & Aubin, 2013; Schneider, 2004). Individuals tend to display ingroup bias, or ethnocentrism, which is the perception that one's ingroup is superior or more favorable than outgroups (Rodriguez, 2016; Schneider, 2004; Tajfel, 1974). People who identify strongly with a group are more likely to feel attached and committed to the group, are more likely to believe the group is homogenous, have positive stereotypes about the group, and conform more strongly to group norms. They may make changes to their appearance, how they speak, or their behavior in order to seem more like they belong to that group and to further differentiate themselves from outgroups. These individuals work harder to maintain a positive reputation for the group than other members (Schneider, 2004). There are, however, individuals with weak levels of group identity who do not feel as strong of a connection to their ingroup or reject their ingroup completely for a number of reasons (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Rodriguez, 2016; Schneider, 2004). One might be that their ingroup is not seen favorably by society, or there is a negative stigma that comes with being a member of a particular group (Rodriguez, 2016; Schneider, 2004). Another might be that the group membership is not actively helping them reach or is hindering them from reaching their personal goals in life. Some individuals may deviate from a group that is under attack or harsh criticism (Schneider, 2004). Individuals may try to distance themselves from an ingroup and/or try to take on characteristics of an outgroup if they do not heavily identify with that group (Rodriguez,

2016). There is less of a desire (or none at all) to differentiate one's ingroup from outgroups among these individuals (Schneider, 2004).

Social identity theory has provided insight into related topics including racial identity, ingroups vs. outgroups, intergroup conflict, ethnocentrism, prejudice and discrimination, cultural affirmation, and self-hatred among others (Rodriguez, 2016). Specifically, strength of racial identity represents to what extent one regards their race or ethnicity (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010). Some feel more positively about or identify more strongly with their racial group than others (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Schneider, 2004), however as we discussed before, many desire to maintain a positive view of oneself and the groups they belong to (Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010). For example, Abrams and Giles (2007) found that African Americans with stronger racial identity tend to avoid media that does not depict Black characters they could relate to.

Wanting to maintain a positive outlook of one's in-group means constantly rejecting negative depictions (Sanders & Banjo, 2013). Derogation of a particular social group by outgroups, including acts of prejudice or discrimination, can be perceived as an attack on ingroup members' personal identity and self worth (Schneider, 2004). However, because strength of racial identity differs between individuals, situations that are perceived as offensive or discriminatory by one group member may not be interpreted the same way by another group member (Carter et al., 2017). An individual's strength of racial identity will determine whether they are able recognize an event as racist (Carter et al., 2017; Forsyth & Carter, 2012). African Americans with strong racial identity are better suited to recognize racial prejudice and discrimination when it happens, and may be more critical or suspicious of media that poorly represent their racial group (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Carter et al., 2017). This may lead to in-

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group members questioning the motives of news organizations who constantly depict Black subjects in a negative light. Conflict with outgroups may lead to stronger group identity, resulting in unity among ingroup members and efforts to enhance the group's status to prove that they are worthy members of the group (Schneider, 2004).

Additionally, studies have demonstrated that during widespread social movements connected to group identity, ingroup members tended to more strongly identify with that particular group. For example, during the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, more Black people were heavily identifying as Black and making that social group central to their overall identity. When social movements arise that emphasize a particular group's pride and dedication to that group (like Civil Rights and Black Power), self-esteem and positive self outlook are enhanced in the individual group members (Rodriguez, 2016). This may be the case with racial identity today. The Black Lives Matter movement, addressing issues surrounding police violence against African Americans, began in 2013 and is still very prevalent today (Obasogie & Newman, 2016). The presence of this movement may result in stronger overall racial identity from respondents. Racial identity acts as a moderating variable in this study because strength of racial identity may influence the potential effects of frequent exposure to police violence in news.

> RQ1: Will racial identity moderate the relationships between frequent news exposure and participants' perceptions of the world, paranoia toward law enforcement, and/or trust in news organizations?

Prior Contact with Law Enforcement

Studies have found that real world experiences are more significant than mediated experiences (Callanan, 2012; Surette, 2007). Cultivation studies have found that an individual's perception of the world is not simply influenced by their media consumption habits, but that

personal experiences and the individual's position in society act as moderators and adjust how they engage with and process media messages (Callanan, 2012; Gerbner, 1998). Gerbner (1998) discusses the resonance hypothesis as a concept that came from cultivation analysis. The resonance hypothesis says that individuals are more likely to retain and process media messages that are consistent with what they have experienced or witness in real life (Callanan, 2012; Gerbner, 1998). In other words, cultivation effects are stronger for individuals whose everyday reality matches what they are seeing on television. For example, watching violence on television may cultivate a fear of crime in real life. This effect is even stronger for people who already live in high crime areas (Gerbner, 1998).

As was previously discussed, African Americans are more likely to have negative experiences with and perceptions of law enforcement than other demographics (Epp et al., 2014). This is partially because police officers have very little constraints on how they choose to exercise discretion (Alexander, 2012). Police officers are allowed to use race as a factor when determining whether or not to approach a civilian (Alexander, 2012; Chaudhry, 2016; Tolliver et al., 2016). Often times police officers choose to stop a Black suspect due to implicit biases that stem from stereotypes linking skin color and crime (Chaudhry, 2016). Therefore, especially for males, being young and African American has been determined reasonable suspicion (Alexander, 2012; Epp et al., 2014). There are even databases in many cities including Los Angeles and Denver that list "suspected criminals" based on highly stereotypical and often irrelevant information. These indicators include whether the person wears certain clothes, jewelry, colors, pagers, hair styles, or has family members with criminal records. Law enforcement and other societal institutions have access to these lists, which are primarily made up of people of color. Black youth in inner cities often "know the drill" when a police car

approaches them. They are so used to being singled out that they know to prepare themselves to be stopped and potentially harassed (Alexander, 2012). Law enforcement has been called out for using excessive force against citizens due to racial bias within police departments, but unfortunately the discrimination continues (Chaudhry, 2016).

African Americans' lack of trust in law enforcement is heavily and primarily influenced by these negative encounters. The more negative encounters African Americans have with law enforcement, the less they trust these officers (Epp et al., 2014). African Americans who have had more negative contact with law enforcement are likely to solidify their paranoia and lack of trust for law enforcement (Callanan, 2012; Epp et al., 2014), possibly causing them to have a stronger reaction to depictions of police violence in news (Callanan, 2012). Therefore, prior contact with law enforcement is additionally investigated as a moderating variable in this study.

> RQ2: Will prior contact with law enforcement moderate the relationships between frequent news exposure and participants' perceptions of the world and/or paranoia toward law enforcement?

CHAPTER 3
METHOD

Sample and Recruitment

I recruited 119 participants for this study. The participants were undergraduate and graduate students because I believed this age group would be reasonably concerned with this particular topic. All of the participants identified as African American. I recruited these students by reaching out to faculty and staff members via email from various universities in the South who agreed to distribute the survey to their students. Participants came from 13 colleges and universities, including Louisiana State University, Jackson State University, University of Florida, University of Southern Mississippi, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Xavier University, University of North Texas, Southern University, University of Georgia, Texas A&M University, Old Dominion University, University of Houston, and Mississippi College. Some professors decided to offer their students extra credit for participating in the survey. In order to account for this and maintain anonymity of participants in relation to specific responses, I linked another survey at the end of the original survey that all participants were rerouted to after completing the original survey. The second survey asked participants whether they were taking the survey for extra credit. If they selected "No," they were directed to the end of the survey. If they selected "Yes," they were asked what class they were taking the survey for, their professor's name, and their student ID number. This information was then given to the appropriate faculty members. Additional students were later recruited after reaching out to student presidents and spokespersons of Black organizations at these same universities. I used a very similar email as the one I sent to faculty and staff, customizing each email slightly in order to appropriately address the recipient.

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Twenty-three participants were excluded from analysis due to missing data, leaving a final sample of 96 participants. Of that final sample, 8.33% of participants reported multiple ethnicities (N=8), including Lebanese, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American and White. The majority of participants were undergraduates (76%). Participants reported their classification as either Freshman (8.3%, N=8), Sophomore (21.9%, N=21), Junior (30.2%, N=29), Senior (14.6%, N=14), 5+ Year Undergraduate (1.0%, N=1), or Graduate Student (24%, N=23).

Procedure

This study was made up of a single survey with 38 questions. Participants were required to agree to the consent form before beginning the survey. The consent form indicated that the participants were 18 years of age or older and that they understood the parameters of this study. The first three questions asked participants their race/ethnicity, institution, and class rank. If the participant did not identify as Black/African American or was not a university student, they were not able to complete the rest of the survey. Next, participants were also asked their levels of racial identity and questions regarding their previous encounters with law enforcement. Participants were then asked questions about their exposure to news, as well as potential effects of such exposure including judgments about the dangers of the real world, paranoia around law enforcement, and trust in the news media. The full measure was administered online, accessible with a link. The survey was available to participants between February 15 and April 24, 2017. Participants took approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey.

Variables and Measures

My independent variable is frequency of exposure to news. My dependent variables are perceptions of a mean and scary world, paranoia toward police officers and mistrust of news.

Potential moderating variables also measured here are strength of racial identity and prior contact with law enforcement.

The first set of questions measured strength of racial identity. I used Phinney's (1992) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. This was a 5 point Likert scale made up of 14 racial identity items with responses ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." This measure received an acceptable reliability score (a = .859). Some of these items include, "I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership," "I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life" (reverse coded), and "I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups." The questions within this section were presented in random order.

The next set of questions measured prior contact with law enforcement. I took six questions from the Bureau of Justice Statistic's Police-Public Contact Survey (Durose & Langton, 2011). I adjusted the questions to make them more applicable to the current study. The first three questions were presented in random order, and included, "Have you ever been stopped by the police while in a public place, but not a moving vehicle (this includes being in a parked vehicle)," "Have you ever been stopped by the police while driving a motor vehicle," and "Have you ever been the passenger in a motor vehicle that was stopped by the police?" Participants responded "Yes," "No," or "I don't recall." The last three questions remained in order because of the nature of the questions. These questions included, "Have you ever been stopped or approached by the police under circumstances I have not mentioned," "Approximately how many face to face contacts have you had with police," and "In general, have your encounters with law enforcement officers been positive or negative?" The fourth question was assigned "Yes," "No," or "I don't recall" as responses. When asked how many encounters one has had

with police, participants selected "0," "1-2," "3-5," or "6+." The final question was presented as a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging between "Extremely negative" and "Extremely positive." I created a summation score where "yes"=1 and "no/don't recall"=0.

The next measure addressed frequency of exposure to news on police violence, the independent variable. The first item asked participants through which mediums they consume news. They were prompted to select all answers that apply, those answers being television, social media (news organizations, blogs, etc.), interactions or conversations with other users on social media, Internet, print, and radio. The following items asked how frequently participants consume news via the mediums stated under the previous item. Examples of these items include, "How frequently do you consume news via television?" and "How frequently do you consume news via print publications?" These were 5-point Likert type scales with the responses "0 days a week," "1-2 days a week," "3-4 days a week," " 5-6 days a week," and "Daily." Only the mediums that a participant chose under the previous item were displayed under this item. If the participant selected that they consume news through a particular medium (excluding social media conversations and interactions) 3-4 days per week or more frequently, they were then asked to name the top five news sources they consume regularly through that particular medium. For example, if participants watch television news 3-4 days per week or more frequently, they were asked to list five television news sources that they consume regularly. They were then asked if they follow the sources they listed on social media. Finally, participants were asked to name the top five news sources they consume in general, regardless of medium. This measure also received a low reliability score ($a = .51$), however I have decided that for the purposes of this investigation it is acceptable and I am moving forward with the variable.

The remaining questions addressed the three dependent variables. The first dependent variable is perception of a mean and scary world. This measure was a 5-point Likert type scale made up of four items modeled after questions from a cultivation scale that measured fear of crime (Callanan, 2012). I adjusted the items to make them more applicable to the current study. Participants were asked to indicate how likely they felt it was that they would be "criminally victimized (i.e. become a victim of some crime) when out in public," "unjustly stopped by a law enforcement officer when out in public or in a vehicle," "harassed by a law enforcement officer when out in public," and "physically assaulted by a law enforcement officer while out in public." The responses ranged between "Very unlikely" to "Very likely." This measure received an acceptable reliability score ($a = .907$). The questions within this section were presented in random order.

The second dependent measure addressed paranoia toward law enforcement. These items were very similar to those in the previous mean world measure, but asked more specifically about feelings of paranoia and fear around police, rather than perceived likelihood of being victimized by police. I took five questions from a survey used by Freeman and colleagues (2005) used to measure general levels of paranoia in a college student sample. One of the questions was used twice but reworded to address a different aspect of paranoia. These items included, "I need to be on my guard against police officers," "Police officers would be hostile towards me during an encounter," "Police officers would harm me if given the opportunity," "I am paranoid around police officers," and "I have a suspicion that law enforcement officers have bad intentions towards me." I also took two questions from Terrell and Terrell's (1981) Cultural Mistrust Inventory, originally developed to measure levels of mistrust African Americans feel toward Whites. These items included, "Police officers can rarely be counted on to do what they are

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supposed to do," and "Blacks should be cautious about what they say in the presence of police officers since police officers will try to use it against them." These were both 5-point Likert scales with responses ranging between "Definitely disagree" and "Definitely agree." All of these items have been adjusted to make them more applicable specifically to paranoia toward police officers. This measure received an acceptable reliability score ($a = .872$). The questions within this section were presented in random order.

The last dependent measure addressed mistrust of news. This measure was made up of five items modeled after items from a 2014 study that measured perceived media bias (Glynn & Huge, 2014). I reworded these questions to make them more appropriate for the current study. This was a 5-point Likert type scale with varying responses. These items included, "Do you feel the news media are fair in their reports about Black victims of police violence" (Not at all fair – Extremely fair), "Do you feel the news media are accurate in their reports about Black victims of police violence" (Not at all accurate – Extremely accurate), "Do you feel the news media tell the whole story in their reports about Black victims of police violence" (Never – Always), "Do you feel the news media can be trusted in their reports about Black victims of police violence" (Not at all trustworthy – Extremely trustworthy), and "Do you think the news media portray African Americans in a bad light" (Never – Always). This scale received a low reliability score ($a = .598$). One item ("Do you think the news media portray African Americans in a bad light?") was excluded from further analysis and the remaining scale received a reliability score of .809. The questions within this section were presented in random order.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

I ran descriptive statistics for all of my variables to determine how participants responded to these measures. Overall, participants reported high racial identity levels (M=4.31, SD=.57), a moderate amount of prior contact with police (M=5.28, SD=1.69), a moderate amount of news exposure (M=3.66, SD=.68), neutral perceptions of a mean and scary world (M=2.96, SD=1.19), moderate levels of paranoia toward police (M=3.32, SD=.93), and low levels of trust in news media (M=2.08, SD=.80). The majority of participants consumed news via news organizations and blogs on social media (85.4%, N=82), with many participants also consuming news via television (79.2%, N=76), Internet (74%, N=71), and social media interactions (65.6%, N=63). Less than half of participants consumed news via radio (46.9%, N=45) and very few consumed news via print publications (25%, N=24). The most frequently reported news sources across all mediums were CNN (reported 132 times), FOX (49), WLBT (43), MSNBC (31).

I ran a series of regression tests in order to determine the relationship between my variables. The first hypothesis proposed that African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news would perceive the world as a meaner and scarier place than those who have had less news exposure. A simple linear regression analysis revealed support for H1. I found that news exposure and mean world syndrome have a positive correlation (r=.29*). Additionally, the model explained a significant portion of the variance, R^2=.09, F (1,94)=8.71, p<.01. There is a significant relationship between frequent news exposure and perceptions of a mean and scary world, such that more exposure to news increases perceptions of a mean and scary world (B=.29), t(94)=2.95, p<.01 (Table 1).

Table 1: Predictor of Mean World Perceptions

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure	.29**	2.95

R^2 = .09, F(1,94) = 8.71, $p<.01$
***$p<.001$, **$p<.01$, *$p<.05$

A second simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether African Americans' frequent news exposure is related to feelings of paranoia toward police (H2). This hypothesis was also supported. News exposure and paranoia toward police has a positive correlation ($r=.31*$), and the model explained a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.10$, F (1,92)=9.71, $p<.01$. There is a significant relationship between frequency of news exposure and paranoia toward police, such that more exposure to news increases paranoia toward police (B=.31), $t(92)=3.12$, $p<.01$ (Table 2).

Table 2: Predictor of Paranoia toward Law Enforcement

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure	.31**	3.12

R^2 = .10, F(1,92) = 9.71, $p<.01$
***$p<.001$, **$p<.01$, *$p<.05$

Next, I conducted a simple linear regression analysis to examine whether African Americans' frequency of news exposure predicts mistrust of news (H3). The results revealed a positive correlation between news consumption and trust of news media ($r=.08*$). Furthermore, the model did not explain a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.01$, F(1,94)=.630, $p>.05$ and there was no significant relationship between frequent news exposure and trust in news (B=-.08), $t(94)=-.793$, $p>.05$. H3 was not supported (Table 3).

Table 3: Predictor of Mistrust of News

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure	-.08	-.79

R^2 = .01, F(1,94) = .63, $p>.05$
***$p<.001$, **$p<.01$, *$p<.05$

The first research question asked if racial identity moderated the relationship between frequency of news exposure and perceptions of a mean and scary world, paranoia toward police, and mistrust of news. A series of regressions were conducted in order to determine these relationships including racial identity as a moderator. The first test examined whether frequent news exposure predicts perceptions of a mean and scary world when moderated by racial identity. The model explained a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.15$, F (3,89)=5.03, $p<.01$. However, the interaction is not statistically significant ($p>.05$), revealing that racial identity does not moderate the relationship between news exposure and perceptions of a mean and scary world. As levels of racial identity increased, statistical significance got weaker. There was no relationship between news exposure and mean world perceptions for participants with low levels of racial identity B=.21, $t(89)=1.30$, $p>.05$, moderate levels of racial identity B=.18, $t(89)=1.26$, $p>.05$, or high levels of racial identity B=.14, $t(89)=.72$, $p>.05$ (Table 4, Figure 1).

Table 4: Predictor of Mean World Perceptions / Racial ID

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure		
Interaction	-.06	-.31
Low Racial ID	.21	1.30
Moderate Racial ID	.18	1.26
High Racial ID	.14	.72

$R^2 = .15$, F(3,89) = 5.03, $p<.01$
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05
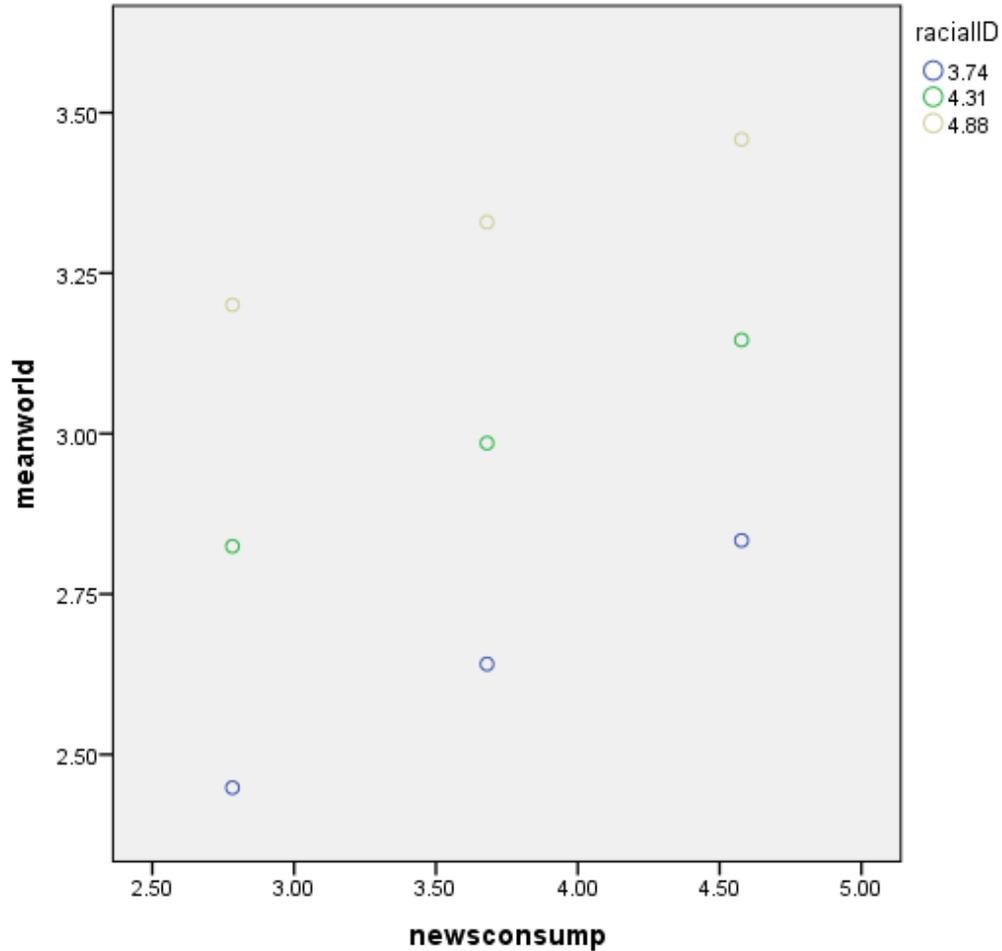
Figure 1: Predictor of Mean World Perceptions with Racial ID Moderator

A second regression test was conducted to examine whether frequency of news exposure predicts feelings of paranoia toward police when moderated by racial identity. The results indicate that the effect of racial identity on the relationship between news exposure and paranoia toward police approached statistical significance. The model explained a significant portion of the variance, R^2=.22, $F(3,88)$=8.30, $p<.01$. The interaction is approaching statistical significance (p=.08), such that as racial identity gets stronger, so does the relationship between news exposure and paranoia. For participants with lower levels of racial identity, there is no relationship between news exposure and paranoia (B=.07), $t(88)$=.52, $p>.05$. For participants with moderate levels of racial identity, there is a relationship between news exposure and paranoia (B=.22),

$t(88)=2.05$, $p<.05$. Finally, participants with higher levels of racial identity displayed an even stronger relationship between news exposure and paranoia (B=.38), $t(88)=2.51$, $p<.05$ (Table 5, Figure 2).

Table 5: Predictor of Paranoia toward Law Enforcement / Racial ID

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure		
Interaction	.28	1.78
Low Racial ID	.07	.52
Moderate Racial ID	.22*	2.05
High Racial ID	.38*	2.51

$R^2 = .22$, $F(3,88) = 8.30$, $p<.01$
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05
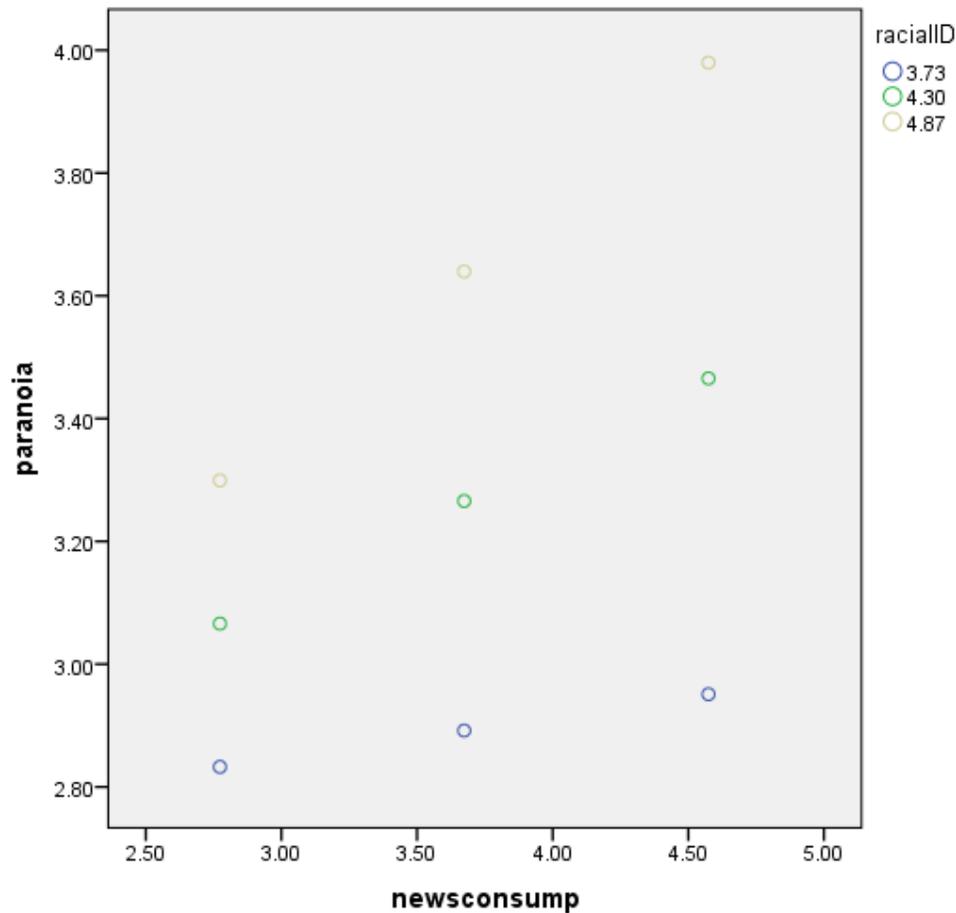
Figure 2: Predictor of Paranoia toward Law Enforcement with Racial ID Moderator

The final regression test for this moderator was conducted to examine whether frequency of news exposure predicts mistrust of news when moderated by racial identity. The model explained a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.10$, $F(3,89)=3.28$, $p<.05$. However, the interaction is not statistically significant ($p>.05$). The model revealed that racial identity does not moderate the relationship between news exposure and trust of news. There is no relationship between news exposure and trust of news for participants with lower levels $B=.13$, $t(89)=1.08$, $p>.05$, moderate levels $B=.01$, $t(89)=.13$, $p>.05$, or higher levels $B=-.10$, $t(89)=-.71$, $p>.05$ of racial identity (Table 6, Figure 3).

Table 6: Predictor of Mistrust of News / Racial ID

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure		
Interaction	-.20	-1.40
Low Racial ID	.13	1.08
Moderate Racial ID	.01	.13
High Racial ID	-.10	-.71

$R^2 = .10$, $F(3,89) = 3.28$, $p<.05$
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05
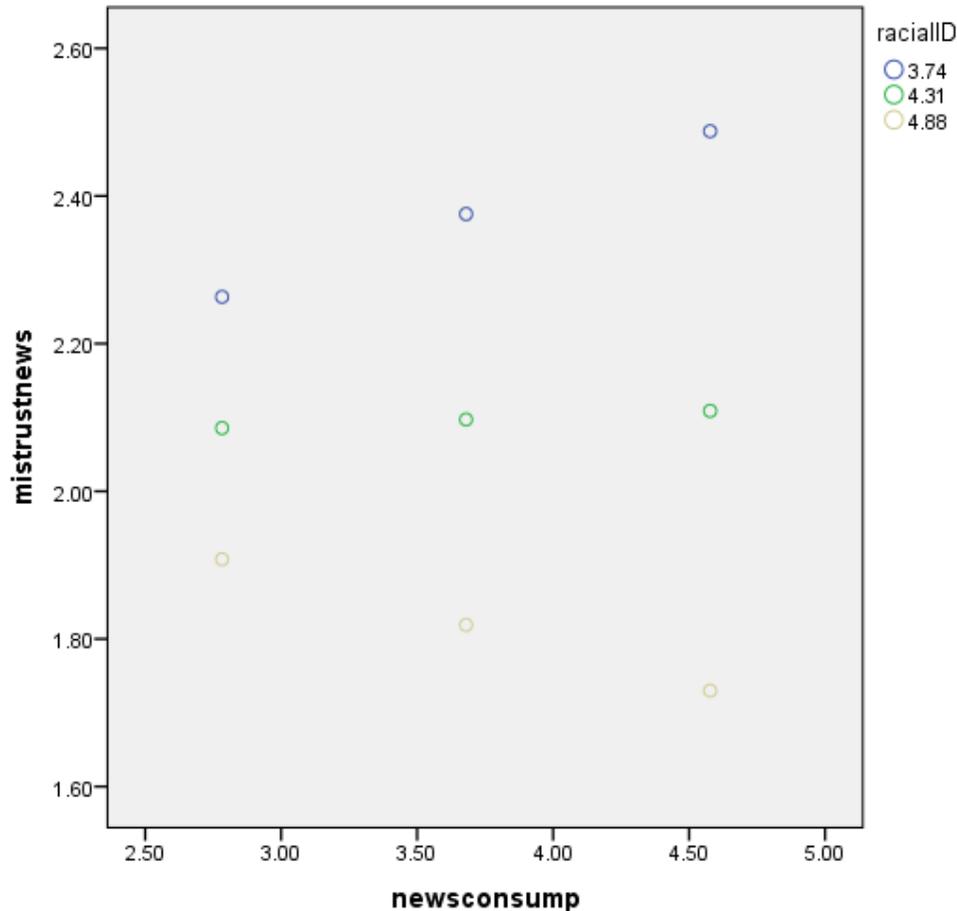
Figure 3: Predictor of Mistrust of News with Racial ID Moderator

The second research question asked whether prior contact with police moderated the relationship between frequency of news exposure and perceptions of a mean and scary world, as well as paranoia toward police. The first regression test was conducted to examine whether frequent news exposure predicts mean world perceptions when moderated by prior contact. The model explained a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.10$, $F(3,92)=3.53$, $p<.05$. The interaction is not statistically significant ($p>.05$), but shows that for increased prior contact with police the relationship between news exposure and mean world perceptions gets stronger. For participants with less prior contact, there is no relationship between news exposure and mean world perceptions $B=.29$, $t(92)=1.66$, $p>.05$. For participants with a moderate level of prior contact, there is a very significant relationship between news exposure and mean world

perceptions B=.37, *t*(92)=2.79, *p*<.01. Finally, participants with more prior contact displayed a

less significant relationship between news exposure and mean world perceptions B=.44,

t(92)=2.26, *p*<.05 (Table 7, Figure 4).

Table 7: Predictor of Mean World Perceptions / Prior Contact

	Standardized B	*t*
News Exposure		
Interaction	.05	.60
Low Prior Contact	.29	1.66
Moderate Prior Contact	.37**	2.79
High Prior Contact	.44*	2.26

$R^2 = .10$, F(3,92) = 3.53, *p*<.05
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05
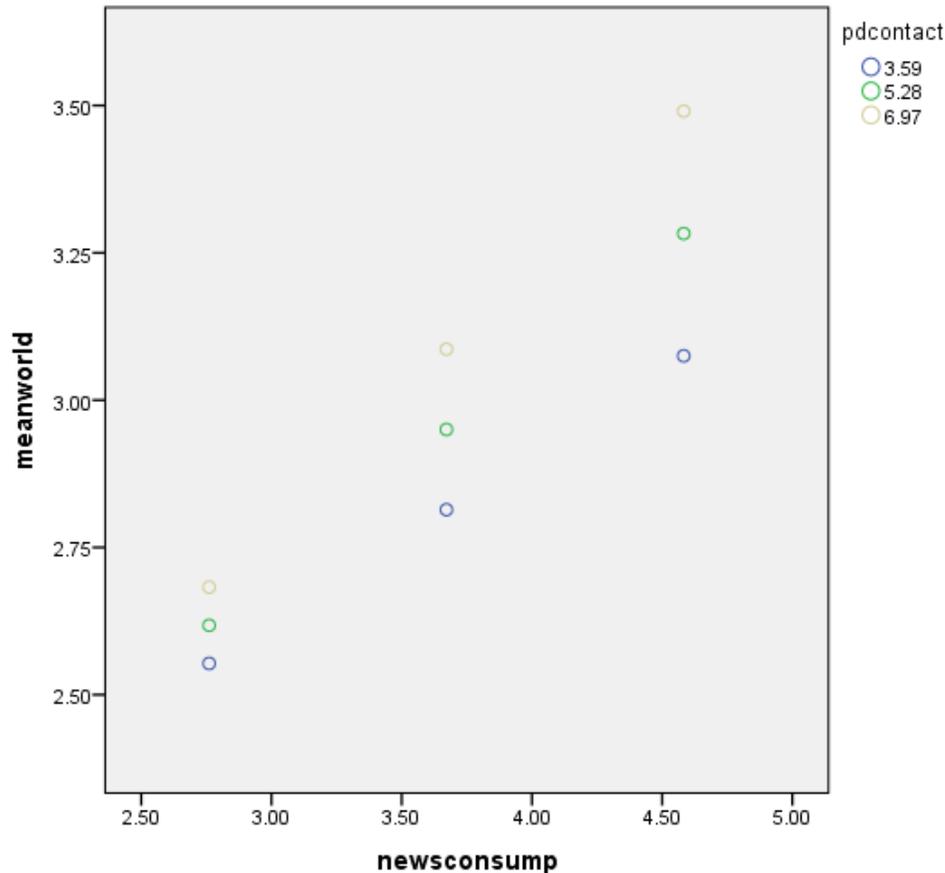
Figure 4: Predictor of Mean World Perceptions with Prior Contact Moderator

The second and final regression test addressing this moderator examined whether

frequency of news exposure predicts paranoia toward police when moderated by prior contact

with police. The model explained a significant portion of the variance, $R^2=.14$, F (3,90)=4.70, $p<.01$. The interaction is not statistically significant ($p>.05$), but additionally demonstrates that for moderate and high levels of prior contact with police the relationship between news exposure and paranoia is stronger. For participants with less prior contact, there is no relationship between news exposure and paranoia B=.17, $t(90)=1.20$, $p>.05$. For participants with a moderate level of prior contact, there is a very significant relationship between news exposure and paranoia B=.31, $t(90)=3.06$, $p<.01$. Finally, participants with more prior contact also displayed a significant relationship between news exposure and paranoia B=.46, $t(90)=2.99$, $p<.01$ (Table 8, Figure 5).

Table 8: Predictor of Paranoia toward Law Enforcement / Prior Contact

	Standardized B	t
News Exposure		
Interaction	.09	1.36
Low Prior Contact	.17	1.20
Moderate Prior Contact	.31**	3.06
High Prior Contact	.46**	2.99

$R^2 = .14$, F(3,90) = 4.70, $p<.01$
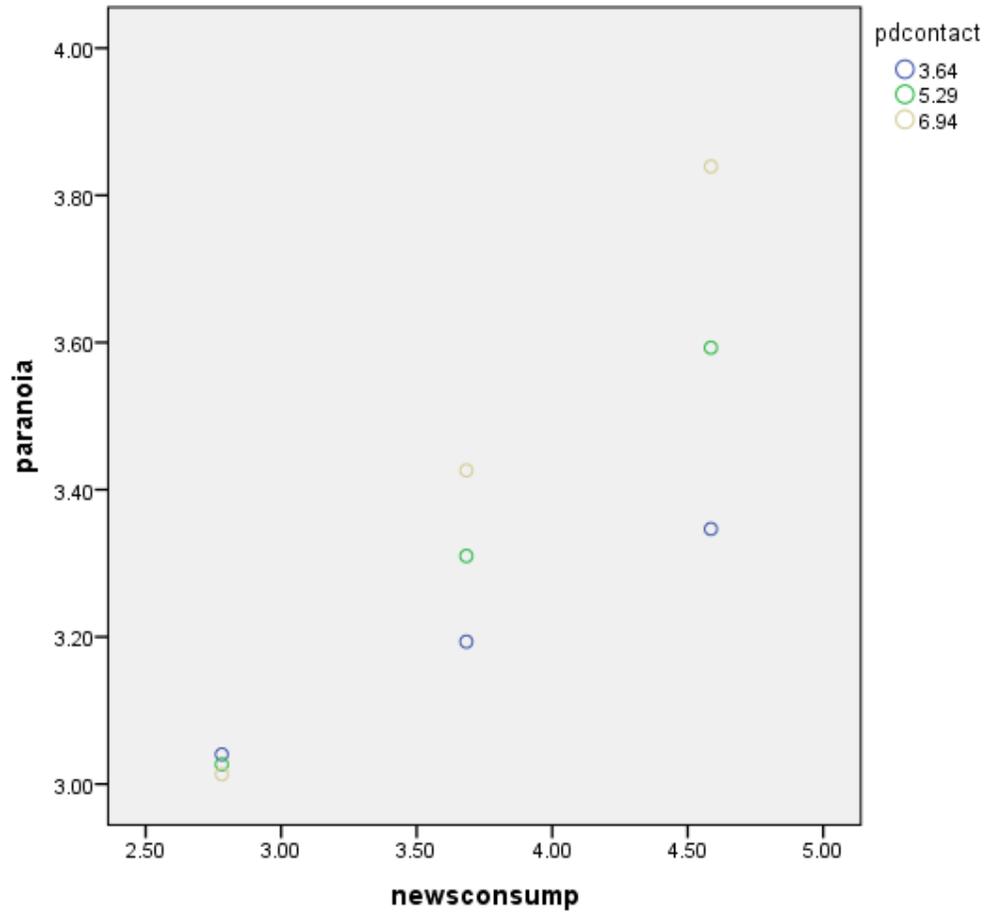***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Figure 5: Predictor of Paranoia toward Law Enforcement with Prior Contact Moderator

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

Implications

This study investigated how African American audiences would be affected by news on police violence. Many of my findings were expected, however some of my results were unexpected. Participants in this study had very high levels of racial identity, heavily identifying as Black/African American, as I expected. Participants in this study did not report having much prior contact with police. The majority of participants reported having between 3-5 encounters with police in their lifetimes, majority of those being while driving or as a passenger in a moving vehicle. Most people reported having neutral encounters and even leaned toward somewhat positive rather than somewhat negative. I interpreted this as participants not being heavily affected by their previous contact with police. Being that this is a student sample and many participants are younger/undergraduates, they may not have had a lot of experience with getting pulled over or approached by police as they would if they were older. These results could also be due to the possibility that negative police encounters are actually less likely to occur than neutral or positive ones. This would be a valuable topic for future study. I expected to find that participants would have more negative than positive encounters with police, due to the research that shows that African Americans generally find that their encounters with police are negative and hostile (Epp et al., 2014). This sample's neutral response to this measure may be due to their age, or possibly their socio-economic status. People who are from lower class backgrounds are more likely to have hostile and negative encounters with police, than those from middle or higher-class backgrounds (Alexander, 2012). Since these participants were in college, it may be true that they are from higher class backgrounds than other individuals their age who are not in college, based on statistics that say individuals from middle- to high-class backgrounds are more

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likely to go to college than individuals from low-class backgrounds (Leonhardt, 2005). Socio-economic status may be a valuable variable to include in future investigations on this topic.

My results revealed that news exposure was not very high. This may be the reason that, even though H1 and H2 were supported, I did not get very strong results from the mean world perceptions and paranoia toward police measures, which I was not expecting. Higher frequency of news exposure may have led to higher levels of mean world perceptions and more paranoia toward police. On the other hand, participants reported low levels of trust in news as expected, reporting that the news media are generally unfair, inaccurate, and untrustworthy in their reports of Black victims, as well as reporting that Black victims are portrayed negatively and that news organizations leave out information when reporting on Black victims. This may be the reason why participants are not exposing themselves to news more frequently. Future studies may further investigate the relationship between frequency of exposure and trust in news media by purposefully attaining a sample with high, moderate and low news consumers, and compare their trust in news media.

The first hypothesis stated that African Americans who have had frequent exposure to news would perceive the world as a meaner and scarier place than those who have had less news exposure. Frequency of news exposure and mean world perceptions had a positive correlation. This implies that the more frequently participants consumed news, they perceived the world as slightly meaner and scarier. Furthermore, the regression test revealed that frequency of news exposure does predict mean world perceptions, supporting the first hypothesis. The second hypothesis stated that African Americans with more frequent exposure to news would experience more paranoia around police officers. News exposure and paranoia had a positive correlation, meaning that with more news exposure, there is a slight increase in paranoia toward police.

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Additionally, news exposure was again found to predict paranoia toward police, supporting the second hypothesis. The final hypothesis predicted that African Americans with frequent news exposure would exhibit less trust in news than those who have had less news exposure. These variables displayed a positive correlation, meaning that as news exposure increases, trust of news increases slightly. Furthermore, news exposure was not found to predict trust in news media, leaving the third hypothesis unsupported.

These findings are consistent with previous cultivation studies. This study tells us that African Americans who watch news frequently are likely to have slightly more negative perceptions of the world and experience paranoia when encountering everyday situations, like a traffic stop. This contributes to cultivation studies that demonstrate how consuming news more frequently leads to believing the content is an accurate depiction of the world (Gerbner, 1998; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2009). Furthermore, these findings contribute to research on mean world syndrome. There is not much research on mean world syndrome in this context and I think there is a lot of opportunity to continue to research how negative news depictions, particularly police violence, leads to mean world perceptions in African Americans. These findings were also consistent with the Microaggression Process Model and research that says that people with more exposure to discrimination are more likely to feel fearful and paranoid of being a target for their oppressors (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Ponterotto et al., 2006; Sue, 2010).

This study's application of cultivation theory is slightly unique in that it is not looking solely at television news. Cultivation theory is generally applied to television viewing (Gerbner, 1998) and there are few studies that consider the effects of cultivation theory on other mediums (Callanan, 2012; Mitomo et al., 2016; Vergeer et al., 2000). This thesis considered the potential

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effects of cultivation theory on various news mediums, including television, social media, Internet, radio, and print. This is a valuable contribution to cultivation research and future studies should continue to explore the potential cultivation effects of different news and entertainment mediums.

One explanation for these findings is demonstrated in the findings for H3, which revealed a positive correlation between frequent news exposure and trust in news. Because levels of news exposure and levels of trust in news were both low, it is possible that this particular sample is simply not exposing themselves to much news because they do not trust it. Therefore, people who consume news more often would be more likely to trust it (and/or people who trust news are more likely to consume it often). This correlation addresses why news exposure predicts mean world perceptions and paranoia toward police. While I found that news exposure predicts mean world perceptions (H1) and paranoia toward police (H2), the results were not very strong. This may be because news exposure was so low. If participants consumed news more frequently, then these results may have been stronger. The type of news would also play a factor here. Exposing oneself to more news would mean seeing different types of news content, including more violent content that may lead to mean world perceptions and paranoia. Future studies with a more representative sample that demonstrates higher levels of news exposure could investigate these discrepancies. Scholars could explore in more detail the relationship between frequency of news exposure and levels of trust by seeking out samples with a wider range of levels of news exposure. Furthermore, scholars could take into account what news content participants are most frequently exposed to in order to get a better idea of why this variable predicts mean world perceptions and paranoia toward police.

While I did not find support for hypothesis 3, the findings were still noteworthy. Frequency of news exposure does not predict trust in news, but the two variables are positively correlated. The specifics regarding *how* these two variables are related were not revealed in this study. It is possible that there is another uninvestigated variable influencing this relationship, such as political orientation or partisanship. A follow up study might investigate how the interaction between news exposure and partisanship influences amount of trust. Additionally, I did not specify what kind of news mediums or sources when measuring trust in news, and I did not differentiate between types of news mediums or sources after measuring frequency of exposure. Eighty-five percent of participants reported consuming news via organizations on social media and 66% reported consuming news via social media conversations and interactions. It is possible, for example, that participants find news on social media more trustworthy than national news organizations. People can easily tailor their social media feeds to only display what they want to see. It is not difficult to only expose oneself to news that is framed in a way that you think is fair and accurate, and avoid news that you feel is inaccurately and unfairly framed. When these participants were asked about trust in news, they may have been thinking about those news sources and mediums that they do not trust, rather than the alternate sources of news that they choose to expose themselves to via social media. This example illustrates how there could have been some inconsistencies in understanding these two measures. Further investigation will have to be done in order to gain a more clear understanding of the relationship between these two variables. Future studies could focus on types and amount of news exposure, and how news sources and mediums influences both amount of exposure and trust for different news sources. Measurements of trust will have to take into account that individuals may trust one medium or source over another, and be more specific with their measurements. Framing should

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also be considered in these studies. It would be valuable to know whether individuals feel that the news they consume via social media, for example, is more trustworthy and accurate than news via national or local news organizations who are more likely to follow and elitist agenda (Ryan et al., 2001). Asking individuals how they perceive news is framed on different sources and mediums and then measuring frequency of exposure and levels of trust could be explored in the future.

The first research question asked whether racial identity would moderate the relationships between frequency of news exposure and mean world perceptions, paranoia toward police, and mistrust of news. The results revealed that racial identity only moderated the relationship between news exposure and paranoia toward police. This means that the relationships between news exposure and mean world perceptions, and that of news exposure and mistrust of news, remained the same regardless of the participants' racial identity. In other words, racial identity did not influence these relationships. On the other hand, racial identity did influence the relationship between news exposure and paranoia toward police, in that the stronger a participant's racial identity was, the stronger the relationship between news exposure and paranoia. These findings were unexpected as they are inconsistent with social identity theory, which suggests that strength of racial identity would increase one's ability to recognize racism in media (Carter et al., 2017; Forsyth & Carter, 2012). It is alternatively possible that participants did not feel their general news content was racially insensitive.

Furthermore, mean world perceptions and lack of trust in news are not race specific (i.e. people of all races may experience this), however African American communities have historically had a very unique relationship with law enforcement (Alexander, 2012; Chaudhry, 2016; Epp et al., 2014) potentially leading to paranoia and fear of their motives and intentions.

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The fact that African Americans in general have expressed negative experiences with and feelings toward law enforcement (Callanan, 2012; Epp et al., 2014) may explain why racial identity is more closely related to feelings of paranoia than the other variables. Future studies may want to look at racial identity, news exposure, and paranoia toward police exclusively to determine how they work together, as well as ask participants about specific news content (i.e. police brutality) rather than general news exposure.

The second research question asked whether prior contact with police would moderate the relationships between frequency of news exposure and mean world perceptions as well as paranoia toward police. The results indicated that participants with moderate levels of prior contact with police showed the strongest relationship between news exposure and both mean world perceptions and paranoia toward police. Participants with high levels of prior contact showed a weaker, but still significant relationship between these variables. These results are somewhat in line with the resonance hypothesis, which asserts that real world experiences will strengthen the effects of media shaping opinions and beliefs, particularly when what one experiences in real life and what they are exposed to in the media is consistent (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). What was interesting however, was that these effects were stronger for those with moderate levels of prior contact with police, but slightly weaker for those with high levels of prior contact. One possible explanation for these findings is that after a certain amount of contact with police, individuals are no longer as impacted as they once were. For example, if an individual has had a moderate amount of negative contact with police, they may begin to anticipate that negativity when they are being approached by an officer, and no longer feel the same level of paranoia or mean world perceptions. Future scholars might consider investigating in more detail the relationships between news exposure and mean world perceptions, as well as

news exposure and paranoia toward police when moderated by prior contact with police in order to uncover why that relationship begins to decline after a certain level of prior contact. Looking at factors such as the type of contact and general feelings about the role police play in their communities, as well as controlling for other variables that may influence mean world perceptions and paranoia would be useful in this endeavor.

Limitations

There are a few elements of this study I would have adjusted now that I have my findings and had I had access to the proper resources. I was somewhat limited in my sampling. While I was pleased with the amount of participants I attained from different areas in the South, I could have gotten more generalizable findings from a more representative sample. A more representative sample might be one with an equal amount of participants from each Southern state, extended to any African American adult instead of just students, with participants from various genders, socio-economic backgrounds, education levels, incomes, etc. It would be valuable to replicate this study with a more representative sample in the future if resources are available. Additionally, there were some demographic questions I failed to ask my participants, such as age and gender, because I initially felt they were irrelevant to the study. Looking back I recognize the significance of including this basic information even when it is not directly relevant to the study, and will include it in future research projects.

One factor that I did not take into consideration was asking participants what kind of news they were being exposed to. The initial purpose of this study was to determine how exposure to police violence in news affects the Black community, and my measure for news exposure never addressed police violence or any other content questions. It simply asked about frequency and type of exposure. Cultivation studies have found that, regardless of the content

shown, more exposure to television news results in an increase in feelings of paranoia/skepticism of others and a heightened fear of violence (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). Therefore, it could be argued that asking specific content questions was not necessary. However, a follow up study could go into more detail about the type of news content participants are exposing themselves to, and more specifically, ask questions about how they find out about police brutality cases. This will give scholars a better idea of how police violence specifically is affecting the Black community and their relationship to law enforcement, news organizations and society at large.

Looking back on my measures, I realized that the paranoia toward police and mean world syndrome measures were very similar. While they were distinct in that the paranoia items measured level of *fear* of being harmed by police, and the mean world items measured perceived *likelihood* of being victimized by police, it may have been beneficial to make these measures more distinct by making the mean world items about perceptions of the world and society in general, rather than law enforcement specifically.

Additionally, the language I used when discussing trust/mistrust in news may have been misleading. I discuss mistrust in news throughout the paper as my dependent variable, but was actually measuring trust in news in the measure. In the future, this will be more clear, either by reversing the measurement in order to remain consistent and measure mistrust of news, or by defining the variable as trust in news, and seeking negative correlations/relationships after measurement.

Future studies may also consider expanding this approach to examine diagnosable mental health outcomes. As is briefly outlined in the literature, there is a lot of previous work linking experiences with discrimination to mental health issues including anxiety, depression, and trauma (Alexander, 2012, DeGruy, 2005). However there is less research out there on how

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mediated exposure to discrimination affects mental health in marginalized groups. I think it would be useful to test how this type of news content affects those types of psychological outcomes in African Americans and other marginalized groups.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the in-group effects of news stories about police violence against African Americans. In the end, what I really found was how frequency of news exposure affected African Americans' perceptions and trust in law enforcement and the news media. I was happy that my findings were mostly what I expected. Participants revealed that frequency of news exposure predicts mean world perceptions and paranoia toward police, and is positively correlated with trust of news. Racial identity and prior contact with police partially moderated these relationships. There is a lot of opportunity for further investigation into this topic, but I believe that this study is a significant contribution to research that demonstrates how every day media can have a negative impact on marginalized groups, further distancing them from majority culture.

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Demographics

1. What is your race/ethnicity? Please select all that apply. (If participant does not select "Black/African American" they will skip to the "Extra Credit Identification" section.)

    a. Black/African American

    b. Native American

    c. Asian

    d. Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian

    e. White

    f. Hispanic/Latinx

    g. Other _____

2. What institution are you currently affiliated with?

    _____

3. What is your classification? (If participant selects "None of the above" they will they will skip to the "Extra Credit Identification" section.)

    a. Freshman

    b. Sophomore

    c. Junior

    d. Senior

    e. 5+ Year Undergraduate

    f. Graduate Student

    g. None of the above

Racial Identity

Please indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with the following statements.

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as history, traditions, and customs.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

6. I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life. (reverse coded)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

7. I really haven't spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my

   ethnic group. (reverse coded)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

8. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

9. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how

   to relate to my own group and other groups.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

10. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people

    about my ethnic group.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

11. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

12. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or

    customs.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

13. I feel a strong attachment to my own ethnic group.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

14. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

Prior Contact with Law Enforcement

Please answer the following questions based on your experience with law enforcement.

1. Have you ever been stopped by the police while in a public place, but not a moving vehicle (this includes being in a parked vehicle)?

   a. Yes

   b. No

   c. I don't recall

2. Have you ever been stopped by the police while driving a motor vehicle?

   a. Yes

   b. No

   c. I don't recall

3. Have you ever been the passenger in a motor vehicle that was stopped by the police?

   a. Yes

   b. No

   c. I don't recall

4. Have you ever been stopped or approached by the police under circumstances I have not mentioned?

   a. Yes

b. No

c. I don't recall

5. Approximately how many face to face contacts have you had with police?

    a. 0

    b. 1-2

    c. 3-5

    d. 6+

6. In general, have your encounters with law enforcement officers been positive or negative?

1	2	3	4	5
Extremely negative	Somewhat negative	Neutral	Somewhat positive	Extremely positive

Frequent Exposure to News

Please answer the following questions based on how and how frequently you consume news.

1. Through which mediums do you consume news (even if not very frequently)? Please select all that apply.

    a. Television

    b. Social media (news orgs, blogs, etc.)

    c. Social media (interactions or conversations with other users)

    d. Internet (cnn.com, msnbc.com, foxnews.com, etc.)

    e. Print (newspaper, magazine, etc.)

    f. Radio

2. How frequently do you consume news via television? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Television" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

3. How frequently do you consume news via social media (news orgs, blogs, etc.)? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Social media (news orgs, blogs, etc.)" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

4. How frequently do you hear about news stories via interactions or conversations with other social media users (NOT news orgs or blogs on social media)? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Social media (interactions or conversations with other users)" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

5. How frequently do you consume news via the Internet (cnn.com, msnbc.com, foxnews.com, etc.)? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Internet (cnn.com, msnbc.com, foxnews.com, etc.)" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

6. How frequently do you consume news via print publications (newspapers, magazines, etc.)? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Print (newspaper, magazine, etc.)" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

7. How frequently do you consume news via radio? (This question will only appear if participant selected "Radio" under the first question in this section.)

○	○	○	○	○
0 days a week	1-2 days a week	3-4 days a week	5-6 days a week	Daily

8. Please name the top 5 TELEVISION news sources you consume regularly. (This question will only appear if the participant selected "3-4 days a week," "5-6 days a week," or "Daily" under question #2 in this section.)

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

9. Do you follow these sources on social media? (This question will only appear if the participant filled in at least one source in the previous item.)

10. Please name the top 5 news sources you consume via SOCIAL MEDIA regularly. (This question will only appear if the participant selected "3-4 days a week," "5-6 days a week," or "Daily" under question #3 in this section.)

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

11. Do you follow these sources on social media? (This question will only appear if the participant filled in at least one source in the previous item.)

12. Please name the top 5 INTERNET news sources you consume regularly. (This question will only appear if the participant selected "3-4 days a week," "5-6 days a week," or "Daily" under question #5 in this section.)

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

13. Do you follow these sources on social media? (This question will only appear if the participant filled in at least one source in the previous item.)

14. Please name the top 5 PRINT publications through which you consume news regularly. (This question will only appear if the participant selected "3-4 days a week," "5-6 days a week," or "Daily" under question #6 in this section.)

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

15. Do you follow these sources on social media? (This question will only appear if the participant filled in at least one source in the previous item.)

16. Please name the top 5 RADIO news sources you consume regularly. (This question will only appear if the participant selected "3-4 days a week," "5-6 days a week," or "Daily" under question #7 in this section.)

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

17. Do you follow these sources on social media? (This question will only appear if the

participant filled in at least one source in the previous item.)

18. Please name the top 5 news sources you consume IN GENERAL.

Source 1:

Source 2:

Source 3:

Source 4:

Source 5:

Perceptions of a Mean and Scary World

Please take a moment to think about how likely it is that you will experience each of the

following while out in public:

1. Be criminally victimized (i.e. become a victim of some crime)

1	2	3	4	5
Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely

2. Be unjustly stopped by a law enforcement officer (as a pedestrian **or** while in a vehicle)

1	2	3	4	5
Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely

3. Be harassed by a law enforcement officer

1	2	3	4	5
Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely

4. Be physically assaulted by a law enforcement officer

1	2	3	4	5
Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely

Paranoia toward Law Enforcement

Please indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with the following statements.

1. I need to be on my guard against police officers.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

2. Police officers would be hostile towards me during an encounter.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

3. Police officers would harm me if given the opportunity.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

4. I have a suspicion that law enforcement officers have bad intentions towards me.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

5. I am paranoid around police officers.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

6. Police officers can rarely be counted on to do what they are supposed to do.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

7. Blacks should be cautious about what they say in the presence of police officers since police officers will try to use it against them. (Terrell & Terrell, 1981)

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Definitely agree

Mistrust of News

Please answer the following questions regarding the news media's treatment of African Americans.

1. Do you feel the news media are fair in their reports about Black victims of police violence?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all fair		Somewhat fair		Extremely fair

2. Do you feel the news media are accurate in their reports about Black victims of police violence?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all accurate		Somewhat accurate		Extremely accurate

3. Do you feel the news media tell the whole story in their reports about Black victims of police violence?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always

4. Do you feel the news media can be trusted in their reports about Black victims of police violence?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all trustworthy		Somewhat trustworthy		Extremely trustworthy

5. Do you think the news media portray African Americans in a bad light?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always

Extra Credit Identification

1. Are you taking this survey for extra credit? (If participants select "No," they are taken to the end of the survey.)

    a. Yes

    b. No

2. What class are you taking this for?

    _____

3. What is the name of your professor?

    _____

4. What is your student ID number? (Please do not provide your name. This information is not in any way connected to your previous responses. Your previous responses are still anonymous; this is solely for the purposes of granting extra credit.)

    _____

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

LSU

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

TO: Folasade Adesanya
          Mass Communication

FROM: Dennis Landin
          Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: February 8, 2017

RE: **IRB#** E10322

TITLE: In-group effects of new stories on police violence against African Americans

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 2/7/2017

Approved _____ X _____ **Disapproved** _____

Approval Date: 2/8/2017   **Approval Expiration Date:** 2/7/2020
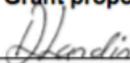
Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2a

Signed Consent Waived?: Yes

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable)

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman _____

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:
1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE:** When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

*   *All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/irb*

Consent Form

Study Title:	In-group Effects of News Stories on Police Violence against African Americans
Performance Site:	Louisiana State University
Investigators:	Principal PI: Folasade Adesanya, (510) 209-6587, fadesa1@lsu.edu Co-PI: Dr. Meghan Sanders, (225) 578-7380, msand@lsu.edu
Purpose of Study:	The purpose of this study is to determine how prolonged exposure to specific news content affects the perceptions of participants and their communities.
Subject Inclusion:	Black undergraduate and graduate students attending universities in the South. To participate in this study you must meet the requirement of the inclusion criteria.
# of Subjects:	200
Study Procedures:	Participants will receive a link to an online survey which they will complete on their time. The survey should not take more than 15 minutes to complete.
Benefits:	The benefits of the study are to expose the effects of this kind of news content. Implications can be made for news media and law enforcement and these institutions' relationships with the African American community. Participants are able to contribute to a study that explores issues directly affecting their lives, as well as think more deeply about how the topics

	presented in the survey are relevant to their lives.
Risks:	The topic of this study may bring up emotional feelings, however there are no known risks to this study.
Right to Refuse:	This study is voluntary. Participants may change their minds and withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty held against them.
Privacy:	Data collected in this study will remain confidential unless release is legally compelled. No names or identifying information will be shared with others or published.

"The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Dennis Landin, Chairman, LSU Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the researchers' obligation to provide me with a copy of this consent form if signed by me."

By continuing with this survey you are indicating that you give your implied consent.

IRB #E10322   Expiration Date: 2/7/2020

Pleas select one of the following:

- I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and understand the consent information and agree to participate in the study.

- I do not wish to participate in this study.

VITA

Folasade Adesanya was born in Hayward, California and grew up in the Bay Area. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Advertising from Pepperdine University in April 2014. She took a year off from school and worked various jobs in Advertising and Marketing. She began studies at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University in August 2015, working toward her Master of Mass Communication. She is expecting to graduate in August 2017. She has been admitted to Temple University and will begin working toward a PhD in Sociology in August 2017. Upon completion of her PhD, Folasade hopes to pursue a career in academia.