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The experiences of Smith College School for Social Work students talking with field supervisors about issues of race

Julia Kraft Perault

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Julia Perault
The Experiences of Smith
College School for Social
Work Students Talking with
Field Supervisors about
Issues of Race

ABSTRACT

This mixed method survey study explored Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW) students' experiences in talking with field supervisors about issues of race.

Increased racial and ethnic diversity in the United States calls for attention to issues of race in social work education and practice. The SCSSW shares with major social work organizations its commitment to anti-racism. Field supervision is an integral component of the SCSSW social work curriculum and represents an arena in which students can incorporate anti-racism learning into practice. A dearth of social work conceptual and empirical literature examines racial dialogues in field supervision from the perspectives of social work master's students.

The researcher hypothesized that students' year in graduate school and amount of completed graduate coursework and training in issues of race influenced students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. Open-ended questions inquired into students' perceptions of the factors influencing racial dialogues in supervision.

This study surveyed 84 SCSSW master's students during their practicum placements. While the study sample was representative across gender and age of the SCSSW student population and social work graduate programs nationwide, students of

color were underrepresented in this sample. In spite of this major limitation, the findings demonstrated the importance of an open and safe relationship with a supervisor, who has developed the racial awareness necessary to initiate and explore issues of race in depth with the student. These findings are significant given the dearth of current knowledge on SCSSW students' experiences incorporating anti-racism learning into field practice through racial dialogues with field supervisors. Findings have implications for social work education, training, practice and policy.

THE EXPERIENCES OF SMITH COLLEGE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK
STUDENTS TALKING WITH FIELD SUPERVISORS ABOUT ISSUES OF RACE

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work.

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2009

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Study Issue

For 91 years, the Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW) has educated master's and doctoral-level students to provide clinical social work practice to disadvantaged and at-risk populations. In 1994, a group of SCSSW students protested the School's lack of commitment to opposing racism, which led to extensive dialogues among the students, faculty, and administration. These dialogues resulted in the School's decision to adopt a commitment toward becoming an anti-racism institution (Newdom, 2007). According to Miller and Garran (2008), an anti-racism institution not only aims to build cultural responsiveness and competency, but also acknowledges the destructive power of racism in society and the power inequities in privilege.

Over the past 15 years, the SCSSW's programming in all areas (e.g., its mission statement; curriculum; recruitment and hiring; faculty development and training; field education) has evolved and changed to incorporate anti-racism mission goals. Conceptual and empirical literature has examined the School's anti-racism efforts to deepen race-related conversations and to prepare students, faculty and agency personnel in these efforts (Basham, Donner & Killough, 1997; Basham, Donner and Everett, 2001; Vaughn, 2008).

Field education is a required and integral component of the SCSSW's course of study, in which students apply knowledge acquired in summer coursework into full-time

field practice in agencies across the country. Field supervision represents one means through which the SCSSW's anti-racism goals may be achieved. For instance, Basham et al. (2001) explored the experiences of SCSSW master's students (N=3), faculty field advisors (N=18), and agency supervisors (N=3) in conducting the required anti-racism field assignment – a project aimed at providing students with the opportunity to incorporate anti-racism knowledge into the field. The findings identified the critical role of field supervisors in helping students implement anti-racism work in the field; however, the study sample underrepresented the voices of SCSSW master's students (only 16%) and limited its focus on the anti-racism field assignment—only one mechanism through which students may incorporate anti-racism learning into their field experiences.

The purpose of this mixed-method, survey study was to document SCSSW master's students' experiences talking with field supervisors about issues of race. The study focused on two student characteristics related to racial dialogues in supervision: (1) year in graduate school; and (2) amount of completed anti-racism training and graduate coursework. Additionally, students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race was compared to their comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general. Finally, students responded to open-ended questions, which inquired into their subjective experiences discussing issues of race in field supervision.

Rationale

Racism in the United States is manifested and embedded in institutions, public discourse, economics, politics, and socio-cultural, interpersonal and intergroup relations (Miller & Garran, 2008). The social work profession developed – in the past and into the present – as part of this larger social system, and absorbed a strong ideology of racism

into its theory, clinical practice and institutional policies (NASW, 2007). More recently, major social work organizations and accrediting standards have adopted code of ethics, which institute requirements for social work graduate programs to incorporate anti-racism education into their curricula.

Existing counseling psychology and social work literature examining racial issues within the field supervision process has demonstrated that field supervision is key aspect of social work graduate education (Council on Social Work Education, 2004); and that failure to discuss issues of race in supervision may adversely affect client service delivery as well as students' learning and satisfaction in the field (Tummala-Narra, 2001; Cook & Helms, 1988; Fukuyama, 1994; Leong & Wagner, 1994; Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2003).

In spite of the established importance, research documents the infrequency of racial dialogues in supervision (Constantine, 1997). Limited social work research has addressed the factors which influence racial dialogues in field supervision from the perspectives of social work master's students (Hilton, Russell, & Salmi, 1995). This study aims to expand this knowledge base by identifying the subjective experiences of SCSSW master's students in talking with field supervisors about issues of race.

Significance

This study holds significance for social work education, practice and policy. This study informs training models for supervisors and students in how to talk about issues of race in field supervision. In order to provide effective services to an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse clientele, students need supervisory opportunities to reflect upon and explore their feelings, reactions and attitudes about issues of race. If race is not

addressed in supervision, clients may be denied opportunities to explore the influence of racial variables on their everyday experiences and self-other relationships (Cook, 1994).

White students, in particular, may consciously or unconsciously reenact societal racism in the clinical encounter, which negatively affects client treatment and student learning. An examination of racial dialogues in supervision may inform policies in social service agencies and aid students in combating institutional racism in their field agencies.

This mixed method exploration into students' experiences in talking with field supervisors about issues of race offers important information for the SCSSW master's student community, the SCSSW administration, affiliate field supervisors and agencies as well as other graduate schools for social work. The findings of this in-depth study provide insight into how students' incorporate the SCSSW's anti-racism mission into their field practicum experiences. This study attempts to expand the existing empirical knowledge base on students' anti-racism learning and practice and to further understand the factors which influence racial dialogues in the context of field supervision.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews pertinent literature related to the study questions: (1) what are the experiences of master's students at the Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW) in talking with field supervisors about issues of race?; (2) according to students' perceptions, what are the factors that facilitate, and interfere with, discussions of race in field supervision?; and (3) does year in graduate school or completed graduate training and coursework in issues of race predict students' comfort discussing issues of race in field supervision?

Conceptual and empirical literature from several areas will be reviewed in this chapter in order to provide the rationale for this thesis. The literature review is presented in six sections: (1) conceptualizations of race; (2) issues of race in the social work profession; (3) SCSSW's anti-racism commitment and education; (4) clinical social work supervision; (5) issues of race and racial dialogues in clinical supervision; and (6) an explanation for the present study's focus on issues of race and the SCSSW's anti-racism mission statement. Throughout this chapter, relevant conceptual papers and empirical studies are reviewed and critiqued.

Conceptualizations of Race

This section offers a brief examination of how race has been conceptualized in the social sciences. A definition of race for this study emerges from the interpersonal fields of counseling psychology, sociology and anthropology. First, this section examines some

of the trends and challenges in defining and studying the construct of race. Next, the emerging importance of racial identity theory is examined. While there is a wealth of literature that focuses on the evolution of the concept of race in the United States, for the purposes of this thesis study, a concise review is offered.

Trends and Challenges in Defining and Studying Race

This sub-section provides a succinct review of the current trends and tensions among social scientists in studying and conceptualizing the construct of race. Counseling psychologists have identified the unique challenges in defining and studying race (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). For instance, Cokley (2007) noted that one challenge concerns the "competing conceptualizations and measurements [of race] that are influenced by ideology, political climate, and adherence to old paradigms as much as by advances in science" (p.224). Trimble (2007) explained that "the increasing observation that humans have multiple, intertwined identities that influence one another in ways that are not fully understood" has complicated the search for a distinct and separate definition of race (p.247).

A specific tension among scholars concerns the conceptual confusion between the construct of race and other potentially overlapping terms (e.g., ethnicity) (Trimble, 2007) – with some scholars acknowledging race and ethnicity as synonymous terms, and other defining them as distinct constructs. For instance, the American Anthropological Association (1997) explained that the race and ethnicity are comparable social constructs:

...By treating race and ethnicity as fundamentally different...the historical evolution of these category types is largely ignored. For example, today's ethnicities are yesterday's races. In the early 20th century in the U.S., Italians, the Irish, and Jews were all thought to be racial (not ethnic) groups whose members

were inherently and irredeemably distinct from the majority of white population. (para. 20).

In contrast, Helms and Talleyrand (1997) criticized the literature for too often and incorrectly using the term ethnicity as a euphemism and proxy for race. Instead, they argued that race is a distinct construct, with a clear meaning in psychology and American society that differs from that of ethnicity (p.1246).

Current scholarly thinking among anthropologists and social scientists debunks definitions of race that stem from biological or genetic variation. Instead, they emphasize that race as a social construction is very real and derives its meaning from the social, political, economic, and cultural context in which it exists and is formulated (Miller & Garran, 2008). The American Anthropological Association (1999) provided empirical support for the idea that race is not a legitimate biological or genetic construct. They found that while certain groups of people have clear physical differences (i.e., skin tone, hair color and texture, and facial features), far greater genetic variation exists within – rather than between – "racial" groups. However, as Miller and Garran (2008) explained:

Thinking of all humankind as a single species certainly is not how race has been conceptualized, particularly in the Western world. And it certainly does not mesh with how "racial" groups have been treated historically in the United States and many other parts of the world today" (p.15).

Moreover, NASW (2007) acknowledged that physical traits still have meaning as markers of racial identity. Smedley and Smedley (2005) noted that it is this social race identity that confers placement in the social hierarchy of society, and thereby access to or denial of privileges, power, and wealth. As Pinderhughes (1989) explained: "The status assignment based on skin color identity has evolved into complex social structures that promote power differential between whites and various people of color" (p.17).

While social work accrediting institutions and major organizations agree that race is a social construction, they make an effort to emphasize that racism—a system of advantage based on race—is very much a concrete reality in American society (Miller & Garran, 2008; National Association of Social Workers, 2007). The positions of these social work institutions on issues of race and racism are discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

"Race as a social construct" has profound implications for empirical examinations of race. For instance, Holloway (1995) explained that when examined in isolation as independent variables, racial characteristics do not take into account the interactive context in which meaning is created for the individual involved. Similarly, the American Psychological Association (2003) has questioned whether race, in itself, is a discrete, measurable, and scientifically meaningful variable from which causality can be assumed. These findings have profound meaning for the present study which examines the experiences of social work students discussing issues of race in field supervision.

In summary, current conceptual and empirical literature has identified the unique challenges in defining and studying the construct of race. The current position among major social work organizations and accrediting institutions (e.g., Council for Social Work Education; National Association of Social Workers) is that the meaning of race has been defined and contested throughout society; and that race is a complex and ever-evolving social construction, which takes on different meanings and definitions based on the social, economic, and political context in which it exists and is studied. These current trends in the way race is conceptualized in social work education holds importance for

the present study, which examines the experiences of social work graduate students talking about issues of race in the social context of field agencies. These findings also have profound meaning for a clinical social work supervision relationship, which is rooted in the unequal distribution of power and relative advantage. Race can clearly confound the clinical relationship if one is not aware of the definitions and meanings contained therein.

Racial Identity Theory

This sub-section examines racial identity – a concept which takes into account individual perspectives and experiences of one's own racial group as well as members of other racial groups. First developed in the 1970s among counselors and psychologists, racial identity theories were utilized to focus the attention away from the idea that racial group membership alone dictates how people react in a wide range of therapy and counseling situations (Reynolds & Baluch, 2001). Examining the construct of race through the lens of racial identity allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the differential meanings race can acquire in the contexts of interpersonal relationships.

A definition of racial identity for the present study is derived from counseling psychology literature and involves the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral processes that govern an individual's interpretation of racial information, including how one feels, thinks and behaves in regard to oneself, others within one's identified racial group, and others not belonging to the identified racial group (Helms, 1990). Psychoanalytic literature has defined racial identity as the interpersonal aspects of one's understanding of the self and other as racial beings to which historical, socioeconomic, political, familial, and intrapsychic events all contribute (Suchet, 2004).

Counseling and social work literature has shown that racial identity development differs across individuals (Helms, 1990). First, Miehl (2001) explained that as a result of the combined influence of personality characteristics, reference group orientation, and ascribed identity, individuals may identify with their respective racial backgrounds in different ways. He further posited that individuals who are exposed to racial oppression on a continuous basis (e.g., "racial minorities" or persons of color) may experience race to be an extremely salient part of their identity or part of their pervasive conscious awareness. In contrast, those who reap societal privileges (e.g., the "dominant" white group) may be less aware of their racial selves (Miehl). Similarly, Helms (1990) explained that the pathway of racial identity development differs for whites and for people of color. Helms and Cook (1999) posited that the transformative process for people of color in the United States begins with the passive acceptance of the self as inferior to the dominant, white group. It eventually culminates in overcoming internalized racism and developing a self-affirming identity. For white individuals, the identity development process entails an acknowledgement of their false sense of racial superiority and eventually adopting a non-racist identity (Helms & Cook). These findings have implications for a major objective of social work education; that is, for educators to impart knowledge that helps students engage in critical self-reflection about power and inequality (Millstein, 1997, p.491). Individual differences in racial identity development also have meaning for racial discussions in the context of interpersonal clinical relationships.

Summary

This concise review of literature suggests that the present study – which examines SCSSW students’ experiences discussing issues of race with field supervisors – must take into account the historical trends and challenges in defining the construct of race in the fields of counseling and therapy. The emergence of racial identity theories in relational research has allowed for a more complex examination of the emotional, cognitive and behavioral processes that govern an individual's interpretation of racial information in the context of interpersonal relationships. These findings have meaning for the present study, which examines the interactive context of social work field supervision as a forum for conversations about issues of race. The next section presents a brief review of the ways racial issues have been addressed in the social work profession, historically and currently.

Issues of Race in the Social Work Profession

A limited review of the systems through which the social work profession has evolved historically and into the present demonstrates that the social workers have inconsistently acknowledged and addressed issues of race and racism. As the president of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Elvira Craig de Silva, explained:

The social work profession...is part of a larger society in which policies, resources, and practices are designed to benefit some groups significantly more than others, while simultaneously denying the existence of racism as a variable, except in its most extreme forms (NASW, 2006, p.3)

This section reviews the evolution of the social work profession’s stance toward issues of race during the Progressive era; the New Deal era; the 60s and 70s; and in the present

day. Considerations are made for the relevance of this historical review for the present study.

A review of the history of the social work profession demonstrates that the profession inconsistently addressed the needs of people of color. For instance, Lasch-Quinn (1993) and Miller and Garran (2008) critiqued that during the Progressive Era from approximately 1890 to 1945, the American settlement house movement – including two forerunners of the social work profession, the Charity Organization Societies and white-run settlement houses – failed to respond adequately to the needs of African Americans and other people of color. While making early progress in helping white, foreign-born immigrants adjust to life in American cities, many of the settlement houses banned African Americans from their programs; thus, clinging to the commonly held prejudices of the existing society (Lasch-Quinn). Instead, large groups of "colored people" in a predominantly white neighborhoods established a separate branch – a mentality which led to the creation of African American settlement houses with limited access to resources and short life spans as "separate and unequal" (Kraus, 1980).

In 1909, social workers Mary White Ovington and Henry Moskowitz, among others, helped organize black and white people to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which aimed to protect the legal and social rights of black people and other minority groups. The NAACP continues to be the nation's oldest civil rights organization with an impressive track record of advocating for social justice concerns of a diverse membership (NAACP, n.d).

During the New Deal era, only a small, radical group of social workers—the "Rank and File"—criticized the New Deal for propping up capitalism and failing to deal

with profound social inequities and injustices. Otherwise, many social workers fully supported the New Deal programs, which were structured and shaped by societal racism (Miller & Garren, 2008). In 1955, a year after *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled that racial segregation in public schools is unconstitutional, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) was created through the merger of seven social work organizations. Membership was restricted to members of the seven associations and subsequently to master's degree-level workers graduating from accredited schools of social work (Barker, 1995). During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960s, an unmatched tide of social change generated a passion for social justice, and many new social workers entered the profession (Miller & Garran, 2008). Social workers participated in the Civil Rights Movement, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a massive civil rights march on Washington. When conditions of racism and economic exclusion in cities led to massive social unrest and high rates of unemployment, social workers worked to enroll clients in welfare and civil rights education (Miller & Garran). In 1968, a group of black social workers founded the National Association of Black Social Workers "in response to the need for educational institutions to revamp curricula and to demonstrate concern, appreciation, and understanding of all races and ethnic groups reflected in the social welfare service arena" (NABSW, n.d.). In the same year, the National Association of Puerto Rican Social Service Workers (NAPRSSW) and the Asian American Social Workers (AASW) were founded (Barker, 1995). As with the work of Ovington and Moscovitz, these organizations sprang up in response to the perception that the overarching governing body for the social work profession – NASW – was not meeting the needs of its entire constituency.

In 1984, Barbara White—a female of color and president of NASW from 1991-1992—embarked on a mission to challenge racism at the individual, organizational and societal levels in her seminal book, *Color in a White Society*, which reaffirmed the profession's commitment to clients and social workers of color. Current NASW president, Craig de Silva (2007) explained that as a result of this book, "the voices of social workers of color were lifted up, and the association became more invested in the issues of people and communities of color" (para. 4). While it is clear that racial "issues from that day continue into this day," NASW and other major social work institutions have implemented measures which represent a marked shift from the turn of the last century in addressing issues of racism (Craig de Silva, para. 5). For instance, NASW's code of ethics (2008) incorporates an anti-racism stance as one of its defining characteristics:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty...Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice (para. 1).

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which maintains Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) and acts as the accrediting body for schools of social work, acknowledges the profession's commitment to anti-oppression and anti-discrimination as well as the role of social work programs in promoting these principles (CSWE, 2004). In 2006, the CSWE Board of Directors approved the creation of a Center for Diversity and Social and Economic Justice, the mission of which outlines a commitment to the education and training of beginning social workers in diversity issues:

Social work education has the obligation and the commitment to provide future social workers with the intellectual and practical skills needed to address issues of diversity and social and economic justice and to understand how the structures of power and privilege limit equal opportunity for all (CSWE, 2006, p.2).

In summary, the social work profession has come a long way in acknowledging and challenging the pervasive effects of racism. Initially, the social work profession was quite slow to take an inclusive stance with regard to race and ethnicity, as only century ago settlement houses were discriminatory and selective in their operation. However, over time and through a range of initiatives, the profession has indeed come to recognize the need for a more deliberate and integrated approach to anti-racism initiatives. The next section examines the SCSSW's progress toward becoming an anti-racism institution.

Smith College School for Social Work's Anti-Racism Mission

A review of the websites of the first top 10 social work graduate schools (U.S. News & World Report, 2008) revealed that SCSSW has adopted a unique anti-racism commitment as part of its mission. While other graduate institutions seemed to require foundational coursework in issues of diversity, SCSSW stood out as an institution specifically committed to combating the oppressive nature of racism.

This section examines the unique anti-racism mission adopted by the Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW) and is organized in the following way: (1) the process of change at SCSSW toward becoming an anti-racism institution; (2) current SCSSW's anti-racism stance and mission statement; (3) anti-racism training and preparation at SCSSW; and (4) conceptual and empirical literature on the SCSSW anti-racism mission.

Development of Anti-Racism Commitment at SCSSW

The SCSSW shares with the social work profession its historic and evolving commitment to anti-racism. Major changes took place at SCSSW between the years of 1994 and 1997. In the summer of 1994, both students of color and white students at SCSSW held a demonstration outside the administration building to express their discontent about the isolation students of color were experiencing in the Racism in the U.S. course at the time (Vaughn, 2008). The students' actions led to a series of faculty-student-administration dialogues. As adjunct professor, Fred Newdom, explained in his speech to SCSSW students about the School's anti-racism commitment:

Plainly and simply, we made the decision [to focus on becoming an anti-racism institution]...because we believed that racism has a unique legacy in this country with our history of slavery and Jim Crow laws, the internment of Japanese residents during World War II, race-based immigration laws, the denial of entry to Jewish refugees from the Holocaust, and the near genocide of Native people, and it seemed critical for us to afford that legacy a place of primacy in our overall work against oppression. In this country's current climate, in which Muslims and people of Arabic and South Asian descent are radically profiled as potential terrorist threats and where the racial fault lines exposed by Hurricane Katrina are still apparent, it is clear that racism is still very much with us (Newdom, 2007, p.3)

In 1994, the faculty voted to ensure that the School's goals, course objectives, and field placement experiences were informed by an anti-racism stance (SCSSW, 2008). This mission represents a groundbreaking effort on the part of the school to advance core values of the social work profession.

Anti-Racism Training and Preparation at SCSSW

Under the School's Block Plan, three successive 10-week summer sessions are devoted exclusively to academic work, and the two intervening fall/winter sessions are reserved for field work (SCSSW, 2008). Since adopting the anti-racism mission, the

School supports students and faculty in acknowledging and challenging racism through required completion of a variety of coursework and workshops throughout the program. During the summer months, several activities prepare students to anti-racism work, which include: coursework in race and racism (e.g., Sociocultural Concepts in the first year; Racism in the United States course in the second), an anti-racism symposium (required for students in their first year), and student groups which organize around anti-racism. Additionally, resident faculty participate in ongoing monthly anti-racism dialogues and trainings; adjunct faculty attend training sessions on anti-racism work at Fall and Spring meetings; and the School sponsors an ongoing group for faculty each summer dedicated to anti-racism pedagogy (SCSSW, 2008).

Over the past 15 years, empirical and conceptual studies examined the SCSSW's anti-racism efforts. First, Basham, Donner and Killough (1997) discussed the processes of change at SCSSW toward becoming an anti-racism institution and the emergence of the Anti-racism Task Force. The article documented the School's anti-racism efforts in the following areas: the mission statement; curriculum; recruitment and hiring; faculty development and diversity training; and the design of anti-racism practice in field internships. Second, Basham, Donner and Everett (2001) collected data from a series of focus groups with field advisors, supervisors, and students to document the SCSSW's process in creating and implementing a required anti-racism field assignment – an assignment which continues to provide students the opportunity to develop anti-racism skills as part of professional learning. The study identified the field supervisor's role in helping students incorporate anti-racism work in the field; however, the voices of SCSSW master's students (only 16%) were underrepresented. Further, the study limited

attention to the anti-racism field assignment—only one way students may incorporate anti-racism work in the field. Finally, Vaughn (2008) interviewed SCSSW faculty, staff and alumni for her master's thesis project to document the organizational changes involved in the establishment of the SCSSW's commitment to anti-racism during the years 1993-1998. She identified the need for future research to examine both "students' perceptions of the anti-racism commitment" as well as "how do students conceptualize the anti-racism commitment?" (Vaughn, p.145).

While these studies made important contributions to the knowledge base on the SCSSW's anti-racism commitment, no systematic inquiry has focused on SCSSW master's students' experiences exclusively, as they incorporate anti-racism work into their field education. The next section presents a brief discussion of this crucial aspect of a social work student's training.

Field Education

This section reviews theoretical literature to demonstrate the importance of field education and its place in the social work curriculum. Additionally, information particular to the SCSSW program is presented.

Field education is a required and integral component of the social work curriculum in graduate programs in accredited schools of social work in the United States (EPAS, 2002). Through field education, students learn to utilize and apply theory and knowledge studied in academic courses to practice. Kadushin (1991, 11) found that social work students believed the field practicum to be "the most significant, most productive, most memorable component of social work education."

Under SCSSW's curriculum, field placement extends for eight months, from September through April, with students spending 30 hours a week in their agencies. During this time, the School requires master's students to complete two anti-racism assignments. First-year students complete an "Agency Assessment," which focuses in part on the placement agency policies and practices as they relate to issues of race and to anti-racism work. Second-year students complete an Agency Assessment and, in collaboration with their placement agency, they develop and implement a piece of anti-racism work, known as the Anti-racism Project. Preparation and support for these assignments is provided through race-related summer coursework and workshops as well as through faculty field advisors and the Field Department's training for students, supervisors and training directors (SCSSW, 2008).

The School provides students, faculty field advisors, and field supervisors with the Guidelines for Field Practicum (SCSSW, 2008), which outlines the School's commitment to anti-racism, student requirements and responsibilities, as well as statements of the School's major field-related policies as of 2008-2009 academic year. Field agencies are encouraged to provide students with a caseload that represents diversity (e.g., in terms of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, and environmental situations). The field office expects that faculty, students and the agency supervisors will familiarize themselves with the Guidelines for Field Practicum (SCSSW).

Field instructors and faculty field advisors are oriented to all aspects of the School's mission statement in order to make the learning seamless for the students. Each summer, field instructors are invited to campus for a four-day orientation and on-going

training that addresses key aspects of the curriculum and field requirements, including the anti-racism work required by the school (SCSSW, 2008). Field instructors and faculty field advisors alike are invited to participate in these activities in order to be better prepared to help meet the learning needs of the students once the placement experience is underway. The next section of this literature review examines in greater detail the importance of clinical supervision in the field of social work, particularly with regard to anti-racism and diversity efforts.

Clinical Social Work Supervision

This section reviews the evolution of social work supervision and identifies new directions cited in the literature. The organization of this section is as follows: (1) a brief overview of the historical development of supervisory practice in the field of social work; (2) a description of theoretical contributions on social work supervision; (3) a review of the small amount of empirical research on the supervision of social work students in their field placements; and (4) a conceptual framework of social work supervision defined for this present study.

Brief History of Social Work Supervision

The early history of social work supervision from the 1890s to the 1930s closely parallels the evolution of the social work profession (Bruce & Austin, 2000). The social workers of the Charity Organizations and settlement houses needed an administrative structure that provided periodic supervisory feedback and accountability. When schools of social work first developed around this time, students received supervision in their field work from a member of the American Association of Social Workers, which reflected an apprenticeship model rather than an educationally-focused approach. It was

not until the post World War II era (1945-1990) that most of the texts on social work supervision were published (Bruce & Austin). With the establishment of the Council on Social Work Education in the mid-1950s, educational terms began to be used when referring to field work, including the need to train field supervisors as field instructors (Raskin, 2005). Since the mid-1970s, theoretical and empirical body of knowledge on social work supervision has flourished with prominent social work professionals. Founded in 1983 by editor Munson, *The Clinical Supervisor*—an interdisciplinary journal of supervision in psychotherapy and mental health—paved the way for more social work supervisors and researchers to disseminate innovations, observations, and empirical findings (Bogo & McKnight, 2005).

Over the past 20 years, changes in public social welfare policy and regulatory developments (e.g., the emergence of managed care and welfare reform) have increased the demand for accountability, efficiency and productivity on limited financial resources (Bruce & Austin, 2008). Supervising students under these new realities places new emphasis on skills related to assessing outcomes, monitoring systems and managing resources. More specifically, welfare reform has shifted the focus from client dependency to client self-sufficiency, placing new pressures on workers and supervisors to use interventions that enable clients to assume increased responsibility for their lives (Bruce & Austin).

Theoretical Perspectives on Social Work Supervision

This section includes a description and analysis of the following theoretical perspectives on social work supervision: (1) Kadushin's *Supervision in Social Work* (1992); (2) Shulman's *Interactional Supervision* (1993); (3) Munson's *Clinical Social*

Work Supervision (1983); and (4) Tsui and Ho's *In Search of a Comprehensive Model of Social Work Supervision* (1997).

First, Kadushin (1992) posited that three predominant aspects of social work supervision included administrative, educational, and supportive components. He believed that these components were most important because they encompassed the supervisor's multiple roles as task-oriented manager, authority figure, instructive teacher and supportive role model. He also emphasized the importance of the supervisee-supervisor relationship in providing "the psychological and interpersonal context that enables the worker to mobilize the emotional energy needed for effective job performance" (p.227). Second, Shulman (1993) proposed an interactional, or parallel process, supervision approach, in which supervisees are educated about their interaction with clients by using the supervisory interaction as a model for relationship-building and strengthening. Through interactional supervision, Shulman explained that the supervisor interacts with multiple systems, irrespective of the type of social work agency, to provide educational and supportive opportunities for students. Third, Munson (1983) used a clinical social work framework to examine supervisory practice. She focused on three domains of practice – the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee; the relationship between the supervisee and the client; and the administrative aspects of clinical supervision. Finally, Tsui and Ho (1997) identified limitations of existing models of social work supervision: that the supervisory relationship, defined only between the supervisor and supervisee, was oversimplified and limited "the scope of meaningful discussion and analysis" (p.196); and that culture, as a major context for supervision, has not received enough attention in practice and research. Tsui and Ho provided a holistic

definition of social work supervision: a multi-faceted, interactive relationship between four parties – the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee, and the client – as embedded in a cultural context.

A review of the theoretical literature on social work supervision demonstrates that many scholars have contributed to a comprehensive picture of social work supervision. From their contributing works, it is clear that the process of supervision is not an easily conceptualized or straightforward phenomenon; rather, it involves: (1) administrative, educational, cultural, interactive, parallel process, and supportive components; and (2) the multi-faceted, interactive relationship among four parties – the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee, and the client. Further, while theory implicates the importance the cultural context on supervision, there is a dearth of empirical knowledge to support these claims.

Research on Social Work Field Supervision

This section reviews empirical studies, which specifically refer to the professional education of social work students in the field practicum. Appropriate caution must be used in generalizing from the conclusions drawn due to the limits of the research designs – such as, small samples; scales that have not established reliability and validity; reliance on survey and exploratory methods; and use of satisfaction as the sole outcome measure.

First, Fortune and Abramson (1993) surveyed social work graduate students (N=142) and demonstrated the critical function of the field supervisory relationship in promoting student learning and practicum satisfaction. Further, they found that students identified "preferred" affective (e.g., trust, support, openness, availability) and teaching components (e.g., active learning; encouragement; autonomy; self-expression; critical feedback; routine meetings) associated with a high quality field supervisory relationship.

Next, Knight (2000, 2001) surveyed social work students (N=500) and identified the field supervisor's dynamic and evolving role, which required a variety of approaches depending upon where the student is in the learning process (e.g., first-year or second-year placement). First-year students preferred more task-focused supervision (e.g. agency orientation; clear performance expectations; autonomy; case review), which second-year students preferred more supportive, interactional supervision (e.g., applying theory to practice; self-reflection; sharing thoughts and feelings). Knight also demonstrated that frequency and length of supervisory sessions predicted student satisfaction in supervision. Third, Giddings, Vodde, and Cleveland (2003) surveyed social workers nationally (N=2,000) and identified negative supervisor behaviors, which included: lack of structure and feedback; authoritarian or rigid teaching; insensitivity to student needs; unprofessional, boundary-violating behavior; and racial bias.

In summary, the limited empirical research on field supervision of social work students identified two major themes: (1) the field supervisory relationship holds critical importance for the students' learning and satisfaction in the field; and (2) students prefer certain supervisor behaviors, which differ based on students' evolving learning needs and year in placement.

Much empirical research in social work field supervision identifies supervisor behaviors, which correlate with students' satisfaction in the supervisory relationship and in the field placement. However, a dearth of literature examines social work students' experiences discussing certain issues with supervisors or the factors which influence their comfort doing so. The present study aims to examine this gap in the knowledge base by

examining SCSSW students' experiences talking with field supervisors about issues of race.

Definition of Supervision for the Present Study

After close examination of the historical background and recent trends as well as the theoretical and empirical models of social work supervision, the present study conceptualized social work supervision based on the following four principles: (1) Supervision is an interpersonal process in which the experienced and competent supervisor imparts knowledge on the supervisee and ensures the quality of service to clients; (2) Supervision involves administrative, educational, interactional, parallel process, and supportive components; (3) Supervision is a multi-faceted and interactive process among the agency, supervisor, supervisee, and client; and (4) Contextual factors (e.g., needs, expectations, educational background, culture, politics) of the agency, supervisor, supervisee, and client all greatly influence the supervisory process.

Further, the present study aims to explore SCSSW master's students' experiences talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to three "contextual factors of supervision" – the supervisory relationship; the counseling relationship; and the field agency structure and climate. The "contextual factors of supervision" for the present study are defined here and in Appendix A:

Supervisory Relationship: The dynamic, relational process between supervisor and supervisee; topics may involve: the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with the supervisor or about their professional learning process; both the supervisor and supervisee exploring how their backgrounds, expectations, prior experiences impact the supervisory relationship.

Counseling Relationship: The dynamic, relational process between client and supervisee/therapist/student; topics may involve: client characteristics; client identified presenting problem and diagnosis; parallel process dynamics, as

manifested in supervision; the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with clients.

Field Agency Structure and Climate: The context of the institutional organization in which the student and supervisor work; topics may include: organizational clientele; the roles prescribed to supervisor and supervisee by the organization; organizational norms, politics; organizational supports and stressors; organizational goals, policy and procedures; service setting.

This extensive review emphasizes the need for social work supervision research, which takes into account the multi-faceted and dynamic influence of socio-cultural contextual factors on supervision. The next section examines the existing theory and empirical research, which explores discussions about issues of race in clinical supervision.

Addressing Issues of Race in Supervision

Increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the United States population and changes in health care reform over the past 20 years call for increased attention to issues of race in human service agencies. This shift has become increasingly salient for social work students, as they participate in their field placements. The major social work organizations emphasize that effective social work training and practice requires, among other things, the ability to talk about race and racism. At Smith College School for Social Work, "deepening conversations about race shape the School's anti-racism mission." Originally composed and adopted in 1994, with the most recent version revised and voted into use in 2004, the SCSSW anti-racism statement provides a description of what its mission entails:

The Smith College School for Social Work is committed to addressing the pernicious and enduring multilayered effects of racism. Anti-racism initiatives promote respect for and interest in multiple world views, values, and cultures. The School for Social Work develops and teaches knowledge, skills and values that

enhance the ability to mutually affirm each other's equal place in the world. In addition, self-reflection and deepening conversations about race shape the School's anti-racism mission and promote culturally responsive practice, research and scholarship, and other anti-racism activities (SCSSW, 2004, para. 2).

In addition to summer coursework and training at SCSSW, master's social work students have unique opportunities to move towards increased articulation about race-related issues in field supervision. Despite this reality, students' experiences of racial dialogues with field supervisors, and the clinical manifestations thereof, have not received sufficient attention in empirical social work research. This section reviews existing theory and research on this topic.

This section examines counseling, psychology and social work empirical literature on issues of race in supervision. The gaps in empirical knowledge will be identified, which justify the need for the present study. This section is divided into three sub-sections: (1) talking with supervisors about issues of race; (2) the importance and frequency of discussions of race in supervision; and (3) the factors affecting discussion of race in supervision.

Talking about Issues of Race with Supervisors

Based on the earlier reviews on the construct of race and on social work supervision, "talking about issues of race with supervisors" for the present study is defined as: any topic about race that comes up in the ongoing interaction between supervisor and supervisee and which is verbally communicated. Specific topics about race may include: emotional, cognitive and behavioral processes that govern an individual's interpretation of racial information; racial group membership or identification; social identity characteristics or features; individual backgrounds; life

experiences; societal, institutional, legal, historical or relational issues related to race; how one feels, thinks and behaves in regard to race; the intersection of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds within the relationship that may include the discussion of relevant cultural issues in a combined effort to provide effective counseling and supervisory processes (Daniels, D'Andrea & Kim, 1997).

Addressing Issues of Race in Supervision – Importance and Frequency

Theoretical literature supports the importance of addressing issues of race in supervision – both for the students' and clients' benefit. Miehl (2001) explained that social work students benefit from the opportunity to examine and articulate their increasingly complex racial identity statuses in the context of interpersonal dialogues (e.g., between student and supervisor):

The identity development of the social worker is more complicated than learning self-awareness or dealing with countertransference; rather, it is about entering into a dialogical exchange with an Other in which each partner can be profoundly influenced (p.239).

According to Miehl (2001), such "a dialogical exchange" works to accelerate the development of racial identity statuses as well as the development of informed, racially-sensitive social work clinicians. Cook (1994) explained that if supervisors do not assist students in addressing racial issues in supervision, clients may be denied opportunities to explore a basic part of their identities and the influence of their racial identities on interpersonal relationships. Bernard and Goodyear (1998) emphasized that discussing the impact of racial diversity and similarity on the supervisory dyad may be the single most powerful intervention for effective multicultural supervision to occur.

Much of the empirical research identifying the importance and frequency of addressing issues of race in supervision comes from the fields of clinical and counseling psychology. For instance, Fukuyama (1994) interviewed former racial and ethnic minority pre-doctoral interns who reported that discussions of race were a salient aspect of clinical supervision. Constantine (1997) conducted a qualitative study with pre-doctoral interns and their supervisors and found that

Failure to discuss or explore the potential plethora of important demographic variables that may be present in supervision relationships may adversely affect the quality, content, process, and outcome of such relationships (p.316).

Constantine also found that the supervisory dyads spent only an average of 15% of their supervision time addressing racial or cultural issues. Likewise, Gatmon, Jackson, Koshkarian, Martos-Perry, Molina, Patel, and Rodolfa (2001) surveyed pre-doctoral psychology interns and their supervisors and found that limited discussions occurred (only 32% of the time) about the similarities and differences regarding ethnicity issues in the supervision relationship, with the supervisors and supervisees reporting different frequencies. Duan and Roehlke (2001) also found that supervisees and supervisors reported disparate frequencies for discussions of cultural and racial issues as related to the supervisory relationship, with supervisors reporting more frequent discussions than supervisees.

Factors Affecting Discussions of Race in Supervision

Apart from the frequency and importance of race-related discussions, counseling psychology and social work literature has identified that certain factors tend to influence discussions about race in supervision. Several smaller sections present these factors, which include: (1) racial composition; (2) racial identity attitudes and development; (3)

role of supervisor as initiator; (4) graduate coursework and professional training; and (5) students' comfort level.

Racial composition. Counseling psychologists have found inconsistent empirical support for the effect of race on the supervision process and outcome. For instance, Vander Kolk, (1974) found that students of color, as compared to white students, expected their supervisors to be less empathic, respectful and supportive. Helms and Cook (1988) reported that "visible racial minority" students' perceptions of their supervisors' positive feelings for them predicted these students' satisfaction in supervision. Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, and Pope-Davis (2004) found that 15-16% of supervisees in cross-racial supervisory dyads experienced negative events with supervisors, such as: cultural insensitivity toward supervisee or clients; questioning supervisees' clinical abilities; and challenging use of specific interventions with cultural diverse clients. This study did not specify the racial composition of the "cross-racial" dyads. Gardner (2002) found that among Black student and white supervisor dyads, some students reported difficulties with their supervisors (e.g., incompatible language or communication styles; personality conflicts). While these studies cite *race* as the variable of effect, Holloway's (1995) critique – that causality can not be assumed from racial characteristics alone – is relevant in interpreting these findings. Further, these findings also showed that the supervisory relationship is likely to be a function of the student's and supervisor's expectations, power discrepancies, personality characteristics, cultural attitudes, communication differences, ethnic or racial group identifications, as well as the interaction among these characteristics. For instance, as Burkard et al. (2006) clearly demonstrated, racial identity development of supervisor and supervisee influenced

the supervisory relationship, but not cross-cultural match. Similarly, Hilton et al. (1995) found no effect for race on students' evaluations of supervision. Instead, they found that supervisory support influenced supervisees' evaluations of supervision.

In summary, counseling research has inconsistently demonstrated an effect for race on the supervision process and outcome. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the supervisory dyads' personality characteristics, expectations, racial identity attitudes, and racial group memberships work together to influence the supervisory relationship.

Racial identity attitudes and development. As explained above, the racial identity attitudes and development of the supervisor and supervisee may have an effect on discussions of race in supervision. As reviewed in this section, conceptual and empirical literature in counseling psychology emphasizes that the ways in which racial identity attitudes affect interpersonal relationships greatly differs from that of racial group membership.

According to Helms (1990), racial identity development is a cyclical, evolving and impressionable process. One individual may exhibit a variety of responses to race (or racial identity attitudes) simultaneously or across situations. Two individuals of the same or different races may exhibit similar (or parallel) responses to race based on shared attitudes about whites and people of color. Or, two individuals of the same or different races may exhibit different (or crossed) responses to race based on divergent racial attitudes. Helms explained that power dynamics may influence whether the merging of two individuals' racial identity attitudes (as parallel or crossed) influences the racial identity development of each individual involved. Based on Helm's model, Cook (1994)

theorized how racial issues might be discussed in supervision based on the various racial identity attitudes of the supervisor and supervisee. Inherent in Cook's hypothesis was her position that the supervisor holds the most social power in the supervisory relationship due to the professional credentials of supervisors, their evaluative role, and their responsibility for clients' welfare. Thus, Cook theorized that the supervisor is in a position to influence—either consciously or unconsciously—the student's racial attitudes, behaviors and development as well as the degree to which the student is open in expressing his or her feelings and thoughts about issues of race.

As empirical support for Cook's theory (1994), Ladany, Bethlehem, Brittan-Powell, and Pannu (1997) surveyed counseling psychology graduate students and demonstrated that supervisor-student racial identity interactions predicted aspects of the supervisory alliance. Specifically, students who paralleled their supervisors' racial identity attitudes reported the strongest working alliances (e.g., agreement on tasks and goals; emotional bond). However, students who were "more advanced" in racial identity attitudes and development than their supervisors reported the weakest supervisory alliance.

In summary, conceptual and empirical counseling literature suggests that racial identity attitudes may affect how racial issues are discussed in social work field supervision more than racial group membership alone. Sharing similar racial identity attitudes with supervisors may contribute to the development of a strong supervisory relationship. Further, the supervisor may have the power to influence the student's comfort or willingness to share his or her attitudes and feelings about race in supervision.

This next section looks more closely at the role the supervisor has in race-related conversations in supervision.

Role of supervisor as initiator. Prior research establishing the importance of addressing issues of race in supervision found that supervisors have the task of helping supervisees explore their own and their clients' racial identity attitudes (Leong & Wagner, 1994) by initiating and stressing the importance of such discussions (Constantine, 1997). Bernard and Goodyear (1998) emphasized the importance of the "willingness of the supervisor to open the cultural door and walk through it with the supervisee" (p.45). Helms and Cook (1999) explained that supervisors, with more ascribed social power than students, are responsible for creating an atmosphere in which issues of race can be explored. For instance, they suggested that the supervisor can allow

race to enter into the room [by discussing] the various implications of the supervisor's, the supervisee's, and the client's racial and cultural socialization, and the effects of the interactions among these dimensions on the supervisory process (p.283).

Helms and Cook (1999) also emphasized the supervisor's willingness to examine and share their own racial perspectives in supervision; permit the examination of individual differences; avoid sweeping generalizations about various racial and ethnic groups; discuss racial identity within a general discussion of the principles of professional growth and development, rather than in the history of casting and denying blame; and explore students' expectations and assumptions about supervision, their previous supervisory experiences, and their personal goals for supervision (Helms & Cook). Further, Cook (1994) explained that the supervisor's response to the student's willingness to initiate the topic of race can determine the depth of the discussions. For instance, the supervisor may

intuit that the supervisee does not recognize race as an important factor in therapy and supervision. Subsequently, the supervisee may feel discouraged from exploring racial issues further for fear of negative evaluation (Cook).

Race-related graduate coursework and professional training. Empirical literature in counseling psychology has demonstrated that while supervisors are responsible for fostering students' cultural competence and ensuring adequate treatment for clients of color, many supervisors have been trained minimally in diversity issues (Constantine & Sue, 2007). Constantine (1997) surveyed supervisory dyads and found that only 30% of supervisors (compared to 70% of students) completed coursework in multicultural counseling issues. Duan and Roehlke (2001) reported that 93% of supervisors in their study had no experience supervising trainees who were racially or culturally different from them. Burkard et al. (2006) found that the discrepancy between supervisor and student in race-related training contributed to relational conflicts in supervision. Moreover, studies have demonstrated that many supervisors have not been sufficiently trained to address race-related issues in supervision practice.

Student's comfort level. Another aspect of the supervisory relationship that might impede a student's desire to explore racial issues further is his or her comfort level. The students' comfort level may be influenced by the strong affect (e.g., anger, fear, shame, denial, guilt), which the topic of race tends to carry (Miller & Garran, 2008). Helms & Cook (1999) explained that students' hesitation to initiate discussions of race may be due to their anxiety or fear of being offensive, hurting or alienating the other person, or being judged for saying the wrong thing. Pinderhughes (1989) explained that naturally humans may feel a sense of fear, anxiety and confusion when dealing with "difference," which

tends to trigger feelings of being alone, isolated or lacking connection to others. A narcissistic injury may be felt when faced with difference:

Experiences related to cultural differences can cause people to develop negative, ambivalent, or confused perceptions, feelings and attitudes about themselves and others. Such internalization can prompt one to behave in unhelpful ways toward others and thus can compromise the ability of the practitioner (Pinderhughes, 1989, p. 1).

Shelton and Richeson (2005) demonstrated that white students, in particular, may hold back from participating in "inter-racial dialogues" for fear of appearing prejudice, undesirable, and selfish. They found that students of color may be reticent to risk confirming negative stereotypes held by whites. Further, the process of examining who one is "when one comes into contact with an 'other' who brings different views, values, and opinions to a dialogue" can be uncomfortable (Miehls, 2001, p.235). While "progressive" or well-intentioned white individuals may see themselves as tolerant, they may unconsciously resist discussing racism, a topic which may cause cognitive dissonance or threaten their self-concept. Further, Miller and Garran (2008) explained that individuals seeking affirmation and validation for their developing personal and professional identities may avoid situations, in which their identity may be dismissed, disrespected or denigrated – a concept that has particular relevance to the present study, which surveys a student population.

Rationale for Focus on Race

Based on a concise review of the social science literature, the present study's decision to focus on the construct of race is thoughtfully purposeful. The study aims to support the SCSSW's deliberate and thoughtful decision to focus on race in its anti-racism mission:

Because race is such a difficult issue to talk about, one that generates uncomfortable emotions like anger, even rage, sadness, shame and guilt, we saw it is a topic that, left to itself, would be avoided, as it is in the larger society. It was, in that context, that we believed that focusing instead on oppression in general would exacerbate a process in which students would compete to have that portion of their identity that is not of the dominant culture become the focus of discussions on oppression. It was our concern that, given the discomfort with talking about race and the potential competition for “air time,” race and racism would receive little focused attention (Newdom, 2007, p.3).

Further, the SCSSW's Anti-Racism Statement – originally composed and adopted in 1994, with the most recent version revised and voted into use in 2004 – focuses on race and racism. The Statement first presents a definition of racism, followed by a description of what the anti-racism mission entails:

Racism is a system of privilege, inequality, and oppression based on perceived categorical differences, value assigned to those differences, and a system of oppression that rewards and punishes people based on the assigned differences (SCSSW, 2004, para. 1)

The Smith College School for Social Work is committed to addressing the pernicious and enduring multilayered effects of racism. Anti-racism initiatives promote respect for and interest in multiple world views, values, and cultures. The School for Social Work develops and teaches knowledge, skills and values that enhance the ability to mutually affirm each other's equal place in the world. In addition, self-reflection and deepening conversations about race shape the School's anti-racism mission and promote culturally responsive practice, research and scholarship, and other anti-racism activities (SCSSW, para. 2).

Thus, in light of the School's focus on issues of race and racism, the present study focuses on these issues as well.

Summary

This review examined existing conceptual and empirical literature, which demonstrated: (1) the challenges in defining and studying the construct of race; (2) the social work profession's inconsistent efforts to acknowledge the pervasive effects of racism; (3) the lack of empirical knowledge on the experiences of SCSSW master's

students incorporating anti-racism knowledge into field education; (4) the critical importance of social work supervision for students' learning and satisfaction in the field; (5) the multi-faceted and interactive nature of social work supervision, which is influenced by the agency, supervisor, student, and client; and (6) the presence of certain factors which influence discussions of race in supervision.

It is the intent of the present study to expand the existing knowledge base by examining SCSSW master's students' experiences in talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to three different contextual factors of supervision – the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and the field agency structure and climate. The next chapter outlines the methodology for this research investigation, including: study design and recruitment, quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection; and statistical tests for data analysis.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Study Aims and Hypotheses

The purpose of this mixed-method study was to develop an understanding of the Smith College School for Social Work master's students' experiences discussing race in field supervision, and to make a contribution to research and practice literature in clinical social work education. The SCSSW has made purposeful efforts to support and train students and faculty in acknowledging and challenging racism; however, it is speculated that no systematic inquiry has examined SCSSW students' experiences discussing issues of race in the context of field supervision. Specifically, this study would be useful in understanding how SCSSW students incorporate anti-racism graduate coursework and professional training into the field practicum experience. A clearer understanding of student experiences – and more specifically, the factors which facilitate or impede upon students' abilities to have conversations about issues of race in supervision – would offer valuable information regarding students' continued anti-racism learning in the field.

This study examined the experiences of SCSSW students as they discuss issues of race with supervisors as related to the: (1) supervisory relationship; (2) counseling relationship; and (3) field agency structure and climate. There were quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, each with their own hypotheses. The quantitative hypotheses were three-fold. The first hypothesis stated that SCSSW students' comfort talking openly about topics in general with supervisors would predict their comfort

talking about issues of race in the contexts under examination. The second hypothesis stated that the number of completed graduate school and professional training activities would predict SCSSW students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race in the contexts under examination. The third hypothesis stated that the effect – of SCSSW students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race in the contexts under examination – would be stronger for second-year students than for first-year students. The qualitative hypothesis was exploratory in nature – key themes would emerge regarding the students' perceptions of the factors which facilitate or interfere with race-related discussions in supervision.

Research Design

Method

The current study employed a mixed-method, on-line, researcher-created survey (Appendix E), based on a review of the literature on clinical social work supervision, field education, cross-racial supervision, racial identity development, anti-racism, and dialogism.

The data was collected using Survey Monkey, a secure Internet website that hosts online surveys. The quantitative portion of the survey collected student and supervisor demographic information (i.e., age, gender, race/ethnicity, theoretical orientation) from the students' perspectives. Other descriptive data collected from students included: supervisors' years of supervisory experience; students' current standing at SCSSW; amount of weekly supervision time; the graduate coursework and professional training activities completed by students (e.g., SCSSW anti-racism symposium; SCSSW graduate coursework; SCSSW anti-racism field assignment; training and workshops at field

placement; "other"); and the percentage of supervision time talking about issues of race. On a 5-point Likert-scale (from extremely comfortable to extremely uncomfortable), students rated their comfort levels talking to supervisors *about all you think and feel in relation to* three different contextual situations – the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and field agency structure and climate. Students' comfort levels talking openly to supervisors about *issues of race* in relation to the three proposed situations were also elicited.

The qualitative portion of the survey included six open-ended questions, designed to elicit more intimate information about students' personal experiences and perceptions about race-related discussions in supervision. Specifically, open-ended questions explored: students' experiences discussing issues of race in supervision; students' experiences discussing their own, their supervisor's, and their clients' racial backgrounds in supervision; and students' opinions about the factors which facilitate, and interfere with race-related discussions in supervision. Following the quantitative question regarding students' completion of graduate coursework and professional training activities, an open-ended question elicited students' perceptions of how such activities prepared, or did not prepare, them for having race-related discussions in supervision.

Procedure

Consult and pilot review. In order to increase the study's validity and reliability, the researcher consulted several social work professionals (two of whom were people of color, and two white) to evaluate the survey instrument to assess content, clarity, logical flow as well as to monitor for potentially leading questions. Since the researcher intended to survey SCSSW students, the Human Subjects Review (HSR) process required

a particularly rigorous review of study materials. SCSSW's Research Sequence Chair and Dean of Students reviewed the HSR application and survey instrument before materials were submitted to the HSR committee. In January 2009, once the survey instrument was revised in accordance with the reviewers' critiques (i.e., to include more objective and open-ended questions, so to elicit students' diverse responses and to let more specific conclusions unfold from the data collected), the researcher's use of SCSSW students as subjects was approved. Upon receipt of HSR approval (Appendix C), a pilot test was conducted with seven social work students at the researcher's field placement – who all met inclusion criteria, with the exception of being SCSSW students. The pilot test was helpful in improving the clarity of questions, assessing the approximate time for survey completion, and ensuring the functionality of the instrument and web links. Feedback from the reviewers and pilot test subjects was incorporated into the final instrument.

Recruitment. Study participants were recruited via the internet through a one-time mass email, which gave a brief description of the researcher and her study and indicated that participation in the study was voluntary (Appendix B). The rationale for this one-time mass email approach was to maximize access to the intended population and to clarify inclusion and exclusion criteria, while reducing inconvenience to students. The email provided participants with a link to the full Informed Consent form (Appendix D) and researcher-created survey instrument in Survey Monkey (Appendix E).

Ethnics and Safeguards. The protection of participants in this study was a critical priority. Deliberate measures were taken to ensure participants' confidentiality and anonymity. However, it is important to note that complete anonymity of the student

participants could not be guaranteed due to the researcher's SCSSW student status. For instance, the researcher may have been able to identify a particular student by the demographic characteristics or information provided in the open-ended responses. For this reason, notable care was taken to safeguard the materials and information collected. First, the researcher remained blind to participants' contact information. The researcher never received a list of students' email addresses, as the researcher did not email the SCSSW students directly. Instead, the SCSSW Research Sequence's Administrative Assistant forwarded the researcher's HSR-approved recruitment letter to all the enrollees in SCSSW's master's program. Second, by keeping the research materials electronic (via email and online survey), the researcher did not communicate directly with any of the participants. Third, participants were not required to sign a hard copy of the Informed Consent form. Instead, participants were instructed that by clicking "NEXT" to enter the Survey, they were indicating their agreement to participate in this study. Participants were given the option to save or print a copy of the Informed Consent from the Survey Monkey site. Fourth, the researcher configured the Survey Monkey's settings so that participants' IP addresses were not saved in the analysis section. And fifth, the researcher will keep the list of potential student participants and the data collected in a secure location for a period of at least three (3) years, as required by Federal guidelines and the mandates of the social work profession. While the researcher plans to disseminate the study's findings during the SCSSW dissemination process, any information presented or published will be based on students' group characteristics. No individual participant data will be disclosed or presented in any recognizable form.

Sample

The participants for this study were 84 first year, second year, and advanced placement master's graduate students currently enrolled at SCSSW. Inclusion criteria for this study included: a) first year, second year, and advanced placement master's graduate students currently enrolled at SCSSW and currently interning at field practicum placements, b) engagement in social work supervision relationship within the past year, and c) a willingness to participate in student conducted clinical practice research.

The Primary Researcher's Background, Experiences, and Biases

Prior to data collection, the primary researcher noted her background, experiences, and biases regarding the study (as illustrated by Constantine & Sue, 2007). The primary researcher is a 26-year-old, Caucasian, Jewish, female second-year graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work. She participates in a full-time, second-year field placement in New York City and receiving individual supervision with a Caucasian, female, psychoanalytically-oriented supervisor – who is approximately 65 years of age with 11-20 years of supervisory experience. The researcher's personal model of counseling is "eclectic" – informed by psychoanalytic, psychodynamic, and relational theoretical perspectives. The researcher meets with her supervisor 1-2 hours each week and spends 0-20% of supervision meeting time discussing issues of race. The primary researcher has participated in SCSSW's anti-racism symposium, graduate coursework, and an anti-racism field assignment.

The researcher experienced challenges related to race in a cross-racial supervisory dyad during her first-year field placement – issues that were not openly working through in the context of this relationship. The researcher is also a SCSSW second-year Field

Representative – and has been privy to the challenges students have reported regarding discussions of race in the supervisory relationship or in their field placements more generally. With these experiences in mind, the researcher came into the study with certain biases – namely, that many SCSSW students were experiencing discussions about race in supervision challenging. The initial draft of the survey – reviewed by the SCSSW administration – was revised to be more objective, and it was clear at this point that the researcher needed to be mindful of her biases throughout the data collection and analysis portions of the study.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data

The data was analyzed by the researcher, with the assistance of the SCSSW's professional data analyst using descriptive techniques and the statistical tests using SPSS 14.0. Frequency outputs provided descriptive statistics on each demographic and descriptive variable of the study sample (student current standing at SCSSW; supervisors/students' age, gender, race/ethnicity, theoretical orientation; supervisors' years of supervisory experience; timing meeting with supervisor; percentage talking to supervisor about race; number of training activities completed). Frequency outputs were also provided for Likert-scale, ordinal variable questions regarding students' comfort levels (extremely comfortable to extremely uncomfortable) talking openly with supervisors in relation to the three contexts (supervisory relationship; counseling relationship; and field agency structure and climate) – and students' comfort levels talking openly with supervisors about race in relation to these three contexts.

A parametric t-test was used to assess group differences between first-year and second-year students' comfort levels discussing issue of race. The t-test is a parametric test used to assess group differences when you are comparing only 2 groups. The dependent variable is always measured at the interval or ratio level. The non-parametric Spearman's rho was used to test association between variables (number of training activities and students' comfort level discussing race; students' general comfort level talking openly in supervision and students' comfort talking about issues of race). The Spearman's Rho is a non-parametric test of the association between an ordinal level variable and another variable having an equal or higher level of measurement.

Qualitative Data

The main intention of this portion of the data collection was not to document the relative frequency of students' discussing issues of race in supervision. Rather, it was to investigate the issues that characterize students' experiences discussing, or not discussing, issues of race in supervision. The main questions in mind while examining the qualitative responses include: What is going on here; that is, issues, problems, concerns? How do the participants define the situation? Or what is its meaning to them? Are their definitions and meanings the same or different? When, how and with what consequences are they acting, and how are these the same or different for various participants and various situations?

The researcher chose to analyze qualitative data for the study by using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), as illustrated by Constantine & Sue (2007) – an exploratory study which examined psychology supervisees' experiences in cross-racial supervisory dyads. IPA recognizes the centrality of the researcher to data

analysis and the limitations which exist in the researcher's ability to reflect and analyze the data – as well as the ways in which participants' interpretations may be bounded by their ability to express their thoughts and experiences through writing. According to IPA, the researcher's interpretations are not arrived at prematurely or impulsively. Instead, data analysis is a cyclical process and consists of revisiting data at various points and returning through the stages of analysis to add or alter appropriate themes.

The researcher first read the responses to each open-ended question several times in detail to get a holistic picture. The researcher recorded her initial thoughts and comments related to the responses in the margins of the transcripts, and documented key words and emerging themes to capture the essence of the emerging analysis. The researcher gave attention to responses' emotional salience (positive, negative, neutral, mixed) and not just to the frequency of the themes. Initial organization of responses by emotional salience was important in controlling for researcher bias. For instance, the researcher noted the ways in which certain responses initially stood out because of the powerful language used and the tendency for such language to draw the researcher in or to confirm her biases. By organizing by emotional salience, the researcher was able to be more conscious of the tone in the language – and so not to be swayed by this phenomenon when deciphering themes from the responses. Positive, negative and mixed experiences were coded and included to clearly represent the full spectrum of participants' experiences. A comprehensive list of master themes was generated from this process.

Also to control for researcher bias, the researcher wrote running notes and reflections during the coding process to keep track of thoughts, associations and

interpretations – as a way to maintain personal skepticism and self-examination throughout the process. The researcher also used peer commentators to ensure the trustworthiness of codes and to conduct reliability and validity checks (Anastas, 1999).

Summary of Methodology Chapter

This research project was a mixed method survey study, which utilized quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The objective of this study was to examine the experiences of SCSSW master's students as they discuss issues of race with supervisors as related to the three contextual variables of supervision – the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and the field agency structure and climate. In the following chapter, findings from this study are presented. Descriptive and inferential statistics are presented.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In order to expand the theoretical and empirical knowledge base of Smith College School for Social Work students' experiences discussing issues of race in field supervision, this investigation: (1) presents demographic information on the SCSSW students and their supervisors, and describes characteristics of the field supervision; (2) presents the frequency distributions for the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about a) topics in general and b) issues of race, as related to the contexts under examination (e.g., the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and the field agency structure and climate); (3) addresses the influence of three variables on students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race (e.g., students' year in graduate school; their amount of completed race-related coursework and training; and their comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general); and (4) presents five themes that emerged from the students' written responses to six short-answer questions, eliciting descriptive information about their experiences discussing issues of race in supervision.

In this chapter, the findings of data analysis for this study are divided into four sections. The first section presents descriptive statistical information on the student, supervisor, and field supervision characteristics using data collected from the researcher-created survey instrument. The analyzed data are presented in terms of frequencies and percentages. The second section presents descriptive information on the ratings of

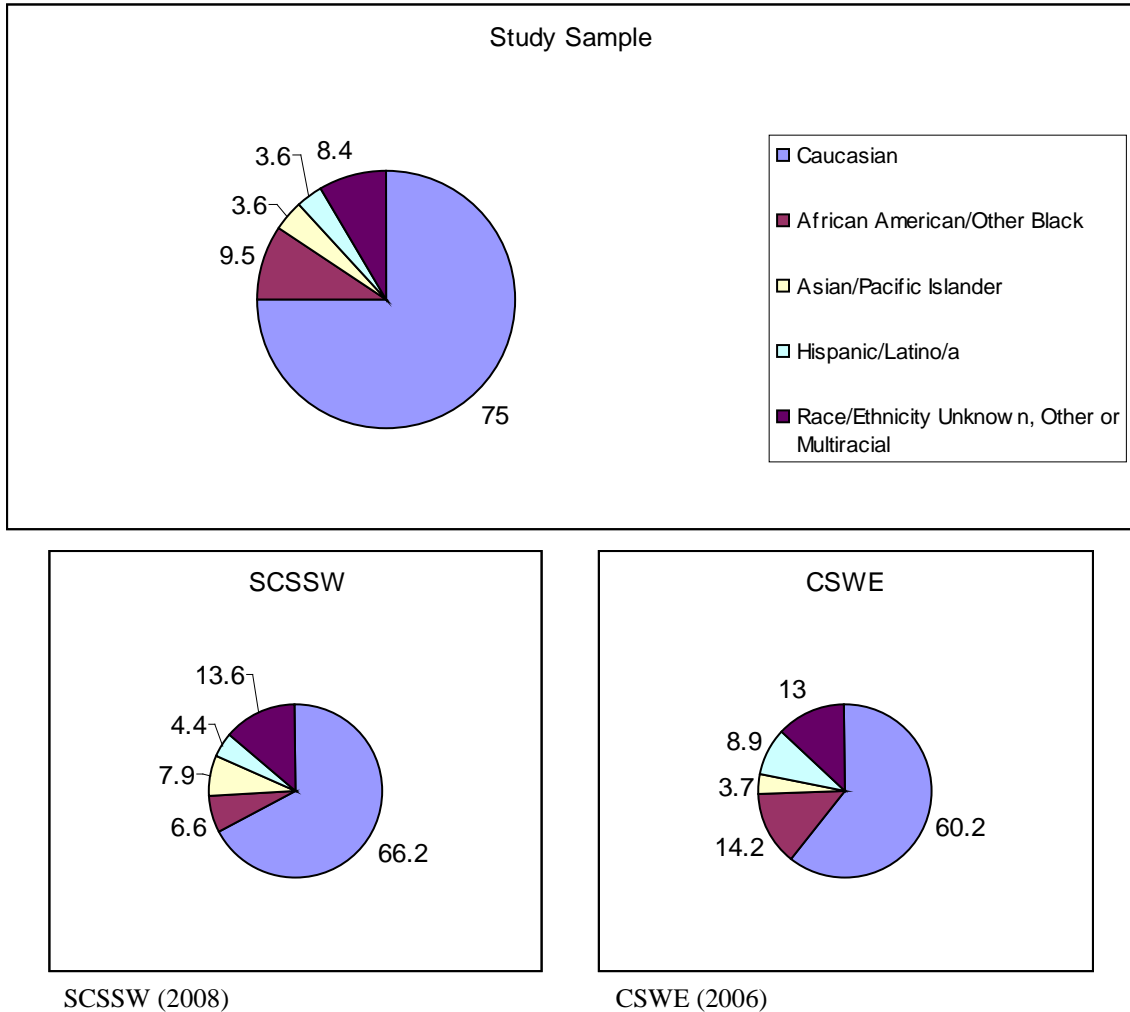
students' comfort talking with supervisors about a) topics in general and b) issues of race as related to the contexts under examination (e.g., the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and field agency structure and climate). The analyzed data is presented in terms of frequencies and percentages. The third section presents the findings for a series of Spearman's rho correlation tests, which were conducted to examine associations between certain variables in the data: 1) students' comfort talking about topics in general and their comfort talking about issues of race with supervisors as related to the contexts under examination; and 2) the amount of completed race-related training activities and students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the contexts under examination. This section also presents the findings for a series of parametric t-tests, which were run to determine if second year students felt more comfortable talking about issues of race than first year students, for each of the three contexts under examination. These findings are critical for the evaluation of key hypotheses for this study which will be utilized in the Chapter 5 discussion. The fourth section introduces five themes which emerged from the qualitative data collected from the open-ended questions presented on the survey instrument.

Descriptive Statistics on the Student, Supervisor, and Field Supervision Characteristics

This study surveyed 84 first year, second year, and advanced placement master's students currently enrolled at SCSSW, who interned at a field practicum placement and engaged in a social work supervision relationship within the past year. As illustrated in Table 1, approximately 92% of the respondents (N=77) were female, seven percent (N=6) were male, and one percent identified as Other (N=1). The findings for students' gender is similar to the SCSSW master's student population (89.5% female and 10.5%

male) and the Council on Social Work Education's 2006 Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States (83.4% female and 13.3% male) (CSWE, 2006; SCSSW, 2008). The mean age of student respondents was 32 years with a median of 29 and a standard deviation of 10.1. A majority of students (63%) were 30 years or under – a finding similar to the SCSSW (69.3%) and CSWE (59.8%) statistics of students 30 years or under. The majority of students self-identified as Caucasian (75%), with modest representations by African Americans (9.5%), Latino/a (3.6%), Asian (3.6%), Multiracial (6%), and Other (2.4%). As demonstrated in Figure 1, compared to the SCSSW student body and CSWE Statistics, the present study sample overrepresented Caucasian students and underrepresented students of color (SCSSW, 2008; CSWE, 2006).

Figure 1. Racial/Ethnic identification of the study sample as compared to SCSSW master's student population and CSWE's full-time master's student enrollment in social work programs



As illustrated in Table 1, the respondents reported their supervisors to be 76% female (N=63) and 23% male (N=19). According to the students' perceptions, mean and median age of the supervisor was 50 years with a standard deviation of 9.6. A majority of the students' perceived their supervisor to be Caucasian (77.4%), with modest representations by Latino/a (9.5%), African Americans (9.5%), Asian (1.2%), Middle Eastern (1.2%), and "Other" (1.2%) (e.g., Jewish; Irish; Israeli; Northern European).

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' and Supervisors' Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Age

Variable	Students		Supervisors	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Gender</u>				
Female	77	91.7	63	75.9
Male	6	7.1	19	22.9
Other	1	1.2	1	1.2
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>				
Caucasian	63	75.0	65	77.4
African American	8	9.5	8	9.5
Latino/a	3	3.6	8	9.5
Asian	3	3.6	1	1.2
Multiracial	5	6.0	0	0
Middle eastern	0	0	1	1.2
Other	2	2.4	1	1.2
<u>Age</u>				
25 and under	21	25	1	1.2
26-30	32	38	0	0
31-40	14	16.7	17	21
41 and over	17	20.2	63	77.8
Missing Data	0	0	3	--

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution for students' and supervisors' theoretical orientations. The majority of students defined their own theoretical orientation, or personal model of counseling, to be Eclectic (47.6%), with 23% Psychoanalytic, 11.9% Unknown, 10.7%, Cognitive-Behavioral, and 7% Other (e.g., Relational; Feminist; Psychodynamic). The students defined their supervisor's theoretical orientation, or personal model of counseling, to be Psychoanalytic (33.3%), Eclectic (28.9%), Other (16.7%), Cognitive-Behavioral (11.9%), and Unknown (9.5%). "Other" responses included: Bowenian; Contextual; Prolonged Exposure; Family Structural; Feminist; Relational; Motivational Interviewing; Strengths-based; Narrative; Self Psychology; and Psychodynamic.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' and Supervisors' Theoretical Orientations

Variable	Students		Supervisors	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Theoretical Orientation</u>				
Cognitive Behavioral	9	10.7	10	11.9
Psychoanalytic	19	22.6	28	33.3
Eclectic	49	47.6	24	28.6
Unknown	10	11.9	6	9.5
Other	6	7.1	14	16.7

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution for the students' year in graduate school at SCSSW as of March and April, 2009. As illustrated in the table, there is a relatively even number of second year (55%) and first year (44%) students, with one respondent in advanced standing.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Year in Graduate School at SCSSW

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Current Standing</u>		
First-year	37	44.0
Second-year	46	54.8
Advanced standing	1	1.2

Table 4 shows the frequency distribution for students' perceptions of their supervisors' amount of supervisory experience (in years). As illustrated in the table, a majority of the students perceived their supervisors to either have 0-10 years of supervisory experience (40.5%) or 11-20 years of experience (32.1%), with more modest representations in 21-30 years (16.7%) and 31 or more years (1.2%).

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Supervisors' Years of Supervisory Experience

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Supervisory Experience</u>		
0-10 years	34	40.5
11-20 years	27	32.1
21-30 years	14	16.7
31 or more years	1	1.2
Unknown	8	9.5

As illustrated in Table 5, a majority of the students met with supervisors for 1-2 hours each week (64.3%); 33.3% met for more than two hours; and 2.4% for less than one hour.

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages of Weekly Supervision Time

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Weekly Supervision Time</u>		
< 1 hour	2	2.4
1-2 hours	54	64.3
> 2 hours	28	33.3

As shown in Table 6, an overwhelming majority of students (80.5%) discussed race with supervisors 0-20% of the supervision time; 18.3% discussed race 21-40% of the time; and 1.2% discussed race 61-80% of the time. None of the students reported discussing race 81-100% of the time.

Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages of Time Talking about Issues of Race in Supervision

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Percent of Time Talking about Race in Supervision</u>		
0-20 %	66	80.5
21-40%	15	18.3
61-80%	1	1.2
81-100%	0	0
Missing	2	--

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the total number of race-related graduate school and professional training activities students' completed by May 2009. As illustrated in Table 7, approximately 37.8% of the respondents participated in three activities, 25.7% in four, 20.3% in two, and 16.2% in one.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of the Amount of Race-Related Graduate Coursework and Professional Training Activities Completed by Students by May 2009

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Number of Activities Completed</u>		
1.00	12	16.2
2.00	15	20.3
3.00	28	37.8
4.00	19	25.7
Missing	10	--

Table 8 shows the frequency distribution and percentages for the specific, race-related graduate school and professional training activities that students completed by May 2009. As illustrated in the table, 87% of the respondents participated in the SCSSW's annual anti-racism symposium, 63% in race-related graduate coursework, 55% in the anti-racism field assignment, and 39% field placement trainings. Approximately 9.5% of the students checked the "Other" box for this question, the written responses of which included: undergraduate coursework; participation in other workshops or conferences; and the experience of a racial minority in a professional setting.

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of the Specific Race-Related Graduate Coursework and Professional Training Activities Completed by Students by May 2009

<u>Graduate School and Professional Training Activities</u>	Completed		Not Completed	
	N	%	N	%
SCSSW's anti-racism symposium	72	86.7	11	13.3
SCSSW's graduate coursework	52	62.7	31	37.3
SCSSW's anti-racism field assignment	46	55.4	37	44.6
Trainings and workshops at field placement(s)	32	38.6	51	61.4
"Other"	8	9.5	--	--

Descriptive Information on the Ratings of Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors

This section presents descriptive information on the 5-point Likert-scale ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about a) topics in general and b) issues of race as related to the contexts under examination (e.g., the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and field agency structure and climate). The analyzed data is presented in the following section in terms of frequencies and percentages. The purpose of Tables 9 and 10 is to aid the reader in understanding the presented findings in the next two sections. The definitions for the Topics of Discussion (e.g., topics in general and issues of race) and the Contexts under Examination (e.g., the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and the field agency structure and climate) are defined in Table 9 and in Appendix A.

Table 9

Names and Descriptions of the Variables: Topics of Discussion and Contexts under Examination

<u>Topics of Discussion</u>	
Topics in General	Any topic that comes up in the ongoing interaction between supervisor and supervisee.
Issues of Race	Any topic about race that comes up in the ongoing interaction between supervisor and supervisee; social identity characteristics, opinions, backgrounds, life experiences as related to race; societal, historical, and relational issues as related to race.
<u>Contexts under Examination</u>	
Supervisory Relationship	The dynamic, relational process between supervisor and supervisee. Topics may involve: the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with the supervisor or about their professional learning process; both the supervisor and supervisee exploring how their backgrounds, expectations, prior experiences impact the supervisory relationship.
Counseling Relationship	The dynamic, relational process between client and supervisee/therapist/student. Topics may involve: client characteristics; client identified presenting problem and diagnosis; parallel process dynamics, as manifested in supervision; the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with clients.
Field Agency Structure & Climate	The context of the institutional organization in which the student and supervisor work. Topics may include: organizational clientele; the roles prescribed to supervisor and supervisee by the organization; organizational norms, politics; organizational supports and stressors; organizational goals, policy and procedures; service setting.

Table 10 demonstrates the ways in which the researcher examines the mutual influences of the Topics Discussed and Contexts under Examination on students' comfort talking with supervisors. As described in the table below, COM1 refers to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the supervisory relationship; COM2 to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the counseling relationship; and COM3 to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the field agency structure and climate. In the next column of the table, RACOM1 refers to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the supervisory relationship; RACOM2 to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the counseling relationship; and RACOM3 to the students' comfort ratings talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the field agency structure and climate.

Table 10

The Matrix of Topics of Discussion and Contexts under Examination on Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors

	Topics in General	Issues of Race
Supervisory Relationship	COM1	RACOM1
Counseling Relationship	COM2	RACOM2
Field Agency Structure and Climate	COM3	RACOM3

Table 11 displays the frequencies and percentages for the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the Contexts under Examination (e.g., COM1, COM2, COM3).

Table 11

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors about Topics in General as related to the Contexts under Examination

	Contextual Factors of Supervision					
	Supervisory Relationship		Counseling Relationship		Field Agency Structure & Climate	
Students' Comfort	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extremely Uncomfortable	3	3.6	1	1.2	3	3.6
Uncomfortable	10	11.9	6	7.2	15	18.1
Neutral	14	16.7	8	9.6	13	15.7
Comfortable	32	38.1	38	45.8	27	32.5
Extremely Comfortable	24	28.6	29	34.9	25	30.1
NA	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
Missing	1	--	0	0	1	--

Note. Values are the frequency and percentages of reported scores on a 5-point scale (1=Extremely Uncomfortable, 5=Extremely Comfortable).

Table 12 displays the frequencies and percentages for ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the three Contextual Factor of Supervision (e.g., RACOM1, RACOM2, RACOM3).

Table 12

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors about Issues of Race as related to the Contexts under Examination

Students' Comfort	Contextual Factors of Supervision					
	Supervisory Relationship		Counseling Relationship		Field Agency Structure & Climate	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extremely Uncomfortable	4	4.9	1	1.2	4	4.9
Uncomfortable	7	8.5	10	12.3	12	14.8
Neutral	21	25.6	13	16.0	20	24.7
Comfortable	29	35.4	39	48.1	31	38.3
Extremely Comfortable	19	23.2	18	22.2	14	17.3
NA	2	2.4	0	0	0	0
Missing	0	0	3	--	3	--

Note. Values are the frequency and percentages of reported scores on a 5-point scale (1=Extremely Uncomfortable, 5=Extremely Comfortable).

Measures of Association using the Spearman's rho Correlation Test and the t-Test

As outlined in the Methodology chapter, both the non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation test and the parametric t-test were used to examine the relationship among the variables. First, the Spearman's rho correlation was conducted to determine the level of association between the students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general and their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the contexts under examination. That is, does COM1-3 predict RACOM1-3? Below, the results for

this statistical test are presented by each context under examination. Table 13 shows the correlation coefficients between COM1-3 scores and RACOM 1-3 scores.

Supervisory relationship. The Spearman rho correlations were run in order to determine the relatedness of the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the supervisory relationship (COM1) and their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the supervisory relationship (RACOM1). A significant, moderate, positive correlation was found (rho=.641, p=.000, two tailed).

Counseling relationship. The Spearman rho correlations were run in order to determine the relatedness of the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the counseling relationship (COM2) and their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the counseling relationship (RACOM2). A significant, moderate, positive correlation was found (rho=.623, p=.000, two tailed).

Field agency structure and climate. The Spearman rho correlations were run in order to determine the relatedness of the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general as related to the field agency structure (COM3) and climate and their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the field agency structure and climate (RACOM3). A significant, strong, positive correlation was found (rho=.719, p=.000, two tailed).

Table 13

Correlation Coefficients between the Ratings of Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors about Topics in General (COM) and about Issues of Race (RACOM) by Context under Examination (1-3)

<u>Issues of Race</u>	<u>Topics in General</u>		
	Supervisory Relationship (COM1)	Counseling Relationship (COM2)	Field Agency Structure & Climate (COM3)
Supervisory Relationship (RACOM1)	.641*	--	--
Counseling Relationship (RACOM2)	--	.623*	--
Field Agency Structure & Climate (RACOM3)	--	--	.719*

**Note.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The second set of Spearman rho correlation tests were performed in order to determine if there was an association between the students' number of completed training activities and their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to Contextual Factor of Supervision. No significant correlation was found. Therefore, the number of completed training activities does not predict the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the Contextual Factor of Supervision.

To determine if the overall effect of the ratings of students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race was stronger for second-year students than for first-year students, parametric t-tests were run for each of the three Contextual Factor of Supervision (RACOM1-3). No significant differences between the first year and second year students' comfort ratings were found. Table 14 provides the group statistics

calculated for first year and second year students' comfort ratings for each of the three contexts under examination.

Table 14

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on the First Year and Second Year Students' Comfort Talking with Supervisors about Issues of Race for the Contexts under Examination

<u>Current Standing</u>	<u>Contextual Factors of Supervision</u>		
	Supervisory Relationship	Counseling Relationship	Field Agency Structure & Climate
<u>First Year</u>			
N	34	36	36
M	3.76	3.81	3.61
SD	1.017	.980	1.103
<u>Second Year</u>			
N	46	45	45
M	3.57	3.76	3.38
SD	1.148	.981	1.093

Note. Values are means of reported scores on a 5-point scale (1=Extremely Uncomfortable, 5=Extremely Comfortable).

Qualitative Data

Seventy-one students, or 85% of total respondents, responded to the open-ended questions in the survey instrument. The qualitative portion of this study gathered the students' subjective descriptions of: (1) their experiences discussing issues of race in supervision; (2) their opinions about the factors that facilitate or interfere with discussions of race in supervision; and (3) their perceptions of how graduate coursework and professional training in anti-racism issues prepared them for race-related discussions in supervision.

The responses were coded in aggregate to extract the themes presented in this section. Several of the themes are interrelated to some extent. Given the researcher's SCSSW student status and plans to disseminate the findings to the SCSSW community, the researcher excluded the race/ethnicity, age, and gender of students and supervisors to protect the students' confidentiality and anonymity.

The student respondents reported a wide range of experiences talking with supervisors about issues of race, with a relatively even distribution of positive, negative, mixed, and neutral experiences. While the content and emotional salience of students' experiences varied greatly, a majority agreed that talking with supervisors about issues of race was important. Further, the responses indicated that the students discussed issues of race more often in relation to their clients than to the supervisory relationship.

Five major content themes emerged from the students' responses: (1) the safety of the supervisory relationship; (2) who initiates the discussion; (3) racial group membership of the parties involved; (4) racial identity attitudes and development of the

parties involved; (5) race versus other social identity constructs; and (6) graduate training and coursework.

Theme One: Development of a Safe Supervisory Relationship

The theme most frequently raised by the students was the fundamental importance of establishing a supervisory relationship in which it feels safe to discuss difficult and uncomfortable subject matter, such as race. Students described such a relationship as: comfortable; open; tolerant; mutually respectful; empathic; and self-aware. The students differed in their perceptions as to who bore more responsibility for fostering this safe supervisory alliance. Some of the students felt that the supervisor was responsible, while others felt that "it required willingness on behalf of both the student and the supervisor."

The students identified these important characteristics of a supervisor: an ability to model openness and self-reflection; an ability to identify with the student and the student's clients; experience as a supervisor and in the field; a respectful attitude; a relaxed and patient manner; tolerance for the student's mistakes; openness to feedback from the student; and an ability to collaborate with the student in deciding upon working arrangements and goals. Characteristics of a poor supervisor included: vague or authoritarian style of communication; cold or judgmental attitudes; avoidance of interpersonal issues in the supervisory relationship; and insensitivity to the student's individual learning needs. As one student explained:

I don't feel as comfortable or at ease in general [in supervision] and have not developed the trusting relationship that would make me feel more comfortable.

In addition, the students hesitated to discuss racial issues because of their uncertainty about "what kind of relationship supervision actually is." While the students

understood that the supervisory relationship differed from a counseling or therapy relationship, they were ambiguous and confused about how much personal information or emotional experience could be disclosed and explored in the context of supervision. One student felt "unsure about whether or not [the topic of race] will make the supervisor feel uncomfortable." Another noted "a fear of causing tension in supervision."

The students acknowledged the importance of feeling that assertions regarding race could be made without fear of retribution, and that unformulated notions of race could be considered learning opportunities without judgment. Some students spoke to "fears of bringing up [race] in supervision" due to concerns that it could negatively impact the supervisory relationship or "damage [the student's] placement opportunities." One believed: "It's almost polite not to mention it."

Finally, some students recognized that parallel process could influence the supervisory dyad's openness to racial issues. "If clients do not feel safe talking to the student about race," one student explained, "then it may not come up in supervision also."

Theme Two: Who First Addresses Issues of Race – the Supervisor or the Student?

Students' differed over who is responsible for first addressing issues of race in supervision. Some felt it was their role; others the supervisor's role, and some felt the supervisor and supervisee shared responsibility. But as one student explained:

"Someone in the relationship needs to initiate the discussion."

Some students reported positive experiences, in which the supervisor initiated discussions about race-related issues. For instance, one student reported:

It has helped when a supervisor brings up the issue of race, because it lets the student know that the supervisor is aware of race and is comfortable talking about

it. It also helps facilitate race-related discussions when the supervisor responds to questions [and] issues about race in an affirming way.

In contrast, some reported "uncertainty about how to bring it up, and how to keep the conversation going," or discomfort "discussing anyone's racial background unless the person brings it up first." As one student explained:

I may think something is about race in a session, but I do not want to label it if the client hasn't put that label on it. There is a fine balance of being a conscious white person and assuming something about someone else's experiences and psyche.

Some students felt their supervisor tended to avoid or minimize issues of race, especially when students shared personal information. They were frustrated that in order for conversations about race to take place, the student needed to be "the one to always" bring it up. As two students wrote:

The fact that I am more likely than my supervisor to bring up issues of race, makes me feel somewhat inhibited about bringing up race.

I know I need to be responsible to examining my own thoughts, feelings and reactions about race and ethnicity, but I also wish that [my supervisor] would probe more into this - that we could dialogue about it on a deeper level.

Even if the supervisor seemed to listen when the student brought up race-related issues, the "back and forth" conversation did not go "as deep" or "as far" as some students would have liked. Instead, the topic of race would "fall flat," or the supervisor would "agree but add little to the conversation." As two students commented:

I felt comfortable and wanted to take our discussions further but didn't feel as though my supervisor felt comfortable doing so. [My supervisor] tended to touch on the subject, but then end abruptly as if it was too much, too overwhelming.

It is not that I don't want to bring it up on my own but certain supervisors seem to connect with certain types of material and start running with it. Even if I bring it up it can be somewhat glossed over.

Students tended to decide early on if the supervisory relationship felt safe enough to bring up issues of race. A majority of the students reported that following intensive summer experiences of anti-racism training and involvement, they came into placement with a strong willingness, and even eagerness, to explore issues of race with supervisors. However, the ways this initial attitude played out in supervision differed across the students' responses. Some students reported that while initially demonstrating disinterest, their supervisors "surprised" them with an increased willingness to explore issues of race as the supervisory relationship developed. Some students felt empowered by taking initiative to "plant the seed" or "open the door to more conversations." Others reported that despite their own initial willingness to explore issues of race, the supervisor's initial unresponsiveness deterred them from raising the topic again. One student perceived early on that the supervisor "did not understand me." Another felt the supervisor "discouraged me from overemphasizing issues of race." And a third explained: "From our interactions, I began to feel [my supervisor] was not particularly concerned with issues of race, so I stopped bringing it up."

Theme Three: Racial Group Membership

The racial group memberships of the parties involved (i.e., the student, supervisor, clients or agency staff) did not predict the students' experiences talking with supervisors about issues of race in any one way.

Client caseload. The students' experiences varied greatly in the extent to which the racial composition of their client caseload affected discussions of race in supervision. Some students reported that a diverse client caseload – or a client presenting with race-related concerns (i.e., identifying as a racial minority; needing an interpreter; dealing with

deported family members; experiencing/perpetuating racism) – led to more frequent race-related discussions with supervisors. For instance, two students reported:

All but one of my families are African American, and I bring up race to design my treatment style and plans.

Race was only discussed once and that was when I brought it up because a client was being racist, and I didn't know how to deal with it.

Conversely, a homogeneous, predominantly white caseload contributed to infrequent discussions of race. As one student explained:

We do a poor job talking about race in the absence of a client of color. For instance, we do not talk about how a client's white identity affects him or her, but only how race affects a client of color. In fact, we really act like the only people who "have race" are people of color.

A few students felt that the racial composition of their client caseloads had no effect on discussions of race in supervision. Some of these students reported infrequent discussions despite a diverse client caseload, and others had frequent discussions despite a homogeneous, white caseload.

The supervisory relationship. The students' experiences varied greatly in the extent to which the racial composition of the supervisory dyad affected discussions of race in supervision. It is important to note that the study sample, while representative of SCSSW's student body, is relatively racially white and homogeneous. Therefore, the information collected in reference to this particular theme must be interpreted with caution.

For some students, sharing the same racial identity as the supervisor facilitated discussions. As one student explained:

I feel very comfortable discussing my racial background with [my supervisor]... perhaps, I would feel differently if we were not both Caucasian, with similar family immigration histories.

Other students found that having a supervisor from a different race or ethnicity facilitated discussions:

It has been a very interesting experience for me because we are from different racial backgrounds, and my supervisor is always trying to understand my experiences related with my racial background. We have both benefited from each others' experiences of race.

My supervisor openly discusses her background as a Latino woman, and I openly discuss my background as a woman who comes from a sheltered community of white privilege. It is a comfortable and enlightening exchange.

Some students, however, reported racial matching or crossing interfered with discussions.

Some white students matched with a supervisor from a racial minority reported self-consciousness and guilt in "discussing my background with [my supervisor] because of my agent status." Two students in white supervisory dyads explained:

With me and my supervisor, who are both white, it is extremely easy not to mention it and stay in a comfort zone.

Because [my supervisor and I] are both Caucasian, we tend to subconsciously forget ...that [race] could be an issue.

Finally, a few students reported that racial composition of the supervisory dyad had no effect on race-related discussions in supervision.

Agency structure and climate. The responses varied in the extent to which the racial composition of the agency staff affected discussions of race in supervision. Some students reported discomfort talking about issues of race concerning the "the agency staff and higher administration," irrespective of their racial composition. Others spoke to facilitating effects of an agency with "a racially diverse senior staffing structure."

According to one student,

Working in a very multicultural agency, race is discussed fairly often. We celebrate and acknowledge a wide range of holidays, and often discuss race as it applies to our population.

Some students observed that a white, homogenous agency staff seemed to foster a "general ignorance" about matters of race:

Issues of race have not come up at all during supervision, probably due to the fact that all of the clinicians...on our team are white.

The predominantly white clinical team did not lend itself to many discussions of racial issues during team meetings.

Theme Four: Racial Identity Attitudes and Development

The responses demonstrated that the racial attitudes and development of both supervisor and student impact race-related discussions, with the supervisor's racial attitude shaping how race is addressed in supervision. One student explained that "the supervisor's ability to be open about their own issues with race creates a safe space to struggle with this complex topic openly."

The students identified the facilitating effect of sharing a similar framework, or common understanding, with the supervisor about the historical importance of race and its relevance to client assessment and treatment. For instance, two students explained:

[My supervisor] was affirming of my recognition of these things as important issues.

My supervisor is open and we both tend to have somewhat of the same framework in mind when talking about issues relating to race.

A major sub-theme concerned the degree to which the supervisor is familiar with the "Smith anti-racism framework." Some students acknowledged the facilitating effect of a supervisor not only familiar with the SCSSW's anti-racism mission who could effectively model anti-racism practice, but also a supervisor who graduated from SCSSW. As two students explained:

In both years, I felt confident about discussing race with my supervisors. I also knew that they both attended Smith as a grad student and felt that I could trust that

they were committed to becoming anti-racism practitioners and this made it easier to bring up the subject.

My supervisor is very racially aware and open to my bringing race to the supervisory discussion. My supervisor graduated from Smith College School for Social Work, and I think that increases my comfort level in discussing issues of race.

In another way, two students explained the negative effects of working with a supervisor unfamiliar with the SCSSW's anti-racism framework:

[My supervisor] does not have the same orientation to [issues of race] that Smith perhaps does, nor does it seem that [my supervisor] has had much experience interacting with people of different cultural backgrounds.

I believe my feelings [of discomfort] come from my knowledge that [my supervisor] does not subscribe to the same school of thought as Smith.

One student believed that "the intense reputation that Smith has for being so racially focused can sometimes intimidate supervisors."

A broad consensus found that "it is difficult to have a discussion if either party has not reflected upon [his or her] own racial identity and racism present in their own past." Some of the Smith students felt they had more race-related knowledge and experience than their supervisors – a difference that may reflect the supervisor's limited diversity training, experience working with clients of color, or generational differences between student and supervisor. One student explained that a supervisor and supervisee who "are in different stages in their progression towards anti-racist values (especially if the intern is further along than the supervisor) would interfere with this discussion."

While some students felt empowered by having more racial awareness than the supervisor, a majority experienced frustration in "having to teach" the supervisor and expressed a need for "more clear support [from the supervisor] about how to approach" discussions of race. Students identified the specific kinds of attitudes toward issues of

race that may interfere with race-related discussions: "colorblind" attitudes (i.e., saying that race doesn't exist); unwillingness to examine one's own unconscious racist beliefs or biases; dismissal of race as an important issue; generalizing about racial groups; defensive postures; reducing race-related discussions to stereotypes; and holding fixed opinions about what race means.

The racial attitudes of the placement agency were found to affect discussions of race in supervision. As three students explained:

I perceive that acknowledging race is taboo in this agency.

My agency does push cultural diversity, but does not look at white privilege and the role it plays with the clients [or in] supervisory relationships.

I feel there is room in supervision to talk about race, although I do feel that I see dynamics and aspects of our treatment team as racist, whereas my supervisor does not, and it can feel intimidating to talk about this.

Theme Five: Race versus Other Social Identity Constructs

Many students reported discussing issues of race in supervision indirectly – in terms of class, ethnicity, religion, culture, or immigration. As three students explained:

Race is rarely, if ever, discussed. The majority of the clients I work with are African American. In supervision, the focus tends to be more surrounding issues of poverty and policy issues – many issues which, in my mind, have a direct correlation to race and racism.

We have often discussed ethnicity and immigration, but have discussed race only occasionally.

We have discussed our different religious/cultural background rather than our common racial grouping.

Theme Six: Graduate Training and Coursework in Issues of Race

Student responses identified that race-conscious coursework and training provided a climate, a relationship, resources, and procedural means to help students enhance their

own skills, eagerness to talk about race with others, and awareness of the ways issues of race affected their clinical social work practice. In particular, they identified helpful preparation activities, such as: the role-playing of racial dialogues, normalization of challenges and discomfort, and examination of racial identity formation and attitudes.

Some students felt that coursework and training only “somewhat prepared” them for racial dialogues in supervision. They identified the need for more training in specifically how to transfer racial dialogues from the classroom to field supervision, especially in light of the unequal power dynamics and differential racial identity attitudes often encountered in the supervisory relationship and field agency climate. As two students explained of their experiences:

I just wish the field agency was on track as much as we are at Smith. It’s hard to come from Smith where we really push to do this work and then be in the field where people are reluctant to admit that race is an issue to discuss period.

The racism class gave me practice and helped me face my discomfort in talking about racism as well as increased my awareness that issues of race affect my work. However, the coursework did not really address issues of discussing race in supervision, which I still find intimidating at times.

Finally, some students felt that anti-racism education by itself could not empower students to share with others the knowledge and skills in combating racism. As one student explained, “While graduate coursework and training has helped prepare me, it is truly an individually driven effort. One must make a commitment to anti-racism work in order to bring it into their every day practice.”

Summary

Quantitative results were found for the present study. First, it was found that the students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general predicted their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race as related to the Contextual Factor of Supervision. The most notable aspect of this finding was the stronger correlation found for "the field agency structure and climate" contextual variable (.713) than for other two variables, the supervisory (.641) and counseling (.623) relationships. Second, the students' number of completed training activities did not predict their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. Third, there was no significant difference between the first year and second year students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. Among the description statistics, notable findings included: a relatively large percentage of the students (9.5%) checked "Unknown" for how much supervisory experience their supervisor had; and an overwhelming majority of students (80.5%) discussed race with supervisors 0-20% of the supervision time.

Meaningful qualitative data emerged from the students' responses to open-ended questions and were distilled into six major themes: (1) the safety of the supervisory relationship; (2) who initiates the discussion; (3) racial group membership of the parties involved; (4) racial identity attitudes of the parties involved; (5) race versus other social identity constructs; and (6) graduate coursework and training in issues of race. Overall, the qualitative findings demonstrated the importance of an open and safe relationship with a supervisor, who has developed the racial awareness necessary to initiate and explore issues of race in depth with the student. Thus, while students identified the need for more training in specifically how to address issues of race in the context of field

supervision, students also identified their own responsibility to empower themselves and find ways to incorporate anti-racism efforts into the field. The implication of these findings, and the strengths and limitations of this data will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The discussion chapter is presented in six sections: (1) demographic characteristics of participants and their supervisors; (2) a detailed synthesis of the findings; (3) a discussion of the limitations of the study; (4) the implications for social work education, training, practice and policy; (5) the implications for future research on the subject; and (6) conclusion.

Demographic Characteristics of Students and their Supervisors

This study surveyed 84 master's graduate students currently enrolled at SCSSW, who interned at a field practicum placement and engaged in a social work supervision relationship within the past year. An overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) were female and a smaller majority were under the age of 30 (63%)—findings consistent with SCSSW master's student population and social work master's students nationwide (SCSSW, 2008; CSWE, 2006). Seventy-five percent of students self-identified as Caucasian, with modest representations by African Americans (9.5%), Latino/a (3.6%), Asian (3.6%), Multiracial (6%), and Other (2.4%). Students reported that a majority of their supervisors were female (76%) and averaged 50 years of age. A majority of supervisors were Caucasian (77.4%), with modest representations by Latino/a (9.5%), African Americans (9.5%), Asian (1.2%), Middle Eastern (1.2%), and "Other" (1.2%).

Synthesis of Findings

The overarching research question for this mixed-method survey study was: What are the subjective experiences of Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW) students talking with field supervisors about issues of race? Subsumed under this research question were four sub-questions: (1) does students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general predict their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race?; (2) does year in graduate school predict students' comfort discussing issues of race in supervision?; (3) does the amount of completed graduate training and coursework about issues of race predict students' comfort discussing issues of race in supervision?; and (4) what are students' perceptions of the factors that facilitate and interfere with discussions of race in supervision?

This discussion chapter will explore the central and significant findings related to the four stated hypotheses and how the findings support current conceptual and empirical literature. Findings that are not significant will be reviewed with possible explanations offered for the lack of correlation between variables. Qualitative findings will provide support for further explanation for quantitative findings.

Overall, the results of this study highlight the centrality of the field supervisory relationship in furthering SCSSW's anti-racism goals in social work education, practice and policy. The results reaffirm existing counseling psychology and social work literature in suggesting that: (1) racial issues play an important role in the learning and relational processes between student and field supervisor (Miehls, 2001; Black, Maki & Nunn, 1997); (2) the establishment of an accepting, comfortable, and mutually respectful supervisory relationship impacts students' comfort discussing issues of race with

supervisors (Helms & Cook, 1999); (3) the unspoken assumptions regarding race affect every aspect of supervision, including establishment of the relationship and expectations for supervision as well as conceptualization of clients and treatment planning (Cook, 1994; Bernard and Goodyear; 1998); and (4) it is still considered "taboo" to have direct discussions about race and racism that penetrate surface-level explorations (Utsey, Gernat & Hammer, 2005).

Hypothesis 1: Students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general predict their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race

The findings demonstrate the significant relationship between students' comfort talking with field supervisors about issues of race and topics in general. This association suggests that factors, other than the subject matter of race, may mediate students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. One such factor – implicated in students' qualitative responses and in existing research – may be the overall comfort, safety and openness of the supervisory relationship (Gatmon et al., 2001). As one student explained, "It ultimately comes down to how comfortable one feels bringing up difficult topics in supervision." This finding further supports Gatmon et al. in suggesting that "an atmosphere of safety" for discussing racial variables in the supervisory relationship contributes to building alliances and students' satisfaction in supervision. This finding also supports interactive, relational models of social work field supervision (e.g., Shulman; Munson; Tsui & Ho), which are "consistent with the values and practices of social work, where relationship and use of self are viewed as primary factors in social work outcomes" (Ganzer & Ornstein, 1999, p.232).

Students' qualitative responses provided potential reasons for the stronger correlation found for the "field agency structure and climate" contextual variable (.713) than for other two variables, the supervisory (.641) and counseling (.623) relationships. For instance, this finding may demonstrate that when supervisory discussions relate to field agency structure and climate, factors other than "subject matter of race" play an even more important role on students' comfort. The frequencies and percentages demonstrate that more students felt "uncomfortable" talking with supervisors about issues of race (15%) and topics in general (18%) as related to field agency structure and climate, than in the other two contexts (e.g., the supervisory relationship and counseling relationship). In addition, existing conceptual literature identified one mechanism by which students may feel additional discomfort sharing issues with supervisors related to the field agency structure and climate. For instance, Basham et al. (2001) explained that if the climate at an agency is not adequately hospitable and safe, students may feel uncomfortable talking with supervisors about bureaucratic practices due to fear of being scapegoated (e.g., through negative evaluations, criticalness, or disempowerment). One student's response further demonstrates this point: "I feel interested in thinking about this topic because it has been interwoven in my clinical training and coursework, but I do not feel prepared to raise difficult and challenging issues as an intern in a political environment."

Hypotheses 2 and 3: Does year in graduate school and prior anti-racism training predict students' comfort discussing issues of race in supervision?

Findings related to the second and third hypotheses revealed no statistical significance, calling into question the lack of association between year in graduate school

and amount of completed anti-racism coursework and training on students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. Several factors may contribute to these insignificant findings. First, confounding factors may have mediated the effect of the independent variables – students' amount of anti-racism education and training and students' year in graduate school – on students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. For instance, Constantine and Sue (2007) found that supervisors – ultimately responsible for fostering students' racial and cultural learning in the field – had limited multicultural knowledge and experience dealing with manifestations of racial biases in supervisory and counseling relationships (Constantine & Sue, 2007; Constantine, 1997). Moreover, it is plausible that the confounding influence of supervisor's training experience limited the strength of the independent variables in predicting students' comfort. Second, the survey instrument combined "SCSSW graduate coursework" into one category. By doing this, the researcher did not account for the possible differential effects of different graduate courses – or certain aspects of these courses – on students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race.

Hypothesis 4: What are the factors that facilitate and interfere with discussions of race in supervision?

Overall, the qualitative findings demonstrated the importance of an open and safe relationship with a supervisor, who has developed the racial awareness necessary to initiate and explore issues of race in depth with the student. First, it was found that field supervisors – who can provide an atmosphere of openness and safety, depth of dialogue, and frequent opportunities to discuss racial variables – positively influence discussions of race in supervision. This finding complements previous social work literature, which

implicates the influence of specific supervisor behaviors and relationship characteristics in promoting an environment, in which students feel safe to explore difficult issues (Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Knight, 2000, 2001; Giddings et al., 2003). Further, Mishna and Rasmussen (2001) explained that by upholding an atmosphere in which difficult dialogue and exploration are invited without becoming punitive and defensive, the field supervisor provides the student with "a meaningful learning opportunity" (p.390). As Fox (1998) explained:

The impact of field instruction resides in how well the field instructor uses him- or herself and employs sensitivity to guide interns' journeys in development of their professional selves. The most important vehicle available to make this happen is the field instructor's ability to model behavior, reflect attitude, explore thinking and feeling s/he expects them to draw upon in their work with clients (p.60).

Moreover, Leary (2000) explained that racial discourse continues to be experienced as highly vulnerable, owing largely to the reliance on language that is centered on acceptance and power versus exclusion and powerlessness. Tummala-Narra (2001) explained that for these reasons, the degree to which the student perceives the supervisory relationship to be a safe space for exploration is critical in determining the extent to which issues of race will be discussed.

Second, the finding that supervisors are responsible for initiating discussions of race in supervision supports conceptual and empirical literature in counseling and clinical psychology (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995; Constantine, 1997; Gatmon et al., 2001; Leong & Wagner, 1994; Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Helms & Cook, 1999). Tummala-Narra (2001) posited that the lack of initiative on the part of the supervisor to explore issues of race can contribute to the student's lowered self-esteem and experience of

shame via their impact on “superego pressures (i.e., supervisor, dominant theoretical perspective, institutional demands)” (p.305). Helms and Cook (1999) explained that supervisors, with more ascribed social power than students, are responsible for creating an atmosphere in which issues of race can be explored.

Third, the finding – that racial composition of the parties involved (e.g., the supervisor, student, clients, and agency personnel) does not necessarily influence discussions of race in supervision in any one way – supports clinical psychology and counseling literature. For instance, Gatmon et al. (2001) and Hilton et al. (1995) found that racial matching of the supervisor and student were neither related to supervisee ratings of supervision satisfaction nor to supervision working alliance. The variability among student responses in this study also reaffirms literature, which suggests that the influence of racial group membership on racial dialogues in supervision is complex and multi-influenced by a range of confounding and contextual factors (Holloway, 1995). While racial diversity in client caseload did not determine the frequency of racial discussions for all students in this study, many reported that a predominantly white caseload – and even more, a predominantly white clinical team – contributed to less frequent race-related discussions in supervision. This finding is consistent with literature suggesting that white individuals are carefully taught to deny the benefits of white-skin privilege (Ancis and Szymanski, 2001). According to Utsey, Gernat & Hammer (2001), white students and supervisors failing to explore what it means to be white in this society – thereby denying that they are racial beings – significantly impedes effective clinical practice.

Fourth, the finding – that racial identity awareness and development of supervisor and student affects discussions of racial issues in supervision – supports existing literature (Pinderhughes, 1989; Young, 2003). Ladany et al. (1997) found that the supervisory working alliances were stronger when supervisors were equal to, or higher than, their students in racial identity development. Cook (1994) explained that for students to competently address issues of race with clients, supervisors must

withstand their own awkwardness and discomfort in dealing with race as they teach their students to “break the silence” in revealing and openly discussing their racial identity attitudes (p.7).

Other Notable Findings

The finding that an overwhelming majority of students (80.5%) discussed race with supervisors 0-20% of the supervision time reaffirms clinical and counseling psychology literature in highlighting the low frequency of race-related discussions in supervision (Constantine, 1997; Gatmon et al., 2001). It is likely that multiple factors play a role in this finding, such as: differential racial identity attitudes between supervisor and student; insensitive or authoritarian supervisor behaviors; unsafe or distrustful supervisory environment; fear of being scapegoated; or supervisors dismissing issues of race.

Another finding concerns the relatively large percentage of students (9.5%) who checked "Unknown" in response to the question: *How much supervisory experience does your supervisor have?* If students had asked their supervisors before responding to this question, the results would have been more accurate. This finding could potentially imply that students do not feel comfortable asking their supervisors about personal issues, such as how much experience they have as supervisors.

Limitations of the Current Study

Some caution should be used when interpreting results from this investigation. Although the sample size of this study was consistent with recommended quantitative methodology (SCSSW, 2008), the small number of participants and the nature of qualitative research prevent generalization of the results to the general population of social work students. The relatively small sample size also likely affected the power of the analyses to detect statistically significant relationships among the variables. Even more notable is the high percentage of white respondents and relatively small representation of students of color – as compared to the SCSSW student body and the CSWE statistics – which limits the generalizability of the results. This finding represents a major limitation of the present study and warrants further examination. One potential reason for this under representation may be that when asked to participate in a study on race and racism, students of color may have felt the burden of having "to teach white people about racism." One challenge, then, for racial dialogues as well as for race-related research is "how they can be productive for all participants, not just a learning situation for white people while people of color bare their souls to help white people" ((Miller & Garran, 2008, p. 168).

Another limitation concerns the researcher-created survey instrument. First, the definitions of the contextual variables of supervision (e.g., the supervisory relationship, the counseling relationship, and the field agency structure and climate) were not explicitly or comprehensively defined in the survey instrument. This lack of clarity may have confused students as they responded to the Likert-scale questions. Further, since the

survey was researcher-created, even though there was face validity, other tests of validity and reliability were limited.

A third limitation concerns participant self-selection. The participants who responded by completing the survey instrument may have had a greater-than-average interest in, or sensitivity to, issues of race or the supervisory relationship than the general SCSSW student body. Given their strong interest in this topic, the respondents may have perceived their experiences differently than the typical student. Correspondingly, some participants may have chosen to participate as a forum for expressing grievances toward their supervisors, the SCSSW program, or practicum sites.

Finally, although the study attempted to address the influence of researcher bias on the data analysis, it is possible that the researcher's perceptions uniquely influenced aspects of the investigation (e.g., the formulation of research questions), which may have subsequently influenced the type of data collected. However, an attempt to include a broader set of individuals in the research survey's design (e.g., pilot study and HSR review) lends some additional validity to the researcher's findings.

Implications for Social Work Training, Practice and Policy

Education and Training

For students and supervisors. Results from this study suggest that students and supervisors not only need training in anti-racism content, but also in how to dialogue about issues of race in field supervision. Training for students and supervisors together should establish the foundations for honest and meaningful dialogue; develop a shared language; increase awareness of multiple racial and social group memberships and dynamics of privilege and oppression; and encourage listening and perspective taking of

experiences and perceptions different from one's own (Werkmeister Rozas, 2007).

Training should emphasize the study's finding that the overall comfort, safety and openness of the supervisory relationship promote an atmosphere, in which difficult issues (e.g., race and racism) can be acknowledged and explored. Training also should inform students and supervisors of the potential challenges they may face in addressing issues of race in supervision as well as concrete strategies for how to work through these challenges. As Bogo (1993) wrote of the potential benefits of the "inevitable discomfort" stirred up between supervisor and student in the field instructor relationship:

While trust is developed in the presence of facilitative conditions such as warmth, acceptance, genuineness, and interest, it is truly tested as participants grapple with difference and recognize that they can risk disagreement and achieve resolution of some sort" (p.34).

Further, supervisor and student may benefit from a role-play demonstration, in which workshop facilitators model a "supervisory racial dialogue" in front of the larger group. This activity may be helpful in demonstrating the application of what is learned in the training in the context of interpersonal interactions. Finally, it may be useful for supervisor and student to create together some guidelines for how race-related discussions would take place, and some principles to guide the process.

For field supervisors. Findings strongly indicate that training for field supervisors should not only clarify what SCSSW means by "anti-racism commitment," but also highlight the supervisor's essential role in collaborating with students to apply anti-racism learning to social work practice. Training should emphasize the supervisor's role in initiating race-related discussions at the beginning of students' field experiences.

Workshops for field supervisors should incorporate racial identity models, which according to Cook (1994)

can provide a relatively non-threatening focus for discussing racial differences in supervision, as the models examine individual differences rather than sweeping generalizations about different racial groups, generalizations that can contribute to alienation and defensiveness when individuals discuss racial issues (p.5).

Finally, specific findings from students' detailed responses in this study – such as, supervisor behaviors and supervisory relationship factors that promote students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race – should be shared with supervisors.

For SCSSW students. Training for SCSSW master's students should take place at the end of the summer prior to students' entry into field placements. This training should prepare students for the potential benefits and challenges of talking about issues of race with field supervisors. For instance, "seasoned students" (e.g., second or third summer master's students) potentially could facilitate a training workshop for first-year students. This format – of more seasoned students teaching incoming students – may act to empower students by making it possible for students to take charge of matters which affect them. Senior students could share the strategies they have developed to cope with challenges in addressing issues of race with field supervisors. This "normalizing" and "mentoring of other students" also may increase students' courage to initiate racial dialogues in supervision.

Clinical Practice

These findings have implications for social work practice. If racial dialogues take place in the supervisory relationship, then students may learn how to discuss issues of race with clients. However, if racial issues are not addressed in supervision, clients may

be denied opportunities to explore "a basic part of their identities and the influence of their racial identities on interpersonal relationships" (Cook, 1994, p.5). Further, particularly in counseling dyads involving a white clinician and a client of color, many elements of the client's everyday life (e.g., covert or overt racism) can be reenacted in the clinical encounter. In order to provide effective services to an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse clientele, social work students need opportunities in field supervision to reflect upon and explore their feelings, reactions and attitudes about issues of race.

Policy

The study's findings have implications for social work policy. Mandates in the code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (2008) articulate the expectations for social workers to pursue social change and social justice. Findings from this study may help social work educators carry out this professional mandate by more comprehensively understanding the process that transpires when social work students engage in race-related discourse with field supervisors. As Harro (2007) stated, the mission of the social work profession

is to question and challenge assumptions, structures and rules of the system of oppression, and to clarify our different needs, perceptions, strengths, resources and skills in the process. Done well, these dialogues result in a deeper and richer repertoire of options and opportunities for changing the system (p.463).

Further, existing policies regarding staff hiring, the organizational power within the agency, or client eligibility may be expressed in ways that tilt opportunity and privilege to members of the dominant, white culture. Racial dialogues in supervision may allow for student and supervisor to come together in efforts to work toward combating institutional racism in their field agencies. Forming partnerships across differences may

increase shared power and manifest in influencing the structure, policy and management of social work organizations (Harro, 2007).

Implications for Future Research

The findings hold several implications for future research. First, given that the current study sample underrepresented students of color, future research might use purposeful sampling techniques to recruit a larger sample with a broader range of diversity. If conducted with enough participants, this might permit an extended examination of the relationship among racial group membership, racial identity development and racial dialogues in supervision. Next, further exploration is needed to explore the field agency conditions, under which racial issues may be optimally addressed. While this study identified students' particular discomfort talking with field supervisors about issues pertaining to the field agency structure and climate, future research in this area is warranted. Third, in this investigation, discussions of race with field supervisors were only considered from the perspective of students. Future examinations may uncover more descriptive data by examining the perspectives of supervisors and students simultaneously. Fourth, future research might examine the influence of different types of racial discussions on students and supervisors. Perhaps certain matters of race are more difficult than others, which may explain differences in how students experience and respond to them. For instance, students may feel more comfortable discussing issues of race related to others (e.g., clients), than as related to their own personal experiences.

Fifth, future studies might focus on how certain other socio-cultural variables of students and supervisors (e.g., religion; gender; country of origin; age group)

differentially influence racial dialogues in supervision. Sixth, future research might examine the relationship among supervisory style and approach, student characteristics and discussions of race in supervision. For instance, some supervisory styles and approaches may contribute, more than others, to students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. This also may differ as a function of students' individual differences and developmental needs.

Seventh, simultaneous examination of supervision and therapy processes might lead to a fuller understanding of parallel process dynamics on racial dialogues in supervision. For instance, this research could use independent observation to examine the influence of racial dialogues in supervision on client outcome. Using an independent observation method may enable the collection of data, which may be beyond students' conscious awareness. Eighth, qualitative research that involves in-depth interviews could extend some of the concepts identified in this study. Finally, future projects might construct training models and test the effectiveness of these models in aiding discussions of race in supervision.

Conclusion

The need to integrate issues of race in social work field supervision is becoming increasingly relevant to social service provision, as evidenced by a rapid increase in racial and ethnic diversity in the United States. Although the social work major organizations and accrediting institutions acknowledge the importance of racial and cultural awareness within every aspect of social work education and practice, the majority of current social work literature concerning issues of race is limited to counseling and assessment (Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2003). In the context of field supervision, discussions about issues of

race can facilitate students' learning in how to engage in sensitive, competent and responsive cross-racial clinical work. The dynamics of the supervisory encounter are greatly impacted by the student's and supervisor's attempts to either avoid or engage with issues of race. Since 1994 when the SCSSW adopted its commitment to anti-racism, there have been several examinations of the institutional changes to the School's mission statement, curriculum, recruitment and hiring, faculty development and diversity training, and the design of anti-racism practice in field internships. However, there is limited documentation, which reflects the subjective experiences of the School's master's student population incorporating anti-racism learning into their field practicum experiences.

The purpose of this mixed-method, survey study was to collect descriptive data on students' experiences talking with field supervisors about issues of race in an effort to further examine how students incorporate anti-racism learning into the field. The study examined students' year in graduate school and students' amount of completed anti-racism training and graduate coursework on their comfort discussing issues of race with supervisors. Additionally, the researcher examined students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general compared to issues of race. Finally, students provided open-ended responses to a series of questions, which elicited their experiences talking with supervisors about issues of race.

Limitations notwithstanding, this study is significant given the dearth of current knowledge on SCSSW students' experiences incorporating anti-racism learning into field practice through racial dialogues with field supervisors. Quantitative findings included: (1) students' comfort talking with supervisors about topics in general predicted their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race; (2) students' number of completed

training activities did not predict their comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race; and (3) there was no significant difference between the first year and second year students' comfort talking with supervisors about issues of race. Overall, the findings demonstrated the importance of an open and safe relationship with a supervisor, who has developed the racial awareness necessary to initiate and explore issues of race in depth with the student. The findings implicated the need for more training for students and supervisors in how to specifically address issues of race in the context of field supervision. Student respondents also acknowledged their responsibility in taking actions to empower themselves. They articulated a shared desire to learn strategies for incorporating the School's anti-racism commitment into their field experiences, clinical practice, and beyond.

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Appendix A

Glossary of Terms Used

Topics Discussed

Topics in General

Any topic that comes up in the ongoing interaction between supervisor and supervisee.

Issues of Race

Any topic about race that comes up in the ongoing interaction between supervisor and supervisee; social identity characteristics, opinions, backgrounds, life experiences as related to race; societal, historical, and relational issues as related to race.

Contextual Factors of Supervision

Supervisory Relationship

The dynamic, relational process between supervisor and supervisee.

Topics may involve: the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with the supervisor or about their professional learning process; both the supervisor and supervisee exploring how their backgrounds, expectations, prior experiences impact the supervisory relationship.

Counseling Relationship

The dynamic, relational process between client and supervisee/therapist/student.

Topics may involve: client characteristics; client identified presenting problem and diagnosis; parallel process dynamics, as manifested in supervision; the students' feelings, thoughts, behaviors about their relationship with clients.

Field Agency Structure & Climate

The context of the institutional organization in which the student and supervisor work.

Topics may include: organizational clientele; the roles prescribed to supervisor and supervisee by the organization; organizational norms, politics; organizational supports and stressors; organizational goals, policy and procedures; service setting.

Appendix B

Text of Recruitment Email

Dear fellow students:

Greetings from New York City! I hope this email finds you all well.

My name is Julia Perault. I am a second-year graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work collecting data for my MSW thesis, which asks the question: How do students experience conversations about race within the field supervisory relationship?

I request 35 minutes of your time to fill out a survey for my research on this topic.

I invite you to use the survey link below to participate in my study if you meet the following criteria:

You are currently enrolled at Smith College School for Social Work, currently intern at a field agency, and receive routine, one-on-one supervision.

The confidentiality of the participants will be secured by not having any names or email addresses attached to the surveys. A third party, Survey Monkey, will collect the completed surveys in an anonymous method for which no records will be kept regarding who responds to this survey.

Your time, honesty, and thoughtfulness are deeply appreciated. If you have any concerns about this study, please contact me via email (julia.perault@gmail.com) or the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee at (413) 585-7974.

Sincerely,
Julia Perault

Survey Link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com>

Appendix C

Human Subjects Review Approval Letter

February 8, 2009

Julia Perault

Dear Julia,

Your revised materials have been reviewed and everything is now complete. We are glad to give final approval to your study. You don't have to include referral information as this is a professional group and they probably know how to seek help should they wish it. Further, I'm not sure psychotherapy is the answer if they are that upset about their supervision. If you like, you may delete that part of the Informed Consent and the Application. It is up to you.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Good luck with your project.

Sincerely,

Ann Hartman, D.S.W.
Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Joseph Smith, Research Advisor

Appendix D

Informed Consent

Dear Participant:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study! My name is Julia Perault. I am a second-year graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work. I am conducting a study to examine Smith College School for Social Work students' experiences talking about issues of race in field supervision. Your perspective is valuable in adding to the empirical knowledge base about students' experiences addressing racial material in supervision. This study provides the School with information on students' continued anti-racism learning in the field. I am conducting this study for my Master's thesis, and plan to disseminate information I learn during the Smith dissemination process.

Please participate in this study only if you: a) are a currently enrolled master's student at Smith College School for Social Work, and b) presently receive individual clinical supervision as an intern. The survey should take approximately 35 minutes to complete. By clicking "NEXT" to enter the Survey, you are indicating your agreement to participate in this study.

Risks to participation are minimal. You may experience uncomfortable or distressful feelings for reasons such as: answering personal questions about how racial issues are addressed in supervision; or discovering ways that you are dissatisfied with your supervision experience. There is no financial compensation for study participation. Please contact the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Telephone Referral Service at 800-242-9794 to locate a clinical social worker within your geographical area, in the unlikely event any discomfort of more than minimal intensity or duration should occur.

You may benefit from study participation in the following ways: an increased self-awareness of factors which affect whether issues of race are discussed in supervision; an ability to utilize this awareness to better integrate racial issues in supervision; opportunities to enhance the School's sensitivity to race-related matters in field supervision as well as to how the anti-racism mission translates into field practicum; contribution to the betterment of the social work profession; assisting a student in need of study participants.

As a participant in this study, considerable measures will be implemented to maintain your confidentiality throughout the course of this research. Data will be kept in a secure location for a period of at least three (3) years, as required by Federal guidelines and the mandates of the social work profession.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question without penalty. You may withdraw from the study at any time during the data collection process. If you wish to withdraw while filling out the survey, you can leave the Survey Monkey

website or close your web browser. However, you WILL NOT be able to withdraw once you have submitted your answers (by clicking the "Next" button). The survey is anonymous, and so I will not be able to identify and exclude your data. If you have concerns about your rights or about any aspect of the study, please contact me via email (julia.perault@gmail.com) or the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee at (413) 585-7974.

BY CLICKING "NEXT" YOU ARE INDICATING THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE INFORMATION ABOVE AND THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION, AND YOUR RIGHTS AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

Sincerely,
Julia Perault

You may download and/or print a copy of this consent form for your records.
Thank you for your participation in this study.

Appendix E

Researcher-Created Survey Instrument

Eligibility Questions

1. Are you a graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work? Yes/No
2. Are you currently receiving routine individual supervision as a social work intern? Yes/No

Demographic and Background Information: *Please fill out the following to the best of your ability.*

3. What is your age? _____
4. What is your self-identified gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Other _____ (please specify)
5. What is your self-identified racial and/or ethnic background?
 - a. African American
 - b. Asian
 - c. Caucasian
 - d. First Nations/Native American
 - e. Latino/a
 - f. Middle Eastern
 - g. Multiracial
 - h. Racial/ethnic identity not listed above _____ (please specify)
6. What is your current standing at Smith College School for Social Work?
 - a. First-year placement (A10)
 - b. Second-year placement (A09)
 - c. Advanced standing (A09)
 - d. Other _____ (please specify)
7. What of the following best describes your theoretical orientation, or personal model of counseling?
 - Cognitive behavioral
 - Psychoanalytic
 - Eclectic
 - Unknown
 - Other _____ (please specify)

Primary Supervisor: *Please answer the following questions in reference to your primary, one-on-one supervisor. If you are supervised by more than one supervisor, please answer questions with only one supervisor in mind.*

8. What is your supervisor's approximate age? _____
9. What is your supervisor's gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Other _____ (please specify)
10. What is your supervisor's racial and/or ethnic background?
 - a. African American
 - b. Asian
 - c. Caucasian
 - d. First Nations/Native American
 - e. Latino/a
 - f. Middle Eastern
 - g. Multiracial
 - h. Unknown
 - i. Racial/ethnic identity not listed above _____ (please specify)
11. What of the following best describes your supervisor's theoretical orientation, or personal model of counseling?
 - Cognitive behavioral
 - Psychoanalytic
 - Eclectic
 - Other _____ (please specify)
 - Unknown
12. Approximately how many years of supervisory experience does your supervisor have?
 - 0-10 years
 - 11-20 years
 - 21-30 years
 - 31 or more years
 - Unknown
13. On average each week, how much time do you spend meeting with your supervisor?
 - Never
 - Less than 1 hour
 - 1-2 hours
 - More than 2 hours
 - Other _____ (please specify)

Discussions in Supervision

Supervisory Relationship: supervisor-supervisee

Counseling Relationship: therapist-client

14. Please rate your comfort level talking to your supervisor about all you think and feel in relation to the:

Very Comfortable	Comfortable	Somewhat Comfortable	Somewhat Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable	N/A
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- a. Supervisory Relationship
- b. Counseling Relationship
- c. Field Agency Structure and Climate

Discussions in Supervision: Race

Supervisory Relationship: supervisor-supervisee

Counseling Relationship: therapist-client

Race: a social construct that divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997).

15. On average, approximately what percentage of your supervision time is spent talking about RACE?

- 0-20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- 81-100%

16. Please rate your comfort level talking to your supervisor about all you think and feel in relation to the:

Very Comfortable	Comfortable	Somewhat Comfortable	Somewhat Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable	N/A
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- a. Supervisory Relationship
- b. Counseling Relationship
- c. Field Agency Structure and Climate

Short Answer: One

Please elaborate on the following questions based on your experience.

17. Please comment on your general experience discussing (or not discussing) issues of race in supervision.
18. Please comment on your experience discussing (or not discussing) your racial background and your supervisor's racial background with each other in supervision.
19. Please comment on your experience discussing (or not discussing) your clients' racial backgrounds in supervision.

Short Answer: Two

20. In your opinion, what factors FACILITATE race-related discussions in supervision?
21. In your opinion, what factors INTERFERE with race-related discussions in supervision?

Preparation and Support

22. By May 2009, what graduate school and professional training will you have completed in issues of race and racism? (Please check all statements that apply to you.)
 - a. Smith College School for Social Work's antiracism symposium
 - b. Smith College School for Social Work's graduate coursework
 - c. Smith College School for Social Work's anti-racism field assignment
 - d. Trainings and workshops at field placement
 - e. Other (please specify) _____
23. How has graduate coursework and training in racial issues prepared (or not prepared) you for having discussions about race in supervision?