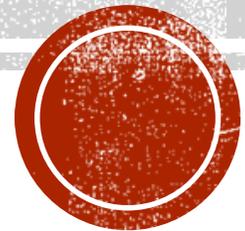


RACE AND DISCIPLINE AT A RACIALLY MIXED HIGH SCHOOL: INTERRUPTING ORGANIZATIONAL ROUTINES

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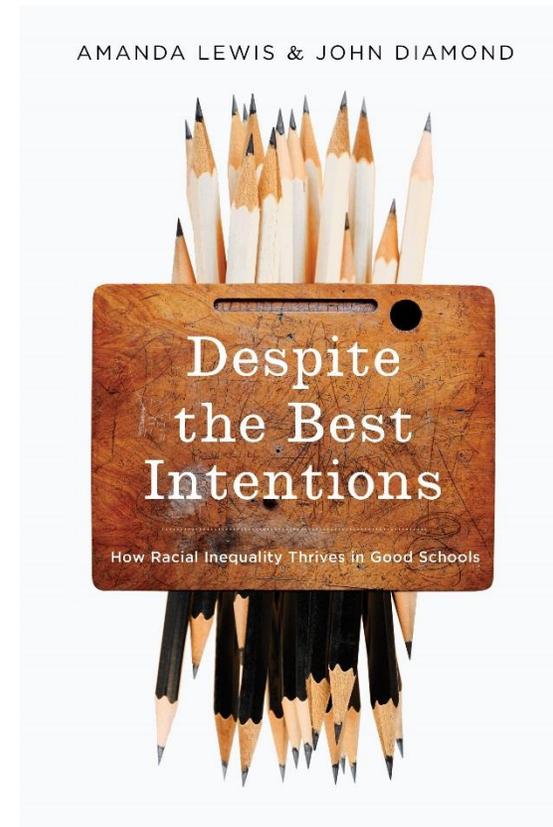


DESPITE THE BEST INTENTIONS

What is “racial” about racial “achievement” gaps?

How do these gaps persist in a liberal, suburban school district where nearly everyone espouses the best intentions?

For Today: How do racial inequalities become embedded in organizational routines?



FOR TODAY

Racial disparities in school discipline, including suspension and expulsion, have been documented for decades.

Instead of suspension and expulsion, we focus on formal and informal rules and daily practices, that regulate movement through school buildings, allowable dress, etc.

Large differences in teachers' referral rates for minor student offenses (Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al. 2002).

These daily disciplinary moments communicate to all who is and is not a full member of the school community (Vavrus & Cole 2002).



THE RESEARCH

Case Study of “Riverview”

A Racially Diverse, Affluent Suburban High School

171 interviews with students, teachers, administrators, staff,
and parents

Survey data from 25,000 7-11 grade students
across 15 suburban school districts including
Riverview

Community Social, Historical, and Economic
Data



RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

| Riverview, 2003 – 2004 | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Students | | Teachers | |
| White | 1,497 | <u>48.0%</u> | 184 | 72.9% |
| Black/ African American | 1,288 | <u>41.3%</u> | 54 | 21.6% |
| Hispanic | 265 | 8.5% | 10 | 4.0% |
| Asian / Pacific Islander | 65 | 2.1% | 4 | 1.6% |
| Native American | 3 | 0.1% | 0 | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | 3,118 | 100.0% | 252 | 100.0% |
| Limited English Proficient (of any race) | 50 | 1.6% | n/a | n/a |
| Low-income (of any race) | 976 | 31.3% | n/a | n/a |

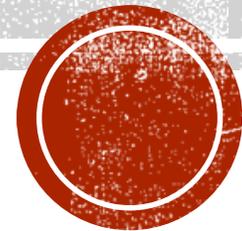


THEORETICAL TOOLS

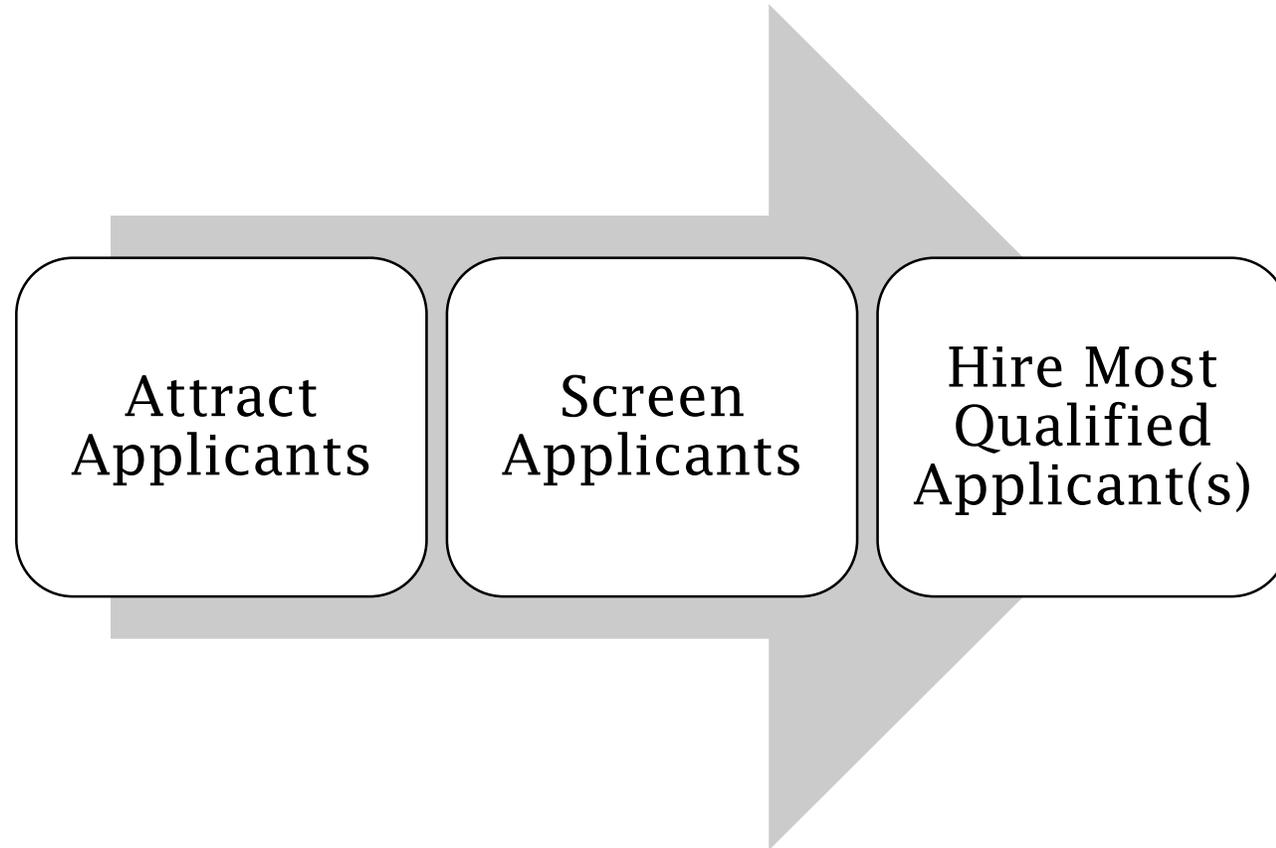
- Organizational Routines
 - “an organizational routine is a repetitive, recognizable pattern of interdependent actions, involving multiple actors” (Feldman and Pentland 2003: 96).
- Two Aspects of Organizational Routines
 - Ostensive (the “ideal” of the routine)
 - Performative (the routine in practice)



EXAMPLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL ROUTINES: HIRING PROCESS



HIRING PROCESS AS AN ORGANIZATIONAL ROUTINE: OSTENSIVE ASPECT



BLACK & WHITE SOUNDING NAMES AND RESUMES

Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004)*

Identical resumes sent to employers in Boston and Chicago
Applicants with “white sounding” names got 50% more
callbacks

For white applicants with resumes with slightly better
credentials got 27% more callbacks; for “black sounding”
applicants no significant difference.

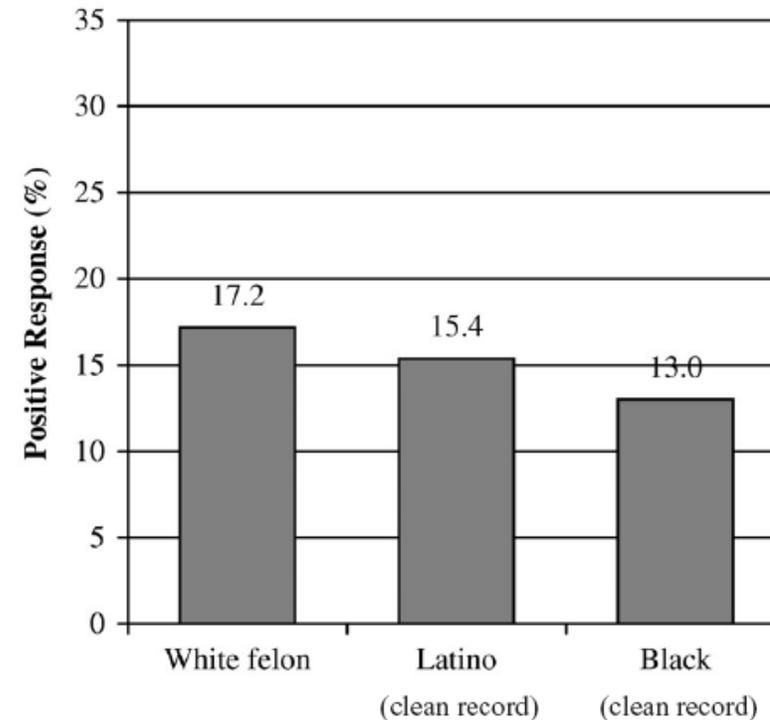
*Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination. *AM Econ Rev.*
<http://www.nber.org/digest/sep03/w9873.html>



RACE, STATUS, AND HIRING

Whites with criminal records were more likely to get callbacks and job offers than Blacks and Latinos with clean records.

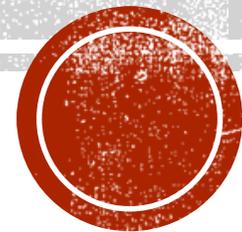
2a. Positive Responses by Race, Ethnicity, and Criminal Record



Pager, D. et al 2009. Discrimination in a low-wage labor market: A Field Experiment. *American Sociological Review*. Also see Pager & Quillian (2005). Walking the Talk? What Employers Say Versus What They Do. *American Sociological Review*

RACE AND DISCIPLINE AT RIVERVIEW

In 2009 35% of Riverview students were Black but they represented 70 percent of those suspended in-school and more than 60 percent of those suspended out-of-school.



DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE OSTENSIVE ASPECT

Student
Breaks a
School Rule

Student
Goes
Through
Discipline
Process

Student
Receives
Punishment,
Suspension,
or Expulsion



DISCIPLINE: THE OSTENSIVE ASPECT AS LEGITIMATING

“Conformity to rules is treated by school adults as the essential prior condition for any classroom learning to take place. ...rules bear the weight of moral authority... [and] are spoken about as inherently neutral, impartially exercised, and impervious to individual feelings and personal responses” (Ferguson, 2001).



THE DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE OSTENSIVE ASPECT

The [discipline handbook]... This is our guide. It tells us the discipline rules. It tells us the consequences ... We don't care if you're white, black, Hispanic, Russian, Asian, Hebrew, Chinese. We're going to follow that book. And that's just where we are. I come into this building. When I come into this building, I don't see colors, I see people. ... There are no favors.

(Mr. James, African American Riverview Security Guard)



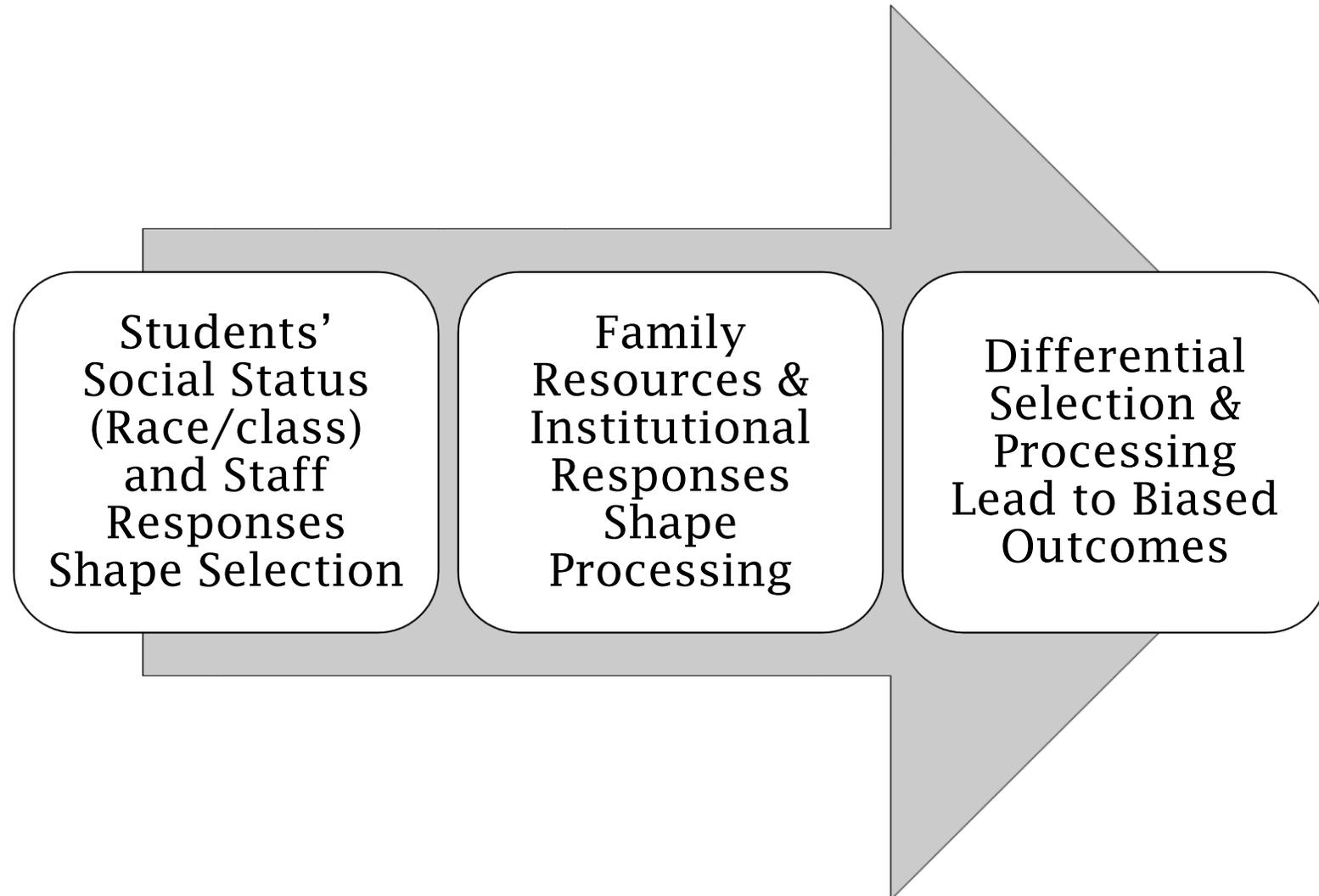
THE DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE PERFORMATIVE ASPECT

I don't think the have-nots are always treated the same. I think if your parents can afford lawyers and can talk very loudly, and are very educated ... you might stand a great chance of getting away with something ... The have-nots, they're generally ... seen as rude, disrespectful, impolite....And they don't generally get away with it because for the most part, the have-nots' parents are not going to come over here and deal with it.

(Mr. James, African American Riverview Security Guard)

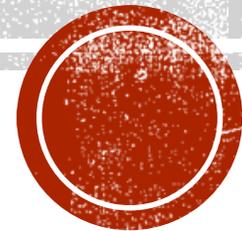


THE DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE PERFORMATIVE ASPECT



DIFFERENTIAL SELECTION IN PRACTICE: THE HALLWAY PASS

“Students who ... leave the room during the period must get a valid pass from the teacher or supervisor.... Students without a valid pass ... face school consequences.”



DIFFERENTIAL SELECTION: THE HALLWAY PASS

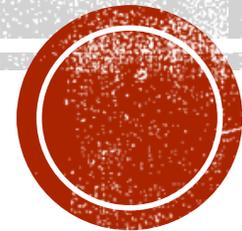
I think security guards, just like, I think they like point out African Americans a lot more than like White. ... Like I'll walk down the hall without a pass, and they'll just let you go. But then they'll find someone else and say, 'You have to have a Saturday detention.' I think it's really uncalled for that they don't stop everyone."

Maria (Riverview White sophomore)



DIFFERENTIAL SELECTION IN PRACTICE: APPROPRIATE DRESS

Brief and revealing clothing are not appropriate in school. Examples include tank or halter tops, garments with spaghetti straps or strapless garments; clothing that is “see-through,” cut low, or exposes one’s midriff; or skirts that are shorter than 3-inches above the knee (Riverview Discipline Code)



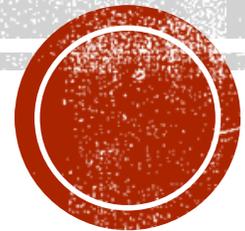
DIFFERENTIAL SELECTION: APPROPRIATE DRESS

We had a policy that the girls couldn't have their belly showing. All you saw walking in the hall [was] girls with their white bellies out. Black girls sent home. They [Black girls] were pissed off. [One black student] said, 'well, why are you saying something to me. I'm sitting up in a room with 6 white girls with their stomach out and you pick me out of the group.'

(Riverview Teacher)



**DIFFERENTIAL PROCESSING IN PRACTICE:
THE IMPLICATIONS OF FAMILY
RESOURCES (STATUS)**



DIFFERENTIAL PROCESSING: DRUG POSSESSION

White kids get caught with pot all the time ... The school can't be dealing with these folks' parents, because their parents are going to start suing the school When you get a black kid, and you suspend them for having pot, or you kick them out, what are the parents going to do? They don't have the money, or they don't know the resources. ... That's why I think it continuously happens.

Julius (Black Riverview Junior)



DIFFERENTIAL PROCESSING: DRUG POSSESSION

I have had parents come in to appeal white students' ...disciplinary actions. And rarely will they say, 'my son didn't do that or would not do that or my daughter would not.' Their issue is 'how do we get it out of the record? Can we not call it that because we don't want it to impact college admissions.' ... I'd say I hear it twenty times a year. A student got caught in possession of some marijuana. The parent never said to me, 'he didn't have it, he didn't do it.' The parent argued that we call it possession and possession means you have it and you are...it's yours to manipulate and to sell... 'It was never his. He was just looking at it. It was in his hands. So that possession is not real possession.'

(Riverview Administrator)



CONCLUSIONS

Taking race seriously means considering the multiple ways it is implicated in shaping students' educational experiences.

Examining the performative aspect of organizational routines provides insights into how structural and symbolic inequality becomes embedded and reproduced in school organizations.

The functioning of routines can contribute to the reproduction of inequality but such processes can also be interrupted through redesigning routines.



TABLE A.1. Riverview High School Interviews by Race and Status

Students

| | |
|--------|----|
| Black | 42 |
| White | 28 |
| Latino | 13 |

Parents

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Black | 27 |
| White | 27 ^a |
| Latino | 7 |

Staff

| | |
|-------|----|
| Black | 15 |
| White | 12 |

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Total | 171 |
|--------------|------------|

^a These 27 parents represent 21 families as, in several cases, both parents participated in the interview. This was not the case for either Black or Latino families.

