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The Whiteness Pandemic Behind the Racism Pandemic: Familial Whiteness Socialization in Minneapolis Following #GeorgeFloyd's Murder

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Family socialization into the centuries-old culture of Whiteness—involving colorblindness, passivity, and fragility—perpetrates and perpetuates U.S. racism, reflecting an insidious Whiteness pandemic. As a poignant case study, this mixed methods study examined Whiteness socialization among White mothers (N = 392, M = 37.99 years, SD = 4.34) in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the month following the May 2020 police killing of unarmed Black resident, George Floyd. Using Helms' (1984, 2017) White racial identity development theory (WRID), content analyses of qualitative responses classified participants into lower versus higher levels of WRID, after which thematic analyses compared their Whiteness socialization beliefs/values, attitudes, practices, and emotions, and analyses of variance compared their demographics, multiculturalism, and psychological distress. There was strong convergence across qualitative and quantitative findings and results aligned with the WRID model. Racially silent participants (i.e., no mention of Floyd's murder or subsequent events on open-ended questions: 53%) had lower multiculturalism scores and lower psychological distress. Among mothers who were racially responsive (i.e., mentioned Floyd's murder or subsequent events: 47%), those with more advanced WRID (17%) had higher multiculturalism scores; lower ethnic group protectiveness scores; a more effective coping style featuring empathy, moral outrage, and hope; more color- and power-conscious socialization beliefs/values; and more purposeful racial socialization practices than their less advanced peers (30%). Collectively, color-evasion and power-evasion—pathogens of the Whiteness pandemic—are inexorably transmitted within families, with White parents serving as carriers to their children unless they take active preventive measures rooted in antiracism and equity-promotion.

Public Significance Statement
Family socialization into the centuries-old culture of Whiteness—involving colorblindness, passivity, and fragility—perpetrates and perpetuates U.S. racism, reflecting an insidious Whiteness pandemic. As a case study immediately following the high-profile 2020 police homicide of Black unarmed Minneapolis resident—George Floyd—by a White police officer, we found that most White Minneapolis mothers displayed apathy or were overwhelmed and fearful, and avoided discussing Floyd's murder or systemic racism with their children. On the other hand, mothers with more advanced White racial identity development (only 17%), who embraced multiculturalism more fully and felt less of a need to protect their own ethnic/racial group, displayed grief, concern, and hope, and discussed Floyd's murder and Black Lives Matter with their children using color-conscious and power-conscious parenting.

Keywords: racial socialization, White racial identity, racism, antiracism, Black Lives Matter

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We dedicate this article to the living memory of Mr. George Floyd and to all the other Black and Brown individuals who have been killed by police including Mr. Daunte Wright, who was fatally shot at a traffic stop in Minneapolis metro area just days before Derek Chauvin was convicted for Floyd's murder (see incomplete list of names from 1968 to 2021 in the United States: https://www.reneeater.com/on-monuments-blog/tag/list+of+unarmed+black+people+killed+by+police).

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On Memorial Day, May 25, 2020, Mr. George Floyd, a Black Minneapolis resident, was killed by a White police officer who knelt on his neck for 9+ deadly minutes in broad daylight, while Floyd, community members, and even a paramedic, pleaded in vain for him to stop. The county autopsy ruled Floyd's death a homicide and 10 months later, a jury declared the former officer guilty of two counts of murder and one count of manslaughter (Xiong et al., 2021). Although racial bias in U.S. policing is widely recognized (Hall et al., 2016), the dehumanization of Floyd, the timing of his murder on a national holiday, and the ironic anticlimax of this homicide during the state reopening after COVID-19 lockdown (i.e., a Black man escapes one deadly pandemic ravaging his community only to be killed by another) launched a justified nationwide outcry against structural oppression of Black lives through policing and other systems. Since then, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director (CDC, 2021) has declared U.S. racism to be an epidemic, and the 2020 APA President acknowledged an even broader scope saying that "we are living in a racism pandemic"[1] (APA, 2020). In this article, we unveil the "Whiteness pandemic" lurking behind this racism pandemic. Because racism is not inborn (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020), we argue that familial Whiteness socialization into the centuries-old culture of Whiteness perpetrates and perpetuates U.S. racism (hereafter "American" and "American racism"). Hence, we are living in a Whiteness pandemic. This article presents a mixed methods case study of Whiteness socialization in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the month following Floyd's murder using Helms' (1984, 2017) theory of White racial identity development as a guiding framework. We focus on U.S. literature unless otherwise noted.

American racism advantaging Whites is no secret (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020), and Minnesota is case in point. The "Minnesota Paradox" reflects that Minnesota is identified as one of the best states to live, unless you are Black (Myers, n.d.). Black Minnesotans are being killed at higher rates than White Minnesotans by COVID-19 and police brutality (Navratil, 2020). Roberts and Rizzo (2020) demonstrated how American racism is motivated by seven factors, five of which are relevant in Minnesota: *factions* (e.g., racial ingroup/outgroup self-positioning); *segregation* (e.g., residential; middle/upper-income Whites occupying most racially homogeneous settings); *power* (pervasive White supremacy via discriminatory housing and employment practices, national leaders shaping racist values and policies [macro], and White parents socializing their children into colorblindness [micro]); *media* (overrepresents Blacks as criminals and underrepresents them as victims with the reverse for Whites); and most importantly for this study, *passivism* (silence and bystander inaction around racial injustice). In this article, we, like Roberts and Rizzo (2020) and Hall et al. (2016), intentionally move beyond a focus on individual racism (e.g., racial bias of the former officer convicted of Floyd's murder). Instead, we fix our gaze on the Whiteness pandemic affecting *all* Americans, whether they be perpetrators or victims, by fueling individual and collective racism and their effects. First, we profile how the Black Lives Matter movement is shifting engagement with U.S. racism for many White parents, then we define the Whiteness pandemic and link it to central theory and research, share findings from our mixed methods empirical case study, and suggest recommendations.

Black Lives Matter

The last decade has seen a resurgent push for change in anti-Black racism, and the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) is a clear contributor. BLM, cofounded in 2013 by Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors (Black Lives Matter, n.d.), has had extraordinary reach and longevity (Buchanan et al., 2020). BLM takes center stage in the national conversation after each police killing of an unarmed Black individual because compared with Whites, police killings are among the leading causes of deaths for African American and other men of color between 25 and 35 years (Edwards et al., 2019). Therefore, for White parents, BLM presents a unique challenge to the prevalent colorblind racial ideology (CBRI; Neville et al., 2013), which manifests in the socialization of White individuals to stop seeing race altogether, including one's own (color-

[1] A pandemic is an epidemic of large, cross-national proportion with agents that spread easily among humans (Porta, 2016).

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evasion—follows from the value of individualism), and the belief that every individual has equal opportunities and protections in U.S. society (power-evasion—stems from the narrative that America operates under a meritocracy so racism is no longer a major issue). However, how White parents go about this racial reckoning is understudied. BLM has gained even more attention since Mr. Floyd's murder. Approximately 15–26 million Americans participated in BLM protests in June 2020. Ninety-five percent of these protests were in majority-White counties (Buchanan et al., 2020) and over 96% of these summer 2020 protests were peaceful (Chenoweth & Pressman, 2020).

The Whiteness Pandemic: Making the Invisible Visible

To rectify the frequent invisibility of Whiteness in discussions of racism and to make progress toward racial equality, it is first necessary to unveil, define, and challenge the normative assumptions and practices of Whiteness (Helms, 2017). Whiteness is culture rather than biology (Katz, 1985). Culture is a "system of people, places, and practices, for a purpose such as enacting, justifying, or resisting power" (*p*-model: Causadias, 2020, p. 1). The culture of Whiteness entails "the overt and subliminal socialization processes and practices, power structures, laws, privilege, and life experiences that favor the White racial group over all others" (Helms, 2017, p. 718) and persists even in the face of changing racial demographics (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). In addition to overt racism, CBRI is a covert tool of Whiteness involving practices that deny the reality of racial inequality, obfuscate the existence and impact of White racial identity, and socialize the next generation to perpetuate these inequalities (Neville et al., 2013).

Although controversial, we are not the first to use a medical metaphor to communicate the gravity of racism and the dire need for antiracist action (APA, 2020; CDC, 2021; Kendi, 2019). We argue that Whiteness, like racism, can be considered a *behavioral pandemic*[2] given: (a) the wide cross-national spread of Whiteness and White supremacy (e.g., Green et al., 2007); (b) that the cultural-behavioral patterns of CBRI have been identified as central mechanisms of Whiteness (Neville et al., 2013); and (c) these cultural-behavioral patterns spread through person: person transmission within White families and through group reinforcement in the larger White society (Porta, 2016).

The Whiteness pandemic serves to reinforce CBRI in modern-day U.S. White families by denying or downplaying the existence of race and asserting that all individuals have equal access to merit-based opportunities. In reality, while the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution nominally guarantees equal protection under the law, numerous racist laws have been passed prior to and afterward in violation of this amendment and have led to the disproportionate accumulation of wealth and power by the White racial group across centuries. The repeal of overtly racist laws, in the absence of corrective, antiracist laws, creates an illusion of equality that inherently attributes inequality to individual or racial group inferiorities (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). Today, the prevalence of CBRI means that many White individuals perpetuate these inequalities through denial and complacency. False notions of equal opportunity and character-based attributions of inequality are so entrenched that many White voters resist reforms to health care or welfare systems, hurting communities of color and themselves (Metzl, 2019).

Emotions also fuel the Whiteness pandemic. Spanierman and Cabrera's (2014) summary of racist emotions includes White apathy (linked to colorblindness) and White fear (anxiety and fragile self-concept as being constantly threatened), which motivate *White silence*. On the other hand, antiracist emotions include White empathy (identifying

[2] Epidemics, and by extension, pandemics, are not only biological in origin, but can also be behavioral, stemming from culturally-driven behavioral patterns (e.g., racism: CDC, 2021; loneliness: Jeste et al., 2020). Although in some epidemics/pandemics the illness is passively acquired (e.g., airborne coronavirus), it can also be actively acquired (e.g., the obesity epidemic is largely driven by behavioral lifestyle changes). In the case of the Whiteness pandemic, there are both passive elements of the socialization of color- and power-evasion (e.g., parental modeling of White apathy or White fear; omissions in school curricula) and active elements (e.g., parental restriction of all race-related media; telling a child that everyone is equal without stating the reality of unequal treatment). Effective prevention also varies based on the pandemic's communicable agent. For example, social distancing is an effective preventive intervention for the COVID-19 pandemic's airborne agent, but not for the Whiteness pandemic wherein agents are evasiveness around color and power. Finally, it is important to appreciate that behavioral epidemics/pandemics are not solely determined by individual behavior, but structural determinants can also play a central role (e.g., food access and built environment constrain lifestyle "choices" in marginalized communities).

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with Black pain/suffering; the most advanced form being "autopathy" in which White individuals deliberately place themselves in situations to experience feelings of marginalization), moral outrage (frustration, anger), compassion, joy, and even hope. Therefore, White silence may function as a shield from the psychological distress associated with facing racial stimuli directly. These emotions map onto two orientations toward cross-cultural interactions relevant to Whiteness socialization: ethnic protection (avoiding intercultural interactions to safeguard one's cultural norms, promotes White silence) and multicultural acquisition (embracing cultural diversity, seeking cultural knowledge, promotes understanding of White privilege and antiracist actions; Chen et al., 2016).

To make Whiteness visible in the study of racism, several White racial identity models have emerged. The most widely adopted of these, Helms' White racial identity development (WRID) model (see Helms, 1984, 2017), describes two broad, sequenced phases:[3] (a) *internalized racism* characterized by obliviousness or denial of race (CBRI: color-evasion), explicit bias against Blacks or Whites, or conflicted/ambivalent awareness of racism but without antiracist actions (CBRI: power-evasion); and (b) *abandonment of racism* characterized by full awareness of systemic racism and one's racial privilege, acknowledgment of one's role in perpetuating racism, or commitment to self-reflection and other antiracist actions to promote racial equity and dismantle racism. The hegemony of CBRI and associated practices of White silence means that many White adults are socialized into and remain in Helms' Phase 1 and then transmit these beliefs and practices to the next generation. This leads to a Whiteness pandemic that is two-fold: White apathy, silence, passivism toward rectifying injustices when the racial status quo is not challenged (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020), and patterns of discomfort, defensiveness, or aggression—broadly labeled White fragility—when the racial status quo is challenged (DiAngelo, 2018).

In Helm's WRID model, *racial dissonance* can occur when the schema you use to make sense of racial interactions no longer makes sense. The growing prominence of BLM, a counterculture to Whiteness, and the resurgence of conversations on systemic racism and antiracist actions could challenge CBRI, pushing White individuals into racial dissonance. Given that a quantitative study with over 1 million U.S. adults found explicit and implicit racial bias to decrease during high points of BLM salience between 2009 and 2016 (Sawyer & Gampa, 2018), it is possible that BLM events are moving White individuals into Helms' Phase 2, including in their parenting practices.

White Racial Socialization

Racial-ethnic socialization (henceforth, racial socialization) describes "the mechanisms through which parents transmit information, values, and perspectives about ethnicity and race to their children" (Hughes et al., 2006, p. 747). Both racial minority and racial majority families engage in racial socialization, whether explicitly or implicitly, and this shapes how the next generation will respond to racial injustice. In particular, the socialization of White children by White parents is one critical pathway for the transmission of both racist and antiracist beliefs and practices, as children spend the majority of their time in the home and parents largely control the racial stimuli children experience through school, neighborhood, and media choices (Gillen-O'Neel, 2021; Hagerman, 2014; Lloyd & Gaither, 2018).[4] This section will review research on White parental racial socialization practices, linking both explicit and implicit practices that are rooted in CBRI to the maintenance of the Whiteness pandemic across generations.

Unlike racial and ethnic minority families, White families rarely engage in explicit forms of racial socialization and, when they do, they often transmit color-evasive and power-evasive messages characteristic of less advanced WRID. A nationally representative U.S. sample of 10,000+ kindergarten-aged children found that White parents were almost twice as likely as parents of other racial and ethnic groups to never or almost never engage in explicit racial socialization (White parents 56.9% vs. Black 29.6%; Lesane-Brown

[3] Helms (1984, 2017, 2020) describes three schemas within each broad phase of WRID; however, this study focuses on the two higher-level phases versus the lower-level schemas.

[4] Although this article focuses on parents as agents of socialization, we have provided a supplementary online reference list with readings on additional factors and processes impacting children's racial attitudes, and more historical and sociological context. See Supplement A in the online supplemental materials.

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et al., 2010). Similarly, among 100+ White American mothers of 4- to 7-year-olds, 70% reported avoiding conversations about race or actively conveying color-evasive messages rooted in CBRI (Vittrup, 2018).

In the absence of explicit forms of racial socialization, "exposure-to-diversity" through schools or multiracial neighborhood settings has become an implicit racial socialization practice among politically liberal, well-resourced White parents (Underhill, 2019). A recent study in the Twin Cities found that even among well-educated White parents of 5- to 14-year-old children at a social justice-oriented school, there was a range of shallow-to-deeper engagement with antiracist parenting with most parents unaware of their role in systemic racism (Gillen-O'Neel, 2021). White children are, therefore, frequently socialized by parents' silence and/or their color- and power-evasion to believe that their White racial identity is meaningless and that race does not play a meaningful role in society, directly undermining White children's engagement in the active reflections on Whiteness necessary for WRID progress (Helms, 2017).

Racial socialization begins early in development as children process information about racial differences and acceptable beliefs and behaviors. Research shows that 3-month-old children are aware of racial differences (Kelly et al., 2005), and that they begin to internalize implicit biases and racial stereotypes from their social environments by age 3 (Castelli et al., 2009). Instead of disappearing with age, children may develop more subtle expressions of outgroup bias as they are socialized to avoid discussing race. An experiment found that 5- to 10-year-old White South American children showed anti-Black bias in allocating reward, but only older children attempted to justify this bias through nonracial explanations (de França & Monteiro, 2013). This demonstrates that White children growing up in the Whiteness pandemic are processing information about race from a young age, but simultaneously learning the practice of White silence as they receive color-evasive messages that race, including their own, should not be discussed or interrogated.

Even after widely-publicized incidents of racial injustice, contemporary White U.S. parents continue to avoid discussions of race with their children. For example, in a study of parenting practices following a series of racially-motivated U.S. police shootings, nearly two thirds of White parents reported not discussing the events with their children despite the widespread media coverage of these events (see summary in Abaied & Perry, 2021). Parents reported wanting to shield their children from knowledge or media about racialized violence and about racism in society more broadly, or believed that these conversations were unnecessary (CBRI; power-evasion). Indeed, some White parents fear that explicit conversations about racism or their child's White racial identity will engender racial bias (Vittrup, 2018). However, such conversations are essential for contextualizing the racial stimuli to which children are attuned, and they help children detect and confront bias (Lloyd & Gaither, 2018).

Current Study

Using a mixed methods study of Whiteness socialization in Minneapolis in the month following Floyd's murder, the current study addresses Roberts and Rizzo's (2020) call for research on the contextual influences (encounters like police brutality), psychological processes (familial Whiteness socialization, parental multicultural orientation), and developmental mechanisms (White racial identity development) that foster antiracism (p. 10). While previous articles have used the BLM movement to examine parent racial socialization and racial attitudes (e.g., Sawyer & Gampa, 2018; Zucker & Patterson, 2018), to our knowledge, this is the first study to capture these processes among White parents in the immediate aftermath of a high-profile police homicide of an unarmed Black man in their locale.

Our hypotheses were fourfold. First, based on Helms' WRID model (Helms, 2017) and CBRI (Neville et al., 2013), we expected to observe different phases of WRID. We expected that some participants would engage in White silence and color- and power-evasiveness by not mentioning the murder of George Floyd or any subsequent events in qualitative responses (hereafter called "racial silence"; representing the lowest WRID within Helms' Phase 1). Among participants who referenced George Floyd and events in their responses (hereafter called "racially responsive"), we expected some to be at a more advanced WRID phase than others (mix of Phase 1 and 2). Relatedly, we expected differences in Whiteness socialization based on WRID (e.g., more color- and power-evasive parenting among less

advanced parents). Second and third, based on WRID theory (Helms, 2017) and antiracist emotions research (Spanierman & Cabrera, 2014), we expected racially responsive individuals (vs. silent) and those in WRID Phase 2 (vs. Phase 1) to have higher multiculturalism (Hypothesis 2) and higher psychological distress (Hypothesis 3) because these participants may be experiencing more grief, frustration, or anger as they empathize with Mr. Floyd, his family, and the Black community. Fourth, racial responsiveness versus racial silence was expected to be uniquely associated with higher distress because the latter features apathy and denial as coping mechanisms (Spanierman & Cabrera, 2014).

Method

Data for this study were drawn from a larger mixed-methods study on family media use in the context of globalization and diversity during COVID-19 that launched a few days after Floyd's murder and lasted 5 weeks. Because participants were not recruited for a race/racism study, a unique strength of our sample is its representativeness of a range of WRID schemas rather than being narrowed by self-selection to those with more advanced WRID (e.g., see Gillen-O'Neel, 2021). We utilized mixed methods to harness the strengths of both qualitative research (e.g., free-form responses, depth of description, nuanced and subjective interpretation) and quantitative research (e.g., large sample, objective methods, generalizability) in addressing our research questions with completeness and corroboration (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This study used a convergent design—questionnaire variant—wherein qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously using open-ended and closed-ended questions in an online questionnaire, qualitative and quantitative analyses were performed separately, and then the results were triangulated (i.e., compared, contrasted, synthesized in the Discussion section and Table 2) during the interpretation process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The entire sample (N = 392) had the opportunity to provide qualitative and quantitative responses; therefore, our qualitative findings may be more generalizable than is common in small qualitative studies.

Participants

In total, 474 U.S. participants originally completed the survey. Of these participants, 398 reported that both they and their child were mono-ethnically White and non-Hispanic/Latino. One participant was removed due to missing >50% data as were five participants living outside the Midwest leaving 392 participants in the analytic sample (385 in Minnesota). Parents (M_{age} = 37.99, SD = 4.34, *range* = 25–52) were mothers of children (M_{age} = 5.36 years, SD = 2.39, *range* = 2–13 years; 197 boys, 194 girls, one "prefer not to answer"). The average annual family income category was $125,000–$149,999, and the sample was highly educated (91.1% had a bachelor's degree or higher) and fairly liberal (61% were somewhat or very liberal vs. 18% somewhat or very conservative).

Measures

Qualitative: WRID, Whiteness Socialization

This study used qualitative data to elicit WRID and White racial socialization strategies, rather than quantitative measures used previously (see Zucker & Patterson, 2018). To capture participants' unfiltered reactions to George Floyd's police killing, two simple, open-ended, nonleading question prompts about "current events" were used to capture text responses without space or time constraints. Because of the severity, proximity, publicity, and community impact of Floyd's murder and subsequent events in Minneapolis (including emergency text notices of protest-related curfews), it would have been virtually impossible for any parent in our sample to have been unaware of this major race-related event. Therefore, akin to projective techniques in which an ambiguous stimulus is presented, Floyd was not directly referenced in either prompt, and individuals' responses (i.e., both what they said and how they said it) and nonresponses (i.e., silence on race) were taken as meaningful indicators of their inner feelings, attitudes, and maturity in handling racial stimuli (see Tuber & Meehan, 2015). The first question prompt was positioned at the midpoint of the questionnaire in a section on parents' mediation strategies around children's media use during COVID-19, asking parents to explain the strategies used when talking to their children about "current events" in the news: *"In the last month . . . have you used any of the previously-mentioned strategies when talking to your child about any other current events in the news, whether on TV or online? PLEASE EXPLAIN*." The second question prompt occurred at the end of the questionnaire: *"Is there anything we didn't ask that you think is important such as other current events that are impacting you and/or your family right now?*"

Quantitative

Multiculturalism. Participants reported their orientation toward multiculturalism on the Multicultural Acquisition subscale (13 items: seeking or valuing novel cultural knowledge or experiences) and their sense of ethnic/racial group defensiveness on the Ethnic Protection subscale (12 items: discomfort with multiculturalism, preference for one's own culture) of the Global Orientations Scale (Chen et al., 2016). A Likert scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*, was used with higher scores indicating higher levels of each construct. Subscale averages were computed (Cronbach's alpha = .84 & .69, respectively).

Daily COVID-19 Impact. A single-item measurement from the Pandemic Stress Index was used (Harkness, 2020): "How much has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your

day-to-day life?" on a scale from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *extremely*.

Psychological Distress. Using the Patient Health Questionnaire–4 (PHQ-4; Kroenke et al., 2009), participants reported how often they had been bothered by symptoms of anxiety or depression over the past 2 weeks on a scale from 0 = *not at all* to 3 = *nearly every day*. The four items were summed ($\alpha = .83$; possible range = 0–12).

Demographics. In addition to age in years, participants reported their (a) annual income on a 1 (*less than $25,000*) to 9 (*$200,000 or more*) scale used in Distefano et al. (2018); (b) education on a 1 (*some high school*) to 7 (*graduate or professional degree*) scale used in Distefano et al. (2018); (c) political affiliation on a 1 (*very liberal*) to 5 (*very conservative*) scale adapted from the Pew Research Center (2018); and (d) distance from their zip code to the George Floyd memorial murder site in miles as the crow flies (to account for the psychological impact of physical proximity to the site and to related protests). See Table 1 for details.

Procedure

Following Institutional Review Board approval, the researchers received a randomly selected list of participants from the university's statewide participant pool of parents with children between the ages of 2 and 11 years old. The researchers sent an email with the consent form and survey link to these participants and to a list of prior study participants who indicated interest in future surveys. The survey took approximately 30–40 minutes and parents elected a $10 e-gift card of their choice, informational resources on parenting and child well-being during COVID-19, both, or neither. There were three attention check items but no deception or debriefing.

Plan of Analysis

Qualitative Analysis

Content analyses and thematic analyses were performed to assess Hypothesis 1 (Braun & Clarke, 2006; see coding manual in Supplement B). The coding team included both White and Black American women to harness multiple perspectives. To avoid confirmation bias, two coauthors content-coded WRID phases (independent variable) assisted by a third author in discussions (i.e., coders: White American-primary, Black immigrant American-secondary, White American-discussions), while three different coders simultaneously performed consensual thematic analyses (dependent variables; coders: White American-primary, White American and African American as secondary).

For content coding, first, a dichotomous variable coded whether participants mentioned George Floyd, his murder, or related events such as protests in their open-ended responses (i.e., racially "responsive": $n = 184$, 47%), or whether they demonstrated racial silence by providing no open-ended response whatsoever, stating "no" or "N/A", or responding without mentioning Floyd or related events (i.e., racially "silent": $n = 208$, 53%). Next, open-ended

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Variables Included in Quantitative Analyses (N = 392 Unless Otherwise Noted)

Variable	*M*/%	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. WRID phase[a]	30%, 17%	—	1										
2. Multicultural acquisition[b]	5.06	0.79	0.24**	1									
3. Ethnic protection[c]	2.62	0.67	−0.21**	−0.40**	1								
4. Family income[d]	5.83	2.17	0.01	0.09	0.00	1							
5. Education level (reverse)[e]	2.01	1.12	−0.05	−0.23**	0.03	−0.33**	1						
6. Political affiliation[f]	2.38	1.11	−0.29**	−0.32**	0.30**	−0.03	0.15**	1					
7. Psychological distress[g]	2.93	2.64	0.06	0.06	0.01	−0.14**	0.08	−0.14**	1				
8. Age (in years)	38	4.34	0.04	0.07	−0.05	0.19**	−0.24**	−0.09	0.00	1			
9. Distance (in miles) from George Floyd memorial	16.08	28.34	0.03	−0.02	0.00	−0.01	0.04	0.03	−0.05	−0.08	1		
10. COVID-19 daily impact[h]	3.72	1.05	0.14	0.22**	−0.11*	0.04	−0.12*	−0.23**	0.23**	0.11*	0.01	1	
11. Racial responsiveness	47%	—	N/A	0.13**	0.00	0.02	−0.07	−0.18**	0.18**	0.11*	−0.05	0.19**	1

Note. Descriptive statistics are based on unimputed raw data.
[a] WRID phase % is the percentage of the sample classified into WRID Phase 1, Phase 2 ($n = 119, 65$). N/A is listed for correlation between WRID phase and racial responsiveness because only racially responsive individuals were coded for WRID phase. [b] 377 participants responded to all items for this scale, possible range: 1–7. [c] 387 participants responded to all items for this scale, possible range: 1–7. [d] 1 = less than $25,000; 2 = $25,000–$49,999; 3 = $50,000–$74,999; 4 = $75,000–$99,000; 5 = $100,000–$124,999; 6 = $125,000–$149,999; 7 = $150,000–$174,999; 8 = $175,000–$199,999; 9 = $200,000 or more. [e] 1 = graduate or professional degree; 2 = attended some graduate school; 3 = bachelor's degree; 4 = attended some college; 5 = high school diploma; 6 = GED; 7 = some high school. [f] 1 = very liberal; 2 = somewhat liberal; 3 = moderate; 4 = somewhat conservative; 5 = very conservative. [g] Possible range: 0–12. [h] Possible range: 1–5.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

responses were used to classify each participant into Helms (2017) Phase 1 or 2 according to their maturity in handling racial stimuli. Less advanced WRID was indexed by the absence of any mentions of race/racism, race obliviousness/denial/avoidance/ambivalence, explicit bias against Blacks or Whites, or awareness of racism (not described as systemic) without accompanying understanding of White privilege or engagement in antiracist actions. In contrast, more advanced WRID was indicated by acknowledgment of systemic racism along with real, desired, or intellectualized antiracist actions. Actions could include any current or hoped actions to promote racial equity or dismantle racism including protesting or having conversations about racism/racial inequality/White privilege, even if the discrimination was blamed on "bad White people." Kappas revealed near perfect interrater reliability of .82 (Landis & Koch, 1977: see online Supplement B for details). After a final discussion of discrepant codes, 100% agreement was achieved.

For thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006), an independent set of coders first read all participant responses in their entirety to become familiar with the data. Next, they independently generated initial codes for each response using Saldaña's (2015) value coding (i.e., coding Whiteness socialization beliefs/values [ideas considered true or important], attitudes [feelings about or reactions to issues or events], and practices [actions]) and emotion coding techniques (i.e., explicit or implicit emotions related to Whiteness socialization). See Supplement B for detailed coding plan. Coders met on multiple occasions to collate codes into potential overarching themes, divide those themes across WRID phases, refine themes, resolve discrepancies, and create a table of illustrative quotes. Each theme and code was derived from responses of multiple participants.

Quantitative Analyses

The proportion of missing data was minimal across variables (3.3% at highest). Little's MCAR test was significant ($\chi^2 = 484.69$, $p < .01$); however, because χ^2 analyses are sensitive to sample size, we computed and evaluated the normed χ^2 ($\chi^2/df = 1.24$), which was acceptable ($\chi^2/df <$ 1.5 or 2) suggesting that data were missing completely at random. Therefore, the data were treated as MCAR (Ullman, 2001) and imputed. Data from five multiply imputed data sets were aggregated for analyses; however, descriptive statistics are based on unimputed raw data.

Main analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 26. A one-way MANCOVA controlling for age with a Bonferroni correction assessed differences in demographics (income, education, political affiliation—exploratory), multiculturalism (multicultural acquisition, ethnic protection—Hypothesis 2), and psychological distress (Hypothesis 3), across responsive versus silent participants in the full sample, and also across the two WRID phases within the set of responsive participants. Next, hierarchical regression analyses in the full sample were conducted to predict psychological distress (Hypothesis 4). Demographic covariates (income, age, education, political affiliation, and distance from the Floyd memorial) were entered into the first step; COVID-19 daily impact was entered second; then, racial silence versus responsiveness was entered third. An α of .05 was used and effect sizes were determined by η_p^2 and Cohen's *d*s (MANCOVAs) and by regression coefficients and ΔR^2 (regressions). Our sample size was well powered ($\geq$.80) to detect a small effect of $f^2 = .08$.

Results

Qualitative Analyses

Per Hypothesis 1, content analyses among racially responsive participants detected participants with less advanced WRID (Helms, 2017, Phase 1: $n = 119$, 30% of full sample) and more advanced WRID (Phase 2: $n = 65$, 17% of full sample), and thematic analyses of their responses revealed distinct differences in Whiteness socialization. Thematic analyses produced 20 themes (italicized) within four predetermined domains of Whiteness Socialization: beliefs/values, attitudes, practices, and emotions. Eighteen themes distinguished between less/more advanced respondents, and two themes cut across both WRID phases. See Table 2 for themes and quotes.

Whiteness Socialization Beliefs and Values

Participants across both WRID phases believed that police brutality, race, and *racism* (generally stated, not described as systemic) were current realities, and that Floyd was murdered. (Note: This was long before Chauvin's murder conviction). However, only participants with more advanced WRID married those beliefs with an acknowledgment that racism is systemic and placed explicit value on *"Black Lives Matter"* or antiracism. Similarly, respondents across both WRID phases spoke of *privilege* and the *demonstrations* following Floyd's murder. However, less advanced participants tended to focus on their economic privilege (e.g., employment) and only they labeled the Minneapolis events as "riots" or "uprisings" (words that emphasize violence and property destruction, threats to their economic privilege), whereas more advanced participants focused on their White privilege and were equally likely as less advanced peers to use the terms "protest" and "unrest" (words that emphasize nonviolent demonstration or civil disobedience). *Parenting values* also differed across WRID phases. Less advanced participants valued providing information to children reactively following incidental exposure to racial stimuli in order to promote awareness, whereas more advanced participants valued proactive social justice-oriented parenting to educate and motivate. Participants across both WRID phases assigned *blame* for Floyd's

Table 2

Themes, Codes, and Quotes From Racially Responsive White Mothers in WRID Phase 1 Versus Phase 2 on How "Current Events" May Be Impacting Them/Their Families

Domain	Theme	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: Less advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 1 (n = 119, 30% of total sample)	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: More advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 2 (n = 65, 17% of total sample)
Whiteness Socialization Beliefs / Values	Racism	**Race and racism** "Racism events" *ID 56 (3 yo)* "Racial tension related news and events …" *ID 63 (9 yo)* "The death of Mr Flyod [sic] and racism" *ID 34 (5 yo)*	**Systemic racism and antiracism** "Murder of George Floyd and systemic racism" *ID 94 (7 yo)* "Civil unrest and violence stemming from the recent death of George Floyd and other black men. Somehow the struggle for societal justice seems to eclipse the COVID-19 pandemic as the more immediate and acute threat." *ID 61 (6 yo)* I have wanted to do more to support changes to end structural racism, but haven't wanted to risk going to protests. My mother is 78 years old, and my son has mild asthma. *ID 72 (10 yo)*
	Black Lives Matter	**Police brutality and murder** "Discussion of current events involving police brutality and protests" - *ID 37 (6 yo)* "I talked to CHILD (and my older child) about George Floyd's murder and the protests. Over the past week demonstrations against police brutality have become much more central and impactful than COVID-19." *ID 70 (4 yo)*	**Police brutality and murder + BLM** "George Floyd and the riots have created a more driven conversation on the topics of race, racism, white supremacy, BLM, LGBTQIA+, and police brutality in our household." – *ID 139 (6 yo)* "Discussing police brutality and black lives matter" *ID 148 (7 yo)*
	Privilege	**Economic privilege** "Our family has a lot of privilege and that has become very clear during the pandemic along with the recent protest events within the metro. I am home full time taking care of my children and another child of a friend. I'm here all day to help and provide them with food and activities. I understand it's not the same for every family out there. I work part time 10 hours a week and fit my work time in an hour an afternoon and over the weekend. Not every family has that kind of opportunity." *ID 114 (5 yo)* "We have been lucky that neither parent lost work and that our grocery stores have remained open, thought [sic] some food options are sporadically available - we as parents recognize this and try to pass that to the children." *ID 1 (8 yo)*	**White privilege** "We have had lots of discussions about race, white priveledge [sic], and protests. Obviously we keep the conversation at a level that she can understand." *ID 11 (3 yo)* "Currently, with the death of George Flyod [sic] and this upcoming shift in racism and such. I'm now working on how to talk to my kids regarding this and since we are white, how we can help support our family and friends of color and how we can better behave." *ID 52 (8 yo)*
	Demonstrations	**Riots and uprisings** "Race Riots" *ID 97 (6 yo)* "Our City being looted by rioters has been most on our minds." *ID 36 (10 yo)* "The violent riots are not American." *ID 140 (3 yo)*	**Protests** "We have talked about the Black Lives Matter protests at home. It has also come up at Daycare."*ID 30 (3 yo)* "We have do A LOT of talking about and participating in protesting as a family." *ID 46 (6 yo)*
	Parenting Values	**Awareness-oriented with reactive approach** "We have been trying to explain very little about the rioting that is going on in Minneapolis. We watch some of the Live news on tv and answer any questions he might have." *ID 155 (3 yo)* "This week George Floyd was killed in our community and unsafe protests are occuring at night. We are answering questions and talking with our kids, but we aren't watching any TV news. We read online news article and share relevant informaiton [sic] with our kids through discussions and watching online church and other things where they get bits of info and then we fill in additional information afterward." *ID 26 (6 yo)*	**Social-justice-oriented with (pro)active and responsive approach** "Since my son has been very small we've had conversations about how privileged we are and how others are not. About how there are doors open for us (and particularly for my white, middle class/affluent son) that are not open to others. The events of the past couple of weeks have increased those conversations in our family. We talk about how it is our responsibility to be aware of our privilege and not to assume that others will think and act like we do, because they might have very different life experiences." *ID 126 (10 yo)* "We live in a culturally diverse community and our family of friends is culturally diverse. Our elder child has had exposure to racism in standing up for friends and is active and involved in information around him. He asks questions and seeks to understand. As parents we feel it is our responsibility to educate the kids on inequalities around us and encouraging what we can do to learn, grow, and help stand up for The community around us. This goes for COVID

(*table continues*)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Domain	Theme	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: Less advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 1 (n = 119, 30% of total sample)	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: More advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 2 (n = 65, 17% of total sample)
			related concerns as well as Racism continuing to be unmasked in our community and what, as parents, we were raised in and actively try to learn and teach our children about." *ID 177 (4 yo)*
	Blame	**Bad choices and Bad people** "When the events around George Floyd were going on, we talked about how a police officer and George Floyd made some bad choices that resulted in consequences" *ID 67 (4 yo)* "We have mixed race family members and many friends from the black community and we want her to know that what that officer did was wrong and that just because there are bad cops, there are also many good cops." *ID 83 (4 yo)*	
Whiteness Socialization Attitudes	Focus	**Shift in focus from COVID-19 to Floyd murder (external)** "Current situation following George Floyd's murder has overpowered our focus on the pandemic." *ID 2 (8 yo)* "The death of George Floyd almost two weeks ago has definitely put things in perspective and sort of made us forget about COVID but has also raised my husband and I'd stress level as we live in Minneapolis and care deeply about our hurting city." *ID 127 (4 yo)*	**Self-reflection on social positionality (internal)** "Given the pandemic effects on daily life and realizing the scope of racial injustice that is becoming more apparent to this ignorant white girl, it's emphasized a gap I've had in parenting my children." *ID 123 (3 yo)* "race relations, George Floyd's murder, challenges of talking to your child about police that make poor decisions while also acknowledging that you have raised them to seek the polices help when scared, hurt, etc." *ID 105 (7 yo)*
	Time Orientation	**Present-oriented** "In the last week, we have used many screen/online resources to share and discuss the current events taking place in Minneapolis" *ID 62 (6 yo)* "I have also mentioned briefly in 4 year old language what is going on with racism in the world right now." *ID 45 (4 yo)*	**Future-oriented** "While COVID is a world pandemic the conversations and social impact of George's death is going to likely be what my children remember most about 2020 on." *ID 142 (3 yo)* "It sometimes feels difficult to remember that above this storm, blue skies still exist, but we're doing our best. While I am bracing myself for things to get worse before they get better, I am hopeful that all of this will give us the opportunity to take a look at the systems that have not been working and rebuild them with something that does." *ID 126 (10 yo)*
	Source of Stress	**Riots are stressful (external source)** "Riots in our neighborhood is extremely stressful" *ID 21 (2 yo)* "A lot of my answers in regards to being worried have nothing to do with Covid-19. More to do with the riots and hate Americans are perpetuating to everyone." *ID 185 (5 yo)*	**Family conversations about events are difficult (internal impact)** "It has been hard to explain the George Floyd incident to her and what was happening in Minneapolis, but we try to expose her to what is going on." *ID 83 (4 yo)* "We have had some difficult conversations and watched some things about systemic racism and George Floyd" *ID 53 (9 yo)*
	Exposure	**Developmentally appropriate yet tentative** "The events surrounding George Floyd are upsetting to us. We discuss some of the things going on in the world due to that horrible act but we try to do so without scaring the kids. With one child with severe anxiety (not CHILD), it can be tricky to know how much/how little to share with them. We want to them to be aware of what's happening because we want the world to be a better place for them." *ID 39 (9 yo)* "Protests, property destruction, and apparent white supremacists infiltrating our neighborhood has required great care in discussing. We live very near the heart of the protests." *ID 147 (3 yo)*	**Developmentally appropriate yet bold** "After George Floyd's murder, we watched a lot of news on the protests, police and the violence in Minneapolis. They had a lot of questions and we talked a lot about what was happening and why. We tried to make sure they felt safe, but also understood the reasons we were upset and people in our community were upset. We set aside specific time to talk about it." *ID 57 (10 yo)* "We have limited screen time related to George Floyd's murder, protesting and rioting but have watched it together and talked about it often" *ID 105 (7 yo)*
	Felt Impact	**Community/child impact** "We're following the recent protests-turned-rioting/looting over the murder of George Floyd and the community effects of food insecurity, home safety, school resources, etc." *ID 1 (8 yo)*	**Personal/family impact** "We as parents were very stressed for a week or two, kids seemed oblivious to helicopters and sirens but it's been stressful overall, I've been sleep deprived and deeply troubled, and extremely distracted. It's been difficult to be an

(*table continues*)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Domain	Theme	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: Less advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 1 (n = 119, 30% of total sample)	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: More advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 2 (n = 65, 17% of total sample)
		"CHILD has had a far more negative reaction to George Floyd's death - she had a nightmare someone was stepping on her neck. She hasn't related to COVID that strongly/specifically." *ID 106 (5 yo)*	emotionally present parent during this time, especially these past couple weeks." *ID 73 (3 yo)* "I feel like the current events surrounding George Floyd's murder and subsequent unrest in the twin cities has really affected my answers and mindset right now. *ID 33 (4 yo)*
	Dual Pandemic Coping	**Dual pandemic is overwhelming** "The riots/protests while covid 19 is happening is extremely insane." *ID 98 (2 yo)* "Between COVID-19 and the George Floyd protests, we are at capacity of our ability to manage emotions and take in and process information, especially the kids." *ID 158 (5 yo)*	**Grateful and managing during dual pandemic** "I think the #BLM movement is SO big right now - it is bigger than the pandemic, or at least it feels more important right now. I think it actually provides some hope for us because this is something we can do something positive about vs. staying at home trying not to get sick." *ID 148 (7 yo)* "I feel like we were in a pretty good groove with sheltering at home, distance learning, husband working at home. I think the George Floyd murder has put some stress and tension in our home. The adults are stressed and tired and I think the kids are starting to feel it as well." *ID 19 (4 yo)*
Whiteness Socialization Practices	Color-evasiveness and Power-evasiveness	**Power-evasive conversations** "We had to talk about the George Floyd situation" *ID 122 (9 yo)* "We have discussed reasons for curfews, and other issues related to the George Floyd uprisings" *ID 51 (8 yo)* "The rioting in Minneapolis and across the country has needed a fair amount of explanation." *ID 14 (7 yo)*	**Power-conscious conversations** "The racial justice revolution in response to the murder of George Floyd and countless other Black Americans is influencing our family's conversations and behavior much more than the pandemic is." *ID 50 (2 yo)* "We've been talking about racism and black lives matter and the protesting and riots in Minneapolis." *ID166 (7 yo)* "Lots of discussion about police and BLM" *ID 111 (10 yo)*
	Racial Socialization	**Egalitarianism** "When riots were occurring over George Floyd we talked a little bit about why people were upset (at a high level), why there were police trying to protect buildings and people, and to be kind to all people." *ID 54 (3 yo)* "We have talked about race and that God created everyone uniquely different and the same." *ID 66 (3 yo)*	**Unveiling culture of Whiteness to resist/change** "We used some online stories and Civil Rights videos on Youtube together as a family to talk about what happened to George Floyd and racism and white privilege in general" *ID 144 (5 yo)* "We discussed white privilege, racism, how is history is taught (and it's limitations) in context of Mr. Floyd's death" *ID 93 (6 yo)*
	Following News	**Following news obsessively** "I've had a problem with overconsumption of news since the pandemic and, more recently, the George Floyd murder." *ID 100 (4 yo)* "George Floyd and subsequent local activity. We had greatly reduced adult tv time from COVID onset until recently." *ID 64 (4 yo)*	**Following news purposefully** "We've discussed BLM, protests, riots, and related movements that have been covered in our news sources. The local protests/unrest in Minneapolis was both helpful and stressful to our family. Helpful in continuing to amplify black voices and avoid complacency with racial disparity but stressful in that our own personal lives experienced further disruption. It wasn't bad stress, per se, but stress nonetheless." *ID 79 (10 yo)* "They only watched news coverage sitting next to us so we could converse while we watched. We would never expect our children to navigate the pandemic and the fight for social justice without also allowing them to be able to feel comfortable asking any question they have a receive an immediate answer or conversation." *ID 46 (6 yo)*
	Parental Mediation	**Restrictive mediation or restrictive + active/instructive mediation** "We avoid watching any violent news stories as it affects CHILD as she is very sensitive. It's gives her nightmares and affects her sleep." *ID 180 (10 yo)* "My children have been exposed to George Floyd death and subsequent rioting. We have been avoiding media with them, but as they become aware have been discussing it with them" *ID 168 (5 yo)*	**Restrictive + active/instructive mediation** "We live in Minneapolis and are grieving the murder of George Floyd and talking with our child about the impact on our community. He is seeing things in real life (such as burned or boarded up buildings) - not on the media. We are turning to children's literature to support our family's processing." *ID 133 (3 yo)*

(*table continues*)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Domain	Theme	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: Less advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 1 (n = 119, 30% of total sample)	Codes and Illustrative Quotes: More advanced White racial identity development (WRID) Phase 2 (n = 65, 17% of total sample)
			"With the current unrest in the Twin Cities, we have talked a lot about that and had open conversations related to media coverage" *ID 22 (7 yo)*
	Community-Related Positioning	**Silent or help community** "Although we are in the suburbs, we are doing the best we can to help out the community affected by the rioting in the Twin Cities. I am trying to teach my son there are ways to safely help and the lessons we need to learn from this." *ID 7 (8 yo)*	**Participate in community** "We have been talking racial tensions in our area this last week and what we can do to be a good neighbor and friend." *ID 146 (10 yo)* "CHILD doesn't watch the news or you tube… however, we frequently have conversations with CHILD on the topic of COVID as well as have begun to discuss George Floyd (discrimination and race specifically as appropriate for a 5YO) and took CHILD to the memorial to see the impact and activism. We've choose to do this without screen time and rather make both conversations live." *ID 89 (5 yo)*
	Stage of Change	**Sparked first learning: new knowledge** "The political unrest has become a new topic that we are slowly tip toeing into." *ID 86 (5 yo)* "We normally never watch the news. Even during Covid. But with the Geaorge [sic] Floyd murder in our town this week we turned on the news and talked about it as a family. My 5 and 4 year old engaged. CHILD is only 2 so still doesn't really get it." *ID 176 (2 yo)*	**Awakening: awareness of systemic racism is provoking change** "With the protests and riots after George Floyd's murder, we talked about why we had a curfew, why people were protesting, why people were rioting, in what ways white supremacy and racism still show up in our society and in people." *ID 72 (10 yo)* "We have discussed race and the police force, peaceful versus violent protests, and how to peacefully advocate for change" *ID 71 (3 yo)*
Whiteness Socialization Emotion States	Universal	**Attentive, stressed, distracted** "We've talked about the protests, racism, and police problems related to the recent events." *ID 18 (5 yo)* "The George Floyd protests have caused me FAR!!!!!!! more anxiety and worry than anything related to Covid-19." *ID 112 (5 yo)* "I find myself feeling more distracted and have to be intentional about limiting screen time around the kids." *ID 100 (5 yo)*	
	Phase-Specific	**Overwhelmed, nervous/on edge, protective** "George Floyd's death and the Mpls riots have been very stressful and overwhelming." *ID 156 (12 yo)* "Between COVID-19 and the George Floyd protests, we are at capacity of our ability to manage emotions and take in and process information, especially the kids." *ID 158 (5 yo)* "These events have caused me to be more on edge and nervous." *ID 103 (2 yo)* "He's also seen us watching some news about the current unrest surrounding the death of George Floyd, and we've had to gently explain that some people are mad about how people aren't all treated fairly, and some are doing some destructive things in Minneapolis, but not near our house." *ID 15 (4 yo)*	**Sadness/grief/loss, passionate/frustrated/exhausted, concerned/worried, stretching/striving/hopeful** "Our family is feeling very frustrated and saddened by the death of George Floyd." *ID 55 (3 yo)* "George Floyd's death and subsequent rioting has been difficult to handle and navigate as a parent and concerned member of society" *ID 93 (6 yo)* "The murder of George Floyd has impacted the Twin Cities and the whole country. The seismic shift amongst white people is incredibly important and we hope the wave continues. While Covid has changed our daily ways of life, and will likely impact our lives for some time, the social impact of George Floyd's death was a long time coming. Hopefully this will have lasting change on our society far longer than Covid." *ID 178 (3 yo)*
Quantitative differences[a] (MANCOVAs, $ps < .05$)		*Lower multicultural acquisition* *Higher ethnic protection* *Less liberal* *No differences in income or education*	*Higher multicultural acquisition* *Lower ethnic protection* *More liberal* *No differences in income or education*

Note. All quotes are presented exactly as the participant typed them into the survey (except that "CHILD" is used in place of children's names for anonymity) and age of the participants' target child is listed after each quote. To avoid confirmation bias in coding, content coding for WRID phase was performed by one set of coders whereas thematic coding was done by a different set of coders. Domain names in the leftmost column are displayed vertically and in bold text for ease of viewing.

[a] See Results section for statistics supporting the significant quantitative differences reported.

murder or related events to bad people (e.g., "police," "White supremacists," "looters," "reprehensible president") and/or those people's bad choices. Of note, one participant with less advanced WRID placed equal blame on Floyd for his own murder ("We talked about how a police officer and George Floyd made some bad choices that resulted in consequences," ID67) whereas one more advanced participant discussed good choices ("helping their neighbors, peacefully marching, putting up signs," ID19).

Whiteness Socialization Attitudes

There were differences in *focus* and *time orientation* across WRID phases. Mothers with less advanced WRID had a more external focus and described a marked shift in that focus from one pandemic to the next—that is, from COVID-19 to Floyd's murder and related events. More advanced participants, on the other hand, had a more internal and future-oriented focus where they tended to reflect on their own social positionality and expressed hopelessness or hopefulness regarding the society's future outlook in light of these crises. For less advanced participants, the "riots" and family discussions about them beginning with Floyd's murder—often described in amorphous ways such as "things going on in the world due to that horrible act" (ID39)—were *stressful* and frightening. This stress included navigating fathers being activated by the National Guard to help quell the local unrest as one mother explained: "When her dada was activated . . . we told her he was going to military work to help keep us and others safe" (ID95). However, more advanced participants reported a noticeably wider array of stressors beyond the unrest itself (e.g., racism overall, murder, dual pandemic of racism + COVID-19), and the difficulty of their family conversations stemmed from cognitive and moral challenges of honestly explaining racism and White privilege. Participants in both WRID phases spoke about being sensitive to developmental appropriateness in *children's exposure* to information regarding Floyd's murder and subsequent outcry. However, less advanced participants were tentative in this exposure (e.g., "it can be tricky to know how much/how little to share with them": ID39, mother of a 9 year old) whereas more advanced participants of similarly aged children were bold and less worried about oversharing ("have watched it together and talked about it often": ID105, mother of a 7 year old). There was also a difference in the *felt impacts* of Floyd's murder and subsequent events: Less advanced participants only discussed depersonalized impacts external to themselves (i.e., on their communities and on their children) whereas more advanced participants tended to describe personal impacts on themselves and their whole families. Finally, less advanced mothers had a harder time *coping with the dual pandemics*—they were overwhelmed and at their limit whereas more advanced mothers described being "in a groove" and managing pandemic life with an attitude of gratitude.

Whiteness Socialization Practices

There were striking differences between WRID groups in participants' degree of conversational *power-evasiveness* and to a lesser extent *color-evasiveness*. Consistent with their beliefs/values explained above, less advanced participants tended to exclude or minimize the role of racism and White privilege in conversations with their children, instead favoring egalitarianism as a *racial socialization* strategy (e.g., no mentions of BLM; encouraging child to "be kind to all people": ID 54). The opposite was true for more advanced participants who used color- and power-conscious terms, including "BLM," to unveil the culture of Whiteness to their children and teach them how to create change.

Two themes pertained to managing media use around Floyd's murder and related community events. First, all participants regardless of WRID phase were *following news*. However, less advanced participants were completely consumed by the news coverage, giving a sense that they "couldn't look away," whereas more advanced participants did less passive or obsessive news consumption and more purposeful use of news coverage to promote antiracist learning and activities in their homes (e.g., "to amplify Black voices": ID79). Second, although active/instructive *parental mediation* (explaining media while coviewing) and restrictive mediation strategies (limiting media) were used by both groups of participants, only less advanced participants chose to use restrictive mediation on its own by limiting their children's media exposure to relevant news coverage. Participants' *community positioning* aligned with other trends in group differences: More advanced participants positioned themselves as community insiders using first-person pronouns (e.g., "racial tensions in our area": ID146) and described how they were participating in the community (e.g., family visit to Floyd's memorial: ID89), whereas less advanced respondents generally did neither. In fact, in one case, a less advanced participant who lived only 6 miles from the site of Floyd's murder adopted an outsider position of helper to the community rather than a participant in it ("Although we are in the suburbs, we are doing the best we can to help out the community affected by the rioting in the Twin Cities. I am trying to teach my son there are ways to safely help" ID7). Finally, Floyd's murder and related events were more likely to spark initial learning for the less advanced group, whereas only those in the more advanced group described an awakening that catalyzed *change* from mere awareness of racism toward antiracist action.

Whiteness Socialization Emotion States

Some *universal* emotion states included attentiveness (e.g., to the news), stress, and distraction. For *phase-specific* emotions, participants with less advanced WRID described

feeling overwhelmed (e.g., response to dual pandemic), nervous/on edge, and protective (e.g., corresponding to limiting child media exposure, avoiding conversation). Instead, more advanced participants felt grief and loss regarding Floyd's murder, along with passion, frustration, exhaustion, and concern at the ongoing injustices. Moreover, multiple more advanced participants were still striving despite feeling uncertain (e.g., "working on how to talk to my kids" ID52), and some expressed hope.

Quantitative Analyses

Differences Between Silent (53% of Full Sample) Versus Responsive (47%) Participants

A one-way MANCOVA using the full sample (n = 392) comparing racially silent versus responsive participants on demographics (income, education, political affiliation—exploratory), multiculturalism (multicultural acquisition, ethnic protection—Hypothesis 2), and psychological distress (Hypothesis 3) while controlling for age revealed a statistically significant omnibus difference, $F(6, 384) = 4.56$, $p < .001$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .93$, $\eta^2_p = .07$. Responsive participants had higher *multicultural acquisition* (Hypothesis 2: $M = 5.55$, $SD = .78$ vs. 5.33, .90, $p < .05$, Cohen's $d = .26$), were more *distressed* (Hypothesis 3: 3.43, 2.77 vs 2.48, 2.44, $p < .001$, $d = .36$), and more *politically liberal* (inverted scale: 2.16, 1.07 vs. 2.56, 1.11, $p < .01$, $d = .36$). There were no group differences in ethnic protection (2.62, .67 vs. 2.62, .66, $p = .91$), income (5.89, 2.13 vs. 5.78, 2.21, $p = .97$), or education (1.92, 1.12 vs. 2.08, 1.11, $p = .38$).

Differences Between Responders With Less Advanced (30% Full Sample) Versus More Advanced WRID (17%)

A one-way MANCOVA comparing responders in WRID Phase 1 versus Phase 2 (n = 184) on the same outcomes while controlling for age revealed a statistically significant omnibus difference, $F(6, 176) = 4.00$, $p < .01$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .88$, $\eta^2_p = .12$. As expected, more advanced participants had higher *multicultural acquisition (*Hypothesis 2: $M = 5.79$, $SD = .67$ vs. 5.43, .80, $p < .01$, $d = .49$) and lower *ethnic protection* (Hypothesis 2: 2.43, .60 vs. 2.72, .69, $p < .01$, $d = .45$), and were also more *politically liberal* (inverted scale: 1.74, .73 vs. 2.40, 1.15, $p < .001$, $d = .69$). However, contrary to expectations (Hypothesis 3), the distress of respondents did not differ across WRID phases (3.65, 2.90 vs. 3.32, 2.70, $p = .45$). There were no group differences in income (5.92, 2.15 vs. 5.87, 2.13, $p = .93$) or education (1.85, 1.12 vs. 1.99, 1.13, $p = .57$).

Differences in Distress Between Silent (53% Full Sample) Versus Responsive (47%) Participants

Using the full sample, psychological distress (PHQ-4) was regressed onto multiple variables in three steps confirming Hypothesis 4 (see online Supplement C). Responsiveness to Floyd's murder contributed unique variance to distress above and beyond COVID-19 and other factors ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .01$). Higher psychological distress was associated with lower income ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$, $B = -.13$) in Step 1, higher COVID-19 impact in Step 2 ($\beta = .50$, $p < .001$, $B = .20$), and racial responsiveness (vs. silence) in Step 3 ($\beta = .71$, $p < .01$, $B = .13$).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to unveil the Whiteness pandemic lurking behind the racism pandemic by examining Whiteness socialization in a large U.S. sample of White families in and around Minneapolis in the month following the murder of an unarmed Black resident, Mr. George Floyd, by a White policer officer on May 25, 2020. This mixed methods study achieved strong convergent validity across methods—after controlling for age, qualitatively derived White racial identity development (WRID) phase was significantly associated with quantitative scores on multicultural acquisition and ethnic protectiveness, but not income or education. Findings largely supported expectations with medium effect sizes for quantitative analyses, and demonstrated the interlocking facets of the p-model of culture applied to Whiteness (Causadias, 2020). Our complementary qualitative and quantitative findings aligned with Helms (1984, 2017) WRID theory in that participants who were racially silent (i.e., no mention of Floyd's murder or subsequent events in response to open-ended questions) were significantly less oriented toward multiculturalism, and among those who were racially responsive, those with less advanced WRID (Helms' Phase 1) had a significantly weaker orientation toward multiculturalism and a significantly more protective stance toward their racial/ethnic group relative to more advanced participants (Helms' Phase 2). Thematic analyses revealed many more differences than similarities between less advanced and more advanced parents in their Whiteness socialization beliefs/values, attitudes, practices, and emotions. A discussion of each major finding follows with implications and recommendations.

Beliefs and Values: Color- and Power-Evasiveness Versus Color- and Power-Consciousness

Our findings evidence the widespread presence of CBRI in White mothers despite the recent calls from researchers (e.g., Roberts & Rizzo, 2020) and also the general public (BLM: Buchanan et al., 2020; Parents magazine: Carter, 2020) to abandon this ideology and move toward active antiracist beliefs in parenting values. Specifically, the majority of our sample was either completely silent on race, Floyd, and community events subsequent to his murder (qualitative) with a significantly lower orientation toward multicultural (quantitative), or were racially responsive in ways that did not recognize the systemic nature of racism or

White privilege, mention BLM, or value proactive parenting to handle racial stimuli (qualitative). Moreover, these forms of parental evasiveness were not explained by child age: Color- and power-consciousness was evident in parents of younger and older children. This is certainly a frustrating and exhausting reality, primarily for the Black community that endures continued daily harm from overt (higher police use of force) and covert systemic racism (passive bystander behavior, negative health impact of discrimination), and, secondarily, for White mothers with more advanced WRID who observe these markers of lacking racial progress.

Although the Whiteness pandemic includes both passive and active transmission of CBRI, effective prevention or intervention must be active. Suggested strategies for dismantling CBRI start with racism and antiracism education. Courses on racism and diversity can be offered not just in college but also at younger ages to decrease racism across White students, who are the next generation of White parents (see Neville et al., 2013 for review). Such education targeting parents could be implemented by city-based community education programming or university-based research, intervention, or extension centers. Meaningful interracial interactions, including those fostered through BLM engagement, can also reduce CBRI in White individuals (see Neville et al., 2013), but future research is needed to uncover *what* it is about those interactions that increases racial awareness in White individuals. Relatedly, research needs to shift away from examining how people become *racist* to how people become *antiracist* (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). Our article examined factors related to White parents' WRID—future research efforts can uncover the exact *processes* by which such individuals progress toward more advanced WRID. It will be important to go beyond how White women learn to say the right things to also consider how they learn to do the right things and actually "show up" for racial justice (see Tropp & Uluğ, 2019 in Supplement A).

Attitudes: Less Effective Versus More Effective Coping Style

Racial injustice and social unrest are very troubling realities and so attentiveness, stress, and distractedness are quite appropriate emotional responses such as we saw across our sample. However, White mothers with less advanced WRID demonstrated a less effective coping style evidenced by higher stress and perceived threat, an external depersonalized present-oriented stance, and a nervous protective emotional state, possibly motivated by their greater desire for ethnic group protection. This contrasts with the more effective and agentic coping style of the more advanced group characterized by lower stress and higher positivity, and an internal personalized future-oriented stance, possibly motivated by their greater desire to embrace multiculturalism. It is particularly noteworthy that less advanced mothers, regardless of geography, viewed themselves as outsiders to the problem of police brutality and systemic racial oppression. This is indeed a critical part of the Whiteness pandemic—socializing children to view themselves as outsiders and their actions as disconnected from systemic oppression. Additionally, phase-specific emotions aligned closely with Spanierman and Cabrera (2014) summary of racist and antiracist emotions: less advanced mothers displayed racist emotions of White apathy and fear, whereas more advanced mothers displayed antiracist emotions of White empathy (e.g., sadness/grief) and autopathy (e.g., visiting the Floyd memorial to more fully experience the horror), moral outrage, and hope. Coping style differences across WRID phases are likely to be linked to more general stress and coping differences. Less advanced mothers may appraise race-related police murders and similar injustices as uncontrollable, whereas more advanced mothers are more likely to view them as controllable—caused by certain actors, including themselves, and changeable by certain actions in which they are motivated to participate (Rochford & Blocker, 1991). Less advanced mothers also showed more emotion-focused coping relative to their more advanced peers who showed more problem-focused coping, both of which are known to relate negatively and positively, respectively, with activism after a disaster (Rochford & Blocker, 1991). Mothers used a similar coping style with COVID-19 pandemic: Less advanced mothers were overwhelmed by it, whereas more advanced mothers capitalized on COVID-19 quarantine space and time to reflect and grow (e.g., "And I think the pandemic has provided space to realize that and make way for change": ID123, more advanced).

White individuals' stress can abound when discussing race. To work against the White fragility they might feel in these situations, it is essential for them to move beyond simplistic awareness of racism to a more *agentic stance* of action and *dismantling racist systems* (DiAngelo, 2018). White parents also need to resist defensiveness and complacency, be open to feedback, and focus on the impact of their parenting *actions*, *not just their intentions* (DiAngelo, 2018). Helms (2017) also recommends that psychologists—both researchers and practitioners in our view—should focus on self-exploration of Whiteness, not just race and racism, and self-diagnose their own racial identity schemas to better understand and approach their work.

Practices: Avoidant/Passive/Incidental Versus Approach/Active/Purposeful

Floyd's murder and subsequent events likely promoted racial dissonance for many White Americans. For those with less advanced WRID in our sample, this may have been the first major encounter that pierced through their shielded bubbles by hitting close to their physical homes (e.g., whirring helicopter blades, neighborhood fires). Supporting this interpretation, the farther away the unrest was from their homes, the more White parents could employ avoidance, passivity, and White silence

in their parenting (e.g., "We live far enough away from the community unrest that I have not yet explained this to my daughter": ID145). Additionally, less advanced parents were novices in considering racism—many reported acquiring first/new knowledge after Floyd's murder. They were likely reticent to include race-related information in socializing their children as they themselves had not yet digested it nor learned that speaking of race does make one racist and will not produce racial bias in children. Importantly, reticence can transform to complicity in systems of White supremacy in the absence of development of more advanced parental racial identity (Helms, 2017; Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). This contrasts with more advanced White parents for whom parental racial dissonance catalyzed growth in White racial identity development and change efforts—for some this meant advancing from Helms (2017) Phase 1 to Phase 2, meaning a transition from mere knowledge of racism to reckoning with its systemic nature and/or deciding to engage with antiracist actions in parental socialization efforts.

For White parents, engaging in color-conscious and power-conscious conversations is optional, or even discouraged by the Whiteness pandemic, so most choose not to do so, an attestation of their power and privilege (Underhill, 2019). Resisting the dominant practices of Whiteness will require researchers, educators, and parents to engage in difficult conversations and improve the racial-ethnic socialization of White children. Proactively engaging White individuals in discussions about racism could help them think more introspectively about the topic (e.g., understand their own privilege or complicity in racism) and perhaps prepare them for future difficult conversations around such topics as police brutality by raising their *racial stamina* (DiAngelo, 2018; Hall et al., 2016). Schooley et al. (2019) focus specifically on how research can advance in this area by considering more modern forms of racism and CBRI present in White individuals, something not captured by all measures used in the literature. Other scholars suggest that intervening at the family level could be advantageous—if parents are encouraged to teach their children about color-conscious ideology and receive scaffolding to do so effectively, they could themselves become less biased (Abaied & Perry, 2021). For example, Vittrup (2018) noted that parents can work to use more specific (vs. vague) language to communicate race-related information. These discussions have long been essential parenting in Black families, and while they may be new and awkward for White parents, they are equally essential to breaking patterns of racialized power structures and systemic harm.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study was limited in some ways that can guide future research. First, we purposefully captured a snapshot of Whiteness socialization immediately following Floyd's murder during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, future studies following race-related events not constrained by pandemic realities can employ longitudinal methodologies to assess the degree to which these socialization features are sustained/transform over time. This study focuses on mothers because very few fathers participated; however, mothers are often primary socializers around emotion and communication (Eisenberg et al., 1998). Additionally, future work should examine mothers' own interracial friendships based on their established importance in maternal racial socialization in previous work (see Pahlke et al., 2012) in Supplement A. Our sample included largely middle/upper income liberals because this is the specific demographic most impacted by the Whiteness pandemic in Minnesota and the United States generally; therefore, the results may not generalize to Whites from other socioeconomic status/political brackets. This study focused on racial silence and passivism, major features of the Whiteness pandemic; therefore, no explicit interrogation of race was done in qualitative open-ended questions. This was an asset rather than a liability and provides a complement to other studies explicitly focusing on racism and antiracism in samples of parents who self-identify as antiracist. However, oversampling self-identified antiracist parents may provide more power to detect small effects below .08.

Conclusion

Color-evasion and power-evasion—the central pathogens of the Whiteness pandemic—are inexorably transmitted within families. White parents serve as carriers to their children of this colorblind racial ideology unless they take active preventative measures rooted in antiracism and equity-promotion.

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