

STRADDLING THE FENCE: HOW WHITE FACEBOOK USERS EXPRESS
AMBIVALENCE TO NAVIGATE THE CONTEXT COLLAPSE

By

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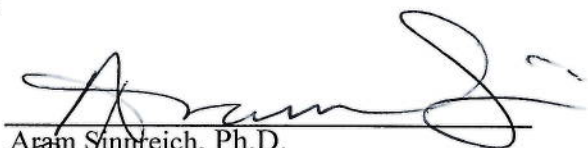
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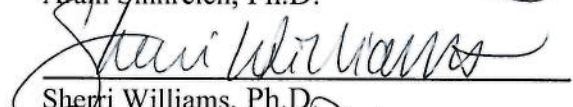
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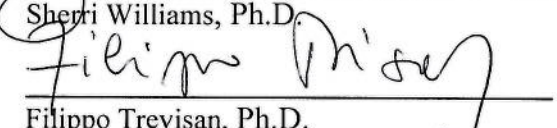
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Dedication

To my family, fiancée, friends, and Nipsey Hussle

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Donte Newman

ABSTRACT

The disregard for black life evidenced through police violence is a social problem that dates back to the formation of law enforcement and continues to this day (Adams, 2016; Davis, 2017). In light of a string of recent high-profile shootings, police brutality against black people has emerged as a contentious topic in national dialogue. And many of these conversations are taking place within Facebook, which has emerged as an online platform for race-related public discourse, among other pressing subjects. However, as with all communication media, the technological architecture of Facebook may play a role in shaping how users have conversations about racially motivated police shootings. Specifically, the collapsing of social networks on Facebook may present impression management challenges for users in general but for white users in particular when it comes to events like these.

Data for this study were derived from a content analysis of 4,353 comments by both white and black Facebook users in response to the Philando Castile incident. The findings suggest that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to employ ambivalence to appease multiple audiences in their collapsed social network. Additionally, based on the white racial frames and semantic moves that emerge, I argue that ambivalence may be an impression management tactic that enables Facebook users to avert accusations of racism by expressing support for Philando Castile (i.e., moral claims) while upholding structural whiteness by supporting officer Jeronimo Yanez (i.e., normative claims).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MC	Moral Claim
NC	Normative Claim

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Hannah

It is very sad, and I don't condone what the police did, but let's not forget what police are facing today with BLM causing blacks to assassinate men/woman in uniform. ..Police are being killed in vast numbers because of it. If a police officer pulls you over and ask for your ID and you tell him you have a carry permit and gun, do so with your hands in the air until the police has your weapon in his control....then proceed as directed by police.

The above statement is an example of how white Facebook users express ambivalence. In Hannah's comment, she first indirectly conveys sympathy for Philando Castile—a black victim of police violence—by stating “It is very sad, and I don’t condone what the police did.” Then, Hannah’s sympathy for Castile dissipates as she legitimates his death because “Police are being killed in vast numbers.” Previous scholarship explores how ambivalence emerges in white Americans’ discourse when commenting on race-related incidents (Foster, 2006, 2013; Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Despite social media platforms continuing to permeate society and serve as tools for political expression, not much scholarship has theorized about why white Americans draw on this form of racial discourse in the contemporary media environment. On that note, ambivalence in the digital media age is the focus of this study: How does the technological infrastructure of social media platforms like Facebook help to engender ambivalence? What purpose does ambivalence serve the white Facebook users who draw on this discourse? Are white Facebook users more likely than black Facebook users to convey ambivalence? What dominant racial frames and semantic moves emerge in ambivalent discourses? This dissertation examines (1) whether white Facebook users are more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence; (2) the white racial frames that emerge in ambivalent discourses and how they

differ across stages of the Philando Castile incident; and (3) the semantic moves in the ambivalent discourses.

Problem Statement

Philando Castile was fatally shot by police officer Jeronimo Yanez on July 6, 2016, during a traffic stop in Falcon Heights, Minnesota (Ali, 2017). The aftermath of the police shooting was live-streamed on Facebook by Castile's girlfriend Diamond Reynolds. As reported by Reynolds, law enforcement officer Yanez instructed Castile to retrieve his license and registration (Croft, 2017). While reaching for his identification card, Castile informed officer Yanez that he had a gun on his person and was licensed to carry a firearm. Reynolds reported that Castile was fatally shot by police officer Yanez while obtaining his identification card. The shooting of Philando Castile went viral and sparked nationwide protests against police brutality (Croft, 2017). On November 16, 2016, officer Yanez was indicted for second-degree manslaughter (Olson, 2017). Yanez' indictment sparked outrage among law enforcement supporters who believed the shooting was justified. Seven months later in July 2017, officer Yanez was acquitted of fatally shooting Castile (Herreria, 2017). Similar to the police shooting, the acquittal of officer Yanez prompted national demonstrations against police brutality and racial injustice (Kennedy, 2017). The Castile shooting is emblematic of a pattern of recent incidents involving race-related killings by police.

Black people are three times more likely than whites to be victims of police killings (Mapping Police Violence, 2017). And this disparity is consistent even when black people are unarmed. African Americans are twice as likely as whites to be victims of police killings while being unarmed (Vittana, 2017). Recent high-profile police killings demonstrate that black victims are often unarmed. On July 7, 2014, in Staten Island, New York, unarmed Eric Garner cried "I can't breathe" while being choked to death by police officer Daniel Pantaleo. Officer

Pantaleo was not indicted in the killing of Garner (Voorhees, 2014). On August 9, 2014, in Ferguson, Missouri, unarmed, eighteen-year-old Michael Brown was gunned down by law enforcement officer Daren Wilson. Officer Wilson was not indicted in the killing of Brown. (Halpern, 2015). On November 22, 2014, in Cleveland, Ohio, unarmed, twelve-year-old Tamir Rice was fatally shot by police officer Timothy Loehmann. Officer Loehmann was not indicted in the killing of Rice (Williams & Smith, 2015). These high-profile police killings of black people and non-indictments of police officers have elicited polarized reactions.

In one corner, people express support for black victims of police killings. Support for black victims of police violence help to give rise to the Black Lives Matter movement (BLMM), which centers largely on the eradication of police brutality against black people (Newman, 2015). The BLMM introduced the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag to stimulate a national dialogue around racialized police violence (Newman, 2015). While many supporters of black victims are not members of a chapter, the BLMM has been instrumental in sparking people to condemn police killings. Although black victims of police brutality receive much support, not everyone supports them. In the other corner, people express support for police officers.

Support for law enforcement help to give rise to the counter-hashtag Blue Lives Matter, which centers largely on defending officers following on-duty shootings of black people (Guha, 2017) as well as expressing support for cops who die in the line of duty (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016). The Blue Lives Matter hashtag serves as a counter-narrative to #BlackLivesMatter (Carney, 2016), and has been pivotal in stimulating a national discussion about the value of police officers. The dichotomy between expressing support for black victims and expressing support for law enforcement has polarized Americans (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). And these conflicting responses to police shootings of black people and non-indictments of police officers

are increasingly expressed on social media in general but Facebook in particular (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016).

Facebook is a social networking site that was created in 2004 for Harvard students. It later expanded to include any student with a university issued email address and eventually opened up to the general public (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Facebook is the most prevalent social media platform in the U.S. In 2018, the total number of American Facebook users exceeded 214 million (Statista, 2018). While Facebook was premised on the idea of connecting and sharing content with offline friends in a virtual environment, it has emerged as an online destination for reading news and discussing social issues (Laudone, 2012; Kim, Hsu, & Zuniga, 2013). A recent Pew study reports that 66% of U.S. adults use Facebook and around 45% get political news while on the site (Shearer & Gottfried, 2017). And Facebook users generally like, share, and discuss news stories with their online network (Mitchell, et al., 2013). These revelations have led scholars to regard Facebook as the online manifestation of Habermas' concept of the public sphere, which refers to a setting wherein people can gather to discuss social issues and form public opinion (Robertson, Vatrappu, & Medina, 2010). Police brutality against black people is one of many social issues that is discussed on Facebook. However, the technological architecture of Facebook may shape how users in general but white users in particular discuss police killings of black people.

In Facebook, different social relations with different beliefs and expectations are collapsed into a single network (Vitak, 2012). This context collapse may occur because Facebook encourages its users to populate their "friends" network by adding or accepting friends, family members, co-workers, acquaintances, professional ties, and loved ones (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Through its "People You May Know" suggestions, Facebook further encourages adding new "friends" based on connections with pre-existing friends (Facebook, 2018). One

benefit of Facebook is that it enables users to simultaneously stay connected with many different social relations (Caers et al., 2013). However, the integration of conflicting social relations with conflicting beliefs and expectations may complicate how white Facebook users respond to police shootings of black people and non-indictments of police officers.

For instance, one set of social relations may expect white Facebook users to express support for black victims of police violence. Support for black victims makes a moral claim. Here's an example of a moral claim: "Philando Castile was innocent. He didn't deserve to die. Sending my condolences to his family and loved ones." The expectation or motivation to express moral claims may stem from several social and individual factors. At the social level, white Facebook users may be socially expected to show human sympathy for a black man shot and killed by police officers because morally it may be the right thing to do. At the individual level, expressing moral claims may help to convey a non-racist identity.

In contrast, another set of social relations may expect white Facebook users to express support for law enforcement. Support for police officers makes a normative claim. Here's an example of a normative claim: "I support law enforcement. Officer Jeronimo Yanez is innocent. Policemen have a tough job. Philando should have obeyed his orders." Facebook users may be expected or motivated to communicate normative claims at multiple levels. At the social level, white Facebook users may be socially expected to convey normative claims because it helps to protect a system that was created by and for white people (Davis, 2017). At the individual level, conveying normative claims can help to preserve white privilege that is afforded through oppressive social structures (Foster, 2006).

Choosing which claim to convey to an overlapping audience may engender cognitive dissonance in white Facebook users. Because the state of cognitive dissonance is intolerable (Festinger, 1957), white Facebook users may be motivated to reduce the psychological

discomfort stemming from the context collapse. One avenue white Facebook users can take to minimize cognitive dissonance is to produce ambivalence. Ambivalence refers to discourses that encompass both moral and normative claims. Moral claims support black victims of police violence, whereas normative claims support law enforcement. In using moral and normative claims, the communication of ambivalence may enable Facebook users to reduce cognitive dissonance by simultaneously appealing to conflicting social relations with conflicting beliefs and expectations.

While ambivalence may help to minimize psychological tension, I investigate whether ambivalence is an impression management strategy deployed by white Facebook users to convey a non-racist identity (through moral claims) while simultaneously upholding structural whiteness (through normative claims). I additionally examine how do white racial frames (i.e., ideas that perpetuate racial privilege and inequality) and semantic moves (i.e., vacillating between moral and normative claims) expose ambivalence as a self-presentational strategy to project a racially unprejudiced public image while concurrently protecting institutional whiteness. Using the Philando Castile incident, and black Facebook users as a control group, this dissertation explores the dominant frames and discursive semantic moves that emerge in ambivalent discourses of Facebook users.

Background and Context

Philando Castile was an elementary nutrition services assistant at J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School in St. Paul, Minnesota (Garcia, 2016). He was known for financially helping students with their lunch payments as well as giving students extra snacks and high fives (Haag, 2018; Tuakli, 2017). Students at J.J. Hill often referred to Philando as Mr. Phil (Haag, 2018). In his community, Mr. Castile had encounters not only with students but also local law enforcement. Over the course of 13 years, Castile was pulled over by St. Paul police officers

nearly 50 times (LaFraniere & Smith, 2016). He was frequently pulled over for minor traffic violations such as failing to wear a seatbelt and speeding (Massie, 2016). Castile was also repeatedly fined for driving with a suspended license. At one point, he paid up to \$1200 in fines (LaFraniere & Smith, 2016). Although Castile had been pulled over by St. Paul Police Department nearly once every three months over the course of 13 years, no records show that he was uncooperative or unfriendly with police officers (LaFraniere & Smith, 2016). The last time Philando Castile would be pulled over was summer 2016.

On July 6, 2016, Philando Castile was pulled over by police officers Jeronimo Yanez and Joseph Kauser for resembling a robbery suspect (Massie, 2016). Officer Yanez mistook Castile as a robbery suspect because of his “wide-set nose” (Schuppe, 2016, para. 2). The traffic stop occurred in Falcon Heights, which is a predominately white suburb of St. Paul, Minnesota (Alexander, 2016). Castile’s girlfriend Diamond Reynolds was riding passenger while his 4-year-old daughter was in the backseat. A police dashboard video of the traffic stop shows it was officer Jeronimo Yanez who approached Philando Castile (Croft, 2017). At the driver’s window, officer Yanez asks Castile for his license and proof of insurance. While retrieving his license and insurance, Castile informs officer Yanez that he is carrying a licensed firearm. Officer Yanez responds “Don’t reach for it then ... Don’t pull it out.” Castile responds, “I’m not pulling it out.” Reynolds tries to affirm officer Yanez by responding “He’s not [pulling out his gun].” Yanez responds, “Don’t pull it out.” Suddenly Yanez pulls out his firearm and fires seven shots. Castile was shot 5 times (Croft, 2017).

The police dashboard video was released a year following Diamond Reynold’s Facebook Live video of the aftermath of the police shooting. The dash cam video affirmed Reynold’s narrative of the fatal police encounter (Hughes, 2017). In 2016, Reynold’s live-stream of the incident went viral and made the Philando Castile shooting a national story, which prompted

nationwide protest against police brutality. In Minnesota, hundreds of people marched, sang, chanted, and created signs with Castile's name (MPR News, 2017). On July 8, 2016, two days after the shooting, protestors were met by more than 200 police officers in riot gear (Gottfried et al., 2016). After allegedly being hit with projectiles by demonstrators, police officers used smoke grenades, blast balls, chemical irritants, and pepper spray to disperse large crowds (Gottfried et al., 2016). Over 50 protestors were arrested for assembling unlawfully. Protestors continued fighting for racial justice weeks after the death of Philando Castile. Supporters created a "Justice For Philando Castile" Facebook page to keep people abreast of the incident (Facebook, 2018b). While many people supported Castile, officer Yanez also received much support. For example, a state representative from Minnesota and two others posted photos on Facebook wearing t-shirts that read "Police Deserve Due Process," "Justice for Jeronimo," and "Stop the Rush to Judgement" (CBS Minnesota, 2016 para. 2-3). Four months after killing Castile, officer Yanez became the first Minnesota police officer to face charges for an on-duty shooting in over a decade (Berman, 2017).

Ramsey County Prosecutor John Choi indicted police officer Jeronimo Yanez with second-degree manslaughter (Ortiz, 2016). Second-degree manslaughter "carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, a \$20,000 fine, or both" (Olson, 2017, para. 6). Officer Yanez was also charged with two counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm for putting at risk the lives of Diamond Reynolds and her four-year-old daughter who were present when the shooting occurred. Each count "carries a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both" (Olson, 2017, para. 6). Officer Yanez hired three lawyers and pleaded not guilty to these charges (Xiong, 2016).

Yanez recruited attorneys Earl Gray, Thomas Kelly, and Paul Engh to help fight his high-profile case. Ramsey County Chief Judge John Guthmann assigned the case to Judge Edward

Wilson, a black man who is the second rank senior of Ramsey county (Xiong, 2016). Chief Judge Guthmann said in a statement that race was not a factor in selecting a judge, but availability was a factor (Xiong, 2016). Yanez's defense came under scrutiny before the start of the trial. Yanez's attorneys filed a motion to remove Judge Edward Wilson from presiding over the trial (Xiong, 2016). Yanez's defense motioned to remove Judge Wilson by citing "a rule of Minnesota criminal procedure that allows defense or prosecuting attorneys to ask for the removal of one assigned judge per case without citing a reason" (Xiong, 2016, para. 2). Yanez's attorney Earl Gray said in a statement that removing Judge Wilson "was necessary for Yanez to get a fair trial" (Mullen, 2016, para. 3). Gray did not explain why Judge Wilson couldn't give Yanez a fair trial. Following the removal of Judge Wilson, Judge William Leary, who is white, was appointed to preside over the trial (Mullen, 2016). The prosecutors did not challenge this motion because "each side can file to remove one judge from a case, and the request is automatically granted" (Mullen, 2016, para. 2). The trial by jury began in March 2017.

The initial pool of 50 jurors were reduced to 12. The 12 jurors consisted of a young black man, young, foreign-born Ethiopian American, older white woman, 5 middle-aged white men, 2 middle aged-white women, older white man, and a racial unidentifiable juror (StarTribune, 2017a). The prosecution had three main arguments in their case. First, they argued that officer "Yanez was nervous, failed to follow training and panicked after Castile volunteered that he had a gun" (StarTribune, 2017b, para. 2). Second, they argued that "Castile was reaching for his wallet, not his gun. Yanez couldn't have seen the gun because it was in his pocket" (ibid). Third, they argued that "Yanez used unreasonable force by firing seven shots into the car" (ibid).

The defense also presented three main arguments in their case. First, they argued that officer "Yanez acted reasonably after seeing a gun and believing his life was in danger" (StarTribune, 2017b, para. 3). Second, they argued that "Castile was under the influence of

marijuana and failed to follow Yanez's instructions" (ibid). Third, they argued that "Castile's girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, gave inconsistent statements and tried to shield Castile from culpability for 6 grams of marijuana in the car" (ibid). After five days of deliberation, in a unanimous decision, the jury found police officer Jeronimo Yanez not guilty of one count of second-degree manslaughter and two counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm (Ellis & Kirkos, 2017).

The acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez prompted nationwide demonstrations against police brutality. In Minnesota, hundreds of Castile supporters gathered on highways and chanted "no justice, no peace, prosecute the police," "Hands up, don't shoot," and "Yanez, guilty" (Herreria, 2017, para. 7; Kennedy, 2017). And some demonstrators held signs that read "Justice is dead" (Smith, Otarola, & Sawyer, 2017, para. 3). Protestors also engaged in digital activism by using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter on Facebook and Twitter. Castile's family responded to the verdict with disappointment. Valerie Castile, Castile's mother, expressed that she was "mad as hell" and later stated that the "system continues to fail all black people" (Georgantopoulos, 2017, para. 9). Diamond Reynolds said in a statement that "It's a sad state of affairs when this type of criminal conduct is condoned simply because Yanez is a policeman" (Shapiro & Jacobo, 2017, para. 8). Clarence Castile, Philando Castile's uncle, said Yanez "should be in jail" and that Yanez is "like a fish that wiggled his way off a hook" (Forliti, 2017, para. 10). Officer Yanez also received support following the acquittal. For example, Yanez' family received donations from non-profit organizations to help them transition after the trial. Supporters also used the hashtag #BlueLivesMatter on Facebook and Twitter to express support for officer Yanez. While Yanez was found not guilty in the killing of Philando Castile, he was fired by the St. Anthony Police Department (Forliti, 2017).

The City of St. Anthony said in a report that the “public will be best served if Officer Yanez is no longer a police officer in our city” (Shapiro & Jacobo, 2017, para. 3). Officer Yanez received a \$48,500 lump sum buyout as part of the separation agreement (Forliti, 2017). Yanez wasn’t the only one to receive money following the acquittal. The city awarded Castile’s mother \$3 million dollars in a wrongful death lawsuit (Forliti, 2017), and Diamond Reynolds received \$800,000 for false arrest and emotional distress (Allen, 2017). Nearly two years after the shooting, in honor of Castile’s legacy, a charity named Philando Feeds the Children paid the lunch debt of every student in St. Paul Public Schools (Haag, 2018).

Rationale for Philando Castile Case Study

There are several reasons why the Philando Castile case was chosen to explore how Facebook users’ express ambivalence to multiple audiences. First, the aftermath of the police shooting was live-streamed on Facebook where conflicting social relations are collapsed into a single network (Hughes, 2017; Vitak, 2012). As Haimson and Tang (2017) note, “Live streaming is an important resource for sharing information during political, breaking news, and crises events, and can be a means for civic engagement” (p. 50). Reynolds used her camera phone to Facebook Live the aftermath of the shooting to produce her own narrative. Anden-Papadopoulos (2014) refers to this phenomenon as “citizen camera-witnessing,” which describes how citizens record instances of social injustices to foster solidarity. One of the motivations to live stream is that imagery of social oppression enables others to witness an event, which can have an impact on audience sensibilities and how they respond. Introduced in 2015, Facebook Live enables you to “Broadcast to the largest audience in the world with the camera in your pocket” (Facebook, 2018b, para. 1). The allure of Facebook Live is that it allows streamers to connect and interact with viewers in real time. Viewers can interact with streamers by posting comments and

reactions to live video streams that could last up to four hours. Reynold's live-stream of the fatal police encounter may have compelled Facebook users to respond to the shooting.

Second, the Castile shooting was a national news story that generated polarizing social media discussions (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016). For example, some social media users may have expressed support for Philando Castile using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, whereas others may have expressed support for officer Jeronimo Yanez using the hashtag #BlueLivesMatter.

Third, officer Yanez is one of few law enforcement officials to be indicted for shooting and killing a black person (Park, 2018). The indictment rate for officer-involved killings is less than 1% (Vittana, 2017). This is important because it provides researchers with an opportunity to explore ambivalent responses to an indictment of a police officer as well as the verdict of the trial.

Aims and Rationale

This dissertation aims to answer whether white Facebook users are more likely than their black counterparts to communicate ambivalence in response to the Philando Castile incident. It aims to examine how dominate frames and semantic moves may help to expose ambivalence as a form of impression management. But why might ambivalence be more likely to emerge in the discourses of white Facebook users? This study theorizes that conveying ambivalence in response to racial matters may be prompted by the context collapse on Facebook, which causes white users to adjust their speech as a part of an impression management strategy to project a non-racist identity while simultaneously maintaining structural whiteness.

Ambivalent responses to race-related incidents may have significant sociopolitical implications. Ambivalence may create a sociopolitical environment wherein racially motivated police brutality is not regarded as a pressing social issue. For instance, ambivalence about police killings may not prompt politicians to include police reform as a platform issue. Politicians tend

to be advocates for issues that are championed by the public. Second, ambivalence may not prompt local police departments to implement serious trainings and educational programs to inform officers of both explicit and implicit racial biases, which may help to improve community-police relations. It is important to examine ambivalence because it can influence the sociopolitical climate. This study examines white Facebook users in particular for several reasons.

First, white people are more polarized about police killings of black people than any other racial group (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). Using the Black Lives Matter movement as a proxy for support for black victims of police violence, a recent Pew study reports that 14% of white people strongly support and 26% somewhat support the BLM movement (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). This study also finds that 11% of white people strongly oppose and 17% somewhat oppose the BLM movement. White support for Black Lives Matter varies based on partisan orientation. White democrats are more likely to support the Black Lives Matter movement than their republican counterpart (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). These findings suggest that white people are divided in their support or opposition to black victims of police violence. But why examine ambivalence from white Facebook users in particular?

Second, white people use Facebook more than any other social media platform (Smith & Anderson, 2018). A recent Pew internet study conducted by Smith and Anderson (2018) reports that 67% of white people use Facebook, 32% use Instagram, 26% use LinkedIn, and 24% use Twitter. Furthermore, Facebook has emerged as an online forum for reading and discussing social issues. Shearer and Gottfried (2017) found that 65% of white Facebook users get news on the site, and users tend to share, like, comment, and discuss news stories with friends on Facebook (Mitchell, et al., 2013). These findings make Facebook a suitable avenue to explore how white users express ambivalence in response to police killings of black people. Using

ambivalence as response to police violence may be prompted by conflicting social groups in white Facebook users' networks. As noted, white people have polarized into two conflicting groups in response to police brutality (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). White Facebook users may have a set of social relations that expect them to express support for black victims of police violence, and another set of social relations that expect them to express support for law enforcement. Ambivalence may help white Facebook users simultaneously satisfy these competing expectations from divergent groups.

In addition to social factors, individual factors may also play a role. Research from psychology suggests that white Americans experience anxiety when talking about racial issues. This anxiety stems from the likelihood of being perceived as racist when discussing race-related matters. And this anxiety may cause white Americans to self-regulate their behavior to prevent being perceived as racist (Richeson & Trawalter, 2005). Being regarded as racist is viewed as a character flaw for many white Americans. One way white Facebook users can express racism while circumventing accusations of racism is through ambivalence. But, how might white ambivalence influence the sociopolitical environment? Why is it important to study how white people express ambivalence in response to racial injustice?

Third, white people have the institutional power to help eradicate police violence against black people. As a result of exclusion, genocide, slavery, and plunder, white people disproportionately hold social, political, and judicial positions of power (Omi & Winant, 2015). White people account for 73% of local law enforcement (Reaves, 2015), 95% of elected prosecutors (Davis, 2017), and overrepresented as judges (Torres-Spelliscy et al., 2010) as well as elected political officials (Lardieri, 2017). White people have the social, judicial, and political power to help either eradicate or perpetuate racism in policing to the extent that it is addressable through hiring, policy, and enforcement. It is important to examine ambivalence about racially

motivated police shootings because historically discourse has been intertwined with structural racism (Myers, 2005). It also important to examine ambivalence because white people are uniquely needed in the struggle of uprooting systemic racism in the culture of policing. Eradicating police violence against black people may require white out-group solidarity.

While black people are disproportionately targeted by police violence, and rightfully leading the crusade in implementing police reform, white out-group solidarity may signal to society that unjustifiable police shootings will not be tolerated. White out-group solidarity, then, requires whites to refrain from employing ambivalence as a response to police killings. White out-group solidarity demands whites to support black victims of police brutality. Social change, historically, has always been accomplished by whites working in unison with blacks to dismantle institutional racial oppression (Wise, 2008). Discourse is one social instrument whites can use to advocate structural changes in policing.

Race and Technology

The complex intersection of race and technology is a burgeoning area of scholarship. In the nascent stages of the Internet, scholars theorized that the anonymous nature of many online environments “would mean an escape from the boundaries of race and the experience of racism” (Daniels, 2012, p. 695). Racial disembodiment in text-only online social environments helped to inform this thinking. In the contemporary digital environment, despite the digital divide, race is an important feature of the Internet. And scholars note that “race and racism persist online in ways that are both new and unique to the internet, alongside vestiges of centuries-old forms that reverberate significantly both offline and on” (Daniels, 2012, p. 695). Many scholars have conducted studies at the intricate nexus between race and technology.

Daniels (2009) explore how white supremacy online is manifested in several ways including cloaked websites that ostensibly appear devoted to civil rights while propagating racist

propaganda. Pitcan et al. (2018) examine how underprivileged, young adults of color self-regulate their online behavior by complying with ideological and behavioral norms of respectability politics. Noble (2018a) investigates how search engines help to reproduce racism and sexism and further marginalized historically oppressed groups. Brock (2009) examines how the Internet has provided blacks with a new space to discuss racial and cultural issues from heterogeneous perspectives. Maragh (2017) explores how black Twitter users convey racial authenticity in their discourses as an online identity performance. Byrne (2008) note that black people utilize social media platforms to engage in intra-racial social interaction to validate their racial identities and to discuss experiential realities. Tyne and Markoe (2010) investigate how differing levels of color-blind attitudes impact the ways in which white or black Facebook users would respond to racial theme parties. Freelon et al. (2016) explores the use of the #blacklivesmatter hashtag on twitter following police shootings of black people and non-indictments of police officers. Those are but a few studies that contribute to their area of discourse, race, and technology.

This dissertation builds on preexisting race and technology scholarship. In thinking about how race is imbricated in technology, Tynes, Schuschke, and Noble (2016) note that “Theorizing about race online expands our understanding of racial representations, of how race is performed and modeled, and of the pedagogical function of digital tools and platforms” (p. 23). This study examines how race is discursively performed and managed by examining the discourses of both white and black Facebook users in response to the Philando Castile incident. It theorizes how the technological infrastructure of Facebook may shape the digital mediated discourses of white Facebook users. In so doing, not only does this study contribute to research covering race and technology but also other fields.

Contributions

This dissertation contributes to existing literature in the fields of communication, social psychology, critical whiteness studies, and sociology. First, this study draws on communication literature by theorizing Facebook and online identity construction. While previous studies have explored identity construction on Facebook (Georgalou, 2017; Ridout, Campbell, & Ellis, 2012; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008), this study contributes to communication studies by exploring how Facebook's affordances, policies, and architectural structure may influence the ways in which white or black users discursively construct their identities when discussing police killings. Second, this study draws on social psychology by exploring cognitive dissonance, ambivalence, and impression management. This dissertation contributes to existing literature in social psychology by integrating these distinct concepts into a theoretical framework that seeks to explain why and how Facebook users produce contradictory discourses in response to racially motivated police shootings. Third, this dissertation contributes to scholarship in critical whiteness studies by making whiteness visible in the context of killings by police, whereas previous studies have focused on how whiteness permeates discourses regarding residential segregation, affirmative action, and interracial relationships (Foster, 2006). Furthermore, this study draws on literature in sociology by integrating structuration theory in the theoretical framework. This project contributes to sociology by exploring how white Facebook users may work as agents of law enforcement to help legitimize and reproduce structural whiteness.

Project Overview

In this Chapter, I have presented a broad overview of this project including its aims and rationales. In Chapter Two, I provide the foundations for examining whiteness, ambivalence, cognitive dissonance, impression management, critical race theory, Facebook, and framing. In Chapter Three, I present the data and rationales behind the method and methodological

approaches of this study. In Chapter Four, I present evidence on whether white Facebook users were more likely to express ambivalence than black Facebook users. In Chapter Five, I present how Facebook users employed white racial frames in their ambivalent discourses. In Chapter Six, I investigate the semantic moves Facebook users employ in their ambivalent discourses. Finally, in Chapter Seven, I conclude by discussing the importance of examining race and ambivalence in the age of social media, limitations of the project, and implications for future studies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate whether white Facebook users are more likely to express ambivalence than black Facebook users in response to the Philando Castile shooting, trial, and acquittal. Additionally, I examine how the frames and semantic moves that emerge in comments help to render ambivalence as an impression management strategy. I also explore how white racial frames differ across stages of the Philando Castile incident. In light of these aims, a robust theoretical framework is needed. I begin by theorizing whiteness. Second, I discuss colorblindness as the dominant ideology of whiteness and the white racial frame. Third, I discuss cognitive dissonance as an intolerable psychological state. Fourth, I discuss ambivalence as a discursive tool employed by white Americans as an impression management strategy. Fifth, I write about how the values and expectations of audiences may drive impression management tactics. Sixth, I provide an overview of identity construction on Facebook. Seventh, I discuss context collapse on Facebook and its implications. Eighth, I discuss how white dominance can be reinforced by drawing on the white racial frame. Ninth, I write about Critical Race Theory. Finally, I provide a conceptual framework that binds these theories together in the context of this study.

Theorizing Whiteness

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) emerged as an academic field of study in the 1990s (Doane, 2003). CWS differs from other paradigms because it focuses exclusively on the role white people play in helping to perpetuate racism while benefiting from racial dominance (Applebaum, 2016). Put another way, the difference between CWS and other paradigms is that it centers “whiteness” as a location for scholarly exploration. It is unconventional in that it draws attention to not only how whiteness affects racial minorities but also how it confers advantages.

For that reason, CWS is a departure from the status quo of positioning only racial minorities as areas of investigation while the perpetrators of racism remain invisible (Doane, 2003). CWS aims to disrupt the hegemony of whiteness by making it visible (Andersen, 2003). But, what is whiteness?

This section of the literature review will develop a theoretical framework of whiteness. To understand the scope of whiteness, it is important to conceptualize it as multidimensional. First, I will discuss whiteness as a racial identity. Second, I will theorize whiteness as a standpoint. Third, I will conceptualize whiteness as structural. Fourth, I will discuss whiteness as privilege. Finally, I will discuss whiteness as semantic moves.

Whiteness as a Racial Identity

Race is a complex, and relatively new concept. Racial categories emerged as early as 1684 (Orbe & Harris, 2007). According to the U.S. Census (2018), racial groups generally include white/Caucasian, black/African American, Latinx, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Asian. These racial classifications categorize people into distinct racial groups based on skin color, hair texture, eye shape and color, and physical build (Omi & Winant, 2015). While race has no biological foundation and is socially constructed, physical features generally determine how an individual will be racially classified. As an example, people who have light-skin, blue eyes, and blond hair are generally racially categorized as white (Myers, 2005). And scholars note that people categorized as white possesses whiteness (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, & Embrick, 2006; Frankenburg, 1993; Kivel, 2002; Owens, 2007; Rasmussen et. al. 2001).

Many scholars have defined whiteness as a racial identity belonging to white people. Owens (2007) notes “whiteness is grounded in the interests, needs and values of those racialized as white, so it is founded on the ascribed racial identity of being white” (p. 206). Kivel (2002) notes that “Whiteness is a constantly shifting boundary separating those who are entitled to have

certain privileges from those whose exploitation and vulnerability to violence is justified by their not being white” (p. 15). And Bonilla-Silva, Goar, and Embrick (2006) note that “whiteness is a[n] ...identity that serves to define individuals, determine behavior, and evaluate status” (p. 231). The common thread in the aforementioned definitions is that whiteness is an identity of white people. Put another way, whiteness is about white identity (Winant, 2001). While white skin is a property of whiteness (Harris, 1993), the racial boundaries of whiteness can be slippery.

Whiteness has historically been a heterogeneous category that is malleable and constantly redefined (Owens, 2007). The malleable boundaries of whiteness as a racial identity is in part due to it being a social construction and not a biological fact. Kivel (2002) notes that “there is nothing scientifically distinctive about it [whiteness] except skin color, and that is highly variable” (p. 17). As an example, “Chinese Americans are conditionally white at times, not white at others, but clearly different from blacks and Native Americans” (Kivel, 2002, p. 17). Frankenburg (1993) notes that “Jewish Americans, Italian Americans, and Latinos have, at different times ... been viewed as both “white” and “non-white” (p. 11). Ignatiev (2008) notes that the Irish became white by marginalizing African Americans and aligning with whites to better their economic conditions. While whiteness as a racial identity can be malleable, whiteness cannot be separated from white people. Rasmussen et. al. (2001) note that whiteness is the racial identity of white people. There is no whiteness without white people. As Owens (2007) notes, whiteness is rooted in those racialized as whites. In addition to whiteness being a racial identity it is also a standpoint.

Whiteness as a Standpoint

Standpoint theory postulates that "the world looks different depending on your social standing" (Orbe & Harris, 2007, p. 12). Put another way, “standpoint theory is based on the premise that our perceptions of the world around us are largely influenced by social group

membership” (ibid, p. 12). The social groups we belong to shape our experiences and knowledge in addition to our understanding and how we communicate in the world (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, 2014). Social groups may include but not limited to race, gender, religious affiliation, and political party. Drawing on standpoint theory, the ways in which white people interpret social and political events in society may be shaped by the very nature of being white.

Many scholars have defined whiteness as a standpoint. Frankenburg (1993) notes that “whiteness is a standpoint, which is “a place from which white people look at [themselves], at others, and at society” (p. 1). Owens (2007) note that “whiteness defines a particular racialized perspective or standpoint that shapes the white subject’s understanding of both self and the social world” (p. 205). Indeed, whiteness as a standpoint shapes how white people not only see themselves but also others in society. Owens (2007) notes that whiteness as a standpoint is inherently a limited perspective. He postulates that whiteness is a limited worldview because whites are in a position of racial dominance, which doesn’t require them to learn about other standpoints from marginalized groups. As a consequence, this may lead to whites having a narrow perspective of not only self but also others due to internalizing whiteness (DiAngelo, 2012). As a standpoint, whiteness may be learned in the “white bubble” or through the white racial frame (Feagin, 2013; Feagin & O'Brien, 2004).

Feagin and O'Brien (2004) note that white people develop their social, racial, and political perspectives in the white bubble. Put simply, the white bubble refers to racially homogenous spaces. For example, residential segregation may help to facilitate a white bubble as white people may have infrequent and non-meaningful interactions with non-white people (Foster, 2013). Whites learn to interpret events in society from a white vantage point while living in the white bubble. It is in the white bubble where white individuals may be first introduced to the white racial frame. Feagin (2013) argues that whites’ worldviews are informed by the white racial

frame, which “encompasses not only the stereotyping, bigotry, and racist ideology emphasized in other theories of “race,” but also the visual images, array of emotions, sounds of accented language, interlinking interpretations and narratives, and inclinations to discriminate that are still central to the frame’s everyday operations” (np, 2013). He postulates that the white racial frame provides whites with a framework for how to see the world, and whites generally draw on it to interpret social, racial, and political issues. Feagin (2013) notes that the white racial frame is embedded in the minds of white people. Indeed, whiteness as a standpoint may be learned through socialization in white bubbles and from the white racial frame. In addition to whiteness being a standpoint, it is also structural.

Whiteness as Structural

The theory of structuration provides a theoretical framework for how agents and structures operate in tandem to reproduce social systems (Giddens, 1984). Agents refer to “individuals or groups,” whereas structures refer to “rules and resources” (Giddens, 1984, p. 19). The interconnection between agents and structures is referred to as the duality of structure, which postulates that agents reproduce structures through their everyday social interactions (Giddens, 1984). By using the rules and resources of structures, agents help to maintain structures in their everyday social practices. Drawing on structuration theory, scholars have noted that white people may act as agents to reproduce structures that are rooted in whiteness (Foster, 2006; Owen, 2007).

Foster (2006) notes that white Americans may not differentiate themselves from social structures. He postulates that white agents may see themselves as structures because laws, rules, and regulations of structures are generally instantiated in whiteness. Other scholars have also implicitly and explicitly written about whiteness as structural. Harris (1993) notes that “whiteness, initially constructed as a form of racial identity, evolved into a form of property,

historically and presently acknowledged and protected in American law (p. 1709). Frankenberg (1993) notes that “Whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege” (p. 1). Owens (2007) notes that “Whiteness shapes the cognitive frameworks of agents because, first, it is a structuring property of the social system into which agents are socialized and acculturated, and, second, it constitutes part of the conditions (acknowledged and unacknowledged) of action” (p. 208).

As agents, whites are invested in the preservation of structural whiteness (Lipsitz, 2006). Foster (2006) notes that in moments of structural or institutional crisis, white Americans may work as agents to invalidate structural changes. Instead of advocating change, white agents may contend that the system has only “a few bad apples” (ibid). As Foster (2006) states, “The point is that white agents and social structures are interconnected: whites create the institutions, they oversee their operations, maintain, protect, and legitimize them, which in turn maintains their power” (p. 22). Indeed, whiteness as structural may play a role in whites acting as agents because they learn there are benefits in the preservation of structures. Support for structural whiteness can be referred to as normative claims. In addition to whiteness being structural it also bestows privilege.

Whiteness as Privilege

Whiteness as privilege. The concept of white privilege has stimulated debates around whether it exists, and, if so, what does it mean to have white privilege. White privilege cannot be discussed without first understanding racism. Put simply, racism is a system of advantages based on race (DiAngelo, 2012) And these advantages can result in white privilege. While white privilege sums to advantages to those racially categorized as white, it results in disadvantages for those racially classified as non-white (Wise, 2008). Put another way, if one group is privileged

then the other group must be under-privileged. While there is no universal definition of white privilege, critical whiteness scholars generally share similar conceptualizations.

Applebaum (2016) notes that white privilege refers to the systemic and institutional unearned advantages afforded to people racially categorized as white. Kivel (2002) notes that “whiteness is a many-faceted phenomenon, slowly and constantly shifting its emphasis, but all the time maintaining a racial hierarchy and protecting the power that accrues to white people” (p. 2003). Simpson (2008) notes that “Whiteness has been a historically privileged category insofar as people with white or light skin have benefited from historic legal, social, and economic advantages that shape a common history and have resulted in long-term inequities in the distribution of income, property, and power that persist to this day” (p. 141). The common thread is that white privilege is a benefit afforded to white people. White privilege can manifest in several different ways at the social, racial, political, material, and structural level.

DiAngelo (2011) notes that white privilege manifests in many ways including racial belonging and psychic freedom. She notes racial belonging is a privilege because everywhere “we [whites] look, we see our own racial image reflected back to us – in our heroes and heroines, in standards of beauty, in our role-models and teachers, in our textbooks and historical memory, in the media, in religious iconography including the image of god himself, etc” (p. 62). Second, psychic freedom is a privilege because whites generally don’t have the social burden of thinking about how their whiteness will be used against them in many social and economic contexts. As an example of psychic freedom, McIntosh (2004) notes that white privilege is knowing that if “a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven’t been singled out because of my race” (p. 189). It’s worth mentioning that white privilege doesn’t exist inside of a vacuum. Whiteness as privilege cannot exist without racial inequality. The reproduction of

whiteness continues to advantage whites over non-whites (Owens, 2007). In addition to whiteness as privilege it also discursive.

Whiteness as Semantic Moves

Bonilla-Silva and Foreman (2000) note that discursive strategies may help whites avoid being perceived as racist when discussing racial issues. Discursive strategies may be driven by social norms that prohibit uninhibited racist discourse (Van Dijk, 1987). In the contemporary racial landscape, racist discourse by white people is often mitigated by discursive strategies such as semantic moves.

Several scholars have written about how semantic moves emerge in white Americans' discourse. Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) describes semantic moves in the following way:

Semantic moves are 'strategically managed relations between propositions' (VanDijk, 1987: 86). They are called semantic because the strategic function of a proposition is determined by the 'content of speech act sequences', that is, by the link between a proposition and a preceding or subsequent proposition. The overall goal of these moves, the semantic strategy, is to save face, that is, to avoid appearing 'racist'. (p. 79).

In other words, a comment may contain semantic moves when one proposition can be interpreted as racist whereas another proposition can be interpreted as non-racist with the latter proposition being used as a face-saving strategy to avoid being perceived as racist. A proposition refers to a statement that conveys an opinion or judgment (Van Dijk, 1984). Furthermore, Van Dijk (2000, p. 92) notes:

Quite typical in discourse about immigrants and minorities is the use of special semantic moves that implement the possible contradiction between positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, as is the case for well-known disclaimers such as the Apparent Denial (I have nothing against X, but...). These are essential moves in the management of the impression the recipients may have about the speaker.

Put simply, semantic moves enable white speakers to express a proposition that could potentially be perceived as racist (i.e., in favor of whiteness) followed by a proposition that could potentially be perceived as non-racist (in favor of racial minorities) for impression management purposes.

By employing semantic moves, white Americans can engage in positive in-group presentation and negative out-group presentation while appearing non-racist. Bonilla-Silva (2002) argues that semantic moves are “used by whites to safely express their racial views” in the post Jim Crow era when discursive racism was overt (p. 41). In fact, their study found that white college students employed semantic moves when discussing affirmative action, interracial marriage, and discrimination. But how do semantic moves look in practice?

Semantic moves may include disclaimers or phrases such as “I am not racist/prejudiced,” “I agree and disagree,” “I don’t know,” or “I’m not sure.” (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000, p. 27). Those disclaimers are followed by racist comments such as “Blacks are lazy or unintelligent.” Van Dijk (1984) argues that semantic moves arise because speakers may want to express their true opinions but cognizant of how they might be perceived socially by receivers.

In using semantic moves, white speakers can “formulate first a positive opinion in order to be able to formulate a negative opinion later” (Van Dijk, 1984, p. 115). Therefore, scholars can study semantic moves as the vacillation between propositions that may be perceived as racist and ones that may be perceived as non-racist (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000). Semantic moves may enable white Americans to express racism while saving face with non-racist statements in the discursive process (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). The next section covers colorblindness as the dominant ideology of whiteness and the white racial frame.

Colorblindness

Colorblindness is the prevailing ideology of the white racial frame. The color-blind racial ideology emerged following the Civil Rights Movement, which rendered blatantly racist expressions socially unacceptable (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Hence, the racial discourse of colorblindness is subtler and more nuanced. Colorblindness describes “the pattern of behaviors used by whites toward people of color to minimize differences, to appear unbiased, to appear

friendly, to avoid interactions with people of color, to not acknowledge race-related topics, and even pretend not seeing the person's race" (Sue, 2015, p. 26). In other words, the racial reality of white Americans is that we are now living in a post-racial era wherein race is no longer a predictor variable in determining racial minorities' status in society. Colorblindness has four frames abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization (Bonilla-Silva, 2010).

The first frame of colorblindness is abstract liberalism. This frame is grounded in the ideologies of individualism and universalism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Individualism refers to the philosophy "that we all act independently from one another, that we all have the same possibility of achievement and those possibilities are unmarked by social positions as race, class, and gender" (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2014, p. 117). The ideology of individualism is invoked by white people to not only appear racially unprejudiced but also to deny unearned privilege. While individualism posits that all citizens, regardless of social identity, have equal opportunity, the ideology of universalism postulates that all humans regardless of race, class, gender, have equal value. The philosophy of universalism "assumes that Whites and people of color have the same reality, the same experiences in the same context, the same responses from others, and that the same doors are open" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 176). Abstract liberalism produces contradictory social ideologies regarding race, racism, and white privilege. Individualism suggests that each person is unique, while universalism suggests everyone is the same. While contradictory, both ideologies deny the existence of racism and white privilege (DiAngelo, 2012).

The second frame of colorblindness is naturalization. This frame is rooted in the notion that racial structures are occurrences of natural phenomena (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). For instance, whites rationalize residential and school segregation as consequences of homophily (Myers, 2005). The principle of homophily posits that people are more likely to associate with others

with similar socio-demographic variables (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Bonilla-Silva (2010) notes that racial structures are not a result of natural phenomena. As it relates to housing, residential segregation is a result of gerrymandering and redlining, which are not natural phenomena.

The third frame of colorblindness is cultural racism. Cultural racism suggests that the pathological nature of racial minorities explains racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). For instance, racial disparities in education, income, wealth, and health are often explained by perceived dysfunctional family households in black communities (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Blaming black people as culturally deficient is common in this frame to justify racial inequality. This frame has replaced biological racism. Blacks fare worse on all major quality of life indicators as a result of cultural pathology, not biological inferiority.

The fourth frame of colorblindness is minimization (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Discursive minimization of race, racism, and white privilege may occur through denial and deflection. Denial refers to the rejection of personal, societal, and institutional racism (Sue, 2013). Whites deny the salience and significance of racism by suggesting that Blacks make every issue about race (Wise, 2008). Minimization also occurs through deflection. Whites deflect by shifting conversations about racism to other isms such as sexism and classism (Sue, 2013). Changing the conversation enables whites to minimize the significance of race, racism, and white privilege (Wise, 2008).

The discourse of colorblindness undergirds the maintenance of white privilege. It does so by obscuring the significance of race, racism, and whiteness (Rios & Zamudio, 2006). Together, the frames of colorblindness conceal the material, psychological, and social advantages allotted to members of the white racial group. Simpson (2008) contends that “A discourse of color blindness perpetuates a system of thought in which White ways of being, knowing, and

experiencing are “morally neutral, normative, average, and ideal” (p. 142). Colorblind discourse denies the existence of systemic and institutional racism (Twine & Gallagher, 2008).

Colorblindness, as Foster (2006) notes, “has been used in different ways by researchers and authors ...including (1) colorblindness as an ideology; (2) colorblindness as a characteristic of white Americans; and (3) colorblindness as a discursive repertoire” (p. 28). This dissertation posits that colorblindness is not only cognitive but also social and discursive. The next section discusses cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive Dissonance

The theory of cognitive dissonance describes “The distressing mental state caused by inconsistency between a person’s two beliefs or a belief and an action” (Griffin et al., (2014, p. 200). In other words, cognitive dissonance refers to the psychological discomfort individuals experience from holding contrasting cognitions. Festinger (1962) defines cognition as “any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one’s behavior” (p. 3). Festinger (1962) argues that dissonance is inescapable, and people may experience dissonance daily. In everyday situations, dissonance may arise from making choices or social pressure.

People may experience cognitive dissonance from having to choose between two mutually exclusive alternatives (Festinger, 1962). The psychological discomfort may stem from each alternative having favorable characteristics, which makes each option desirable. Dissonance may further increase when people choose one of the mutually exclusive alternatives. This may be a result of the positive elements of the unselected alternative being dissonant with negative elements of the selected alternative (Festinger, 1962). Furthermore, dissonance may be triggered by social groups.

The knowledge people possess about beliefs within their social networks may induce dissonance. Festinger (1962) notes that the “existence of disagreement among members of a group on some issue or some opinion, if perceived by the members, certainly produces cognitive dissonance” (p. 178). Social disagreement within a group may lead to psychological discomfort as individuals may have to make decision regarding which group to side with. When people experience dissonance, they may be motivated to reduce dissonance.

People tend to seek cognitive consistency, which motivates individuals to reduce dissonance. Festinger (1962) proposes three ways people engage in dissonance reduction to minimize psychological discomfort. First, individuals may ignore cognitive dissonance. Second, individuals can place greater importance on certain attitudes. Dissonance can be minimized by placing greater weight on one of the attitudes causing psychological discomfort. Place greater weight on one of the attitudes lessens the dissonance. Third, people can make conflicting attitudes or behaviors harmonious.

The theory of cognitive dissonance posits that “when an individual holds two or more elements of knowledge that are relevant to each other but inconsistent with one another, a state of discomfort is created” (Harmon-Jones & Harmon-Jones, 2007, p. 7). People experience dissonance from having to make decisions between two favorable alternatives. Additionally, dissonance may arise from social disagreement within social groups as individuals may have to pick a side. Inconsistency may be uncomfortable. Individuals are motivated to find ways to reconcile these inconsistencies. Thus, individuals work to reduce dissonance and restore psychological comfort. People can modify their attitudes or behaviors to dissipate dissonance (Griffin et al., 2014). The next section discusses ambivalence.

Ambivalence

The concept of ambivalence has produced conflicting definitions. Foster (2006) provides two ways in which ambivalence has largely been defined: “(1) ambivalence is not knowing due to conflicting frames of reference [and] (2) ambivalence is knowing but uncertain of how to present oneself ...” (p. 27). In his study regarding contradictions in the discourse of white Americans, Foster (2006) provides a new way of defining ambivalence. He conceptualizes ambivalence “as a deliberate projection of oneself in an attempt to appear innocent (e.g., nonracist)” (p. 27). He further notes that “white ambivalence is created, not felt, and becomes a tool for rationalizing the racist social structure” (Foster, 2013, p. 194). Drawing on Foster’s conceptualization of ambivalence, this dissertation defines ambivalence as the (1) simultaneous expression of both moral and normative claims, (2) wherein moral claims function to convey a non-racist identity and (3) normative claims operate to help legitimize racist institutional behavior in an effort to protect structural whiteness and preserve white privilege.

In the context of this study, moral claims refer to comments by Facebook users that express direct or indirect support for black victims of police violence. There may be three reasons why white Facebook users may be motivated or expected to express moral claims in light of a race-related police shooting. At the individual level, publicly expressing sympathy for black victims of police brutality shows humanity or adherence to moral values. Haidt (2001) defines morality as “actions or character of a person that are made with respect to a set of virtues held to be obligatory by a culture or subculture” (p. 817). Expressing sympathy for victims may broadcast a commitment to moral standards held by a social group on Facebook.

At the group level, openly conveying support for black victims of police violence projects a racially unprejudiced public image. Research from social psychology suggests that whites are often concerned about being perceived as prejudiced when discussing race issues. In an effort to

avoid being labeled as prejudiced, whites tend to “monitor their thoughts, feelings, and behavior” during race-based conversations (Richeson & Shelton, 2007, p. 318). At the social level, publicly condemning police killings shows support for racial equality. Projecting an egalitarian self-image helps to construct a positive social identity. The individual, group, and social levels may explain why white Facebook users may be motivated or expected to support black victims of police-perpetrated shootings. Expressing support for black victims makes a moral claim that “I’m a good person. I’m not racist.” Therefore, moral claims may enable white Facebook users to avert accusations of racism. Moral claims differ from normative claims.

In this study, normative claims refer to comments by white Facebook users that express direct or indirect support for law enforcement. There may be three reasons why white Facebook users may be motivated or expected to express normative claims in response to a racially motivated police shooting. At the individual level, publicly expressing support for police officers may help to construct a white racial identity. American law enforcement was created by whites and disproportionately employs white Americans (Foster, 2013; Reaves, 2015). And the psychological aspect may be that law enforcement helps whites to feel safer who feel threatened by black people. Hee Lee and Ifill (2017) note that police shootings of black people may be a result of officers linking black people with criminality. And this this criminality bias may stem from law enforcement being an extension of slave patrollers. Moore, et al., (2016, p. 258) note that, “... modern U.S. police departments’ foundational roots and driving ideologies are influenced by slave era policies.” That said, it is not misguided to believe that white Americans, like police officers, have internalized this black criminality bias and feel safer by the presence of officers. Therefore, they are motivated and expected to support them to establish a white racial identity.

At the group level, expressing support for law enforcement may convey racial identity of the victim is irrelevant. Support for police officers can be masked in the narrative that the victim's race was not a factor in the shooting. At the social level, expressing support for law enforcement may help to legitimate structural whiteness to preserve white privilege. Legitimation refers to the discursive process by which institutional behavior is justified (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Van Dijk (1998) notes that legitimating discourse:

“become imperative ... in moments of crises, when the legitimacy of the state, an institution or an office is at stake. Legitimation, then, becomes part of strategies of crisis management, in which ingroups and their institutions need self-legitimation, and outgroups must be delegitimated.” (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 257).

Furthermore, when systemic whiteness fails white Americans, they may need to de-legitimize their institutions to re-center whiteness. De-legitimation refers to the discursive process by which institutional behavior is unjustified (Van Dijk, 1998). The discourse of de-legitimation operates to invalidate institutions to re-establish whiteness. The individual, group, and social levels may explain why white Facebook users may be motivated or expected to support law enforcement. Expressing support for law enforcement makes a normative claim that “whiteness is working.”

Discourse is one tool white Americans can use to either legitimize or de-legitimize social structures to preserve whiteness (Van Dijk, 1998). In this process, Green et al. (2007) note that “White people distance themselves from racism and racial privilege through a range of discourses and practices, which also protect and secure the dominance and normativity of whiteness” (p. 406). Ambivalence is a discursive mechanism that white Facebook users can employ to accomplish this. Van den Berg (2003) argues that ambivalence is a strategic face-saving mechanism that operates to mitigate racist opinions. Put differently, he contends that ambivalence has two functions: (1) presenting a positive self-image and (2) maintaining social structures. He further notes that “... contradictions [ambivalence] in discourse cannot be “real,”

but rather must be the results of deceptive presentations of the hidden reality of prejudice” (p. 123). Ambivalence is an impression management strategy that enables whites to preserve social structures while being in alignment with social norms (Van den Berg, 2003; Foster, 2006, 2013). The next section covers impression management.

Impression Management

Goffman (1959) notes that people tend to be concerned with how they are perceived and evaluated by others in public settings. This concern may stem from a desire to be favorably regarded by others. And this desire to create a favorable self-image helps to motivate people to control how they are perceived by others through a process called impression management or self-presentation (Leary, 1995). Impression management refers to the process by which people try to control how they are regarded by others (Goffman, 1959). People are generally motivated to create a self-image that complies with social norms to make positive impressions as negative impressions may give rise to social and material implications (Leary, 1995). For example, fostering negative impressions may lead to social ostracism or job loss. Put another way, people tend to engage in impression management to “maximize rewards and minimize punishments” (Leary, 1995, p. 53). Taking a dramaturgical approach, Goffman (1959) notes that motivation for impression management is contingent upon stages including the front stage and backstage.

In the front stage, impression management is higher as people are performing before an outside audience (Goffman, 1959). The front stage audience can be comprised of people who come from different social groups, hold different beliefs, or subscribe to different social norms (Leary, 1995). As social actors, people are not only mindful of the audience’s presence, but also aware of their expectations. And these expectations may motivate people to engage in impression management to present a positive self-image that is consistent with the social norms of the audience. For example, Picca and Feagin (2007) find that whites, in the front stage, generally

attempt to adhere to egalitarian values to present a non-racist identity to a racially diverse audience. In the presence of people of color, they find that whites tend to employ impression management tactics such as using racially coded language to preclude accusations of racism. Tactics such as these may help white people avoid fostering negative impressions in the front stage, which may have social or material consequences. Indeed, the front stage may prompt self-image concerns as people generally want to be regarded favorably by others. While motivation to engage in impression management is higher in the front stage, it is lower in the back stage.

In the backstage, the motivation to engage in impression management is lower because people are performing before an “inside” audience. The backstage audience may be comprised of people who come from the same social group, hold similar beliefs, or subscribe to similar social norms. As social actors, people are aware of when they are in the backstage. Unlike in the front stage, in the backstage, people can relax without the expectation to adhere to social norms of outside audiences. As Goffman (1959) explains, people can be themselves in the backstage as members of the same group can freely express themselves such as speaking negatively about members of the outside audience. For example, Picca and Feagin (2007) find that whites generally engage in overtly racist performances in backstage settings. In the backstage, whites generally don’t have to worry about presenting or maintaining their non-racist identity as their racist performances are not only tolerated but also encouraged by others from the same social group. Indeed, the backstage is a safe environment for people to freely express themselves. The backstage differs from the front stage as people are not surrounded by an outside audience and pressured to adhere to their social norms to make a positive impression. But what happens when the audiences of the front stage and back stage are integrated?

Impression management challenges arise when different audiences are present in a single environment. This is a challenge because people generally alter their impressions or self-image

to the values of a single audience. The presence of two or more distinct audiences refer to the “multiple audience problem” (Leary, 1995). The “multiple audience problem arise when people find themselves in the awkward position of wanting to present different impressions to two or more people in the same social encounter” (Leary, 1995, p. 109). When this occurs, multiple audiences are problematic because people may want to give off an impression to one audience that conflicts with the impression they want to give off to another audience. Different audiences may value different impressions, which prompts impression management challenges when multiple audiences collide. Put another way, the convergence of multiple audiences presents self-presentation challenges because people may have to simultaneously present different impressions to different audiences. One way people can navigate the multiple audience problem is by simultaneously appealing to both audiences.

Impression management refers to the social process by which people try to control how they are publicly perceived by others. The motivation for impression management generally stems from people wanting to project a positive public identity that is in accordance with an audience’s social values, norms, and behaviors. Goffman (1959) argues that impression management is activated in the front stage, whereas in the backstage people generally can relax (Barash, Ducheneaut, Isaacs, & Bellotti, 2010). However, when audiences from the front and back stages collide, it presents impression management challenges because have to construct a positive public identity by appealing to conflicting social values, norms, and behaviors. Put another way, the “multiple audience problem” may present impression management challenges as individuals try to convey different impressions to different audiences. The next section discusses identity construction in a mediated social environment like Facebook.

Facebook and Identity Construction

Facebook was initially created for Harvard students in 2004 (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Facebook has since emerged as the preeminent social network site in the U.S. with 215 million users (Statista, 2017). boyd and Ellison (2007) “define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (p. 211). As a social networking site, Facebook also enables its users to engage in identity construction.

There are several affordances that enable Facebook users to discursively construct themselves in existence (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Its “what’s on your mind?” and “commenting” features allow users to discursively construct their online identities (Georgalou, 2017). Benwell and Stokoe (2006) note that there’s a relationship between discourse and identity. Georgalou (2017) mentions that when “we use language, we instantly disclose – either intentionally or unintentionally – something about ourselves and who we take ourselves to be” (Georgalou, 2017, p. 12). People are able to construct their online identities on Facebook through posting. Online identity refers to “the representation of one’s persona in a digital context” (Georgalou, 2017, p. 13). While Facebook affordances may enable discursive identity construction, Facebook policies and structural features may shape the ways in which users construct their identities.

Two relevant Facebook policies that may shape discursive identity construction are real name-policy and community standards. First, Facebook’s real-name policy requires its users to use the name by which they use in everyday life (Facebook, 2017). The rationale behind Facebook’s real-name policy is that it enables users to “know who you're connecting with” (Facebook, 2017). As a consequence of Facebook’s real-name policy, it’s plausible to assume that some Facebook users may try to discursively construct a socially desirable public image

because it can be associated with one's real-life identity. Second, Facebook's community standards were developed with the goal of keeping its online community members safe from harassment and hate speech (Facebook, 2017). For example, hate speech based on race is prohibited under its community standards, and violating this policy may result in account suspension or deletion (Facebook, 2017). As a consequence of Facebook's community standards, some Facebook users may mitigate their overtly racist opinions to avert account suspension or deletion. Facebook's real-name policy and community standards may shape discursive identity construction. Furthermore, there are four structural features that may shape identity construction within Facebook.

Boyd (2010) provides four structural features of social media platforms that may govern how individuals engage in online communication: persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability. First, persistence refers to how social media platforms enable the archival of user-generated content. Second, replicability refers to how user-generated content is duplicable. Third, scalability enables user-generated content to reach broader audiences. Fourth, searchability enables user-generated content to be accessed. These structural features may shape how white Facebook users discursively construct their identity as their commentary may be archived, reproduced, gain visibility, or accessed. Furthermore, one major dynamic of Facebook that may shape discursive identity construction and impression management is the context collapse.

Context Collapse

The premise of Facebook is connecting and sharing content with friends (Laudone, 2012). Facebook encourages its users to extend offline friendships by adding and accepting people as "friends" on its online platform (boyd & Ellison, 2007). In fact, Facebook makes suggestions about who people should add as friends based on their pre-existing social networks

(Facebook, 2018). It's emphasis on friends may explain why Facebook has become the dominate social media platform for people to keep in touch with not only strong ties but also weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). People use Facebook as a singular platform to stay connected with networks as diverse as friends, family, loved ones, co-workers, acquaintances, and professional contacts. Although Facebook enables users to stay connected with diverse social networks, it may result in a context collapse.

Context collapse refers to how the “lack of spatial, social, and temporal boundaries makes it difficult to maintain distinct social contexts” (boyd, 2010, p. 49). Put another way, context collapse refers to a single network populated by distinct social groups (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Davis and Jurgenson (2014) divide context collapse in two concepts: context collusion and context collision. Context collusion refers to people intentionally integrating diverse audiences, whereas context collision refers to diverse audiences unintentionally integrated. Whether intentional or unintentional, context collapse may present challenges. As boyd (2010) notes, “Maintaining distinct contexts online is particularly tricky because of the persistent, replicable, searchable, and scalable nature of networked acts” (p. 50-51). The integration of diverse social networks into a single network may create identity construction and management issues (Marder, Joinson, Shankar, & Thirlaway, 2016).

Vitak (2012) notes that “... self-presentation strategies vary based on the audience for whom they are performing. Variations in self-presentation range from minor (e.g., small changes in vocabulary) to significant (e.g., political or religious opinions)” (p. 454). For example, Dupree and Fisk (2018) found that white liberals may use less sophisticated language when speaking to blacks and competent language with whites. Baym and boyd (2012) note that “Navigating collapsed contexts requires a wide variety of strategies. While some people seek to engage in strategic facework and minimize visibility, others seek to publicize themselves in ways that may

complicate their relationship to different members of their audience” (p. 324). Kietzman, Silvestre, McCarthy, and Pitt, (2012) note that people may self-present contradictory identities to communicate across multiple audiences. Marwick and boyd, (2011) note that people may use coded language or obscure information to appeal to distinct networks. Marwick and Boyd (2010) note that the “large audiences for sites like Facebook or MySpace may create a lowest-common denominator effect, as individuals only post things they believe their broadest group of acquaintances will find non-offensive” (p. 122). As Hogan (2010) puts it, individuals may address context collapse using the lowest-common denominator approach, which is sharing information that is appropriate across audience. While social media users can use strategic discourses to navigate the context collapse, it is worth mentioning Facebook users can employ several technological affordances or privacy management tools to circumvent presenting to distinct audiences. For example, Facebook users can send private messages, target their audience using friend lists, create groups, or even mute or unfollow their friends (Facebook, 2018).

The technological affordances of social media platforms such as Facebook can complicate online discourse and identity construction (Baym & boyd, 2012). Facebook is an ideal social media platform to explore how people construct and manage their online identities in the context collapse (Vitak, 2012). Davis and Jurgenson (2014) note that the “collapsing of social contexts together has emerged as an important topic with the rise of social media that so often blurs the public and private, professional and personal, and the many different selves and situations in which individuals find themselves” (p. 476). While context collapse is not unique to social media environments, the scale is different from offline contexts. Baym and boyd (2012) note that the architecture and affordances of online spaces present a different type of publicness. Posts can potentially reach a larger audience than in non-mediated spaces. The next section discusses the white racial frame.

White Racial Frame

The white racial frame was developed in the seventeenth century. Elite white figures such as public officials, doctors, scientists, slave masters, and even the “Founding Fathers” helped to create the white racial frame (Feagin, 2010). White Americans learn the dominant racial frame in schools, homes, media, work places, and churches, among many other social institutions. The nature and methods for propagating the white racial frame changes and evolves over time. But what is the white racial frame?

Feagin (2010) defines the white racial frame as “an overarching worldview, one that encompasses important racial ideas, terms, images, emotions, and interpretations” (p. 3). But what purpose does the white racial frame serve? Several scholars note that the white racial frame functions to legitimate, normalize, and reinforce white dominance. Moore and Bell (2010) assert that “the power of white racial framing ... [is] a protective mechanism for white power, privilege and wealth” (p. 125). Griffith (2009) argues that “... the white racial frame permeates virtually all social dimensions of American society and inevitably impacts all people through upholding white privilege at the ongoing cost of oppressing and subordinating groups of color” (p. 224). Wingfield and Feagin (2012) assert that the white racial frame enables whites to “collude in or rationalize the systemic processes that facilitate and maintain ongoing racial privilege and inequality” (p. 144). Drawing on frames in communication research, white Americans can discursively interpret racial matters by relying on the white racial frame.

Frames in communication describe how characteristics within messages are made salient through selection and emphasis (Druckman, 2001). Salience describes “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (Entman 1993, p. 53). The crux of framing theory is that an event can be discussed from a diverse set of views, but speakers choose to discuss some aspects of an event while omitting others (Chong & Druckman,

2007). Frames in communication, then, call attention to some aspects of a message while ignoring others. Frames in communication can draw from racialized frameworks such as the white racial frame. For a plethora of white people, as Feagin (2010) asserts, “the white racial frame ... has routinely defined a way of being, a broad perspective on life, and one that provides the language and interpretations that help structure, normalize, and make sense out of society” (p. 11). For centuries the white racial frame has operated as the dominate framework for interpreting racial matters. And aspects from the dominant racial frame can be emphasized in communication.

The white racial frame can serve as a vantage point from which white Americans discursively interpret racial issues in society. The white racial frame includes racist narratives, images, and stereotypes that help to perpetuate systemic whiteness and racial oppression. And this can occur through frames in communication, which refers to making certain aspects of a situation more salient than others. In response to racial matters, salient aspects of a message by white Americans can derive from the dominant white racial frame as frames are generally “driven by ideology and prejudice” (Edelman, 1993, p. 232). And Foster (2006) notes that “frames are ultimately so embedded within our minds that agents are often unaware of them as they make decisions in their everyday lives” (p. 30-31). The purpose of the white racial frame is to reinforce white dominance through maintaining structural whiteness and white privilege (Wingfield & Feagin, 2012). The next section covers Critical Race Theory.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides a theoretical framework for investigating and challenging the ways in which anti-black racism not only has socio-political but also cultural and discursive implications. The CRT movement seeks to eradicate whiteness, white privilege, and anti-black racism. CRT was established in the 1970s following the Civil Rights Movement. It

emerged from Critical Legal Studies (CLS), which focused on how racial progress was slow-moving due to racist ideologies inherently embedded in the legal system. CLS evolved into CRT where scholars and activist critique more broadly society at large for perpetuating whiteness, white privilege, and anti-black racism. CRT is centered around the emancipation of racially marginalized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Critical race theorists have developed 5 tenets.

The first tenet of CRT is that racism is ordinary in America. It is embedded in our thoughts, institutions, and systems. The second tenet of CRT is that whiteness confers economic and psychological benefits (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The interest-convergence hypothesis postulates that “[b]ecause racism advances the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class whites (psychically), large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 9). Blacks’ status in society is advanced when our interests converge with white self-interest. The third tenet of CRT is that race is a social construction, not a biological entity. The fourth tenet of CRT is different racialization. Whites racialize marginalized groups according to the labor market. The fifth tenet of CRT is that racially marginalized groups have a unique voice. As a result of racial oppression, blacks have socio-cultural and political knowledge that whites don’t possess. Furthermore, there are four major themes in CRT scholarship.

The first theme is a critique of liberalism, such as the political philosophy of colorblindness. CRT scholars believe that only race-conscious policies can ameliorate the suffering of black people. The second theme is narrative analysis. CRT provides a racial critique of legal and social systems by privileging narratives and counter-narratives told by black people. The third theme is structural determinism, which addresses how systems are not equipped to rectify certain dimensions of racism. The fourth theme is revisionist history, which seeks to

redress historical wrongs by revisiting historical events and examining them from a black person's experience. Altogether, CRT scholars aim to not only understand and critique power dynamics in black-white relations but to also rectify it. The next section provides a conceptual framework for this study. See Figure 1.

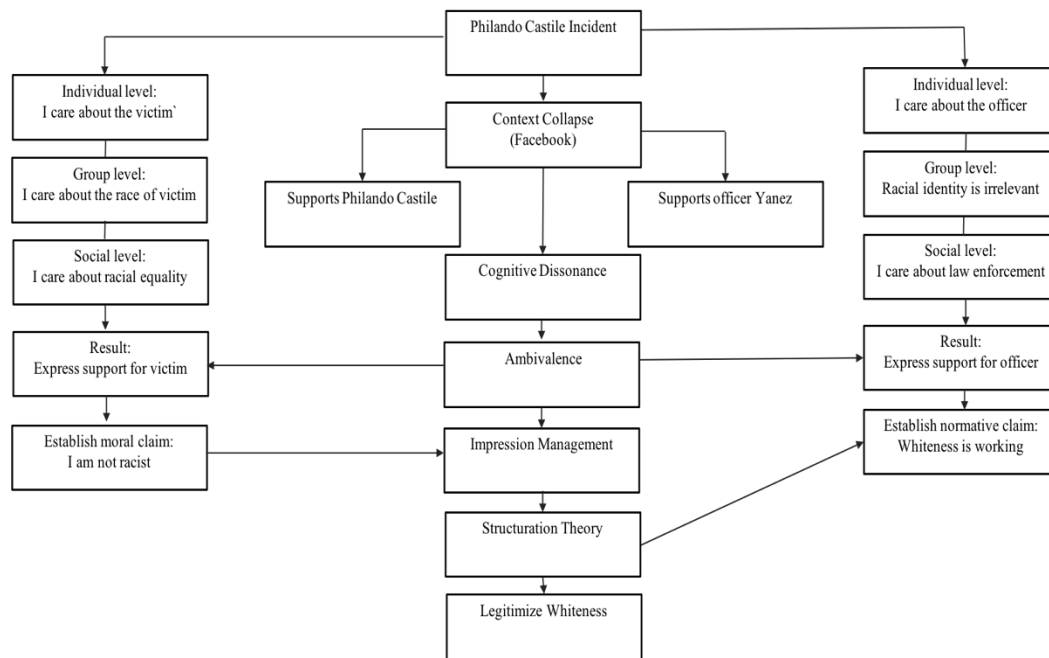


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework

This conceptual framework begins with the Philando Castile Incident. It was live-streamed on Facebook where the context collapse may occur. White Facebook users may have friends in their network who may expect them to express support for black victims of police violence like Philando Castile. Expressing support for black victims or Castile makes a moral claim. On other hand, white Facebook users may also have friends who may expect them to express support for law enforcement officers like Jeronimo Yanez. Expressing support for law enforcement or Yanez makes a normative claim.

These conflicting expectations from conflicting social networks may induce cognitive dissonance in white Facebook users. Because cognitive dissonance is an intolerable psychological state, Facebook users may be motivated to reduce the psychological tension engendered by the context collapse.

One way Facebook users can mitigate cognitive dissonance is through discursive ambivalence, which helps them to satisfy different expectations from different Facebook groups. Ambivalence refers to the simultaneous expression of moral claims (or support for black victims) and normative claims (or support for law enforcement).

Current research suggests that white Americans tend to regulate their thoughts and behavior when discussing race issues publicly to avoid being labeled as prejudiced. On those grounds, moral claims may be an impression management tactic to project a non-racist identity while expressing normative claims.

Drawing on structuration theory, as agents of law enforcement, white Facebook users may be motivated to express normative claims to protect structural whiteness and preserve white privilege. This further renders moral claims as an impression management tactic to project a non-racist identity to one segment of their network.

The white racial frames and semantic moves that emerge may help to conclude that ambivalence is indeed an impression management strategy that ultimately functions to legitimate whiteness. White racial frames may help to show us that the framing used is favorable to law enforcement or Yanez. The semantic moves may show that more emphasis is placed on normative claims than moral claims.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

This study uses the case of Philando Castile to investigate whether white Facebook users are more likely to communicate discursive ambivalence than their black counterparts. Furthermore, I examine the white racial frames and semantic moves that emerge in the ambivalent discourses of white or black Facebook users. The Philando Castile incident is one of the more recent high-profile cases of systemic racism in policing. This incident can be categorized into three stages: (1) police shooting of Philando Castile, (2) indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez, (3) and acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez. The following research questions help to guide this project: Are white Facebook users more likely to express ambivalence than black Facebook users? What frames were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses? How did frames differ in each stage? What semantic moves were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses? To answer those questions, data were collected using a unique methodology and method.

Methodology

This section discusses the rationale behind the methodology of finding news articles, selecting news articles, Facebook commenting, modes of expression, identifying Facebook users, and addressing ethical concerns, and coding.

Selecting articles

This dissertation explores white or black Facebook users' comments in response to 9 news articles regarding the three stages of the Philando Castile incident. Each stage is characterized by three news audiences that differ across the political spectrum, which means each stage has a left-leaning, moderate, and right-leaning news audience. A diverse news

audience may help capture a heterogeneous pool of Facebook users. Using participants' news media habits from a Pew study (Mitchell et al., 2014), I created three separate lists of left-leaning, moderate, and right-leaning news organizations based on the political leanings of their news audiences.

News organizations with a left-leaning news audience included but not limited to CNN, Washington Post, NPR, and New York Times. News organizations with a moderate audience included but not limited to ABC News, USA Today, and CBS News. News organizations with a right-leaning audience included but not limited to The Blaze, Fox News, and Breitbart. To find news articles, Philando Castile was typed into Facebook's search engine for the first stage, and Jeronimo Yanez was typed into Facebook's search engine for the second and third stages. Drawing on my list of news organizations, I searched for news articles posted on Facebook by each news organization that covered either the shooting, indictment, or acquittal. For each stage, I used three filters to find news articles: posts, news source, and date posted.

The "posts" filter enabled me to sift out people named Philando Castile or Jeronimo Yanez. The source filter enabled me to exclusively search through articles posted by each news organization. And the date filter allowed me to examine news articles that were published only in 2016 and 2017, which is the timeframe of the Philando Castile incident. From these results, news articles were selected based on three criteria: (1) date posted; (2) information uniformity; and (3) greatest number of comments.

First, date posted requires each news article to have publication dates within two days apart. Second, information uniformity requires each news article to cover either the shooting, indictment, or acquittal. For instance, in the first stage, information alignment requires that every news article covers the police shooting of Philando Castile. The rationale behind the first two criteria is that white or black Facebook users should respond to news articles with similar

information, which is important for a thematic discourse analysis. Based on the first two criteria, articles with the greatest number of comments were chosen, which helps to provide a rich pool of data. In what follows is a step-by-step account of how news articles were searched and selected on Facebook.

First, in each stage, I typed Philando Castile into Facebook's search engine. Second, I clicked on "Posts" to filter results to exclude people, photos, videos, pages, places, groups, apps, events, and links. Third, underneath the "Posted By" filter, I clicked on the "Choose a Source" tab to type in news media outlets with either a left-leaning, moderate, right-leaning news audience. Fourth, underneath the "Date Posted" filter, I selected "2016" to bring up news articles for the police shooting of Philando Castile and the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez, and I selected "2017" to bring up news articles about the acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez. I selected news articles based on similar publications dates, information uniformity, and greatest number of comments. The next section discusses the rationale behind selecting a commenting option on Facebook.

Facebook commenting

Facebook's commenting feature enable its user to respond to public posts. To comment on a post, a user has to click on "Comment," enter text into a white box that says, "write a comment," and press either enter or return to broadcast it. (Facebook, 2017). Users can also post links, videos, photos, gifs, and emoticons as comments. Commenting is a Facebook feature that enables users to articulate their positions on public issues (Georgalou, 2017). Comments, unlike wall posts, are accessible because the information is public. Facebook provides three options for viewing comments: top comments, most recent comments, and top comments unfiltered.

First, when viewing comments within the "top comments" filter, "the most relevant comments appear at the top" (Facebook, 2017). Second, when viewing comments within the "most recent" filter, "new comments and those with new replies go to the top" (ibid). Finally,

when viewing comments within the “top comments unfiltered” filter, “all comments, including spam and comments in other languages, with most relevant comments at the top” (ibid). This dissertation analyzes comments within the “top comments” filter. In choosing the “top comments” filter, I can examine whether the most engaged comments are ambivalent, which is challenging using the “most recent comments” filter. The “top comments unfiltered” filter is not selected as I am fluent only in English, and this filter includes comments in other languages. In what follows is a step-by-step account of how I archived Facebook comments.

First, I opened a blank-word document. Second, I went to the Facebook news article to access the comment thread. It should be noted that Facebook presents 50 comments in each row. Third, I scanned rows of 50 comments to check for the “see more” option, which means there’s more text to present. Fourth, I clicked on the “see more” option wherever presented to expand the comment. In so doing, the entire comment is included in the data. It’s worth mentioning that the “replies” feature was not expanded because those comments appear in the data in terms of relevance. Expanding the “replies” feature would be necessary for a study examining online political deliberation in Facebook. Fifth, regardless of mode of expression, I copy and pasted comments into a word document. After each row of 50 comments, I clicked on “view more comments” for the next row of 50 comments to appear. Sixth, I scanned each word document to make sure the comments converted properly. While some media (i.e., gifs and videos) did not properly upload in the word document, I labeled each row of 50 comments to revisit the Facebook news article to examine missing media. In each stage, for every news article, these steps were repeated. And each news article has a separate word document, which totals to 9-word documents with Facebook comments. Data from these documents were later exported into 9 Google Sheets spreadsheets with seven columns: commenter, comment, race, gender, ambivalence, frame, and semantic move.

Archiving Facebook comments has two major benefits. First, it provides unfettered access to the data sets. This is important in the event Facebook is unable to be accessed, or news media organizations or commenters delete their posts. Second, archiving comments allows me to further explore the data for future studies. The next sections cover the criteria for analyzing certain modes of expression.

Modes of expression

Technological advances in communication enable Facebook users to convey ambivalence in a myriad of ways. Ambivalence may be constructed through gifs, memes, emoticons, links, videos, characters, and pictures. As Fairclough (2001) notes, “it would be quite artificial to conceive of discourse in exclusively verbal terms” (p. 22). Discourse includes various forms of communication that enable people to construct and manage their online identities (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The construction of ambivalence through various modes of expression is included in the analysis. For instance, contradictory emoticons in a comment may express ambivalence. A white Facebook user may post a comment with a ‘blue heart’ and ‘balled-up fist’ emoticons. This comment may convey ambivalence as the ‘blue heart’ emoticon may denote #BlueLivesMatter, whereas the ‘balled-up fist’ emoticon may convey sympathy for black victims of police violence. While this dissertation aims to include various modes of expression, some media and expressions are not included in the analysis.

Although linking to other sites is commonplace within Facebook, the content of links is not analyzed. This dissertation examines discursive ambivalence within Facebook, not on other sites. Furthermore, videos are not analyzed. This study examines text-based discourse rather than verbal expressions of ambivalence. Ambivalence may also be conveyed through Facebook “reactions.”

In 2016, Facebook updated its features with new functions they named “reactions” (Georgalou, 2017). Reactions include the following functions: Like, Wow, Angry, Sad, Haha, and Love (Facebook, 2017). These reactions allow Facebook users to express their views on posts (Georgalou, 2017). Reactions may convey support, ambivalence, or opposition to the content of news articles and comments. For instance, a disproportionate number of “likes” may convey support. A balanced number of “likes” and “sad” reactions may convey ambivalence. And a disproportionate number of “angry” reactions may convey opposition. The next section discusses the process of identifying Facebook users.

Identifying Facebook users

This dissertation examines how white or black Facebook users employ ambivalence as a discursive response to racialized police brutality. Non-white or black commenters are excluded from the qualitative analysis as the objective of this dissertation is to investigate how white or black Facebook users employ ambivalence in response to police shootings. Identifying Facebook users is tricky as race is a social construction, and is “unstable, flexible, and subject to constant conflict and reinvention” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. viii). However, our bodies are racially marked, and racial identity is assigned on the basis of social characteristics (Omi & Winant, 2015). Drawing on racial formation theory, Facebook users were categorized as white or black if they met one or more of the following three criteria: (1) white or black physical characteristics, (2) white or black sounding names, and (3) identity claim.

The first criterion, which can be viewed as a “meta-criterion,” is white or black physical characteristics. First, to be categorized as white, each commenter had to socially appear white. An example of a person who physically appears white may have blond hair, blue eyes, pale skin, freckles (Myers, 2005; Omi & Winant, 2015). Second, an example of person who may be coded

as black may embody certain physical characteristics such as dark skin, kinky hair, full lips, and round nose (Omi & Winant, 2015). It's worth mentioning these are not exhaustive descriptions of whiteness or blackness as a social identity. Categorizing Facebook users based on physical characteristics isn't farfetched. Omi and Winant (2015) note that racial classifications categorize people into distinct racial groups based on skin color, hair texture, eye shape and color, and physical build (Omi & Winant, 2015). Therefore, white or black physical features were assessed by looking at profile pictures and photo albums. Identifying race of social media users through their profile pictures isn't implausible. Chaudhry (2016) identifies white twitter users by looking at profile pictures. Furthermore, Brinkman (2018) found that social media users suspect people to know their racial identity through their photos and skin color.

The second criterion is white or black sounding name. Daniel and Daniel (1998) note that parents tend to give their children names that are connected to their racial background, which suggests that names, in some instances, can help to convey a person's race (Carpusor & Loges, 2006). Fryer and Levitt (2004) and Daniel and Daniel (1998) provide a list of white-sounding male and female names as well as black-sounding male and female names. First, they note white-sounding male names include but not limited to Cody and Connor, whereas white-sounding female names include Emily and Hannah. Second, black-sounding male names include but not limited to Reginald and Tyrone, whereas black-female sounding names include Shanice and Kiara. Employing a name-based method to help identify ethnic groups when self-reported identity is unavailable is not new (see Mateos, 2007). In internet and social media research, Chaudhry (2016) identifies white twitter users by looking at user names. Daniels (2009) uses screen names in her study of online white supremacy on Stormfront.org to identify white male or female contributors. Online names can signify racial identity. It's noteworthy that Facebook

commenters with a white or black sounding names had to possess white or black physical characteristics to be categorized as such.

The third criterion is identity claim. Commenters may discursively identify as white or black through identity claims. For instance, a commenter may type “As a white/black man or woman” to construct his or her racial identity. Previous research by Brinkman (2018) found that social media users discursively convey their racial identity through their bios or online interactions. While commenters may construct a white or black racial identity through identity claims, they had to possess white or black physical characteristics to be categorized as such. Racial identity is not only about how an individual self-identify, but also how he or she is socially perceived (Omi & Winant, 2015). In what follows is a step-by-step account of how white or black Facebook users were identified.

First, in Google Sheets, I clicked on the commenter’s name (which was hyperlinked to his/her Facebook page) to explore profile pictures and photo albums to determine the race of the Facebook user. It’s worth mentioning that some users might create fake profiles. To that end, users who did not have any photos, or used photos of cartoon characters or celebrities, were categorized as ‘unable to determine race.’ Second, it’s worth mentioning that commenters with traditionally non-white or black sounding first names but physically appear white or black were categorized as such. For instance, commenters with Hispanic-sounding first names such as Alejandro or Miguel for men and Sofia or Isabella for women were categorized as white if they possessed white external characteristics. The rationale behind this decision is that whiteness, historically, has always been malleable (Twine & Gallagher, 2008). Groups have either been invented into whiteness or could pass as white (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). And some white Hispanics identify as white and are perceived as white in certain social environments. Moreover, Omi and Winant (2015) note that an individual’s “own sense of racial identity may differ significantly

from how other people see and categorize her/him” (p. 2). The next section discusses ethical challenges in collecting data for social media research.

Ethical Challenges

Social media platforms enable researchers to conduct important studies on issues such as race and policing. The vast amounts of data readily available on social media platforms is attractive to internet researchers (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). These online platforms offer new ways to examine social phenomena in communication. However, ethical concerns must be considered when conducting online research. One major ethical dilemma this study faces is protecting participants’ privacy while using their comments verbatim without informed consent. On the other hand, using Facebook users’ comments verbatim may be necessary to conduct a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis. While complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed, this study endeavors to protect participants’ privacy through pseudonyms and article blindness.

First, during data analysis, each commenter is given a pseudonym. In other words, each Facebook user has a fictitious name in the data analysis. For example, a commenter’s name may be Zachary, but in the study his name could change to Sarah. This is one way to anonymize participants in the study. Second, as another level of protection, in the analysis, I do not mention the news article in which the commenter is responding. In so doing, this provides an additional layer of protection as re-identifying the commenter becomes more difficult.

To further protect participants’ privacy and from potential harm, comments were excluded from data analysis on several grounds. First, comments were not analyzed if they contained sensitive personal information such as social security number, home address, place of employment, or health-related information. Second, comments were not analyzed if they contained threats, which refers to statements about enacting physical, emotional, or mental harm on someone.

Packard (2010) defines privacy as “the right to control access to information about ourselves” (p. 202). Privacy is important, and social media users have a right to privacy (McKee, 2013). Social media users may know that their content is public, but when internet researchers publish their content it’s broadcast to a wider audience (Markham & Buchanan, 2012). In so doing, social media users lose control over their privacy. One way can scholars can provide a degree of protection for participants’ privacy, especially if informed consent is not obtained, is through anonymization. Internet researchers can do this through focusing on what was said as opposed to who said it (Trevisan & Reilly, 2014). This dissertation seeks to protect unaware social media users’ privacy through pseudonyms, article blindness, and excluding comments with sensitive information or threats. However, privacy and anonymity cannot be guaranteed through these measures.

While using direct quotes may be necessary for a critical discourse analysis, participants can be re-identified through direct quotes even when all personally identifiable information has been removed (Trevisan & Reilly, 2014). For instance, I copy and pasted comments into both Google’s and Facebook’s search engines, and commenters were unable to be found. While this may seem like a victory, Reilly and Trevisan (2016) warn that using direct quotes enable re-identification if typed into advanced search engines. Complete anonymity cannot be promised when using direct quotes from social media users. While this study endeavors to protect the privacy and identity of participants through data anonymization and article blindness, as Zimmer (2010) notes, “there often remains information that could just as easily be used to re-identify individuals” (p. 319).

This dissertation addresses ethical concerns of privacy and anonymity by removing personally identifiable information of Facebook users and where their comments were posted. While Facebook users may still be re-identified, Trevisan and Reilly (2014) note that an ethical

position in social media research is providing some level protection for participants. The next section discusses coding.

Coding

Taking an inductive content analysis approach, I engaged in “open coding” while reading the comments by black or white Facebook users. Elo and Kyngas (2007) note that “Open coding means that notes and headings are written in the text while reading it. The written material is read through again, and as many headings as necessary are written down in the margins to describe all aspects of the content” (p. 109-110). After combing through the data multiple times, I grouped reoccurring message characteristics into categories or frames. The next section discusses intercoder reliability and training.

The coding team was comprised of the principal investigator, two D.C. government employees, and a graduate student at Rutgers University. Coders were selected based on their experiences with coding, knowledge of police shootings, and, most importantly, availability. In May 2018, the coding team held three separate conference calls to discuss and train on the methodology of content analysis and how to identify message characteristics. Each coder received a google sheet with the necessary coding form and codebook. I used Freelon’s (2010) “Reliability Calculator” (ReCal 2) to calculate intercoder reliability for each variable. ReCal “is an online utility that computes intercoder/interrater reliability coefficients for nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio-level data” (para. 1). The variables in this study were hierarchical and could not be coded simultaneously. Therefore, the coding team divided into dyads. After coding for one or two variables, the next round of coding with a different coder took place. Dyads of coders examined five variables: Race, gender, ambivalence, frame, and semantic move.

As the principal investigator, I trained another coder before conducting pilot tests for the variables race and gender. During coder training, this coder was told that the purpose of this study was simply to identify the race and gender of Facebook users. The pilot tests achieved acceptable reliability coefficients for both race (KALPHA .701, $n = 50$) and gender (KALPHA .733, $n = 50$). While the coefficients for race and gender were generally acceptable, we discussed the cases where there was no agreement and revised the code book accordingly. Final tests produced acceptable agreements for both variables: race (KALPHA .715, $n = 685$) and gender (KALPHA .822, $n = 685$).

I trained a different coder before running pilot tests for the following variables: ambivalence and frame. During coder training, this coder was told that the purpose of the study was to identify how Facebook users talked about the Philando Castile incident. The pilot tests produced an acceptable reliability coefficient for ambivalence (KALPHA .068, $n = 51$) but not for frame (KALPHA .528, $n = 33$). After reviewing missed cases, the codebook was revised, and final tests produced coefficients of ambivalence (KALPHA .601, $n = 393$) and frame (KALPHA .051, $n = 44$).

In the last phase, I trained a coder to identify semantic moves in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users. This coder was told that the purpose of the study was to examine the ways in which Facebook users discussed the Philando Castile case. The pilot test did not yield an acceptable reliability coefficient (KALPHA .39, $n = 39$). The missed cases were discussed, and the codebook was revised accordingly before beginning final test, which produced (KALPHA .576, $n = 44$). See table 1.

Table 1. Pilot and Final Inter-coder Reliability Coefficients

Variables	Percent Agreement	Scott's Pi	Cohen's Kappa	Krippendorff's Alpha	(n)
Race	801 (80)	0.715 (0.698)	.715 (0.699)	.715 (0.701)	685 (50)
Gender	90.5 (88)	0.822 (0.73)	0.822 (0.732)	0.822 (0.733)	685 (50)
Ambivalence	76.3 (78.4)	0.6 (0.677)	0.601 (0.68)	0.601 (0.68)	393 (51)
Frame	56.8 (57.6)	0.504 (0.521)	0.507 (0.528)	0.51 (0.528)	44 (33)
Semantic move	63.6 (48.7)	0.571 (0.382)	0.574 (0.395)	0.576 (0.39)	44 (39)
Note: Final agreement coefficients are in bold, whereas pilot coefficients are in parentheses. It's worth noting that this coding was done hierarchically. First, I coded for race and gender. Second, I coded for ambivalence by selecting cases where there was agreement on race (black or white users) between coder 1 and coder 2. Moreover, I coded for frames and semantic moves by selecting cases that were coded as ambivalent.					

Method

A Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis grounded in the interpretive communities of Critical Race Theory and Critical Whiteness Theory was employed to examine discursive ambivalence. Additionally, a content analysis was conducted along with a Chi-square Analysis to analyze data.

Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis

The present study employs a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) to examine Facebook users' ambivalent messages. Because this study argues that the context collapse on Facebook prompts ambivalence, employing CDTA is useful. Brock (2018) notes that CTDA follows the "assumption that digitally mediated discourse may be ... shaped by the

technological features of computer-mediated communications systems” (p. 1017). Put differently, CTDA not only examines the use of digital communication platforms by users, but also the platform itself. For example, CTDA can examine the “graphical user interface (GUI) design, narrative, context of use, and the cultural background of the designers of intended users” (Brock, 2018, p. 1019). Brock (2018) contends that digital communication platforms are embedded with cultural ideologies that help to shape user-generated content. CTDA is powerful because other methods such as Critical Discourse Analysis tend to focus on the discursive output of information communication platforms.

CTDA is similar to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in that it examines how political, social, cultural, racial, and economic power are produced and reproduced in society through discourse (Van Dijk, 2008; Fairclough, 2001). However, CTDA differs from CDA in that it explores the mediation of discursive actions embodied as online discourse and digital interfaces” (Brock 2018, p. 1019). In other words, CTDA interrogates the discourses generated by users but also the technologies that make the discourse possible. Employing a CTDA framework helps to understand how power can be produced in maintained in the digital media society. Power, as Dijk (2008) suggests, refers to:

how specific groups in society are able to control the definition of, and the emotions about, public events, general sociocultural knowledge and common sense, attitudes about controversial issues or, most fundamentally, the basic ideologies, norms and values that organize and control such social representations of the public at large (p. 14).

Discourse has a significant influence on the change and maintenance of power relations in society (Fairclough, 2001). CTDA is powerful because it also considers how technological affordances help to shape discourses. Brock (2018) contends that CTDA should be used with critical theory such as critical race theory. This study pairs CTDA with both critical race theory and critical whiteness theory to examine ambivalence.

This dissertation employs a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis grounded in the interpretive community of Critical Race Theory. This approach provides several advantages. CTDA provides a framework for exploring connections between discourse, ideology, power, and technology. Pairing CTDA with CRT helps to expose ambivalent discourses that operate to perpetuate whiteness, preserve white privilege, and racial inequality. This method combines theoretical concepts of both frameworks to identify, understand, and critique (a) ambivalence as a form of (b) impression management to present a non-racist identity (c) while concurrently helping to legitimize actions of law enforcement. Brock (2018) notes that “CTDA is most useful to critical cultural researchers who have an inquiry into digital media discourse utilizing qualitative or quantitative content analysis” (p. 1014). The next section covers content analysis.

Content Analysis

This dissertation employs a content analysis to quantify Facebook users and messages. Content analysis is a popular methodological technique frequently employed in mass communication research. Content analysis has been defined in several ways. Neuendorf (2017) notes that content analysis can be “briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (p. 1). Krippendorff (2013) notes that “Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (p. 24). Ahuvia (2001) defines content analysis as a “general term for methodologies that code text into categories and then count the frequencies of occurrences within each category” (p. 139). In content analysis, human coders refer to people who “are employed in the systematic interpretation of textual, visual, or audible matter, such as newspaper editorials, television news, advertisements, public speeches, and other verbal or nonverbal units of analysis” ((Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007, p. 77).

An essential component of content analysis is intercoder reliability. Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2002) note that intercoder reliability “is a measure of the extent to which independent judges make the same coding decisions in evaluating the characteristics of messages” (p. 587). Neuendorff (2017) notes that intercoder reliability refers to the “level of agreement among two or more coders” (p. 19). In other words, intercoder reliability necessitates two or more coders. As stated by Neuendorff (2017), In content analysis, reliability is paramount. Without acceptable levels of reliability, content analysis measures are meaningless” (p. 19). There are several indexes to measure intercoder reliability.

There are a number of ways to report the level of agreement between coders in the reliability stage. Neuendorff (2017) notes that reliability coefficients “are concerned with the assessment, one measure at a time, of one or more of the following criteria: agreement, agreement beyond chance, and covariation” (p. 174). There are a number of indexes to use to report reliability including but not limited to percent agreement, Scott’s Pi, Cohen’s Kappa, and Krippendorff Alpha. Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2002) note that percent agreement “has major weaknesses, the most important of which involves its failure to account for agreement that would occur simply by chance” (p. 590). While Scott’s Pi and Cohens Kappa account for chance agreement, these indexes can be conservative. Several scholars have proposed Krippendorff’s alpha (KALPHA) as the standard measure of reliability (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007; Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken, 2002).

Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2002) note that “Krippendorff’s alpha index ... is attractive for several reasons. It allows for any number of coders and is explicitly designed to be used for variables at different levels of measurement from nominal to ratio. It also accounts for chance agreements, using the same assumption as Scott’s pi of equal marginal proportions for the coders” (592). Hayes and Krippendorff (2007) note that KALPHA “generalizes across scales

of measurement; can be used with any number of observers, with or without missing data; and it satisfies all of the important criteria for a good measure of reliability” (p. 78). The next section covers sampling for content analysis.

Neuendorf (2017) notes that “sampling is the process of selecting a subset of cases for study from the larger population” (p. 84). While there are a number of sampling methods, this study takes a random/probability sampling approach. Random sampling refers to how “Every element (case) in the population must have an equal chance of being selected” (p. 84).

Probability sampling is useful for generalizability to a population of cases. After creating a sampling frame, this study randomly selected cases for intercoder reliability by using Microsoft Excel’s randomizing function. The next section covers chi-square analysis.

Chi-square Analysis

This study draws on chi-square as a statistical method to analyze data. I applied a chi-square test to examine the relationships between (1) race and ambivalence; (2) gender and ambivalence; and (3) white-men v. white-women Facebook users and ambivalence. Race refers to black or white Facebook users. Gender refers to men and women Facebook users.

Ambivalence refers to messages that were coded as either ambivalent or not ambivalent. What is chi-square?

Chi-square is a useful statistical method for analyzing categorical data. Pearson’s chi-square test compares “the frequencies you observe in certain categories to the frequencies you might expect to get in those categories by chance” (Field, 2009, p. 688). Field (2009) notes that “Pearson’s chi-square test examines whether there is an association between two categorical variables (p. 696). This study uses Pearson’s chi-square to explore whether there is a relationship between racial identity of Facebook users and the expression of ambivalence. This project meets the assumptions of chi-square analysis by not doing a repeated measures design or having

expected frequencies less than 5 (Field, 2009). In what follows is a recount of how I readied data for chi-square tests.

There were seven categories in race, and four categories in both gender and ambivalence variables. I took the following steps to make those binary categorical variables. First, I imported data from each stage into SPSS to run unique chi-square tests. Second, I clicked on the *Transform* tab followed by the *Recode into Different Variables* option. Third, I selected the 'Race' variable. I clicked on the *Old and New Values* tabs to create a new variable. In the *Old Value* space. I typed in "1" for black Facebook users and entered "0" in the *New Value* space. Next, I typed in "2" for white Facebook users in the *Old Value* space and entered "1" in the *New Value* space. I named the new variable "Race2" and labelled it as "New Race." Fourth, I selected the 'Ambivalence' variable. Following the same process, I entered "1" for ambivalence in the *Old Value* space and entered "1" in the *New Value* space. Next, I entered "2," "3," and "4" in the *Old Value* space and entered "0" in the *New Value* space. I named the new variable "Ambivalence 2" and labelled it as "New Ambivalence." Fifth, I clicked on *Analyze* followed by *Descriptive Statistics* and *Crosstabs*. I selected the variable 'Race2' for the *Row* and the variable 'Ambivalence 2' for *Column*. Sixth, for the 'Gender' variable, I entered "1" for 'Male' in the *Old Value* space and "0" in the *New Value* space. Furthermore, I entered "2" for 'Female' in the *Old Value* space and "1" in the *New Value* space. Seventh, I clicked on *Statistics* tab and selected *Chi-square*. And I pressed *OK* to run the analysis. These steps were followed for all stages including overall data.

In order to test whether differences exist between white-male Facebook users and white-female Facebook users in the expression of ambivalence, I had to compute a new variable. To do this I followed these steps: First, I clicked on the *Transform* tab, followed by *Compute Variable*. Second, I entered "White People" into the *Target Variable* space and entered "0" in the *Numeric*

Expression space. Third, I clicked on the *If* tab. Fourth, I clicked on the *Include if case satisfies condition* option. Fifth, I clicked on the *Race* and *Gender* variables to create the following syntax to produce white male Facebook users: Race=2 & Gender=1. After creating this syntax for white men, I went back to *Compute Variable* entered “1” in in the *Numeric Expression* space. I entered the following syntax to create a variable for white female Facebook users: Race=2 & Gender=2. The next chapter discusses the findings regarding expressions of ambivalence in each stage.

CHAPTER 4

AMBIVALENCE

This dissertation presented a theoretical framework that postulated that the context collapse on Facebook may engender psychological tension in Facebook users in general but white users in particular. In other words, meshing different audiences with different expectations into an online context may induce cognitive dissonance in white Facebook users. Festinger (1962) asserts that people are motivated to alleviate cognitive dissonance because it is an intolerable state. Facebook users can reduce this psychological tension through producing ambivalence because it enables them to simultaneously appease divergent audiences. As agents with stake in structural whiteness, white ambivalence may operate as a self-presentational device to project a non-racist public image through moral claims while simultaneously protecting institutional whiteness through normative claims.

This chapter will examine whether white Facebook users were more likely than their black counterparts to convey ambivalence in response to each stage of the Philando Castile incident. First, I will provide an overview of the data. Second, I will explore whether white social media users were more likely than black ones to communicate ambivalence following the police shooting of Philando Castile. Third, I will investigate whether white Facebook users were more likely to express ambivalence than their black counterparts following the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez. Fourth, I will examine whether white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence following the acquittal of police officer Jeronimo Yanez.

Data

The next section will provide an overview of data. First, I will present data from the first stage. Second, I will provide data for the second stage. Finally, I will present data from the third stage.

First stage: Overview of Data

In the first stage, Philando Castile was fatally shot by police officer Jeronimo Yanez on July 6, 2016, during a traffic stop for a busted tail light in Falcon Heights, Minnesota (Massie, 2016). Data for the first stage is characterized by three news articles: CNN, ABC, and Breitbart. Each news article has a readership that differs across the political spectrum to capture a politically heterogeneous audience: CNN has a left-leaning news audience, ABC has a moderate news audience, and Breitbart has a right-leaning news audience (Mitchell et al., 2014). These news organizations covered the Castile shooting. This study analyzes the Facebook comment sections of three different news articles posted by these three different news organization. In what follows is a description of the data set for each Facebook news article in the first stage.

CNN is an acronym for Cable News Network. CNN, which was founded in 1980 by Ted Turner, is a cable news channel and the first television news organization to cover news 24-hours (Campbell et al, 2017). CNN's Facebook news article regarding the police shooting of Philando Castile has received over 3,100 online comments since posted on July 7, 2016. The comments were in response to a CNN news article titled "Woman streams aftermath of fatal officer-involved shooting." This Facebook news article post has received over 18,000 interactions including 7,400 "likes", 5,800 "angry" reactions, 5,000 "sad" impressions, 386 "wow" impressions, 43 "loves," and 37 "haha" reactions. It also has 8,600 shares. While CNN has a left-leaning news audience, the next data set has a moderate news audience.

ABC News is acronym for American Broadcasting Corporation. ABC News is a news organization founded in 1945 (Campbell et al, 2017). ABC's Facebook news article regarding the police shooting of Philando Castile has received 731 online comments since posted on July 7, 2016. The comments were in response to an ABC news article titled 'Woman Live-Streams After Police Fatally Shoot Boyfriend in Minnesota.' This Facebook news article post has received over 5,100 interactions including 2,200 "likes", 1,300 "sad" impressions, 1,300 "angry" reactions, 203 "wow" impressions, 11 "loves," and 6 "haha" reactions. It also has 2,200 shares. While ABC has a moderate news audience, the next data set has a right-leaning news audience.

Breitbart, founded in 2007 by Andrew Breitbart, is a controversial alt-right online news organization. Breitbart's Facebook news article about the shooting of Philando Castile received 924 online comments since posted on July 7, 2016. The comments were in response to a Breitbart news article titled "Man Fatally Shot by Police in Minnesota; Woman Livestreams Aftermath on Facebook." This Facebook news post has received over 1000 reactions including 487 "likes", 241 "sad" impressions, 240 "angry" reactions, 55 "wow" impressions, 14 "haha" reactions, and 6 "loves." It also has 464 shares.

Second stage: Overview of Data

In the second stage, Jeronimo Yanez was criminally charged with "second-degree manslaughter and two felony counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm" on November 16, 2016 (Ellis, 2016, para. 1). Data for the second stage is characterized by three news articles to gather a ideologically diverse pool: CNN, ABC News, and FOX News. Each news article has a readership that differs across the political spectrum: CNN has a left-leaning news audience, ABC news has a moderate news audience, and Fox News has a right-leaning news audience (Mitchell et al., 2014). These news articles reported the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez. The

comment sections of each Facebook news article are analyzed. In what follows is a description of the data set for each news article in the second stage.

CNN's Facebook news article about the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez has received 956 online comments since posted on November 17, 2016. The comments were in response to a CNN news article titled 'Officer charged with manslaughter in Philando Castile killing.' This Facebook news article post has received over 18,000 reactions including 16,000 "likes", 1,500 "loves," 572 "wow" impressions, 143 "angry" reactions, 129 "sad" impressions, and 31 "haha" reactions. It also has 11,000 shares. The next data set is from ABC News, which has a moderate news audience.

ABC News Facebook article about the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez has received 117 online comments since posted on November 16, 2016. The comments were in response to an ABC News' news article titled 'Minnesota officer charged with manslaughter in Castile Death.' This Facebook news article post has received over 2,600 interactions including 2,200 "likes", 219 "loves," 130 "angry" reactions, 42 "sad" impressions, 30 "wow" impressions, and 3 "haha" reactions. It also has 657 shares. The next data set is from Fox News, which has a right-leaning news audience.

Fox News, founded in 1996, is a cable news channel and online news platform. Fox News' Facebook news article about the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez has received 910 online comments since posted on November 16, 2016. The comments were in response to a Fox News article titled 'Breaking News: Minnesota police officer Jeronimo Yanez has been charged with second-degree manslaughter in the July shooting death of Philando Castile.' This Facebook news article post has received over 4,300 reactions including 1,900 "likes", over 1,200 "sad" impressions, 561 "wow" reactions, 427 "angry" impressions, 124 "loves," and 46 "haha" reactions. It also has 686 shares.

Third stage: Overview of Data

In the third stage, officer Jeronimo Yanez was acquitted of second-degree manslaughter in the killing of Philando Castile (Ellis & Kirkos, 2017). The acquittal is characterized as the third stage of the Philando Castile incident. Data for this stage is characterized by three news articles to capture a politically non-likeminded audience: Washington Post, ABC News, and Fox News. Each news article has a readership that differs across the political spectrum: Washington Post has a left-leaning news audience, ABC news has a moderate news audience, and Fox News has a right-leaning news audience (Mitchell et al., 2014). These news articles reported the acquittal of police officer Jeronimo Yanez. The comment sections of each Facebook news article are analyzed. In what follows is a description of the data set for each news article in the third stage.

Washington Post, founded in 1877, is a national newspaper covering politics. Washington Post's Facebook news article about the acquittal of police officer Jeronimo Yanez has received 697 online comments since posted on June 16, 2016. The comments were in response to a Washington Post news article titled 'Minn. Officer acquitted of manslaughter for shooting Philando Castile during traffic stop, dismissed from police force.' This Facebook news article post has received over 9,400 reactions including 6,800 "angry" reactions, 1,500 "sad" impressions, 657 "likes," 251 "wow" impressions, 32 "loves," and 24 "haha" reactions. It also has 2,700 shares. The next data set is from ABC News, which has a moderate news audience.

ABC News Facebook article about the acquittal of police officer Jeronimo Yanez has received 307 online comments since posted on June 16, 2016. The comments were in response to an ABC News article titled 'Minnesota officer fired from police force after acquittal in Philando Castile shooting.' This Facebook news article post has received over 1,400 reactions including 999 "likes," 250 "angry" reactions, 87 "loves," 51 "wow" impressions, 35 "sad" impressions,

and 9 “haha” reactions. It also has 321 shares. The next data set is from Fox News, which has a right-leaning news audience.

Fox News Facebook article about the acquittal of police officer Jeronimo Yanez has received 1,619 online comments from June 16-18, 2017. The comments were in response to a Fox News’ article titled ‘NOT GUILTY: Minnesota police officer Jeronimo Yanez has been acquitted of manslaughter in the shooting death of black motorist Philando Castile.’ This Facebook news article post has received over 9,700 reactions including 8000 “likes,” 903 “loves,” 592 “angry” impressions, 100 “wow” reactions, 44 “sad” impressions, and 38 “haha” reactions. It also has 583 shares. The next section covers the methodology of this study.

Ambivalence in the First Stage

The first stage explores racial differences in the expression of ambivalence in response to the police shooting of Castile. It compares the percentages of ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users against their black counterparts. This stage is guided by the following research question:

RQ1: Are white Facebook users more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the police shooting of Philando Castile?

In response to the police shooting of Castile, the value of Pearson’s chi-square test is 51.883. This value is highly significant, suggesting an association between race and the communication of ambivalence $X^2(1, N = 2092) = 51.883, p < .001$. This significant finding reflects that 3.40% of black Facebook users comments were ambivalent compared to 15.8% of white Facebook users. In light of these findings, we can conclude that there is a significant relationship between the racial identity of Facebook users and the expression of ambivalence. While highly significant, Cramer’s effect size statistic indicates that the relationship between

race and ambivalence has a weak association at .16 out of a maximum value of 1. Measuring the effect size as an odds ratio, the odds of white Facebook users expressing ambivalence is 4.64 times higher than black Facebook users.

To test whether race was distinctive in its association with ambivalence, a chi-square test was performed, and no relationship was found between gender and the expression of ambivalence, $X^2 (1, N = 2087) = .167, p > .05$. Therefore, we can conclude that gender has a weaker relationship with the communication of ambivalence than does race. Put another way, the expression of ambivalence differed by race but not by gender. This finding suggests that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the Castile police shooting. An additional chi-square test showed that there was no significant difference in the expression of ambivalence between white-men Facebook users and white-women Facebook users $X^2 (1, N = 1589) = 1.166, p > .05$.

Table 2. First stage: Chi-square tests Comparing the Relationships Between Race, Gender, and Ambivalence

	Race		Gender		White Race	
	Black	White	Men	Women	White Men	White Women
Ambivalent	17	251	133	135	122	129
Not Ambivalent	489	1352	927	892	700	638
Total	499	1593	1060	1027	822	767
Chi-square	51.883		.167		1.166	
Df	1		1		1	
Sig	.000		.683		.280	
Phi	.16					

Table 3. First stage: Race, Gender, and Ambivalence Crosstabulation

Table 3: First stage: Race, Gender and Values crosstabulation							
Values			Gender			Total	Percent
			Male	Female	Other		
Ambivalence	Race	Black	11	6		17	3.40
		White	122	129		251	15.75
	Total		133	135		268	12.81
Supports Castile	Race	Black	199	228		427	85.57
		White	266	423	3	693	43.50
	Total		465	651	3	1120	53.53
Supports Yanez	Race	Black	4	8		12	2.40
		White	350	158		508	31.88
	Total		354	166		520	24.85
Cannot Determine	Race	Black	24	18	1	43	8.61
		White	84	57		141	8.85
	Total		108	75	1	184	8.79
Total	Race	Black	238	260	1	499	23.85
		White	822	767	3	1593	76.14
	Total		1060	1027	4	2092	69.59
Percent	Percent		50.66	49.09	0.19	0.04	69.59

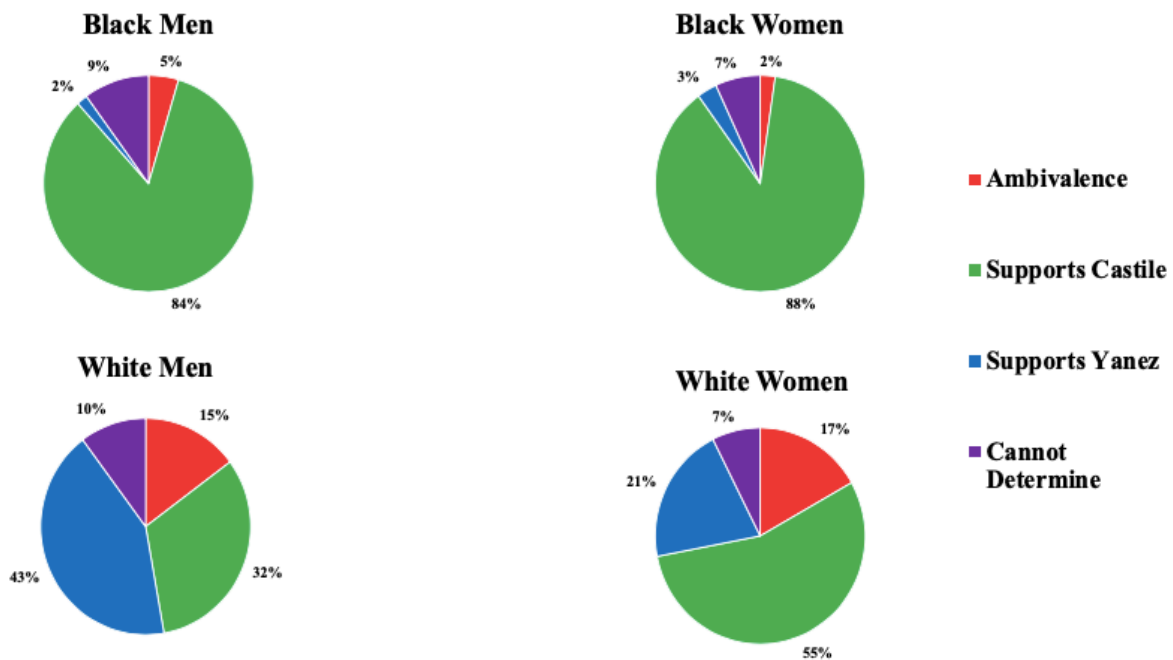


Figure 2. Ambivalence In response to the Police Shooting of Philando Castile

RQ1: Summary

These findings suggest that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence following the police shooting of Philando Castile (See Table 3).

While white women had the highest percentage of ambivalent messages 16.81%, black women had the lowest 2.3%. Furthermore, white Facebook users (31.88%) were also more likely than their black counterparts to express support for police officer Yanez (2.40%). See Figure 2.

Results from this study may indicate that social groups that are more likely to express support for law enforcement are also more likely to express ambivalence. The next section covers expression of ambivalence in the second stage.

Ambivalence in the Second Stage

The second stage explores the communication of ambivalence by white or Facebook users in response to the indictment of officer Yanez. It compares ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users against their black counterparts. This stage is guided by the following research question:

RQ2: Are white Facebook users more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the indictment of officer Jeronimo Yanez?

In response to the indictment of officer Yanez, the Pearson chi-square value is 25.741. This highly significant value suggests that there is a relationship between the racial identity of Facebook users and the communication of ambivalence $X^2 (1, N= 940) = 25.741, p < .001$. This significant finding reflects that 2% of black Facebook users comments were ambivalent in comparison to 12.55% of white Facebook users. Thus, we can conclude that race has a significant association with the expression of ambivalence. Although highly significant, Cramer's effect size shows a weak association between race and communicating ambivalence .17 out of a maximum value of 1. Calculating odds ratio as an effect size, the odds of white Facebook users expressing ambivalence is 6 times higher than black Facebook users.

Furthermore, I employed another chi-square statistic using gender to test whether race was distinctive in its relationship with the communication of ambivalence. The value from this test did not achieve significance $X^2 (1, N = 240) = 2.926, p > .05$, indicating that there is not a significant association between gender and ambivalence. As a result, we can conclude that race has a stronger relationship with the expression of ambivalence than does gender. In other words, the communication of ambivalence differed by race but not by gender.

These results indicate that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez. Additionally, a

significant difference exists between white-men Facebook users and white-men Facebook users in the expression of ambivalence. White-women Facebook users were more likely than white-men Facebook users to express ambivalence $X^2 (1, N= 653) = 6.980, p < .05$. See Table 3 for overview of data. See table 4.

Table 4. Second stage: Chi-square tests Comparing the Relationships Between Race, Gender, and Ambivalence

	Race		Gender		White Race	
	Black	White	Men	Women	White Men	White Women
Ambivalent	6	82	43	45	40	42
Not Ambivalent	281	571	497	355	365	206
Total	287	653	540	400	405	248
Chi-square	25.741		2.926		6.980	
Df	1		1		1	
Sig	.000		.087		.008	
Phi	.17					

Table 5. Second Stage: Race, Gender, and Ambivalence Crosstabulation

			Gender					
Values			Male	Female	Other	Cannot Determine	Total	Percent
Ambivalence	Race	Black	3	3			6	2.09
		White	40	42			82	12.55
	Total		43	44			88	9.36
Supports Castile	Race	Black	119	142			261	90.9
		White	122	99			221	33.84
	Total		241	241			482	51.27
Supports Yanez	Race	Black	1	0			1	0.34
		White	175	79			254	38.89
	Total		176	79			255	27.12
Cannot Determine	Race	Black	12	7			19	6.62
		White	68	28			96	14.70
	Total		80	35			115	12.23
Total	Race	Black	135	152			287	30.53
		White	405	248			653	69.46
	Total		540	400			940	71.42
Percent	Percent		57.44	42.55				

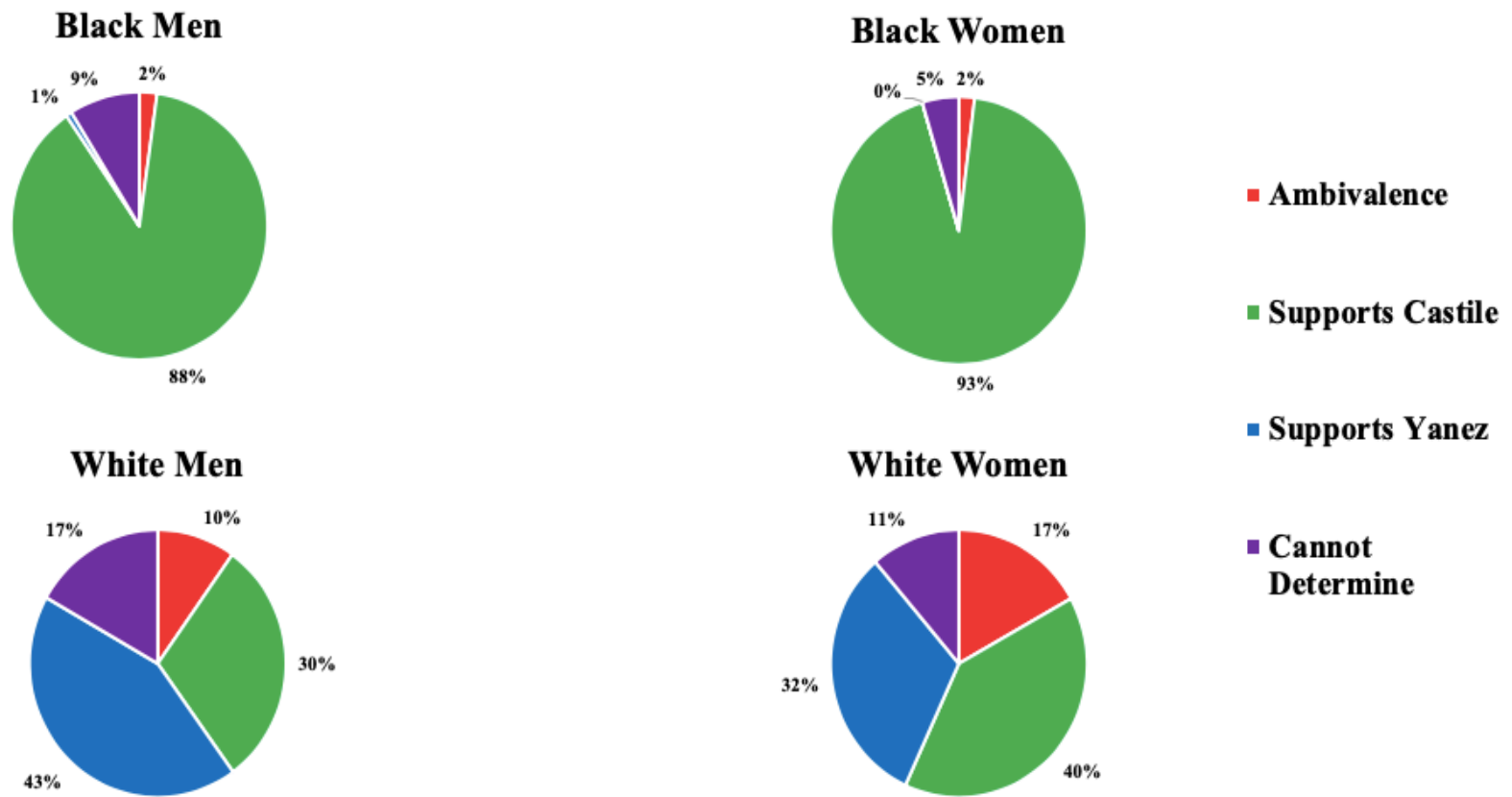


Figure 3. Ambivalence in Response to the Indictment of Officer Jeronimo Yanez

RQ2: Summary

These findings indicate that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to communicate ambivalence following the indictment of officer Jeronimo Yanez. See Table 5. While white-women Facebook users had the highest percentage of ambivalent comments 16.93%, black-women Facebook users had the lowest 1.97% (See Figure 3). Another indicator that ambivalence may be an impression management tactic is that white Facebook users were also more likely than black users to express support for law enforcement. The next stage explores ambivalence in response to the third stage.

Ambivalence in the Third Stage

The third stage explores racial differences in the expression of ambivalence in response to the shooting of Castile. Employing a chi-square test, I will compare the ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users against their black counterparts. This stage is guided by the following research question:

RQ3: Are white Facebook users more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez?

In response to the acquittal of officer Yanez, the value of Pearson's chi-square test is 9.177. This value is highly significant, signifying a relationship between race and the communication of ambivalence $X^2(1, N = 1321) = 9.177, p < .001$. This significant result reflects that 2.38% of black Facebook users comments were ambivalent compared to 7.67% of white Facebook users. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant association between the racial identity of Facebook users and the expression of ambivalence. While highly significant, Cramer's effect size statistic indicates that the relationship between race and ambivalence has a weak association at .083 out of a maximum value of 1. Measuring the effect size as an odds ratio,

the odds of white Facebook users expressing ambivalence is 3.22 times higher than black Facebook users.

Furthermore, I employed another Pearson's Chi-square statistic to test whether gender was also associated with ambivalence. The results from this test were not significant $X^2(1, N = 1320) = .001, p > .05$, suggesting that there is not a significant relationship between gender and the expression of ambivalence. Thus, we can conclude that gender has a weaker relationship with the communication of ambivalence than does race. Put differently, the expression of ambivalence differed by race but not by gender. These findings suggest that white Facebook users were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez. Another chi-square analysis showed that there was no significant difference in the communication of ambivalence between white-men Facebook users and white-women Facebook users $X^2(1, N = 1068) = .001, p > .05$. See Table 6.

Table 6. Third Stage: Chi-Square tests Comparing the Relationship Between Race, Gender, and Ambivalence.

	Race		Gender		White Race	
	Black	White	Men	Women	White Men	White Women
Ambivalent	6	82	43	45	40	42
Not Ambivalent	281	571	497	355	365	206
Total	287	653	540	400	405	248
Chi-square	25.741		2.926		6.980	
Df	1		1		1	
Sig	.000		.087		.008	
Phi	.17					

Table 7. Third Stage: Race, Gender, and Ambivalence Crosstabulation

Values			Gender			Cannot Determine	Total	Percent
			Male	Female	Other			
Ambivalence	Race	Black	3	3			6	2.09
		White	40	42			82	12.55
	Total		43	44			88	9.36
Supports Castile	Race	Black	119	142			261	90.9
		White	122	99			221	33.84
	Total		241	241			482	51.27
Supports Yanez	Race	Black	1	0			1	0.34
		White	175	79			254	38.89
	Total		176	79			255	27.12
Cannot Determine	Race	Black	12	7			19	6.62
		White	68	28			96	14.70
	Total		80	35			115	12.23
Total	Race	Black	135	152			287	30.53
		White	405	248			653	69.46
	Total		540	400			940	71.42
Percent	Percent		57.44	42.55				

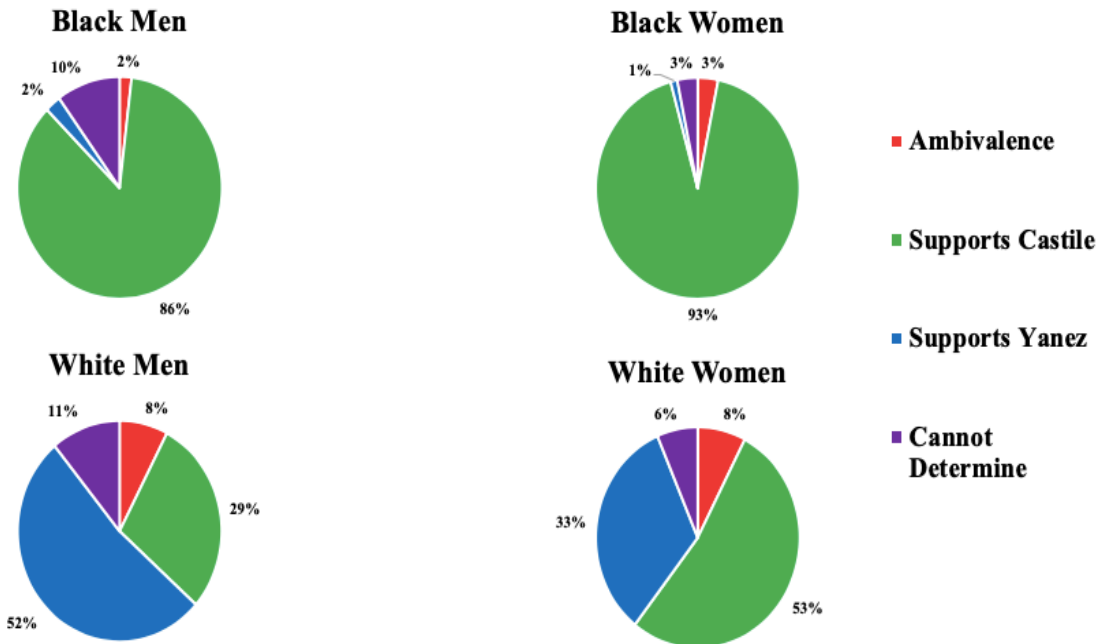


Figure 4. Ambivalence in Response to the Acquittal of Officer Jeronimo Yanez

RQ3: Summary

Results from this stage suggest that white Facebook were more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence following the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez. See Table 7. White-men Facebook users communicated the highest percentage of ambivalence 7.69%, whereas black-men users had the lowest 1.88%. White Facebook users were also more likely to express support for law enforcement. See Figure 4. The next section covers ambivalence across all stages of the Philando Castile incident.

Ambivalence Across All Stages

This stage explores whether white Facebook users differ from black Facebook users in the communication of ambivalence across all stages. The following question guides my analysis:

RQ4: Across all stages, are white Facebook users more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence?

Across all stages, the value of Pearson's chi-square test for race and ambivalence was 81.621. This is a highly significant value, indicating there was a significant relationship between race and the expression of ambivalence $X^2(1, N = 4353) = 81.621, p < .001$. This significant result reflects that 2.8% of black Facebook users comments were ambivalent compared to 12.5% of white Facebook users. Therefore, we can conclude that race was significantly associated with the expression of ambivalence. Using Cramer's statistic to calculate the effect size, the strength of association between race and ambivalence is .14 out of a maximum value of 1, which represents a weak association between the two categorical variables. While this is a weak association, the value is still highly significant. Using odds ratio to calculate the effect size, the odds of white Facebook users conveying ambivalence is 4.97 times higher than black Facebook users.

An additional test using gender was employed to test whether race was unique in its relationship with the expression of ambivalence. This value was not significant $X^2(1, N = 4347) = 3.707, p > .05$. This indicates that the communication of ambivalence differed by race but not by gender. Therefore, we can conclude that race has a stronger association with the expression of ambivalence than does gender. Additionally, a significant difference exists between white-men Facebook users and white-women Facebook users in the communication of ambivalence. White-women Facebook users were more likely than white-men Facebook users to express ambivalence $X^2(1, N = 3310) = 8.377, p < .05$. See Table 8.

Table 8. All Stages: Chi-Square tests Comparing the Relationship Between Race, Gender, and Ambivalence

	Race	Gender	White Race

	Black	White	Men	Women	White Men	White Women
Ambivalent	29	415	235	209	218	197
Not Ambivalent	1009	2900	2252	1651	1737	1158
Total	1038	3315	2487	1860	1955	1355
Chi-square	81.621		3.707		8.377	
Df	1		1		1	
Sig	.000		.054		.004	
Phi	.14				.50	

Table 9. All Stages: Race, Gender, and Ambivalence Crosstabulation

			Gender					
Values			Male	Female	Other	Cannot Determine	Total	Percent
Ambivalence	Race	Black	17	12			29	2.79
		White	218	197			415	12.82
	Total		235	209			444	10.19
Supports Castile	Race	Black	454	456			910	87.66
		White	598	702	3	1	1304	39.33
	Total		1052	1158	3	1	2214	50.86
Supports Yanez	Race	Black	9	9			18	1.73
		White	907	349		1	1257	37.91
	Total		916	358		1	1275	29.29
Cannot Determine	Race	Black	52	28	1		81	7.80
		White	232	107			339	10.22
	Total		284	135	1		420	9.64
Total	Race	Black	532	505	1		1038	23.84
		White	1955	1355	3	2	3315	76.15
	Total		2487	1860	4	2	4353	
Percent	Percent		57.13	42.72	0.091	0.045		

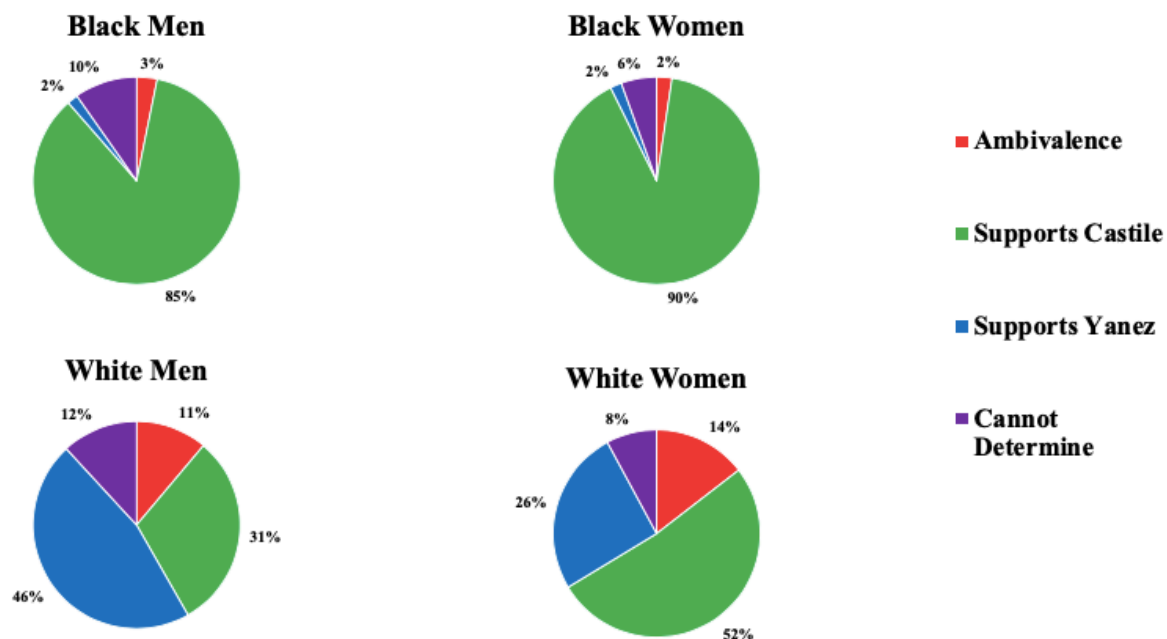


Figure 5. Ambivalence in Response to the Philando Castile Incident

RQ4: Summary

Across all stages, this dissertation finds there is a significant association between race and ambivalence. See Table 9. A chi-square test was performed comparing the frequency of ambivalent comments between black or white Facebook users. White Facebook users were more likely in each stage to express ambivalence. The frequency of ambivalence messages declines across stages. The highest percentage of ambivalence is in the first stage and the lowest is in the third stage. See Figure 5. The percentage of ambivalence decreases across race and gender and each stage except for black users in the third stage.

Chapter Summary

Results from this study suggest that white Facebook users were more likely than their black counterparts to express ambivalence in response to each stage of the Philando Castile incident. The results from these analyses help to support previous research on the relationship between whiteness and ambivalence (Foster, 2006, 2013; Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Foster (2013) argues that ambivalence enables whites to save face while concurrently preserving racist social structures. Bonilla-Silva (2010) refers to this sort of discourse as ‘racism without racists.’ Furthermore, Foster (2006) asserts that whites, as agents, engage in impression management while rationalizing the status quo because they have a stake in the system. That is, defending structural whiteness helps to preserve white privilege. Therefore, ambivalence operates to reinforce whiteness to safeguard the social benefits of being white. The next chapter endeavors to explore how frames emerged throughout the stages of the Philando Castile incident.

CHAPTER 5

FRAMES

Entman (1993) notes that “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52). The crux of framing theory is that an event can be discussed from a diverse set of views, but speakers choose to discuss some aspects of an event while omitting others (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Frames are “embedded in political discourse” and can be observed in several ways including identifying “the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” (Scheufele, 1999, p. 106; Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Several scholars have argued that frames in communication can emerge from the white racial frame. Feagin (2010) argues that the white racial frame is a “broad, persisting and dominant racial frame that has rationalized racial oppression and inequality and thus impacted all U.S. institutions” (p. ix). Frames are important to examine because they can help to reinforce white dominance and reveal how people perceive events, which in turn, can influence how others perceive events (Feagin, 2010; Druckman, 2001; Papacharissi & de Fatima Oliveira, 2008; Chong & Druckman, 2007). Drawing on the white racial frame may help to prove that ambivalence is indeed an impression management tactic to project a non-racist identity.

This chapter presents the white racial frames that emerged in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users across the Philando Castile incident. First, I will discuss the white racial frames that emerge in response to the police shooting of Philando Castile. Second, I will present

the unique frames that emerge in response to the indictment of officer Jeronimo Yanez. Third, I will examine the unique frames that emerge in response to the acquittal of officer Yanez.

Frames in the First Stage

In this section, I will explore how white or black Facebook users employed elements of the white racial frame to discuss the police shooting of Castile. The stage is guided by the following research question:

RQ5: In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile, what frames were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?

In response to the police shooting, 16 frames emerged in Facebook users ambivalent discourses. See Table 10. The next section will provide at least three examples of each frame from white or black Facebook users.

Table 10. Frames in Response to the Police Shooting of Castile

Frames	Black	White	Total	Percent
Victim blaming	2	35	37	13.8
Discrediting Witness	3	32	35	13.1
Withholding judgment	0	35	35	13.1
Qualified Sympathy	1	33	34	12.7
A Few Bad Apples	6	23	29	10.8
De-emphasizing race	2	26	28	10.4
Attack on law enforcement	1	13	14	5.2
Past victims	1	11	12	4.5
Injuring the Victim	1	9	10	3.7
White victimhood	0	9	9	3.4
Blaming Mass Media	0	9	9	3.4
Black Angel	0	5	5	1.9
Black-on-black crime	0	4	4	1.5
Blaming Guns	0	4	4	1.5
Politicization	0	2	2	.7
No Angel	0	1	1	.4
Total	17	251	268	100

Victim Blaming

The most frequent frame to emerge is ‘victim blaming’ (n = 37), which is present in comments that wholly or partially hold any black victim of police violence responsible for his or her own death or mistreatment. Brandon and Laura illustrate how ‘victim blaming’ emerged in the ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users.

Brandon

If the man had a CCW license the police would know when they ran his license plates and being a CCW holder myself I know I'm not to make any sudden movements that could reasonably appear suspicious to a police officer in this context . Knowing full well that I MUST keep my hands visible to where the officer can see them and be submissive to their directions exactly when they are given. Sadly I think this man attempted to retrieve his wallet quickly maybe being nervous as well and the officer perceived it as a threat to him developing especially if a person does not comply and respond to orders or any commands when they were given. Again people should comply with commands from police exactly as they are given when they are given. Sad for the family and officer involved .There needs to be a review across the nations police forces of citizens concerns to individual officers that demonstrate behavior that is inconsistent with the held values and professionalism of what law enforcement is about and the training tactics and responses and philosophy involved when contact is made between law enforcement officers and citizens for the safety of all concerned . So terribly tragic.

Brandon deploys normative claims by drawing on the colorblind ideology of universalism to frame his ‘victim blaming’ arguments. His statements assume that his experiences as a white man with law enforcement is akin to experiences for other people, namely black people. This colorblind discourse rooted in victim blaming is socially dangerous because it enables him to justify racially motivated police shootings. Brandon notes that he knows “not to make any sudden movements that could reasonably appear suspicious to a police officer in this context.” This colorblind, ahistorical argument with traces of victim blaming ignores how black people are gunned down by police officers even when they are motionless. He neglects the reality that blacks and whites have uniquely different experiential realities. The undertones of this comment suggest that Brandon may be unaware of the social value of his white body, and how darker skinned bodies may hold less value to law enforcement. Put simply, his actions may not be viewed as threatening because officers have adopted a white racial frame wherein white men aren’t perceived as criminal. As an agent of a structural whiteness, Brandon deploys normative claims embedded with victim blaming to not only help protect law enforcement but also to preserve his white privilege.

Second, now that Brandon has employed normative claims to meet social expectations of a single segment of his Facebook population, he must employ moral claims for impression

management purposes for another audience who may expect him to support black victims of police violence. Employing a moral claim to reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse, Brandon notes that the Castile shooting is “sad.” However, this sympathy is quickly undermined by normative claims that suggests that Castile’s death is a result of his resistance to follow police orders. This victim blaming argument is problematic because it allows police officers to kill with impunity if black people don’t follow orders.

Third, still attempting to minimize the psychological discomfort engendered by conflicting audiences with divergent expectations, Brandon concludes his comment through moral claims that express sympathy for Philando as well as advocate for better police trainings. These moral claims may function as an impression management tactic to foster a favorable social identity after blaming Castile for his own death. The next comment is by Laura.

Laura

My problem this one is the officer put both the women child in danger shooting into the car. The officer is scared our something. I still support our police. When stopped never until they tell you to.

Laura employs a moral claim through condemning officer Yanez for shooting into Castile’s car while both his girlfriend and daughter were inside. This moral claim may perform as a self-presentational strategy to construct a positive public image. It helps to communicate compassion and humanity to a segment of her Facebook audience who may expect her to support Castile. At the surface level, this moral claim is inarguably, altogether supportive of Castile. But note that Laura never condemns the police killing of Castile. Put simply, her quarrel is not with killing Castile but endangering a woman and child in the process. The normative undertones of this moral claim convey that the black male body is disposable as long as others do not witness state-sanctioned violence. Her quasi-moral claim performs as an impression management tactic to project a positive public identity to a segment of her Facebook network who may expect her to advocate for Castile.

Second, Laura minimizes cognitive dissonance engendered by the context collapse through expressing normative claims that appeal to a different sector of her audience. Drawing on the white racial frame, Laura states that officer Yanez must have been “scared.” The ideological frame of fear is problematic because it is a discursive strategy that helps to legitimize unjustifiable and unlawful killings of black bodies based on an unsubstantiated phobia.

Third, Laura proceeds with normative claims to pander to a single sector of her Facebook audience. She states, “I still support our police.” How can Laura still support law enforcement when she has a problem with an officer endangering women and children? Note she says, “our police.” As an agent of structural and institutional whiteness, Laura says “our police” because in moments of crises her support for law enforcement is unconditional and unwavering. She says “our police” because it is an institution that affords her white privilege.

Fourth, Laura concludes her comment with a normative claim that draws on the discourse of victim blaming. She notes “When stopped never [move] until they tell you to.” The subtext of this argument is that Castile is dead because he moved and not because he was black. This argument disregards how black people are shot and killed even they are not moving. Note how Laura doesn’t suggest what cops should do when they pull people over.

Black Facebook Users

Kendra illustrates how the ‘victim blaming’ frame emerged in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users:

Kendra

In light of the resent shootings I must admit I'm not shocked.... This has been going on for well over 150 years.... I'm am concerned for the wellbeing of the our black community... Its time we look with in to change our way of life and the way other treat us.... The thug life is going to end with a bullet and may as well have died with 2Pac....This is not a game, a movie or a song, If you look the part, act the part or portend to be the part be prepared to be handled.... The police not playing when asked to stop, don't run, don't struggle..... Be polite and calm.... Better to go in front of the judge than

your maker..... Its going to take us all to change our ways in order to end the oppression....

Kendra commences her comment with moral claims that appeal to a segment of her Facebook audience that may expect her to condemn police shootings of black people. She historicizes police brutality as a social issue that has plagued black communities for “150 years.” Kendra also conveys compassion by stating that she is worried about the welfare of black people. These moral claims may be a form of impression management to appeal to a single segment of her audience and maintain a socially desirable identity.

Second, Kendra alleviates psychological dissonance by transitioning to normative claims to placate a different audience with different expectations and values within her collapsed network. Kendra expresses normative claims by drawing on the discourses of respectability politics and victim blaming. Drawing on the cultural racism frame of colorblindness, Kendra states that the reason black people are gunned down by police officers is a result of black culture. The subtext of this comment is that black people are subject to police violence because of cultural blackness. Drawing on the white racial frame, she argues that black people experience police brutality for living a “thug life” and trying to lead lives of rappers and movie stars. Kendra continues with normative claims rooted in victim blaming by suggesting that black people experience police brutality because they are non-compliant. This ahistorical argument ignores how black people are gunned down when they are compliant and unarmed.

To reconstruct her socially desirable identity, Kendra concludes her comment with a moral claim that calls for people to come together to dismantle racial oppression. But note how she places the onus on black people to eradicate oppressive systems.

Discrediting Witness

The second most frequent frame is ‘discrediting witness’ (n = 35), which is present in comments that disregard, diminish or discredit a witnesses’ narrative of a police encounter involving a black victim. The following two white Facebook users provide examples of discrediting witness: Jacob and Elizabeth.

Jacob

Unfortunate but we only have one side of the story. And the woman's rather calm demeanor with her dying boyfriend in her car is rather suspicious. LEOs in states with concealed carry are trained on how to handle someone who is legally carrying. If the officer was not comfortable he should have had him get out of the car where he could safely disarm him before proceeding. But again, everyone is rushing to conclusions based on incomplete information and the BLM narrative. Wait until we have FACTS.

Jacob opens his comment with a moral claim that expresses sympathy for Castile’s fatal police encounter. He simply says that it was “unfortunate.” This single word operates as an impression management tactic that works to convey a favorable identity to a segment of his Facebook network who may expect him to convey compassion for black victims of police violence. After appealing to this division of his Facebook network, Jacob minimizes psychological discomfort stemming from the context collapse by expressing normative claims to appease another sector of his population.

Second, through multiple normative claims, Jacob drops self-presentational tactics and discredits Reynold’s account of the police encounter. He states that “we only have one side of the story.” This statement ignores Reynold’s recount on Facebook Live of the shooting. In other words, Reynold’s narrative of the fatal police encounter is not credible or legitimate. As an agent, Jacob protects his investment in structural whiteness and the privileges it affords by not lending credence to Reynold’s recount of the event.

Third, Jacob further reduces cognitive dissonance by re-appealing to the division of his network who may support black victims. He notes that the police officer should have taken a

different procedure to de-escalate the situation. This moral claim may operate as an impression management strategy to rebuild his favorable identity after discrediting Reynolds.

Fourth, Jacob reverts back to normative claims by criticizing people forming opinions without having all the evidence. Note he says “everyone,” which could be used a lexical strategy to connote black people because he says the narrative is informed by the Black Lives Matter movement. What is the BLM narrative? Jacob encourages people to “wait until we [have the] FACTS” to form opinions but note he has formed his opinions in the text. He closes by further undermining Diamond’s account of the fatal police encounter. The next comment is by Elizabeth.

Elizabeth

I agree Jacob Brooker..it is still a tragic thing to watch. Especially with a child in the car...She may have been in shock..And I am sorry but I think she was on some kind if drugs too. Does not make it Ok. But drugs to make people do stupid things..he may have been out of line. I just do not know, my heart goes out to all involved...

Elizabeth conveys a moral claim by stating that the aftermath of the fatal police shooting of Castile is “tragic ... to watch.” This moral claim may function as an impression management tactic to present a positive public identity to segment of her Facebook network who may expect her express compassion for victims of police shootings. Second, Elizabeth is motivated to minimize cognitive dissonance induced by the context collapse by employing normative claims to satisfy the expectations of another segment of her Facebook social network who may expect her to support law enforcement. Elizabeth discredits Reynolds as a credible witness by drawing on the white racial frame that positions black people as drug users. Note how Elizabeth says “I’m sorry” to mitigate this racist statement to smear the character of the witness. This serves as an impression management strategy to maintain a socially desirable identity while simultaneously making racist comments. Her statements are dangerous because they assassinate the character of the eyewitness. Through discrediting the witness, Elizabeth is helping to protect her privileges

afforded by structural whiteness in law enforcement. Third, Elizabeth, still attempting to reduce cognitive dissonance through appealing to different audiences with different expectations in her collapsed network, concludes by reconstructing a positive public image through moral claims. She says her “heart goes out to all involved.”

Black Facebook Users

The discrediting witness frame also emerged in the discourses of black Facebook users.

The following black Facebook user employed the victim blaming frame: Rajon.

Rajon

Police are scared of African Americans period! They think we are all up to no good! He was scared, made a poor decision, and realized he fucked up! Personally I would not have posted a live video, however if she hadn't done this, he probably would have killed her also.

Rajon commences his comment with a moral claim that appeals to a segment of his Facebook audience that may expect him to defend black victims of police brutality. He underscores how police officers are fearful of black men which may cause them to shoot. This statement calls attention to have cops have internalized the white racial frame that stereotypes black men, women, and children as dangerous and something to be feared. Furthermore, he lambastes Yanez for shooting Castile. Second, Rajon reduces cognitive dissonance prompted the context collapse by appeasing another segment of his Facebook network. He criticizes Reynolds for live-streaming the aftermath of the fatal police encounter. However, Rajon concludes his comment with a moral claim that may serve as a self-presentational strategy. He notes that he understands why Reynolds live-streamed the incident because officer Yanez could have killed her as well.

Withholding Judgement

The third most frequent frame is ‘withholding judgement’ (n = 35), which appears in comments that suggest reserving criticism or developing an opinion of a police encounter until all evidence is presented. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the withholding judgement frame in their ambivalent discourses. However, Simone and Rachel provide examples of how white Facebook users employed ‘withholding judgment’ frame in their ambivalent comments.

Simone

The headline itself states she started filming after the fact. We don't know what led up to the shooting. Before you start judging, you should wait to see all the evidence. Justified or not a young man lost his life. How about praying for him and his family and also praying for the officers involved. Until you are in someone else's shoes, you can't say shoulda coulda would.

Simone expresses a normative claim rooted in colorblindness by stating “We don't know what led up to the shooting.” She is using strategic ignorance as a discursive strategy to disregard the primary variable involved in recent high-profile police shootings: race. The gross racial disparities in police killings may signal that Castile’s race was a predictor variable in the shooting. Second, Simone continues with normative claims by stating “Before you start judging, you should wait to see all the evidence.” The subtext of this comment is that black people should not form an opinion about Castile’s death until ascertaining all the evidence. This statement is problematic because it functions to silence the voice of black people who are outraged at yet another unjustifiable police shooting. Black people don’t have the luxury of withholding judgment because they are disproportionately gunned down. Withholding judgement may be a privilege afforded to white people by institutions and structures that operate on whiteness.

Third, Simone’s normative claims meet the expectations of a segment of her Facebook population, now she must satisfy the expectations of another social group who may support Castile. She minimizes psychological discomfort stemming from the context collapse by

expressing a moral claim: “Justified or not a young man lost his life.” This moral claim may operate as an impression management tactic to convey a socially desirable public image. Finally, Simone concludes her comment with moral and normative claims that suggests people should pray for Castile and his family as well as officer Yanez. The next comment is by Rachel.

Rachel

Yes "aftermath" read it again "aftermath" where is the video from the beginning to prove what hapoen. Why is their outrage over an "aftermath" video. Let wait for cops video that shows from start to finish. But in all honestly what ever the truth is hope it all works out for whom it needs to wither victim or cop. PRAYERS FOR THEM ALL

Rachel communicates a normative claim that functions to de-legitimize the outrage regarding Castile’s death because the video doesn’t capture what prompted the police shooting. This normative claim is dangerous because it suggests that black people should not be outraged unless the police shooting of a black victim is captured in its entirety. This is problematic because some shootings are not captured on video. Furthermore, this argument conveys that a full video is needed to determine whether Castile is innocent or guilty. Second, Rachel indirectly asks, “Why is their outrage over an "aftermath" video.” Drawing on Critical Race Theory, there may be outrage because the black community has experienced yet another black body devalued. There may be outrage because another black girl has watched her daddy die at the hand of those sworn to protect and serve. There may be outrage because another black man was unjustifiably shot and killed.

Third, Rachel implicitly states that people should withhold judgment until the police car video is released. This is problematic because police departments, in some cases, don’t release video until years after a police officer is found innocent. As an agent of structural whiteness, Rachel urges people to withhold judgement because it helps to protect structural whiteness and preserve her white privilege. Fourth, now that Rachel has defended structural whiteness through normative claims, which meets the expectations of one group of her network, she must reduce

cognitive dissonance through employing moral claims that appeal to another group. She concludes her comment by saying “PRAYERS FOR THEM ALL.” This is clearly an impression management tactic to maintain a positive public image.

Qualified Sympathy

The fourth most frequent frame is ‘qualified sympathy’ (n = 34), which is present in comments that express sympathy and/or support for both a black victim and police officer. While there were no instances of black Facebook users drawing on this frame, the following two white Facebook users provide examples of ‘qualified sympathy’: Walter and Kristi.

Walter

I support cops. But this looks like a bad shoot. Quick application of a tourniquet may have saved the dude if the fatal wound was to his arm.

Walter commences his comment with a normative claim that appeals to a segment of his Facebook audience who may support law enforcement. As an agent of structural whiteness, he states, “I support cops.” After appeasing one segment of his Facebook audience, Walter reduces the psychological discomfort engendered by the context collapse through expressing a moral claim that appeals to another division of his Facebook network. He appeases the other side of his Facebook audience who may expect him to support black victim of police violence through stating “... this looks like a bad shoot.” This moral claim may function as an impression management strategy to avert accusations of racism and maintain a favorable social identity. Walter is vacillating to appeal to the different norms and expectation of different groups collapsed into a single social environment. After opening his comment with “I support cops,” he concludes by expresses sympathy for Castile. The next comment is by Kristi.

Kristi

I'm usually on the side of the officers but this man was following orders (supposedly) as he was still buckled into his seatbelt and his girlfriend was calm and respectful to the officer. The officer should have helped this man. He was in no position to aid himself and

his girlfriend wasn't able to help either. I hope that this lady and her daughter find peace and love during this time. I also hope that justice is served in the best way possible.

Kristi appeals to a division of her social network by expressing a normative claim.

She states, “I’m usually on the side of the officers.” As an agent, she upholds structural whiteness in moments of crises because it affords her privilege. This normative claim suggests that she finds some police shootings of black people permissible. Now that she has appealed to the values and expectations of one division of her Facebook network, Kristi minimizes the mental discomfort prompted by the context collapse through appeasing a divergent sector of her audience. She expresses a moral claim that suggests Castile didn’t deserve to be shot and killed because he “was following orders (supposedly).” This moral claim functions as an impression management device to construct or maintain a positive public image. Note that she states “supposedly” as a discursive tactic that shields her from unreservedly supporting Castile. Through a host of moral claims, she continues her support for Castile by stating “the officer should have helped this man.” Note how she never states that officer Yanez should be held responsible for Castile’s death.

A Few Bad Apples

The fifth most frequent frame is ‘a few bad apples’ (n = 29), which is present in comments that downplay the prevalence of police brutality. The following two white Facebook users provide examples of ‘a few bad apples’: Scott and Allison.

Scott

I would like to point out that this is not THE police; it is a very small percentage of the police. That being said, this IS getting out of control. Another black man executed for no reason.

Scott opens his comment with a normative claim to appeal a segment of his network that may expect him to advocate for law enforcement. Drawing on the white racial frame, he downplays racial bias in policing through stating officer-involved shootings come from a “very

small percentage of the police.” Reducing the prevalence of unjustifiable police shootings of black people to just a few bad apples is dangerous because it functions to safeguard law enforcement from wrongdoing. Furthermore, this frame is problematic because it serves as an impression management tactic for an institution in crisis. This normative claim functions to help protect structural whiteness by legitimizing the unlawful behavior of officers. After appealing to a segment of his Facebook population with a normative claim, Scott must reduce cognitive dissonance by appeasing another segment of his Facebook network with moral claims. Second, Scott employs a moral claim by stating that police shootings “are getting out of control” and Castile was “executed for no reason.” These moral claims help Scott avert accusations of racism while simultaneously building and maintaining a positive public identity. This may be a self-presentational strategy that panders to the values of one segment of his audience. The next comment is by Allison.

Allison

Sometimes mistakes are made. Let's not stereotype all cops by the actions of this one nervous nellie police officer. Police work is NOT easy.

Allison begins her comment with a moral claim to satisfy the social expectations and values of one division of her Facebook network. She states that “Sometimes mistakes are made.” This claim indicates that officer Yanez made a mistake in shooting and killing Castile. However, this moral claim may be an impression management tactic to convey a socially desirable identity. Second, Allison mitigates the intolerable nature of psychological dissonance induced by the context collapse through appeasing the values and expectations of another sector of her Facebook network. Allison expresses a normative claim by drawing on the frame of a ‘few bad apples.’ She states, “Let's not stereotype all cops by the actions of this one nervous nellie police officer.” This frame is problematic and dangerous because it is not “one nervous Nellie” but systemic. Black people are systematically and disproportionately gunned down by police

officers. Even when unarmed, black people are three times more likely than whites to be shot and killed by law enforcement. By drawing on this frame, Allison is protecting her investment in structural whiteness. Finally, Allison concludes her comment with a normative claim: “Police work is NOT easy.” As an agent, she is justifying police killings of black people because law enforcement officers have a tough job. This is not an excuse to gun down people who are sworn to protect and serve.

Black Facebook Users

Antoine illustrates how black Facebook users employed ‘a few bad apples’ frame:

Antoine

There are many good and we'll intentioned white people, including some Police Officers. But the truth of the matter is that they don't grasp or fully understand the problems that Black men, both young and old, encounter with the Police. Under normal conditions white men are not routinely stopped by the Police, unless they are suspected of wrongdoing. ON the other hand, black men are routinely stopped by the Police, often for no reason and often the results are fatal. It's time for this to stop.

Antoine commences his comment with a normative claim that appeals to a division of his network that may expect him to support law enforcement. He states that there are “many good and we'll intentioned white people, including some Police Officers.” (Note how he discusses whiteness in the context of law enforcement.) Drawing on ‘a few bad apples’ frame ignores how police work is inherently flawed because they are sworn to uphold policies that disproportionately affect black people. While there may be well-intentioned cops, they are obligated to uphold laws and norms that have racist outcomes. This frame is dangerous because it enables people to ignore ugliness of law enforcement. Second, after appeasing the social values of one segment of his Facebook network, Antoine attenuates cognitive discomfort through expressing moral claims to appease another section of his audience. Through a series of moral claims, Antoine concludes his comment by stating that law enforcement doesn’t understand the

racial reality of black people, white men are not racially profiled, and black and white men have different experiential racial realities.

De-emphasizing race

The sixth most frequent frame is ‘de-emphasizing race’ (n = 28), which is present in comments that ignore or minimize the role race plays in police encounters involving black victims. The following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘de-emphasizing race’ frame: David, Thomas, and Kim.

David

Wow, the fact that they killed this man in front of her and the little girl , then had the audacity to put them both in the back of a cop care is atrocious.... but I also hope this doesn't turn into another video blacks use to spread white hate. Let me say right out the gate this has NOTHING to do with race , just a scared trigger happy cop. That cop fucked us all when he shot that black guy, now it just adds ammo to these hate groups like blm and the Panthers. Yes we will see what the report is before jumping to conclusions but to me it don't look good on the cops part, tragic indeed

David constructs a non-racist identity through moral positions that condemn law enforcement for not only fatally shooting Philando Castile but also how his girlfriend and daughter were subsequently treated. It’s noteworthy that law enforcement is rendered invisible in his moral claims, which is problematic because anonymous perpetrators are impossible to hold accountable. He refers to police officers as “they.” This moral claim may be an impression management strategy to circumvent allegations of racism and foster a socially desirable identity. After appeasing one segment with moral claims, David expresses normative claims to pander to another division of his Facebook network.

Second, as an agent of structural whiteness, David positions the crusade to eradicate systemic racism in policing as “white hate.” Put simply, he views combating racial injustice as a personal attack because he cannot draw a distinction between his whiteness and racist social structures. He is the structure, and any structural changes affect him. Third, David constructs a

colorblind identity by drawing on language from the minimization frame of colorblindness: “Let me say right out the gate this has NOTHING to do with race.” Notice he emphatically states this ideological argument by capitalizing “NOTHING.” This ideological narrative functions to eliminate race from the fatal police encounter, which in turn, helps to protect structural whiteness from accusations of racism. He trivializes Castile’s race as a predictor variable to preserve his white privilege, which is conferred by systemic whiteness. The de-emphasizing race frame is problematic because shifts the conversation from racial bias in policing.

Fourth, David reduces a systemic problem in policing to a “just a scared trigger happy cop.” This is a socially dangerous ideological argument that operates to legitimize the devaluation of black bodies based on an unsubstantiated fear of black men. Additionally, the “trigger happy cop” argument ignores how systematically black people are gunned down. The problem is pervasive not personal. Fifth, David continues with normative claims by de-legitimizing BLM and Black Panthers as hate groups. This argument is life threatening for BLM activists as leaders of former black social movements have been targeted for assassination by law police departments and the FBI. Sixth, still trying to mitigate mental dissonance, David concludes his comment by appeasing the other side of his network through moral claims. He refers to the police shooting as “tragic” and hold the police officer quasi-responsible. The next example is from Thomas.

Thomas

I watched this video, I for one am sick of race being the first thing everyone jumps to. This is an unfortunate situation and should have been avoided. She states in the video he told the officer he had a gun and a permit to carry then reached for his ID, you can't do that. The officer doesn't know you and doesn't know if you are going for your weapon or not. I don't care if your brown, white, black or yellow, if you reach in the vicinity of a weapon an officer is going to react quickly. Anyone who carries, for your safety and the officers safety should first keep hands on steering wheel, let the officer know they are carrying and let the officer disarm you before you ever try reaching for your ID. This is sad this happened but this video doesn't show the whole story, don't cast judgement on this officer so quick. This man's weapon could have been on his hip by where his ID is. Prayers to this man's family and God bless

Thomas employs normative claims by drawing on the discourse of the minimization frame of colorblindness. He conveys the ideological sentiments of colorblindness by expressing his frustration with people inserting race into police shootings. This is a normative claim that operates to not only understate the significance race played in the police shooting but also to insulate structural whiteness. Downplaying race as a predictor variable insulates racist policing practices from structural changes. After appealing to a sector of Facebook audience who may expect him to defend law enforcement, Thomas reduces cognitive dissonance stemming from the context collapse by pandering to the other side of his network. Thomas expresses moral claims that may function as tactics of impression management. He makes a moral claim by describing the fatal police encounter as “unfortunate.” However, after making a moral claim for impression management, he reverts back to normative claims to protect his stake in institutional whiteness.

Third, Thomas employs the discourse of victim blaming. In so doing, he positions the police officer as innocent and unaccountable for Castile’s death. He contends that Castile shouldn’t have mentioned he had a gun, but what criminal alerts an officer he has a gun if he’s going to shoot him? The discourse of victim blaming is dangerous because it exonerates police officers of any wrongdoing. Fourth, Thomas reverts back to constructing his colorblind identity. In so doing, he draws on the ideology and language of colorblind universalism. Working as an agent for law enforcement, he legitimizes the police shooting by expressing that police officers react the same in situations regardless of race. This statement grossly misrepresents how white bodies are treated with more value than black bodies. The experiential reality of white Americans differs from the experiential reality of black Americans.

Fifth, Thomas reverts back to victim blaming. He ignores how police officers are trained to de-escalate situations Sixth, Thomas reconstructs a favorable social identity through a moral claim that expresses sympathy for Philando. He states that the incident is “sad.” However, he

follows this moral claim with a normative claim that functions to protect the officer. He urges people not to “cast judgment” on the officer until receiving all evidence but does not urge people to withhold judgement of Castile. He also contradicts himself by “casting judgment” on Castile through victim blaming without having all the evidence. This argument works to safeguard police officers by giving them the benefit of the doubt in race-related police shootings. Seventh, still attempting to reduce psychological dissonance, Thomas reconstructs a non-racist identity through moral claims by sending prayers to Philando and family. The next example is from Kim.

Kim

I first send my thoughts and prayers to his family. This is unacceptable loss. Second it is sad this has become a race issue when it's a police protocol issue. My boyfriend who is white said that he has had a gun drawn on him when he was pulling out his wallet on a couple occasions. I was telling him that I was taught you always go ahead and get your license and registration out in that period your waiting for a officer to come to the window. But he said that then police question you why there was shuffling going about the car like if you were hiding stuff. Lastly all lives matter.

Kim employs a moral claim express sympathy not only for Castile but also for his family. Trying to mitigate cognitive dissonance produced by the context collapse, she departs from employing moral claims for purposes of impression management. She draws on normative claims to appeal to another segment of her Facebook network. Second, Kim draws on the language and ideology of the minimization frame of colorblindness. She states that “it is sad this has become a race issue.” This normative claim functions to underplay the importance of race in a racially motivated police shooting. Regarding race as an insignificant variable is dangerous because it discourages meaningful conversations about racist police practices. Third, Kim proceeds with perpetuating normative claims by engaging in the colorblind discourse and ideology of universalism. Drawing on her white boyfriend’s successful encounters with police officers, she assumes that black people have similar experiences during interactions with law enforcement. This universalist argument ignores how blacks and whites do not have identical experiential realities. Her white boyfriend has social value on the basis of his membership in the

white racial group. The colorblind language and ideology of universalism is dangerous because it implies that if white people can survive police encounters then so should blacks. As an agent of structural whiteness, this ahistorical argument subtly absolves police officers of accountability for devaluing black bodies.

Fourth, Kim concludes by reinforcing her colorblind identity through the minimization frame of colorblindness. She states that “all lives matter.” The “All Lives Matter” slogan operates to not only re-center whiteness but also to trivialize the disproportionate rate at which black people are gunned down by law enforcement. As many people have noted, the history of America suggests that the word “All” has never included black people. The Constitution posits that “All men were created equal” in a time where black people were viewed as property and subhuman. The Pledge of Allegiance posits “with liberty and justice for all” in a time wherein when white people lynched blacks with impunity. All Lives Matter is a colorblind, ahistorical slogan that functions to remove race from conversations about police killings to protect whiteness and preserve white privilege.

Black Facebook Users

The ‘de-emphasizing race’ frame also emerged in the discourses of black Facebook users. The following black Facebook users employed the ‘de-emphasizing race’ frame: Jerome and Melissa.

Jerome

It is better we begin to look at the negligence involved. Once you bring race in this, the cycle will continue. It is time to look at the ethics and conduct of police and not race

Jerome begins his comment with a moral claim to appeal to a section of his Facebook audience. He insinuates that Yanez was negligent in his shooting of Castile. However, this may be an impression management strategy to construct and maintain positive public image. Jerome reduces cognitive dissonance induced by the context collapse through appealing to another

segment of his audience with normative claims. He draws on the minimization frame of colorblindness by stating that looking at the shooting through a racial lens help to perpetuate these shootings. This colorblind frame is problematic because it implies that talking about racist police practices produce racist police practices, which is illogical. Removing race from conversations about policing is misguided because it ignores gross racial disparities in police killings. Colorblindness performs to dismiss the significance of race, which is dangerous because it situates discussions about racism as preposterous in a colorblind society. The politics of colorblindness help to preserve structural whiteness. Finally, Jerome concludes his ambivalent comment with a moral claim preceding a normative claim. He calls attention to unethical practices of law enforcement but absolve them of racism.

Attack on Law Enforcement

The seventh most frequent frame is ‘attack on law enforcement’ (n = 14), which is present in comments that suggests police officers are under attack. Emma and Jack provide examples of how ‘attack on law enforcement’ frame emerged in the ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users

Emma

You will not find a person that supports and stands behind law enforcement more than myself. That being said, this is a clear case of an officer who is too scared to perform his job properly. All the minor traffic violations that have went badly for LEOs over the years has struck so much fear into some of these men, that this has become the result. I don't think it has anything to do with race, but just fear that everyone is going to try to shoot you over something as little as a tail light violation. What sickens me is this man is clearly dying and the officer STILL has his gun drawn on him as if he's a threat. Here's a tip: if someone you pulled over tells you he has a CCW permit and has the gun in the car, you don't shoot him. If he was going to shoot you, he sure as heck wouldn't be telling you he has a gun on him. This is incredibly disturbing. I understand this job comes with a level of fear, but if you're too scared at every traffic stop, you need to find a new job. This is bad for both sides.

Emma begins her comment with a normative claim that appeals to the values, expectations, and opinions of a division of her Facebook network. As an agent of law

enforcement, she proclaims that “You will not find a person that supports and stands behind law enforcement more than myself.” She unreservedly backs police officers because the institution of law enforcement bestows her white privilege. White women are less likely than black women to be gunned down by those sworn to protect and serve. Now that Emma has appealed to the ‘back the blue’ audience of her Facebook population, she must reduce cognitive dissonance stemming from the context collapse by pandering to another segment of her Facebook audience, which may expect her to defend black victims of police brutality. Second, Emma expresses a moral claim by suggesting officer Yanez was too fearful to do his job. This moral claim is an impression management tactic to avert accusations of racism. Note how this moral claim sits in between two sets of normative claims.

Third, Emma reverts back to normative claims to safeguard structural whiteness and preserve white privilege. She justifies police shootings because officers are under attack during traffic stops. This frame is dangerous because it ignores how black men are gunned down even when they are compliant, unarmed, or non-violent. This frame is problematic because black men are gunned down at higher rates than when white men when they are more likely to kill officers. This frame functions to justify and exonerate officers who devalue black bodies. Fourth, Emma continues employing normative claims by drawing on the minimization frame of colorblindness. Emma states the shooting has nothing “to do with race, but just fear.” Note that Emma is conflating fear and attack on law enforcement as justifiable reasons to shoot and kill black people.

Finally, Emma concludes her comment reverting back to moral claims to appease the other side of her network. She expresses a host of moral claims that condemn officer Yanez’s actions in the fatal police encounter as well as express sympathy for Castile. Still trying to reduce

cognitive dissonance, she revisits the normative claim of fear and attack on law enforcement.

The next comment is from Jack.

Jack

This seems to be a tragedy. Time will tell. That said. Cops know they are hated and even targeted by the black criminal element that has been empowered by legitimizing groups such as BLM. Knowing this why people just don't do exactly what the officer says during a traffic stop is beyond me. Now since I'm tired of PC bull crap I will say it. This applies particularly to blacks. This may be wrong or this may be right however it is the way things are.

Jack begins his comment with a moral claim that appeases the social expectations of one segment of his Facebook network. He expresses a moral claim by describing the police shooting as a “tragedy.” Though Jack implicitly conveys sympathy for Castile, this may be an impression management tactic to circumvent allegations of racism and to maintain a positive public image. Now that he has satisfied the expectations of one set of social relations in his context collapse, he must reduce cognitive dissonance by pandering to another group who expects him to defend law enforcement. Second, Jack expresses a normative claim that claims officer are under attack by black people. This claim is demonstrably false as white people, particularly white men, are responsible for more deaths of police officers than black people. Yee Hee Lee (2015) notes that “There were 511 officers killed in felonious incidents and 540 offenders from 2004 to 2013, ... Among the total offenders, 52 percent were white, and 43 percent were black.” Jack deploys the ‘attack on law enforcement’ frame to vindicate officers who unjustifiably gun down black people. His next sentiment functions to mitigate psychological dissonance produced by the context collapse. Jack makes a disclaimer about politically correctness. He says that his comments “applies particularity [sic] to blacks.” But notice how he quickly engages in impression management to avert accusation of racism by saying “this may be wrong.”

Black Facebook Users

This frame appears in black Facebook users' ambivalent comments. Michael employed 'attack on law enforcement' frame in his comment:

Michael

There can be no mistake now that the police have made themselves a target with the American people and now does this mean that police officer are in more danger of being shot by people who now claim to have enough of the police killings of Black and white people the police must be held accountable for their own action to wards people and not above the law its self bad police officers should be removed from the force without doubt now as there could be more killings of police officer to come , its time to change the attitude of police officers before its to late and we start to see police officer being killed for revenge of people that have been killed.

Michael commences his comment with a normative claim. He suggests that police are now targets, which simply isn't true. No one has killed Darren Wilson, the officer who killed Mike Brown. No one has killed Daniel Pantaleo, the officer who killed Eric Garner. The narrative that officers are under attack is patently erroneous. This idea helps to justify police shootings. Second, Michael reduces cognitive dissonance through expressing moral claims that appeal to another segment of his Facebook audience. Michael notes that police officers must be held accountable when they unlawfully kill civilians. This may be an impression management strategy to appeal to an audience who expects him to support black victims. Third, Michael transitions back to normative claims to appease his other audience. He notes that "bad police officers should be removed" because their lives are at risk. Michael is protecting police officers but ignores how they routinely take black lives. Note how he doesn't make suggestions on how to stop cops from killing black people but discusses how to stop people from killing cops.

Past Victims

The eighth most frequent frame is 'past victims' (n = 12), which is present in comments where opposition or support for a black victim is juxtaposed with opposition or support for

another black victim of police violence. The following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘past victims’ frame: Christopher, Justin, and Ed.

Christopher

This is a completely different situation from the likes of that Alton, Michael Brown, or Tamir Rice stuff. He wasn't a criminal, he went through all the proper steps to legally carry, and he informed the officer that he was carrying. This is honestly one of the instances where the officer truly over reacted.

Christopher commences his comment by conveying a normative claim to appease a division of his Facebook network that may expect him to advocate for law enforcement. As an agent, he is working to legitimate recent shootings by referring to black victims of police killings as criminals. This is disturbing because Tamir Rice, who was a 12-year-old boy, is referred to as a criminal. The criminal label is powerful because it helps to exonerate officers of wrongdoing. Additionally, it helps agents of structural whiteness to feel no remorse because the victim’s life did not matter. Second, Christopher alleviates psychological dissonance prompted by the integration of diverse audiences with divergent values and expectations through appealing to another segment of his Facebook population. Christopher expresses a moral claim with traces of normative elements. He suggests that Castile should be alive because “he wasn’t a criminal.” Again, this discourse is dangerous because it suggests that officers can unjustifiably kill black people if they have a criminal record. Christopher is using an impression management strategy to avert accusations of racism and to maintain a favorable public image. He frames his comment as supportive of Castile but not other victims. This identity management tactic is clever because it enables him to express ambivalence, which simultaneously panders to multiple audiences. Using the ‘past victims’ frame, Christopher can construct an ambivalent online identity that satisfy the social expectations of conflicting networks. Third, continuing with moral claims, Christopher concludes by stating that the police officer “truly over reacted.” The next comment is by Justin.

Justin

Finally an incident where a protest may actually be an accurate response. It is sad that this incident will just blend in with the legit officer involved shootings because of all the times the BLM community has screamed wolf.

Justin employs a moral claim (with normative aspects) as an impression management tactic to convey a socially desirable identity to a segment of his Facebook network that may support black victims of police shootings. He notes that the Castile police shooting is an incident that warrants a protest. This comment suggests that he views the Castile shooting as unjustifiable. However, note how he begins his moral claim with “Finally.” The undertone of this comment is that other shootings did not warrant a protest because they were lawful. Justin is drawing on the ‘past victims’ frame, which enables him to simultaneously appease the values and opinions of conflicting audiences. This frame is dangerous because it allows agents of structural whiteness to suggest who deserved to live or die. Second, Justin continues expressing moral claims with normative sentiments. He states that “it is sad” that the unjust killing police of Castile will be undermined by legitimate shootings of other victims that have garnered national attention by the movement for black lives. By drawing on the ‘past victims’ frame, Justin is able to reduce cognitive dissonance promoted by the context collapse.

Black Facebook Users

The ‘past victim’ frame also emerged in the discourses of black Facebook users. The following black Facebook user employed past victim: Karina.

Karina
I'm normally on the side of the officers but not this time.

Karina expresses a normative claim that functions to placate a division of her Facebook friends network who may expect her to advocate for law enforcement. She states that she is “Normally on the side of the officers.” Second, Karina mitigates mental discomfort induced by the context collapse through appeasing the sentiments of the other side of her network. Her moral

claim conveys that she is supportive of Castile even though she generally supports law enforcement. This comment implicitly draws on the discourses of the ‘past victims’ frame. Karina is conveying that she generally don’t support black victims of police violence but she supports Castile.

Injuring the Victim

The ninth most frequent frame is ‘injuring the victim’ (n = 10), which is present in comments that indicate cops should use a different weapon or shoot fewer times to subdue black victims during police encounters. White Facebook users Kristen and Glen provide examples of ‘injuring the victim’ frame.

Kristen

Once again. All other issues aside (there are many i am isolating but one at the moment)...why must it be shoot 5 times to kill instead of 1 time to disarm if you as a cop "feel threatened". Google or youtube white men pointing guns at cops.....the comparison is startling

Kristen expresses a normative claim with moral sentiments by drawing on the discourses of ‘injuring the victim’ frame. She states, “why must it be shoot 5 times to kill instead of 1 time to disarm if you as a cop “fell threatened” This normative claim is disgusting and dangerous because a single bullet can kill or gravely injure. Furthermore, feeling threatened should not grant cops the permission to shoot one time. Because many officers have internalized the white racial frame, this would have a disproportionate impact on black people, namely black men. Kristen expresses a moral claim to reduce cognitive dissonance and appease another segment of her audience who support black victims. She states that armed white men have been able to go untouched by police officers. Why doesn’t she suggest the same for black people? Why do they have to be shot one time? Why don’t police de-escalate the situation, armed or unarmed, like they do with white men. Shooting one time is excessive. The next comment is by Glen.

Glen

its sad but lets not make it a color issue it is a badly trained cop who was wrrong why do we teach to shoot to kill why not shoot to injure it would be tuff to be a cop with what they have to deal with all of the time but we need more training weed out the bad ones god bless this family

Glenn begins his comment with a moral claim to appeal to the values of one segment of his Facebook network who may expect him to express sympathy for black victims of police shootings. He implicitly refers to the Castile shooting as “sad.” This simple word operates as an impression management device by conveying compassion and humanity for Castile, which helps to project a positive public image. After appealing to one section of his network, he must now minimize psychological dissonance prompted by the context collapse through placating a divergent audience. Glenn expresses a normative claim by employing the minimization frame of colorblindness. He de-emphasizes the role race played in the shooting by stating that “lets not make it a color issue it is a badly trained cop who was wrong.” As an agent of structural whiteness, minimizing the pivotal role race played in the shooting performs as an impression management tactic that absolves law enforcement of racism and wrongdoing. It functions to repair the public identity of an institution that is under scrutiny.

Third, Glenn continues with normative claims by drawing on ‘injuring the victim’ frame. He states that “why do we teach [police officers] to shoot to kill [and] not shoot to injure.” This is line of thinking is alarming. Shooting to injure innocent victims is disturbing and unjust. It will have a disproportionate impact on black people who are already three times more likely to be shot than white people. This frame endangers black lives. Fourth, still attempting reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse, Glenn reverts back to moral claims to rebuild his favorable public image with another segment of his audience. He calls for more robust police training as well as sympathy for Castile’s family.

Black Facebook Users

Black Facebook user Venika employed ‘injuring the victim’ frame in her ambivalent comment.

Venika

Is there a sort of a secret 'civil' war going on in the USA? What if a group of people joined the police force with the intention of harming innocent lives? This is way too much killing. Why do they shoot to kill? How come they hardly aim for a leg or something else. As a police officer do you really belief that if you shoot someone on the leg..they will still have the energy to kill you?

Venika expresses moral claims through questioning why police officers kill black civilians. These claims appease a sector of her Facebook network that oppose the police killings of black people. Second, Venika alleviates psychological dissonance from the context collapse by expressing a normative claim to placate to another division of her Facebook population. She draws on ‘injuring the victim’ frame by asking and stating “Why do they shoot to kill? How come they hardly aim for a leg or something else.” Furthermore, she even suggests that it is acceptable to shoot a black person in the leg. This frame is problematic because it allows officers to injure black people without ever attempting tactics of de-escalation. Furthermore, shooting someone in the leg can lead to amputation or other unfortunate consequences.

White Victimhood

The tenth most frequent frame is ‘white victimhood’ (n = 9), which is present in comments that downplay police brutality against black people because white people also experience police misconduct. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the ‘white victimhood’ frame in their ambivalent discourses. However, the following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘white victimhood’: Wyatt, Lindsay, and Dawn.

Wyatt

This is terrible. Definitely should go through intense investigation. But out of 588 killed by police in 2016,. 281 were White! The rest are Native American, Asian, Hispanic, Black Ameicans. More correctly I could just say 588 Americans!

Wyatt constructs a moral identity, albeit transient, through two moral claims, which describe the police shooting of Philando as “terrible” and suggest that it should undergo an “intense investigation.” These two moral claims function as a form of impression management to construct a positive public identity for a segment of his Facebook network who may expect him to support Castile. Wyatt can now reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by expressing normative claims to protect structural whiteness, preserve white privilege, and appeal to another segment of his social network in Facebook.

Second, Wyatt draws on the ‘white victimhood’ frame. He states that “out of 588 killed by police in 2016, 281 were White! These statistics are misleading but notice the emphatic stress and tone of this argument as if it is a competition of which racial group is more likely to be gunned down by police officers. The white victimhood argument is dangerous because it allows white people to dismiss racialized police killings on the bases that raw numbers show more white people are gunned down by police officers. This is problematic because the numbers require adjustment for population. There are 160 million more white Americans than there are black Americans (Lowry, 2016). Put differently, white people constitute 62% of America, but represent only 49% of victims of police brutality.

Third, Wyatt concludes his comment by drawing on the ideological discourse of the minimization frame of colorblindness. He states that police killings of people of color can just be viewed as police killings of Americans. But this argument trivializes how people of color are shot and killed at higher rates than white people. This argument works to legitimize the police shooting of Castile. It’s noteworthy that Wyatt doesn’t care about police killings. His only concern is that police killings aren’t racialized. The subtext of this argument is that because more white Americans are killed than blacks we shouldn’t pay attention to the death of Castile. This next comment is by Lindsay.

Lindsay

Cops kill innocent white people too. And there are real murders in the black communities, horrible black on black crimes:(but every chance media gets, they will highlight this. Further injuring racism and firing it up. It's sad. There are children being molested and killed , but this gets all the attention because the media can't stand to let racism take a breath. That cop was wrong! Yes. And the cop that killed a white man who was innocent is wrong it doesn't matter what color you are. Quit feeding this kind of animal

Lindsay opens her comment conveying a normative claim by drawing on the ‘white victimhood’ frame. She states that police officers “kill innocent white people too.” It’s noteworthy that she is not outraged by the police killings of innocent white people. She employs this normative position only to justify the police shooting of Castile. Lindsay supports police violence against black people because white people experience police violence. This frame is dangerous because it operates to exonerate police officers for killing black people because they kill white people as well.

Second, Lindsay draws on ideological language of black-on-black crime. She notes that “there are real murders in the black communities, horrible black on black crimes.” Crime is about proximity. There are real murders in white communities, horrible white-on-white crimes. Statistics show that 82% of white people are killed by other white people (Bennett, 2015). The black-on-black crime argument performs to legitimize police killings of black people. It would be asinine to justify police killings of white people because white people kill white people.

Third, as a colorblind agent, Lindsay views discussing racialized police brutality as racist. This is problematic because racism cannot be rectified if talking about racism is racist. This preposterous argument functions to sustain structural whiteness. Fourth, Lindsay states that media should focus on “children being molested and killed.” This is a red-herring, which operates to divert attention from police killings of black bodies. Her white fragility is on full display. Lindsay notes that “media can’t stand to let racism take breath.” She is experiencing psychological discomfort from exposure to news about racism in policing. As an agent of this

institution, who must protect it at all costs, national conversations about racialized police killings disturbs her. The subtext here is that racism is not the issue but reporting on racism is.

Fifth, Lindsay has employed normative claims to not only protect her stake in whiteness but also to satisfy the expectations of a social group in her Facebook network. She must now employ moral claims for impression management purposes to present a non-racist identity to a segment of her social network. Lindsay minimizes psychological dissonance from the context collapse by stating “That cop was wrong!” This moral claim functions only to avert accusations of racism. Sixth, this statement is followed by normative claims of colorblindness and white victimhood, which helps to reconstruct her commitment to structural whiteness. It’s noteworthy that colorblindness and white victimhood are contradictory. The next comment is by Dawn.

Dawn

I don't see story's about a white man getting shot bc if it happened it can't be used as a race issue.. People that's y the world is like it is bc everyone thinks everything is about race this is ridiculous.. Yes this story is sad but that's not the first time an officer did that a friend of mine that was white was sleeping in his car and was killed by a police officers straight cold blooded murder but that's not all over the media why bc it was a white male js

Dawn takes a normative position by drawing on the discourse and frame of ‘white victimhood.’ She notes that police shootings of white men do not garner national media coverage. This argument is misplaced. Men account for 93% of victims of police brutality (Vittana, 2017). But white men are less likely than black men to be killed by police. Unarmed white men are also less likely than unarmed black men to be victims of excessive use of force (Vittana, 2017). This helps to explain why police shootings of white men are less likely to receive coverage.

Second, she employs a normative claim that draws on the ideological discourse of the minimization frame of colorblindness. She states, “the world is like it is bc everyone thinks everything is about race.” This ahistorical argument ignores how white people stratified

American society based on a racial hierarchy (Orbe & Harris, 2007). Following the creation of different racial groups by white people, everything, then, became about race (Omi & Winant, 2015).

Third, Dawn has employed normative claims to defend a racist institution and appeal to a segment of her social network. She must now employ moral claims for impression management to another segment of her social network. Dawn mitigates cognitive dissonance through stating “Yes this story is sad.” This is constructed sympathy that works to present a positive public identity. Fourth, Dawn reconstructs her normative identity by reverting back to the ideological discourse of white victimhood. She provides anecdotal evidence of a friend who gunned down by law enforcement. Instead of tackling police brutality, she is upset that police shootings of black people gets more coverage.

Blaming Mass Media

The eleventh most frequent frame is ‘blaming mass media’ (n = 9), which is present in comments that mention news outlets are the reason for police shootings. Although black Facebook users did not draw on this frame, white Facebook users Patrick, Sandy, and Scott provide examples of ‘blaming mass media’:

Patrick

Its sad that these dirty cops are turning so many black people against the white race in general. Not every white person hates blacks just because dirty, crooked POS cops do! Lets also not forget that cops murder people of every color regularly, the mainstream news just tends to only report on ones that appear to be racist because it gets them views and gets the nation divided. We need to stand together against police brutality and the police state! ALL LIVES MATTER not just black lives!

Patrick begins with a moral claim to appease a segment of his Facebook friends network. He acknowledges that police brutality against black people is a problem to the point it may be sowing or exacerbating racial division. It must be stated the police brutality against black people causes black people to protest against law enforcement not white people. Nonetheless, this

comment functions as a self-presentational tactic to project a socially desirable identity that is consistent with the values and expectations of a segment of his network. Second, Patrick expresses a normative claim to appeal to another division of his population. He alleviates cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by stating that police officers kill people of all races. He is ignoring how black people are disproportionately killed by law enforcement.

Third, Patrick continues expressing normative claims by blaming mainstream media for racially dividing the country through reporting on police shootings of black people. The frame is misguided as the nation is not divided because mainstream media reports police killings of black people, rather it is divided because police officers kill black people, and some white people justify it. Blaming the media for stoking racial tension absolve law enforcement of policing with racial bias. As an agent of law enforcement, Patrick blames the media but not the institution of policing. The media would have nothing to report if officers stopped shooting black people. Fourth, Patrick reverts back to moral claims to appeal to his other Facebook network. He states that “We need to stand together against police brutality and the police state.” Fifth, still battling cognitive dissonance, Patrick concludes his comment by drawing on the minimization frame of colorblindness. He says “ALL LIVES MATTER not just black lives” which, again, disregards how black people are disproportionately shot and killed by police officers. The next comment is by Sandy.

Sandy

This is horrible but please tell me how this makes the news after 500+ PEOPLE have been killed this year alone by police and more than half of those people were white. Media needs to stop race baiting. You are most definitely the biggest part of the problems in the world today.

Sandy begins with a moral claim. She expresses her humanity and compassion for Castile’s death by saying “This is horrible.” This serves as an impression management tactic to appeal to a segment of her Facebook network who may support black victims of police violence.

Second, Sandy reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by expressing a normative claim to appeal to another segment of her population. She questions why this shooting receives news coverage when over 500 people have been killed by law enforcement and more than half were racially white. She is drawing on the frame ‘white victimhood.’ Yes, more white people are killed by police officers simply because there are more whites than there are blacks.

Proportionately, blacks are more likely to be killed by police officers than whites. Third, Sandy continues expressing normative claims by blaming media for “race baiting” and being the real problem. As an agent of law enforcement, note how she criticizes media for reporting these atrocities but not condemn law enforcement for committing them. The media have a responsibility to cover public events. This frame is used simply denigrate media but not officers who unjustifiably kill black people. The next comment is by Scott.

Scott

The only evidence anyone has on this is that someone turned on a camera after the fact. We know NOTHING about it. Could it be murder? Sure. But people screaming police brutality and just simply taking this woman they know nothing about's word on the matter. Maybe it's time for the media to stop fanning the flames and cover something with worldly consequences, and stop spreading footage of this guys death all over the Internet. It's easy to turn on a camera after the fact and claim something else happened.in other words stop creating the news, and just report it instead. If you create news yourself spurred from an agenda, you lose all credibility with anyone that is capable of critical thinking, that don't need the media to tell them what to be mad about

Scott begins with a normative claim to appeal to a segment of his audience who support law enforcement. He discredits Reynold’s narrative of the fatal police encounter by uttering we “know NOTHING” about what’s happened. This disregards Reynold’s account of the shooting. Second, Scott minimizes the intolerable nature of psychological dissonance by expressing a moral claim as an impression management tactic to appease another segment of his Facebook network. He suggests that the shooting “could be murder,” which implies Castile’s innocence and Yanez’s guiltiness. Third, Scott reverts back to normative claims by discrediting Reynold’s narrative of the police interaction. Fourth, Scott continues with normative claims by denigrating

the news media for covering the shooting of Castile. He notes the media is stoking racial tension and should cover “something with worldly consequences.” What does he mean by “worldly consequences”? This comment shows how little Castile’s black life did not matter to him. He vilifies media but does not vilify officers for shooting black people. As an agent of law enforcement, denigrating the media and ignoring police brutality helps to protect structural whiteness which preserves his white privilege. He doesn’t want to hear, listen, or read about black people dying in the news. Fifth, he concludes his comments with normative claims that further defame Reynold’s and attack mainstream media.

Black Angel

The twelfth most frequent frame is ‘black angel’ (n = 5), which is present in comments that mention how a black victim of police violence has no criminal past. This frame did not emerge in black Facebook users’ ambivalent comments. However, the following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘black angel’: Amanda, Cindy, and Alex.

Amanda

Geezzzz whats sad is how calm she is in the beginning not realizing he is dying.... this doesn't look good for the officer... the victim has no criminal background, works at, what sounds like a catholic school...

Amanda conveys a moral claim by saying “this doesn’t look good for the officer.” She’s acknowledging that Yanez may have unlawfully shot and killed Castile. As part of her impression management strategy, this moral claim functions to construct a socially desirable identity for a segment of her audience who may support black victims of police brutality. Second, after placating one segment of her audience, she must now reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by appealing to the values of an opposing division of her Facebook network. Amanda expresses a normative claim, albeit with moral sentiments, by drawing on the discourses of the ‘black angel’ frame. She states that “the victim has no criminal background,

works at, what sounds like a catholic school...” The ‘black angel’ frame is problematic because it implicitly conveys that black people have to be angels to be treated with dignity and respect. This frame postulates that black people lives only matter when they are perfectly unflawed citizens. The ‘black angel’ frame is dangerous because the subtext is that people with a criminal record deserve to be unjustifiably shot and killed by police.

Cindy

This story is disgusting! I get the police have a dangerous job, and I get we all make "mistakes" but killing an innocent person isn't one. This man has no criminal history, he wasn't a was offender like the last man they brutally shot in the head while they had him pinned down. This should of never occurred and I hope this cop is charged! The next comment is by Cindy.

Cindy expresses moral claims to appeal to a segment of her audience that supports black victims of police violence. She states that “this story is disgusting.” This is an impression management tactic to avert accusations of racism and to construct a positive public image. Second, she reduces cognitive dissonance prompted by the context collapse through expressing normative claims to appeal to another section of her Facebook network. She says “police have a dangerous job.” As an agent of law enforcement, she is protecting structural whiteness by explaining why they may make “mistakes.” Third, still trying to reduce cognitive dissonance by simultaneously appeasing conflicting audiences, she expresses a moral claim by stating that “killing an innocent person isn’t” a mistake. She is straddling the fence to placate both sides of her network.

Fourth, Cindy reverts back to normative claims by saying Castile “has no criminal history, he wasn't a was offender like the last man they brutally shot in the head while they had him pinned down.” She simultaneously draws on ‘past victims’ and ‘black angel’ frames. The ‘black angel’ frame is problematic because it suggests that Castile’s life mattered because he wasn’t a criminal, whereas Alton Sterling’s life was disposable because he was deemed criminal. The ‘black angel’ frame is dangerous because it conveys that black people must be perfect

citizens to be valued. Fifth, Cindy engages in impression management by expressing a host of moral claims by saying the Castile shooting shouldn't have happened and Officer Yanez should be indicted. The next comment is by Alex.

Alex

This case the victim was innocent. He had all legal paper work for his fire arm and registration. This cop was to easy to pull the trigger. You clearly hear it in his voice. The victim I'll defend because he did everything right. He has no criminal history, works with kids at a school. Lived the straight and narrow. Had his CCW . Did everything right. This is the people we need in this day and age. He is our fellow American brother and we should honor him. Don't treat him as if this was a Mike Brown incident. This wasn't.

Alex commences his comment with a moral claim. He notes that Castile was “innocent.”

This appeals to a segment of his Facebook network that may expect him to support black victims of police violence. Second, Alex drops the impression management act to express normative claims to appeal to a different division of his Facebook friends network. Alex reduces cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by stating he will “defend” Castile because he doesn't have a criminal record. Drawing on the ‘black angel’ frame is dangerous and shouldn't be a barometer of support because it enables people to justify the death of victims even when past crimes are unrelated. More importantly, having a criminal record should not mean your life is disposable. Third, Alex expresses a normative claim that justifies why having no criminal record should not be the barometer for support. Alex justifies the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown because he had a “criminal history.”

Black-on-black crime

The thirteenth most frequent frame is ‘black-on-black crime’ (n = 4), which is present in comments that mention or justify police violence against black victims because black people kill each other. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the ‘black-on-black crime’ frame in their ambivalent discourses. However, the following three white Facebook users provide examples of black-on-black crime: Clare, Samuel, and Caitlyn.

Clare

So if the cop was in the wrong I guess now ALL cops are bad?? Ok got it. Why is the nation not in an uproar over the 60 people shot in Chicago last weekend? Were any of those caught on live stream? I don't know if this was justified or not but I'm sick of this because one cop made a bad call now all cops carry the same judgement. Give me a break.

Clare appeals to a segment of her Facebook network through a normative claim in the form of a rhetorical question. She asks, “So if the cop was in the wrong I guess now ALL cops are bad??” This rhetorical question, rooted in the ‘a few bad apples frame’, not only indirectly conveys her position on racialized police brutality but also functions to save face for law enforcement. Clare is downplaying systemic racism in policing by suggesting that not “ALL” cops are bad. This argument is dangerous because it functions to silence conversations about police killings on the basis that not all cops kill.

Second, Clare proceeds with normative claims by perpetuating the black-on-black crime myth. It’s noteworthy that Chicago is coded language that denotes black-on-black crime. The discourse of black-on-black crime draws on the ideology of the cultural racism frame of colorblindness. It blames issues in the black community on the pathological nature of blackness. This ahistorical discourse ignores how systemic whiteness in the form of redlining and segregation concentrates black people into poverty, which helps to give rise to crime. Furthermore, the black-on-black crime frame is problematic because it diverts attention away from racialized police violence. It further ignores how intra-racial crime is not a phenomenon unique to black people. Eighty-three percent of white people are killed by other white people (Bennett, 2015). The subtext of this frame is that black people shouldn’t be outraged by the systematic police killings of those sworn to protect and serve because of black-on-black crime.

Third, Clare has met the expectations of a segment of her Facebook through normative claims, now she has to pander to another segment. Clare reduces cognitive dissonance from the

context collapse by downplaying or contradicting her previous normative claims. She states that “I don't know if this was justified or not.” Additionally, this statement of constructed ignorance may function as an impression management tactic to construct a moral identity because she reverts back to normative claims. Fourth, as an agent of institutional whiteness, Clare concludes with protecting the image of law enforcement. Clare states “Give me a break.” Clare appears frustrated that law enforcement comes under scrutiny for racially motivated police shootings. As an agent who must protect privileges afforded by structural whiteness, she works to deflect the conversation from racialized police brutality to black-on-black crime. The next comment is by Samuel.

Samuel

I agree that there are some bad police officers out there. But by the statistics, blacks being killed by white cops is small compared to the Black on Black crime. But I don't here people talking about that. Do not blame all police for the actions of a few. It is hard job for them and I don't see any of the haters taking those jobs to change things. And what about the statistics of police officers hurt or killed by the criminals of all colors? Or is that OK? Everyone here is a hypocrite and has no solution for a small problem. Yes there is racism in america. Mainly by the news media and so much from poor uneducated people of all races. People need to take some responsibility for their own actions and for how their lives have turned out. Stop blaming others for your circumstances.

Samuel avert accusations of racism through a moral claim that underscores bad police officers in law enforcement. This moral claim may be a tactic of impression management to comply with the social expectations of one segment of his Facebook social network. Second, after satisfying one segment of his social network with moral claims, Samuel mitigates psychological dissonance by employing normative claims to satisfy the expectations of another social group in Facebook population. His egalitarian self-image is undermined by normative claims that draw on the discourses of the ‘black-of-black crime’ frame. Samuel notes that “blacks being killed by white cops is small compared to the Black on Black crime.” Comparing black-on-black crime to blue-on-black crime is a false equivalency. Black people who kill black people are arrested, indicted, and convicted of murder. Police officers who kill black people are

rarely arrested, indicted, and convicted. This frame is problematic because it ignores how law enforcement officers kill black people with impunity.

Third, Samuel proceeds with normative claims by engaging in impression management for law enforcement. He states, “Do not blame all police for the actions of a few.” As an agent who benefits from the persistence of structural whiteness, he downplays the systemic prevalence of racialized police brutality. Fourth, Samuel argues that police officers have a “hard job.” This is a red-herring that works to legitimize shooting innocent black people because the job of an officer is hard. He also suggests that “haters,” by this he is referring to black people, should do something to change status quo. This overlooks the work people are doing to fight systemic racism in policing by pushing for body cameras, changing sentencing laws, stopping racial profiling, and implementing implicit and explicit biases trainings. Fifth, Samuel refers to police brutality as a “small problem,” which functions to minimize the prevalence of racism. Sixth, Samuel transiently reconstructs a favorable public identity for impression management purposes through the moral claim that “there is racism in america.” However, he immediately reconstruct a normative identity through normative claims. Seventh, Samuel concludes his comment by drawing on the discourse and colorblind ideology of individualism. He states that “[p]eople need to take some responsibility for their own actions.” The ideological discourse of individualism functions to exonerate structural racism by holding black people accountable for their status in society. In this case, Samuel uses this rhetoric to absolve the police officer of accountability. The next comment is by Caitlyn.

Caitlyn

This is awful. I'm going to ask why aren't all communities as fed up with the gang violence in these same communities! I want to see the same marches and posts about black men killing black men and black children and black women on the porches of their own neighborhoods. I'm ready to march for all of it! We need to pray hard for our country who has a culture of death and not life! We need to pray for peace for each and everyone of us! Lord Jesus please come into the hearts and minds of our people, black or

white, brown or red, and every shade in between. Help us to see that we need to be the light in the darkness!

Caitlyn constructs a positive public identity through a moral claim that showcases her humanity and compassion. She notes that the shooting of Castile was “awful..” This moral claim may be for impression management purposes to meet the social expectations of a group in her Facebook network. Second, after satisfying one segment of her social network with moral claims, Caitlyn employs normative claims to meet the expectations of another social group. Caitlyn reduces mental dissonance prompted by the context collapse through drawing on the ideological discourse and frame of ‘black-on-black crime.’ She notes that black people should be outraged by black-on-black crime and should march to end the violence. This frame is dangerous for several reasons. The black-on-black crime myth is a diversion that ignores “the fundamental difference between being killed by a citizen and being killed by an agent of law” (Bouie, 2014, para 8). The difference is that black people, unlike policemen, aren’t entrusted with protecting and serving communities. Additionally, choosing to tackle police brutality or black-on-crime is a false dichotomy. And Black people can do both, have done so. Black people march to end police violence in black communities. Black people care about what’s occurring in their communities. Moreover, black-on-black crime is a symptom of structural whiteness, which results in racial oppression, unemployment, underemployment, concentrated poverty, and segregation.

Third, Caitlyn concludes her comment by reconstructing a moral identity through moral claims. She states, “I’m ready to march for all of it.” This may be an impression management tactic to restore her racially unprejudiced self-image to segment of social network. Furthermore, she proceeds with moral claims by praying to Jesus to help people come together but doesn’t pray that Jesus enter the hearts of police officers who are gunning down black boys, black men, black girls, and black women. Caitlyn’s sympathy for Castile may be façade to present a non-

racist identity while simultaneously legitimizing his death through the ‘black-on-black crime’ frame.

Blaming Guns

The fourteenth most frequent frame is ‘blaming guns’ (n = 4), which is present in comments that blame guns for police shootings of black victims. While this frame did not appear in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users, it emerged in white Facebook users’ comments.

Lance

WTH is wrong with America. Of course in a country where you can buy a rifle with your groceries things like this will happen. It is a shame lives are lost in vain. Can't blame the policemen or the man in the car anymore. This is part of a much bigger problem the USA need to address.

Lance begins with a normative claim with traces of moral elements. He suggests that Castile was gunned down by officer Yanez because he had a gun. This frame of blaming the gun ignores how Castile was licensed to carry and how he informed officer Yanez he was licensed to carry a firearm. Additionally, ‘blaming the gun’ frame disregards how unarmed black people are gunned down even when unarmed. Michael Brown was unarmed when he was shot and killed by Darren Wilson. Tamir Rice was unarmed when he was shot and killed in Ohio. Akai Gurley was unarmed when he was shot and killed by officer Peter Liang. This discourse of gun blaming is rooted in the minimization frame of colorblindness. It functions to hold the gun responsible for Castile’s death while erasing his race as a significant variable. Second, Lance reduces cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by conveying a moral claim to appeal to another segment of his Facebook network. He shows his compassion and humanity for Castile and other black victims of police violence by saying “It is a shame lives are lost in vain.” This is an impression management tactic that enables him to maintain moral identity. Third, Lance conveys

ambivalence with a comment that appeals to each side by saying it is neither officer Yanez's nor Castile's fault for the fatal police encounter. The next example is by Lacie.

Lacie

Its the gun again over and over. The second amendment is a curse on this Country not a blessing. Until that sinks in en masse and there is a purge to rid America of the devils death stick it will keep happening over and over. The police get Tigger happy because they see death from the gun daily and they shoot first before someone shoots them.

Lacie employs a normative claim by drawing on the 'blaming the gun' frame. She suggests that Castile's fatal police encounter is a result of having a gun on his person. This frame disregards how unarmed black men, women, and children have been gunned down by police officers. The 'blaming the gun' frame is rooted in colorblindness. It removes race as a central factor in the police shooting. Second, Lacie alleviates psychological tension from the context collapse by expressing a normative claim to appeal to the values and expectations of an opposing sector her Facebook friends network. She criticizes police officers for being "trigger happy." But note how race is again downplayed. She blames the gun for cops being "trigger happy" and not race.

Politicization

The fifteenth most frequent frame is 'politicization' (n = 2), which is present in comments that talk about police shootings in the context of either Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, or Donald Trump. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the 'politicization' frame in their ambivalent discourses. However, the following two white Facebook users provide examples of 'politicization': Briana and Amy.

Briana

This crap happens every day not saying it's right because it's not. But, let's not lose focus on Hillary Clinton and what she just got away with... That's exactly what they (the media) is trying to do here...

Briana begins with a moral claim to appeal to a segment of her Facebook audience who are supportive of black victims. She states that black people are gunned down by police officers every day. This claim acknowledges that police brutality is a major issue. However, Briana doesn't want to read, listen, or hear about this "crap" in the news during a major political cycle. Second, Briana reduces cognitive dissonance by appeasing another segment of her Facebook audience by calling attention to what's going on in politics with Hillary Clinton. Drawing on the 'politicization' frame, her normative claims states "let's not lose focus on Hillary Clinton and she just got away with." The focus on Hillary Clinton functions to divert attention away from the police killing of Castile. She sees Hillary's email scandal as more important than Castile's life. The subtext of this frame is that news about the political election is more important than an officer unlawfully taking a life. The next comment is by Amy.

Amy

And what about all the cop shootings.....other shootings that never get in the newswhy is it always one sided.....I'm sorry these men were shot but we need the truth regardless the outcome.....but we can't blame all police personnel.....this administration is to blame for so much of this mentality.....

Amy begins with a normative claim to appeal to a sector of her Facebook audience that supports law enforcement. She states that shootings of cops and shootings of non-black people do not make it to the news. This colorblind discourse functions to draw attention away from the fact black people are disproportionately killed by police officers. As an agent of law enforcement, Amy is engaging in impression management for the institution to continue to reaping the benefits of her white privilege.

Second, Amy minimizes cognitive tension from the integration of diverse audiences through moral claims that placate to another segment of her Facebook population. She says "I'm sorry these [black] men were shot." As an impression management strategy, these sentiments help to show her humanity and foster positive public image.

Third, Amy continues expressing normative claims. Drawing on the discourse of ‘politicization’ frame, she states that police officers aren’t to blame but the Obama administration. Interestingly, police brutality against black people predates Obama’s presidency. Before Obama was elected president, police fired 41 shots at Amadou Diallo in 1999. Before Obama was elected president, police fired 50 shots into the car of Sean Bell on the day before his wedding (Juzwiak & Chan, 2014). Politicizing the Castile’s death is a red-herring argument because police shootings of black people predate Obama’s presidency.

No Angel

The least frequent frame is ‘no angel’ (n = 1), which is present in comments that mention how a black victim of police brutality has a criminal past. While this frame did not merge in the discourses of black Facebook users, the following white Facebook user Todd provides an example of ‘no angel’ frame:

Todd

He was a multiple offender on non violent charges (ask google, I found 5 mugshots) but mostly no license, no insurance, driving on revoked and marijuana possession. No reason to be killed over. RIP Lunchman!

Todd conveys a normative claim to appeal to a segment of his Facebook audience who may support law enforcement. Drawing on the ‘no angel’ frame, Todd brings up Castile’s non-violent criminal charges to justify why his life being taken by law enforcement is justifiable. The ‘no angel’ frame is dangerous because it suggests having a criminal past can legitimate unlawful shootings. Second, Todd reduces psychological tension by expressing a moral claim as an impression management tactic to placate to another division of his Facebook network. He says Castile’s non-violent criminal record was “No reason to be killed over.” This self-presentational strategy works to absolve him of racism. If his criminal record doesn’t matter, why would he mention it? Note how he denigrates Castile by calling him “Lunchman!”

RQ5: Summary

Research question five endeavored to answer the question “In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile, what frames emerged in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users?” To answer this question, I employed a CTDA paired with CRT and CWS that observed dominant white racial frames that emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalent comments. I presented evidence that showed the host of frames Facebook users deployed. The analysis of Facebook messages revealed 16 dominant frames. These frames ranged from ‘victim blaming’ to ‘a few bad apples.’ The link that binds these frames together is that they derive from the dominant white racial frame and function to protect structural whiteness and preserve white privilege. The next section endeavors to examine the patterns that emerge in Facebook users’ ambivalent discourses following the indictment of officer Yanez.

Frames in the Second Stage

The second stage explores the white racial frames in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users following the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez. It seeks to explore new frames that did not emerge following the police shooting of Castile. The following research question guide the second stage analysis:

RQ6: In response to the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez, what new frames were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?

In response to the indictment, 11 frames emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalent discourses. The following section will provide examples of the new frames Facebook users employed in this stage: ‘Innocent Until Proven Guilty’ and ‘Doing His Job.’

Table 11. Frames in Response to the Indictment of Officer Jeronimo Yanez

Frames	Black	White	Total	Percent
Qualified Sympathy	2	21	23	26.1
<i>Innocent until proven guilty</i>	1	15	16	18.2
Victim Blaming	0	10	10	11.4
A Few Bad Apples	2	6	8	9.1
De-emphasizing race	1	5	6	6.8
Attack on law enforcement	0	6	6	6.8
<i>Doing his Job</i>	0	6	6	6.8
Past Victims	0	6	6	6.8
Withholding Judgement	0	3	3	3.4
Discrediting Witness	0	2	2	2.3
Politicization	0	2	2	2.3
Total	6	82	88	100

Innocent Until Proven Guilty

The most frequent unique frame is ‘innocent until proven guilty’ (n = 16), which is present in comments that propose police officers should be presumed innocent until a guilty verdict is issued by a jury or judge. Black Facebook users did not employ the ‘innocent until proven guilty’ frame in their ambivalent discourses. White Facebook users Danny, Denise, and Teddy provide examples of ‘innocent until guilty’ frame.

Danny

I'd like to know what kind of person streams live video of her boyfriend being shot. If I was in her situation that would not even enter my mind. Other than that I have no comment on the charges. Remember, innocent until proven guilty, although it doesn't seem to work that way these days.

Danny employs a host of moral claims to appease a segment of his audience who may support law enforcement. She condemns Reynolds for recording the fatal police encounter but not officer Yanez for unjustifiably shooting Castile. Attacking witnesses is problematic because

it vilifies black people who record moments of racialized police brutality. Second, Danny notes that “If I was in her situation that would not even enter my mind.” Danny is indirectly drawing on the ideology of universalism. The notion that black and whites have identical experiential realities is false. As an agent of structural whiteness, recording police encounters doesn’t enter her mind because she doesn’t have to document incidents to prove her innocence. Third, Danny protects her investment in white privilege through white silence. She states she has “no comment on the charges.”

Fourth, Danny employs ambivalence to appeal to multiple audiences within her Facebook network. She states that “remember, innocent until proven guilty.” This is a form of impression management to appear objective. Note that Danny contradicts herself because her previous normative claims suggests that officer Yanez is innocent. Drawing on the frame “innocent until proven guilty” is reliable because police officers are, rarely if ever, convicted of murder or manslaughter. Thus, instead of directly saying he is innocent, Danny says innocent until proven guilty to avert accusations of racism. The undertones of this frame also suggests that courts and juries are objective in cases regarding officer-involved shootings. Danny believes in this system because it continues to afford her white privilege. The ‘innocent until proven guilty’ frame is dangerous because it makes Danny look fair and impartial. It also helps her to reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by simultaneously appealing to multiple audiences. The next comment is by Denise.

Denise

Being charged doesn't make him guilty, he will get a fair trial, by a "jury of his peers," and, hopefully, that means other cops, because anyone who is not a cop cannot understand what he was going through. He will have his day in court to give his testimony. That said he has been charged means only that. We haven't seen the evidence. A jury will see all of the evidence and decide (unless he takes a plea).

Denise draws on ‘innocent until proven guilty’ frame to simultaneously satisfy the social expectations of conflicting audiences in her Facebook friends network. She states that “being

charged doesn't make him guilty." This normative frame functions to exonerate officer Yanez in the killing of Castile. She then attempts to construct an impartial identity by stating officer Yanez will get a "fair" trial. As an agent, Denise ignores how the judicial system is biased in favor of whiteness. Put simply, police officers are highly unlikely to be convicted of unlawfully shooting and killing a black person. The belief in a "fair trial" indicates how Denise has faith in structural whiteness. The term "fair" can also operate as an impression management tactic because it enables Denise to support officer Yanez by masquerading as impartial. Drawing on the 'innocent until guilty' frame, Denise can avert accusations of racism through leaving judgment to a criminal justice system that operates on whiteness.

Second, Denise expresses a normative claim by saying a "jury of his peers" should mean "other cops." This is dangerous because cops have the blue wall of silence, which requires them to protect their fellow law enforcement officers at all cost. Denise rationalize this argument by stating that "anyone who is not a cop cannot understand what he was going through." This normative rationale is problematic, and works to find officer Yanez not guilty. It could also be said that any jury member who is not black cannot understand what it is like to be black when pulled over by police officers. Note the contradiction in Denise's statement: On one hand, she states that officer Yanez will receive a "fair trial" under the criminal justice system. On the other hand, she states the trail will only be fair if Yanez's "jury of peers" are police officers. How can she believe that the system is fair but also believe that the system is unfair? It is feasible to assume that Denise knows that jury of peers does not mean coworkers. This is a contradiction. Third, note that Denise doesn't make explicit moral claims to reduce cognitive stemming from the context collapse. She uses discursive strategies to engage in impression management for a different audience of her Facebook population. The next comment is by Teddy.

Teddy

Let the jury decide....I'm with blue but how about we not do what the left does.....every one deserves justice under the law.. but let a jury of his peers acquit or convict. We don't know the facts....if he is found guilty he goes to prison and I have no problem with that, but I'm not gonna be an obama and prejudge

Teddy begins by constructing a pseudo-moral claim. He engages in impression management to present an impartial identity through the comment: “Let the jury decide.” This claim is problematic because police officers are often exonerated when they devalue black bodies. Second, Teddy reduces cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by expressing normative claims to appeal to a different segment of his Facebook network with different values, norms, and expectations. Teddy constructs a normative identity through the normative claim: “I’m with blue.” Note the contradiction. He commences his comment with “Let the jury decide” and later states “I’m with blue.” He is vacillating from moral to normative claims to satisfy divergent expectations from divergent audiences collapse into a single social environment. Third, drawing on the ‘innocent until proven guilty’ frame, Teddy continues with ambivalence by stating that acquittal or conviction should be left to a jury of his peers. This frame is buttressed by the discursive strategy of strategic ignorance: “we don’t know the facts.” This enables Teddy to rely on structural whiteness which works in the favor of law enforcement. Fourth, Teddy employs a moral claim by stating that officer Yanez should go to prison if convicted. Teddy concludes by politicizing the indictment by stating that he will not be prejudge like Obama.

Doing His Job

The second most frequent unique frame is ‘doing his job’ (n = 6), which is present in comments that convey cops involved in shootings of black people were trying to do their (hard) job. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the ‘doing his job’ frame in their ambivalent discourses. The following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘doing his job’: Denise, Nate, and Dale.

Denise

He was wrong and he should pay for it , I know they have an impossible job and people are hating the police and don't realize how hard their job is , but this was no way justified . All lives Matter

Denise commences her comment with a moral claim to appeal to the values of a segment of her Facebook friends network. She condemns officer Yanez's actions by stating that "He was wrong and he should pay for it." This moral claim functions as a form of impression management to present a positive public identity before she expresses normative positions. Second, Denise reduces mental discomfort from the context collapse by appealing to another division of her audience. She notes that police officers have an "impossible job and people are hating the police and don't realize how hard their job is." Drawing on 'doing his job' frame is dangerous because it works to normalize unjustifiably police shootings of black people. It works to silence critics of police shootings because officers have a tough job. This frame operates to position officer Yanez as innocent of killing Castile. Third, still trying to reduce cognitive dissonance, Denise reconstructs a moral identity by stating that the shooting "was no way justified." This moral claim performs as an impression management strategy to avert accusations of racism after exuding the shooting because officers have an 'impossible job.' Fourth, Denise concludes with a colorblind slogan: "All lives Matter." This normative frame minimizes the significance of race in racially motivated police shootings. The next comment is by Nate.

Nate

Such a sad situation. This situation is very unfortunate for both parties that man didn't deserve to die and the cop was just trying to do his job.

Nate conveys a moral claim by stating that the police shooting of Castile is a "sad situation." This moral position operates to present a racially unprejudiced public identity by expressing sympathy for Castile. Taking a moral position meets the social expectations of an audience of his Facebook network. Second, Nate mitigates cognitive dissonance produced by the context collapse through ambivalence. He states that Philando "didn't deserve to die" and officer

Yanez “was just trying to do his job.” What was his job? Was his job to racially profile? To walk up to a car with a black driver with his hand read draw in his gun? To kill Castile in front of his fiancé and 4-year-old daughter? To say that he was trying to do his job mischaracterizes the job of most police officers. The ‘doing his job’ frame works to de-legitimize the indictment of officer Yanez. It positions officer Yanez as racially innocent. This ambivalent comment works to appeal to competing social expectations. The next comment is by Dale.

Dale

If convicted, he deserves every bit of his sentence. Officers have a tough job, but that doesn't allow room for errors when it costs someone their life. I still back the Blue, but this seemed to be a bad call (to say the least).

Dale opens his comment with a moral claim through stating that officer Yanez should serve prison time if convicted. This moral claim functions as an impression management tool to present a positive public image to a single audience in his Facebook network. Second, Dale alleviates psychological discomfort by drawing on the ‘doing his job’ frame. He states that “Officers have a tough job.” This frame is dangerous because it helps to legitimate police shootings. Third, this normative claim is followed by a moral claim: Dale notes that while policing is a tough job, it doesn’t give officers room to unjustifiably kill innocent people. Fourth, Dale follows this moral claim with another normative claim that he still supports police officers. As an agent of structural whiteness, despite his belief that the shooting was unjustifiable, he continues to support law enforcement. He states that “I still back the Blue.” Fifth, the normative claim is followed by a moral claim wherein he interprets the police shooting as a “bad call.” .

RQ6: Summary

The aim of research question six was to answer the question “In response to the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez, what new frames were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?” To answer this question, I conducted a CTDA coupled with CRT and

CWS to identify the new dominant white racial frames that emerged in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users. While Facebook users employed 11 frames, two new frames emerged in this stage: ‘Innocent Until Proven Guilty’ and ‘Doing His Job.’

The former frame functioned to protect institutional whiteness by presuming officer Yanez was innocent. The latter frame also performed to safeguard structural whiteness by suggesting that killing is a description of “his job.” Drawing on CRT, these frames may have emerged in the second stage to de-legitimize the indictment of officer Yanez. That is, they may work to justify the police shooting to render officer Yanez not guilty in the death of Philando Castile. Frames such as these derive from the white racial frame in that it functions to justify and reproduce structural whiteness and white privilege.

Frames in the Third Stage

This stage examines the white racial frames employed by Facebook users in response to the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez. This stage is guided by the following research question:

RQ7: In response to the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez, what new frames were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?

In response to the acquittal, 12 frames emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalent discourses. See Table 12. The next section will provide examples of the new frames that appear in this stage: ‘Accepting Verdict,’ ‘Strategic Ignorance,’ and ‘Protest Peacefully.’

Table 12. Frames in Response to the Acquittal of Officer Jeronimo Yanez

Frames	Black	White	Total	Percent
<i>Accepting Verdict</i>	0	14	14	15.9
De-emphasizing race	1	11	12	13.6
Victim Blaming	0	12	12	13.6
Qualified Sympathy	1	11	12	13.6

<i>Strategic Ignorance</i>	0	11	11	12.5
<i>Protest Peacefully</i>	2	8	10	11.4
A Few Bad Apples	1	7	8	9.1
Past Victims	0	3	3	3.4
Doing his Job	0	2	2	2.3
Injuring the victim	1	1	2	2.3
Discrediting witness	0	1	1	1.1
Withholding Judgement	0	1	1	1.1
Total	6	82	88	100
Note: New frames are in bold and italicized.				

Accepting Verdict

The most frequent unique frame is ‘accepting verdict’ (n = 14), which is present in comments that agree with a non-guilty decision of a police officer who was on a trial for killing a black person. This frame did not emerge in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users. The following three white Facebook users provide examples of ‘accepting verdict’: Kenneth, Brando, and Bon.

Kenneth

It would help if the media would stop portraying all cops as bad guys and all bad guys as saints. They rushed to judgement just like they did in Baltimore before they had all the facts and to appease the masses. I wasn't there and don't have all the facts but the jury did so we have to go by their decisions.

Kenneth employs a normative claim by drawing on ‘a few bad apples’ frame. He reduces police brutality to individual officers as well as criminalize victims of police brutality. Second, Kenneth references Freddie Gray, whose spinal cord was severed while riding in a police van. He asserts an opinion by saying the media “rushed to judgement ... to appease the masses.” Note that masses may be a discursive strategy to denote black people. As an agent, Kenneth criticizes news media for shedding light on police shootings of black people. This discourse functions to protect law enforcement through the concealment of systemic police brutality.

Third, Kenneth has made normative claims to protect structural whiteness, maintain his doses of white privilege, and appease a segment of his Facebook audience who may expect him to support police officers. Third, Kenneth reduces cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by downplaying his normative positions. He states that “I wasn't there and don't have all the facts.” This statement works as a form of impression management to be perceived favorably by another segment of his Facebook population. Fourth, Kenneth reverts back to a normative position by helping to legitimize the acquittal of officer Yanez by saying we as a society must accept the verdict. The ‘accepting verdict’ frame operates to urge black people to be OK with the systemic police killings. This frame is dangerous because “accepting the verdict” allows police officers to continue unjustifiably killing black men, women, and children with impunity. The next comment is by Brando.

Brando

In a criminal justice major. I can only operate with what I'm given. The jury was given all the facts. They found him not guilty. It's as simple as that the cop didn't bribe a judge. This was a jury of 12 people. Not 12 cops. In fact. Cops were likely to be excluded by the defense on the grounds they were cops and would have bias.

Brando constructs his public identity as an expert on the studies of criminal justice. He states that “In a criminal justice major.” This identity claim works to convey to his Facebook audience that he is well informed on how things work in a court case. Second, Brando takes a normative position by stating that the jury was present with all of the evidence, and “they found him not guilty.” This is an indirect way of drawing on ‘accepting the verdict’ frame. Brando bolsters his case by stating that officer Yanez “didn’t bribe a judge.” Officer Yanez didn’t have to “bribe a judge because criminal justice system was designed for him to be acquitted in cases of police shootings of black men.

Third, Brando notes that the jury consisted of 12 everyday people and not law enforcement officers. As an agent, Brando comments work to reduce any claims of bias in the

verdict by noting that the jury did not consist of cops. This comment overlooks how whiteness permeates the criminal justice system. A “jury of his peers” was in fact a jury of his peers. Put simply, officer Yanez was protected by his peers. The jury consisted of primarily white people. In most cases white jurors never find policeman guilty of gunning down black people. Brando created an identity that did not explicitly support for law enforcement but he didn’t have to because his belief that the system is fair and partial shows that he’s an agent working to protect his white privilege and structural whiteness. This discourse of ‘accept the verdict’ is dangerous because it functions to quiet black people about state-sanctioned violence against black bodies. The next comment is by Bon.

Bon

Must have had enough evidence to do it plain and simple. People need to get over it. These people wanting to protest, aka- act like the heathens they are, don't know what happened!

Bon takes a normative position by stating that the jury had enough evidence to exonerate officer Yanez in the racially motivated police killing of Castile. Second, Bon suggests that “people need get over it.” By “people,” she is referring to black people. White people tend to tell black people to get over being constantly denied of racial justice. As an agent, this works to protect white supremacy and her white privilege. Bon would prefer blacks to stay silent in the face of racial injustice. The language of ‘accept-the-verdict’ is problematic because it blames black people for being outraged at a miscarriage of justice. It can also function as an impression management tactic to project a impartial identity. This frame is dangerous because it legitimizes the acquittal of officer Yanez. Third, Bon uses the infamous pronominal phrase of “these people” to refer to black people. She suggests that black people don’t protest but instead engage in uncivil demonstrations. She even refers to black people as “heathens.” Fourth, Bon concludes by suggesting that black people react without knowing what happened. Bon ultimately wants black people to accept the verdict so she can continue receiving her dose of white privilege from a

system run on unchallenged institutional whiteness. The next section explores the ‘strategic ignorance’ frame.

Strategic Ignorance

The second most frequent unique frame is ‘strategic ignorance’ (n = 11), which is present in comments where people proclaim to have little to know knowledge about a police shooting. There were no instances of black Facebook users employing the ‘strategic ignorance’ frame in their ambivalent discourses. However, white Facebook users Bella, Bronson, and Camden provide examples of ‘strategic ignorance’ frame:

Bella

I do not know much about this case, I am not a lawyer nor was I a member of the jury. But maybe if the racist rhetoric and supported violence against police had not been front and center over the last 8+ years, questionable action might be avoided. Anyone stopped is in danger as a result of the hate. Like everyone, police get scared. They've been walking around with targets on them, being killed at random. They too want to go home to their families at night. Not saying this was the case on this incident though.

Bella draws on the ‘strategic ignorance’ frame by stating that she doesn’t “know much about the case” and further that she is “not a lawyer” or was a “member of the jury.” The ‘strategic ignorance’ frame is powerful because not only does it perform as a normative claim but also as a moral claim. It functions as a normative claim because it ignores the reality of racially motivated police shootings as well as structural whiteness in the criminal justice system. As a normative position, it enables Bella to accept the acquittal of Officer Yanez. On the other hand, the ‘strategic ignorance’ frame operates as a moral claim because it allows Bella to project an impartial identity. The ‘strategic ignorance’ frame reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse because it can appeal to each segment of her network. Second, Bella continues with explicit claims rooted in normative narratives. She justifies the acquittal by imploring that officer Yanez wouldn’t have shot and killed Castile if it weren’t for the “racist rhetoric” and anti-police narratives under the Obama administration.

Third, she proceeds with normative claims by drawing on 'attack on law enforcement frame.' She states that police officers have "been walking around with targets on them, being killed at random." This attack on law enforcement discourse works to justify Yanez's acquittal. Here's the logic behind this frame: It suggests that because officers are killed, they can unjustifiably kill innocent people. Fourth, she sympathizes and humanizes officer Yanez by stating he wants to go home to his family every night. She doesn't mention that Castile was murdered in front of his family. As an agent, Bella is defending structural whiteness to preserve white privileged.

Fifth, Bella concludes by engaging in impression management. She says this probably wasn't the case in this shooting. But how could that be if all cops are under attack? Bella comment is full of contradictions to appease multiple audiences in her Facebook network. Bella states that she doesn't know much about the case then proceeds to justify the Castile shooting based on her knowledge about shootings. As an agent, she employs the 'strategic ignorance' frame when it comes to racial injustice, but knowledgeable when it comes to perceived structural injustice. The next comment is by Bronson.

Bronson

I wasnt there , so i do notknow. But when you are a cop and have know idea who is coming at you.... you pull your gun. Id want to say good night to my kids as much as the other guy. ... and yes.. there are trigger happy cops. As well as criminals. What would we do? !! If youve never been there, dont brother answering

Bronson commences his comment by drawing on the frame of 'strategic ignorance.' He states "I wasnt there , so i do notknow." The discourse of 'strategic ignorance' enables Bronson to alleviate psychological tension from the context collapse because it performs as both a normative and moral claim, which can appease multiple sections of his Facebook audience. As a normative claim, this image of ignorance allows him to accept the unlawful structural violence against Castile. As a moral claim, it helps him present an unbiased public image. Second, drops

the image of ignorance to explicitly express normative positions. Drawing on the ‘attack on law enforcement’ frame, he justifies the Castile shooting because officers are killed in the line of duty.

Third, still trying to reduce cognitive dissonance stemming from the context collapse, Bronson employs a moral claim by stating that “there are trigger happy cops.” This moral position works to present a positive public identity to a segment of his Facebook network. He uses this argument as a form of impression management. Fourth, Bronson reverts back to normative claims by stating that there are criminals to counteract his previous moral claim. Fully advocating for the lives of black people doesn’t help to advance white privilege. This normative position works to safeguard structural whiteness, legitimize the acquittal of Yanez, and appeal to the social expectations of a single audience in his Facebook network. The next comment is by Camden.

Camden

I don't know what lead up to the shooting, but what I do know is the fact the woman didn't start filming until after the officer shot him. He could have been reaching for the gun he had on him, no one knows. I believe they did the right thing by letting him go. Here come the riots...

Camden draws on the discourse and frame of ‘strategic ignorance’ by stating that “I don't know what lead up to the shooting.” As a normative claim, the identity of ignorance enables her to accept the non-guilty verdict. This frame is also rooted in colorblindness. It works to downplay race as a central factor in the police shooting. As a moral claim, this image of ignorance is an impression management tactic to appear non-racist. By stating she doesn’t “know what lead up to the shooting,” she can ignore that race may have played a pivotal role in the Castile shooting.

Second, moving forward from strategic ignorance, Camden explicitly takes a normative position by stating that Reynolds began recording after Castile was shot. Drawing on

‘discrediting witness’ frame is dangerous because it suggests that black victims need irrefutable evidence of police violence to be innocent. Drawing on vehement frame of ‘victim blaming,’ note that Camden says she is unaware of what prompted the shooting but begin to speculate that Castile is cause of his own death. Finally, Camden concludes with normative claims by drawing on ‘accepting verdict’ and ‘peacefully protest’ frames.

Protest Peacefully

The third most frequent unique frame is ‘protest peacefully’ (n = 10), which is present in comments that instruct (black) people how to protest against a non-guilty verdict. Jonny and Taylor illustrate how white Facebook users employed ‘protest peacefully’ frame.

Jonny

Wow he is guilty as sin. Please do not tare up your own community because of this. I understand the frustrations but there has to be a better way.

Jonny employs a moral claim by stating that officer Yanez “is guilty as sin.” This moral claim works to convey a positive public identity to a segment of his Facebook social network before he makes a normative claim. Second, Jonny reduces cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by employing normative claims to protect his stake in structural whiteness and meet the social expectations of another audience within his Facebook population. He implicitly instructs the black community to “not tare up your own community because of this.” Drawing on ‘protest peacefully’ frame, he suggests that people should protest racial injustice in alignment with his ideals of demonstration standards. Note the ambivalence here: he acknowledges that officer Yanez is guilty in shooting Castile but suggests that people should not protest by any means necessary get racial justice. Telling black people how to protests works to safeguard white supremacy and, in this case, legitimize the acquittal of officer Yanez. Jonny would prefer people to softly and quietly protest against systemic violence. Notice he criticizes the so-called violence

of protestors but not the violence perpetrated by police officers in riot gear shooting bean bags and tear gas at peaceful protestors. This comment shows Jonny working as an agent to protect white supremacy by dictating how black people should protest the acquittal of officer Yanez. He opens with a moral claim which may be for impression management purposes. The next comment is by Taylor.

Taylor

Good. Doesn't deserve be charge after what they did... riot burn loot after he got shot? Mother in jail for attempted murder. Does cop deserve have charges yes but that's if public didn't burn city down over the shooting in first place

Taylor takes a normative position by referring to the acquittal of officer Yanez as “Good.” Furthermore, Taylor states that officer Yanez didn’t deserve to be indicted “after what they did... riot burn loot after he got shot?” Drawing on the ‘protest peacefully’ frame, Taylor suggests that officer Yanez should have never been indicted for killing Castile because (black) people protested against the shooting. This frame is dangerous because it conveys that cops should only be held liable for unlawful shootings when the public isn’t outraged. It also ignores how police officers have become soldiers, clothed in combat gear, using military-style weapons and driving tanks on streets. This is the violence Taylor is overlooking.

Third, note that she contradicts herself. Taylor then states, “Does cop deserve have charges yes but that's if public didn't burn city down over the shooting in first place.” It’s noteworthy that she doesn’t believe officer Yanez should be charged. Therefore, this may be a form of impression management to circumvent accusations of racism and construct a positive public image. Drawing on the frame of ‘protest peacefully,’ she argues that officer Yanez, while guilty of unjustifiably gunning down an innocent black man, should not be charged with manslaughter because black people protested the police shooting. This is extremely problematic, and operates to silence black people in the face of racial injustices. As an agent, Taylor is

working to defend law enforcement from structural changes and police officers from accountability.

Black Facebook Users

This frame also emerged in the discourses of black Facebook users. The following black Facebook user employed ‘protest peacefully’: Cherrelle.

Cherrelle

Now let's be clear don't go out killing cops an stupid stuff lets revisit other ways of making sure all ALL lives matter

Cherrelle expresses a normative claim to appeal to a segment of her Facebook network. She notes that (black) people should not avenge Castile by killing law enforcement offices. This normative narrative is ill-informed because black people aren’t systematically killing cops in retaliation to police brutality. Therefore, her assertion of not killing cops is unwarranted Second, she expresses a moral claim that suggests (black) people should be fighting to ensure that “ALL lives Matter.” The emphasis on ALL may suggest that black people should be included and treated like their lives matter

RQ7: Summary

The purpose of research question seven was to answer the question “In response to the acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez, what new frames emerged in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users?” I answered this question by conducting a CTDA grounded in the paradigms of CRT and CWT to identify the frames that emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalent comments. Facebook users employed 12 dominant frames in their ambivalent discourses following the non-guilty verdict of officer Jeronimo Yanez. In this stage, three new frames emerged: ‘Accepting Verdict,’ ‘Strategic Ignorance,’ and ‘Protest Peacefully. Drawing from the white racial frame, these frames operated to reinforce white dominance.

Frames Across All stages

Different frames emerge in each stage. This section explores and theorizes how frames differ across the stages in the Philando Castile incident. In all, 21 frames emerged across all stages. See Table 21. This section is guided by the following question:

Table 13. Frames in Response to the Philando Castile Incident

Frames	Black	White	Total	Percent
Qualified Sympathy	4	65	69	15.54
Victim blaming	2	57	59	13.28
De-emphasizing race	4	42	46	10.36
A Few Bad Apples	9	36	45	10.13
Withholding judgment	0	39	39	8.78
Discrediting Witness	3	35	38	8.55
Past victims	1	20	21	4.72
Attack on law enforcement	1	19	20	4.50
A Few Bad Apples	1	15	16	3.60
Accepting Verdict	0	14	14	3.15
Injuring the Victim	2	10	12	2.70
Strategic Ignorance	0	11	11	2.47
Protest Peacefully	2	8	10	2.25
White victimhood	0	9	9	2.02
Blaming Mass Media	0	9	9	2.02
Doing His Job	0	8	8	1.80
Black Angel	0	5	5	1.12
Black-on-black crime	0	4	4	.90
Politicization	0	4	4	.90
Blaming Guns	0	4	4	.90
No Angel	0	1	1	.225
Total	29	415	444	100

RQ8: How do frames differ across stages?

This section discusses the unique frames that emerge in each stage. First, I will discuss the unique frames that emerge in the first stage. See Figure 6. Second, I will present the unique frames that emerge in the second stage. Third, I will discuss the unique frames that emerged in the third stage.

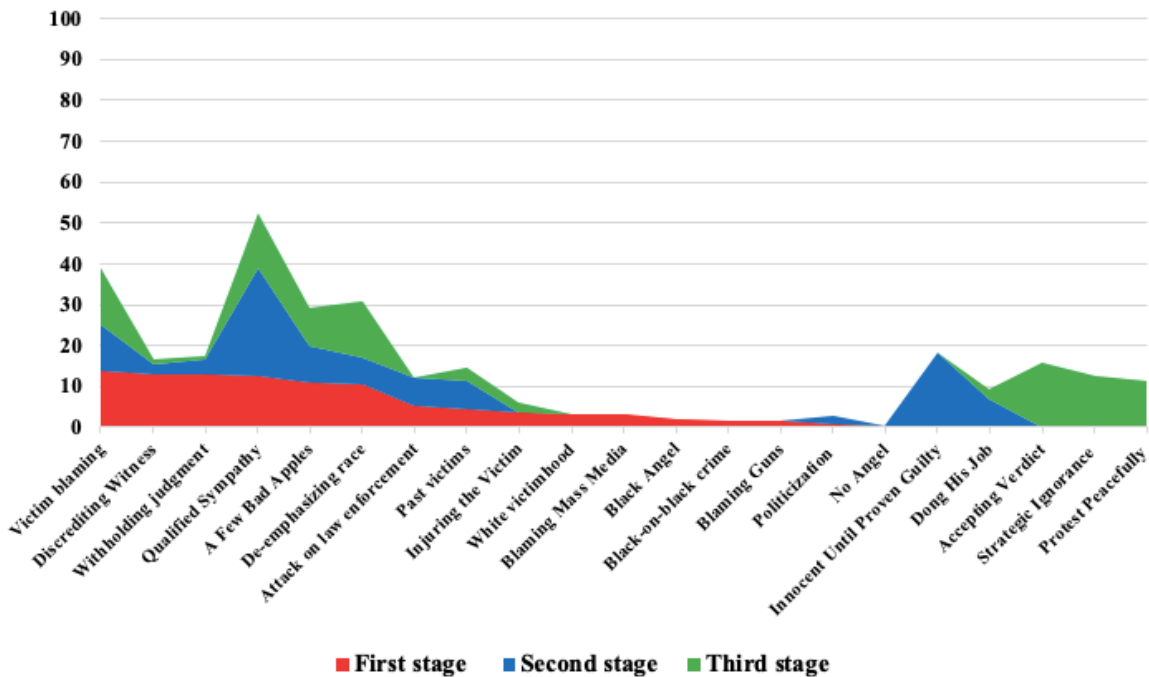


Figure 6. Contrasting How Frames Differed Across Stages

In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile, there are several dominate racial frames that are distinctive to the first stage. First, ‘black-on-black crime’ emerged as a way to justify the police shooting of Castile because blacks kill each other or to urge those outraged by the shooting to shift their attention to black crime. Second, ‘white victimhood’ appeared to downplay the Castile shooting because white people, too, are gunned by law enforcement. Third, ‘blaming guns’ appeared may be as a result of Castile having a gun on his person, which functioned to legitimate his death. Fourth, ‘mass media’ suggested that police shootings of black

people are happening because news media outlets are covering the shootings. Fifth, 'no angel' emerged to justify Castile's death because he had a criminal record. Sixth, 'black angel' appeared to suggest that Castile didn't deserve to die because he didn't have a criminal record.

Those frames emerged only in the first stage. In other words, those frames were communicated only in response to the police shooting of Philando Castile. The common thread in those frames is that they focus particularly on Philando Castile and not officer Jeronimo Yanez. They functioned to criminalize Castile and/or black people to legitimize the police shooting and/or law enforcement as a social institution. However, the new frames that emerge in the second stage shift attention to officer Yanez while working to de-legitimize social institutions.

In response to the indictment of officer Jeronimo Yanez, there are two new frames that emerge in the second stage. First, 'innocent until proven guilty' emerges as a new frame that functions to give Yanez the benefit of the doubt in the shooting of Castile. Moreover, this frame functions to de-legitimize the criminal justice system for even bringing charges against officer Yanez. Second, the frame 'doing his job' also appears to de-legitimize the charges against police officer Yanez. Facebook users argued that Yanez's actions were not unlawful. He was merely performing his duties as a police officer.

Following the indictment of Yanez, new frames emerge such as 'Innocent Until Proven Guilty' and 'Doing His Job.' Those frames operated not to criminalize Castile but to provide direct support for officer Yanez. For example, rather than blaming Castile for his death like in the first stage, Facebook users communicated that Yanez was simply 'doing his job' and should be perceived as 'innocent until proven guilty.' From a critical perspective, note this is a different tone from the first stage. Following the police shooting, Facebook users blamed Castile for his own death to legitimize law enforcement as a social institution. In the second stage, Facebook

users provided support for officer Yanez by de-legitimizing the indictment and the criminal justice system as a social institution. In the third stage, Facebook users revert back to legitimizing social institutions following the acquittal of officer Yanez.

In response to the acquittal of officer Jeronimo Yanez, there are three new white racial frames to emerge in the third stage. First, ‘accepting verdict’ keeps the conversation of support on Yanez. It functions to legitimate the outcome of the trial. Facebook users employed this frame to urge others to accept the non-guilty verdict. Second, ‘strategic ignorance’ functions to create an image of not knowing about the shooting of Castile. This frame was used as an impression management tactic to justify why users accepted the verdict. Put differently, it emerged and performed to help Facebook users save face by pretending to be virtually clueless about the case and therefore must accept the verdict. Third, ‘protest peacefully’ urges supporters of Castile to not protest in response to the verdict of the trial.

Following the acquittal of officer Yanez, three new frames emerged. These frames functioned to legitimize structural whiteness through (1) accepting the verdict of the trial; (2) appearing as ignorant about the Philando Castile shooting; and (3) and urging Castile supporters to not ‘riot’ or ‘loot.’ These frames worked to legitimate structural whiteness whereas in the second stage Facebook users de-legitimized social institutions. The next section provides a summary of the chapter.

Chapter Summary

This dissertation examined dominant racial frames that emerge across three stages characterized as the Philando Castile incident: (1) the police shooting of Philando Castile; (2) the indictment of police officer Jeronimo Yanez; (3) the acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez. Across all stages, 21 frames emerged with more frames appearing in the first stage ($n = 16$) followed by the third ($n = 12$) and second stages ($n = 11$). This chapter endeavored to explore how frames differed

across stages. I document how Facebook users shift from using frames rooted in normative claims to legitimate or de-legitimate structural whiteness within social institutions. The shift from employing normative frames to legitimate structural whiteness (in the first stage) to the de-legitimation of structural whiteness (in the second stage) and back to the legitimation of structural whiteness (in the third stage) shows that as agents white Facebook users know when to uphold and to oppose institutional structures. These shifts in normative claims may convey that white Facebook users legitimate or de-legitimate structural and institutional whiteness only when it favors whiteness. The next chapter covers finding from semantic moves.

CHAPTER 6

SEMANTIC MOVES

Myers and Williamson (2001) note that “Racism is dialectical” (p. 3). That is, racism is communicated through discourse. However, contemporary social norms against racist ideologies have shifted how racism is expressed. Bonilla-Silva (2002) argues that white Americans draw on rhetorical strategies to circumvent the perception of racism. For example, “A common way of stating racial views without opening yourself to the charge of racism is apparently taking all sides on an issue” (Bonilla-Silva, 2002, p. 50). Van Dijk (197) argues that this form of discourse is a semantic move to express racism while saving face. Semantic moves enable white Americans to vacillate between racist and non-racist statements. Bonilla-Silva (2002) notes that semantic moves do not indicate that white people are “less “racist.” It just means that they are more adept at navigating the dangerous waters of America’s contemporary racial landscape and to know all the stylistic tools available to save face” (p. 62). Van Dijk (1984) argues that semantic moves serve to enable speakers to express their honest opinions while saving face in social environments. Therefore, semantic moves may help to prove that ambivalence is indeed an impression management tactic to convey a non-racist identity.

This chapter will identify and categorize the semantic moves that emerge in Facebook users ambivalent discourses across all stages of the Philando Castile incident. It will also investigate the racial differences in semantic moves. Investigating semantic moves goes beyond investigating the presence of ambivalence. It examines how ambivalent message are structured. That is, it classifies semantic moves based on the vacillation between moral and normative claims within ambivalent comments from Facebook users. This chapter is guided by the following question:

RQ9: In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile incident, what semantic moves were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?

In response to the Philando Castile incident, ten semantic moves emerged in the ambivalent discourses of Facebook users. To help better identify semantic moves in ambivalent comments, the following color scheme is used:

1. Moral claims are coded red.
2. Normative claims are coded blue.
3. Neutral or irrelevant text are coded black.

The following section provides examples of each semantic move that emerged in the ambivalent comments of Facebook users in response to the Philando Castile incident. See table 14.

Table 14. Semantic Moves in Response to the Philando Castile Incident

Semantic moves	Black	White	Total	Percent
N,M	14	94	108	24.32
M,N	4	97	101	22.72
N,M,N	0	78	78	17.56
M,N,M	4	73	77	17.34
N,M,N,M	0	31	31	6.98
M,N,M,N	3	18	21	4.72
M,N,M,N,M	3	12	15	3.37
N,M,N,M,N	0	7	7	1.57
N,M,N,M,N,M	1	3	4	0.90
N,M,N,M,N,M,N	0	2	2	0.45
Total	29	415	444	
Percent	6.98	93.02		100

Semantic Moves Across All Stages

Normative claim(s), moral claim

The most frequent semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim (n = 108). This semantic move is evidenced in ambivalent comments that commence with a normative claim and conclude with a moral claim. While normative claims tend to appear in multiple sentences, moral claims generally appear as a single sentence. Tyler provides an example of how white Facebook users employed this semantic move in their ambivalent discourses:

Tyler

I can't comprehend how this woman can be so calm through this. No pleading to help him, only concern for filming and reporting. Shows zero concern for child in car. Child in back seat is silent until removed from car. The cop is more visibly shaken than the woman who just watched her boyfriend get shot 4 times. Call me crazy, but something isn't right here. My opinion, false flag. And before you call me a racist, it is also my opinion that the cops who killed the man in Louisiana are guilty of murder.

First, Tyler expresses a multitude of normative claims. Drawing on the 'discrediting witness' frame, he criticizes Reynolds for recording the incident when she could have been attending to Castile's injuries and her daughter. Note that he doesn't condemn officer Yanez for shooting Castile or attending to his injuries. After a host of normative claims, Tyler concludes his comment with a moral claim that expresses support for Alton Sterling, another black victim of police violence. In using this semantic move, Tyler alleviates the psychological dissonance from the context collapse by concurrently appealing to different social relations with divergent expectations in his Facebook network. This semantic move is powerful because concluding with a moral claim enables Tyler to reject all accusations of racism that were expressed via normative claims. Note that Tyler dismisses accusations of racism by stating "before you call me a racist," and then proceeds with a moral claim to buttress why he cannot be labeled as racist.

Black Facebook Users

Q'sean provides an example of how black Facebook users expressed this semantic move in their ambivalent comments:

Q'sean

Lets male sure we have the facts straight though. Where was the gun located? Did the man inform the officer of where it was? The girlfriend somehow felt the need to openly admit on camera that they had weed in the car. I think that white people still get talked down even when they have a gun in hand ready to shoot but its different story with us. Nobody in this country of any race should just be gunned down without the right of due process.

First, Q'sean conveys normative claims to appease one segment of his integrated audience. He begins with a series of rhetorical questions that places the burden on the victim rather than poor cop training. Rhetorical questioning may function as an impression management tactic to convey or maintain a positive identity with online audiences. He reduces the psychological discomfort stemming from conflicting expectations from contrasting social relations by expressing moral claims to appease the other side of his Facebook network. Second, he discusses white privilege and how police officers tend practice restraint when it comes to them. Concluding with a moral a claim helps to rebuild his favorable public identity.

Moral claim, normative claim(s)

The second most frequent semantic move of ambivalence was moral claim, normative claim(s) (n = 101). This semantic move refers to ambivalent comments that begin with a moral claim and conclude with a normative claim. While moral claims are typically a single sentence, normative claims tend to appear in multiple sentences. In response to the police shooting of Castile, here's an example of how white Facebook users conveyed ambivalence using this semantic move:

Hannah

It is very sad, and I don't condone what the police did, but let's not forget what police are facing today with BLM causing blacks to assassinate men/woman in uniform. ..Police are being killed in vast numbers because of it. If a police officer pulls you over and ask for

your ID and you tell him you have a carry permit and gun, do so with your hands in the air until the police has your weapon in his control....then proceed as directed by police.

First, Hannah expresses a moral claim. She indirectly expresses support for Castile by stating that she doesn't condone the actions of the police officers. This moral claim is followed by a host of normative claims. These normative claims accuse the BLM movement for deaths of police officers as well as instruct black people how to properly behave when pulled over by a cop. By using this semantic move, Hannah can reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse by simultaneously appealing to different groups with different expectations in her Facebook network. Additionally, this semantic move may enable Hannah to avert accusations of racism by establishing a non-racist identity through expressing a moral claim at the onset. After establishing a positive public image through using a moral claim as an impression management tactic, she can uphold structural whiteness through protecting law enforcement with a host of normative claims.

Black Facebook Users

This semantic move of ambivalence also appeared in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users.

Chante

This is not only happening in the US, black people are being killed by police officers around the world for no reason. And the sad thing about it, is that the justice system is not doing anything to protect us. And these police officers are not being prosecuted for their criminal actions, so that's giving them a license to kill us. But eventually it will have a serious backlash where people will reach a point and start to kill police officers randomly. And unfortunately the good and innocent officers will end up paying for the corrupt, trigger happy killers in a police uniform.

First, Chante conveys a moral claim that appeals to a segment of her audience that may expect her to advocate for black victims affected by police violence. She discusses how police brutality against black people is transpiring not only domestically but also globally. Chante notes how cops are police officers are rarely, if ever, held liable for black deaths by a justice system.

Chante then reduces cognitive dissonance produced by the context collapse by appealing another section of her Facebook population through normative claims. She states that people, perhaps black people, will begin killing police officers. This is dangerous because in modern history there is no evidence to suggest that black people will randomly kill law enforcement in mass. Moreover, she states “good and innocent officers” will be caught in the crossfire. This is problematic because officers are not good as long as they continue to uphold laws that disproportionately affect black children, teenagers, women, and men. This semantic move enables Chante to appeal to simultaneously appeal to conflicting audiences by being king with a moral claim and concluding a normative claim.

Normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s)

The third most frequent semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s) (n = 78). This semantic move is representative of ambivalent comments that begin with a normative claim(s), followed by a moral claim, and conclude with a normative claim(s). In this semantic move, a single moral claim is generally in the middle of two sets of multiple normative claims that appear at both the beginning and ending of a comment. White Facebook user Emily draws on this semantic move in her ambivalent comment:

Emily

My question is: WHO THE HELL HAS TIME TO GET OUT THEIR PHONE RECORD THE EVENT ON LIVE SESSION INSTEAD OF FREAKING OUT OR DOING CPR?? this doesn't seem to make sense to me.... if i had a man shot beside me I sure as hell wouldn't be calm enough to record it. I get it #blacklivesmatter but so does everyone else's and if people really cared they would find a way to change behaviors and circumstances instead of trying to make EVERYTHING a race issue....

First, Emily deploys normative claims. Drawing on this discourse of ‘discrediting witness,’ she criticizes Reynolds for recording the aftermath of the police shooting and not conducting CPR on Castile. These normative claims are followed by a single moral claim. As a self-presentational tactic, Emily expresses she agrees with the movement for black lives. This

moral claim is followed by multiple normative claims. Taking a colorblind approach, Emily indirectly expresses that black people should change their behavior and stop making things racial. This semantic move allows Emily to reduce cognitive dissonance by expressing both moral and normative claims that satisfy the social expectations of different audiences with different expectations. This semantic move is powerful because expressing a moral claim between two distinct sets of normative claims may enable her to refute allegations of upholding structural whiteness.

Moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim

The fourth most frequent semantic move of ambivalence was moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim (n = 77). This semantic move is demonstrative of ambivalent comments that begin with a moral claim, followed by a normative claim(s), and conclude with a moral claim. In this semantic move, a single moral claim generally appears in separate sentences whereas normative claims are bundled together. Here's an example of how white Facebook users communicate ambivalence using this semantic move:

Cody

Sorry he got shot but how does the video only show the blood not what happened before.you can't judge a situation until all the facts come out.If the police officer is guilty you must give him the maximum sentence

First, Cody uses a single moral claim. He expresses sympathy for Castile by saying "Sorry he got shot." This moral claim is followed by multiple normative claims. These normative claims include critiquing the video because it doesn't show what prompted the police shooting as well as suggesting people cannot judge the shooting until all the facts are revealed. These normative claims are followed by a single moral claim. Cody expresses that the police officer should receive the maximum sentence if convicted of killing Castile. This semantic move allows Cody to minimize psychological tension stemming from the context collapse by concurrently

meeting the divergent expectations of heterogeneous social relations in his Facebook network. At the onset, expressing a single moral claim may help Cody establish a non-racist identity for impression management purposes. After constructing a socially desirable identity, he can safeguard structural whiteness to preserve white privilege through expressing normative claims. After expressing multiple normative claims, Cody rebuilds his non-racist identity by expressing a single moral claim to conclude his comment.

Black Facebook Users

This semantic move appears in the ambivalent comments made by black Facebook users.

Kevin

We, America have to stand together, so many dying. We don't need wars against other countries, we are at war with ourselves. All police officers are not murders. There are many that stand for everything they were sworn to do when they took their oath, protect and serve. My prayers to the young man's family and friends. Most of all I pray for justice to be served. 🙏🙏

First, Kevin conveys a quasi-moral claim to appeal to a division of his network. He alludes to deaths of black people at the hands of police offices and suggests that citizens must ban together. This moral claim may serve as an impression management maneuver to present a socially desirable identity. Next, Kevin mitigates the intolerable nature of cognitive dissonance by satisfying the expectations of a contrasting audience. Kevin draws on the language of ‘a few bad apples’ by stating that “all police officers are not murders.” This argument is dangerous because it enables people to lionize while abstaining from critical analysis of law enforcement. Then, Kevin resorts back to his support for Castile after backing law enforcement to reconstruct his identity as a supporter of black victims. He expresses sympathy by praying for Castile’s family. This moral claim enables Kevin to reconstruct a socially desirable identity to a segment of his audience.

Normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim

The fifth most frequent semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim (n = 31). This semantic move is demonstrative of ambivalent comments that begin with a normative claim(s), followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim(s), and conclude with a moral claim. In this semantic move, normative claims generally appear in multiple sentences, whereas moral claims appear as a sentence. This semantic move does not emerge in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users. Becky provides an example of how white Facebook users' express ambivalence using this semantic move:

Becky

This is coming from a white person, I have been stopped before and I do everything the cop tells me to do because if you don't something bad can happen! This is so sad... Please do what you are told! I know with all the cop killings they are probably scared and if they are overly scared they need to quit!!!

First, Becky communicates a number of normative claims. She disregards the differing experiential realities of black and whites by noting that when she is pulled over she obeys the officers' orders and nothing "bad" occurs. Her experience as white woman differs from the experience of Castile, who was a black man. She also expresses a normative claim by accepting that if people don't follow commands then something "bad" should be allowed to happen. Second, to reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse, these normative claims are followed by a single moral claim to appease a different audience in her Facebook network. Becky indirectly expresses support for Castile by stating the fatal police encounter is "sad." Third, this moral claim is followed by multiple normative claims. She employs normative claims by indirectly holding Castile accountable for his own death by saying he should have followed commands as well as suggest that police officers are under attack, which may explain why Castile was shot. Not racism. Fourth, Becky concludes her comment with a single moral claim

that says police officers who are fearful should quit. In using this semantic move, Becky can concurrently satisfy conflicting social relations with conflicting expectations by vacillating between normative and moral claims. This semantic move is powerful because it enables Becky to uphold structural whiteness while averting accusations of racism. After each set of multiple normative claims, Becky employs a moral claim to foster a favorable identity.

Moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s)

The sixth most frequent semantic move of ambivalence was moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s) (n = 21). This semantic move suggests that ambivalent comments begin with a moral claim, followed by a normative claim(s), which is followed by a moral claim, and conclude with a normative claim(s). In this semantic move, moral claims generally appear as a single sentence, whereas normative claims appear in several sentences. Here's an example of how white Facebook users' express ambivalence using this semantic move:

Larry

This is sad, but when a culture glorifies killing cops such as most black people do in their rap music, you're going to have officers who are skittish when it comes to pulling over someone who they feel might try to shoot them, not saying it was right in anyway, after the man was shot he should have been having medical attention, it's not like the cop shot him in the face or in the heart he shot him in the arm I don't think he meant to take his life he was just as scared as the woman was if you look at the video, it's not because you're black that you're getting checked or pulled over it's because you want to glorify killing white people or white cops that's the stereotype you have I don't make that stereotype, up you do, with the drug slang in cop killing rhetoric black people use in their rap music.

First, Larry expresses a moral claim, which may function as an impression management tactic to establish a socially desirable identity to a sector of his Facebook network. He indirectly conveys that he is saddened by the police shooting of Castile. Next, to alleviate the discomfort of dissonance from divergent multiple audiences integrated into a social environment, Larry expresses normative claims to appease another audience. Larry draws on the cultural racism

frame of colorblindness. He states that killing law enforcement is part of black culture because of rap music. Then, Larry reconstructs a positive public image through a single moral claim by stating that the shooting didn't have to happen, and Castile should have received "medical attention." Larry then reverts back to normative claims by humanizing and absolving officer Yanez of responsibility. Larry concludes his arguments with a host of normative claims: He downplays the shooting by stating that Castile wasn't shot in the face, humanizes the officer by saying he look terrified. This semantic move enables Larry to vacillate from moral to normative claims to not only construct a positive image while defending police brutality but also appease multiple audiences in his Facebook friends network.

Black Facebook Users

Kristi provides an example of how black Facebook users employed this semantic move in their ambivalence:

Kristi

It is better we begin to look at the negligence involved. Once you bring race in this, the cycle will continue. It is time to look at the ethics and conduct of police and not race

First, Kristi conveys a moral claim to appeal to segment of her Facebook audience. This claim works as a form of impression management to control how a segment of her Facebook audience perceives her. Because Facebook collapses distinct audiences, Kristi expresses a normative claim to reduce the cognitive dissonance engendered by the multiple audience problem. Second, Kristi draws on the frame of colorblindness by stating that race should not be factor in the shooting. Third, she reverts back to a moral claims by suggesting that society should investigates in ethical police practices. Kristi concludes her argument by drawing on the frame of colorblindness again. She suggests that society shouldn't examine race. This semantic move enables Kristi to appeal to divergent audiences in her context collapse by vacillating from moral to normative claims.

Moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim

The seventh most frequent semantic move was moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim (n = 15). This semantic move indicates that comments begin with a moral claim, followed by a normative claim, which is followed by a moral claim, then followed by a normative claim, and conclude with a moral claim. Moral claims are generally a single sentence, whereas normative claims typically appear in several sentences.

White Facebook user Scott draws on this semantic move in his ambivalent comment:

Scott

First it sounds like a good person died. Second, he did not have to volunteer the information that he had a conceal and carry permit or was carrying until asked. Three when you have a gun pointed at you you do not do anything but keep your hands in sight at all times until you are told otherwise. Granted he was trying to do the right thing. There has to be more to this story, especially why he already had his gun drawn (the officer). This was bad for all. My condolences to both families.

First, Scott communicates a moral claim to satisfy the expectations of a sector of his Facebook network. He states that Castile might have been a good guy who died. Next, his discomfort from dissonance is attenuated by expressing a normative claim that enables him to pander to the other side of his Facebook audience. Second, Scott draws on the ‘victim blaming’ frame by holding Castile responsible for his own death. As an agent of institutional whiteness, Scott absolves the officer of accountability. After blaming Castile for his death, he employs a moral claim as an impression management device to shape how he perceived. He states that Castile “was trying to do the right thing.” Scott then reverts back to normative claims by stating that “there has to be more to this story.” This discredit Reynolds recount of the fatal police encounter. Finally, Scott closes his comment with a moral claim that suggest the fatal police encounter was “bad for all.” This is an impression management attempt to project a favorable public persona.

Black Facebook Users

Black Facebook user George employs this ambivalent semantic move:

George

I can't believe this sh*t is real... I can almost cry. I know there are good cops out there that love the communities they serve but I am so numb over this.... Sh*t like this makes you say "F**k the Police" they took this guys life with a kid watching and had this girl not live streamed this video we would have been in the dark about this. I know an investigation will answer some questions so I'll wait then to pass total judgement but seriously the cops have to STOP KILLING US!!!!!!

First, George expresses a moral claim to appeal to a segment of his Facebook network that may expect him to support black victims. He shows his humanity and compassion by stating that he “can almost cry” because of the shooting of Castile. Second, to reduce cognitive dissonance from the context collapse, George transitions to normative claims for another segment of his network. He draws on the frame of ‘a few bad apples,’ The good cop narrative ignores how racial bias in policing is systemic and that good cops are often problematic because they have to uphold laws that are inherently racist. Third, George transitions back to moral claims by condemning law enforcement in general but officer Yanez in particular for killing Castile while his daughter was in the car. Fourth, George reverts back to normative claims by stating he will withhold full judgment until the investigation. Fifth, George concludes his comment with a moral claim that states police need to “STOP KILLING” black people.

Normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s)

The eighth most frequent semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s) (n = 7). This semantic move is representative of ambivalent comments that begin with a normative claim(s), followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim(s), followed by a moral claim, and conclude with a normative claim. In this semantic move, normative claims generally appear in multiple sentences, whereas moral claims appear as a single sentence. While this semantic move does not appear in the

ambivalence of Black Facebook users, it does emerge in the ambivalent discourses of white Facebook users:

Andrew

What bothers me is that she is so calm throughout the video, she says her boyfriend is dead even though he is visually weakly stirring, her 4 year old doesn't start crying until they're out of the car, no one attempts first aid, she admits there was weed in the car so it's not a routine traffic stop, I mean if the cops gonna let you livestream this on Facebook I'm sure you can get away with attempting first aid to stop him from bleeding out. It's just not how anyone really reacts in that situation. Then again the cop seems guilty too but idk maybe he feels guilty cuz he probably killed a guy. Justly or not that's how I'd react.

First, Andrew employs a normative claim by discrediting Reynolds as a witness to the fatal police encounter. He attacks her recount of the police shooting. This functions to appeal to one segment of his Facebook audience who may support law enforcement. He reduces his psychological dissonance stemming from different audiences with different expectations by expressing a moral claim. Next, Andrew expresses sympathy for Castile (albeit, simultaneously discrediting Reynolds) by wondering why “no one attempts first aid.” This is an impression management tactic, his compassion for Castile is rooted in his discrediting of Reynolds. Note how he doesn’t explicitly ask why the officer did not attempt first aid. Then, he continues with normative claims aimed at Reynolds by suggesting that her response was unusual because that’s not how a normal person would react. This draws on colorblind ideology of universalism. Andrew sees his whiteness as normal and universal, and thus Reynolds blackness as abnormal. Next, Andrew expresses a moral claim by stating that “the cop seems guilty.” Note how this moral claim is in between sets of normative claims. This may be self-presentation device to project a positive public image to a segment of his audience. Finally, Andrew concludes his comment with a normative claim by humanizing officer Yanez. This semantic move is powerful because it allows Andrew to begin and conclude with normative claims that function to safeguard structural whiteness while concurrently expressing two distinct sets of moral claims for impression management purposes.

Normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim

The ninth most frequent frame semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim (n = 4). This semantic move indicates that comments begin with a normative claim, followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim, then followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim and conclude with a moral claim. In this semantic move, normative claims appear as multiple sentences whereas moral claims appear as a single sentence. Black Facebook users did not draw on this ambivalent semantic move. However, Laura provides an example of how white Facebook users employ this semantic move in their ambivalent discourses:

Laura

I'm not sure about this,I understand the tragedy and the loss but at the same view where do you hear him say he had a weapon,where do you hear him say I'm getting my license, where do you hear anything other than recording after he was already shot..it is one word against another at this point and that's very sad..I don't think anyone should be hurt or killed because of thier race,their beliefs or where they live but it is happening on a daily basis not just with Police,you hang gangs of same rave Killing each other everyday,some how we lost respect for other races and even within our own races so how can you fix it,not sure it can be fixed if we keep killing..Don't hate and discriminate against others or of your own race,love each person as an individual...j/s

First, drawing on the discursive repertoire of the 'strategic ignorance' frame, Laura expresses "I'm not sure about this." This normative claim functions as a discursive strategy to enable her to support law enforcement because she is unsure of the shooting. This normative claim is followed by a moral claim to reduce cognitive dissonance stemming from the context collapse. Second, Laura notes that she "understands the tragedy and loss" of Castile. This serves as an impression management device to convey her humanity and appease the sensibilities of another segment of her Facebook audience. Third, after appeasing this audience she reverts to normative claims. Furthermore, she vacillates from moral to normative claims in a series of indirect rhetorical questioning. However, these rhetorical questions are rooted in a normative

narrative that blames Castile for his death, which is dangerous because it doesn't hold the officer accountable for his role in the fatal police encounter. Fourth, Laura expresses moral claims to foster a favorable social identity. She provides support for black victims of police shooting by stating that she doesn't believe "anyone should be hurt or killed because of their race, their beliefs or where they live." This operates as a self-presentational strategy because she follows this comment with a normative claim. Fifth, Laura uses a discursive strategy to derail the conversation about police shootings of black people to "gang violence," which is racially coded language for black-on-black crime. This is problematic and helps to reproduce racial bias in policing because police are sworn to protect and serve not to kill unlawfully. There are higher standards for police officers. Sixth, Laura concludes with moral claims that encourage people to love all including those within or outside of one's own racial group. This semantic move is robust because it enables Laura to draw on both moral and normative claims in three different sets.

Normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s).

The least frequent semantic move was normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s) (n = 2). This semantic move represents comments that begin with a normative claim, followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim, then followed by a moral claim, which is followed by a normative claim, then followed by a moral claim and conclude with a normative claim. In this semantic move, normative claims appear as a host of sentences whereas moral claims appear as a single sentence. This semantic move does not emerge in the ambivalent discourses of black Facebook users. Here's an example of how white Facebook users' express ambivalence using this semantic move:

Julia

I know I'm going to get a lot of flack for this comment, but I have a question. How is this woman filming herself in the back seat of the police car when she is handcuffed and lost her phone on the ground? I am sorry for the loss of any life, black or otherwise, but as a photographer the end of the clip just doesn't make sense to me. Would the officers give her back her cell phone after putting her in the back of the police car? I could be wrong, but I would think that would be evidence and I would be surprised if they would and I can't picture anyway she could be holding that phone at the angle she is if she is cuffed. She sounds scripted to me. If my child had been in the car with me I couldn't have been that calm, and I can't believe that child wasn't screaming it's head off. I would have been climbing over the back seat to protect my baby from any bullets and once we were in the police car I would be putting all my effort into reassuring my child. Does anybody who was actually at the scene have any answers for me? I'm not being unsympathetic. I think this man's death is a crime. I'm just not sure why the crime was committed or why it was released on CNN at this time. Lot's of deaths right now in the US, but this is a major story due to the innocence of the black man involved and the whole black lives matters movement. There is something about this that just doesn't ring true to me and I am wondering about what the motivation was behind this man's death. It certainly changed the dialog on the news from politics to race....your thoughts would be appreciated. Just so you know, my own family has experienced violence at the hands of a police officer and had other police lie to cover for them so trust me I am not unsympathetic to the family. I also had police in my family...I am just questioning the optics as presented and why...

First, Julia opens her comment with a disclaimer noting that she will receive backlash from her comments on the police shootings. This disclaimer shows that she knows her Facebook audience will read and interact with her posting. She employs a normative claim that discredits Reynolds. Second, this normative claim is followed by a moral claim to minimize the psychological discomfort engendered by the context collapse. Julia expresses a moral claim by being sympathetic towards Castile's death. This may be an impression management attempt to control how her Facebook network perceives her. Third, she continues with normative claims that discredit Reynolds. She attacks her for being "calm" during the encounter. These normative claims are followed by a single moral claim. Fourth, she appeases different segment of her audience by stating that she is not "being unsympathetic" towards Castile. She concludes that his "death is a crime." Fifth, despite believing his death was unlawful, she expresses normative claim by downplaying his death and other black deaths reported in the news. Julia, not wanting to hear about race, is outraged that the national conversation turns from the elections to racially

motivated police shootings. Sixth, this comment is followed by moral claims that details how her family experience police violence as well. This panders to the audience she may expect to receive “flack” from. Finally, she concludes with a normative claim that indirectly targets Reynolds as a non-credible witness. This is powerful because it allows her to express moral claims three times for impression management purposes while concluding with a normative claim. The next section covers racial differences in semantic moves.

Racial Differences in Semantic Moves

Racial differences emerged in semantic moves. The data suggests that white Facebook users were more likely than black users to emphasize normative claims over moral claims in their ambivalent comments (See Figure 7). In other words, white Facebook users accentuated their support for law enforcement officers such as Yanez while support for black victims of police violence was de-emphasized. The reverse was true for black Facebook users. That is, the data suggest that black Facebook users usually emphasized moral claims over normative claims. This might suggest that white Facebook users employed ambivalence as an impression management strategy because they emphasized their support for structural whiteness over black victims of police violence.

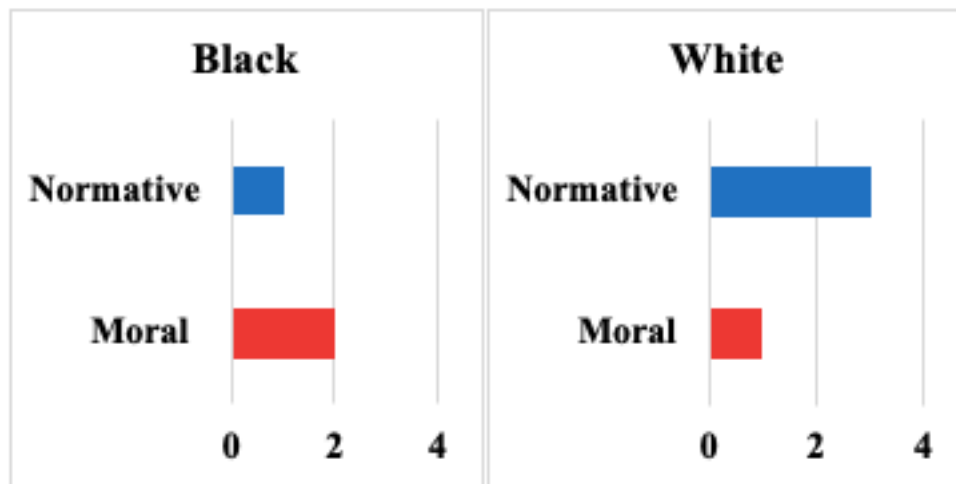


Figure 7. Racial Differences in Semantic Moves

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to answer research question 9: “In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile incident, what semantic moves were used by Facebook users in their ambivalent discourses?” To answer this question, I conducted a CTDA coupled with CRT and CWT to identify the semantic moves that emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalent responses. Evidence from this study suggests that Facebook users draw on a multitude of semantic moves when conveying ambivalence. The analysis of Facebook comments revealed ten semantic moves. These semantic moves functioned to help Facebook users, white users in particular, to vacillate from racist to non-racist views while maintaining a socially desirable identity. I found that semantic moves may help to categorize ambivalence as an impression management tactic because there are more emphasis and sentences for normative than moral claims. Moral claims appear as a single sentence, whereas normative claims appear in multiple sentences. Next is the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

This dissertation endeavored to explore whether white Facebook users were more likely than black users to communicate ambivalence in response to the Philando Castile incident. I argued that ambivalence is an impression management strategy employed by (white) Facebook users to navigate the context collapse. The white racial frames and semantic moves that emerged in comments provide further evidence that ambivalence may function as a self-presentational tactic to save face while upholding structural whiteness. I employed a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis paired with Critical Whiteness and Critical Race Theories to examine discursive ambivalence. Additionally, I conducted a Content Analysis and Chi-square analysis to further examine data.

In this chapter, I will first provide a summary of results for each stage of analysis. Second, I will discuss the role of race in expressing ambivalence. Third, I will talk about the role of framing in the communication of ambivalence. Fourth, I will discuss the role of semantic moves in discursive ambivalence. Fifth, I will talk about the role of context collapse in communicating ambivalence. Sixth, I will discuss the role of Facebook in ambivalent expression. Seventh, I will talk about whiteness, ambivalence, and technology. Eighth, I will discuss the advantages and limitations of this study and directions for future research. Finally, I offer how white Facebook users can help in the crusade to eradicate systemic police violence against black bodies through white outgroup solidarity.

Summary of Findings

This study employed a mix-methods approach. A quantitative content analysis helped to quantify Facebook users, ambivalence, frames, and semantic moves that emerged across the

three stages of the Philando Castile incident: (1) police shooting of Philando Castile; (2) indictment and (3) acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez.

The first stage of the Philando Castile incident represents the day he was gunned down by policeman Jeronimo Yanez. Not only does this stage have the greatest number of comments ($n = 2092$), but also the greatest number of ambivalent comments ($n = 268$), frames ($n = 16$), and semantic moves ($n = 10$). First, with regard to ambivalence, 15.75% of white Facebook users' comments were ambivalent in comparison to 3.40% of black Facebook users. These findings suggest that white Facebook users were approximately five times more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the Castile police shooting. An additional test showed that gender did not have a significant relationship with ambivalence. Results from this stage contribute to previous work on the association between ambivalence and whiteness. Second, Facebook users relied on dominant white racial framing to justify the shooting of Castile. The most frequent frame in this stage was victim blaming ($n = 37$), which holds Castile responsible for his own death. Third, Facebook users employed semantic moves to help convey their ambivalence. The most frequent semantic move in response to the shooting were moral claim-normative claim and normative claim-moral claim ($n = 57$). The next section summarizes the second stage.

The second stage of the Philando Castile incident represents the indictment of policeman Jeronimo Yanez. This stage has the least number of comments ($n = 940$), tied with third stage for number of ambivalent comments ($n = 88$), and least numbers of frames ($n = 11$), and semantic move ($n = 6$). With respect to ambivalence, 12.55% of white Facebook users conveyed ambivalence in response to the Yanez indictment, whereas 2.09% of black Facebook users expressed ambivalence. This stage accounts for the greatest disparity in ambivalent comments between white and black Facebook users. White Facebook users were approximately six times

more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the indictment of officer Yanez. Furthermore, gender was not associated with the communication of ambivalence. Second, the most frequent frame in this stage was qualified sympathy ($n = 23$), which expresses support or sympathy for police officer and victim. Third, the most frequent semantic move in this stage is normative-claim ($n = 23$), which enabled Facebook users to express support for law enforcement followed by support for black victims to present a non-racist identity. The next section summarizes the third stage.

The third stage of the Philando Castile incident represents the acquittal of policeman Jeronimo Yanez. This stage has the second greatest number of comments ($n = 1321$), tied with second stage for number of ambivalent comments ($n = 88$), second greatest numbers of frames (12), and semantic move ($n = 8$). First, in discussing ambivalence, 7.67% of white Facebook users communicated ambivalence following Yanez's acquittal compared to 2.38% of black Facebook users. This stage has the lowest disparity in ambivalent comments between white and black Facebook users. White Facebook users were approximately three times more likely than black Facebook users to express ambivalence in response to the acquittal of officer Yanez. Moreover, there was no relationship between gender and the expression of ambivalence. Second, the most frequent frame in response to the acquittal is accepting verdict ($n = 14$), which documents how Facebook approved of the non-guilty ruling. Third, the most frequent semantic move is normative claim-moral claim ($n = 28$), which allows Facebook users to communicate support for structural whiteness and maintain a favorable identity by following it with support for black people victimized by systemic racism.

Across all stages of the Philando Castile incident, there were 4,353 comments, 488 ambivalent comments, 21 frames, and 10 semantic moves. Across all stages, 12.82% of white Facebook users employed ambivalence in comparison to 2.79% of black Facebook users. These

numbers suggest that white Facebook users were nearly five times more likely than their black counterparts to express ambivalence. Second, different frames emerge in different stages and different frequencies. For example, in the first stage, ‘victim blaming’ is the most frequent frame to emerge in response to the shootings of Philando Castile. Second, the ‘innocent until proven guilty’ emerges only in response to the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez. Third, ‘accepting verdict’ is a unique frame in response to the acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez. Third, the most frequent semantic move was normative claim-moral claim, which functioned to save face after expressing a claim that upheld structural whiteness. The next section discusses the role of race in expressing ambivalence.

The Role of Race in Expressing Ambivalence

Racist discourse is not as overt as it once was during the Jim Crow era (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). The shift from overt to covert racist discourse was to circumvent accusations of racism, which carries a social stigma that may render someone socially undesirable. Today, discursive racism is subtler, more nuanced, and cloaked. Several scholars have noted how the successes of the Civil Rights Movement helped to change racial discourse. Van Dijk (1993) argues that “The Civil Rights Movement, antidiscrimination laws, policies of equal opportunities, and modest forms of Affirmative Action have today curtailed the more blatant and overt manifestation of racism against minorities” (p. 7). Myers and Williamson (2001) note that “The post-civil rights climate makes the public expression of racist ideas unacceptable, so their expression becomes more subtle” (p. 5). Racist discourse isn’t dead. On the contrary, in response to policy changes and social norms, new forms of racist discourse have emerged. One subtler form of racist discourse that whites can draw on in the contemporary environment is ambivalence.

In this study, I have discussed how ambivalence may be a face-saving discursive tactic in a climate where overt racism is shunned. Like Foster (2006), I contend that white Americans

“speak in certain ways not due to coincidence but a deliberate impression management campaign” (p. 188). Put another way, ambivalence functions to uphold racism while not appearing racist. As Bonilla-Silva (2002) argues, discursive strategies such as ambivalence do not indicate that white people are “less racist. It just means that they are more adept at navigating the dangerous waters of America’s contemporary racial landscape and to know all the stylistic tools available to save face” (p. 62). Indeed, maintaining a non-racist self-image is important to uphold a favorable public identity. Ambivalence is an elusive form of racist discourse, which makes it more challenging to recognize. Myers (2005) notes that “people carefully hide their racetalk from public scrutiny: it lurks just of reach” (p. 23). Ambivalence is racism concealed in plain sight. But why do white people seek to uphold structural whiteness and systemic racism?

Drawing on structuration theory, I have argued that white Facebook users act as agents of social institutions. In moments of institutional crisis, whites act as agents to reproduce systems that afford their white privilege. Additionally, as creators, whites defend institutions because they cannot separate themselves from the very nature of institutions (Foster, 2006). I have documented how white Facebook users not only engage in impression management for themselves but also institutions such as law enforcement. For example, white Facebook users may justify the shooting of black victims by stating he or she wasn’t “an angel” and therefore law enforcement hasn’t committed any wrongdoing. As agents, I have argued that white Facebook users employ ambivalence as a discursive tactic to help maintain structural racism and whiteness. This isn’t farfetched. Myers (2005) notes that “people tend to act in ways that reproduce the structures” (p. 185). Indeed, actions cannot be separated from structures, and discourse can help to reinforce structures. In serving as agents, whites also rely on the dominant white racial frame to support their ambivalence.

The Role of Framing in Expressing Ambivalence

To further examine whether ambivalence was an impression management tactic, I examined comments to identify whether white Facebook users used the white racial frame to interpret the Castile incident. Theorizing that ambivalence was an impression management strategy to convey a non-racist identity was bolstered by the fact that white Facebook users used the white racial frame to interpret the shooting, indictment, and acquittal. Framing is important because drawing on the white racial frame may suggest that ambivalence is indeed an impression management strategy to project a non-racist identity while simultaneously upholding structural whiteness. As indicated previously, the primary purpose of the white racial frames is to legitimate and reproduce institutional whiteness and racial inequality. The next section covers the role of semantic moves in expressing ambivalence.

The Role of Semantic Moves in Expressing Ambivalence

I have documented how (white) Facebook users attempt to mask their racism by drawing on semantic moves. The examination of semantic moves goes beyond studying ambivalence or frames. It investigates how discursive ambivalence is structured. That is, it explores how Facebook users vacillate from claim to claim within their ambivalent comments. It is important to examine semantic moves because they may help to show that ambivalence may be an impression management tactic to convey a non-racist public image while upholding structural racism.

In this study, I have documented how semantic moves revealed that Facebook users sometimes expressed a single moral claim whereas normative claims usually appeared in multiple sentences. The data suggests there were racial differences in semantic moves. White Facebook users usually expressed more normative claims than moral claims in their ambivalent

comments. In contrast, black Facebook users usually conveyed more moral claims than normative claims.

I argued that moral claims functioned to project a non-racist self-identity while expressing a normative claim that draws on the white racial frame operated to defend structural and institutional whiteness. Foster (2006) asserts that white people “employ a sophisticated discursive strategy that defends white supremacy while simultaneously attempting to come across as not defending it” (p. 89). By oscillating white Facebook users were able to defend whiteness (through multiple normative claims) while protecting themselves against charges of racism (through a single moral claim). The next section discusses the role of context collapse in ambivalent expression.

The Role of Context Collapse in Expressing Ambivalence

This dissertation theorized that technology may prompt ambivalence. One way technology can induce ambivalence is through the context collapse, which assembles people from divergent divisions of one’s social network (Georgalou, 2017). Marwick and boyd (2010) note “Social media technologies collapse multiple audiences into single contexts, making it difficult for people to use the same techniques that they do to handle multiplicity in face-to-face conversations” (p. 114). The context collapse problematizes how people present themselves.

I argued that the context collapse in mediated spaces can complicate online identity construction and management for Facebook users in general but white users in particular when it comes to discussing police shootings of black people. I theorized that Facebook users might have a set of social relations that would expect them to defend black victims of police brutality as well as a set of social relations that would expect them to defend law enforcement. These competing expectations might result in cognitive dissonance because of the challenge to impress divergent audiences. As Marwick and boyd (2010) argues, “Social media collapse diverse social context

into one, making it difficult for people to engage in the complex negotiations needed to vary identity presentation, manage impressions, and save face” (p. 123).

In order to reduce cognitive dissonance prompted by the context collapse, drawing on impression management theory, I argued that white Facebook users would navigate the context collapse by producing ambivalence to appease different audiences with different expectations in their network. As articulated by Marwick and boyd (2010), “we present ourselves differently based on who we are talking to and where the conversation takes place” (p. 114). Indeed, the concept of impression managements postulates that people tend to tailor their identities to social context, norms, expectations, and audiences. Facebook users’ expressed ambivalence to appease multiple audiences in their context collapse. But what role does Facebook play in producing ambivalence?

The Role of Facebook in Expressing Ambivalence

Facebook may play a major role in the expression of ambivalence. In this project, I discussed how Facebook is a social media platform that enables its users to “Friend” diverse contacts, which may result in a context collapse. The context collapse on Facebook may be defined as “The flattening of diverse social relationships into a monolithic group of “Friends” makes it difficult for users to negotiate the normal variances of self-presentation that occur in day-to-day life” (Marwick, 2011, p. 10). Not only does Facebook help to mesh different social networks, but it also serves as an online platform for people to read, engage, share, and contribute to political discussions of public interest. Facebook is a virtual podium for people to contribute to discourse (Westling, 2007). Taken together, I have argued that Facebook integrates diverse audiences into a single environment where people generally discuss contentious issues

such as race-related topics. I highlighted how the architecture, policies, and affordances of social media platforms influence how identities are constructed in the networked publics.

Networked publics refers to “spaces constructed through networked technologies and imagined communities that emerge as a result of the intersection of people, technology, and practice” (Marwick & boyd, 2010, p. 1052). Networked publics alter how users share information. While there are privacy management settings on Facebook to help directly send messages to a select audience, as Marwick and boyd (2014) note, privacy control functions on Facebook are “complicated and confusing, and rarely provide meaningful protection” (p. 1056). And Facebook’s privacy control functions change frequently, and many users may not know how to effectively employ them. As a result, social media users deploy various strategies to manage divergent norms and values present in the network publics. For example, people may employ the lowest common denominator effect, where “individuals only post things they believe their broadest group of acquaintances will find non-offensive” (Marwick & boyd, 2010, p. 122). The technological features of social media platforms complicate online discourse. Ambivalence may be a response to the networked publics.

In addition to the context collapse, there are four features associated with social media platforms like Facebook that may engender ambivalence in the networked publics (Marwick, 2011). First, *persistence* refers to how digital communication is documented and archived. Second, replicability refers to how digital communication can be effortlessly reproduced. Third, scalability refers to how digital communication can easily gain visibility. Finally, *searchability* refers to how digital communication can effortlessly be found through search engines. These affordances are not in play in the offline world and help to shape digital communication in social media platforms like Facebook. As Baym and Boyd (2012) note, “The nature of publicness online is shaped by the architecture and affordances of social media, but also by people’s social

contexts, identities, and practices” (p. 320). In this dissertation, using Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis, I have argued that Facebook’s affordances, policies, and architecture may contribute to the production of ambivalence. I began this dissertation with the promise that this project will contribute to a growing field studying the complicated intersection between race and technology.

Whiteness, Ambivalence, and Technology

Nakamura and Chow-White (2013) note that “Critical race studies must take into account the digital” (p. 6). In accepting this call, I have applied a critical theoretical framework—i.e., CDTA, CRT, and CWS—to explore the complicated nexus between race and technology. The ways in which race, racism, and whiteness present themselves in digital life are unique in many ways (Daniels, 2012). The Internet offers a myriad of ways for people to construct identity unlike older mediums (Tynes et al, 2011). As Birkman (2018) notes, “It is important to examine how individuals display identity in general, and racial identity in particular, on social networks” (p. 18). In this study, I have examined how Facebook users, particularly white users communicate ambivalence in response to a high-profile shooting. Drawing on critical whiteness theory and critical race theory helped to identify dominant racial frames and semantic move that emerged in Facebook users’ ambivalence discourses in response to the Castile incident. The next section will discuss the advantages and limitations of this study.

Advantages and limitations

Facebook provides several advantages as a site for analysis. First, Facebook is the most prominent social media platform in the U.S. with over 214 million users (Statista, 2018). Second, white Americans prefer to use Facebook over other social media platforms (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Third, Facebook users are not only increasingly turning to Facebook for news

consumption but also to discuss news (Mitchel et al., 2013). Fourth, unlike many other social media platforms, Facebook's real-name policy demands its users to create profiles using their true identity or name that they go by in real life. This makes it easier to identify the user's race. Fifth, Facebook's word limit of 63, 206 is considerably higher than other social media platforms (Buck, 2012), which may provide more data for a richer analysis. Sixth, the public nature of Facebook commenting enables unobtrusive research, which is important as my racial identity as a black man doesn't influence commenter's responses. Comments were posted by registered Facebook users, members of the general public, who voluntarily responded to 9 news articles. While Facebook has many advantages as a site for analysis, it also has several limitations.

First, while Facebook asks its community about their gender, and political and religious views, it does not ask how its users racially identify (Grasmuck, Martin, & Zhao, 2009). Noble (2018) notes that colorblindness, "race and racism are embedded in the culture and practices of digital technologies" (p. 151). Under this colorblind approach, there is room to mislabel a commenter's racial identity. Second, the findings of this study cannot be extrapolated to white Americans in general and other white social media users in particular. Responding to police shootings of black people in Facebook is different from face-to-face conversations wherein an individual may have more control of his or her social environment. Furthermore, Facebook's affordances, policies, community standards, infrastructure, and premise differ from other social media platforms in ways that may produce different responses to police shootings of black people. Therefore, the findings of this dissertation may not be generalizable to other social media platforms. Third, I only analyzed the comments of English-dominant white FB users because I am not fluent in other languages. For example, this study doesn't account how ambivalence is conveyed in Spanish. Fourth, commenters may not have the context collapse.

Their networks may either fully support law enforcement or black victims. Or their networks could be ambivalent. Beyond Facebook, there are other limitations.

A major limitation in this study is the unacceptable intercoder reliability coefficients for the following two variables: frame and semantic move. The intercoder reliability coefficients for frame was (KALPHA .51) and semantic move (KALPHA .57). As a result, findings from this study should be carefully interpreted. For both frames and semantic moves, low agreement may be attributed to the number of coding options. As it relates to frames, coders could choose from 21 frames. In addition, intercoder reliability for these variables may be low because multiple frames can emerge in a single comment. Moreover, for semantic moves, coders had the option of selecting 14 semantic moves. The potential to choose from so many coding options may have affected inter-coder reliability agreement. In other words, the level of agreement could have been higher by collapsing frames or semantic moves.

That said, using content analysis to examine latent message characteristics in a critical study is more challenging than analyzing manifest content. Neuendorf (2017) notes that “Manifest analysis examines obvious and straightforward aspects, ... while latent analysis examines the subtler aspects” (p. 31). She further argues that analyzing “latent constructs is typically more problematic” (p. 32). Neuendorf (2017) notes that content analysis of latent content generally produces unreliability in human coding. She notes that scholars have argued that quantitative content analysis is for manifest content while qualitative analysis is for latent content. On that note, while the intercoder reliability coefficients are unacceptable for latent message characteristic such as frame and semantic move, Neuendorf (2017) warns us that we should “expect variables measuring latent content to receive generally lower reliability” (p. 170).

Finally, this study theorizes that ambivalence is an impression management strategy rather than an actual stance. Van Den Berg (2003) states “[t]he co-occurrence of racist

statements and denials of racism in ... discourse isn't always a matter of the careful use of rhetorical devices on behalf of strategic goals" (p. 135). That is, contradictions can be an actual function of ambivalence. Nevertheless, as Foster (2016) notes, conscious or unconscious, ambivalence helps to maintain racist social structures.

Implications for Future Studies

This present study selected the police shooting of Philando Castile as its case study. The Philando Castile incident is distinctive from other high-profile cases in that it was (1) live-streamed, (2) the officer was indicted, (3) which gave rise to a verdict. The unique components of this case may have produced data that are not representative of other police shootings of black people. While this dissertation answers many questions, many questions are left unanswered. The findings of this study raise new questions and directions for future research.

Future research should examine whether ambivalent discourses emerge in response to (a) shootings that aren't live-streamed, (b) news pertaining to non-indictments of officers, (c) news regarding a guilty verdict of officers, and (d) black women or children or other black people gunned down by officers. The mere fact that Philando Castile was a black man may have engendered ambivalence.

Because this dissertation gathers data only from Facebook, future studies should examine whether ambivalence emerges in other social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and/or Instagram. Furthermore, this paper theorizes that the high potential for context collapse on Facebook may prompt ambivalence. Future research should test this theory by examining ambivalence in comment sections of news websites where the context collapse may be least likely to occur, and anonymity is higher. Conducting a cross-platform analysis could help to demonstrate that ambivalence is more likely to emerge in communication platforms where the potential for context collapse is much higher. Additionally, future studies should explore whether

and how white Facebook users' express ambivalence to present a non-racist identity in online dialogues with black Facebook users.

Social psychology literature suggests that interracial political discussions regarding contentious race-related issues are anxiety provoking for whites (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). Discussions about racial matters may facilitate whites to be perceived as prejudiced, which engenders psychological discomfort as whites would like to be regarded as racially egalitarian. Moreover, to avoid being labeled as prejudice, whites tend to "monitor their thoughts, feelings, and behavior" (Richeson & Shelton, p. 318). On that note, scholars should explore the ways in which white Facebook users vacillate between moral and normative claims in online interracial dialogue with black Facebook users. The next section will discuss how white Facebook users can engage in outgroup solidarity in the fight against racialized policing.

White Outgroup Solidarity

Foster (2013) notes that "race discourse is important to examine because discourse is a form of social action" (p. 3). He argues that discourse can either help to eradicate or perpetuate racial injustice. On those grounds, then, white people are needed in the struggle of uprooting systemic racism in law enforcement. And one way to help eradicate racialized police violence is through discourse containing only moral claims. This sort of discourse is a form of outgroup solidarity, which is a form of "solidarity expressed by members of one group toward another group" (Blum, 2007, p. 55). White Facebook users can engage in outgroup solidarity through supporting black victims, betraying systemic whiteness, engaging in white intra-racial interactions, and abandoning the white racial frame.

Supporting black victims of police violence requires white people to express sympathy. It requires whites to not bring up the criminal history of the victim to determine whether his or her life was valuable. It requires whites not to engage in colorblindness and downplay the role race

played in the police shooting. It requires whites not to blame the death on the victim for any reason. It requires whites not to justify the shooting by saying the officer feared for his life. These are the various ways in which whites can engage in white-outgroup solidarity by expressing support for the victim. Another way white Facebook users' can engage in out-group solidarity is through betraying systemic whiteness.

As creators of law enforcement and judicial system in America, white outgroup solidarity requires whites to betray these systems through condemning them when injustice occurs. White outgroup solidarity requires white people to be critical of police actions in fatal encounters. It requires whites to critical of the "rules and resources" that enable police officers to kill black with impunity. It requires whites to rescind their implicit allegiance to whiteness. Treason is defined "as a betrayal of one's expected allegiance to one's race" (Wise, 2008, p. 4). Whites are too often expected to downplay racial injustice, which perpetuates racist social structures (DiAngelo, 2012). Racial disparities in police killings will change only when whites become aggressive in the crusade for racial justice by condemning systemic whiteness. Another way white Facebook users can engage in out-group solidarity is through expressing moral claims to other white people.

Centering moral claims in white intra-racial interactions may help expose the invisibility of systemic racism in law enforcement. As DiAngelo (2012) notes, "Since we [whites] don't see the racism of other whites as our problem, we leave people of color with the responsibility of challenging other white people" (p. 174). And blacks are too often accused of racial paranoia or playing the infamous race card when discussing racial matters. As a result, blacks are generally dismissed as not credible in discussions concerning racial matters with white people (Kivel, 2011). Whites must challenge white racial solidarity and address racialized police violence and

systemic whiteness because they are seen as more credible to their white counterparts (DiAngelo, 2012). Moreover, white Facebook users should abandon the white racial frame.

It is important for whites to reject the white racial frame to begin a deframing and reframing process. Feagin (2010) notes that “Deframing involves consciously taking apart and critically analyzing elements of the old racial frame, while reframing means accepting or creating a new frame to replace that old white racial frame” (p. 198). Because the white racial frame is so ingrained in the white conscience, the deframing and reframing process is necessary for thinking critically about race and racial issues. The deframing and reframing process can occur through educational strategies such as exposure to black counter-frames, listening to black people, and teaching how to speak out against racism. Rejecting the white racial frame is one way to show white outgroup solidarity.

White outgroup solidarity requires white Facebook users to employ moral claims in their discourses regarding racially motivated police brutality. White outgroup solidarity requires whites to support black victims of police violence. It additionally requires white people to break their allegiance to systemic whiteness by speaking out against racist social institutions. White outgroup solidarity requires whites to express moral claims via intra-racial conversations to help increase the racial consciousness of other whites. It mandates that whites do away with ambivalent messages. Finally, it requires whites to abandon the white racial frame. White outgroup solidarity is important because as Blum (2007) notes, “... members of a targeted group appreciate others standing with them, showing that these others appreciate what they are going through, that they empathize with them and disapprove of or condemn what is being done to them” (p. 55). Indeed, the implicit allegiance to whiteness must be rescinded. Race treason requires whites to challenge systemic, institutional, and personal racism, especially in the company of other whites. Treason is defined “as a betrayal of one’s expected allegiance to one’s

race” (Wise, 2008, p. 4). Whites are too often expected to downplay racial injustice, which perpetuates racist social structures (DiAngelo, 2012). Racial disparities in police killings will change only when whites become aggressive in the crusade for racial justice.

Conclusion

This dissertation was inspired by my observation of how Facebook users commented on high-profile police shootings of black people. As police brutality against black people continues to be a contentious social matter, it is important to understand how social media users discuss this issue. In response to the Philando Castile incident, findings from this study suggest that white Facebook users were more likely than black users to express ambivalence to navigate the context collapse. I argued that moral claims functioned as an impression management strategy to project a non-racist public image to one segment of their Facebook audience while normative claims operated to safeguard structural whiteness, preserve white privilege, and appeal to another division of their social network.

This argument was bolstered by the evidence that white Facebook users draw on white racial frames to convey ambivalence. White Facebook users employed frames such as “Victim Blaming,” “De-emphasizing Race,” and “Black-on-Black crime.” These white racial frames function to legitimate and reproduce structural whiteness. Furthermore, semantic moves may further render ambivalence as an impression management strategy.

Data from this study suggest that white Facebook users usually expressed more normative than moral claims in their ambivalent comments. For example, moral claims usually appeared as a single sentence whereas normative claims appeared in multiple sentences. In contrast, black Facebook users sometimes expressed more moral than normative claims in their ambivalent discourses. Therefore, these findings may help to conclude that white ambivalence is

indeed an impression management strategy to project a non-racist identity. While ambivalence may be as self-presentational tactic, it can have structural impact. As Foster (2006) notes, “Reinforcing white racism could be an unintended consequence of the ambivalence, while the manifest function is the management of one’s face during a conversation. Still, the rationalization of the racist social structure takes place” (p. 84).

APPENDIX A

CODEBOOK

FIRST PHASE

- In this phase, coders are identifying race and gender of Facebook users.

COMMENTER (col A)

- This column provides a link to the commenter's Facebook page. Click on the link. Look at the commenter's profile picture, photo albums, and name to identify race and gender.
- If two people appear in a profile picture, look at name and explore photo albums to determine race and gender.
- If Facebook account has been deleted, enter unable to determine for both race and gender.
- Some names may not match their profile because they may have changed it.
- If there are only baby pictures, look at the baby's race and profile name to determine race and gender
- If there is a bitmoji as the only pic, look at skin color, gender, and clothing of bitmoji to determine race and gender.
- Code for gender even if race cannot be determined. Look at names for gender. Note Facebook tells you the person's gender where it says "send him/her friend request."
- If it says "them" with a group of people, then enter 7 and enter 4 for gender
- If it says "them" for a single person, enter 3 for other on the gender category.
- If a black or white Facebook user lives overseas and does not have a listed American hometown, code as other (6) for race. (look at intro section)
- If it says studied overseas, but does not say where "from" or "lives" code as black or white.
- If the name isn't hyperlinked, then enter 7 for race and 4 for gender
- Do not count the same Facebook user more than once.
- DOUBLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU DID NOT SKIP ANY CASES.

RACE (col C)

- Black/African American (Enter 1)
- White/Caucasian (Enter 2)
- Hispanic (Enter 3)
- Native American (Enter 4)
- Asian (Enter 5) This include nationalities such as Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, etc.
- Other (Enter 6)
- Unable to determine (Enter 7)

GENDER (col D)

- Male (Enter 1)
- Female (Enter 2)
- Other (Enter 3)

- Unable to determine (Enter 4)

SECOND PHASE

- Note: In this phase, coders are examining comments by Facebook users coded as either black or white.
- COMMENT (col A)
- This column shows comments posted by Facebook users. Please read comments carefully.
- Do not click on any links
- Comments in “PURPLE” are in response to the police shooting of Philando Castile.
- Comments in “YELLOW” are in response to the indictment of Jeronimo Yanez.
- Comments in “GREEN” are in response to the acquittal of Jeronimo Yanez.
- DOUBLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU DID NOT SKIP ANY CASES.

VALUE (col B)

- Enter 1 if the comment expresses ambivalence:
- Ambivalence is present in comments that simultaneously express support for both black victims of police brutality as well as police officers. Support for black victims of police brutality and opposition to law enforcement make a moral claim, whereas support for police officers and opposition to black victims of police brutality make a normative claim. For example: “Michael Brown did not deserve to be shot and killed (MC), but the police officer shouldn’t be charged for his death (NC). This was just an unfortunate situation.”
- Attributes of moral claims may include:
 - Advocating police reform
 - Mobilizing others against police brutality
 - Expressing sympathy/support for black victims of police brutality
 - Advocating better cop training
 - Participation in protest against police brutality
 - Condemning police officer’s actions
 - Calling cops murderers or pigs
 - Criticizing people who justify shootings
 - #BlackLivesMatter
 - #Icantbreathe
 - Fist emoji
 - FTP = Fuck the police
 - R.I.P (insert black victim)
 - Changing the wording of the news headline
 - Alluding to NRA
 - Sad face emoji
 - Saying the headlines should be change to something that supports black victims or oppose police officer
 - Criticizing the NRA for not speaking up
 - Referring to shooting and acquittal as travesty of justice

- Referring to a girl being convicted of murder
- Attributes of normative claims may include:
 - Expressing sympathy/support for police officers
 - Holding the victim of police brutality responsible for his or own death
 - Downplaying the role of race in police shootings of black victims
 - #BlueLivesMatter
 - #AllLivesMatter
 - Distraction from the presidential election or hiliary
 - Critiques of the media for reprotog on police shootings
 - Referring to protests as riots
 - Saying the headlines should be change to something that supports police officers or oppose black victims
 - Saying people wasnt there so they shouldnt have an opinions
 - Attacking liberals for supporting black victims
 - Mentions that the cop is hispanic and not white
 - Attack on liberal media
 - Crtizcing media for reporting the shooting
 - Back the blue
 - Referring to commenters as Facebook lawyers
 - Trump will pardon him
 - Attacks on jury
- Enter 2 if the comment solely expresses support for black victims of police brutality, or opposition to law enforcement.
 - For example: “Tamir Rice was an innocent kid. He should not have been shot and killed. The officers involved should be indicted and convicted.”
- Enter 3 if the comment solely expresses support for police officers involved in a shooting or law enforcement in general or opposition to black victims of police violence.
 - For example: “Not all police officers are bad! They have a tough job to do. The victim shouldn’t have moved.”
- Enter 4 if unable to determine.
 - If the comment doesn’t make an opinion, enter 4 unable to determine.
 - If the comment is an emoticon or picture, enter 4 unable to determine.
 - If the comment is blank, enter 4 unable to determine.
 - If the comment reads like a headline, enter 4 unable to determine

THIRD PHASE

- Note: In this phase, coders are examining comments to identify frames.
- COMMENT
- This column shows comments posted by Facebook users. Please read comments carefully to identify the framing.
- Frames are only coded for ambivalent comments.
- Note that comments may contain multiple frames. In this case, select a frame based on the following criteria:

- Greatest number of sentences
- Greatest emphasis (e.g., capitalizing words or phrases, or using exclamation marks)
- First frame to appear
- DOUBLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU DID NOT SKIP ANY CASES.

FRAMES:

- Enter 1 if the framing of the comment is de-emphasizing race. De-emphasizing race is present in comments that ignore or minimize the role race plays in police encounters involving black victims. Words or phrases that might suggest de-emphasizing race: “race has nothing to do with it” “this is not a color issue” “stop race baiting” “the officer is not racist”
- Enter 2 if the framing of the comment is victim blaming. Victim blaming is present in comments that wholly or partially hold any black victim of police violence responsible for his or her own death or mistreatment. Words or phrases that might suggest victim blaming: “s/he shouldn’t have reached for his gun.” “s/he should have obeyed the officer’s orders.” “why did s/he move? S/he made the officer nervous.” “Here is how s/he should have responded when pulled over ...”
- Enter 3 if the framing of the comment is black-on-black crime. Black-on-black crime which is present in comments that mention or justify police violence against black victims because black people kill each other. Words or phrases that might suggest black-on-black crime: “why aren’t people protesting murders in Chicago”? Note: Chicago generally signify black-on-black crime in this context. “Yes, police officers kill black people, but black people kill black people.” “People need to also protest gang violence.” “Gang violence, black on black crime, neighborhood,” “People are killing themselves in their own neighborhoods/communities.”
- Enter 4 if the framing of the comment is white victimhood. White victimhood is present in comments that downplay police brutality against black people because white people also experience police misconduct. Words or phrases that might suggest white victimhood: “what about the number of white people killed by law enforcement?” “news media don’t report when white people are killed by police officers.” “my white boyfriend/family member/girlfriend experienced police brutality.”
- Enter 5 if the framing of the comment is discrediting witness. Discrediting witness is present in comments that disregard, diminish or discredit a witnesses’ narrative of a police encounter involving a black victim. Words or phrases that might suggest discrediting witness: “S/he was probably on drugs” “His or her story may not be true” “S/he seems suspiciously calm” “We shouldn’t take her/his word for what happened.” She is doing this for money, trying to get rich.

- Enter 6 if the framing of the comment is withholding judgment. Withholding judgement appears in comments that suggest reserving criticism or developing an opinion of a police encounter until all evidence is presented. Words or phrases that might suggest withholding judgment: “I need to hear both sides.” “I will wait for more evidence.” “There is more to the story.” “We don’t know the facts” “I’ll wait for the investigation.” “I need to see the full video”
- Enter 7 if the framing of the comment is attack on law on enforcement. Attack on law enforcement is present in comments that suggests police officers are under attack. Words or phrases that might suggest attack on law enforcement. “Police officers have been attacked during traffic stops.” “Police officers are nervous/fearful because they are being targeted” “Police officers have a scary job” “Police are on high alert.”
- Enter 8 if the framing of the comment is a few bad apples. A few bad apples is present in comments that downplay the prevalence of police brutality. Words or phrases that might suggest a few bad apples: “Not ALL police officers kill people.” “Only small number of cops kill.” “Let’s not accuse all cops of misbehavior based on the actions of a few.” “Most police officers do good work.”
- Enter 9 if the framing of the comment is qualified sympathy. Qualified sympathy is present in comments that express sympathy and/or support for both a black victim and police officer. Words or phrases that might suggest qualified sympathy: “I am deeply sorry for the loss of Eric Garner, but I also feel sorry for the police officer because he could possibly lose his job” “Alton Sterling should still be alive. I feel bad for the officer because he had to do something in that situation. Sad for both parties” “I support the police but this guy did not deserve to die” “I feel sad for all parties/sad for both parties” “I support the police but he should have been convicted.” “Cops are not good anymore.”
- Enter 10 if the framing of the comment is innocent until proven guilty. Innocent until proven guilty is present in comments that propose police officers should be presumed innocent until a guilty verdict is issued by a jury or judge. “Let the jury decide.” “Cops should be judged by a jury.” “Police officers aren’t guilty because they are charged.” “Let’s get a fair trial”
- Enter 11 if the framing of the comment is doing his job. Doing his job is present in comments that convey cops involved in shootings of black people were trying to do their (hard) job. Words or phrases that might suggest doing his job: “Police officers have a

hard/tough job.” “The cop was just doing his job” “The officer was performing his duties” “Put their lives on the line.”

- Enter 12 if the framing of the comment is accepting verdict. Accepting Verdict is present in comments that agree with a non-guilty decision of a police officer who was on a trial for killing a black person. Words or phrases that might suggest accepting verdict: “The jury has issued a verdict, so we have respect their decision.” “People need to get over it. The jury found not him not guilty.”
- Enter 13 if the framing of the comment is strategic ignorance. Strategic ignorance is present in comments where people proclaim to have little to know knowledge about a police shooting. Words or phrases that might suggest strategic ignorance: “I don’t know much about this case.” “I wasn’t there.” “I don’t remember this case.” “I don’t know”
- Enter 14 if the framing of the comment is protest peacefully. Protest peacefully is present in comments that instruct people how to protest against a non-guilty verdict. Words or phrases that might suggest protest peacefully: “Do not riot/burn/tear down your own community.”
- Enter 15 if the framing of the comment is injure the victim. Injure the Victim is present in comments that indicate cops should use a different weapon or shoot fewer times to subdue a black person during police encounters. “The cop should have used a taser” “The cop should have used fewer bullets” “7 shots seems excessive” “At least the cop didn’t shoot him in the face”
- Enter 16 if the framing of the comment is past victims. Past Victims is present in comments where opposition or support for a black victim is juxtaposed with opposition or support for another black victim of police violence. “Recent shootings of black people have been murky but this incident is clear; the cop was wrong.” “I don’t agree with past shootings but this shooting is unjustified.” “I generally understand why cops shoot but not in this case.” “Some instances do call for use of force but not this one.” “I’m generally on the side of police officers but not this time” “Cases by case basis” “This situation is different”
- Enter 17 if the framing of the comment is politicization. Politicization is present in comments that talk about police shootings in the context of either Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, or Donald Trump. “Don’t let this take attention away from Hillary emails.” “Barack Obama is to blame for racial divide/shootings.” “Trump will fix this.” “I blame this administration.” “I’m conservative. I voted for Trump but this wrong.”

- Enter 18 if the framing of the comment is mass media. Blaming Mass Media is present in comments that mention news outlets are the reason for the shootings. “CNN should stop reporting these shootings.” “Media are making these things racial.” “News wants us to hate each other.” “MSM = mainstream media” “News media profit from these stories”
- Enter 19 if the framing of the comment are guns. Blaming Guns which is present in comments that blame guns for police shootings of black victims. This one doesn’t explicitly blame the victim but blame guns or perceptions of guns in America. “Philando would still be alive if he didn’t have a gun.” “2nd Amendment, CCW, NRA, Gun is the reason Philando is dead.”
- Enter 20 if the framing of the comment is no angel. No Angel is present in comments that mention how a black victim of police brutality has a criminal past. “I feel sorry for him but he did have criminal record.” He was “no angel” “He was not a good guy.”
- Enter 21 if the framing of the comment is black angel. Black Angel is present in comments that mention how a black victim of police violence has no criminal past. “The guy didn’t deserve to die. He didn’t have a criminal record.” “He wasn’t a criminal.” “He has a clean record.” “He was a good day with a CCW.”
- Enter 22 if the framing of the comment “cannot be determined.”

FOURTH PHASE

- Note: In this phase, coders are identifying the “Semantic Moves” of ambivalent comments.
- COMMENTS (col A)
- This column shows comments posted by Facebook users. Please read comments carefully to identify the pattern of ambivalence.
- You may need to use paper and pencil to write down the pattern as you read comments.
- Ambivalence = Moral claim (MC). Normative claim (NC).
- “Sad for both parties” can be either normative or moral depending on the valence before or after.
- A single word such as “Sad” can count as either a moral or normative claim.
- Phrases such as an “unfortunate situation”
- DOUBLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU DID NOT SKIP ANY CASES.

SEMANTIC MOVES

- Enter 1 if the pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s). For example: “Michael Brown did not deserve to be shot and killed (MC), but the police officer shouldn’t be charged for his death (NC).”
- Enter 2 if the pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s). For example: “Michael Brown did not deserve to be shot and killed (MC), but the police officer shouldn’t be charged for his death (NC). I feel sorry for Michael Brown, though (MC)”
- Enter 3 if the pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim(s). For example: “Michael Brown did not deserve to be shot and killed (MC), but the police officer shouldn’t be charged for his death (NC). I feel sorry for Michael Brown, though (MC). I also feel sorry for the officer’s family (NC).”
- Enter 4 if the pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s).
- Enter 5 if pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim, moral claim, normative claim (s).
- Enter 6 pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim, moral claim, normative claim (s), moral claim(s).
- Enter 7 pattern is moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim, moral claim, normative claim (s), moral claim(s), normative claim (s).
- Enter 8 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim.
- For example: “The police officer shouldn’t be charged for his death (NC), but I do feel sorry for Michael Brown.”
- Enter 9 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim(s).
- Enter 10 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim.

- Enter 11 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s)
- Enter 12 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim(s)
- Enter 13 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s).
- Enter 14 if the pattern is normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim, normative claim(s), moral claim(s), normative claim(s), moral claim(s).
- Enter 15 if pattern is other.
- Enter 16 if pattern cannot be determined.

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