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How black faculty experience presenting their research in educational venues within the context of historical objectification of black people as sources of entertainment is an underexplored topic in higher education research. Presenting research has far-reaching implications for black academics' advancement, such as future employment and opportunities for research collaboration. Thus, how black faculty are perceived while presenting has significant implications for their career trajectories. This study is concerned with understanding how black higher education faculty perceive, interpret, and respond to how they are perceived while presenting within a context of racialized academic scrutiny. Thirty-three black professors were interviewed about their participation in a number of presentation contexts, including national conferences, symposia, and campus job talks. Study participants discussed encountering multiple layers of racial stereotyping and bias, and also how their keen racial awareness enabled them to develop strategic coping mechanisms to manage audience reactions. These strategies also represented the self-sacrifices they made that altered their racial identities. By examining black faculty members' struggles to be valued personally and professionally in white-dominated academic sites, the study findings can enrich critical interpretations of racism in higher education.

Keywords: African American faculty; racialized experiences; interpretations of performance; racial notions; presentations

He was so energetic and lively with his expressions. … Actually, he was so enthusiastic I thought he was going to do a little dance.
('Humorous' comment from a white member of a faculty hiring committee about a black male candidate)

You really need to tone it down a little. The audience will assume that your passion is making up for a lack of research subjectivity.
(Advice from a senior white colleague to a black male regarding his mock presentation)

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Smile more. People already think that black women are too damn serious. Don't add to the stereotype!
(Advice from a senior Latino male colleague to a black female after her presentation)

Hey Keith, tell us some jokes.[1]
(Request shouted by a white female colleague to a black male who was in the audience, during a technological delay of a presentation)

Dr West, an award-winning black female professor from a prestigious institution, had spent four dreadful days suffering from the flu; she had regained her voice but was still experiencing frequent headaches and nausea. Although far from well, she did not want to disappoint the group of teachers who had scheduled her talk on culturally relevant teaching for gifted students several months in advance. Dr West, is known for being passionate and courageous in her presentations, but on this particular day she struggled merely to get out of bed. Nevertheless, defying her illness, Dr West presented her talk, covering all the necessary information managing to be engaging and insightful, despite her low energy level.

 Dr West's presentation style, and her identity for that matter, is suffused with humor, seasoned charisma, and commonsense clarity, and, yes, she has been known to use a few expletives. As she described the academic and social inequities that plague black students, Dr West told vivid stories and illustrated them with an engaging slide presentation. Dr West said of this presentation, 'Well, you would have thought that I did not show up at all from the bullsh*t that took place afterward.' She described the audience's reaction, including that of a teacher who is familiar with Dr West's presentation style. This teacher apologized loudly to the audience for, as she described it, Dr West's 'lackluster presentation,' and then turned directly to Dr West and exclaimed:

What happened? You usually have us holding our stomachs with laughter and blushing from your colorful language! I know you are under the weather, but really, you seemed more dead than sick [chuckle].

Before Dr West could answer and give this woman a serious piece of her mind, another teacher in the audience piped in somewhat sympathetically:

Everybody told me that this would be the funniest presentation ever, but since you were little down, it makes sense that you couldn't be on 10. But could you at least give us jokes over lunch?

The mostly white female audience then turned and began to talk to each other, apparently oblivious of the fact that Dr West had just been insulted and demeaned. Dr West later commented that there is nothing funny about the plight of gifted black children who are not being recognized as such,

but that her well-designed, provocative, and compelling research appeared to be no match for her entertainment value. Dr West worried that she would have to rein in her charismatic and humorous style to avoid being seen as a source of amusement.

As Dr West shared her story, it was apparent that her host had unspoken expectations about the presentation, including that it would be highly entertaining. Dr West noted that the obligation to be entertaining while presenting is historically anchored, and she wondered if her emotional reaction to the offensive comments might have been triggered by a defense mechanism. Dr West's narrative thus contributed to an exploration of the following question: Does 'presenting while black' compromise the integrity of black educational researchers' presentations and/or their status as academics?

Scholars and the general public have long acknowledged that African Americans are often more revered for their entertainment value than their intellectual acumen (Coleman 2013; Czopp 2010; Williams, Gooden, and Davis 2012). This study explored the presentation experiences of 33 black education researchers, who ranged from assistant to full professors in education departments. Reported here are similar narratives about the anticipated entertainment value these scholars were expected to offer and the skepticism they encountered about the academic value of their presentations. These faculty members revealed researchers' presentations is not seen as a form of entertainment at every venue, nor did every black scholar we interviewed speak of enduring this experience. Nevertheless, for 29 of the 33 black scholars in this study, and for dozens of other black education faculty we have talked to informally, it happens enough to warrant a discussion of the dynamics associated with presenting while black, and of blackness being interpreted as a form of entertainment during educational presentations.

Being black in the white academy

Faculty presentations play a critical role in the exchange of ideas, which can lead to collaboration on grants, cross-disciplinary research and consulting opportunities, guest lectures, peer-reviewed publications, and an increased local, national, and international presence. While the extant literature documents how a 'chilly' campus climate and racially charged encounters can be harmful to minority faculty members (Allen et al. 2002; Griffin et al. 2011; Jayakumar et al. 2009; Stanley 2006), it has rarely addressed black faculty members' experiences delivering research presentations. In the microcosm of society that is academia, minoritized faculty members must contend with racism, discrimination, and anti-minority sentiment, which can create race-related strain (Bowman 1989; Museus and Jayakumar 2012; Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano 2006). The Higher Education Research Institute (2010) surveyed faculties across the country and concluded that perceived discrimination and worries about personal finances created more stress for faculty members

of color than for their white counterparts. They attributed this higher stress level to their relations with white colleagues. Feeling powerless was a major finding and was often attributed to black faculty members' encounters of being marginalized, which had an impact on their feelings about job security and added to their academic career vulnerabilities.

Stanley's (2006) edited volume on faculty of color who teach in predominantly white colleges and universities presented 23 engaging narratives that exposed the stressors faced by faculty of color. These stressors contribute to feelings of alienation and isolation, lower job satisfaction, competing demands associated with tenure and/or promotion, systemic oppression, and impaired institutional fit – all of which are part of an ongoing legacy of injustice within academia.

While racial pressure is often etic, there is an emic aspect to the racial microaggressions black faculty in the academy are sometimes subjected to by other black faculty. Viewed as a type of internecine racial hostility, intraracial microaggressions are usually verbal, and typically buttressed by whispered messages, discouraging words, cautionary advice, or hostile statements from members of the same racial group, albeit usually those distinguished by a higher level of education or socioeconomic status (Brondolo et al. 2011; Roberts 2013).

A study by Kuppens and Spears (2014) indicated that individuals with more years of formal education are more likely to be aversive racists – that is, they demonstrate more implicit (rather than overt) patterns of prejudice and discrimination. More highly educated individuals also seem to self-report fewer explicit encounters with discrimination and/or anti-black attitudes. In what they term the 'education-prejudice relationship,' Kuppens and Spears suggest that more highly educated people distinguish between being prejudiced and choosing to express prejudice. The implications of these findings are significant for this study, which sought a critical understanding of racial attitudes among higher education faculty within the context of a cultural legacy of colonialism, contemporary racism in the academy, and what we have come to describe as racial battle fatigue among black faculty.

Racialization of the black body: some historical considerations

Much has been said of the esthetic ability of the Negro race. Naturally, it has been exaggerated. (Du Bois 1935, 334)

Not to be overlooked or under-considered is the historical tendency to situate the black body as a source of entertainment, amusement, and spectacle (Hartman 1997; Lhamon 1998; Lott 2013). Going back centuries, the pattern of the dominant society was to frequently caricaturize African Americans as

comical, superstitious, lazy, musical, and dim-witted. These notions worked their way into the popular conscience in the form of all-white and all-black minstrel shows, literature, music, movies, and, ultimately, television (Bogle 2001). As Lott (1993) points out, blackface minstrelsy, in all its racialized subjectivism, was in fact the first distinctly American theatrical form and a handy index of white racial feeling in the United States. As the dominant entertainment form until the turn of the twentieth century, the lampooning of African Americans became a one-way mirror through which the collective white society formed its ideas about blacks. As for the aesthetic appetite of white minstrel show audiences, Lott argues that their racialized 'emotional demands' and 'troubled fantasies' are, in large part, what fueled their interest in the comedic commodification of African Americans (6). Rooted in the cultural legacies of colonialism, this pervasive fetishism (i.e., stereotypes) has been and is routinely perpetrated via media and entertainment modes that seek to minimize or satirize black peoples' intelligence, culture, and their ability to be serious, relevant, substantive, or cerebral. Such racialized (mis)orientations and (mal)practices are centrally embedded in every field of endeavor, including science (i.e., phrenology, eugenics, craniology), philosophy, anthropology, medicine, law, government, and entertainment (Coleman 2013).

The novels of Edgar Rice Burroughs and Warner Bros. cartoons routinely featured racist caricatures of blacks. Human zoos financed by white Europeans were developed during the twentieth century, and their main feature was Africans. Referred to as 'Negro villages,' the human zoos offered public exhibits of African people in their so-called primitive state. For example, Ota Benga, whom missionaries rescued from slavery in 1904, was put on display in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in Missouri that same year (Brauer 1993). Two years later, Ota Benga became the 'star attraction' in an exhibit at the Bronx Zoo, where he was forced to live in a cage in the monkey house. Roughly one hundred years earlier (c.1809), Saartjie 'Sarah' Baartman endured a similar experience. She was sold and put on display in London's Piccadilly Circus, and was later paraded in shows throughout France. Baartman and other South African women were exhibited at white-dominated venues and European freak shows under the moniker 'Hottentot Venus.'

Today the racialized objectification of African Americans is rarely as overt as it was over a century ago. However, it can be safely said that an enduring 'black as entertainment ideology' remains and is operationalized at virtually every level of US society. Therefore, as some have indicated, maintaining the ideology of blacks as entertainment is socio-politically and socioeconomically expedient (Bell 1992; Bonilla-Silva 2014).

Strategies for coping with racialized bias

Black faculty have found numerous ways to cope with racialized bias, including (at the extreme) self-isolation and the verbal expression of hostility.

Armed with an understanding of how race and racism operate, they have developed strategies for navigating racially hostile and microaggressive spaces (Bennett et al. 2011; Griffin et al. 2011; Logan et al. 2014; Pittman 2010). Recent research demonstrates that many black scholars feel empowered to challenge multiple forms of racial bias, which need not be deterministic of their future in academia. However, some black scholars feel obligated to prove or substantiate their intellectual and academic value or credibility to their teachers, families, peers, and the larger education community (Johnson 2003; McGee and Martin 2011; Orelus 2013). Black Feminist scholar Lorde (2001) stated that people of color develop a healthy callousness by default, which makes it possible for them to function and survive while living in a racist and sexist society. As a result, many black scholars put race at the center of their research, thus privileging participants who occupy marginalized spaces.

Boskin and Dorinson (1985) argue that racial humor can become a tool of survival for African Americans, whose racial difference is heightened in certain contexts. Many scholars acknowledge that comedy sometimes is used to further degrade those who already are oppressed; however, they also support racial humor that is used by the oppressed to promote racial consciousness and elucidate social realities (Banjo 2011). Using comedy and humor has been studied as both an empowering coping strategy and a repressive technique to mask feelings when dealing with the stress of racial and political discourse (Freud 1966; Lewis 2005). While comedy may appear an unlikely coping mechanism, smart and critical humor that unpacks issues of race, racism, and bias on the college campus has provided a novel forum for meaningful discourse among black academic professionals. For example, black and Latino comedians in America have cleverly used humor to reflect the history of the nation and concurrently put a protective 'scab' on marginalized individuals' racial wounds (Bostick 2010; Pérez 2013; Weaver 2010). Comedians and comedic actors such as Richard Pryor, Paul Mooney, Marsha Warfield, Cleavon Little, Lawanda Page, and Dave Chappelle are just a few who have used humor to segue to critical reflection and conversation about the nuances and complexities of race and racism in the world. Many young education scholars similarly mix truth with thought-provoking racialized and gendered humor to enhance their presentations and craftily promote discussion of race, discrimination, and bias. Although these strategies are relevant and valid to this study, it was important that we employ a framework that provides both a critical perspective and a lens through which to envision a racialized epistemology.

This research study used critical race theory (CRT) as an analytic tool to make sense of black faculty experiences with educational presentations. CRT in education is a theoretical framework that stems from critical legal studies. This framework challenges society's dominant liberal ideas, such as racial colorblindness and meritocracy, and encourages researchers to take a

critical look at institutional practices that continue to marginalize and oppress people of color and advantage whites (Lynn and Parker 2006; Mutua 2006). Critical race theorists focus on an extensive list of issues both within and beyond the educational paradigm, including language, black American and black immigrant identities, ethnicity, culture, phenotype, and sexuality. Critical race theorists assert that representations of African American faculty are often one-dimensional, and thus fail to present a full picture of their complex cultural and racial identities (Diggs et al. 2009; Jayakumar et al. 2009).

As a theoretical tool and a site for critical reflection, CRT is pivotal in underscoring past and present inequities in education, as well as the larger preservation of white privilege led by a concentrated few, which still impacts black American life. CRT's analytical approach, which allows the narrative voice to breathe, is known as counter-storytelling or counter-narrative. The concept of counter-storytelling validates a black cultural tradition. It is practiced often in interviews, class discussions, and narrative writings as a way to give both group and individual voices to otherwise under-acknowledged populations in the education community. Counter-storytelling also challenges the complacency of historically marginalized individuals by not accepting the simplistic yet dominant narratives about the fate of their race (Ladson-Billings 1999; Parker 1998).

This literature, along with our own personal experiences and those of our colleagues, culminated in a research study guided by the following questions:

(1) How do black education scholars give meaning to and negotiate their experiences with presenting at educational conferences, symposiums, and education departments?
(2) To what extent (if any) do these participants perceive some of their experiences as racialized? How do black faculty respond to those racialized experiences?
(3) Have the participants' experiences in presenting had an impact on their desire or ability to present at future conferences?

This research seeks to contribute to the existing literature on racial experiences and to provide practical guidance on how educational spaces could be structured to reduce the impact of stereotypes and facilitate greater achievement and satisfaction for black presenters. Expanding the stereotype threat literature to include racial stereotyping in presentation contexts expands current understanding and sheds light on another potentially hostile space for black faculty. Our hope is that this research will offer novel and useful insights to those who organize presentations and those who give them so they will be able to understand, appreciate, and provide an improved experience for black and other minoritized scholars.

Method

This study aimed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning black faculty construct around their presentation experiences at educational venues. Phenomenology, a qualitative research methodology that obtains knowledge through empirically grounded interpretations of participants' meaning-making (Patton 2013; Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2009), provided an appropriate way to understand and reveal what the participants said and did as a result of how they interpreted and made sense of their worlds (Marshall and Rossman 2010). The phenomenological view of human behavior acknowledges that humans' multiple perceptions are complex and changing. We also are utilizing Milner's (2007) exceptional racial and cultural consciousness framework to guide us in our process of engaged research with our participants as scholars of color in ways that honor their experiences and maintain their integrity.

Interviews were our primary research tool, which resulted in a descriptive narrative account of how the participants perceived the reception of their research, and their reception as a person. This study of the experiences of black education scholars who have presented their work in a variety of contexts (i.e., job talks, departmental or college symposiums, national or local conferences) was conducted between January 2013 and March 2014 with 33 black faculty members (14 females and 19 males), all of whom held faculty positions in education departments at 13 institutions across the country. We used snowball sampling, whereby the first three participants were contacted based on the number of presentations they performed, their reputation, and their willingness to examine race and racism in education. We then used their social networks to recruit additional participants.

The majority of the participants (16) were assistant professors at postsecondary institutions across the country (see Table 1 for participant list). Seven were adjunct or part-time faculty at various institutions, and one was employed at a research center. Six were at the associate professor level, and four were full professors. All the data were collected in two geographic locations: a local coffee shop in Chicago, known as a meeting place for black academics (22 interviews), and several locations in the Nashville area, including the office of the first author at Vanderbilt University (11 interviews). Four of the interviews in Nashville occurred due to collegial relationships, and seven occurred during a national conference held on Vanderbilt's campus. After the first author conducted the first five interviews, the second author joined the research and helped to refine the research questions and analysis, and also conducted the 14 of the 33 interviews. Of the 12 semi-structured interview questions, these five prompted most of the discussion and data used in this research:

Table 1. All 33 Faculty within educational departments at 13 different postsecondary institutions.

Name	Rank	Gender	Type of Institution*
Adam	Assistant	Male	Elite, Ivy League
Amusa	Assistant	Female	Urban, 4 year
Bryan	Assistant	Male	Research 1
Cynthia	Part-time/Adjunct	Female	Private, Liberal Arts
Deborah	Part-time/Adjunct	Female	Research Intensive
Damon	Assistant	Male	Technology, Institute
Don	Associate	Male	HBCU, Private
Erika	Part-time/Adjunct	Female	Junior College
Ewo	Assistant	Male	City College
Gail	Assistant	Female	Predominately Asian
Isaac	Assistant	Male	Ivy League, Private
Jerald	Assistant	Male	Research Intensive
Kuba	Associate	Male	Urban, Research 1
Kennedy	Part-time/Adjunct	Female	Rural, PWI
Lamont	Full	Male	Research Intensive
Janet	Associate	Female	Technical Community College
Malcolm	Assistant	Male	HBCU
Monica	Assistant	Female	HBCU
Nannette	Assistant	Female	Diverse, Urban
Opal	Associate	Female	Private, 4 year
Osay	Assistant	Male	Predominately black
Quan	Associate	Male	Urban University
Rakeem	Part-time/Adjunct	Male	City College
Robert	Assistant	Male	2 year College
Rose	Full	Female	Research Intensive
Sean	Assistant	Male	PWI, State
Shane	Associate	Male	Institute of Technology
Tameka	Assistant	Female	HBCU, State
Tandy	Full	Female	Research Intensive
Timothy	Assistant	Male	Research First
Dr West	Full	Female	Traditionally white
Will	Part-time/Adjunct	Male	Hispanic Serving Institution
Zachery	National Research Center Associate	Male	HWI, Research 1

Note: *Institutional types are participant described.
HBCU: Historically black college and university.
PWI: Predominately white institution.
HWI: Historically white institution.

(1) What are your experiences with presenting your research at educational conferences, symposiums, job talks, etc., particularly when majority white audiences are present? How do you feel you and your research are received by the audience?

(2) Have you ever felt or been told to modify/alter your presentation style? Who told you this and what was their rationale? How did you respond?

(3) Has an audience or panel member described your presentations with subtle or overt racialized language, gestures, or mannerisms (e.g., infused with racial microaggressions)?

(4) As a result of your racialized experiences while presenting, have you decided to alter your presentation style and/or content? Please provide several examples of what you have changed or expect to.

(5) Have your experiences presenting your research influenced your thoughts about presenting in the future? Please give details.

There was significant variation in the interview time, from as little as 36 minutes to two hours and 10 minutes; the median time was 59 minutes. The authors met monthly to review the implementation and evolution of the methodology and data analysis. This level of triangulation led to intense discussions, reflection, rethinking, and rechecking of the data. This study recognizes that researchers are themselves a factor in interpreting the experiences of others, and that they must be mindful of their own experiences and assumptions when considering the approach and influence of their research.

The positionality and subjectivity of the researchers

Ebony. In formulating my own perspectives in this study, I juxtaposed my academic and research background with my experience as an assistant professor that has presented at over 40 national, local, and departmental conferences, symposiums, and job talks. Studying people who are so much like me required my acknowledgement and discussion of my own positionality and subjectivity. As Peshkin (1988) proclaimed, 'One's subjectivity is a garment that cannot be removed' (17). With Peshkin's quote in mind, I note that my research has been influenced by how and why race and racism operate in this society, which has contributed to my recognition that power, privilege, race, class, and sexual oppression are at the root of many of the academic barriers minoritized faculty researchers face. Thus, this work was performed from a research perspective that reflects how race operates in America in order to examine how being racialized operates in conjunction with the racial constructions of the black body, such as education faculty.

Lasana. My approach to this study was informed by myriad critical insights on the sociocultural and sociopolitical impact of race, as well as on broader historical and topical perspectives on power, privilege, identity, and the formation and regulation of social hierarchies. My teaching and research background reflects a critical orientation that seeks to interrogate and leverage the interpretive voices and accumulated experiences of historically

marginalized populations. My analyses were informed by an ongoing praxis that seeks to apprehend, theorize, and dismantle racism, oppression, and any form of cultural hegemony.

Data analysis

We employed a phenomenological approach to triangulate data for our content analysis. We initially analyzed transcriptions with an eye to participants' responses as they related to themes and codes that emanated from the research questions, as presented in Table 2. The explication of the data was adapted from Groenewald's (2004) article on phenomenological research design, which has five steps: (1) bracketing and phenomenological reduction; (2) delineating units of meaning; (3) clustering units of meaning to form themes and inductive codes; (4) summarizing and validating each interview; and (5) extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews and making a composite summary of codes and themes.

We reached a consensus in coding and categorizing the themes, which resulted in an intercoder reliability rate of 92%. Our crosschecking and auditing process improved the trustworthiness of the data analysis.

Findings

The study participants presented a wealth of information on all things education related, but they were particularly vocal about the difficulties associated with educating children and adults who are often marginalized in complex ways. These scholars offered compelling analyses and have fueled new theories about the state of education for vulnerable student populations. They also have ardently challenged the persuasive deficit model framing that continues to undermine educational outcomes (Griffin, Bennett, and Harris 2013; Griffin and Reddick 2011; Joseph and Hirshfield 2011). Their research has been wide-ranging, from capturing the need to understand identity and identity development in marginalized students and faculty (i.e., ethnic, racial, class, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex [LGBTQ]), to acknowledging multiple forms of resistance and agency in creating mechanisms to achieve academically despite facing barriers and challenges, such as being stereotyped and racially assaulted (Dunn et al. 2014; Torres, Howard-Hamilton, and Cooper 2003).

Critiques of black education faculty presentations

We gathered comments from black education faculty about audience reactions to their research presentations, as well as their reflections on those reactions. The first audience critique they mentioned focused on the research itself: the methodology was not rigorous (the most common criticism was not having a white control group); sample size was too small (mostly in

Table 2. Partial version of the coding architecture.

Themes	Codes
Research	Critiques/Questions about the Participant Presenter's Research
	(1) Subjectivity concerns (15)
	(2) Rigor (12)
	(3) Not being generalizable (17)
	(4) No white or non-black control group (9)
	(5) Assumptions regarding the obligation of doing an intervention (7)
	(6) Challenges about the research being about the human condition and not a product of the racial condition (6)
	(7) Research being accepted/valued in the academy (11)
	(8) Accuracy of the data, e.g., 'seems unbelievable,' 'quite remarkable' (19)
	(9) Sample size too small in qualitative studies (7)
	(10) Accusations of 'playing with' the data (4)
	(11) Relevance of current research for future studies (e.g., 'How would these findings be relevant in a post-racial society?' (9)
Appearance	Critiques about the Presenter's Appearance
	(1) Professionalism questioned (7)
	(2) Garments too tight (females; and males who self-describe as gay or bisexual) (5)
	(3) Comments about presenters' hairstyle (females only) (4)
	(4) Shoes – High heels (females only) (3)
	(5) Comments about presenter's posture and poise (6)
	(6) Appearance of the slide presentation – too busy (4), too much color (5), too much text (referring to block quotes) (3)
Behavior	Critiques about the Presenter's Behavior
	(1) Comments and questions revolving around passion (often disguised as energy level) (24)
	(2) Comments and questions about presenter's emotional state (7)
	(3) Vague comments about the tone of research that appeared to be a disguise critiques about the presenter (5)

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Themes	Codes
	Responses from the Audience
	(4) Audience behavior: Targeted disinterest (13)
	(5) Audience behavior: Intimidation tactics (9)
	(6) Audience behavior: Shock about the high quality of the research (14)
Pedigree	**Presenter's Education Status**
	(1) An unwarranted amount of questions about one's PhD degree (20)
	(2) Pity for education faculty who are adjunct or part-time (5)
	(3) An air of *Super Surprise* if education faculty is at a top-tier institution and/or department (9)
	(4) Fact checkers – the presence of individuals who seem to want to verify the presenter's credentials (11)
Role of Humor	(1) Use of humor in presentations by presenters (22)
	(2) Presenter being ridiculed (13)
	(3) Presenter being the object of jokes/ridicule (17)
Acts of Self-Sacrifice	**Identity-disintegrating sacrifices while presenting**
	(1) Behaving in socially acceptable ways to appease white mainstream audiences (22)

qualitative studies); the presenter lacked the ability to measure participants' accuracy ('How do we know if the subject is telling the truth?'); as well as accusations of researcher subjectivity, the research not being generalizable, and research data being incomplete.

The study participants reported that both black and white colleagues criticized the tone of their research and the essence of the work (e.g., 'Hmmm, still trying to take it all in and make some sense of it,' 'Your find-ings have questionable scholarly value,' 'You are not angry but the research is angry,' 'Your work seems kind of overly emotional,' and 'I get it, I really do, but my fear is that others will not,' 'Hard to believe … because racism is really not that overt anymore'). *White Logic, White Methods: Racism and Methodology* (Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva 2008) offers a poignant analysis that dethrones the historical and contemporary social research practices at the heart of many of these critiques.

A second central critique the black faculty presenters imparted was more personal, including comments on their demeanor, dress, mannerisms, and behaviors, and audience members' assumptions about the presenter's personality. Although this study focuses on both critiques, the findings we present are especially attentive to entertainment-focused comments, where the presentation content often takes a back seat to the presenter's stage pres-ence, which reveals the importance perceptions of stage presence have in critiques of the presenter's research.

The study participants were judged on a host of criteria, some of which had racial undertones, including their energy level, appearance, poise and pos-ture, authenticity, and even their choice of PowerPoint background settings. We fully admit that most audience members appreciate presenters who have good presentation skills, which most often include a strong voice and dynamic presence, good organization and sequencing of the research, a strong finish, and effective use of visual aids, a speaker who talks without notes rather than reading a text, who appears relaxed but confident, and who is able to deal with difficult and complicated questions (Koegel 2007; Weissman 2011). However, our findings suggest that audiences often turn to racialized stereotypes to classify black faculty presenters as performers, even as they simultaneously criticize them for lacking scholarly integrity. The pressure these black scholars were under in managing multiple stereotypes and bias detracted from both the essence of the content being presented and the credibility of the presenter. Our results showcase the 29 of the 33 interviews that were representative of the large sample. Notably, the four participants (Deborah, Rakeem, Opal, and Will) for whom the critiques presented above were not revealed all said they did not care or have time to be concerned with others' perceptions of them during a presentation (e.g., 'I could care less about what they think,' 'I don't operate in racial terms,' 'I let the work speak for itself.'). However, it is inter-esting that none of the four suggested that they did not experience racialized critique; they simply chose not to examine those issues.

Ridiculed, ignored, and threatened

Fifteen participants noted that they were used like a pawn on multiple occasions, and were mocked, disregarded, and made the object of offensive humor. Although 20 of the 29 respondents admitted to using humor in their presentations, the humor the audience tossed back at them, at their expense, caused them considerable angst. Jerald, an assistant professor, related an encounter where he had just finished a job talk on black culture and ethnomusicology for a predominately white department faculty. At the post-presentation reception, the department chair, a white female, introduced Jerald to a white faculty member, who asked him to demonstrate his research by 'playing his banjo' for them, presumably referring to the animated guitar music that had played during the presentation. It took Jerald a few seconds to get over the shock of the 'joke,' and he found himself laughing nervously. Another white male put his arm around Jerald and said, 'As you can tell, we are a fun group here.' Dismayed but at the time jobless, Jerald reluctantly accepted the position.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Jerald revealed how that experience and others compelled him to consciously avoid invitations to present at his university and at predominantly white conferences and symposiums. Lamont, a full professor, discussed years of being 'humorously' ridiculed, which had hardened him into avoiding all use of humor or any other form of entertainment during presentations, particularly in front of white peers. He detected a strong desire among his white colleagues for him to entertain them, and their disappointment became apparent when he did not. Lamont summed up the general experience of black faculty presenting in front of majority white audiences: 'There's a price to be paid for making them laugh and for not making them laugh, and I have strategically chosen the latter.'

Remarking on his strategy to counter the angry black male stereotype, an associate professor named Don explained that he is 'purposefully pleasant and upbeat' with his white colleagues, communicating with a hyper-relaxed demeanor in very low vocal tones. Don's presentation strategy is to entertain and inform simultaneously, attempting to prevent the audience from developing a contrary attitude toward his research, or him. This is reminiscent of the title of Steele's (2010) latest book, *Whistling Vivaldi,* in which a black man whistles music from a famous opera while walking down the city streets to avoid being stereotyped as dangerous and threatening. Malcolm, an assistant professor, revealed that he typically feels pressure to employ humor to make himself and his content relatable. Intriguingly, making white audience members comfortable was as much a priority for Malcolm (if not more) as presenting the content.

Janet, an associate professor and administrator, is a frequent facilitator at state and national conferences. Her presentations typically pertain to fiscal and enrollment matters at her university. Janet recounted the often-hostile

pushback she receives from whites (mostly males) who attend her presentations. Critiques usually came in the form of aggressive questioning, a tone of disbelief, and challenges to the relevancy of her statistics and basic facts. Some even question why she's presenting in the first place. Janet went on to describe the 'cold stares' and 'chilly atmosphere' she frequently encounters while presenting.

Three other black female faculty also described 'cold stares' and frequent encounters with what DeWonda, an assistant professor, described as 'selective disinterest.' DeWonda revealed that her department chair asked her to adopt a less serious attitude during her presentations that included 'less drilling the work down our throats.' Monica, an assistant professor, stated that her rationale for not lacing her presentations with wit although she described herself as 'extremely witty' was that she wanted to be considered a sober and serious professional by her academic peers. Rose, a full professor of African American history, revealed that her circle of black women friends (all fellow academics) often encourage her to 'lighten up more' during her scholarly presentations – something she finds offensive and counter to her own high degree of racial self-awareness.

Passion!?

There appears to be a preoccupation with black education scholars' energy level during presentations. When a black presenter is engaged with his or her audience it is often referred to as 'passion,' whereas our interviewees said they rarely heard of a white or Asian education researcher's presentation style being described in that way. A shocking 25 of the 29 participants said they had been positioned as passionate, which is a highly subjective term not usually associated with scholarship. Many of the respondents said that the words 'passion' and 'passionate' effectively delegitimized their research and/or their own professionalism. The participants surmised that passion is expected from a black presenter, but that too much passion is considered highly idiosyncratic and is penalized. When Tandy, a full professor widely known as an advocate for critical race praxis in education, enters a predominately white presentation space, she is often greeted by the expression, 'Here comes trouble.' One day it was said in a very disparaging tone, followed by a few evil snickers. Thus, on that day, as she as she approached the podium, she stopped directly in front of the person who made the comment and delivered a message: 'I know you did not mean to refer to a renowned, grant-winning professor who is an advocate against educational disparities that disproportionally impact black and brown youth as a troublemaker, did you?' The respondent, whom Tandy described as flushed and embarrassed, could only shake his head no, silently. Gail, an assistant professor, was visually emotional as she discussed her research on black male school expulsion. A white male graduate student who initially

praised her 'passion' quickly went on to challenge her subjectivity because he perceived that Gail had 'obvious and intimate ties' to the participants. Asked to respond to that specific critique, Gail argued that all education researchers should be upset about the state of education for black males, and that her reaction to the injustices these young men experience should not be associated with a lack of objectivity.

Appearance given precedence over content

The black professors in our study concluded that their appearance while presenting has been subjected to uneven scrutiny. They described being told or having overheard feedback about their clothes 'having too much color' or 'being too tight,' their bodies being 'overexposed,' and other insensitive rhetoric of marginalization. A few years ago, for example, Kuba, an assistant professor, was wearing a patterned kente cloth suit inspired by and tailored to align with his presentation on Afrocentric education. Kuba recalled that a few white members of the audience seemed so taken aback by his clothing that they interrupted him several times during the presentation, asking questions that suggested a deficit in his methods and analysis. Kuba did the same presentation a few months later with a similar audience, but he was dressed in a tailored blue business suit and wore glasses. He believed that his presentation was better received and even led to funding opportunities because of his assimilated appearance. He concluded that wearing a business suit was a form of assimilation, a choice that was counter to his identity as an Afrocentric education scholar.

Cynthia, an adjunct professor, recalled a white female audience member's infatuation with her clothes. The woman rushed the panel after Cynthia's presentation and began to ask Cynthia a number of questions about her outfit: 'Where did you get your jacket? It really shows off your figure well. And those shoes?! Those [high] heels are to die for! I would be too shy to wear something like that, especially at a place like this [a national educational conference]. You go girl!' Cynthia surmised that this white woman was so distracted by Cynthia's apparel and body that she seemed unable or unwillingly to absorb the presentation. Cynthia said it was humiliating to have her appearance interrogated while her work was ignored. When one thinks of sexist behavior, the typical culprit is a male; however, sexism is a phenomenon that women too can perpetuate.

Surprised by good research

A number of participants discussed an audience response that was starkly different from questions about the quality of their research. Nine participants described the audience being astounded by their research presentation, but in a way that indicated the audience's surprise by the superior quality.

Disturbing comments like, 'Oh my God, you just blew my mind,' 'I am pleasantly flabbergasted,' 'You are a miracle worker,' 'You must be a genius,' and others showed the audience's predisposition for having low expectations of black researchers, to the extent that they are amazed when their expectations are substantially exceeded. Tameka, an assistant professor, said she interpreted the verbal and written feedback she received from her white colleagues following a conference presentation as racialized bias. They complimented her for being 'so articulate' and expressed bewilderment that she was so knowledgeable about her topic. Alim and Smitherman (2012) argued when blacks master and present in 'Standard English,' they often feel they and their work are diminished by comments about how articulate they are, the focus being not on what they presented but on their manner of speech. Tameka said such comments 'make the hair on [my] arms stand up' and even caused her heart rate to increase. Tameka rationalizes her silence as a form of response that suggests the statements are too 'ridiculous' to honor with a verbal reply. Thus, her coping mechanism takes the form of unspoken, non-confrontational statements about her white colleagues, although she admits her silence may lead her colleagues to continue to insult her.

A series of self-sacrifices

Just as Kuba changed from his Kente cloth suit to mainstream dress, 10 of the 29 participants admitted to making one or more changes in their appearance and behavior as a result of racialized presentation experiences. In fact, three participants changed their research interest entirely. The participants said they often found themselves ensnared in the classic conundrum of racism that forces them to shift between various identities, orientations, and self-representations. There is simultaneous pressure to remain serious and authentic (i.e., true to oneself) to adopt the roles actively prescribed by the dominant group.

Within this critical context, the black presenters seemed to struggle against the an aspect of the Du Boisian 'veil,' wherein they struggle with the consequences of seeing and situating themselves outside of what the dominant group defines, describes, and prescribes for them (Du Bois 1903). To illustrate this point, Robert, an assistant professor, reported being sanctioned by a black male associate professor during a department meeting for overstating the importance of white privilege in teacher education. Robert was shocked that this black professor, whom he considered a mentor and who actually agreed with him in black-only spaces, was cowardly enough to ostracize him in front of the entire department. In that same meeting, Robert was verbally accosted and referred to as 'disingenuous' by a white female colleague because he was 'pushing the race issue too hard.' Robert admitted to becoming bitter and skeptical of black academics that do not seem willing to speak openly about issues of race and power.

Shane, a recent associate professor, revealed some 'seasoned' black academics' tendency to confront him about his personal demeanor during presentations. Shane is considered a young academic, and his presentations incorporate a young cultural dynamic (e.g., rap lyrics, hip hop poetry, strong language). As Shane listened to their criticism with appreciation, he wanted to tell these caring 'black elders,' as he referred to them, that they were trying to stifle his identity as a young fiery black scholar, but in that atmosphere he felt guilt and shame and did not dare to speak.

Black women in the academy appear to have a special position of vulnerability and self-sacrifice. Nannette and Amusa admitted to straightening their hair and shopping for presentation outfits at predominantly white boutiques to try to look 'more mainstream.' Three females in this study, who did not want to be named, revealed that they had resorted to purchasing makeup several shades lighter than their natural skin color to appear fairer and purposely straighten their kinky hair, in the hope that they would be more readily accepted. The issues of colorism among those giving educational presentations only arose in the narratives of dark-skinned black female participants, which signifies that skin color stratification may have a deleterious effect on females who have darker complexions (Monroe 2013).

Black + education + researcher + presenter ≠ black entertainer

Notwithstanding racialized bias, racial microaggressions, or other such obstacles, black faculty still must think, plan, write, advise, conduct research, serve on committees, teach, and interact with colleagues and students, and they must do so with the rigor, sobriety, and professionalism characteristic of their positions. In relating their experiences our black participants described numerous instances where white academic co-workers either were hypercritical of their research; ridiculed, ignored, or threatened them; labeled them as 'passionate'; or critiqued their appearance (i.e., clothing). Based on our study findings, we have leaned toward classifying such critiques/perceptions within the insidious history of black persons being celebrated for their entertain value.

The experiences related to us by most of these 33 black education faculty members are deeply troubling, in that they reveal the complex, racialized psychodynamics that influence how black scholars conduct themselves professionally and are perceived by their peers in various environments. For many black faculty, navigating these psychosocial challenges means having to cope with and endure another layer of an already multilayered, racialized process, wherein they are routinely typecast, 'othered,' classified, indicted, and unfairly scrutinized by their colleagues. As we learned from our study participants, having to cope continuously with and endure such phenomena affects them personally and professionally in numerous ways. Women in this study were particularly tested by their appearance; voluptuous and

fashionably dressed black women had an especially difficult time being perceived as scholarly or even credible.

Our conversations with respondents prompted us to speculate on the current role and trajectory of black faculty within the white-dominated academy, and to question the salience of the academy as a socially inclusive, democratic space. On a deeper level, the revelations from our study participants prompted us to question the default characterization typically ascribed to higher education (writ large) by its stakeholders as a universal site for the propagation of progressive ideas and the celebration of diverse identities, ideologies and perspectives. Black faculty remain actors and participants in the ongoing American racial drama. The dominant group's relegation of black people to positions that lack seriousness and do not demand respect has a very long history in the United States. In ways real and harmful, these daily, racialized impositions and transgressions translate into a pernicious form of intellectual violence that invades and agitates the psychic space of African Americans. Thus, owing to the frequency, variety, and complexity of racialized microaggressions imposed on African Americans, we can safely adduce that *most* of what is experienced by African Americans on this front goes unspoken and unshared.

Whether for kinetic performance, shock value, labor, medical experimentation, incarceration, commodification, or humor, our society has historically found and continues to find diverse entertainment value in the black body. This long history of exploitation and marginalization stands, whether presenters, scholars, or observers (black or white) are aware of it or not. Then as now, the actions and rhetoric of many whites betray a rather curious preoccupation with black people's image, physicality, and performance, as this study demonstrates; some black faculty have this perception as well. Black faculty have withstood an extended history of racialized experiences from their counterparts, and as such black faculty call upon one another for understanding and empathy. Therefore, it is quite ironic and extra complicated when black-on-black faculty criticism gets leveraged as internecine racialized hostility. And while they may have come to anticipate white-on-black racial aggression, our study participants, have shared how intra-racial hostility has contributed to creating additional layers of frustration, confusion, and collective disunity. Thus, we ask whether black education professionals should be aware of and/or take these issues into consideration prior to *going on stage*?

The critique on black presenters' passion prompts us to ask, simply, what's wrong with passion? As educators, we have all at some point encouraged our students to find their passion, to become more expressive, or to approach learning experiences with a deeper level of engagement, zest, and imagination. Many teachers also have lamented their inability to reach students owing to deficiencies in their teaching style, delivery, or method of instruction. Foucault (1996) described passion's ability to move one to a new state, thus making it a valuable trait in its potential to motivate a

community of inquiry. Ironically, many black presenters tend to have such an expressive – i.e., passionate – presentation style that often attracts their peers' admiration and criticism. We challenge racialized critiques that emphasize blackness as a fetishized product and attempt to homogenize cultural and racial identities, while at the same time using racialized criteria to obfuscate the significant inequalities that black presenters endure.

In solidarity with other marginalized groups, we point to the commonalities in our findings with other scholars who also are being marginalized in presentation spaces. For example, an openly gay white male education scholar confided that his presentations have scripted moments of clever and sarcastic humor because he believes that is what is expected of him. An assistant professor in education, who self-defines as a radical Asian male, admitted after making an electrifying presentation that his rap-inspired oratory style was strategically crafted to showcase his resistance to the model minority myth. We recognize that some of these labels (e.g., passionate, radical) are self-descriptions that are celebrated by scholars. However, we are marginalized beings and thus we carry stereotypes with us as we research, teach, and present.

When presenting, our black study participants employed humor as both a coping strategy and a tool to ameliorate what they perceive as the implicit bias, assumed prejudice, and hostility emanating from (largely) white audiences. Using comedy enables some faculty members and groups from various cultures to expose these polarizing issues cleverly and to make us think about them in ways that raise political consciousness, thus giving the audience the opportunity to reflect and take action (Rojas-Drummond, Albarrán, and Littleton 2008). Of course, using humor during presentations backfired for some of the participants resulting in painful reminders associated with living in a raced body. However, taking heed to Quan's comment and assessment, who suggested that some forms of humor are historically rooted in the desire or need of some blacks academics to be seen as auspicious or pleasing to the dominant group, which can inadvertently camouflage substantive content. Thus, might future studies further question humor as a salve, or a truly effective coping strategy, or will black faculty be perceived as simply 'clownin' at their own expense?

The entrenchment of racialized microaggressions toward black academic faculty has potentially larger negative implications for the field itself in terms of faculty diversity, collegial fidelity, professionalization, and scholarly production. Such implications are particularly troubling, given that African Americans represent less than 9% of higher education instructional faculty in the US (NCES [National Center for Education Statistics] 2011). On white-dominated US campuses, substantive and widespread faculty diversity initiatives could be affected or thwarted in the wake of repeated instances of racialized bias, marginalization, disrespect, and other reductive overtures. Another implication, though one not as readily quantifiable, is the

potential for racialized microaggressions to increase stress, apathy, and tension (psychological and physical) among black higher education faculty, who are, as we have found, forced to deal with racism in its various permutations daily and consistently.

This is not a call for black education researchers to disengage themselves from their black cultural capital and expression, which has proved to be both a blessing and a strain (Carter 2005). Alim and Smitherman (2012) remind us that operating in two cultures can be both an asset and a descriptor for difference. We encourage education researchers to further investigate highly significant but often overlooked critiques of the relationship between specific types of black social inequality and its intersection with presenting while black. We further encourage black presenters to pause to consider the intimate interconnections between historical and topical considerations of blackness vis-à-vis performativity, intellectual capital, cultural reproduction, and racialized ideologies.

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Note

1. Names and other identifying information have been changed to protect our participants.

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