Are Some Emotions Marked "Whites Only"? Racialized Feeling Rules in Professional Workplaces

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Much of the research on emotion work in organizations has focused on the ways in which emotional performance reproduces gender inequality. Yet, most of these studies overlook the racial character of professional workplaces and how emotion work is experienced by racial/ethnic minorities. In this article, I examine how the normative feeling rules that guide emotional performance in professional workplaces are racialized rather than neutral or objective criteria. Based on 25 semistructured interviews with black professionals, I contend that feeling rules have different implications for black workers and ultimately reinforce racial difference. This research contributes to the sociological literature on emotion work by further developing the racial components of emotional performance. Keywords: feeling rules, emotion work, race, black professionals, tokenism.

Workers employed in professional environments quickly learn that there are feeling rules that they are expected to follow in the workplace. When professional or paraprofessional workers show deference or express anger, they do so generally because the feeling rules of their jobs mandate such emotional expressions are expected and normative (Hochschild 1983; Lively 2000). These rules are established to regulate and control interpersonal interactions so that they proceed smoothly, effectively, and efficiently.

Existing research establishes that feeling rules, far from being neutral, are gendered, with different rules applied to men and women workers. As such, these rules reinforce gender boundaries by specifying which emotional displays are acceptable for men but not women, and vice versa. This is particularly evident when workers are employed in occupations comprised predominantly of those of the opposite sex. For instance, Jennifer Pierce (1995) finds that women litigators are penalized for displaying emotions such as anger and aggression, even though these feelings are expected of men in this heavily male profession. In the same study, she argues that men paralegals are discouraged from doing deference and caretaking, the feeling rules that are expected from their women counterparts (see also Lively 2000). This work argues that emotional norms, like occupations and organizations themselves, are intrinsically gendered in ways that perpetuate inequality between men and women employees (Acker 1990).

Yet, most of the studies in this area fail to consider how emotional norms may also be selectively applied to workers of different races (but see Harlow 2003; Kang 2003 for exceptions). As Kiran Mirchandani (2003) argued, studies of emotion work typically assume a white worker in a racially homogenous white environment. This is problematic, as research therefore privileges the experiences of white workers and ignores the way emotion work may be differently performed and experienced for minority employees in predominantly white settings. In this article, I contribute to the literature in this area by arguing that feeling rules are implicitly racialized within professional workplaces, imposing additional restrictions on

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the emotional performances from black employees with deleterious consequences for their professional lives.

Theoretical Framework

In her influential study *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977), Rosabeth Kanter offers an insightful analysis of the tokenism that can occur for those in the numerical minority. Studying women who work with mostly male executives, Kanter argues that tokens experience heightened visibility, stereotyping, and isolation from others. When they fail or make mistakes, they are seen as representative of the rest of their group, but their successes are viewed as evidence that they are exceptional and different from similar others. Challenges like these make it very difficult for tokens to blend into the larger group, and ultimately create barriers to their upward mobility and advancement.

The difficulties that many African Americans encounter in the professional workplace are reminiscent of Kanter's (1977) theory of tokenism. In 2006, only 17 percent of African Americans were employed in professional and related occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006). Unlike their working class counterparts, black professional workers are likely to be the first or one of few African Americans in their positions. In this environment, black workers often find that they are tokenized vis-à-vis white colleagues' stereotypes of them as incompetent, poorly trained, and unintelligent (Bell and Nkomo 2001; Feagin 2006; Higginbotham and Weber 1999; Jackson et al. 1995). Black professionals also report discrimination in promotion and hiring (Feagin 2006; Feagin and Sikes 1994). As tokens, they are also socially isolated from colleagues and have difficulty establishing the social networks that are necessary for advancement and occupational mobility (Pierce 2002).

The theory of tokenism helps to explain black workers' experiences in professional environments. Research has yet to address, however, how tokenism shapes their experiences of the feeling rules and emotional norms of the professional workplace. Token status keeps black professionals isolated, stereotyped, and highly visible. Does it also impact the extent to which they can conform to the feeling rules structured by professional work environments?

Emotion Work and Feeling Rules in Professional Settings

In her seminal work *The Managed Heart* (1983), Arlie Russell Hochschild provides an extensive analysis of the ways in which emotions are commodified and structured in work environments. She argues that in an increasingly service-oriented economy, emotions become yet another form of labor that workers must produce and sell in the capitalist marketplace. Organizations demand that employees muster emotions that are appropriate to their occupations, and these emotional exchanges thus become another part of the job. As such, flight attendants are expected not only to assist passengers in the event of an emergency, but also to provide good service by ensuring that customers feel protected, cared for, and safe (Hochschild 1983). Similarly, a core component of bill collectors' jobs involves inducing feelings of trepidation and intimidation in debtors.

Hochschild (1983) argues that critical to this process are the feeling rules that guide everyday emotional exchanges in the workplace and in other settings more generally. These feeling rules are defined as the emotional norms appropriate to a given situation or context, and, as Hochschild (1983) writes, "guide emotion work by establishing the sense of entitlement or obligation that governs emotional exchanges" (p. 56). Thus, feeling rules are the norms and guidelines that govern emotion work or emotion management—individuals' efforts to achieve the appropriate emotional state. Feeling rules are also structured by the environment in which they are enacted. Hence, the flight attendants in Hochschild's (1983) study understand that the feeling rules of their job necessitate that they stifle, rather than express, their irritation with

troublesome passengers. When these feelings themselves become produced and exchanged for wages, workers are performing what Hochschild (1983) describes as emotional labor.

In professional workplaces, the corporate culture is generally structured around white, middle class norms (Anderson 1999; Chase 1995; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Pierce 1995). These norms extend to the feeling rules that characterize these environments, often defining emotions like calmness, amiability, and congeniality as appropriate for the workplace. Emotions like anger and frustration are also tolerable, but only under specific conditions. For instance, in Pierce's (1995) extensive study of the legal profession, she finds that litigators are expected to assert "strategic friendliness" where they are only as polite, congenial, and amiable as is necessary to achieve a particular goal. They also are able to display feelings of aggression, anger, and belligerence towards other attorneys outside the firm and to any subordinates, but not to superiors. Paralegals, in contrast, are expected to conform to emotional norms of being nurturing, caretaking, and deferential to attorneys, and are not supposed to display their feelings of anger and irritation to attorneys.

Pierce's (1995, 1999) study of the legal profession shows that feeling rules are carefully outlined and are stratified by status and gender. Litigators, who are mostly men, are permitted and even expected to show anger and frustration openly, but women attorneys and (mostly female) paralegals are not, as it is viewed as "unfeminine" and therefore unseemly. Paralegals, who are usually women, are expected to be deferential and nurturing, and displays of aggression and curtness are discouraged—unless the paralegals in question are men. In this particular field, then, appropriate emotional displays vary by occupation and gender, but they generally include strategic friendliness, anger, and assertiveness for men, coupled with caretaking and deference for women.

Feeling Rules and Race

The research on emotion work and feeling rules in work environments has only occasionally considered race. As Mirchandani (2003) noted, most studies in this vein fail to consider workplaces as environments that are profoundly shaped by race in ways that create different outcomes for white and minority workers. Yet, since her writing, a few researchers have examined the ways racial dynamics in various work spaces inform the performance of emotion work. In her study of Korean women-owned nail salons, Miliann Kang (2003) shows how race intersects with class and gender to influence the ways Korean women employees alter their emotional and body labor for black and white women customers. Though she focuses on service workers rather than those in a professional setting, Kang's research indicates that racial dynamics play an important role in shaping workers' emotion work.

Additionally, in her research on black college and university professors, Roxana Harlow (2003) offers one of few studies that specifically explore how the process of emotion management is racialized for minority workers. She argues that black college and university professors engage in emotion management to contend with racialized classroom dynamics where their authority and intellectual capabilities are routinely challenged. Black faculty members encounter white students who perceive blacks as inferior and unintelligent, and therefore dispute black professors' knowledge. In response, black faculty perform emotion management to control their feelings of anger and frustration in order to teach effectively and adhere to professional standards. Knowing that the feeling rules of their environment call for calmness and professionalism, they work to bring their emotions in line with the expected feeling norms of their profession.

Harlow (2003) also finds that black women professors in particular contend with white students' perceptions that they are mean, cold, and intimidating. This image is a specifically raced and gendered one that places black women outside the bounds of acceptable femininity, which suggest that women should be nurturing and caring. Black women professors cope with this image by doing emotion work that allows them to maintain a sense of professionalism

in the face of racialized and gendered student perceptions. For these women, emotion work is a necessary strategy for addressing the ways intersections of race and gender overlap to produce stereotypes that lead to adverse interpretations of their classroom performance.

Other work, however, suggests that black women may operate within the context of these stereotypes as a way of navigating hostile or unwelcoming environments (Harvey Wingfield 2007; Ong 2005). In particular, Maria Ong (2005) observes that black women students in the predominantly white male field of physics may deliberately adopt a "loud black girl" persona that plays into white colleagues' stereotypical images, but also enables black women to assert themselves in a field where they are highly visible and in the minority. For African American women, intersections of race and gender create particular stereotypes that profoundly shape many aspects of their lives (Collins 1990, 2004). Ultimately, these studies suggest that racialized, gendered stereotypes inform the ways African American women are perceived, forcing them to do emotion work or to embrace these images as a strategy for being heard and accepted.

Taken together, these studies show that race (and gender) matter in understanding how emotion work is structured and what type(s) of emotion work are performed in professional settings. Kang (2003) shows that race can influence emotion work, while Harlow's (2003) study demonstrates that racial and gendered stereotypes compel black professionals to do emotion work in order to achieve a professional demeanor. Building on this argument, Ong's (2005) research indicates that these same stereotypes may offer a way for black women to assert themselves. However, these studies and the existing work in this area also give rise to additional questions. If feeling rules guide the ways emotion work is performed, how then do black workers in racialized environments follow these rules? Does the tokenism that black professionals across the occupational spectrum often experience subject them to a different set of feeling rules than their white coworkers? Are feeling rules themselves really neutral, objective concepts, or are they implicitly or explicitly racialized in ways that create discriminatory environments for minority workers?

Research Design and Methodology

To address the above questions, I conducted semistructured interviews with 25 African American professionals employed in a variety of occupations. Interviews were conducted during 2005 in respondents' workplaces, homes, or a neutral location. On average, interviews lasted about 90 minutes, and were tape-recorded and later transcribed. Respondents were all college educated and ranged in age from 24 to 61. Eleven had advanced degrees, and two were in the process of completing graduate study.

The respondents worked in settings where they estimated that African Americans constituted 10 percent or fewer of the employees within the organization, including workers at both professional and nonprofessional levels. In fact, 22 respondents (88 percent) were employed in settings where they were the only black professional in their particular office, and 19 (76 percent) stated that they were the only black professional within the entire organization. All of the respondents described themselves as employed in occupations where working effectively with coworkers was an integral factor in their job success, and that interacting with coworkers comprised the majority of their jobs. In other words, these workers stated that some or all of their jobs required them to work closely with colleagues in interracial groups. These workplace dynamics placed respondents in positions where their routine interaction with white coworkers increased the likelihood of the regular performance of emotion work and of navigating the feeling rules that are the basis of this work.

I used a snowball sample to create the data set, beginning with respondents that I knew personally, and asking these subjects to refer me to others who fit the criteria for the study. Though this method has its limitations, particularly in that it creates a sample of individuals who may share similar characteristics and traits, the use of a snowball sample nonetheless

Table 1 • ***Respondents***

Name	*Age*	*Occupation*
Beatrice	37	Attorney
Bill	31	Government employee
Cedric	27	Financial analyst
Charlotte	32	Attorney
Dexter	37	Attorney
Donette	43	University administrator
Gabrielle	54	Director of education
Jay	25	Systems administrator
Kima	42	Community educator
Leon	41	Director, community outreach
Lester	37	Attorney
Marla	57	Manager
Omar	47	Military officer
Ricky	26	Engineer
Roger	49	Community educator
Russell	61	College professor
Sean	31	Engineer
Sonia	34	College professor
Sherrie	51	Sales manager
Steven	35	Loan officer
Tanya	29	Administrative support staff
Terrance	42	Manager
Theresa	24	Nonprofit director
Tommy	35	Financial planner
Yvette	37	Program director

allowed me to reach a broad range of black professionals in different fields. Using the Census definition of "professional" jobs as those that provide technical, administrative, or scientific services to others, I was able to include workers in a variety of occupations, ranging from lawyers to nonprofit directors to engineers. Like all qualitative research, my results are intended to inform general theory, but they are not statistically generalizable.

As an African American woman employed in a professional occupation, I expect that shared racial status (and in some cases, shared racial and gender identity) likely facilitated a level of openness between myself and respondents. In other words, participants may have felt that I understood or could relate to their experiences with race and feeling norms in the professional workplace. Though other researchers have argued that shared racial status does not necessarily facilitate rapport (see Gallagher 2000), in this case respondents may have been more comfortable discussing their encounters with racial stereotypes, inequalities, and perceptions because they presumed I could sympathize and identify with their experiences. The sample does not include interviews with respondents of other races, so I cannot contrast black workers' experiences with those of their white, Asian American, or Latino/a counterparts. Consequently, this study offers an analysis of black professionals' sense of the feeling rules they are expected to follow, and their perceptions of whether and how these rules differ from those appropriate for their white colleagues.

Interview questions focused specifically on ways black workers negotiated emotional performances in the context of their work environments. Respondents discussed their general work history up to their present position, gave an account of the responsibilities and duties of their current jobs, and described the racial climate at those jobs. They also discussed cases when they had to produce emotions in themselves or other colleagues in order to work effectively, the frequency with which this happened, and the types of emotions produced.

Finally, they commented on the ways that organizations established feeling rules, whether they observed white coworkers attempting to follow these rules, and the personal and professional toll of trying to follow feeling rules. Framing interview questions in this way permitted respondents to offer their own assessments of whether feeling rules changed depending on the race of the worker in question, and whether they felt the feeling rules they were expected to follow were consistent with those applied to their white colleagues. In this way, the research design encouraged respondents to talk about workplace feeling rules in a manner that, consistent with the theoretical framework, evoked the basic concepts and aspects of emotion work and feeling rules. This framing also allowed respondents to discuss whether there were times that feeling rules remained constant for all workers regardless of race.

Data were coded according to key themes that emerged: black women's experiences with feeling rules versus black men's; managers' and nonmanagers' relationships to feeling rules; being the only black professional in an environment versus being one of few; jobs that rely heavily on pleasing a customer versus jobs that do not. From these categories, several key feeling rules emerged as ones that were particularly challenging for black professionals due to the racialized climates that they encountered at their jobs and in everyday interactions. All names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

Racialized Emotional Norms in Professional Workplaces

Respondents in this study noted that their workplaces expected employees to follow feeling rules when it came to displays of several key emotions—expressing pleasantness, displaying anger and irritation, and revealing fears and concerns related to race. Feeling rules regulate the ways workers express these emotions. However, respondents experience feeling rules as racialized concepts in two different but related ways: they argued that the racial dynamics of the workplace (and of the larger society) make it more difficult to adhere to the feeling rules that are equally applied to workers of all races; and perceived that black workers are held to different emotional standards than their white colleagues. Instead of being neutral, black professional workers experience feeling rules as largely racialized in ways that constrain their available avenues for emotional expression.

Expressing Pleasantness: The Weight of Racial Dynamics

One key feeling rule of many professional environments is that workers are expected to display an affable, pleasant demeanor (Chase 1995). Organizational norms generally dictate that professional employees should be agreeable, courteous, and amiable towards colleagues, clients, and customers. In professional settings where employees' jobs necessitate a great deal of interpersonal interaction, it makes sense that organizational feeling rules would include emotions that could facilitate establishing a pleasant work environment. Thus, if workers are experiencing stress or aggravation from sources outside of the job, they are expected to leave those emotions at the door so that they do not interfere with their work responsibilities.

Black professionals interviewed for this study found that their workplaces included expressions of pleasantness and congeniality as important feeling rules. As such, they were expected to be amiable and friendly to others in the work environment. Sean, a 31-year old engineer, states, "You have to separate any stressful or bad feelings from work, especially if they are caused by things outside of work. I do this naturally so it kind of works out. I think I do a good job with this."

For Sean, the feeling rules at his company necessitate suppressing any negative emotions caused by issues unrelated to work. This expectation that workers can and should distance themselves from outside distractions reinforces Joan Acker's (1990) contention that

organizations implicitly assume a gendered (male) worker who is unencumbered by external issues often relegated to the private, female sphere (e.g., elder or child care, household labor). By separating these successfully, Sean feels that he puts himself in a better position to conform to the feeling rules of pleasantness that are required at his job.

Yet, while black professionals understand that the feeling rules of their jobs mandate displays of congeniality and likability, they also argue that this feeling rule is difficult to sustain given the racism they encounter in their work environments. Specifically, dealing with the effects of tokenism in the form of racialized comments, stereotypes, and beliefs from colleagues make presenting a pleasant demeanor more difficult. For many of these professionals, being one of very few black workers means they stand out at work and, because of this, they feel that their very presence elicits many statements and behaviors that they believe are expressions of racial bias. Consequently, these workers often find it very difficult to adhere to the organizational requirement that they display a pleasant demeanor.

Theresa is 24 and an associate director of education for a nonprofit agency in a large metropolitan city. She remained in this position for two years before beginning a search for another job. She explains her decision to leave as fueled in part by the "intolerable" racial climate she experienced as the only black employee at her workplace. She describes white colleagues who shun her in the office, exclude her from team outings, and take things from her desk without asking. For Theresa, these occurrences represent a clear pattern of racist behavior. Despite these incidents, she still attempts to conform to organizational feeling rules that she maintain a pleasant exterior:

> [I know] they are uncomfortable with me. My mother suggested smiling after my sentences. I felt like a coon for the first month and a half, but I made a concerted effort to be polite and what it all came down to was that it didn't matter. I tried to be very polite, to establish myself as friendly and very positive in order to make my colleagues comfortable.

Despite her description of near-constant racial tension at this job, she still tries to follow the feeling rules mandated by this workplace. However, in the context of dealing with what she perceives as racial harassment, the expectation that she will maintain this pleasant exterior becomes significantly more difficult. For Theresa, adhering to these feeling rules is racialized in that it makes her "fe[el] like a coon." In this case, having to uphold this feeling rule evokes the stereotypical image of the happy-go-lucky black person who is always smiling and entertaining regardless of the circumstances.

Sherrie also talks about the obstacles to conforming to the appropriate feeling rules in a workplace where she experiences race-related stress. As a 51-year old senior manager for a major company, she is accustomed to working in predominantly white environments and the challenges they bring. Having spent all of her professional life in such environments, she is quite familiar with the way tokenization in these settings can manifest itself in a heightened sense of visibility and isolation:

> [There are] constant experiences but nothing noteworthy, or any one thing. The general thing is being in an environment where you are the minority, being around whites that tell you in many ways they don't want to be around you. They don't want you on their team, they don't care what you have to say. There's discrimination you feel and that you see, and it's a constant presence.

Sherrie characterizes this as a general atmosphere rather than citing specific, concrete examples. In what she perceives as a racialized environment, she struggles to maintain the feeling norms necessary for someone in her position:

> What I'm mostly trying to do is feel comfortable. I don't lose my temper or anything like that, I don't control emotions like that, but really to relax and participate and get involved without the weight that I carry of feeling different and being looked at as though I'm different . . . I have to do this if I'm going to be the cool, calm manager I need to be.

For Sherrie, heightened visibility makes it especially difficult to adhere to the feeling rules that are expected for managers. The feeling rule that workers display pleasantness is extended to all professional employees regardless of race, but the consequences of tokenism make it harder for Sherrie to follow this rule.

Other black professionals experience difficulty maintaining the pleasant exterior because they find it harder simply to check negative emotions at the door. This is particularly true when these employees are dealing with emotions that stem from navigating the broader racial landscape outside their work environment. Charlotte, a 32-year old attorney, is one of two black lawyers at her firm. She lives and works in a predominantly white area that is home to very few other black professionals, and is located several hours from a much larger, racially diverse metropolitan city. For her, this creates serious challenges adhering to her firm's feeling rules that she display a positive attitude:

> I think the one that stands out the most is that I am a black professional woman in [this town]. And as much as I'd like to be upset about it, I can't ever do that in my job because it will come off the wrong way. So I have to be happy-go-lucky, everything's great, and the fact that I don't have a life is wonderful when it really sucks!

Charlotte describes conversations she has with her employers who are oblivious to her efforts to follow the feeling rules of displaying pleasantness. Her supervisors regularly ask her about her weekend plans, only for Charlotte to struggle to remain pleasant despite her displeasure at feeling isolated:

> When I have to make small talk, if they stopped to think about it they would get it. [They'll ask] "What are you doing this weekend?" [My response]"Uh, nothing." [They'll ask again]"What are you doing this weekend?" [My response] "Going to the city. Going to the city. Going to the city. Going to the city." There is clearly a long-term commitment to the area that I have not made . . . It's the culture of most jobs in this background, how firms operate. Also I could tell that being in that environment that they pay attention to things like that, very sensitive to people staying for a long time. When you come they want to keep you there. They don't want to spend resources training you if you're going to leave and take that expertise somewhere else. That's a lot of money they're putting into you and wasting if you're going to go somewhere else and be very efficient for them. So they're very sensitive to that, and that's the nature of the profession.

In some ways, Charlotte's experience might be applied to any number of workers. Many professionals may find it difficult to leave negative emotions caused by nonwork related issues behind when they enter the workplace. However, Charlotte's experience reveals the ways this issue is specifically racialized for African American workers. As a black professional woman, the negative emotions she feels are caused by feelings of racial isolation, which often occurs among African American employees who grapple with tokenism as one of few in their workplace and in other social settings (Kanter 1977; Pierce 2002). Further, in some professional jobs where organizations groom workers with the hope that investment in them will pay off for the company in the long term, there is additional pressure on black professional employees to downplay or minimize the costs of racial isolation and the way it may interfere with adhering to feeling rules of pleasantness and congeniality. As such, organizational feeling rules that require workers to display pleasant emotions may be applicable to employees of all races, but black professionals find that this feeling rule is difficult to follow given the tokenism they encounter in the workplace and in other social settings, and the sense of racial isolation and/or hostility it produces.

Irritation and Anger: Concealment and the Intersections of Race and Gender

While most employees are not expected to come to work angry and irritated, research suggests that there are organizational norms that sanction and establish rules for "appropriate" displays of frustration and aggravation in the professional workplace. For instance, attorneys can

express anger and frustration with relative impunity if it is directed at paralegals or secretaries (Pierce 1995). Police officers can also show their annoyance and displeasure with suspects (Martin 1999). It is not that these emotions are prohibited in professional environments, but that organizations establish the appropriate contexts for expressing these feelings.

Black professionals, however, suggest that the feeling rules that guide the expressions of anger do not apply to them. This is not to suggest that they are free to show anger in any way; in contrast, respondents suggest that a different set of feeling rules apply to them altogether wherein they are not permitted to show anger under any circumstances. They cite numerous examples of white workers who have openly expressed feelings of frustration or annoyance in ways that they believe are simply unavailable to them as black employees. Respondents argue that as black professionals, they would be punished for displaying anger in the same ways their white colleagues do. Thus, when it comes to the feeling rules that establish the appropriate contexts for showing anger, black professionals argue that two sets of rules are in effect: the rule that whites can show anger in certain circumstances; and the rule that blacks' anger is never appropriate and thus should be concealed.

Tanya, a 29-year old administrative support staff member at a liberal arts college, speaks directly to this issue. She states:

> If there is something [white colleagues] are passionate about and they aren't having their way, then it's never about their controlling their emotions. The way it's the same is that its frustration on both parts. I think it's more a lot of times just a tantrum on their part, where we [African Americans] need to be more poised in order to be heard.

To Tanya's way of thinking, white colleagues are much more able to work within the proper channels of showing their frustration with the organization than are black workers. She argues that when white coworkers are angry, the feeling rules of the university are such that they can openly express this emotion with few repercussions. Yet, African American professionals do not have the luxury of simply venting frustrations when things do not go their way; instead, they must adhere to a different standard.

Jay offers a similar analysis of his work environment. At 25, Jay is a systems engineer for a major company. He believes that white colleagues are able to express feelings of anger and frustration in ways that are inaccessible to African American employees:

> One woman, management had a problem with her, with one of her presentations. The organization [of her presentation] wasn't tight, and she went off! "What it is now? You guys are really getting on my nerves!" And I'm like, "Wow, she's talking to managers like that?" She's still there, nothing's wrong. They met with her, I heard her threaten to quit, and they were like, "No, don't quit!" If it were me they'd probably be like, "All right!" You know? So they [whites] say what they want. If someone says, "Do this," they question it, or they get smart. If it was me, I'd be labeled as an angry black dude, can't get along with coworkers. But because it's them, it's all right.

Jay notes the differences between his white coworker's ability to express anger and frustration, and his own lack of access to this emotional norm. Interestingly, this colleague's behavior contrasts with much existing work that suggests women are discouraged from adhering to feeling rules that sanction displays of anger and frustration (Pierce 1995). In this work environment, however, (white) employees are allowed to express their irritation directly to supervisors. Yet, Jay astutely observes that the racialized, gendered stereotype of the "angry black dude" limits his ability to adhere to the feeling rules that render anger acceptable if appropriately expressed. Similar to the controlling image of middle class black men as harmless "sidekicks" to more powerful white men, the image of the "angry black man" minimizes black men's agency by suggesting that they should conform to be as nonthreatening as possible (Collins 2004; Harvey Wingfield 2007). As they try to avoid being seen as "angry black men," this becomes a controlling image that works to discourage African American men from expressing emotional responses of annoyance or agitation. In Jay's case, he finds that this image undermines his ability to follow feeling rules that allow for expressing anger.

Gabrielle, a 54-year old employee with the state education office, also describes the ways in which she sees white coworkers expressing their anger, frustration, and annoyance with apparent impunity. Like Jay, she also argues that these expressions are unavailable to her and other African American professionals in the office:

> I think [whites] get away with far more of their authenticity. Having [John] Bolton[1] and all the publicity is a classic case. That man didn't get that way overnight. He's been allowed to do that for years, and if that had been a black person his career would have been over. My current employer, the young white woman, she is awful to people and nobody says anything to her. In every work environment I have been in, if I were to compare what is acceptable and allowable for people of color versus what is acceptable for white people, it's white people's world . . . It's more how they express those emotions. I couldn't yell at people. I would have some kind of note in my file, but I have seen how white folks get away with that stuff. And nobody says anything! They're allowed to go up the career ladder, and it translates into, they're very demanding, or they're a taskmaster, or they're a workaholic.

Gabrielle's perception, based on interactions she has observed in both previous workplaces and her current one, is that black employees are not permitted the same sort of genuine emotional expression as their white colleagues, particularly when it comes to feelings of anger or rage. Workplaces allow professional employees to show irritation, but African Americans feel that these emotional expressions are basically unavailable to them. Interestingly, she also cites a double standard of emotional expression that parallels the one often applied in the case of gender—women who express strong emotions are negatively labeled aggressive, men who do the same are ambitious. Gabrielle's words suggest that racial dimensions overlap with this gendered one, such that whites who yell and show anger are "demanding, taskmasters, workaholics," whereas the same behaviors would be negatively received if they came from blacks. Note that in her example, her young white woman supervisor is "awful to people" but is rewarded with career advancement. From an intersectional perspective, this suggests that both race and gender may shape the ways in which women are able to express strong emotions like anger and frustration.

Black professionals interviewed for this study believe that they are especially prohibited from expressing anger that arises in response to racial issues. While they observe white colleagues who voice their frustration and aggravation with management and coworkers, their sense of the workplace is that they are not only unable to do this, but that they face additional pressure to avoid acting on this feeling norm if emotions of anger or vexation occur because of colleagues' racial stereotypes and beliefs. Professional workplaces render expressions of anger acceptable in some contexts, but respondents contend that feelings of anger that emerge in response to racial incidents are decidedly impermissible. Thus, while white workers are free to express anger, black workers are typically unable to do so, and this rule is ironclad when it comes to emotions of anger that arise in response to race-related issues.

Describing an interaction between himself and a colleague, Jay gives a concrete example of this:

> One guy came up to me one day and said that my shirt was nice but maybe I should tuck it in. We have no office dress code. There's white men in the office that wear sneakers, jeans, and t-shirts. I had on khakis and a polo shirt, and he says I would look professional if I tucked my shirt in? I'm like, okay, but your office mates have on sneakers. There's different things, that you want to say but you can't. Or you could, but you might not be there long. And that's one of the struggles of being black in the workplace. You have to humble yourself, kind of like modern day sharecropping.

Jay's white colleague's suggestion to tuck in his shirt to look "professional" is not an overtly racial remark. However, as blacks are often assumed not to "look the part" of the professional

1. In 2005, George Bush nominated John Bolton for United States Ambassador to the United Nations. Bolton made news for his controversial style and was accused of having anger management issues.

worker, the suggestion that Jay is being held to a higher standard of professionalism than his white colleagues is important. Additionally, this detailed attention to Jay's wardrobe (and the way white colleagues' jeans, sneakers, and t-shirts go unnoticed) is indicative of the heightened visibility tokens experience as a result of being in the minority (Kanter 1977). Joe Feagin (1991) describes one of the markers of everyday discrimination as the fact that African Americans must often carefully rely on symbols like clothing to signal their respectability and trustworthiness, while for whites, skin color automatically provides this assurance. These symbols may be even more important in signaling authenticity for black workers who experience tokenism in professional environments. Thus, in this example, Jay's coworker overlooks the casual attire of white coworkers to imply that Jay still falls short of the standards of professionalism. Despite his irritation, Jay is guided by his judgment that giving voice to his true feelings means that he "might not be there long." Though he is angered by his colleague's statement, his sense is that if he shows his true feelings about his colleague's racialized assumptions, he does so at the risk of losing his job. Rather than test this theory, however, Jay conforms to his sense of the feeling rules for black workers and hides his exasperation.

Cedric is a 27-year old financial analyst for a professional sports team. He also discusses the potential consequences of expressing anger and irritation in response to racialized joking and assumptions he encounters at work:

> Once at work I had a carton from Boston Market, and one of the guys comes up to me like, "What is that, baby food?" I'm like, why would I be eating baby food at work? So I'm like, "No, its sweet potatoes." He was like, "What?" All confused. I said, "Sweet potatoes, yams, you know." So he's like, "What is that? Is that like soul food?" I'm just like, wow. Stuff like that. You're not mad exactly, it's more like, "This stupid motherfucker . . ."

Cedric's white colleague does not express overtly racist sentiments, but does make the racialized assumption that his black colleague's unfamiliar lunch was probably soul food. Cedric's reaction to this racial stereotype is, as he described, not anger but irritation. Yet, this irritation is carefully concealed. As he states:

> I mean, yeah, you definitely get upset. But this stuff happens all the time. What's the saying on the commercial? You never let them see you sweat? You can't, you have to see it proven before you can jump the gun and let a full anger out. I can't get mad over innuendo, ignorance. Or rather, I can't let these people see how much they annoy me with their stupid comments.

Cedric refuses to "let his anger out" in response to this racially tinged interaction. As he describes it, showing his annoyance at racial stereotyping is simply not an acceptable option in this context.

Lester is a 28-year old researcher for a nonprofit corporation who was very conscious of being the only black person in his office, one of few black workers in the organization, and of the stereotypes many of his white coworkers held. He also describes a perception that he is not able to express any irritation about the racialized assumptions of a particular white woman colleague. He states:

> I work with a woman who is a complete racist and culturally clueless. And what do I do when she tells the biracial woman on our team that her hair looks like a poodle's? Or when she assumes that because I'm black I know people in [a predominantly black part of the city]? I stay calm, change the subject, and get back to work. I have to do this, because how will it look if I curse her out, even when she deserves it? I'll be the one in the fire, not her.

Lester clearly articulates his sense that expressing his irritation at his colleague's racially biased statements will create problems for him rather than for the coworker. As such, he does not believe that professional feeling rules that permit some expressions of irritation and annoyance apply to black professionals whose anger occurs in response to expressions of racial stereotypes. Yet, he "stays calm" through these encounters, and attempts to maintain a sense of equanimity about concealing his true feelings.

In contrast to Lester, Donette, 43, is an administrator at a university where several other black professionals are employed. However, while the greater concentration of black workers offered more social support, it does not change the perception that racialized feeling rules specifically prohibit them from expressing irritation or annoyance. When racial issues arise that arouse anger, Donette opts to meet and talk with one of her black women colleagues in order to vent her feelings in a safe space: "We have meetings at work, and then Veronica and I have the real meeting (laughs). Then it's like, we have our after-meeting like, 'Girl, did you hear them? Did you hear her?" Similar to the paralegals in Kathryn Lively's (2000) study, Donette's bond with a colleague provides a backstage in which to discuss a dominant group (in this case, whites). Further, Donette's example suggests that higher numbers of black workers do not necessarily change the overarching environment. These workers may be just as likely as black professionals like Lester to feel that they must follow racialized feeling rules that forbid expressing anger in response to racism, though Donette's rather lighthearted response suggests that perhaps having a friendly colleague helps her with the process of hiding her annoyance with coworkers' racial statements.

One very interesting exception to this rule occurred among black women professionals. Some African American women believed that it was actually to their advantage to express honest emotions of anger and irritation periodically, despite their sense that this feeling rule was reserved for whites. Ironically, although research suggests that women generally are less able than men to follow feeling norms that allow for expressions of anger (see Erickson and Ritter 2001; Martin 1999; Pierce 1995), some black women in the sample feel that occasional displays of annoyance help them to be taken more seriously.

Kima is a 43-year old community educator for a nonprofit agency where she is the only African American professional employee. She offers one such example of giving voice to her feelings of irritation despite the knowledge that this is a risky option:

> The main thing I had to control was not snapping on people. Why do I have to be in educator mode all the time, and always have to explain how stupid what you just said was? So the main feelings I had to control were feelings of irritation and frustration. There was just no way to come in to work as angry as I sometimes was. But you know what? I took full advantage of the fact that they were a little afraid of me. Sometimes it gave me the space to say what I needed to say. It was frustrating that they didn't want to get better at relating to people who were different. So I said, "This is what I'm feeling," and came right out with it. I did not always need to manage my emotions.

Kima continues on to list the grievances that led to her expression of anger:

> A lack of reading material in the [waiting room] that reflected diversity, nothing for Spanish women, the perception that because I'm black I'm the expert on black people, and again, no attempt [on the management's part] to get better! No, I let them feel that I was angry.

In recounting these problems, Kima is adamant and forceful. It was clear that these issues still bother her, and that had they irritated her enough that she felt that she finally had to speak up, despite the fact that doing so contradicts her sense that black workers are not supposed to show anger at racial issues. Notably, she also believes that white colleagues' fears of her give her opportunities, albeit infrequent, to challenge the feeling rule that black professionals can never express anger.

Similarly, Donette recalls an experience that caused her to express her anger candidly. About a year prior to our interview, she attended a mediation session to resolve a complaint a lower-level service employee filed against her after a heated exchange. Donette learned that the service worker had been mistakenly charging her department and called to correct the error. As the conversation progressed, the service worker who answered the phone accused Donette of being "rude and confrontational," which led to an argument and ultimately culminated in the employee hanging up the telephone on Donette and requesting an apology. Believing that she had done nothing wrong, Donette refused to comply. In

response, the employee filed a complaint, and Donette requested mediation to address the entire situation:

> And what happened during this meeting was not a mediation session. It was not organized, everyone was trying to support [this lady], and when she was finally asked questions she said she wasn't staying for it, and she walked out! So now I'm totally disgusted and feeling totally devalued by the situation. After the session was over and she had decided she wasn't going to go through it, I basically told them how I felt . . . So I let them know. It was not a controlled thing. They heard it right then and there

Donette feels that had she been a white male, mediation would have been far more balanced and the complainant would have been required to remain. She also feels that the service worker's behavior towards her was motivated by racial bias, and describes in very annoyed tones her frustration that other university officials seemed to take sides immediately instead of maintaining a neutral mediation session. Feeling that she was wronged by the mediators and university representatives, Donette violates the proscriptions against black workers expressing irritation and openly reveals her anger at what she sees as a racially motivated issue.

Overall, very few black women in the sample said that they followed this pattern. Most follow the feeling rule for black professionals—that they hide any sense of anger or annoyance—out of the sense that adverse consequences await them if they break this rule. That some black women show anger anyway, however, is especially noteworthy, given that other black men in this sample take pains to follow the feeling rules of concealing anger carefully rather than risk evoking the stereotype of the "angry black man." Other researchers have noted that by virtue of their gender, black women may be seen as more easily controllable than black men (Harvey Wingfield 2007; St. Jean and Feagin 1998). Thus, black professional women may have more latitude to engage in occasional displays of anger and irritation than their male counterparts, for whom any expressions of frustration or aggravation may be perceived as more threatening. Black women also may have more options to show these emotions than their white women colleagues, who are subjected to racialized, gendered stereotypes that depict them as submissive and passive, but not angry. As Ong (2005) observed among black female students in physics and engineering, the stereotype of the "angry black woman" may also provide white employees with a framework in which to contextualize Kima's and Donette's expressions of frustration and aggravation.

Expressing Racial Fears and Concerns: The Pressure to Remain Silent

Interestingly, many workplaces had feeling rules in place that establish the context in which workers could express emotions related to racial issues. Work environments have changed dramatically over the last several decades; as such, virtually all organizations have had to develop policies or official statements on race that establish their businesses as places that, at minimum, are nondiscriminatory. As workplace diversity has become a more popular concept (in theory if not in practice), many organizations offer retreats, workshops, or other formal initiatives designed to address the need for diversity and the importance of establishing a multiracial work environment.

Though diversity workshops and trainings are, in principle, the settings where organizations permitted workers to express emotions related to racial issues, many black professionals do not believe that they are truly able to speak freely about their feelings concerning race and racism. They contend that white colleagues are able to share their emotional responses to working in an integrated environment, but that these feeling rules remain inaccessible to them. As with expressions of anger, respondents believe that there are two different sets of feeling rules in the professional workplace: one for white workers, who are allowed to express their feelings about racial issues in diversity workshops; and one for black workers, who are not permitted to articulate their true emotions about racial inequality in these or any other settings.

Tommy is a 35-year old financial planner at a chain for one of the nation's major banks. In this environment, he describes numerous race-related challenges consistent with the isolation and stereotyping that accompany tokenization: incidents where he has been undermined by subordinates, difficulties developing mentoring relationships with senior colleagues, and problems keeping clients who prefer to take their business to his white coworkers. As part of his training, he was required to attend diversity training seminars, yet, he does not feel that those seminars offered him a place where he could truly share his feelings about the racial discrimination he experienced at work. Instead, when asked his thoughts about the effectiveness of these seminars, he quips: "Those would have been more useful if they'd talked about dealing with white people. That's where my issues are, but that's not what they want to talk about." The seminars ostensibly addressed issues of racial inequality and were designed to give workers a space and place to share their feelings related to racial issues. However, Tommy does not perceive that these seminars are a safe place to talk about the feelings that arose in response to the racial biases he experiences at work. Diversity training emphasizes racial tolerance, but does not address the racial incidents Tommy encounters or the institutional barriers that he feels relegate minority workers to the lower rungs of the organization. Consequently, he adheres to the feeling rules he believes he is expected to follow, and keeps his true emotions about racism in his workplace to himself.

Similarly, Marla is a 57-year old executive with a major technological firm who recounts attending similar mandatory diversity trainings for senior level executives. Marla describes attending these trainings and hearing her coworkers describe how:

> They were raised a certain way. They were raised not to play with black people, that they could not speak with them, and it's difficult for them. They were taught and raised not to associate with minorities. And here they are in the workforce and they have to associate with different people . . . I am never unaware of the racial numbers, the race of the situation, how many minorities in a room. I'm the only black, I'm the only female, the only black manager and black female. So how do I talk about what I feel in this setting when people tell me what they really think about black people? It's a constant struggle.

Marla highlights the difficulties of expressing her own feelings in these diversity seminars, and underscores that these settings do not provide a space for alleviating her racial discomfort or enabling her to discuss or share her emotional responses to racism. While her white colleagues can openly discuss their racialized fears of blacks in a protected setting, Marla finds herself in yet another workplace setting where she is placed in the awkward position of facing her white colleagues' racial biases as the only black executive present. While ostensibly well intentioned, her example suggests that the institutional structures meant to minimize racism in the workplace actually gave rise to the expressions of racism that contribute to making the workplace an uncomfortable environment. Her case also highlights that the tokenism of being a black professional in a largely white workplace contributes to the sense that unlike white colleagues, the feeling rule for black workers is to conceal true emotions about issues of race and racism.

Some respondents made the mistake of openly sharing their emotional responses to racial issues, only to find themselves negatively sanctioned. Yvette, a 37-year old program director, believes that she was terminated from a previous job because she attempted to follow the same feelings rules as her white counterparts. Having been part of many diversity sessions that were dominated by lengthy discussions of whites' fears of minorities, she decided to share her feelings about the conversations she heard:

> This was a sales job. One woman said point blank that she was afraid of dark skinned black people so she didn't really want to try to sell things to them. We would have teams selling things, but we had a team in Atlanta with no black people on it, teams selling in San Francisco with no Asians. It was ridiculous, and I said so. I told them I didn't like what I was hearing, that it bothered me, and that I thought that we needed to change the racial climate if we wanted to improve. Well, you can

guess what happened. The next week they called me into the office, told me I was "too sensitive," and I got fired.

Yvette believes now that she made the mistake of thinking that she could adhere to the same feeling rules as her white colleagues. Though her white colleague expressed a racialized fear of African Americans, Yvette's perception is that her honest articulation of her own feelings of frustration led to her dismissal. The feeling rules that allow workers to express emotions related to race do not seem to apply to black employees in this environment.

Conclusions

In this article, I argue that African Americans' experiences with tokenism in the professional workplace extend to the feeling rules deemed normative in these environments. Black professionals find themselves faced with two types of specifically racialized feeling rules: those that are generally applied to all workers but are particularly difficult for them to follow, and those that differ from the rules available to their white counterparts. Thus, the major contribution of this study is that African American workers find the feeling rules in professional workplaces are not neutral, but are in fact racialized in ways that deny them areas of emotional expression accessible to their white colleagues. This is an important and unique contribution to the literature on emotion work, which has tended to focus heavily on the ways this work reproduces gender inequality without devoting as much attention to the ways it perpetuates racial imbalances. Kang (2003) showed that race intersects with gender and class to shape emotion work among service workers; however, the research presented in this article extends her conclusions and indicates that race in fact informs the core feeling rules that guide emotion work and ultimately, emotional labor. This conclusion helps to fill several important gaps in the emotion work literature, and offers theoretical advances and new direction for future research.

The results of this study extend Kanter's (1977) classic concept of tokenism to show how it offers new sociological knowledge about emotion work and emotional culture in professional workplaces. Specifically, the results of this study suggest that tokenism is an important factor in creating the emotions that are ultimately restricted by racialized feeling rules. As black workers experience the marginalization, social isolation, and heightened visibility that accompanies tokenization, emotions of anger and frustration at racial issues are likely to emerge. Paradoxically, however, the feeling rules of their workplaces preclude them from expressing these emotions. Recall that Jay experiences tokenism in the form of heightened visibility when a white colleague suggests he is less professional than other employees. This encounter leads to emotions of annoyance and irritation, which Jay does not express due to the sense that they violate the feeling rules selectively applied to black workers. Tokenism in professional settings thus helps contribute to some of the very emotions that, when expressed by blacks, are a transgression of racialized feeling rules. In other words, being tokenized creates an emotional response that has to be constrained through emotion work.

Further, tokenism operates in professional workplaces to create and maintain an emotional culture that reproduces racial inequality. As studies of black professionals have established, tokenism produces a sense of isolation, marginalization, and heightened visibility (Feagin and Sikes 1994; Jackson et al. 1995). This article extends these conclusions by showing that these aspects of tokenism make it difficult for black professionals to adhere to feeling rules that either ignore the racialized challenges they face (displaying pleasantness) or are differently applied to black and white employees (expressing anger, frustration with racism). Tokenism operates such that black professionals are scrutinized not only for what they *do*, but how they *feel*. This establishes an emotional culture that is built on racial inequality—feeling rules that are applied

generally are harder for blacks to follow, and the rules that are selectively applied are done in a way that leaves black professionals with fewer opportunities to express emotions.

The results of this study also provide a framework for assessing the emotion work of many other marginalized groups in professional workplaces. This study focuses on the experiences of black professionals, but the sense that different sets of feeling rules apply may be true for other employees who are members of groups that are underrepresented in professional settings. Pierce (1995, 2002) showed that different feelings rules exist for men attorneys and women attorneys, and for men and women paralegals. The results of this study show that tokenism leads to racialized feeling rules, but these rules may also be constructed in different ways for other racial groups who experience tokenization. In other words, Latino/a and Asian American workers may also find that they encounter tokenism in professional settings that leads to a distinct set of feeling rules they are expected to follow. Asian American men, for instance, who are stereotyped as passive, acquiescent, and noncombative, may find themselves subjected to feeling rules that require emotions of complacence and geniality, while white colleagues are permitted to show a range of emotional expression (see Espiritu 2003). Furthermore, members of other groups who are tokenized—LBGTQIQ workers, those with physical disabilities—may also find that this leads to separate feeling rules.

The finding that feeling rules are racialized rather than neutral also has significant implications for the performance of emotional labor in professional workplaces. Harlow's (2003) work shows how race and gender impact black professionals' emotion management, but the focus in this article on feeling rules as racialized concepts has implications for the way emotional labor is done. As Hochschild (1983) argued, feeling rules establish the groundwork for determining which emotions should be produced in a given setting, and when organizations determine that workers must summon these legitimized feelings in exchange for wages, they are doing emotional labor. When the feeling rules that guide appropriate emotional displays are selectively applied to workers of different racial groups, this may extend to divergent performances of emotional labor for black and white workers. In other words, the emotional labor required of professional workers may rest on a foundation of inherently racialized feeling rules, thus creating additional emotional labor for black professionals as they struggle to bring their emotions in line with the feeling rules (congeniality, pleasantness, no anger at any costs, and concealing feelings of frustration or dissatisfaction about race related issues) that apply to them.

This can have implications for emotional labor that have been overlooked in much of the existing literature. For instance, in Harlow's (2003) study she argues that black professors do emotion management to curtail feelings of irritation and frustration with students' racialized stereotypes and perceptions. Yet, if universities evaluate professors based in part on their teaching effectiveness, then they may have to evoke certain emotions in classroom settings to meet this professional standard. If black professors believe that the feeling rules of professional workplaces mandate that unlike their white colleagues, they are not permitted to offer any honest emotional responses in discussions of race and racism, then classes where these topics arise may require a particular sort of emotional labor—curtailing feelings of outrage, annoyance, irritation, or sadness in exchange for the positive student evaluations that will guarantee keeping one's job and ultimately one's salary. Similarly, if black attorneys feel that unlike their white counterparts, they are held to feelings rules that preclude them from showing feelings of anger or frustration (see Pierce 1995), jobs in the legal field may push black workers to engage in forms of emotional labor that have yet to be addressed in current research. Workers in this study strive to follow the feeling rules they believe are applied to them, but future research should consider the extent to which their efforts in this regard are dictated by management and performed in exchange for wages, in order to determine when acquiescence to feeling rules becomes more consistent with Hochschild's (1983) description of emotional labor.

This study also raises questions about the consequences of racialized feeling rules. In this study, most respondents were so certain of severe punishment (e.g., being fired, negative sanctions from supervisors, ostracism from colleagues) that they chose not to break the feeling rules

that they felt applied to them. However, as Donette and Kima show, some black women professionals did violate the feeling rule of concealing anger without incurring punishment or censure. In contrast, Yvette believes she was fired in part because she did not follow feeling rules of hiding her honest emotions about racial matters while at work. This may suggest that organizations consider some feeling rules more sacrosanct than others, or that there may have been something unique about Yvette's workplace. Given that in this sample there were only a small number of cases where workers admitted that they violated feeling rules, it is difficult to say for certain.

However, this finding gives rise to an additional area for future study, and raises questions about the outcomes of both following these rules and of violating them. Why are some workers punished for breaking the feeling rules, while others are not? And what are the occupational consequences for workers who do follow the feeling rules? Does complying with racialized feeling rules assist or impede their occupational advancement? Pierce (1995) has argued that the gendered feeling rules that apply to women attorneys—particularly hiding aggressiveness and combativeness—make their advancement very difficult. Yet, for black professionals, rules that push them to conceal anger and honest reactions to colleagues' expressions of racism may, ironically, be a necessary part of surviving work environments that can be racially inhospitable. These potential differences reinforce the critiques of tokenism itself as a neutral concept: for white women who experience tokenism because of their gender, feeling rules that preclude displays of anger make upward mobility in certain professions more challenging. However, for black professionals who are tokenized due to their race, following racialized feeling rules of concealing anger may enable them to advance in mostly white work settings. These divergent consequences suggest that the experience (and outcomes) of tokenism may be shaped by the race and/or gender of the token.

On a related note, future research should consider other consequences black professionals face for following these feelings rules, particularly consequences to the self. Hochschild (1983) originally argued that emotional labor led to workers' alienation from their feelings, and was thus problematic and dangerous. Other researchers have challenged this and argued that employees may derive some satisfaction from the emotional demands of their jobs (see Lopez 2006). As their statements show, Jay, Cedric, and several other respondents in this study took a rather nonchalant attitude about racialized feeling rules, seeming to regard them as simply a fact of life when working in predominantly white work settings. Other workers echoed Gabrielle, who stated that she simply "wore a mask" at work, language that evokes Hochschild's (1983) analysis of the "surface acting" workers do that enables them to offer the required emotional display without compromising or changing their genuine feelings. The results of this study thus indicate that racialized feeling rules may not create the self-alienation that Hochschild (1983) associated with emotional labor, but additional research could offer more definitive conclusions.

This research thus examines an understudied racial aspect of professional work environments, and suggests that in these settings, emotions are, in a sense, racially segregated. No visible signs can mark emotions like annoyance, frustration, or irritation "for whites only," but in drawing from previous experiences in predominantly white settings, occupational culture, and workplace interactions, black professionals ascertain that organizational feeling rules require them to remain pleasant regardless of any experiences with racism, and that they conceal feelings of anger that their white colleagues express with few repercussions. Emotions thus represent an intangible area of the professional arena where racial divides are reinforced and maintained.

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