The N-Word:
It Doesn't Mean THAT Anymore…
or Does It?

By

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Abstract

The N-word, a linguistic tool of racism, has been historically used, by primarily White Americans, to demean and degrade Black Americans, and since slavery ended it continues to be used in a derogatory manner by both Blacks and Whites in the present day American lexicon. Ironically, however, in addition to the typical use of the N-word, a contemporary variant of the term, "nigga", has been used by people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, including Black Americans, as a term of endearment towards friends, family, and acquaintances; consequently, this apparent contradiction may cause inter-racial confusion and miscommunication. It is this duality that I will explore while attempting to answer the following research questions: 1) In the 21st century does the N-word have multiple meanings among young people? 2) What does it mean to young people who do use the word in their everyday discourse? 3) Is pronunciation a factor for young people when interpreting the meaning of the N-word? and 4) What are the characteristics of people that use the N-Word and its different variants? This research provides an empirically grounded assessment of current patterns of use and meaning of the N-word

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Chapter I: Introduction

Great strides have been made in defeating the racist ideologies that have supported

the institutional discriminatory practices that have been at the core of many social issues that

the United States has encountered over the years. Slavery and Jim Crow segregation have

been abolished, women and minorities have the right to vote, the Fourteenth Amendment to

the Constitution affords equal protection under that law for all citizens, and the 1964 Civil

Rights Act outlawed discriminatory practices against women, and racial, ethnic, and religious

minorities, and racial segregation in schools, the workplace, and in public spaces (Healey,

2010). However, throughout the 20th century, racism has continued to persist, in both direct

and indirect forms and is firmly rooted in the structure of U.S. society. Scholars have argued

that the racism of the post-civil rights era is largely inconspicuous and comes in the form of

covert public policy relating to housing, education, or the hiring policies of corporate

America, to name a few (Wilson, 2009; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith, 1996; Bonilla-Silva and

Forman, 2000, Ansell, 2003). This implicit racism is referred to as color-blind racism in

which, primarily White, people justify acts of discrimination against minorities while

publicly declaring they are not racist (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith, 1996; Bonilla-Silva and

Forman, 2000, Ansell, 2003).

Since overt, direct institutional discriminatory practices have been outlawed by the

Civil Rights Act, and there are institutional programs in place (i.e. affirmative action) to

assist racial minorities, in gaining economic and educational opportunities, it is easy for

Whites to believe Blacks and other minorities are responsible for not obtaining higher

economic and educational statuses because there are programs in place assist them in doing

so. For example, in their study regarding racial attitudes of White college students, Bonilla-

Silva and Forman (2000) discovered that despite the students' stated ideologies of fairness and equality are some very racist ideas. Some of the respondents denied the structural nature of racial inequality while others indicate that Blacks use past discrimination to avoid working or getting an education; moreover, many expressed resentment or disdain for Blacks. Although, in public settings, the language of law and institutional practices has changed, there is evidence to support the idea that racism is still a major concern in this country. Racism practiced at the micro level through language (i.e. use of the N-word) has reinforced institutional discriminatory practices and allowed them to continue.

The N-word[1], a linguistic tool of racism, has been historically used by primarily White Americans to demean and degrade Black Americans, and since the abolishment of slavery, it continues to be used in a derogatory manner by both Blacks and Whites in the present day American lexicon. Ironically, however, in addition to the typical use of the N-word, a contemporary variant of the term, "nigga", has been used by people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, including Black Americans, as a term of endearment towards friends, family, and acquaintances; consequently, this apparent contradiction may cause inter-racial confusion and miscommunication.

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary describes the term nigger as "perhaps the most offensive and inflammatory racial slur in English" (2011). Based on previous analysis, the English term nigger appears to be a borrowing of the Spanish word "negro" which means "black," and was commonly used by Spanish and Portuguese slave traders that referred to the dark skin of Africans. The online Oxford English Dictionary (OED) describes the early use as rather neutral, in spite of the fact that it was used within the context of the slave trade.

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[1] The euphemism "N-word" will primarily be used; however, when a distinction between "nigger" and "nigga" must be made, the appropriate variant will be spelled out.

However, the use of the term by Whites indicated, "underlying attitudes rather than a hostile use of the word itself" (OED, 2011). Early examples suggest the patronizing attitude that Whites had toward Black Africans assumed inferior social, intellectual, and cultural development. The subtle social meanings communicated in the early use by Whites eventually deteriorated into an explicit slur (Rahman, 2012).

Scholars have noted a relationship between the social prestige of a group and the meanings of terms used to refer to members of that group. The derogatory meaning of terms begin with shared stereotypes that produce negative social meanings and are then used to refer to a particular group (Rahman, 2012; Curzan, 2003). The disparaging use of the N-word began in the middle of the 18th century and was "a familiar and influential insult" (Kennedy 2002:5). The term was used by White Americans to establish a distinction between the races that would allow Whites to impose their beliefs of superiority; thereby, placing Blacks in a position of inferiority (Baugh, 1999). The use of the N-word was meant to intimidate Blacks and emphasize what was believed to be their physical, moral, and intellectual inferiority. In 1837, Hosea Easton, a free Black American, wrote of the hatred and disregard that is inherent in the use of the N-word. He described nigger as "an opprobrious term, employed to impose contempt upon blacks as an inferior race" (Easton, 1837/2007:41). The use of the N-word as an epithet established and supported social inequality and the racist ideology which identified Blacks as inferior beings.

Interestingly, Spears (1998) indicated that a non-derogatory form of the N-word became a part of the African American lexicon soon after the arrival of slaves to America. Although it is impossible to know exactly when the term became common in the African American speech community, certain facts are known about the experiences of the slaves at

the time of their arrival in America that may provide a likely explanation. For instance, Gomez (1998) has shown that upon arrival in America, slaves were separated from others of their tribal or ethnic group. Because slaves did not have a common language, they were in need of a mode of communication and a commonly understood term of in-group self-reference for members of the group. The term was frequently heard in the language they were learning; therefore, nigger was a reasonable label for slaves to employ to refer to themselves (Rahman, 2012). Early uses of variations of nigger in the Black and White communities had similar meanings; the term simply referred to an African. This early use seems to be a precursor to the use of the word among Blacks today.

Even though racism, whether direct or indirect, still persists and the struggle to combat racist ideas continues even in a post-civil rights era, the public use of the N-word is generally considered socially unacceptable. Should a White person use the term it would frequently be interpreted as a display of explicit racism; however, when the N-word is used by Black Americans intra-racially, or even sometimes inter-racially, it is sometimes perceived as a term of endearment and it appears the word may be tolerable for public use given its positive connotation. In light of the potential for inter-racial confusion regarding the proper use of the N-word, if there is one, I chose to explore the use of the N-word by college students in Bakersfield, CA. Since I have spent a great deal of time on the two college campuses in Bakersfield, and have heard the word used on several occasions by young people, I decided to look at the use of the N-word by college students because of the apparent increase in the use of the term by this group.

It is this duality that I have explored while attempting to answer the following research questions: 1) In the 21st century does the N-word have multiple meanings among

young people? 2) What does it mean to young people who do use the word in their routine discourse? 3) Is pronunciation a factor for young people when interpreting the meaning of the N-word? and 4) What are the characteristics of people that use the N-Word and its different variants?) The answers to these questions have come from individuals who may or may not use the N-word, but have some knowledge about it either through personal experience or popular culture. This will help readers understand how one particular historically pejorative term can have seemingly opposite meanings. Essentially, how is one word used to refer to one's friend as well as their enemy? This research provides an empirically grounded assessment of current patterns of use and meaning of the N-word.

As the struggle for racial equality among all Americans continues, it is important to understand how this word is perceived by those who it has historically been used against. So just as race, a socially constructed concept, continues to be a topic worthy of discussion and empirical investigation, so is the language used to describe and signify it. There is no shortage of literature regarding the N-word and its use; however, it is often anecdotal or in the form of socio-historical essays. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to expand the limited empirical data that exists on this topic. My research provides empirical data relating to various aspects of this social phenomenon by collecting data from college students who may or may not use the term in their everyday discourse.

The subsequent chapters will outline some of the relevant literature available regarding the N-word, as well as the concept of race, and language as a social behavior, the methods utilized for data collection, preparation, and analysis, the findings, and a discussion of the social significance of those findings, and then finally, a discussion regarding the limitations of this project and ideas for future research.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter will summarize the relevant literature regarding the N-word, and will be organized by the following sections: Language, Language and Race, and finally Language, Race, and the N-word. Then I provide an explanation of the gaps in the literature which provides an empirical basis for this research.

Language

Language, a set of symbols written, verbal, and non-verbal, is what humans use to make sense of the world around us and to convey ideas and meaning to other members of society. Sociologist Herbert Blumer indicated language is a symbolic form of currency used to exchange ideas and communicate practical purposes and intentions (1969). In order to convey the intended meaning, people must be speaking the same language (exchanging the same currency) and have the same idea of what the words mean. Similarly, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1961) provided great insight to the development and use of language in the social world. Similar to Mead's concept of role playing, Wittgenstein referred to language as a "language game" in that participants in an interaction must be playing by the same rules. By rules, Wittgenstein is referring to not only grammar, but also the proper use of words based on the assigned and agreed upon meaning within the group of speakers.

The language an individual speaks helps him/her to function within their social network and is a critical component in the act of self-identification, and recognition as a member of that group. A group can be based on gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, or family ties, to name a few. Thornton, Taylor, and Brown (2000) evaluated the racial labels commonly selected by Black Americans, and they discovered there are many reasons why an individual would choose one label over another. For some, it didn't matter which label was

used at all; nevertheless, all were in an effort to identify with their racial or ethnic cohort. Whereas, for others self-identifying with and taking on the label of a particular group is an attempt to show loyalty to that particular group and establish differences between groups. Labeling, even when the individual selects his or her own label, is one way in which the system of racial stratification was established and is maintained (Thornton, Taylor, and Brown, 2000). Making the distinction between groups allows for the justification of unequal treatment and distribution of group resources. Therefore, if an individual does not belong to the group, there is no obligation to provide him/her with the same opportunities afforded to those in the group.

Relatedly, Janet Holmes (2008) noted that slang serves as a marker of group membership for younger generations and is an area of language where change often begins. The use of slang by young people signals their standing as members of particular speech communities. If membership in these groups carries social prestige, then the language used members may be utilized by other groups in an effort to identify with them. The new term(s) will then has/have the potential to spread throughout the broader society and become the new standard.

In order for language change to occur, individual users and speech communities must change, and that change must be consistent for a long period of time so that other users will adapt to the new rule or word (Chang, 2008). This means that in order for the definition of a word to change and be accepted by the majority of speakers of a particular language, it must be utilized in its new form until it is accepted. It could be argued that this is what is occurring with the N-word, but because of its history the non-pejorative version of the word has not been readily accepted by society at large. Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (2008) speaks of a

"collective secret knowledge" which allows individuals to identify with the group. This is not some covert language that is being used, but rather the agreed upon cultural understanding that is held by the members of the group. Applying to Blacks in the United States, it is this "private vocabulary of Black people serves users as a medium of self-defense…"(Major, 1971:9) which allows members of the Black community to use the N-word with one another without the offense that may be taken if used by someone outside the group. It is possible, with established group membership, that a person who would normally be considered an outsider (i.e. a person of a different racial or ethnic background) would be able to use the term without offending those around him/her. However, the freedom to do so would be limited to that particular group alone which indicates the race of the speaker influences linguistic boundaries.

Language and Race

Pierre Bourdieu (1991) suggested every linguistic interaction, however individual or immaterial, may appear as representative of the social structure it both expresses and helps to reproduce. Language use goes beyond just the transmission of information, to be used as a tool of 'symbolic domination'. Domination, in this sense, is not exercised as explicit physical force, but rather the exclusion from particular social institutions and blocking access to resources. The dominant group establishes the meaning of terms used to distinguish themselves from others in society. For instance, Celious (2002) evaluated the use of the term "bitch" and how it has been transformed into a symbol of independence and power for some women who self-identify by the term. The term "bitch", much like the N-word, has historically been used to oppress and subjugate a group of people, in this case women, and to demean men when it is directed at them. Celious noted that the act of re-appropriating a term

for self-identification is in itself empowering. By using the term themselves, women have undermined the power that was once used to control and stigmatize them. This process gives women a sense of control as they exercise agency with regard to their identity. This is not to say that "bitch" cannot still be used in a negative or derogatory manner, but rather that the meaning is determined by who is saying it and for what purpose. This change in the use and meaning of "bitch" is similar to variation that has been observed with the N-word.

In relation to the concept of race, Bourdieu's view of language as symbolic domination has been exemplified in the United States. W.E.B DuBois addressed this issue in his influential work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, when he introduced the concept of the color-line. The color-line refers to the role of race and racism in history and society which identifies the intersection of race and class as a means of domination within American society (1903). The color-line was symbolically drawn with the words of Whites, such as the N-word, and was used to make clear what they believed were inherent differences between themselves, and those like they chose to accept as White, and Blacks. So whether the term is used as a tool of self-identification or racism, the use of the N-word has had and continues to have the power to maintain the division between Black and non-Black Americans.

Race, as a socially constructed concept, has socio-historically been used to separate people into distinct groups, and is the basis for much of the racial inequality and racism observed within our society. Although the overt racism of the past, such as laws and policies that mandated racial segregation in various social institutions is no longer accepted, the language used to support these practices is still being used in the current lexicon. Because of the covert/colorblind nature of racism today, it is easy for people to believe that racism no longer exists, and ignore or deny the structural racial inequalities that still occur. However,

Myers and Williamson (2001) investigated how racist ideas are being discussed and perpetuated in ordinary, everyday private conversations that ultimately support racism at the macro level. Their study utilized participant observation to collect data on the use of "race talk", language that reinforces and legitimizes racist ideas. The authors found that White individuals, who would not publicly acknowledge their own racist ideas, would in fact discuss them in private conversation with friends and family. Myers and Williamson concluded that the language used by individuals perpetuates the cycle of racist ideology in which discriminatory practices are normalized and supported. Whether used publicly or privately, the N-word and racist language in general help to maintain the symbolic division of power within American society.

Language, Race, and the N-word

A great deal of the existing research data and socio-historical background on the N-word is confined to the origins of the N-word (Bindas, 2010, Rahman, 2012, Curzan, 2003), the existence of the term within legislation and the legalities of its use (Parks and Jones, 2008, Wellington, 2008), and anecdotal recounts of its use and ensuing feelings or responses (Asim, 2007; Jackson, 1999). For instance, Kenneth J. Bindas (2010) provides a detailed account of the history of racism in this country and presents anecdotal evidence as to how and why the N-word became so divisive and disparaging. Bindas takes an in-depth look at race relations in America from the perspective of both Black and White Americans and offers a possible explanation of the intentions of people as they use the N-word. He states the perspectives of race and contemporary race relations are different for Blacks and Whites because each group has their own shared memories of racially based actions and how race is currently viewed in this country. Whites commonly believe that the moral, economic, and

political wrongs of slavery has been made right by the North winning of the Civil War and the emergence of the civil rights era which led to many opportunities for Black Americans. However, Black Americans' memories frequently represent continued repression and unequal, inferior status. These opposing ideas frame the community discussions regarding race and the current status of Black Americans. Consequently, this gives an indication of how race is defined by both Blacks and Whites and the language that is used to describe it, which includes the use and meaning of the N-word.

Similar to Bindas (2010), Parks and Jones (2008) provide the historical and cultural context for the use of the N-word by both Black and White people, but in terms of how it relates to the law should interpret the use of the N-word in identifying hate crimes. Parks and Jones show that there are clear and distinct differences between the uses of the N-word by Black people intra-racially and when used by White people, especially when in the act of verbally harming a Black person. They maintain that the long history of racial prejudice towards Blacks by Whites, and the use of the N-word in establishing and maintaining power over Blacks, is the foundation of the current "implicit anti-Black attitudes" (2008:1345) and are seen while in the commission of hate crimes. Parks and Jones note that studies regarding Whites who identify with Black culture typically do not use the N-word despite their position as insiders. Consequently, it is this difference that could be used to identify and prosecute hate crimes. Their findings in the context of my research serve to explain, at least in part, the diverse meanings of the N-word as they relate to the current state of race relations in the United States.

In her work on the social aspects of communication, Fisher (2008) addresses the role of meaning as it relates to the use of offensive language, specifically the N-word. As with

Parks and Jones (2008), Fisher clearly shows the difference in meaning when the word is used by a White person and directed at a Black person. However, she also indicates that some White people believe that the contextual meaning of the N-word may have changed or may be changing, so that in certain circumstances it may be acceptable for them to use it. However, the N-word used by a White person in reference to a Black person is much more likely to be considered debasing by a Black person despite a close personal relationship; whereas, the opposite may not be true, should a Black person use it to refer to a White person. Fisher's research demonstrates the various meanings of the N-word and how the meaning is often defined by the social or cultural context in which it is used.

The origin and development of the N-word has made the term a unique "American racial epithet" because of its capability to withstand social and cultural shifts in race relations while maintaining the ability to sustain, at least in part, the racial stratification once explicit in this country (Asim, 2007:4). The N-word is not the only epithet used against a group of people based on particular characteristics, such as race, gender, or sexuality to name a few; however, it does seem to be one of, if not the most volatile. For example, while discussing disparaging terms used to refer to homosexuals he noted, "'Nigger'…is not one of those words of innocuous meaning that morphed over time into something different and harmful; it has always been tethered to notions of race and racial inferiority" (Asim, 2007: 215). Similar to Spears (1998), he also indicates that the use of the N-word by Black Americans dates back to the mid-1800s, and that it has become part of the lexicon of many Americans irrespective of their racial or ethnic background.

Much of the existing literature appears to rely on implicit or subjective, rather than empirical, evidence which leaves the data open for legitimate challenge and limits its

generalizability to some degree. Furthermore, the existing scholarship does not address the patterns and trends associated with the use the N-word by young Black people, nor does it address the linguistic significance; given the word has multiple meanings that appear to be contextually based. Consequently, there is a lack of empirical research regarding the use of the N-word and its perceived, among users and nonusers, meaning in the American lexicon. In turn, my research begins to identify patterns of contextual use and meaning of the N-word among those who choose to use it or not. This project also attempts to identify any possible gender and/or generational differences among Black respondents in the meaning and use of the term when compared to their counterparts of differing racial-ethnic backgrounds.

Chapter III: Methodology

In order to study the N-word and examine patterns of use and meaning of the N-word, I developed a survey tool and gathered data from students at Bakersfield College and California State University, Bakersfield. This chapter will discuss the procedures followed during data collection and coding, as well as the ethical concerns that were identified and addressed throughout the research process. It should be noted that this research was conducted following full approval from the Institutional Review Board at California State University, Bakersfield.

Data Collection and Coding

This exploratory project employed a self-administered survey questionnaire. Survey methodology has been previously used to evaluate attitudes towards race (see Bonilla-Silva and Forman, 2000) and was the most efficient method for data collection given the financial and geographic limitations of this study. This approach permitted the asking of specific questions that sought to answer the aforementioned broader research questions. Survey methodology ensured anonymity in that no identifying information was asked and the demographic information requested was general enough that one would not be able to trace it back to any specific participants. Moreover, surveys were coded with a unique identification number for data entry and subsequent analysis.

The survey included both open and closed ended questions. The closed ended questions included "yes" and "no" responses, checklist options, and Likert scale responses. Utilizing nonrandom availability sampling procedures, the unit of analysis is college students at Bakersfield College and California State University, Bakersfield in Bakersfield, CA. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them as they left the

classroom, ensuring they were collected in a random fashion further securing anonymity of the students.

Responses to open ended questions have been transcribed and have been analyzed for patterns, and interpreted related to the specific variables and the overall research questions. Responses to the close ended questions were entered into an Excel spread sheet for analyses and then imported into SPSS. SPSS was used to calculate descriptive statistics and the correlations between the variables. The survey collected data relating to the following variables: race or ethnicity, sex and age of respondent, pronunciation, use, and meaning of the N-word. The independent variables included the race or ethnicity, age, and sex of the respondents. The data regarding race or ethnicity were collected by asking respondents to select the presented racial/ethnic categories they identify with or to write in their response. Although the variable was originally coded based on the respondent's choice: 1-White/Caucasian, 2-Black/African American, 3-Latino/Hispanic, 4-Asian/Pacific Islander, 5-Native American/Alaskan Native, 6-Other (please indicate race), it was subsequently recoded as 1-Black, and 0-Non-Black in order to focus on the difference between the responses of Black students and non-Black students. Age of respondents was collected to evaluate possible generational differences in the use of the N-word. Participants were asked to select one of the presented categories: (1) 16-19, (2) 20-29, (3) 30-39, (4) 40-49, and (5) 50 or older. In an effort to more closely identify the behavior and opinions of traditional college aged students, these categories were collapsed into two groups: (1) 16-29 and (0) 30+. Sex of respondent was asked to evaluate possible gender differences. Originally coded as 1-Male and 2-Female, the variable was recoded as 0-male and 1-female. Participants were also asked if they believe the N-word has multiple meanings. They were asked to select one of the

following options: 1-Yes, 2-No, or 3-Depends on relationship. Categories one and three were collapsed into one "Yes" group and recoded as 0-No and 1-Yes. All the aforementioned questions were re-coded in order to run logistic regression for analysis.

The dependent variables included: daily use of the N-word, pronunciation as a factor in determining the intended meaning, and if participants are offended by the N-word. These variables were evaluated by asking participants to respond to open and closed ended questions. Respondents were asked if they use the N-word and responses were coded: (1) Frequently, (2) Occasionally, or (3) Never. These categories "Frequently" and "Occasionally" were collapsed into a new category "Use of the N-word" (coded as 1) and Never was recoded as 0. This variable, therefore, indicates whether a respondent uses the N-Word or not.

Data regarding pronunciation was collected by asking respondents to indicate whether they agree that it (pronunciation) is a factor in determining the intended meaning. A Likert scale was provided with the following options: (1) Strongly agree, (2) Agree, (3) Disagree, (4) Strongly disagree. These categories were collapsed and re-coded as 0-Not a factor and 1-Pronunciation is a factor. Respondents were also asked to indicate which variety of the term they use, if they use the word at all. Options provided were: (1) "Nigga", (2) "Nigger", or (3) Do Not Use the Word. Responses were re-coded as 1- "Nigga" and 0- Not Used because "Nigger" was not selected by any of the respondents.

Participants were asked to indicate if they are offended by the N-word by choosing one of the following responses: (1) Yes (2) No (3) Sometimes. Categories one and three were combined into one "Yes" category and recoded as 1, and the "No" category was recoded as 0.

Ethical Concerns

Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, there are concerns about the heightened emotional response to repeated exposure to the N-word, especially given the fact that I am White. In an effort to minimize the potential negative emotional response to participants the term "the N-word" was used in place of the word "nigger" throughout most of the survey. The word was spelled out (as either "nigga" or "nigger") when asking respondents to distinguish which variety they use (if they use it), and most often hear used.

I expected that participants would experience minimal risk, discomfort or stress while participating in this study. However, because some questions are personal and thought-provoking, possibly causing harm to participants by triggering a negative emotional response, participants were informed during the consent process that they were free to withdraw at any time if they became uncomfortable while completing the survey. Should participants have needed further assistance with residual emotional feelings after the survey, the phone number for either the Counseling Center (CSUB campus) or the Student Health Center (Bakersfield College campus) would have been provided. I was available to assist in making the initial contact with the appropriate office if needed. Fortunately, none of the respondents indicated they were in need of additional services.

The sample for this research was obtained from the African American History classes held at Bakersfield College and the African American Experience course at CSUB. To avoid any potential for conflict between students and their instructors, or students feeling pressured into participating, each instructor agreed to leave the classroom after he/she introduced me. Only after the instructor left did I begin to explain the procedure to the students and asked for their voluntary participation. I clarified the purpose of this project to all potential participants

to ensure they were comfortable with participating. Potential participants were informed that participation was completely voluntary, they could withdraw at any time, and their privacy would be protected. Anonymity was secure in that no questions requesting identifying information were asked on the survey, and as recommended by the CSUB Institutional Review Board, participants were not required to sign an informed consent document because completion of the survey served as implied consent. Any student questions were answered to their satisfaction prior to the passing out of the questionnaires.

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Chapter IV: Results/Analysis

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This chapter will discuss the features of the sample, the statistical methods used, and the statistical findings.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1															Frequencies
	Age		Race		Sex		Pronunciation Equals Meaning		Pronunciation Used		Offended by the N-word		Multiple Meanings		Use	
	16-29	30+	Black	Non-Black	Male	Female	Yes	No	"Nigga"	Not Used	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
N	331	70	205	196	149	245	294	107	239	162	272	129	308	93	216	185
Percent	82.5	17.5	51.1	48.9	37.2	61.1	73.3	26.7	59.6	40.4	67.8	32.2	76.8	23.2	53.9	46.1
Missing		0		0		7(1.7%)		0		0		0		0		0
Total		401		401		401		401		401		401		401		401

This research produced a sample of 401 total participants. Table 1 above, shows the frequency of both the independent and dependent variables utilized in this project. Of the 401 participants, 82.5% are between the ages of 16-29 years old, 61% are female, and 51% are Black. Seventy six percent of respondents indicated the N-word has multiple meanings, and 73.3% believe that the meaning is specified by the pronunciation used with "nigga" being the pronunciation used most often (59.6%). Curiously, 76% of participants indicated they are offended by the N-word, yet 53% noted they use the word.

Bivariate Analysis

Crosstabs of race by age, sex, and the dependent variables were constructed to highlight the responses provided by Black participants as compared to non-Black participants. Table 2 below shows that of the 205 Black respondents, 158 (77%) are between the ages of 16-29 years old, and 120 (60%) of Black respondents are female.

Table 2		Age, Race, and Sex Crosstabulation				
		Age			Sex	
	16-29	30+	Total	Male	Female	Total
Black	158	47	205	79	120	199
Non-Black	173	23	196	70	125	195
Total	331	70	401	149	245	394*
Chi Square			8.711**			0.605

Notes: *Missing 7 observations; ** p<.01

Table 3				Crosstabulation					
		Use			Offended by the N-word			Pronunciation Equals Meaning	
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Black	142	63	205	154	51	205	156	49	205
Non-Black	74	122	196	118	78	196	138	58	196
Total	216	185	401	272	129	401	294	107	401
Chi-Square		40.042**			10.219**				1.658

Note: ** p<.01

Table 3 above shows 142 (69%) of Black participants use the N-word; whereas, only 74 (38%) of their non-Black counterparts acknowledged use of the word. One hundred fifty-four (75%) of Black and 118 (60%) of non-Black respondents indicated they are offended by the N-word. One hundred fifty-six (76%) of Black participants specified the pronunciation of the N-word is indicative of its intended meaning which is similar to the 138 (70%) of their non-Black counterparts. The chi-square test for each of the comparisons indicated statistically significant differences between in responses between Black and non-Black participants.

Logistic Regression Analysis

Though the Chi-Square tests established significant differences in how Black and non-Black respondents use and perceive the N-Word, Chi-Square tests are limited in that they cannot statistically control for multiple variables at once. Consequently, it is possible that these results are spurious because of other factors. Regression analysis was conducted in

an effort to account for potential spuriousness and to acknowledge that race may not be the only factor that influences the use and perception of the N-Word.

Although, standard linear regression methods analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and multiple independent variables, logistic regression was used because the binary dependent variables are inappropriate for standard regression approaches. Conducting ordinary least squares (OLS) regression on binary outcome variables creates problems with predictions and almost invariably violates assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity essential to the standard regression model. Logistic regression models are suggested by statisticians as a viable alternative to the more common OLS approach (Sweet and Grace-Martin, 2012). As noted above, the dependent variables in these regression models include: use the N-word/ do not use the N-Word, offended by the N-word/ not offended and pronunciation equals meaning/ meaning not related to pronunciation. Logistical regression allows me to estimate the likelihood or odds of a dependent variable occurring as a result of a particular independent variable while accounting for other variables. The results from three logistic regression models are displayed below in Table 4. Each column presents the regression results for a specific dependent variable. The independent variables are listed along the left-most row.

Logistic regression coefficients are somewhat more difficult to interpret than standard OLS coefficients. These coefficients represent the change in the "logit" (which is the natural logarithm of the odds) in y given a unit-increase in X. Unfortunately, changes in logits are not easily understood, so in order to facilitate the interpretation of logistic regression coefficients, the equation is exponentiated, which provides the odds-ratios. The odds-ratios, which are calculated as e^b, indicate the multiplicative change in the odds that $y = 1$, given a 1-

unit increase in *X*. Therefore, if a logistic regression model produces a b of -0.629 (as seen in

Table 4), this results in an odds-ratio of 0.533 ($e^{-0.629}=0.533$), this indicates that a 1-unit

increase in *X* would multiply the odds that *Y* occurred (that is, y = 1) by 0.533. Odds-ratios

less than 1 indicate that an increase in *X* predicts a decrease in the likelihood that *y*

occurs. Specifically, an odds-ratio of 0.533 indicates a 46.7% (1-0.533 = 0.467) decrease in

the expected odds that y = 1. Odds-ratios greater than 1 would indicate that increases in *X*

predict increases in the likelihood that *y* occurs.

Table 4 — Logistic Regression

	Model 1 Use		Model 2 Offended by the N-word		Model 3 Pronunciation Equals Meaning	
	B (SE)	Odds Ratio	B (SE)	Odds Ratio	B (SE)	Odds Ratio
Race (1=Black, 0=non-Black)	1.424** (0.224)	4.153	0.975** (0.252)	2.650	-0.298 (0.285)	0.742
Age (1=16-29, 0=30+)	0.726* (0.292)	2.067	-1.126** (0.387)	0.324	0.414 (0.332)	1.512
Sex (1=Female, 0=Male)	-0.629** (0.227)	0.533	0.432 (0.232)	1.541	0.262 (0.275)	1.300
Use			-1.016** (0.225)	0.362	0.839* (0.366)	2.314
Multiple Meanings					1.487** (0.279)	4.423
Pronunciation Used					1.091** (0.349)	2.977

Note: *p<.05; **p<.01

Model 1 indicates that race, age, and sex are all statistically significant predictors of

use of the N-word. Black respondents, younger respondents, and male respondents are all

more likely to use the N-word in their interactions than their counterparts. Specifically, the

expected odds that Black respondents use the N-word are 4.153 times greater than those of

other races and ethnicities; controlling for age and sex. The expected odds that younger

people (ages 16-29) use the N-word daily are 2.067 times greater than older people (30+); controlling for race and sex. Furthermore, the expected odds of females using the N-word are 47% lower than males; controlling for race and age.

Model 2 shows race, age, and daily use are statistically significant predictors of offense to the N-word. Black respondents, older respondents, and those who do not use the N-word daily are more likely to be offended by the word. The expected odds that Black respondents are offended by the word are 2.650 greater than those of other races and ethnicities; controlling for age, sex, and daily use of the N-word. The expected odds that younger people (ages 16-29) are offended by the N-word are 68% lower than older people (30+); controlling for race, sex, and daily use of the term; additionally, the expected odds that individuals who use the N-word daily are offended by the term are 64% lower than those who do not use it; controlling for race, age, and sex.

Model 3 indicates daily use, belief the N-word has multiple meanings, and the pronunciation used are statistically significant predictors of an individual believing how the N-word is pronounced points to the intended meaning of the speaker. The expected odds of individuals who use the N-word daily believing pronunciation equals meaning are 4.509 times greater than those who do not use it; controlling for other variables. The expected odds that individuals who think the N-word has multiple meanings believing pronunciation equals meaning are 4.423 greater times than those who do not think it has multiple meanings; controlling for other factors. Finally, the expected odds of individuals who pronounce the word "Nigga" believing pronunciation equals meaning are 2.977 times greater than those who do not use the word or pronounce it "Nigger".

In general, the results of the logistic regression models presented in Table 4 suggest there are important racial differences in how people use and perceive the N-Word. These results largely confirm the early patterns presented by the crosstabs and associated chi-squared tests and indicate that the relationship between race and the use/perception of the N-Word is not spurious because of sex or age. Interestingly, however, these results also indicate that age and sex have relationships with the use and perception of the N-Word that are independent of race. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between believing pronunciation is an indication of meaning and the use of the N-word, as well as, belief that it has multiple meanings

Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the current use and meaning of the N-word. The study has addressed the use of the N-word by Black students in comparison to their non-Black counterparts, as well as comparisons based on gender and generational differences. Moreover, the study sought to find out what part does pronunciation of the term play understanding its meaning. Overall, the data indicate Black respondents, younger respondents, and male respondents are all more likely to use the N-word in their interactions than those who are non-Black, older, and female. Interestingly, Black respondents, older respondents, and those who do not use the N-word are also more likely to be offended by the word. Furthermore, use, the belief the N-word has multiple meanings, and the pronunciation used by speakers all point to the idea that pronunciation indicates the intended meaning.

According to the data collected, 76 % of respondents believe the N-word does indeed have multiple meanings, highlighting the word can be used as both a positive and negative expression. When used as a negative term, the N-word appears to maintain its historical definition, as indicated by one participant who gave this definition, "a derogatory word used by whites to degrade blacks" (40-49 year old Black male). In this respect, the term continues to demean Black Americans, and shows disdain for the person to whom the speaker is referring. Conversely, when it is used as a positive term, according to one respondent, the N-word can mean: "Homeboy/home girl, best friends, [an] acknowledgement, and some sort of respect" (20-29 year old Black male). This statement shows the N-word being used as a term of endearment and is a slang term that points to membership in the speaker's group of friends, and is evidence of the change occurring with the use of the N-word (Holmes, 2008). The difference in age of the two respondents quoted here points to a generational difference

of opinion relating to the meaning and use of the N-word which is consistent with the regression results noted in Table 4.

Several respondents also indicated the meaning of the N-word is related to the race of the speaker. For example, one respondent noted, "if a black person [is] using it, it means friend, [if] a white person [uses] it means something negative" (16-19 year old Black female). This implies that the color-line that DuBois (1903) and other scholars (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith, 1996; Bonilla-Silva and Forman, 2000, Ansell, 2003) have discussed is still a part of our society today although it is a commonly held belief that we live in a post-racial, colorblind era.

The findings indicate that pronunciation is a key factor in determining the meaning of the N-word with 76% of Black respondents reporting that the meaning is based on pronunciation, and of the 142 Black respondents who report using the N-word, 100% indicate using the pronunciation "nigga". One respondent explained the difference this way, "Nigger is generally a racial term that is very cruel and demeaning, "Nigga" is a word used to just mean a fellow black person" (20-29 year old Black female). What is interesting to note is this shift in pronunciation among Blacks is not unique to the N-word, but rather it is the change in meaning identified by the shift that is unusual. African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is considered to be a non-rhotic dialect. This means the postvocalic 'r' (an 'r' after a vowel) is often not pronounced (Holmes, 2008). For example, the words "sister" and "brother" are often pronounced "sista" and "brotha"; however, there is no shift in definition of these terms that coincides with the change in pronunciation from that of Standard American English. What the change indicates, with regard to the N-word, is the reclamation of the term by primarily younger Black people for the purpose of exercising

individual agency as well as indicating community solidarity (Celious, 2002). One respondent stated, "It justifies who we are" (20-29 year old, Black respondent, no gender provided), which seems to acknowledge the collective history of the Black community while transforming what was once commonly used to exercise power over the community into a tool of self-empowerment and identification (Celious, 2002).

Remarkably, the data show 69% of Black participants use the N-word, yet 75% of Black respondents indicated they are offended by the N-Word. These findings pose a challenge to both those who argue that the use of the term is no longer offensive, and those who believe that it is still hateful and oppressive. In recent years, there has been an ongoing public debate about the use and meaning of the N-word. There are those who believe the N-word is no longer offensive or harmful, but rather, as actor and rapper Ice Cube stated, a "badge of honor" (Jackson, 2005), and rapper Jay-Z indicated, "It's just become part of the way we communicate" (Nittle, 2009). Conversely, Oprah Winfrey has explained, "When I hear the N-word, I still think about every black man who was lynched—and the N-word was the last thing he heard" (Nittle, 2009). Some may believe that the statements made by Ice Cube and Jay-Z are evidence of generational differences, and this idea would be consistent with data presented in Table 4 of this paper; however, comedian Richard Pryor, who was 29 years older than Ice Cube and Jay-Z when he stated, "Saying it changed me, yes it did. It gave me strength, let me rise above ..." (Jackson, 2005). Dr. Cornel West has tried to bridge to the gap between those who feel the word is no longer harmful and those who feel the sting of history when hearing the N-word. West put it this way, "I know that 'nigga' as opposed to 'nigger' is a term of endearment for some young people. But the history of 'nigger' with its connotation of self-hatred and self-disrespect needs to be acknowledged…" (Nittle, 2009).

Fundamentally, the debate seems to rest on the significance of the N-word and its meaning in relation to the collective history of the Black community. Older generations have a clearer, and often experiential, memory of what the word means and how it has been used to harm and repress the Black community; whereas, younger people who do not have the same experiences and therefore, do not have the same regard for the term. In his explanation of the frequent use of the word in rap music, Jay-Z stated, "My generation hasn't had the same experience with that word that generations of people before us had. We weren't so close to the pain" (Nittle, 2009). Jay-Z's statement is consistent with social research regarding collective memory. Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins's research, based in part on Maurice Halbwachs' concept of collective memory, indicates memories are based in social reality and are established by way of experience (1998). So despite having the historical knowledge regarding the N-word, because younger generations of Black people have not experienced significant past events relevant to the Black American experience, such as the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights movement. As a result, it is almost impossible for them to share in the collective memory in the same way as older generations of Black people who have lived through events such as these.

Conclusion

This study shows the complexity of this uniquely American word and its apparent transformation from a tool of oppression and prejudice to a term used to term of endearment and group identification. The multiple factors that influence the use of the N-word along with the intended and perceived meanings could not all be addressed within the parameters of this one study; however, this project highlights some of them. As indicated by responses to the open ended questions, the race of the speaker is still very critical to understanding its

meaning, along with the context of the interaction and the relationship between speaker and receiver. The social rules associated with the use of the N-word speak to the tenuous nature of race relations in this country and continued presence of racism.

The current study provides a practical evaluation of the use and meaning of the N-word; however, because it was limited to the Bakersfield area and to the sample of college students, I am unable to generalize the findings to the broader population. Also, because the sample is from African American history and experience classes there could be a sampling bias, in that the perspective of students who enroll in these courses may be quite different from those who do not. Consequently, this would limit the generalizability to the broader population of college students as well, but it did ensure a viable number of Black respondents. Additionally, even though I have been able to identify some gender and intergenerational patterns among participants and the use and meaning of the N-word, I cannot accurately provide a comprehensive evaluation of gender or generational differences due the higher number of female and younger participants. Lastly, this exploratory project looked at race and related demographic factors, but does not control for other factors (like socio-economic status, level of education, or cultural factors (race and age of friends, type of music listened to, etc.) that might affect how people view and use the N-Word. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the very empirical data collected does begin to fill the gap in scholarly literature regarding the use and meaning of the N-word in the modern American lexicon.

In the future, this project will be expanded to include further exploration of the gender and generational differences seen in this research, as well as non-Black use of the N-word. In addition, future research will focus on how the use of the N-word in popular culture

influences whether or not people use the N-word. This subsequent project will expand on the overall cultural and social significance of the N-word found in this study by conducting in-depth interviews with Black and non-Black participants to obtain a deeper understanding on their use (or non-use) of the N-word.

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<div align="center">**Appendix**</div>

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time during the completion of the survey. All identifying information will be kept confidential. Only an identification number will appear. I thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Demographic Information:

1. Please indicate your sex: Male____ Female____

2. Please indicate which of the following ranges best fits your current age:

    ___ 16-19 (1)

    ___ 20-29 (2)

    ___ 30-39 (3)

    ___ 40-49 (4)

    ___ 50 or older (5)

3. Which race do you most closely identify with?

    ___ White/Caucasian (1)

    ___ Black/African American (2)

    ___ Latino/Hispanic (3)

    ___ Asian/Pacific Islander (4)

    ___ Native American/Alaskan Native (5)

    ___ Other (please indicate race) _____ (6)

4. What is your current grade level?

    ___ Freshman (1)

    ___ Sophomore (2)

    ___ Junior (3)

    ___ Senior (4)

    ___ Graduate Student (5)

    ___ Other (please indicate) _____ (6)

5. Prior to this quarter/semester, have you ever attended college?

    ___ Yes, I am a returning Student **with** a degree. (1)

    ___ Yes, I am a returning student **without** a degree. (2)

    ___ No (3)

6. Which of the following are you currently?

___ Fulltime student (1)

___ Part time student (2)

7. What is the highest level of education obtained by your mother?

___ Less than a high school diploma (1)

___ High school diploma or GED equivalent (2)

___ Some college (3)

___ Trade school (4)

___ Associate Degree (5)

___ Bachelor's Degree (6)

___ Master's Degree (7)

___ Doctorate Degree/Professional Degree (8)

___ Not Sure (9)

8. What is the highest level of education obtained by your father?

___ Less than a high school diploma (1)

___ High school diploma or GED equivalent (2)

___ Some college (3)

___ Trade school (4)

___ Associate Degree (5)

___ Bachelor's Degree (6)

___ Master's Degree (7)

___ Doctorate Degree/Professional Degree (8)

___ Not Sure (9)

9. What is your educational goal?

___ Certificate of Completion (1)

___ Associate Degree (2)

___ Bachelor's Degree (3)

___ Master's Degree (4)

___ Doctorate Degree/Professional Degree (5)

___ Undecided (6)

10. Are you currently employed?

   ___ Yes (1)

   ___ No (Please go to the next section) (2)

11. Please indicate whether you work full or part time.

   ___ Fulltime (1)

   ___ Part time (2)

12. Do you work on campus or off campus?

   ___ On campus (1)

   ___ Off campus (2)

   ___ Please indicate what type of work you do: _____

Attitudes:

1. In general, are you personally offended by the use of the N-word?

   ___ Yes (1)

   ___ No (2)

   ___ Sometimes (3)

2. Have you ever been referred to as an N-word?

   ___ Yes (1)

   ___ No (2)

3. If yes, by whom? Please indicate the racial background of the person or persons who have referred to you using the N-word.

   _____

4. In general, do you believe the use of the N-word is offensive or inappropriate?

   ___ Offensive (1)

   ___ Inappropriate and offensive (2)

   ___ Inappropriate but not offensive (3)

   ___ Neutral (4)

   ___Nothing wrong with the use of the word (5)

5. Is your response to hearing the N-word dependent on the race of the speaker?

___ Yes (1)

___ No (2)

___ Depends on my relationship with the speaker (3)

___ Not Sure (4)

6. Do you believe the N-word can be used in a negative way?

___ Yes (1)

___ No (2)

___ Depends on my relationship with the speaker (3)

___ Not Sure (4)

7. Do you believe the N-word can be used in a positive way or in a friendly manner?

___ Yes (1)

___ No (2)

___ Depends on my relationship with the speaker (3)

___ Not Sure (4)

8. Do you believe the N-word has multiple meanings?

___ Yes (1)

___ No (2)

___ Depends on my relationship with the speaker (3)

9. If yes to question #8, what are some of those meanings?

_____

_____

_____

10. What does the N-word mean to you?

_____

_____

_____

11. In general, it is okay to use the N-word with a person the same race as my own.

    ___ Strongly Agree (1)

    ___ Agree (2)

    ___ Disagree (3)

    ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

12. In general, it is okay to use the N-word with a person of a different race than my own.

    ___ Strongly Agree (1)

    ___ Agree (2)

    ___ Disagree (3)

    ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

13. In general, it is okay for a person who is NOT Black/African American to use the N-word.

    ___ Strongly Agree (1)

    ___ Agree (2)

    ___ Disagree (3)

    ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

14. When a Black/African American person uses the N-word, it is a reflection of that person's low self-esteem.

    ___ Strongly Agree (1)

    ___ Agree (2)

    ___ Disagree (3)

    ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

15. When a Black/African American person uses the N-word, it is a reflection of that person's self-hatred.

    ___ Strongly Agree (1)

    ___ Agree (2)

    ___ Disagree (3)

    ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

16. When a person who is NOT Black/African American uses the N-word, it is an attempt to self-identify as part of the Black/African American community and culture.

 ___ Strongly Agree (1)

 ___ Agree (2)

 ___ Disagree (3)

 ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

Behaviors:

1. If you use the N-word, how do you pronounce it?

 ___ "Nigga" (1)

 ___ "Nigger" (2)

 ___ I do not use the word (3)

2. If you don't use it, then how do you most often hear it pronounced?

 ___ "Nigga" (1)

 ___ "Nigger" (2)

 ___ I do not hear the word being used (3)

3. Do you believe there is a difference in meaning based on the pronunciation?

 ___ Strongly Agree (1)

 ___ Agree (2)

 ___ Disagree (3)

 ___ Strongly Disagree (4)

4. How often do you use the N-word in your daily conversation?

 ___ Frequently (1)

 ___ Occasionally (2)

 ___ Never (3)

5. If you do use the N-word, in which social context do you use it? Check all that apply:

 ___ Home (1)

 ___ School (2)

 ___ Work (3)

 ___Religious place of worship (church, temple, mosque, etc.) (4)

 ___ Hanging out with friends (at a party, at the mall, at a friend's house, etc.) (5)

 ___ Other (please indicate where) _____

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6. How often do you use the N-word to refer to your friends?

___ Frequently (1)

___ Occasionally (2)

___ Never (2)

7. How often do you use the N-word to refer to family members?

___ Frequently (1)

___ Occasionally (2)

___ Never (3)

8. If you do use the N-word with family, which family members is the word used with?
(check all that apply)

___ Parents (1)

___ Children (2)

___ Siblings/Brothers or Sisters (3)

___ Cousins (4)

___ Aunts/Uncles (5)

___ Grandparents (6)

___ In-laws (mother, father, brother, sister) (7)

___ Other (please indicate relationship)_____

9. If employed, how often do you use the N-word with your co-workers while at work?

___ Frequently (1)

___ Occasionally (2)

___ Never (3)

10. How often do you use the N-word to refer to those you dislike?

___ Frequently (1)

___ Occasionally (2)

___ Never (3)

11. How often do you use the N-word in anger directed at another person?

___ Frequently (1)

___ Occasionally (2)

___ Never (3)

12. How often do you use the N-word as an insult directed at another person?

    ___ Frequently (1)

    ___ Occasionally (2)

    ___ Never (3)

13. How often do you use the N-word to refer to a friend or indicate friendship?

    ___ Frequently (1)

    ___ Occasionally (2)

    ___ Never (3)

14. How often do you use the N-word as a term of endearment or affection?

    ___ Frequently (1)

    ___ Occasionally (2)

    ___ Never (3)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

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California State University, Bakersfield
Bakersfield, CA

2011   **BA**, Sociology with Honors June, 2011
Minor: Linguistics
California State University, Bakersfield
Bakersfield, CA.

Areas of Interest

Language as a Social Behavior; Intersection of Race, Ethnicity and Gender;
Research Methods

Teaching Experience

2013   Teaching Assistant for Sociology 300, winter 2013, CSU Bakersfield.
Duties included: grading written assignments including providing students
with feedback, imputing of grades into an online learning management system
(LMS), conducting study sessions, holding office hours, and creating and
maintaining student attendance log.

2012   Teaching Assistant for Sociology 327, fall 2012, CSU Bakersfield.
Duties included: grading written assignments including providing students
with feedback, imputing of grades into an online learning management system
(LMS), conducting study sessions, holding office hours, and creating and
maintaining student attendance log.

2011   Teaching Assistant for History B20A, summer 2011, Bakersfield College.
Duties included: grading written assignments including providing students
with feedback.

2011   Teaching Assistant for Sociology 100, spring 2011, CSU Bakersfield.
Duties included: grading written assignments including providing students
with feedback, imputing of grades into an online learning management system
(LMS), conducting study sessions, holding office hours, and creating and
maintaining student attendance log.

Research Experience

2012-2013   Graduate research: Continuation and expansion of an independent research project investigating the use of the N-word by African American college students in Bakersfield, CA.

2009-2010   Undergraduate research: An independent research project investigating the use of the N-word by African American college students in Bakersfield, CA.

Presentations

August 2011   19th Annual California McNair Scholars Symposium, Berkeley, CA.

May 2011   CSUB 3rd Annual McNair Scholars Symposium, Bakersfield, CA.
7th Annual CSUB School of Social Science and Education Research Symposium, Bakersfield, CA.

Affiliations

McNair Scholars Program, CSU Bakersfield
CSUB Honors Program
Sigma Tau Delta, Xi Tau Chapter
Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, Beta Alpha Nu Chapter
The National Society of Leadership and Success

Honors

The Betty B. Albright Outstanding Student Award, Spring 2011
Dean's List, six consecutive quarters beginning Fall 2009

Funding

Spring 2013   CSUB Graduate Student-Faculty Collaborative Initiative award for Research and Scholarship ($1000)

2011-2012   CSUB Student Research Scholars (SRS) Program ($500)

2010-2011   McNair Scholars Program, CSU Bakersfield ($1000)

Community Engagement 2007-2009

Kenemer
Peer Mentoring
United Way Day of Caring
Independent City- Kern County Department of Human Services
Garden Fest

Jason's Retreat
Kern County Fair
Bakersfield College Career Day
College Night at the Rabbobank Arena
Obama Family Rally
Health Fair
Transfer Day