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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

COOKING UP INEQUALITY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF RACIAL HIERARCHIES IN MIAMI'S RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

GLOBAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

by

Judith Williams

2021

To: Dean John Stack
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Judith Williams, and entitled Cooking up Inequality: An Ethnographic Study of Racial Hierarchies in Miami's Restaurant Industry, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

_____
Guillermo Grenier

_____
Miranda Kitterlin

_____
Gail Hollander, Co-Major Professor

_____
Andrea J. Queeley, Co-Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 26, 2021

The dissertation of Judith Williams is approved.

_____
Dean John Stack
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

_____
Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2021

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is in memory of my brother, Charlton Christopher Williams (Peter), a fantastic father of four, Jamaican culture connoisseur, and prankster, who died suddenly while I was in graduate school.

May he walk well.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Forty years ago, when I left Jamaica, my Aunt Edna counseled me to get an education when I got to the United States. She said, “America will make or break you, but they can never take away your education!” Those words have stayed with me, and truly resonate as I cross this academic milestone. I’d like to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible people and organizations who have supported me on this doctoral journey.

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The same holds true for my online Black Feminist writing group of dissertation and early PhD scholars. Thank you, Dr. Carla Roberson, for starting this group and to all of my "Wroommates" for providing this space for writing and for real, for real, practical

support as we claim our space as Black female scholars in the academy. I could not have written this dissertation in isolation, during a pandemic, without you!

Thank you to my friends Gepsie Metellus and Leonie Hermantin, as well as Mr. Charles Cazeau from Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center. You went above and beyond helping me to find Haitian restaurant workers, hosting the focus group, and identifying translators. This research would not have been as been as robust, if not for your support. I hope this dissertation serves as a reminder of the discrimination Black Haitians face, and that it inspires more equitable treatment in Miami and across the restaurant industry.

As we say in Jamaica, “Big Up” and “One Love” to my Sundown Crescent family – our matriarch, the late, great, Edna Maude Francis, her daughter, Laura Cameron, my “cousins”, Denroy Harris, Conrad Chin, Eleanor Leiba, Donna Smith, Judith Barksdale, Karen Cameron, Sophia Cameron, and Rose Mason. We are a family not born of blood but of love. Thank you for teaching me that I was smart, that I should never play small, and tolerating my passionate and often polarizing positions.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

COOKING UP INEQUALITY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF RACIAL HIERARCHIES IN MIAMI'S RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

by

Judith Williams

Florida International University, 2021

Miami, Florida

Professor Gail Hollander, Co-Major Professor

Professor Andrea J. Queeley, Co-Major Professor

Racial inequality is a significant problem in the US Restaurant Industry. In Miami, a tropical tourist destination with a majority Latinx population, restaurants serve as a site of multiculturalism, and are promoted by officials as a place where visitors can enjoy ethnic food and culture. However, these same locations of diversity are also spaces where whiteness is normalized as superior and racial hierarchies ensue. Previous studies have documented racism in the restaurant industry but fail to address the intersectional complexities that arise when race is layered with gender, class, nationality, language, and sexual orientation.

Drawing from a 13-month ethnographic study of restaurant workers in Miami, this dissertation examines the shifting dynamics of racial hierarchies within a majority Latinx workforce. Using interviews, focus groups, participant observation and cultural domain analysis, this dissertation details the lived racial experiences of workers in Miami's restaurant industry. In my discussion and analysis of these experiences, I argue that in Miami's restaurant industry, US racial categories of Black and White, have been expanded into a ternary system of Black, White and what I refer to as "White Adjacency"; those whose intersectional position within the racial hierarchy gives them proximity to the power and privilege of whiteness.

Findings from this study also suggest a shift in the racial marking of restaurant jobs in Miami, as ethnocentric Black women are increasingly placed in front of the house, guest facing positions as "Maître Divas" who also serve as the face of the restaurant. This dissertation research contributes to the Anthropology of Race, and Critical Race Theory with an analysis of whiteness and intersectionality in Latinx restaurant labor.

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EPIGRAPH

I remember years ago during this bar mitzvah when I was the Saucier[1] at this hotel the father of the boy kept asking me to DANCE saying.... I know you know this RAP song

I remember the times when I was a line cook & guests would request to thank the person who fixed their meals & I'd walk out just to have them look past me expecting to see a white cook

I remember the guy in the kitchen that once said to me I'm different than THEM because I don't speak like THEY do

I remember the looks I'd get in those manager meetings because some felt I didn't belong there

I remember being passed up for the Sous Chef position even though I was more qualified than the person that got it

I remember the restaurant that asked me to cut my dreads in order to get an assistant manager position but some of the white male employees/managers didn't exactly have short hair

I remember the general manager who didn't like me because I refused to let him disrespect the Haitian dishwashers

I remember the several times depending on the location of the restaurant while I was an assistant manager being told by guests who had complaints that they don't want to talk to me & preferred a non-Black manager

[1] The chef responsible for preparing sauces.

I remember a guest leaving a dollar bill with George Washington colored in BLACK saying it's for me

I remember being good enough to train assistant managers fresh out of MIT[2] & watching them get promoted to GM[3] but NEVER getting that promotion myself & when I spoke up about it they shipped me off to a restaurant in another county

I remember the times I'd get pulled over & being asked where am I going to/coming from even though I'd be in full chef's uniform or suit & tie

I remember the time I went to an art show in Weston & the security guard wouldn't let me in so I had to call my buddy who invited me to it

I remember the time I went to meet a potential client & the shocked look on her face when she saw me. I also remember her not shaking my hand when I extended it to her.

I remember the old lady at the nursing home that told me that I'm very nice & smart for a BLACK person.

Chef Joseph Robinson, May 31, 2020

[2] MIT – Manager in Training Programs

[3] GM – General Manager

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Racial inequality is a significant problem in the US Restaurant Industry. In Miami[4], a tropical multicultural tourist destination with a majority Latinx population, foodies, anxious for exciting, culinary adventures, perceive of popular restaurants in the city as spaces where visitors can experience an amalgamation of authentic ethnic cuisine and culture. Historically, Miami has been portrayed in the media as the land of sun and fun, with beautiful beaches, sexy people, and a vibrant and diverse culture. However, there is a contradiction between these perceptions of Miami, and the persistent racial inequality experienced by restaurant workers. The restaurant industry has a long-standing reputation as a home for marginalized workers, those who are transient, undocumented, criminal, impoverished, undereducated, and struggling to find their footing in life. The late Anthony Bourdain, a chef turned author and television personality described the work culture of the industry as, "a subculture whose centuries old militaristic hierarchy of "rum, buggery, and the lash" make for a mix of unwavering order and nerve shattering chaos" (Bourdain 2007, 5). The hierarchical military brigade system of organization in the restaurant, combined with a culture of incivility and white hypermasculinity is fertile ground for racial inequality.

This dissertation explores the racialized experiences of restaurant workers in full-service restaurants, commonly defined in the industry as restaurants that provide table

[4] In this dissertation, references to Miami include the City of Miami and the City of Miami Beach, both of which are situated in the larger geographical region known as Miami-Dade County. This wider geography is also referred to as Greater Miami and the Beaches.

service and sell alcohol. Full-service restaurants generally fall into a hierarchy of one of three categories: casual dining, moderate dining, and fine dining. Casual dining restaurants are the least expensive and often include family friendly and ethnic restaurants. Moderate dining restaurants are a step up with more gourmet, "globally inspired" cuisine, and fine dining restaurants offer multiple courses, hand-crafted cocktails, wine and food pairings, luxury linens, and other high-end features such as plush comfortable seating, dim lights, and overall a highly personalized dining experience (Canziani et al. 2016).

Most of the workers I interviewed worked in moderate and fine dining establishments. These types of restaurants are physically divided into two spaces, the front of the house and the back of the house. The front of the house refers to the spaces where guests are served and typically include the dining room, outdoor seating areas, the bar, the host area for guests when they first arrive and the restrooms. The back of the house refers to those spaces not occupied by or visible to the guests, usually the kitchen, food preparation areas, the dish area, employee break rooms and office space. These spaces usually have a physical form of demarcation between them which signals the difference. Workers enter in and out of the marked areas several times during the workday, and are effectively reminded of their social status when they traverse these spaces. In most restaurants, back of the house workers are denied access to the front of the house, while front of the house workers are allowed to occupy most spaces and places in the back of the restaurant, except the hot line where food is being prepared for guests. Previous research demonstrates that numerically, front of the house workers are most

likely to be white, while back of the house jobs are generally dominated by Blacks and people of color.

A plethora of studies have documented racism in the restaurant industry but fail to address the intersectional complexities that arise when race is layered with gender, class, nationality, language, and sexual orientation. In Miami, these intersectional complications are particularly salient, because of the regions ethnic and racial diversity. Twenty-five percent of Florida's labor force is made up of immigrants, and a large concentration of these immigrant workers are concentrated in Miami. Furthermore, the data suggests that of this number, just under 300,000 immigrants work in accommodation and foodservices ("Immigrants in Florida" 2015) and the city's white[5] racial category is notably diverse, with over 70 percent of the city's majority Latinx population identifying as white (US Census 1990).

In Miami, whiteness is an ongoing project that over time has expanded to include lighter skinned Latin and Caribbean immigrants based on specific circumstances. However, the privileges that come with whiteness are not automatically assigned based on phenotype. My research demonstrates that in Miami's restaurant industry, social, economic, and political power is variable and even elusive for many who identify as white. It examines whiteness in restaurant labor from the perspective of people of color and contributes to anthropological scholarship on tri-racial formations in labor by

[5] Throughout this dissertation, I capitalize "Black" because like other racially minoritized groups such as Asians and Latinx, Black constitutes a specific cultural group and as such requires denotation as a proper noun. I do not capitalize "white" which is not a proper noun since whites do no constitute a specific cultural group. For the same reason I do not capitalize people of color (Crenshaw 1991).

specifically interrogating the role of ethnicity, class and language as it relates to racial hierarchy. This project also addresses non-white access to the resources of whiteness, by those who are positioned in proximity to whiteness, in a third racial category that I refer to as white adjacency.

Drawing from a 13-month ethnographic study of restaurant workers in Miami, this dissertation examines the intersectional negotiations of racial hierarchies within an ethnically diverse, majority, immigrant workforce. The study's research questions ask:

1a. To what extent do Miami's restaurant workers from a variety of restaurant segments, job positions, races, and nationalities experience race and perceive racism within the workplace?

1b. How does whiteness impact these experiences?

2a. What ideas about racial hierarchy do workers bring with them from their countries of origin?

2b. How are these ideas influenced by American concepts of race and how is this operationalized in daily workplace activities?

3. How do the intersections of race, gender, nationality, language, class, and sexual orientation operate to shape race privilege and discrimination among Miami's restaurant workers?

Using interviews, focus groups, participant observation and discourse analysis, this dissertation details the lived racial experiences of workers in Miami's restaurant industry. In my discussion and analysis of these experiences, I argue that in Miami's restaurant industry, US racial categories of Black and white, have been expanded into a ternary system of Black, white and what I refer to as "White Adjacency"; which I define

as those whose intersectional position within the racial hierarchy gives them proximity to the power and privilege of whiteness. These racial categories are not impermeable, but instead are fluid and sometimes overlapping.

One such model that emerged as a key finding from this study, is the category of "Maître Divas", which I define as ethnocentric Black women who are increasingly placed in guest facing, supervisory positions and also serve as the face of the restaurant. This finding suggests a shift in the racial marking of front of the house restaurant jobs in Miami. I also discuss other instances of white adjacency, such as tokenized Black celebrity chefs generally from the Caribbean, as well as those whose privilege is as a result of mixed race and ethnicity. I conclude this dissertation by suggesting ways this study can be used to shape policy, disrupt systemic drivers of inequality and reduce racial hierarchies within immigrant dominant labor in the United States.

Miami[6] is promoted to the international and domestic visitor industry as a cosmopolitan destination with "a diverse culinary culture" and "eclectic dining options" ("Miami Meetings - Miami and The Beaches" 2018). However, there is tremendous dissonance between the rhetoric and reality. These multi-cultural promotions often interpreted as a marker of diversity do not reflect the elision of inequality. Recent scholarship demonstrates that racial inequality is a significant problem in restaurant labor in Miami and across the United States (Benner 2015a; Campos-Soria, Marchante-Mera, and Ropero-García 2011; J. R. Feagin and Vera 2000). Pervasive patterns of occupational segregation consistently privilege whites while simultaneously discriminating against

[6] I use the term city of Miami to refer to a subsection of Miami on the mainland, officially named as a city. Among locals, city of Miami is used interchangeably with the more general name Miami, which includes the city of Miami, and the city of Miami Beach, both of which are situated in the broader geography of Miami-Dade County.

Blacks. The best paying jobs - managers, servers and bartenders - are dominated by whites, while Blacks are relegated to the worst and lowest paying positions. In Miami, a city politically and economically dominated by Latino immigrants, white Americans and light-skinned South Americans and Cubans predominantly hold the best jobs in the front of the restaurant and earn a living wage, while Black Americans, dark-complexioned Central Americans, and Haitians primarily earn poverty wages in their jobs as dishwashers, bussers, and cooks (Addy et al. 2011; Benner 2015a; Campos-Soria, Marchante-Mera, and Ropero-García 2011).

While these labor studies have produced meaningful evidence of racial inequalities in the restaurant industry, they fail to address the mechanisms, attitudes, and behaviors that reproduce systemic racial hierarchies (Benner 2015a; Sarumathi Jayaraman and Schlosser 2013; Pitts 2012). This limitation is amplified when we consider places where concepts of race and understandings of racism are more complex, specifically in majority immigrant communities such as Miami (Grenier, 1999; Hughes, Sallie, Aranda, Elizabeth, & Sabogal, 2014; Portes, 1984). Furthermore, with scant exception, these studies overlook the various ways in which race intersects with gender, class, nationality, and sexuality to construct and operationalize multiple dimensions of inequality, power, and privilege in restaurant labor (Bendick et al., 2010; Z. Brewster, 2009; Z. W. Brewster & Rusche, 2012; Campos-Soria et al., 2011; Pitts, 2012). Overwhelmingly, research on racism in the restaurant industry problematizes Blackness and Anti-Black discrimination but stops short of exploring the persistent "invisibility" of whiteness and white privilege, how it is conceptualized and what role whiteness may play in reproducing racial hierarchies. This is particularly significant in Miami, a majority-

minority city, whose racial boundaries are more flexible than in other regions of the United States. Because these studies fail to fully explain these interrelated social phenomena, their ability to influence policy in a positive way is limited.

The primary goal of this dissertation project is to explore the construction and reproduction of racial hierarchies within Miami's Latino dominant, immigrant labor force. One of the project's principal areas of inquiry is regarding the role of whiteness as a social signifier of power and privilege within an ethnically diverse workforce that relies heavily on the rhetoric of multi-culturalism for its success. Recognizing the need for an analytical framework that expands binary ideas of race, this project uses an intersectional framework to examine how race, gender, class, and other identities that are often marginalized, intersect to determine one's value and location within the service industry's social hierarchy. Concurrently, the project also investigates the extent to which perceptions of the US Black-White racial binary impacts racialization among a group of workers who are mostly from Latin American countries with a dominant ideology of racelessness and colorblind nationalism. This study will contribute to an interdisciplinary body of anthropological, sociological and hospitality literature on processes of racialization within a Latino-dominant, immigrant, labor force in the United States.

The Complexity of Race and Ethnicity in Miami

The city of Miami, my home for almost forty years, is a fascinating tropical location from which to study racial inequality. Miamians often say that people from Latin America and the Caribbean like to visit the city because it's so close to the United

States![7] Miami, a cosmopolitan city with over 2.7 million people is known for its rich Latinx culture and heritage ("U.S. Census" 2010). Seventy percent of the city's residents are Latinx or Hispanic, with nine out of ten of these Latinx residents identifying as white, while ten percent identify as Black or Afro-Latino. Officially incorporated just over a century ago, the city's warm climate and geographic proximity to the Caribbean and Latin America, has made it a highly desirable location for foreign and US born migrants in search of warm climates and better economic opportunities. As a result of intense migration from places where people have differing racial and ethnic identities, the city's racial history is dynamic and complex.

Situated in Miami-Dade County, the city of Miami is geographically located in the southeastern perimeter of Florida's peninsula. The east coast of the city is bordered by beautiful sandy beaches and highly desirable real estate. South Beach, one of the most notable areas on Miami Beach, has experienced numerous transformations over the past few decades. In the nighties, South Beach went from a low income, senior citizen, beach town to a glamourous Art Deco playground for white bohemians. At that time, it was also a gay mecca with visible queer culture, drag queens, artists, AIDS activists, and nightclubs that regularly attracted celebrities like Prince, Madonna, and Versace. Currently, South Beach remains a popular entertainment destination, with hundreds of nightclubs, restaurants and hotels. It is often referred to as the American Riviera, and images of Art Deco hotels on popular Ocean Drive are emblematic portrayals of the city.

[7] There are many cultural variations of this joke in Miami, but the meaning is generally the same: Miami's Latinx and Caribbean majority makes it so unique, the city more resembles parts of Latin America than it does the US.

Miami Beach, the larger city within which South Beach lies, is also home to several, large, enclaves of conservative and reform Jewish communities.

Miami Beach has a complex history of racial and ethnic segregation. Up until the 1960's, Sundown Laws ensured that Miami Beach was white only, especially after dark when Blacks were not allowed to be on Miami Beach unless they were working. Blacks who were found in the city after dark were subject to harassment and violence, which could result in imprisonment and death. Heavily dependent on Black labor to cook and clean in the hotels and restaurants, the city of Miami Beach[8] required all hotel, restaurant, nightclub, and domestic workers, register with the police, and get fingerprinted. Black workers were required to carry ID cards on them at all times and were over-policed to ensure compliance. In February of 1952, *Jet* Magazine, one of the leading Black media at the time, reported that police pulled over busses of Black commuters traveling to Miami Beach, arresting numerous people for non-compliance. A year later, 150 Black Pastors in town for a convention, attempted to stay at the Betsy Ross Hotel on South Beach, but had to cancel their reservations after the hotel received bomb threats. In a rare attempt of white resistance, George Rone, the manager of the Betsy Ross hotel told the Black convention delegates that despite the threat he would provide them with a room, if they were unable to find lodging elsewhere in a designated Black hotel. Black-white interracial relationships were also prohibited, and those found in violation of "unmarried interracial couples living in and occupying the same room at nighttime" were subject to fines and jail time.

[8] The term city of Miami Beach, refers to the coastal subsection of Miami consisting of adjoined small islands often referred to locally as "the Beach" or "Miami Beach".

Although parts of Miami Beach are now widely considered to be a Jewish enclave of conservative and moderate Jews, early in the twentieth century, this wasn't the case. Carl Fisher, a developer who was considered the "Father of Miami Beach" would not sell prime Miami Beach real estate to Jews. They were restricted to living in a less desirable section of Miami Beach, "South of Fifth", with deeper water, dangerous, coral rock, and less sandy beaches. This anti-Semitic sentiment was also visible in hotel advertisements that famously stated, "Always a View, Never a Jew". However, over the years, anti-Semitism on Miami Beach dissipated as Jews were increasingly included in the white racial category and established communities, wealth and power. Interestingly, the first Jewish family to settle in Miami Beach were the Weiss's, who later founded the world-famous destination restaurant, Joe's Stone Crab, which is prominently located south of Fifth street, in the area formerly restricted to Jews. Given Miami Beach's history of anti-Semitism, it's somewhat ironic, that large swaths of Miami Beach are now dense, Jewish, enclaves.

The tide has not turned for Blacks in the same way that it did for Jews. Deeply entrenched racial segregation has resulted in significant and continued racial animus. In the early two-thousands, groups of young African Americans began going to South Beach for the Memorial Day weekend. As the years progressed, Memorial Day weekend became a Hip-Hop festival known as Urban Beach week, which drew 250,000 young, Black, tourists to the city (Smiley 2012). Unlike other groups of white tourists that came to Miami for festivals such as the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, Black visitors to the city experienced heavy policing, and increased surveillance that included watch

towers on Ocean Drive, and license plate scanners that would check for outstanding arrest warrants, stolen cars, and suspended driver's licenses (Alvarez 2012).

In 2011, the tension between Black visitors during Urban Beach week and the police escalated resulting in a fatal shooting of a Black man by police. The following year over 600 police officers were mobilized to protect and serve white residents and visitors from young Black tourists, inaccurately perceived to be a threat to safety and profits. Sensationalized reports on television and in local chapters portrayed Urban Beach Week as violent, dangerous, and polarizing, reinforced anti-Black attitudes and justified the increase in policing and surveillance as necessary to maintain social order (Smiley 2012; Alvarez 2012; "Man Shot To Death By Police Wanted In Boynton Beach Shooting" 2011). Today, South Beach remains a popular tourist destination; however, Urban Beach Week is still heavily policed, avoided and written off as passé by upwardly mobile Miamians (DeFede 2011). The policing of Urban Beach Week is a modern-day version of Jim Crow Sunset laws that prohibited Blacks from visiting Miami Beach. Surveillance, and the policing of Black bodies is part of a long arc of state-sanctioned racial discrimination against Black people in Miami. This is an added dimension of anti-Black discrimination, with racialized narratives of who belongs, and who doesn't; a subject that Blacks in Miami have historically and rightfully contested. The hyper-policing of Urban Beach Week also speaks to the entrenched racial segregation throughout the Greater Miami and the Beaches[9], as well as the hoarding of resources and opportunities by those at the top of the racial hierarchy.

[9] Greater Miami and the Beaches refers to the larger metropolis of Miami Dade County including the city of Miami, the city of Miami Beach.

On the western border of Miami, large swaths of "affordable", cookie cutter, suburban, housing projects encroach upon the flora and fauna of the Everglades. These homes are generally occupied by middle class, Latinx homeowners who sacrifice long commutes for square footage and some semblance of the American dream. The southern boundary of Miami, known as Florida city, has a vibrant community of Black and Latinx working-class residents, most of whom are Haitian, Jamaican, Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican and Guatemalan. It should be noted that many Afro-Caribbean immigrants experience anti-Black racism and Colorism – discrimination within the racial group based on skin tone and in this particular case also at the intersection of nationality, from within Miami's Black community. This intra-racial discrimination is also compounded at the intersection of gender and class, where there is significant stratification within the Black middle class in neighborhoods such as Florida City, Cutler Bay and West Coconut Grove. These racial dynamics demonstrate that racialized people navigating systems of oppression experience racism and discrimination in a multitude of ways that are almost always, intersectional.

On the northeastern end, an affluent white, Jewish, community has commandeered one of Miami's newest cities, Aventura. Miami's Jewish community is diverse, with people from New York, Israel, South and Central America, with disparate religious beliefs and socioeconomic affiliations. In Aventura, race and class privilege are symbolized by the city's abundance of luxury high rises, gourmet kosher markets, and high-end shopping malls. Several other cities within Miami, such as Miami Beach and North Miami Beach, also have significant Jewish communities.

Within Miami's city limits, there are numerous villages, towns and smaller cities, with diverse, ethnic enclaves of immigrants. Miami's Haitian community is, (or perhaps more accurately, was), largely visible in cities and villages such as North Miami, El Portal and Little Haiti. Haitians in Miami have encountered intense processes of subjugation, where they have been relegated to the bottom of a color-caste system. US immigration policies have not welcomed Haitian immigrants in the same way they did Cubans, and as a result Haitians have struggled to establish themselves upon arrival to the city because of limited state support, and community resources (Stepick and Stepick 1990; Portes and Stepick 1994; Verna 2017). Additionally, current processes of gentrification have displaced many Haitians in established enclaves, who had no choice but to migrate north to less desirable, and more affordable, areas outside of Miami-Dade County. Gentrification is impacting Black cities in Miami such as Overtown, Coconut Grove, and the business corridor of NW 7th Avenue in Liberty City. These gentrified, historically Black neighborhoods in Miami have seen tremendous economic investment in their current development by private and public stakeholders. The city is also heavily invested in gentrification taking place in Wynwood, a relatively new arts district that just over a decade ago was considered a Puerto Rican Barrio. The Puerto Ricans are now gone, with most of their single-family homes demolished and replaced with soaring condos, hipster boutiques, restaurants, and nightclubs.

This gentrified, multicultural mosaic of immigrants from across the Caribbean, South and Central America makes Miami an intriguing site from which to study the impact of gender, class, nationality, language and sexual orientation on the construction of racial hierarchies in the restaurant industry. Miami's restaurant industry is built around

the exotification of food and culture that relies heavily on tropes of tropicalism, with narratives and images that exotify the immigrant community, and portray the destination as a playground for the rich and famous. The complexity of Miami's ethnicity, layered with race, class, gender, and sexual orientation has created an unstable, and fascinating racial hierarchy, that permeates its restaurant industry.

Current demographics in Miami reflect numerous waves of immigration over the past several decades by people from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Blacks hold 18% of the population, while white – Non Hispanics occupy just 12% ("U.S. Census" 2010). Almost half of Miami's Latinx population is of Cuban heritage, while the other half is a multicultural mosaic of immigrants from South and Central America and other countries in the Caribbean (Wile 2019). The numerical dominance of Cubans has been fueled by US and local support, which has bolstered the Cuban community in Miami creating a political and economic hegemony. The racial hierarchies in Miami cannot be completely understood without some attention to the history of Cuban migration to the city and its relationship to Blackness.

Two defining moments in Miami's immigration history were the time period starting in 1959 when the city had a large influx of Cuban migrants fleeing Cuba after Castro's overthrow of Fulgencio Batista; and then the period after 1980 when the Mariel Boatlift brought approximately 125,000 Cuban migrants to the city. The first large wave of Cuban migrants who came after the overthrow of Batista was a heterogeneous group of white identified, "Cuban elites", who lost economic and political power after the revolution. Within this early group of Cuban migrants, were powerful political elites, Cuban exiles with substantial business and financial interests as well as small business

owners whose classification as members of the Cuban elite would be contested (Portes and Bach 1985; Zong 2017).

The second major wave of Cuban migrants known as the Mariel Boatlift began in April of 1980. The catalyst for this mass migration was an incident in Havana, Cuba, in which six Cubans seeking political asylum crashed a bus into the Peruvian embassy. A gun battle ensued, and a Cuban security guard was killed. In retaliation, the Cuban government decided to remove the guards from the embassy and declared that anyone who wanted to leave could go to the embassy to do so. Within 72 hours, over ten thousand Cubans had gathered at the Embassy in protest. Angered by this public display of resistance, the Cuban government decided that anyone who wanted to leave could do so through the port of Mariel (Gosin 2019; Portes and Stepick 1993).

Over the next six months, 125,000 Cubans made their way to Miami from the port of Mariel. The Cuban migrants who arrived in Miami from Mariel were more racially and economically diverse than previous groups of Cuban immigrants; however, both groups had in common their desire to escape political oppression and leverage American capitalism for personal gain (Portes and Bach 1985; Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick 2003). About 10 – 40% of the migrants from Mariel were Black, the largest influx of Black Cubans to the United States. Unlike the first wave of Cuban migrants, those that came as part of the exodus from Mariel, were not welcomed as anti-communist heroes. Instead, they were portrayed as criminals, whose darker skins and lower socioeconomic class, challenged the whitened image of Cubans in Miami as the model minority (Gosin 2019).

A third wave of Cuban migrants arrived after 1994, when an estimated 37,000 Cubans migrated to South Florida via makeshift rafts. This mass exodus from Cuba was precipitated by Cuba's "Special Period", a time of harsh economic crisis that ensued after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Cuba was heavily dependent on the Soviet Union for petroleum, food and other resources. When they collapsed, Cuba lost significant support and experienced severe economic precarity. The government labeled this time as a "Special Period" which required all Cubans to make substantial sacrifices to survive conditions that were crippling the economy and quality of life. In 1994 conditions on the island were extremely harsh, and so many choose to flee by homemade boats and rafts. This wave of immigration became known as the Rafter or "Balsero" Crisis. As with the migrants who arrived from Mariel, these immigrants were of darker skin, and held a lower socio-economic status. Because they mostly arrived via rafts, they became known as Balsero's loosely translated to mean "rafters" (Henken 2005). These last two waves of Cuban migration troubled the dominant narrative of Cuban exile identity, which positioned Cuban migrants as white and successful. This narrative of what it means to be a Cuban American renders Afro-Cubans invisible thus operationalizing a pigmentocracy that facilitates White Cuban hegemony, which is in alignment with white superiority and the US racial system. As a result, prevalent perceptions of white Cuban Americans are constructed in opposition to Blackness and erase Afro Cuban identity (Grenier and Pérez 2003; Newby and Dowling 2007; Henken 2005). Within the racial politics of Miami, ideas of whiteness as a dominant and superior racial category includes Cubans while Afro Cubans, Blacks and monolingual, Kreyol speaking Haitians are positioned on the bottom rungs of the social hierarchy.

Equally important but less discussed in light of Miami's current Latinization, were several waves of Black immigration to the city. The earliest Black migrants in the late nineteenth century first arrived from the Bahamas, via Key West, where they provided labor for white Bahamian traders (Mohl 1990; Dunn 2016). These immigrants were significant to the historic development of the city. About one third of the votes to incorporate the city of Miami came from these early, Black Bahamian immigrants who settled in Coconut Grove (Mohl 1990). Since its official inception, Miami has experienced several infusions of Black migrants from the US South, Haiti, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, South and Central America. Miami's rich and disparate Black culture can be seen in the food, culture, art and history. Blackness is woven into the social fabric of the city, although these acknowledgements are rarely heard in white Latinx centered narratives about the city.

Miami's Restaurant Industry Race Problem

> In most of the restaurants I've worked in, there's a clear structure [of] cultural and racial stratification. The people in the front of the restaurant are White and speak English. The bussers or barbacks are mostly Latino, Haitian, people of color, who in many cases don't speak English. Same in the kitchen: Haitians, Latinos, mostly Central Americans. And the maintenance and cleaning positions, also people of color, Black people, Latinos. (Latina server and bartender in Miami as quoted in Addy et al., 2011).

Miami is an intriguing place from which to study the dynamics of racism in the restaurant industry because of its racial stratification and inequity within an ethnically diverse, majority Latinx population. While Miami is often described as a multicultural mosaic, within a narrative that purports a beautiful, almost artistic, overlapping, assembly of cultures and ethnicities; the reality is that most of the city is racially and ethnically segregated. These divisions within the city are exacerbated across the restaurant industry, which plays a central role in Miami's tourism industry. Dining options in the city are promoted as exotic experiences where diners can taste the flavors of Latin America and the Caribbean without leaving the country. Behind the scenes, workers preparing and serving this exotified food, are mostly immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean (Williams 2020). Dominant Latinx culture is reflected throughout the city, particularly in the food, which is most often associated with Cuba. Cuban coffee and Pastelitos (Cuban pastries), can be found at "Ventanitas" across the city, walk-up windows where you can get a Cortadito or Café con Leche; the first a strong, sweet coffee consumed in thimble sized portions, while the latter is similar to a sweetened, frothy, cappuccino.

Several well-known grocery chains are dedicated to the Latinx market, while mainstream grocers have branded stores in Latinx neighborhoods as "Sabor", the Spanish word for "taste", and stocked them with a wide selection of Latin American foods in an effort to compete with burgeoning ethnic grocers. Latin American foods can be found at Mom and Pop Latinx cafeterias throughout the city and in ethnic enclaves, selling steaming plates of Lechon Asado, Platanos, Maduros, and Arroz con Frijoles, (roast pork, green and sweet plantains, and rice with beans).

These are the same foods and flavors repackaged and sold to affluent tourists and an upscale culinary curious clientele as “Fusion” or “New World Cuisine”, terms used to indicate a hybrid amalgamation of gourmet cuisine that includes Latin American and Caribbean foods (Williams, 2020). Not only is Miami’s culinary scene vibrantly diverse with food and workers, the exploitation of its food and labor is mutually constitutive. Miami’s dining scene reflects prominent white male chefs that exist in stark contrast to a plethora of Blacks and people of color who produce and serve the foods in high end restaurants. Racially minoritized workers who are financially precarious are dependent on the restaurant industry for income, particularly when the need for quick work is great. In my study of racial hierarchies of restaurant workers in Miami, I found that white managers and owners are dependent on the workers for their labor and culinary expertise, as well as the juxtaposition of whiteness, authority, taste, and distinction that comes with the appropriation and exotification of these foods formerly considered irrelevant and unsophisticated.

Miami is not unique in the race and gender segregation of the restaurant industry. Racial segregation is so embedded in the US restaurant industry, scholars have compared the persistent racialization of restaurant labor to repressive Jim Crow laws that enforced continued racial segregation (Addy et al. 2011). An abundance of data quantifies racial segregation and related socio-economic disparity in the restaurant industry. The Restaurant Opportunities Center, a restaurant labor group in Berkeley, California, has led the charge against racial inequality in the restaurant business, conducting national studies culled from quantitative and qualitative research in numerous cities throughout the United States. Nationally, they found that seven out of ten of the lowest paying positions

in the United States are in the restaurant industry and that Blacks predominantly occupy those positions. In fine-dining restaurants, where servers and bartenders make living wages of $50,000 per year and more, White men hold 80% of those more lucrative positions (Addy et al., 2011). Despite civil rights legislation, and even a so called "post-racial" society after the election of Barack Obama; the best jobs in expensive, fine dining restaurants continue to be more likely to held by white workers, while Black workers are still, usually limited to dangerous and low paying jobs in the kitchen. At family and casual restaurants that cater to the working class, working conditions are more grueling, wages are a fraction of earnings in fine dining, and positions within these restaurants are more likely to be filled with people of color.

Many of Miami's restaurant workers come from countries that promote a culture of colorblind racelessness[10] while simultaneously embracing and deploying attitudes of white superiority and anti-Blackness. These variable racial attitudes allow some immigrants to conceptualize their racial identity differently from the US perspective. To illustrate, I encountered dark skinned people from the Dominican Republic who did not consider themselves to be Black, while some light-skinned, Latinos who appeared to be white, identified as non-white. There were also instances of participants that identified as both racially and culturally as "mixed". This definition generally suggested an identity based on two or more races or ethnicities as well as a lived hybrid cultural experience. So, for example, one of the participants who identified as mixed was of Guyanese, Puerto Rican and Brazilian descent. Within these three ethnicities, he also identified racially as

[10] Colorblind racelessness is the ideology of racial equity and "colorblindness" in Latin American and Caribbean countries. These ideologies dismiss the significant impacts of embedded racialization which ultimately reinforces systemic white supremacy and anti-Blackness.

Black, white, and Mestizo, and therefore decided not to distinguish himself solely with one nationality or race.

Although this study is geographically situated in Miami, it is relevant to other cities across the United States with rapidly growing Latinx populations. The findings from this study provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of Latinx racialization, and the role it plays within restaurant labor. Government officials and policy makers often use the term "The Browning of America", which has become a popular euphemism to encapsulate the growing Latinx immigrant population in proportion to the diminishing numbers of whites. While the term does speak to an expanding Latinx demographic in cities across the United States, it also flattens and dismisses the disparate racial and cultural identities of those from countries in Latin America. As such, this project is especially salient for Latinx race relations as it interrogates the experiences of Miami's restaurant workers from an intersectional perspective to expand the binary frameworks of Black and white, male and female, straight and gay, foreign and native, in an effort to contextually understand how immigrant groups negotiate racialization within the workforce.

In Miami, however, the social disparities become even more complex due to the city's complicated history of immigration and racialization. While light-skinned Latinos have coveted positions in the front of the house, dark-skinned Latinos, Black Americans, and Black Haitians, in that pecking order, are at the bottom ranks of the kitchen hierarchy (Addy et al., 2011; Pitts, 2012). Research has shown that Haitians, "the darkest, poorest and most vulnerable" immigrant group in restaurants, are usually relegated to jobs as dishwashers (Addy et al., 2011; Jayaraman & Schlosser, 2013). This disparity was

quantified in a 2011 earnings study of over 600 restaurant workers in Miami. The study found that the median wage was $11.29 for Whites, $10.00 for Latinos, $9.00 for non-Haitian Blacks, and $8.21 for Haitians (Addy et al., 2011; Pitts, 2012

A recent lawsuit filed in response to allegations of racism in a luxury hotel and restaurant on Miami Beach indicates the contemporary relevance of this project. In April of 2017, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Miami filed a discrimination lawsuit against the SLS Hotel, a five-star luxury hotel on Miami Beach. In the lawsuit, the EEOC claims that 14 Black Haitians who worked at the property's restaurant as stewards and dishwashers, (two of the lowest level and lowest paying jobs), were fired for being Haitian and were replaced by light-skinned Latinos.

In order to support the claim that they were fired based on race and nationality, the lawyers stated that, prior to their being fired, the Black Haitian employees were forbidden from speaking their native language (Haitian Kreyol) on the job, not even among themselves, while native Spanish-speaking employees could speak Spanish freely without cause or reprimand. Unlike their light-skinned, Spanish-speaking counterparts, the Haitian employees were assigned heavy and difficult janitorial tasks. Completing these tasks was made more difficult, as they were barred from using the service elevator for trash removal or to move heavy equipment between floors. Instead, they were required to use the stairs. Additionally, the EEOC alleges that Haitian employees were called "slaves" and "f---g Haitians" by chefs and managers ("EEOC Sues SLS Hotel in Miami Beach for Discriminatory Firing Of Black Haitian Kitchen Workers," 2017).[11]

[11] The journalist covering this case in the Miami Herald discussed with me in an email that according to her notes the managers were White. She was uncertain about their nationality or ethnicity.

This case illustrates the variability of racial hierarchies embedded in Miami's Latino dominant restaurant culture. While recent literature finds that Blacks and dark-complexioned immigrants occupy the most menial positions, the facts of this case are that lighter-skinned Latinos replaced Black Haitians. Complicating the findings of recent literature, this case illustrates the intersectional hierarchy of race, nationality, and language that exists in restaurant labor, as the light-skinned Latinos displaced the dark-skinned Haitians, who were left unemployed. Thus, this case suggests that Miami provides a specific and important context in which to consider the impact of intersectionality on contemporary racial hierarchies formed within a diverse immigrant workforce in a multi-cultural city.

While the above examples suggest that anti-Black discrimination is rampant in Miami's restaurant industry, they merely provide illustrations, not analysis. They do not explore how and why racial hierarchies are created, what these hierarchies look like in different spaces, or how different intersectional identities and cultural beliefs impact racial stratification. Interestingly, the racial hierarchies outlined in the EEOC lawsuit suggest a shift in the racial marking of jobs, at least in high-end restaurants in luxury hotels. Positions that are reportedly reserved for Blacks, such as dishwashers and janitors, were, in the EEOC instance, filled by "lighter-skinned Latinos" ("EEOC Sues SLS Hotel in Miami Beach For Discriminatory Firing Of Black Haitian Kitchen Workers," 2017). This could reflect a shift in local processes of racialization that might be distinct from other parts of the country, as Miami continues to concurrently experience continued immigration from the Caribbean and Latin America, gentrification of immigrant enclaves such as Little Haiti and Wynwood, and a political push to brand the city as a multi-

cultural destination in the tourist imagination. Thus, the need for further research that investigates contemporary processes of racialization in multi-cultural, gentrified, tourist destinations such as Miami is clear.

Research Questions

As a Black woman and former chef, my experiences with racism and sexism while working in the restaurant industry were the impetus for this dissertation research project, as well as my decision to use critical race theory as the framework for my methodology and research. When I designed the research as a mode of inquiry into the problem of racism, I wasn't interested in determining if there was racism in Miami's restaurant industry, as my experience working in the industry and the academic literature confirmed the severity of the problem. Rather, I was driven to explore and analyze how the invisible forces of oppression, namely whiteness, sexism, classism, homophobia and xenophobia, intersectionally operated within Miami's multicultural, immigrant, Latinx community to reproduce and reinforce the persistent racial hierarchies I had witnessed for the past thirty plus years. Additionally, I examine the role of whiteness from the perspective of those who, like myself, are non-white.

Whiteness is of particular interest to me in this study because of past experiences but also because it has been significantly under theorized in restaurant labor studies. In a 2004 study on racialized tipping practices, Dirks and Rice found that a "culture of white servers" contributes to the racial politics of the industry, yet there is very little scholarship on the relationship between whiteness and systemic racism since then (Dirks

and Rice 2004). In addition to white racial attitudes, I considered an intersectional framework crucial to the integrity of this project. The intersectional, racism I experienced which was theorized by the work of scholars such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Patricia Hill-Collins, strongly suggested that racial hierarchies cannot be completely understood without a comprehensive understanding of its multiple dimensions. Therefore, to investigate racism in Miami's restaurant industry and the role of whiteness and intersectionality, I posed the following research questions:

Q1) To what extent do Miami's restaurant workers from a variety of restaurant segments, job positions, races, and nationalities experience race and perceive racism within the workplace? How does Whiteness impact these experiences?

Q2) What ideas about racial hierarchy do workers bring with them from their countries of origin? How are these ideas influenced by American concepts of race and how is this operationalized in daily workplace activities?

Q3) How do the intersections of race, gender, nationality, language, class, and sexual orientation operate to shape race privilege and discrimination among Wynwood's restaurant workers?

Research Methods and Population

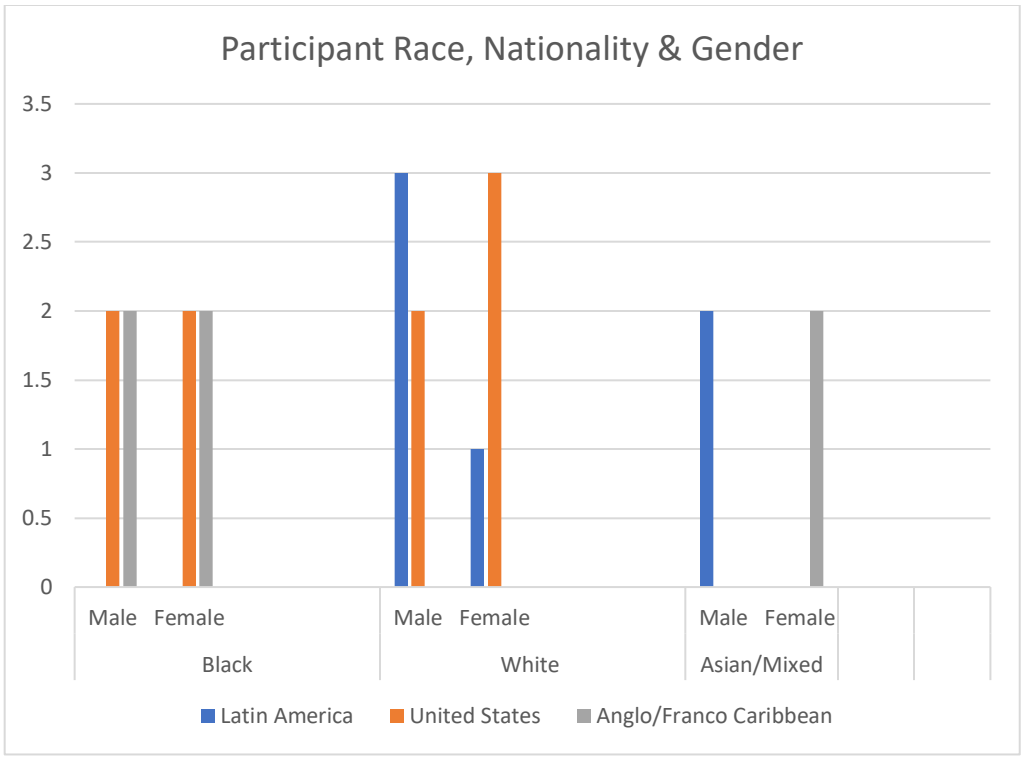
My initial research design called for an equal distribution of men and women, followed by Blacks, whites, and those of mixed race; of which approximately a third would be Latinx, a third would be US born, and a third from the Caribbean; all working in both fine dining and casual dining restaurants in a small, gentrifying area in Miami known as Wynwood. However, as I embarked on selecting participants for interviews, I

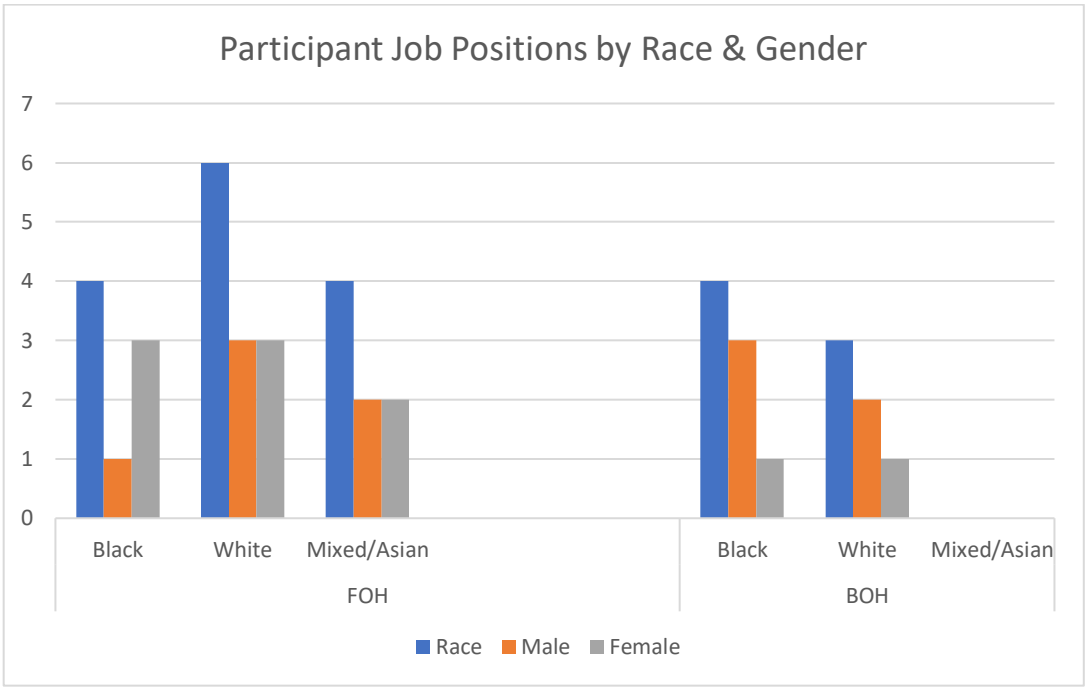
realized that the Wynwood district was too small and didn't have a large enough cohort of workers. While the area was dense with restaurants, the small geographic footprint of the area meant that I could not safely conduct interviews without jeopardizing worker's confidentiality and their jobs. As I embarked upon my project, word quickly spread that there was a Black woman studying race in the restaurant industry. I encountered significant resistance, from neighborhood organizations and officials when I attempted to interview them about the topic. I abandoned that plan and expanded my research site to all of Miami which gave me a wider pool from which to recruit a diverse pool of participants for my sample.

During recruitment I discovered it was much easier to find US born and immigrant participants that identified as Black, than it was to find participants who identified as non-Black, and white. I assumed this was due in large part to Black participants vested interest in the topic due to their lived experiences with racism. White perceptions of race as a non-white problem, meant that most potential non-Black participants that I recruited declined to participate, claiming that they didn't feel they could contribute anything significant to the discussion, or the topic was not of interest to them. Interestingly, recruitment of participants that identified as mixed, was seamless. This challenge of finding white participants was exacerbated because of the subject matter, and because my positionality as a Black, female, researcher was viewed by many white managers and workers as potentially disruptive, especially but not exclusively, by white restaurant owners.

Several potential Black participants asked if I was conducting this study to expose restaurants' overt racism. This response inferred that those who declined to participate

did so out of concern about their jobs and how they would be perceived if it was discovered they were part of the study. Several prospective participants from disparate racial and ethnic backgrounds, expressed concern that their participation would make them appear to be racist or political disruptors. It quickly became obvious that I would face significant challenges with recruitment in the district, and so I decided to expand my geographic area to Greater Miami and the Beaches. I also decided to use critical case sampling, in order to get the best qualitative results, followed by respondent driven sampling for this project (Bernard 2017). I began by selecting participants from a seed group of workers who were known to me as experienced restaurant workers and had some of the key demographic identifiers needed for the study. After the first five informants were interviewed, I then used respondent driven sampling whereby participants referred other qualified participants to me. I continued this process until I reached saturation and there were no more new informants to interview. In total I recruited 21 participants for the semi-structured interviews (See Appendix A). Below are two charts that demonstrate the sampling mix of the interview participant pool. The first illustrates the mix of race, nationality and gender, while the second compares participants race and gender job assignments in the Front of the House (FOH) and Back of the House (BOH).


Participant Race, Nationality & Gender
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
Male
Female
Black
Male
Female
White
Male
Female
Asian/Mixed
Latin America
United States
Anglo/Franco Caribbean


Participant Job Positions by Race & Gender
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Black
White
Mixed/Asian
FOH
Black
White
Mixed/Asian
BOH
Race
Male
Female

From December of 2018 through January of 2020, I conducted 22 interviews with pile sort and consensus statement surveys, facilitated 3 focus groups, and collected 35 free lists. I used both qualitative and quantitative methods for my data collection. Qualitative methods included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, participant observation, discourse analysis, and autoethnography, while quantitative methods were limited to cultural domain analysis which included, free listing, pile sorting and consensus statements. I will discuss each of these in turn.

The semi-structured interviews were organized around an interview protocol that made intersectional connections between early lived experiences with race in participant's country of origin, the current significance of race in their social relationships within the community, and lastly current perceptions and experiences of race in the workplace. The interviews began with general warm up questions to get participants comfortable such as, where are you from, how long have you lived in South Florida and so on. I then asked about cultural ideas of race, when participants became aware of racial difference, how their parents and other authority figures growing up discussed race and responded to people of different races, their racial identity, and how they came to define their race, and lastly, how they thought their race was perceived by others in their community. Participants were then asked about individual experiences with race on the job, and the extent to which they believed their race, gender, nationality, language and sexual orientation determined job assignments, and day to day experiences working in the restaurant. They were asked to discuss their beliefs about racial advantages or disadvantages, especially as it pertained to ideas of whiteness, and to describe situations

where they witnessed racism on the job. The interview concluded with questions about their roles if any in addressing racism in the workplace.

This project, an ethnography of restaurant workers in Miami used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to address the research questions and analyze deep patterns of racial exclusion. The quantitative methods I employed were part of cultural domain analysis (CDA), a technique used in mixed methods anthropological research to determine the shared perceptions within a specific domain. Borgatti defines a cultural domain as "things which in principle have a right answer which is universally true" (Borgatti 1999, 2). This suggests that the contents of a domain are ideas that most believe to be true. Interview participants were also asked to complete two surveys; a pile sorting exercise and a fifty-two-question consensus statement. The pile sort was designed to determine what, if any, relationship existed between a participant's racial identity and the people they theoretically chose to place in specific positions. For the pile sort, participants were provided with a sheet of chapter with a 12-box grid as well as 12 photographs of people that I specifically selected in order to have a variety of ages, races, and genders. Each box in the grid was labeled with a job title. I asked participants to sort the photos based on who they thought would most likely hold each position and to then place the selected photos in each box accordingly.

For the consensus statements, participants were asked to read 52 statements that each described an instance of racism. If they agreed that the statement was an example of racism they were asked to circle yes, and if they disagreed, they were asked to circle no. This survey was used to determine the amount of cultural agreement between participants about how they perceived and defined racism.

Separate from the interview participants, I recruited anonymous restaurant workers for free list surveys using a purposive sample (Bernard 2017). These workers came from food halls, and affluent neighborhoods with pedestrian only streets that featured a variety of upscale dining options. All of the participants I attempted to recruit were restaurant workers. My intent during recruitment was to diversify the sample among different types of restaurants, ethnic, casual, and fine dining, as well as gender, age, race and ethnicity. For the free-list survey, participants were asked to list as many examples of racism in the restaurant industry as they could think of. The survey was anonymous; however, participants also provided demographic information: age, gender, race, nationality, country of origin, job position, type of restaurant they worked in, level of education and political affiliation. The free list survey provided insight as to what type of behaviors were included in restaurant worker's cultural domain of racism, as well as which workers based on demographics, were in agreement with what they perceived as racism (Borgatti 1999; Bernard 2017; Schensul and LeCompte 2012).

Lastly, I conducted three focus groups; one with Black chefs, another with high net-worth "foodies", and a third with a group of Haitian restaurant workers who were mostly dishwashers. The Black chef focus group had 5 participants of which 4 were men, and one was a woman. The female chef had over a decade of experience and was least positioned as a line cook. Of the four men, one owned a popular Soul Food restaurant in Overtown, a gentrifying Black neighborhood in Miami. Another was a recent James Beard Caribbean chef awardee and personal chef to several NBA stars. The third was the owner of a Vegetarian Pop-Up restaurant, and the fourth was an Executive Chef for a country club on Miami Beach. Two of the men were American, and the other two were

from the Caribbean. Their focus group provided insight about race and gender segregation in the culinary industry

Self-proclaimed connoisseurs of good food and fine dining, the foodies that participated in the focus groups were well educated with a bachelor's degree or higher. They were racially and ethnically diverse, with a high socioeconomic status. Included in the group were many of Miami's elite culinary connoisseurs. I organized this focus group in an effort to create another layer of study. The foodie focus group provided a unique guest perspective about the ongoing problem.

The third and last focus group I conducted was with a group of ten Haitian restaurant workers. I organized this group with the help of Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center, a Haitian led community organization that provides resources and support to the Haitian community. All of the participants for this focus group were monolingual Haitian Kreyol speaking, which necessitated a Kreyol speaking translator and transcriber. This focus group provided detailed information about the racial subjugation of Haitian restaurant workers, and their efforts at resistance.

Collectively, the research methods I employed for this project critically interrogate the lived experiences of Miami's restaurant workers to expand our understanding of racialization processes in Miami's restaurant industry beyond the binary frameworks of Black and white, Latinx and Non-Latinx, male and female, straight and gay.

The Challenge of Defining Race

One of the greatest challenges with this project was how to go about defining someone's race. First off, in interviews, I always defaulted to the racial identity provided

by the participant. However, during participant observation, and free-listing, I often encountered participants who refused to define themselves racially or decided that they were of a different race than they seemed to appear, such as dark-skinned people from the Dominican Republic that didn't identify as Black. In situations where participants identified as mixed race, Black and white for example, I made that notation in my field notes and classified them as mixed. While conducting the free list exercise, many Latinos I spoke with, would indicate Latino for a race, and ignore the categories on the survey of Black or white. When possible, I would ask them to choose, but if they declined, I used general racial observations to categorize participants racially as white, Black or mixed, with a notation. There were times when this became tricky. Race is after all a social construction, and what exactly is it about the hue of one's skin, the size of someone's nose, lips, or nap of the hair, that truly categorizes them into one race or another. Miami is an immigrant city, with a spectrum of phenotypes, and other racial identifiers, so this often posed a problem when writing field notes and describing the racial composition of employees. When at a complete loss, or if I had participants that couldn't decide, I would ask them to classify their race based on how they thought law enforcement would view them. I used the racial categories of Black, white, Asian, Native American and mixed to describe a hybridity of indistinguishable races. This marker was grounded in the reality of the sociopolitical violence and differing rules of social enforcement brought to bear by perceptions of race, the ultimate designation of difference.

Assumptions

As a critical race scholar, I approached this study with a set of assumptions about the current state of the racialized culture of Miami's restaurant industry. These assumptions are also informed by previous studies about racial inequality in restaurant labor, an extant review of the literature, and my lived experiences. First, I assumed that racism is multifaceted, deeply embedded, and taken for granted in Miami's restaurant industry (Gillborn 2005; Gillborn and Ladson-Billings 2004). Research conducted by the restaurant opportunities center, as well as media reports of racial discrimination lawsuits presented by the EEOC support this statement. This assumption allowed me to focus on the fluidity of race within a dynamic, immigrant workforce, and the extent to which ideas about race and racism are deconstructed and reconstructed to support Miami's socio-politics (Parker and Lynn 2002).

Second, I assumed that current anti-racism policies within Miami's restaurant industry employ colorblind theories in an effort to create equitable hiring and promotion that inevitably protect and support white privilege and supremacy. Race scholars, as well as data from this project, have demonstrated that most whites consistently resist addressing racial inequality, unless there is interest convergence (Derrick Bell 2008; E. Taylor 2000). Narratives of meritocracy that promote ideas of America as the land of equal opportunity have proven to be false (McNamee and Miller 2009). Studies demonstrate that race intersected with gender, nationality and class are more significant determinants of socioeconomic mobility than merit alone (Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou 2012; Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004; McNamee and Miller 2009). As such, this project focuses on those most impacted by racial inequality and centers the voices of

people of color [12]through autoethnography, interviews, and focus groups to illuminate and understand how whiteness operates to marginalize them and preserve racial inequality.

Skin in the Game: Researcher Positionality

My positionality during the research process reflects my complicated lived experience as a Black, Jamaican, woman with multiple, intersecting identities. I am an immigrant, mother, daughter, scholar, activist, whose research lens is tinted by my race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and education. The first time I came to live in America was in 1969, five years after Civil Rights legislation was enacted. It was just before my eighth birthday and I learned quickly what it meant to be a Black immigrant in America. My mother worked for a wealthy Jewish family that lived in huge house just outside of the city of Philadelphia. I went to a local public elementary school where I was one of four Black children in the entire school. I remember getting into fist fights every day on the playground, and that I was known as "that colored girl", a label I physically and verbally contested. The racial violence I experienced as a child was so intense that my mother sent me home to Jamaica while she stayed in the United States and worked. Although I was now living in a boarding home in Jamaica, my early experience led to a deep involvement with the racial politics taking place in America. Angela Davis quickly became my "shero", and I recall following her public speeches and subsequently her trial quite intensely.

[12] I use this term as an inclusive category of non-white people.

I returned to the United States to live in Miami in 1981, this time as a young adult who vehemently identified as Jamaican and not Black. I had internalized many negative stereotypes of Black Americans and I was determined to be an exception. In 1980, the year before I returned to live in the states, Miami experienced what is now known as the McDuffie riots, a large violent protest in response to the acquittal of the four police officers that had beaten Arthur McDuffie to death. The city was racially segregated, and my family and I lived in a small apartment in the projects in Carol city. I quickly became what I call "a good Negro", metaphorically genuflecting to the wishes of my white co-workers and friends as their token Black friend. Some forty years after migrating to the United States, I managed to achieve some semblance of the middle-class life I once lived in Jamaica, albeit without a housekeeper, gardener and a chauffeur. I earned college degrees, became a chef, had my own catering company for years, and eventually made my way into the academy where I taught culinary arts and hospitality management. I thought that class would mitigate my racial identity, and it angered me deeply when I discovered that it didn't. This realization revealed the extent to which I had internalized the racialized culture of the restaurant and become complicit in anti-Black discrimination. It also brought full circle my awareness of my Blackness, despite my attempts to position myself as white-adjacent and middle class. I realized that I had more in common with my Black co-workers in terms of my struggle to get where I was. In many ways this realization solidified my racial identity, despite my attempts to transcend it with affirmations of my former Jamaican class status. It reshaped my racial consciousness and stayed with me throughout the course of my career. Negotiating racism and sexism has been a constant thread throughout my life. In my late thirties I decided to adopt a child

from Jamaica with a woman, which introduced another layer of complexity as I then had to navigate the politics of race, gender and sexuality. Becoming a parent forced me to examine what it meant to be an immigrant who was Black, Queer and Female.

My social location as a Black, Queer, Jamaican, woman is central to my research, and the manner in which I interpret the data and report the findings. While many scholars assume race consciousness in Black women is a given, I contend that for me, this consciousness about race as a personal and political struggle is still evolving. Throughout my fieldwork, I encountered white, Latinx and Caribbean folks who viewed me as an outsider and felt that my race, gender, class, and social position as a researcher presented a threat to their whiteness, white adjacency and privilege. I also encountered participants that considered me an insider, most often because of my race, my Jamaican nationality, and my experience working as a chef and caterer. African Americans unanimously thought of me as Black, an identity I unapologetically embraced throughout the project. American born Blacks had a heightened awareness of race as an identifier laden with domination or what Brush describes as a "politicized, oppositional consciousness of race and racism" (Brush 2001, 171).

On the axis of class, there were middle-class Latinx, and Afro Caribbean participants who considered me an insider because of my middle-class Jamaican background and education.

Our conversations, the tone, the discourse, and the West Indian propriety suggested that we had a shared identity as Afro-Anglo-Caribbean, an elevated status in Miami. We all knew that white Americans were enamored with our sing-song accents, a perception that we were somehow better than American Blacks, and the fact that we were known as hard

working people. My Afro-Anglo, Caribbean participants exploited these perceptions and assumed that I understood our shared status and that although I was Black, I was not "one of them". In interviews they often shared comments meant to be coded inside jokes about our superiority over American Blacks.

At the same time, my Black American participants considered me an insider because they viewed me as a Black woman with a vested interested in the struggle for racial equality. In the broadest sense, my Blackness gave me authority as a researcher studying race. However, my Blackness became more complicated when it was layered with sexual orientation. Homophobia is rampant in Miami's Black community, and for the most part, any conversations I had during the course of my research about sexual orientation were theoretical and not personal. That said, I felt it was important to include the voices of Queer people in my study, as I felt they were often made invisible and so I was deliberate about selecting participants that identified in some way as Queer.

Although I felt as if I was considered an outsider by most whites I engaged with during this project, I was also considered an insider by some white and Latinx participants, who thought of me as not Black, but Jamaican. Throughout the course of my dissertation research, I found myself constantly negotiating the complexities of my insider-outsider positionality. As a Black, Jamaican, middle-aged, woman who has spent decades working in Miami's culinary industry, my positionality was sometimes an asset, while at other times, it created methodological challenges.

Early in my professional experience working in restaurants, I noticed that I was more likely to be conditionally accepted by whites in Miami, especially those that were Jewish. I attributed that to my Jamaican nationality. Whites that I encountered

professionally and socially, would tell me that growing up, they had a nanny, or some other form of domestic help, who was from Jamaica. They were fascinated with my Jamaican lilt, and my middle-class presenting identity which I used as social leverage. I was strategic about how and when I divulged that I went to prep school, then boarding school in Jamaica, because I had learned that this information would increase my social capital considerably. Somehow, the story of the nanny, or a trip taken to the island's pristine resorts, made white Americans feel some sort of kinship, though superficial, to people like me. It bemused me that they had romanticized the island as an idyllic tropical retreat, and were completely oblivious to the violence, political strife, and rapidly declining economy, that caused my family and me to flee. Elsewhere, in more stereotypical Southern cities like Fort Pierce, Florida, where I once worked as a restaurant manager, my Blackness was non-negotiable. Regardless of my attempts to mediate my position within the racial hierarchy with boarding school narratives, or the like, whites in Fort Pierce consistently treated me with varying degrees of hostility, and white men in particular seemed to enjoy objectifying and fetishizing me.

The same held true in Miami several decades later, when I was working as a Chef for the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, at a popular convention hotel on Miami Beach. The Executive Chef and white European team were overtly racist and hostile to me and other members of my team that were Black, regardless of nationality. They hijacked our production, made it difficult for us to get supplies, and would give us very limited space or the worst equipped kitchens to work from. I circumvented their hostility, by having young, white, or light skinned Latinas – aka "pretty girls" on our team, become our liaison when we needed better products and conditions.

The experience of using gender, nationality, and sexual orientation, to circumvent white male patriarchy, brought to the fore questions about the role of gender identity in my racialized experiences and that of others. I was well aware that women were relegated to particular positions, and experiences based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality. What I sought to understand, was how they navigated the hierarchy with these identifiers, as outsiders within. In what particular instances were their intersectional identities an advantage, and when were they not? Did other immigrant's racial attitudes shift once they arrived in the United States and if so to what extent? My intersectional experiences brought to light questions about different white racial attitudes, as well as the way in which racial oppression was compounded when intersected with gender, nationality, class, and other identifiers.

Throughout the research process, I was constantly aware of my position as a middle-class, Jamaican woman with privilege that was rooted in colonialism and whiteness. Several years ago, I had come to the realization that I had internalized anti-Blackness and valorized whiteness in an effort to regain what I thought of as my middle-class identity. I realized that performing whiteness only served to reinforce Blackness as an inferior, racialized social location regardless of class and that I would never transcend my Blackness. Frantz Fanon spoke at length of whiteness as something non-white people aspired towards, without attainment (Fanon 2008). As a Black feminist and scholar-activist "I have skin in the game", and so who I am is significant to the epistemology, methodology and methods used in conducting this research project. Miami is fertile location for the study of racism in the restaurant industry because of its racial stratification and inequity within an ethnically diverse, majority immigrant, population.

2. COMPLICATING WHITENESS: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON RACE AND RACISM IN RESTAURANT LABOR

Introduction

More than half a century ago, civil rights legislation prohibiting racial discrimination in restaurants was enacted as part of an effort to stem the historical racial inequality that Blacks experienced in the United States. Yet current sociological research finds that over 55% of restaurant servers report an aversion to Black customers and that they discriminate against them by refusing service or providing inferior service (Z. W. Brewster and Brauer 2017a; Z. W. Brewster and Lynn 2014; Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018). Sociologists use the terms "Dining while Black" and "Tableside Racism" to describe this persistent form of anti-Black discrimination in the restaurant industry (Z. Brewster 2009; Z. W. Brewster and Brauer 2017b; Dirks and Rice 2004).

Within a small but increasing body of literature on the topic, labor scholars and sociologists overwhelmingly concur that anti-Black discrimination in the restaurant industry is systemic and extends beyond the dining room and into the labor force (Addy et al. 2011; Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Dirks and Rice 2004; Fine 2009; Sarumathi Jayaraman and Schlosser 2013). Research shows that the racialized culture of the restaurant industry contributes to multiple forms of disadvantage for Blacks, and non-whites such as a reduction in professional opportunities, educational attainment, income, and health outcomes (Sarumathi Jayaraman and Schlosser 2013)[13]. As the academic interest on this topic grows, scholars are moving beyond documenting the nature and

[13] The research found discrimination in restaurant labor against Blacks and Latinxs, while whites are generally privileged. The category of non-white broadly reflects these findings.

pervasiveness of systemic racism and inquiring more about covert racialized discourse and actions that facilitate "modern racism" such as implicit bias and colorblind racism (Z. W. Brewster and Brauer 2017b; Dirks and Rice 2004; Rusche and Brewster 2008). Presently there is an urgent call for critical research that explores some of the more complex aspects of race, such as the intersectional construction of racial stratification in restaurant labor, as well as the significance of white supremacy on the reproduction of racial hierarchies within the industry's organizational structure and worker's interpersonal relations (Z. Brewster 2009; Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Dirks and Rice 2004; Fine 2009; Sarumathi Jayaraman and Schlosser 2013).

There are key questions and notions that are still not discussed in the literature. How does the overlapping of one's gender, and nationality impact their social positioning? How are racial beliefs informed by national origin and culture? How does racism operate differently in different spaces and places? In addition to these unanswered questions, Dirks and Rice articulated a need for more research on this topic when they stated first that "further research is needed to examine how servers treat racial differences in a variety of rural and urban areas", as well as when remarked that "further work on the intersections of racism and sexism will be necessary to examine how they shape both women's and men's experiences" (Dirks and Rice 2004, 44) In Miami, this call for a more critical approach to the study of racism among restaurant workers is especially urgent, as there is a significant difference in the way Miamians experience race and perceive racism due to the variability in ethnicity, immigration experiences, class, education, and social status. One thing is certain, race in Miami doesn't map neatly along the US Black-white binary. It is complicated and findings from my dissertation research

suggest that racism in Miami is more likely to resemble tri-racial models seen in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This review of the literature on racism among restaurant workers seeks to complement current scholarship on race and labor by engaging whiteness studies in an effort to develop a framework for exploring racial politics in the industry as well as the ways in which restaurant workers negotiate, participate in, or are otherwise implicated in the reproduction of power relations. Furthermore, this dissertation research interrogates how white Latinos are situated in Miami's restaurant industry, and what implications that may have for other majority-minority Latinx cities in the United States.

To critically address the role of whiteness in theory and practice, this chapter uses the framework of Critical Race theory (CRT), a legal theory that has been used across disciplines to critically examine the manifestation of systemic and embedded racism in the United States. It should be noted that although whiteness studies evolved from CRT, there is an epistemological distinction between the two fields. Critical Race theory was developed from the legal field and focuses on law, race, and power, while whiteness studies were developed from an interdisciplinary field of inquiry which focused on the historical and cultural construction of whiteness as a privileged social category (Chen 2017). While there is significant overlap between the two fields, each has its own distinct theoretical implications in research.

The first section of this chapter is an overview of CRT, and a discussion on how this informed my research questions. I focus on an intersectional perspective which can expand the scholarship on race and racism in the restaurant industry. In the second section of this chapter, I discuss the current racial stratification taking place in Miami

from a historical perspective. The third section of this chapter discusses some of the ways white privilege is operationalized in Miami's restaurant industry, from cultural appropriation to the idea of the restaurant as a white space. In this segment, I use the concept of white space as a location within which there are numerically dominant groups of people socially perceived as white, and as such non-white actors are considered outsiders unless their presence is justified by those that are white (Anderson 2015). Within the discussion on white Space, I explore the relationship between current scholarship on race and space, a dominant restaurant culture of white superiority, and the resulting menu of discrimination. Finally, I conclude this chapter by examining the role of whiteness in perpetuating racial stratification in the restaurant industry and by briefly discussing how my dissertation research addresses gaps in the literature.

Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality

Since the 1970's an extensive literature has developed on Critical race theory (CRT). In response to persistent post-civil rights racial discrimination, and a legal system that ignored systemic racial bias and inequality, legal scholars initially developed CRT as an interpretive critical lens through which they could challenge systemic racism and understand how and why race and racism continues to operate (Derrick Bell 2008; Crenshaw 1995; Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris 2017). Since then, CRT has evolved into a theoretical framework used by many scholars across disciplines to examine the ways in which race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation and other socially constructed identifiers operate intersectionally to maintain social systems of power and inequality (Crenshaw 1995; D. A. Bell 1995; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Parker and Lynn 2002;

Derek Bell 2008). While, critical race theory and its multitude of scholarly applications is beyond the scope of what I can cover in this chapter, I think it is important to introduce the topic by discussing two relevant themes within the literature; the critique of liberalism and intersectionality, that may be useful in analyzing persistent patterns of racism in the restaurant industry.

Overwhelmingly, critical race scholars' main point of contention is with the inefficacy of liberal ideologies that are promoted and practiced as solutions to racial equality (Derek Bell 2008; Crenshaw 1995; Delgado and Stefancic 1993; Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris 2017; Freeman 1981). CRT scholars argue that race is embedded in the framework of US culture and therefore a central part of American institutions and daily life; yet our legal, political and social systems underplays and overlooks the everyday significance of race and racism (Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Essed 1991; J. R. Feagin 2000; Parker and Lynn 2002). Numerous scholars have discussed the limited progress made through affirmative action programs, criticizing the slow pace of reform, and the periods of progress almost inevitably followed by periods of regression (Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris 2017; Ladson-Billings 1998). In his blistering critique that addressed the failings of Brown vs The Board of education, the landmark Supreme court ruling that declared racially segregated schools as unconstitutional, Derrick Bell notably coined the term "interest convergence" when he argued that Blacks will only attain racial equality when whites find that it is in their best interest (D. A. Bell 1980). Increasingly, critical race scholars argue that racial ideologies of equality and meritocracy are in fact a new form of racism that masks and facilitates persistent white hegemony (Bonilla-Silva 2006; Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris 2017).

Bonilla-Silva's Colorblind racism theory is a seminal contribution to the scholarship on Critical race theory. It is a contemporary critique of liberalism which has garnered significant scholarly attention. The framework of colorblind racism interrogates a common refrain from whites and others who insist they don't see color. This belief in colorblindness relies on the notion that skin color is insignificant and does not determine how people are perceived and treated despite research and historical data that suggests that this is a false narrative (Apfelbaum, Sommers, and Norton 2008; Bonilla-Silva 2006; Gallagher 2003). Critical race scholars across disciplines such as law, education, and criminology, dispute narratives of colorblindness with data that clearly demonstrates that people of color are more frequently stigmatized, and discriminated against resulting in harsher legal sentences, higher rates of incarceration, and frequent academic disciplinary action (D. A. Bell 1995; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Ladson-Billings 1998).

Bonilla-Silva's analysis of Colorblind race ideology argues that ideologies of colorblindness are rooted in "abstract liberalism" and perpetuate racial inequalities by ignoring and minimizing systemic racism, thereby providing a social habitus for covert racialized behavior to go unchecked. Furthermore, Bonilla-Silva makes a strong case that colorblind racism exculpates white dominant racial groups from taking responsibility for racist behavior by naturalizing racism, positioning it as a cultural choice, and also by minimizing the systemic effect of racial inequality. In South Florida, an example of this would be horrific "water-cooler" talk I've heard on the job reflecting cultural beliefs that Haitians are lazy and dirty, and this is why they have higher rates of poverty and reduced economic mobility.

Bonilla-Silva extends his argument of neoliberal colorblind racism to academia which frequently positions whites as unbiased researchers, and people of color as inherently biased. I concur with this assessment by Bonilla-Silva and would extend its scope to include my argument that the invisibility of white racial bias is especially problematic when conducting research on race and racism among restaurant workers, as a significant amount of US restaurants are primarily "white spaces" (Anderson 2015). I will elaborate on this argument later in the chapter when discussing more specifically the literature that pertains to "White Spaces" "Dining while Black" and "The Culture of White Servers" (Dirks and Rice 2004; Anderson 2015).

A second prominent theme to emerge out of the literature on critical race theory is the concept of intersectionality. In the late eighties, critical race scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "Intersectionality", to describe the "various ways race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences" (Crenshaw 1991, 1244). Crenshaw argued that intersecting marginal identities uniquely handicapped Black women structurally, politically and representationally (Crenshaw 1989; 1991). She determined that the intersectional marginalization of gender and race that Black women experienced should be considered as a compounded combination of additional disadvantage, and not as independent analytic categories of social inequality (Crenshaw 1989; 1991).

Since Crenshaw's pioneering work on intersectionality, the concept has moved beyond critical Black feminist scholarship and has been applied across multiple disciplines to address complex social identity structures and how they intersect to create

systems of power, privilege and subordination (Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin 2013; Gopaldas 2013, 10). Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins notably built on Crenshaw's work by exploring these interconnections and arguing that marginal identities are not just interrelated but also used in "interlocking social institutions that have relied on multiple forms of segregation… to produce unjust results" (Collins 2002, 277). Collins claims that US institutions such as the legal system, labor markets, banks, schools, etcetera, have intersected to systematically oppress many, while privileging others in "a matrix of domination" (Collins 2002, 18). For example, data compiled from research on the restaurant industry shows that racial pay disparities are greatest for Black female servers who earn the lowest tips within race and gender demographics (Z. W. Brewster and Lynn 2014). Lower income means fewer life choices - limited housing options, reduced educational attainment, and poor health outcomes. These oppressions taken as a whole can be considered within the matrix of domination. Collins' matrix of domination is viewed as a paradigmatic shift in the analysis of social inequality because it analyzes power within varying degrees of penalty and privilege in any given instance and institution, rather than viewing oppression as a binary. Additionally, Collins claims that some people may be simultaneously oppressed and oppressors, and gives the example of white women who might be subjugated by their gender and simultaneously privileged by their race (Collins 2002).

Intersectionality's wide reach across different disciplines, theoretical perspectives, and political ideologies as well as the interest by feminists and activists has resulted in a tremendous surge in popularity over the past decade (Davis 2008; Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin 2013; Crenshaw 1991). Sociologist Patricia Hills-Collins considers intersectionality

an "overarching knowledge project whose changing contours grow from and respond to social formations of complex social inequalities" (Collins 2015, 5). Leslie McCall deems intersectionality as "the most important contribution that women's studies has made so far" (McCall 2005). This ever-expanding use of intersectionality as a broad-based knowledge project has resulted in multiple definitions and uses of the term (Collins 2015). Recent definitions of intersectionality are more inclusive with wider boundaries that do not include labeled identities (Gopaldas 2013). For example, McCall defines intersectionality "as the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations" (McCall 2005). In a similar vein, labor scholars Browne and Misra define intersectionality as, "the dynamic and interdependent matrices of privilege and disadvantage that affect labor market outcomes across social locations" (Browne and Misra 2003; Gopaldas 2013). While these expanded definitions are generally considered indicative of the turn towards intersectionality as an epistemological perspective and a paradigm of research, some scholars have countered this response by pointing out the definitional problems and practical challenges with its application (Clarke and McCall 2013; Collins 2015; Davis 2008; Hancock 2007; McCall 2005).

In Patricia Hills-Collins' work on *Intersectionality's Definitional Dilemmas,* the scholar calls attention to the relationship between intersectionality and Omi and Winant's theory of racial formation and finds that both concepts interrogate social inequality and its relationship to power (Collins 2015; Omi and Winant 2014). Racial formation theory is "the socio-historical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed or destroyed" (Omi and Winant 2014, 109). Collins argues that racial formation theory does not conflate racial meanings with power, instead it maintains them

as separate and interrogates the relationship between the two. With an understanding that racial formations are fluid and constantly changing, intersectionality provides a lens through which to examine the shifting racial identities of social actors within different environments.

The theory of intersectionality has been praised for its inclusive and innovative approach to analyzing social inequality; however, it has also been criticized for being too complicated and ambiguous (Carroll 2017; Clarke and McCall 2013; Davis 2008; Hancock 2007; Nash 2008). In contrast to traditional race research which may examine social identifiers as independent variables in comparison to each other, or as impacted by a moderating or cultural variable, Intersectional research examines "multiplicatively oppressed groups" with the goal of identifying and exploring the social, political, cultural and historical forces of racial domination and subjugation, and how actors are positioned by multiple social advantages and disadvantages. (Gopaldas 2013). This type of analysis, though significant, can quickly become exhaustive with a plethora of intersectional combinations of power and oppression eventually diluting the data to the extent that it becomes arduous and irrelevant.

There are multiple schools of thought as to how best to conduct intersectional analysis and research. Hill-Collins organizes intersectionality by category, as a field of study, a mode of analysis, or as categorizing scholarship. Similarly, McCall suggests interrogating the boundary making and boundary designing process of social inequality by taking one of three categorical approaches: anti-categorical, inter-categorical and intra-categorical, to formally compare groups intersectionally (Cho, Crenshaw, and

McCall 2013; Clarke and McCall 2013; McCall 2005). Other scholars such as Gopaldas offer concise practical suggestions such as limiting the scope by first determining which identity structures are most consequential, overlooked, or under theorized in the literature and then focusing on that specific category (Gopaldas 2013). Simultaneously, scholars such as Davis argue to the contrary that, "paradoxically, precisely the vagueness and open-endedness of 'intersectionality' may be the very secret to its success" (Davis 2008, 69).

As an approach or lens through which research is conducted, I found intersectionality to be especially useful when exploring complex racial hierarchies such as those formed at the axes of gender, nationality, and socioeconomic status in Miami's immigrant dominant restaurant industry. Hancock, a scholar who has discussed the merit of intersectionality as a research method states that "intersectionality posits an interactive, mutually constitutive relationship among these categories and the way in which race (or ethnicity) and gender (or other relevant categories) play a role in the shaping of political institutions, political actors, the relationships between institutions and actors, and the relevant categories themselves" (Hancock 2007, 67). In other words, an intersectional approach to the study of racism in restaurants may illuminate different roles played by varying intersectional identities in the construction of social hierarchies that shape the workplace. Intersectional research uses multiple methods of data collection such as participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and photovoice technique to acquire multiple viewpoints about a social problem. This approach provides a more comprehensive analysis than analysis that look solely at race.

CRT informed the development of my research questions and my approach to this research project. Thinking critically about the problem of racism among restaurant workers required that I interrogate assumptions about the role of whiteness in racial stratification, and how, when, where, and why white and non-white workers experienced race and perceived racism differently. It also required that I investigate the normalization of whiteness as superior, specifically in the restaurant industry which has been historically contingent on ideas of exceptional taste and distinction. This investigation prompted a second line of questions regarding the influence of immigration and American concepts of race on workers racial attitudes and behaviors. In my own experience living and working in Miami for almost forty years, I witnessed and experienced a shift in immigrant racial attitudes over time. Some of the interesting questions in this context interrogate the extent to which US attitudes towards race affected the beliefs of workers. What were workers racial beliefs in their home countries, what do they believe now, and how if any are those beliefs similar or different. Finally, because I recognized the diversity of difference within essentialized racial categories, I felt compelled to address how workers believe race, gender, nationality, language, class, and sexual orientation intersect and operate to shape race privilege and discrimination in different settings. Critical race theory allowed me to interrogate racism in the restaurant industry quite differently than scholars before me. It expands ideas of race and racism, moving the argument beyond the essentialized US categories of the Black White binary, to complicate the diversity of each, and examine the inter and intra-related social stratification, as it is deployed intersectionally. It is my intent that this work complements

current scholarship on whiteness and service labor and expands the way in which we think racism operates.

Shades of whiteness

On a balmy evening in Miami, I was in the field collecting free lists at the Wynwood Yard – an outdoor food venue with multiple food vendors in a hip gentrifying neighborhood. At a small, farm-to-table restaurant in a shipping container, I met a 27-year-old, white male cashier with green and blonde hair who enthusiastically agreed to complete a free list. When he was finished, he shared that he experienced racial discrimination while working at an Italian Restaurant on South Beach. He felt that he had been discriminated against, because he was Cuban-American. Intrigued, by this very white looking man's claim, I asked him to tell me more.

It turns out he was working as a busser in a fine-dining Italian restaurant where he was one of a few Cubans on staff. The restaurant was owned by an Italian family, who hired other Italians and Europeans for waitstaff and management while the kitchen dish and prep crew was Black and Haitian. He said the owners often made derogatory remarks about Cubans and non-Europeans. Through frequent jokes and anecdotes, the Italian owners made it known in the restaurant that they viewed themselves as racially and ethnically superior. The young man, who I will call Jorge, told me that one night, a "Eurocentric Italian" suddenly started speaking to him in Urban slang. He said it started with "whatsup my Pimp" and quickly escalated to "what's up my Nigga?" He noted that the Eurocentric Italian was careful to not use the N word when Black Haitians were in earshot. This verbal harassment continued for a couple of weeks until he got angry and asked them to stop. The Eurocentric responded with, "What's up, you like Niggers?" but

nevertheless started to back off. Shortly after these incidents, my interlocuter reported that one of the white female Italian owners had taken a liking to him. She singled him out to spend time in her private office and talk. One night she offered him a tarot card reading during which she told him he came from the jungle and was an ape in a former life. He was offended and told her so. The next day at work, he was making small talk with a Black Haitian dishwasher, when one of the managers started walked past them making ape sounds and gestures. This behavior continued, and so a couple of weeks later he quit.

Jorge's story illustrates that in Miami, a city of immigrants, race is complicated and doesn't fall neatly along the US Black-white binary. Light skinned Latinos from Cuba and South America are increasingly included in the racial category of white, while dark-skinned Latinos from Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala are generally considered to be non-white and aligned with the racial category of Black. However, this rule is not absolute, as demonstrated by Jorge's experience. Jorge, a Cuban American identified as white and visually appeared to be in the white racial category; however, when working with Italians who believed their European ancestry and class status made them superior, he was racialized as non-white and stripped of his race privilege. Simultaneously, Jorge's account of his manager's careful use of racial slurs with him, signals that Jorge's racial status though subjugated, ranks above those who are Black. On one hand racialization falls along the US Black-white Binary, while on the other, it is aligned with white and non-white.

This narrative illustrates the fluidity and instability of whiteness and the extent to which whiteness is an embodied, versatile, and unstable category of privilege. A historical assessment of whiteness reveals that poor and working-class people were not

always included in the white racial category. However, whiteness in the United States has been expanded over time to include immigrants such as the Irish and the Jews (Brodkin 1998). In a Latinx-dominant, immigrant city such as Miami, newer intersectional constructions of whiteness are based on phenotype in combination with nationality, language, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Still, this an unstable category, with a great deal of variability, as Jorge's account illustrated. This case demonstrates the need for more research that investigates how racialization operates differently within a majority immigrant labor force such as Miami's restaurant industry.

Black, White and Whiter - Racial Stratification in Miami

As I established in the previous section, whiteness in Miami, is a diverse and variable social identity, that shifts according to a number of intersectional factors such as nationality, gender, language, and sexual orientation as well as the specific context of the situation. While the majority of the city's Latinx immigrants consider themselves to be white, the power and privilege that comes with whiteness doesn't always correlate to one's racial identity, as demonstrated in Jorge's story above. In Miami, the variability in whiteness, who counts and who doesn't, when, where and why, is complicated. According to the latest data from the US Census Bureau, 70% of people in Miami identify as Hispanic or Latinx, and within that group, just over 80% racially identify as white. This data is in line with current trends in racial demographics, that show a 6% increase in the number of people who identify as white across the United States ("U.S. Census" 2010). Scholars attribute this rise in white racial identity to significantly more Latinx people identifying as white, thus bolstering the numbers of a declining majority of

people with European ancestry, historically considered to be white (Council et al. 2006; Gosin 2019).

This increase in the number of Latinx immigrants who identify as white is particularly salient in Miami, a city with a Latinx majority, that is also politically and economically dominated by white Cuban elites (Hughes and Aranda 2014; Portes 1984; Zong 2017). Studies show that Latinxs propensity towards whiteness underscores ideas of global white supremacy, and a bias towards Eurocentric ideas of whiteness and white cultural ideals. At the same time, many of those who now consider themselves to be white, also report coming from a country and culture that espouses racelessness. Therefore, the racial politics of Miami cannot be completely understood, without a comprehensive discussion of race and racism across countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the impact of nationalistic racial beliefs on current racial stratification in Miami.

For starters, prior research suggests that many Latinx and Caribbean immigrants embrace the narrative of their home country as a racial democracy. In other words, before their migration, they believe that in comparison to the racial politics of the United States, their countries have relatively few instances of racial discrimination and animosity (Hanchard 1999; Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004; Twine 1998). These racial beliefs are often attributed to the absence of institutionalized racism and racialized violence, as well as a high rate of miscegenation, a hallmark of racial democracies (Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004). These narratives also serve as a measure of moral superiority, particularly in relation to more developed nations such as the United States, which continues to be afflicted with gross, systemic, racial inequality (Twine 1998). It should also be noted that

many anti-racism activists in Brazil, Cuba and other parts of Latin America rejected the myth of a racial democracy (Htun 2004; S. R. Bailey 2004).

Historically, the intermixing and marrying between races and ethnicities are used as evidence of racelessness, although in reality, miscegenation has only served to strengthen white supremacy. Miscegenation occurred in various forms during colonialism, slavery and beyond, often resulting in lighter skinned Black offspring that received more economic and social advantages, than their darker counterparts (Darity, Dietrich, and Hamilton 2005; Herring 2002; Hunter 2007). Social scientists define this phenomenon as Colorism, the "discriminatory treatment of individuals falling within the same "racial" group on the basis of skin color" (Herring 2002, 19). Colorism can be intra-racial, as in discrimination within the race; or it can be inter-racial, discrimination between races. Regardless, Colorism always signals the global preference for whiteness, as those with lighter skin and more European features – narrow nose, "good hair"[14], thin lips, and lighter skin for example, receive more advantages within and between races (Herring 2002).

Miscegenation also resulted in Latin American Mestizos, people whose ancestry are both Indigenous and Spanish, and are often used as a prime example of racial diversity and acceptance throughout Latin America. In the Caribbean, considerable intermarrying and interracial sex between people from China, India, Europe and the Middle East, generally combined with those of African descent, also takes place, resulting in large populations of multi-racial people. This multiracial population was often used as evidence in arguments supporting racial democracy. Motto's such as

[14] Hair that is straight or less kinky.

Jamaica's, "Out of Many, One People", promote ideas of ethnic assimilation and colorblindness as an effective path towards a unified national identity.

Throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, miscegenation has resulted in a tri-racial system of Black, white and Mixed people. Within each of these groups, there are Black and white poles that anchor a tertiary group of mixed people, all with different strata of status, that determine the social hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva 2002; 2004; Herring 2002). While there is considerable variability in the self-identification of those with mixed races, the margins of Blackness and whiteness are historically contingent, and generally remain fixed, with whites at the top of the hierarchy and Blacks on the lowest rung. At the same time, there is diversity and fluidity within the intragroup stratifications, which are organized around intersectional factors such as education, occupation, class, language, and region; that overlap to determine one's position within the social hierarchy. These are the dynamics at play within the racial politics of Latin America, the Caribbean, which are now also currently seen in Miami. City leaders refuse to engage in substantive interventions to address racial disparities often citing colorblindness akin to racial democracy (Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004; Hughes and Aranda 2014). These tropes sanitize the legacy of colonialism and slavery by dismissing entrenched racial inequalities, instead asserting that social difference is a result of other contributing factors such as class, politics, or the historical legacies of wealth disparity.

A substantial body of social science literature disputes accounts of racial democracies throughout Latin America and the Caribbean with data that demonstrates that significant anti-Black racism exists in these countries albeit with inter and intra group complexities (Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004; Twine 1998). In fact, upon closer

examination, social scientists found that structural racism was disguised as classism and the effect of anti-Blackness, and white supremacy in these countries was just as deleterious as it is in the United States. Despite evidence of significant racism, racial egalitarianism is embraced and celebrated by Latinx and Caribbean immigrants in Miami, particularly those who were considered elite or upper class in their homeland. These perceptions of racelessness, insulates white elites, perpetuates racial hierarchies and white supremacy, and simultaneously minimizes Blackness or renders it invisible. Race privilege and discrimination are reproduced and reinforced through mechanisms such as education, labor, and poverty (Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004; Twine 1998).

Historical studies show that an estimated half a million Cubans migrated to Miami in the 1960s, following the 1959 overthrow of the US-sponsored Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista (Mohl, 1990). Cuban immigrants to South Florida received significant aid from the US government, through the federally funded Cuban Refugee Program which provided $1.3 billion in financial assistance, educational loans, health care and child welfare services for Cuban migrants. Some of this financial support was diverted from funds slated to support Miami's Black community. This strong support from the US government was a significant catalyst for the eventual political and economic ascension of Cubans in Miami ("Cuban Refugee Center Records, 1960-1994 | University of Miami Cuban Heritage Collection" 2018; Grenier and Stepick 1992; Zong 2017)

Several Cubanists contend that privilege upon migration to Miami was closely aligned with race as most Cubans lighter complexion enabled them to rank higher than Miami's African Americans and Blacks on the racial scale ("Cuban Refugee Center Records, 1960-1994 | University of Miami Cuban Heritage Collection," 2018; Grenier &

Stepick, 1992; Zong, 2017). Cuban cultural signifiers of Blackness such as Afro-Cuban music and religion were rejected by early Cuban migrants, further complicating local racial politics and tensions. Cubans were receiving government aid slated for Blacks, while simultaneously rejecting Blackness (Grenier and Stepick 1992).

The Mariel boatlift as discussed in the introductory chapter, also complicated the meaning of whiteness in Miami's Cuban community. In 1980, when 125,000 migrants arrived in Miami from Mariel, Cuba, they were initially welcomed by Miami's Cuban exile community and the US government. However, as it became evident that many of the refugees were of a darker complexion than most of the Cuban exile population in Miami, anti-Black, racial anxieties became heightened. Instead of narratives of refugees fleeing oppression like other lighter skinned Cubans now living Miami, the migrants from Mariel were positioned as criminals and homosexuals that were a danger to society. Anti-Black attitudes were evident within the local Cuban community when they distanced themselves from Afro-Cuban food, culture, and religion that was heightened after Mariel (Palmié 2013). The US government responded to these anxieties by hastily reaching an agreement with Cuba to stop the flow of migrants in large part because of racism, although they claimed that the economic impact of accepting so many migrants would be detrimental. Decades later, research demonstrated that the percentage of violent criminals among the refugees was negligible, and that the negative impact to the economy did not occur as previously feared (Araujo-Dawson 2015; Zurbano 2014).

The US racial Black-white binary in Miami became muddled when more Cubans of various skin-tones arrived. Their primary outsider status as immigrants as well as their intra-racial diversity initially positioned them as non-white. However, race scholars and

sociologists agree that as more and more Cubans with lighter complexions became successful and powerful, light-skinned Cubans were progressively included in the white racial category by white Americans and other light-skinned Cubans (Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2006; Warren and Twine 1997). This expansion of whiteness to include Cubans and other light skinned Latinxs, complicates the way in which racism is operationalized in Miami's restaurant industry (Aja 2016; Hay 2009).

The Invisible Authority of Whiteness

By the mid 1990s, South Florida was an established immigrant community. Cubans were in the majority, but Miami-Dade and Broward counties were also home to large numbers of Haitians, Jamaicans, Trinidadians, South and Central Americans and Puerto Ricans. Restaurants from every nationality and culture could be found throughout the city. State Road 7 in North Dade was a busy corridor filled with Afro-Caribbean markets and eateries. Further south, Miami's Northeast Second Avenue was lined by a string of bustling Haitian markets and restaurants. In the Cuban enclaves of Hialeah and Little Havana, there were Cuban restaurants, cafeterias and bodegas on every corner. Outside these enclaves, Cuban culture permeated Miami. La Carreta and Pollo Tropical were well-established Cuban food chains with numerous restaurants scattered across South Florida. Versailles, one of the oldest Cubans restaurant in Little Havana became a sought-after tourist destination. In 1992, Emilio and Gloria Estefan opened Lario's, a fine dining Cuban establishment in South Beach and many others who were not as famous followed suit.

The flavors of the Caribbean and of Latin America could be found throughout the city, yet it was four white, male, chefs who came to be known as the "Mango Gang" who were granted the power and authority to determine the tropical flavors and cooking techniques that would come to define Miami's "New World Cuisine".[15] A culinary term coined by Norman Van Aken, one of the Mango Gang chefs, New World Cuisine was conceived as a sophisticated fusion of the ethnic foods and flavors from the Caribbean and Latin America, which were supposedly "discovered" by Van Aken. The arrival of the Mango Gang was emblematic of how whiteness was deployed to capitalize on Miami's growing multi-ethnic and multi-race, demographic. While some would argue that the Mango Gang's culinary training and experience conferred that authority upon them, I argue that it was the intersection of those chefs' race, gender, and socioeconomic identities, juxtaposed against the Latin-Caribbean Other, that established them as Miami's authorities on multicultural cuisine (Cook & Crang 1996; Cook & Harrison 2003).

Food writer Fred Tasker, a journalist who covered South Florida's culinary landscape for the last four decades stated that the massive influx of migrants to Miami from Cuba, Haiti, and other parts of the Caribbean and Latin America in the eighties made a regional culinary shift towards more ethnic foods inevitable (Tasker 1999). While the shifting demographics certainly was a catalyst for the chefs' "discovery" of New World Cuisine, multiple interviews, and articles indicate that the Mango Gang chefs were deliberate in their quest to expand their fine dining culinary repertoire with the appropriated tropical foods (Balcomb Lane 1991; Fonseca 2005; Hsiao-Ching 1998;

[15] New World Cuisine is also known interchangeably as Global Fusion cuisine, a culinary term also credited to Norman Van Aken.

"Norman Van Aken: Reminiscing on the Mango Gang" 2016; Rossant 2011). I would extend this argument by suggesting that the appropriation of food and labor became a form of racial capitalism, in which the white chefs benefitted from the intellectual knowledge, traditions, and labor of non-white Blacks and Latinxs (Robinson 1983).

The Mango Gang's appropriation of Latin and Afro-Caribbean foods to create New World Cuisine demonstrates the ways in which their white authority and structural advantages, such as access to wealthy investors and full-time public relations professionals, enabled them to shift the discourse around these foods, transforming these cuisines from underrated and insignificant cookery into expensive and exotic gastronomy. In other words, the "gourmetification" of these peasant foods perceived as non-white cuisine led to an increase in the culinary capital both of those innovative enough to use them in fine dining and of those adventurous enough to consume them in the safe, elite, white-dominated spaces the chefs provided (Johnston & Baumann 2014; Naccarato & Lebesco 2013).

When the chefs initially rolled out New World Cuisine, they described it as one that incorporated, African influences, and frequently referred to foods from the Afro-Caribbean, such as Haiti, Jamaica and the Bahamas ("How Norman Van Aken Developed His 'New World Cuisine'" n.d.; Hsiao-Ching 1998; Van Aken 1997). However, as time went on, they began to focus less on the Afro-Caribbean culinary connection and more on Latin American foods especially the cuisines of Cuba, Peru, Argentina and Brazil. In this way, the racial connotations of New World Cuisine became whitened in the local imagination, in which contemporary race formations of whiteness now included

powerful, light-skinned Latino immigrants (Bonilla-Silva 2006; Omi and Winant 2014; Ramírez 2015).

Whiteness scholars have established that one of the defining features of white racial identity is that white people tend to avoid thinking about race or acknowledging their privilege (Frankenberg 1993; Hartigan 1997; McDermott & Samson 2005; McIntosh 1988). In her essay "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Peggy McIntosh writes: "I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was meant to remain oblivious" (1988, p. 30). This lack of acknowledgement of, or obliviousness to privilege is significant, as it permits white people's social acceptance of their role in constructing race discrimination. As McIntosh becomes aware of her race privilege and the many ways in which she takes that privilege for granted, she also comes to realize that the systems that privilege her must also hinder others. This type of thinking was lost on the Mango Gang chefs.

Race privilege gave the chefs invisible authority and structural advantage, not just because they were white, but because the people whose food and culture they appropriated were non-white and systematically disenfranchised and discriminated against. In our society's hierarchy, white male chefs are considered smarter, better and wiser than non-white, female, cooks. Similarly, foods from ethnic cultures are perceived as different from the accepted, routine cultural fare which dominates the day-to-day eating habits of the dominant, white racial group. Ethnic foods help solidify different aspects of national and ethnic identities in our collective imagination, especially by contrast with normalized whiteness (Mintz & Bois 2002). Consuming the cuisines of

different countries reaffirms our perceptions of the national identities of people from those countries and who they are as individuals (Flammang 2009). What other people eat – or what we think they eat – determines what we think of them, their social status and their value to society (Mintz 2010). The Mango Gang used foods from different people and places – namely Latin America and the Caribbean – to distinguish themselves as daring, innovative and globally-oriented. Their use of foods perceived as bold and exotic was the seed from which Miami's New World Cuisine developed as a tangible symbol of a cosmopolitan city that embraced diversity and multicultural cuisine, while simultaneously reproducing race, gender and class hierarchies.

Researching Racialized Restaurant Service and the white, Patriarchal Gaze

Early research on race-based restaurant discrimination was predominantly conducted by white men and focused heavily on anti-Black discrimination during guest service, particularly as it relates to tipping practices. Discourses about racial and ethnic disparities in tipping are both anecdotal and documented, and the narrative that Black people don't tip is well ingrained among servers and workers in the restaurant industry. The following quote from the discussion board www.tipping.org illustrates this viewpoint well:

> I work in a seafood restaurant located in the midwest. . . I thought the average Black person not tipping was just a regional problem; I guess it's a national problem. I will not take Black tables unless I have no other option; call me racist,

but I also walk out with more money than the people who end up with them – as quoted in (Lynn 2004a)

While there are numerous studies on racialized tipping and service in the literature, a full review of these studies is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the belief that Black people don't tip is emblematic of anti-Black racial attitudes, and so some attention must be paid to the research on tipping, and what that says about ingrained ideas of racism in the industry. Therefore, I will use the following hospitality studies as representational samples of data analyses that address racism in the restaurant industry. A summary of findings follows.

In the first study, researchers Noll and Arnold conducted two exploratory research projects to examine the real and perceived differences between Black and white tipping practices. The authors surveyed 100 servers equally divided between Maryland and Florida and asked about their beliefs about tipping differences between Black and white customers. They followed up with a single restaurant survey of two servers who were asked to record their tips and the race of their diners. In both studies Noll and Arnold found that Black patrons tipped an average of 1-3% less than whites, and that variables such as gender, and education, did not impact the results (Noll and Arnold 2004). In another similar study, Michael Lynn, a researcher at the Hotel School of Cornell found that 94% of servers at a restaurant in Houston thought Blacks were poor tippers. Conversely *none* of those servers considered whites to be poor tippers. (Lynn 2004b).

Building on these findings, Lynn conducted a study exploring racial familiarity with tipping norms. Using secondary data from a random telephone survey of over 1,000

people he found that Blacks reported tipping significantly lower percentages than whites or a flat dollar amounts in lieu of a percentage. (Lynn 2004a). Interestingly, this study also found that Black restaurant patrons rated the service received slightly higher than did white patrons, but the Black patrons still tipped less (Lynn 2004a). From these studies, Lynn concluded that the racial tipping differential was significant, and that it led to poor morale among servers, increased employee turnover, reduced patronage, and an escalation in race-based litigation. In response to these findings, scholars suggested a national educational campaign that would include "entertaining and educational table tents" on diners' tables, as well as working through "local churches and organizations within minority communities" to teach non-whites and other racial and ethnic minorities about tipping norms (Fernandez 2004; Lynn 2006).

Critical race scholars who interrogate the role of white privilege and white supremacy in the reproduction of racial inequity, would argue that the researchers' recommendation that a comprehensive, national, educational campaign about restaurant tipping norms with special attention given to non-whites be enacted, inadvertently reaffirms ideas of white superiority vis-à-vis Black inferiority (Chen 2017; Hartigan 1997b; Hill 2009; Leonardo 2002; Nayak 2007). As Hartigan (1997) and Hill (2009) point out, Black people have long been considered by whites to be culturally inferior and in need of being educated. Furthermore, I would argue that the recommendation for a nationwide education campaign on tipping, infantilizes non-whites, diminishes their agency as competent adults, and ultimately reinforces beliefs of Black inferiority. Although studies have been conducted on race and racism, this problem is still insufficiently explored. A more critical, de-colonial, analysis rooted in in Critical Race

Theory (CRT), is required to comprehensively address perceptions of race-based tipping disparities.

In recent years, sociologists who study race-based tipping have expressed much different opinions than those discussed above, about the cause and effect of Black-white tipping disparities. In a 2018 article by Brewster and Nowak, the authors view of racialized tipping shifted significantly. The scholars argue that the racialized culture of the restaurant industry promotes stereotypes of Black customers as undesirable, resulting in "tableside racism" or the servers' racial categorizing and stereotyping of diners as good or bad tippers depending on their race (Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Z. W. Brewster and Rusche 2012a). Accordingly, the authors find that white server's claims of poor tipping behavior by Blacks are exaggerated, as a result of anti-Black sentiment within "a culture of white servers"(Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Dirks and Rice 2004). As such they stated the following:

> "Unfortunately, our findings also unveil a segment of servers who cognitively exaggerate differences in Black and white customers' tipping practices. Among these individuals are servers who cloak the cynicism that they more generally feel toward Black Americans in hyperbolic concerns about racial differences in customers' tipping practices." (Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018, 10)

These servers' racialized behaviors illustrate the extent of social control enacted through white racism. In this instance, white racism is justified by the argument that discriminatory service and race prejudice is considered to be a natural consequence of poor tipping behaviors. The most current literature on racialized tipping and service makes a case for "deracializing" restaurant culture with training that includes implicit

bias testing and discussion, as well as colorblind racism testing and discussion (Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018, 10). While this is a considerable improvement, additional studies to understand the key tenets of racism among workers in the restaurant industry are required.

Lastly, the findings of these studies, add weight to Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva's argument that scholarship within the academy does not adequately account for the race effect, thus it insentiently reproduces narratives that ultimately rewards members of the white racial hierarchy while simultaneously limiting opportunities for those who are non-white (Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva 2008). The psycho-social dynamics of whiteness that renders race privilege as natural and invisible, has contributed to an abundance of research that normalizes white racism and perpetuates racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva 2006; J. R. Feagin and Vera 1994; Hartigan 1997b). A closer look of the literature on racism in restaurant labor reveals the white male gaze as a handicap that homogenizes racial binaries thus creating several gaps in analysis and discussion of the problem and potential solutions. My positionality as a Black, female, immigrant presents a different lens for this research project, although, I would hastily acknowledge that my position, in and of itself, is not the most important contribution to research on this topic. The main intervention of my dissertation research is the interrogation of established positions of white superiority in Miami's restaurant industry, where whiteness now includes privileged and powerful light skinned Latinx immigrants. My objective with an intersectional interrogation is to expand our understanding of racial stratification in an effort to address and curb systemic racism. As the academic interest in this topic grows, scholars are moving beyond documenting the Black-white binary and the nature and

pervasiveness of systemic racism. They are inquiring more about expanded systems of racialization, covert racialized discourse, and actions that facilitate "modern racism" such as colorism, implicit bias, and colorblind racism (Z. W. Brewster and Brauer 2017b; Dirks and Rice 2004; Rusche and Brewster 2008). This project makes an important contribution to these discussions.

The Restaurant as White Space

> For the white space is where many social rewards originate, including an elegant night on the town, or cultural capital itself—education, employment, privilege, prestige, money, and the promise of acceptance. (Anderson 2015)

Scholars have documented a menu of racial discrimination throughout the American restaurant industry. This menu is prepared, curated and served within many fine dining American restaurants across America which can also be considered "white Spaces" (Anderson 2015). Elijah Anderson uses the Black colloquialism, "white Space", to define social spaces dominated by whites in which Blacks are considered outsiders. On the menu of discrimination is an assortment of anti-Black racism. For example, Blacks are subject to racist remarks, may have to justify their presence in these spaces, and may receive slow or no service. Dirks and Rice argue that the environment of restaurants has produced a "culture of white servers" within which workers use coded language such as "Canadians, cousins, moolies, Black tops and even white people" to discuss to Blacks (Dirks and Rice 2004). They found that in this culture, white servers often play games

such as “pass the Black table” where they ignore or avoid providing service to Black customers. The scholars reported that servers would sometimes pay co-workers to take Black tables that they don’t want to wait on (Dirks and Rice 2004). Brewster’s findings corroborate this argument with data that suggests that more than 60% of servers in eighteen, full-service chain restaurants observed their co-workers making racist comments (Z. W. Brewster 2012). A lawsuit filed against P.F. Chang’s restaurant in Kansas City also gives credence to this narrative of white racial hostility towards Black customers. According to media reports, the lawsuit was based on reports from an African American (Black), woman who claimed that restaurant management required her to serve Black customers when white servers refused to take those tables (Raletz 2011).

The personal attitudes and behaviors that mark a restaurant as a white space also culminate in systemic discrimination such as wage disparity. The Restaurant Opportunities Center (ROC), a national restaurant worker advocacy group has published dozens of reports that address racial inequality in restaurant labor. Their survey research shows that whites earn $4 more per hour on average than the median wage of people of color[16] in the restaurant industry (Pitts 2012). They also found that employees are racially segregated with most of the “good jobs” with living wages and benefits going to white employees, while Blacks and employees of color dominated “bad jobs” or low-wage positions with no benefits. This is demonstrated by data the shows that most fast food, low wage jobs are occupied by Blacks while the best paying jobs in fine dining restaurants are occupied by whites (Benner 2015b). Pair matched testing conducted in New Orleans, New York, Chicago and Detroit found that white applicants for fine-dining

[16] This term refers to Non-white people, including but not limited to Blacks, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans.

server positions were two times more likely to receive a job offer than their Black counterparts, even when Black applicants had higher qualifications. Furthermore, research has provided evidence of employers' complicity in perpetuating racial segregation in the restaurant industry by steering employees to positions in the front or back of the house based on the intersection of their race and gender, and not their qualifications (Benner 2015a; Dirks and Rice 2004; M. Rodriguez et al. 2014).

It is a facile yet accurate observation that this menu of discrimination systemically disadvantages Blacks while benefitting whites, who dominate the American fine-dining consumer base, restaurant management, and top-rung staff in organizational restaurant hierarchy (Benner 2015b; Browne and Misra 2003). A more astute analysis perhaps is that the American restaurant is a curated white Space, within which Blacks are accepted provisionally, if they have the required social capital, or they are allowed access as marginalized and subservient Others within a social field of whiteness (Anderson 2015; Bourdieu 1984a; Hargrove 2009). Anderson discusses the concept of white Space in relation to white ideas about Black Space. He claims that Black spaces in the white imagination are perceived as an "iconic ghetto" where "Blacks have been relegated to live apart from the larger society" (Anderson 2015). Media images of crime and violence in Black communities affirm negative ideas of Blackness and so when Blacks enter white spaces they have the undue burden of having to prove themselves as worthy. When in these white spaces, Blacks are aware of their minority status and often anxious about seeking out other Blacks with whom to commune and connect (Anderson 2015). On the other hand, whites consider the space unremarkable and regard their numerical dominance as a normative reflection of social hierarchy. Anderson argues that within

these spaces, the growing Black middle-class consumer is rendered invisible by prevailing white cultural ideas that associate Blackness with the Ghetto. When in these spaces, middle-class Blacks rely on a tool kit of performances, such as code-switching, dressing "professional", or using more sophisticated language, to signal their education and social status, and to avoid suspicion and the contemptuous refrain that signals their outsider status, "May I help you" (Anderson 2015, 13; Lacy 2007; Pattillo 2013).

Brewster has a similar argument. In his most recent article with Nowak, they discuss the racialized workspace as a significant factor in the ongoing debate about why Blacks tip less than whites. From a psycho-social perspective, these scholars argue that within the workspace racial stereotyping functions among servers to bias their cognitive perception of Blacks, leading to exaggerated claims about the Black-white tipping differential. They contend that this racial stereotyping is a result of larger cultural stereotypes that depict Blacks as lazy, undependable, poor, violent, and of ill-repute. The inference of Brewster and Nowak's argument is that many American restaurants are normalized as white Spaces within which Blacks are considered outsiders and stigmatized due to negative stereotypes. In an article that examines white Space and white Privilege, communications scholar Ronald Jackson demonstrates that whiteness is a metaphor for the "universal insider" which allows whites to transcend racial boundaries with authority and impunity (Jackson 1999, 45). Jackson argues that whiteness is a communicative driven entity concretized by social actions that reinforce privilege and ideas of white superiority (Jackson 1999). This argument is parallel to previously discussed scholarship which determined that racialized discourse in restaurants produces racist behaviors that create segregated work places and ostracize Black consumers

(Bendick, Rodriguez, and Jayaraman 2010; Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Dirks and Rice 2004; Fernandez 2004; Sarumathi Jayaraman and Schlosser 2013; Rusche and Brewster 2008). Last but not least, anti-Black rhetoric allows whites to construct their white identity as oppositional and therefore superior.

Within this discussion of the restaurant as a white space, a brief discussion of the larger body of work on whiteness illustrates the significance of white spaces and a culture of white servers in the restaurant industry. Anderson's claim that people who identify as white find white spaces unremarkable and natural ties into the canon of work in the field of whiteness studies that argues that whiteness is a formation of invisible norms and privileges (Delgado and Stefancic 1997; Frankenberg 1993b; McIntosh 1988). More specifically, Robin DiAngelo defines whiteness as "a term to capture all the dynamics that go into being defined/perceived as white in society. Whiteness grants material and psychological advantages (white privilege) that are invisible and often taken for granted by whites" (DiAngelo 2012). That said, it must also be acknowledged that white racial identity is not homogeneous. Race formation theory asserts that race is fluid and can be retired or expanded at the convenience of the dominant race (Omi and Winant 2014). Consequently, a historical assessment of whiteness reveals that poor and working class people were not always included in the white racial category (Roediger 1999). Whiteness in the United States has been expanded over time to include poor and working-class immigrants that were not previously included in the category of white such as the Irish and the Jews (Brodkin 1998; DiAngelo 2012; Twine and Gallagher 2008). Newer, heterogenous constructions of whiteness range from liberal progressives to neo-conservatives, religiously devout to atheist, extremely wealthy to drastically poor

(Hughey 2010). Certain regions of America such as South Florida and California have extended social constructs of whiteness to include people from Latin America and Asia who are phenotypically light-skinned and have some direct or indirect access to social or political capital (Cobas, Duany, and Feagin 2016; Roediger 2005; Waterston 2008).

Despite these differentiated ideas of whiteness, some scholars contend that the undercurrent that connects these intra-categories is an allegiance to processes that ensure white hegemony (Delgado and Stefancic 1997; Hartigan 1997b; Hughey 2010). In a comparative analysis of a white nationalist group and a white anti-racist organization, Hughey's findings indicate racial solidarity between the two groups despite disparate political agendas (Hughey 2010). The scholar argues that both groups are invested in maintaining a racial system that benefits them, and so while they are different ideologically, they still coalesce around ideas that position white as "different from and superior to non-white". Furthermore, Hughey finds that both groups marginalize whites who stray from practices of being white that are in line with this ideal (Hughey 2010). These findings are significant because it implies that despite the best of intentions, such as progressive ideologies, most whites have internalized racial bias and are invested in policing behaviors and maintaining systems that privilege them (Buck 2012; DiAngelo 2012; Hartigan 1997b).

In reference to systems of whiteness, Cheryl Harris, a critical race scholar, has discussed the social and economic advantages that come with whiteness and claims that whiteness supersedes a simple racial category, and is in fact a form of property (Harris 1993). Harris argues that whiteness is valuable, and as a social classification of identity comes with legal, political, economic, and social rights and privileges that are not

afforded to non-white people (DiAngelo 2012; Harris 1993). Harris' argument is significant because she demonstrates how perceptions of identity can become a resource, that can be leveraged for capital gain. Harris' argument about whiteness as property extends to the psycho-social domain and includes feelings of belonging, self-worth, and confidence. Whiteness as property is also about the freedom that comes from not having to maintain a Duboisian "double consciousness", the concurrent awareness of one's own unique identity juxtaposed against the regular negative racial perception that comes with being Black (Du Bois 1903; Winant 2004). Although Harris does not say so directly, whiteness as a resource often leads to better long-term health outcomes as compared to Blacks whose internalized stressors manifest in higher rates of chronic health issues such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes (Mays, Cochran, and Barnes 2007). Whiteness is an area of research that has been understudied when examining problems of race and racism in the US restaurant industry. Some of the interesting questions that a study of whiteness in restaurant labor may address are: How is whiteness experienced in the everyday lives of white people? How does the socioeconomic status of whites shape their perspective of race? What about whites' variable cultural perspective? To what extent does a white person's cultural position shape their ability to understand systemic racism? Further research in this area could provide greater understanding of the problem, which in turn could lead to improved life outcomes for many people who work in the restaurant industry.

Conclusion

Current scholarship on race and racism in restaurant labor is relatively sparse, especially as compared to the robust body of work on other social justice issues in the

restaurant industry such as sexual harassment, drug use and gender bias. The existing literature confirms significant racial discrimination against Black workers in the restaurant industry, who are less likely to be hired for good paying jobs or receive opportunities for promotion. Furthermore, sociologists who study racialized tipping have uncovered a "culture of white servers" which I argue is significant to any analysis of race and racism in restaurant labor.

While the literature in this review overwhelmingly indicates anti-Black sentiment in restaurant customer service and labor, many scholars have indicated the need for scholarship that explores more nuanced and complicated ideas of race. Some of these scholars suggest a need for research that is more intersectional, within more diverse communities, and explores neoliberal discourses of colorblindness and meritocracy. Previous research can only be considered a first step towards a more profound understanding of race and racism in restaurant labor.

My dissertation research aims to meet this need by analyzing the construct of racial hierarchies in Miami, a dominant Latinx, immigrant city, and addressing the intersectional racial stratification within the tri-racial categories. Specifically, my research examines racial hierarchies within a restaurant industry that positions itself as ethnically diverse and relies on a cosmopolitan culinary identity for its success. Finally, this research project seeks to advance the framework of critical race theory by evaluating the taken-for-granted nature of white superiority and the extent to which whiteness impacts ideas and perceptions of race, as well as the more tangible racialized behaviors that has resulted in persistent racial discrimination and segregation in the US restaurant industry.

3. THE STRATIFICATION OF BLACKNESS WITHIN MIAMI'S RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Introduction: Navigating Race in Multicultural Miami

Across the United States, race is most often viewed in terms of a monolithic Black-White binary, within which Blackness is seen as the "Other", the aberrant minority consistently positioned in opposition to whiteness; a racial category historically normalized as the superior majority. Yet, ethnographic data from my research suggests a more complicated and nuanced racial hierarchy. In this chapter, I discuss the stratification of Blackness within restaurant labor in Miami, which is organized according to a tripartite racial system, similar to what is found in Latin America and the Caribbean, where there are large groups of mixed-race people, as well as those who are perceived as Black or white. My findings suggest that in Miami's restaurant industry, there is tremendous diversity in the racial categories, and within those who are non-white, a third racial category of lighter skinned Black and mixed-race people with access to privilege, power and resources usually reserved for those who are white, is emerging. Drawing from Bonilla-Silva's work on white, honorary white, and Black, I define this racial group, as "white adjacent" (Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2006). In this chapter I will focus on Blackness as a fluid, complex, and diverse racial category that overlaps and therefore includes those I categorize as white adjacent.

In Bonilla-Silva's study of the post-civil-rights racial order in the United States, he found that specific regions such as parts of California and the Southwest had a more complex racial hierarchy than that which is typically defined by outer poles of the Black-white racial binary. Central to his research is the argument that when based on the Black-

white experience, race can fundamentally be categorized as white, and non-white. Historically, this means that the non-white category collectively includes Blacks, Asians, Native Americans and Latinos. The reality of this racial divide is that those who are in the category of non-white have restricted access to what Roediger calls the "multiple wages of whiteness", a racial contract with the state that ensures you'll receive good housing, good jobs, and a good education. However, within the category of non-white, there is significant stratification, sometimes resulting in large gaps between groups within the racial order. When we examine the gaps closest to the top, we see that these spaces are most often filled by those who have almost matched the socio-economic status and positionality of whites, or at least are within striking distance. Following Bonilla-Silva's lead, I define those groups closest to the sphere of whiteness as white adjacent.

In this chapter, I unpack the racial category of Black within the tripartite racial system I encountered in restaurant industry. Using two focus groups of Black Chefs and Haitian restaurant workers, I primarily focus on answering these questions: To what extent do restaurant workers from a variety of restaurant segments, job positions, races, and nationalities experience race and perceive racism within the workplace? How does Whiteness impact these experiences?

Building on Chapter 2, where I discussed Latinx and Caribbean ideology of a racial democracy, and described tripartite racial politics in the region, this chapter examines how restaurant workers draw from their own cultural and ethnic experiences of race to navigate US racial politics in the workplace, often strategically aligning themselves with whiteness in an effort to advance their social mobility. Using data drawn from participant observation, autoethnography, and focus groups, I illustrate the complex,

myriad ways in which workers who identify as Black perform and express their racial identity. This chapter uses an intersectional framework to explore the racial stratification of Black restaurant workers, and discusses my finding that Blackness in Miami's restaurant industry is a spectrum, rather than a fixed location. Some Blacks due to factors of class, education, language and nationality are white adjacent and enjoy many of the privileges of whiteness, while others who are poor, monolingual, and with low socioeconomic status are perpetually placed at the precarious bottom of the hierarchy. These findings challenge the myth of Miami's happy ethnic and racial melting pot that I sometimes refer to as Kumbaya and Jambalaya by discussing the different ways Blackness is often constructed as an inferior social location. In my study, older, non-Spanish speaking Blacks, particularly those who live in poverty such as monolingual Kreyol speaking Haitians, reported persistent horrific overt racism and stigmatization. In this chapter I bring to the forefront the lived experiences of Blackness in the back of the house through a discussion and analysis of a focus group I conducted with Black chefs. Specifically, I address the different ways in which each of them is positioned differently within the restaurant industry. I then discuss the racialization of these chefs, bringing into the conversation the ways in which they experience different types of power and discrimination. In the last section of this chapter, Can Haitians Speak, I center the voices of Haitians who are often literally unable to speak because of language constraints and their subordinate position within the community and the culture of Miami's restaurant industry. I conclude with a brief discussion of the impacts of the stratification on the industry.

Black Chefs Talk: The Lived Experiences of the Black Racial Hierarchy

In a stark, cold, conference room in early January of 2019, I conducted a focus group with five Black chefs, all with long and illustrious careers in Miami, to discuss the racial politics of restaurant labor in Miami. Most of the five chefs were personally known to me for several years before I started this research project. The culinary field in Miami is relatively small and if you're a Black chef in the industry for any length of time, it's almost inevitable that you work with or hear of other Black chefs in the region. Two of the chefs had been my culinary assistants for the South Beach Wine and Food Festival while earning their undergraduate degrees in hospitality management. A third I knew for many years through my Jamaican chef network, and the last two I got to know through a grassroots group of Black chefs in the tri-county Sough Florida region. During my fieldwork, I participated in the Miami meetings for this group of Black chefs, which was where I met the fifth chef.

The chefs came from different backgrounds and had a variety of experiences that contextualize the variability of what it means to be a Black restaurant worker in Miami. For this reason, I think it's important to briefly share each chef's story and examine how their sociocultural background and intersectional identities work in tandem to position them within the racial hierarchy. The first chef, Cynthia[17], was a 30-year-old, native, Miamian. She was born and raised in the "Pork and Beans", a public housing project in Liberty City, a historic Black neighborhood in Miami. Pork and Beans was characterized in the media as a Black ghetto with frequent incidents of horrific violence such as gang and police shootings. Yet Cynthia's memories of growing up in Liberty City were more

[17] Names and identifying factors such as the names of restaurants, have been changed to a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of participants.

about the good food her grandmother taught her to cook, and camaraderie she felt with other students at Miami Northwestern High School, where she took her first formal cooking class. Cynthia had a visual disability and is almost completely blind in one eye. Undeterred, she went on to work in several high-end restaurants as a line cook and then sous chef, while simultaneously completing her bachelor's degree in Hospitality management. She was the only woman that participated in the focus group that evening, a role she was accustomed to in the kitchen. She spoke about how she often gave her Executive Chef ideas for different culinary promotions, but yet realized that her talent and hard work were not enough to get her promoted, as she watched while light skinned Latinas got promoted above her in the kitchen. She often got into altercations with her co-workers and changed positions frequently. She expressed tremendous frustration about working in fine dining kitchens with white French chefs, and white Latina women who she felt repeatedly disparaged her and her work. She was tired of the constant race and gender conflict she encountered in the kitchen and hoped that eventually owning her own meal delivery service would be a way out.

Ian, the most seasoned of the group at 52 years of age, spent the better part of the last two decades working in restaurants in Miami. A Jamaican, Ian has his own cooking show, is the author of a cookbook, and although he is a US citizen, has represented Jamaica on the national and international stage winning multiple culinary awards, including one from the prestigious James Beard association. Ian has a bachelor's degree in architecture, which he completed to please his parents. Once he finished his degree, he promptly enrolled in culinary school so he could achieve his ultimate dream of becoming a chef. He's proud of the fact that he made his own way as a chef and has no regrets

about leaving architecture. Of his experience with race and racism in the restaurant industry Ian said, “I understand that I’m just another pawn in the system”.

Martin, the youngest of the group, was a 28-year-old, executive chef in charge of multiple outlets at a famous Miami Beach Country club that reportedly has never seen a Black member, and only has a handful of Jews (Olkon 2000). He describes his job as “working for ‘rich people’ who respect who he is but wonder how he got there”. Martin has packed a lot into his 28 years. He has spent half of his life working in restaurants in Miami. He got his first job as a dishwasher at a Pizzeria at the age of 14 and was an assistant General Manager by the time he turned 20. He has owned two restaurants and worked in numerous positions in both the front and back of the house, although cooking is his forte. Like Ian, he went to college for something completely different, Robotic Engineering. Halfway through, he switched to Hospitality Management, where was much happier. Martin sometimes identifies as bi-racial and Latino. His mother is a dark-skinned Puerto Rican, and his father is African American. He is married to a light-skinned Latina, who in Miami, would be considered white. At work Martin identifies as Black but shared that when he was out clubbing with his wife, he could pass for white, provided he wore the right outfit. Martin is a dark-skinned man.

I first met Brad, who became a valuable informant for this project, over a decade ago, right after the 2008 recession. My catering company did not survive the recission and to make ends meet, I was making and selling spices on Saturday mornings at a Farmers Market on the Upper Eastside of Miami. Brad had been recently diagnosed with diabetes and had just embarked on a vegetarian diet and healthy lifestyle. He had a booth at the market selling prepared Vegan Foods. I didn’t know him well but recall that we

were cordial with one another. I remember one Saturday morning; city officials came through the market checking for unlicensed vendors. They made a beeline for Brad and his Black, male partner, and loudly escorted them out of the park because they didn't have the proper permits. They didn't bother any of the other mostly white and light skinned vendors, nor did they approach me. A couple of weeks later, Brad and his partner returned to the market having secured whatever documentation was requested of them. After a few months I stopped selling at that market and didn't stay in touch with Brad, so I was pleasantly surprised to re-connect with him when I started my fieldwork. Ian re-introduced us and told me that this was the man with the best access to Black chefs in Miami. It turned out he was right. In addition to Brad's work as a Chef, he also organized a grassroots Black culinary collective that he described as, "A place where Black and brown chefs can use their collective might while still remaining independent. When each of us wins, we all win".

In the time since I first met Brad, a lot had changed in his life. He bought an organic French Bistro in gentrifying Little Haiti, that he owned and operated for some time. At some point he also opened a Vegan restaurant in the Sistrunk corridor, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Fort Lauderdale, just north of the city of Miami. His health challenges with diabetes "inspired him to make healthy meals accessible to Black and brown populations", so in addition to the restaurants, he also offered home delivered healthy meal services. He married a Black woman who was an attorney, and together they had two children. He shared the story of trying to find work after the farmers market. He would repeatedly get job interviews because his name sounded white, only to be told the position had been filled when he showed up and they realized he was

Black. His economic survival required that he tone down his Blackness, which meant that he had to dress white, hiding his “Bling, Bling” - gold jewelry and speak white. After negotiating complex local racial politics to successfully open his business, he decided that from that point forward, he was going to be unapologetically Black. He hired mostly Blacks and people of color to work in his restaurant and started the Black chefs collective when he noticed Blacks weren’t afforded the same opportunities as white and Latinx chefs. Brad was 38 at the time of our focus group.

The last focus group’s participant’s story that I’d like to share is that of Abdul, a 46-year-old Miami native. Like some of the other participants, his first job was as a dishwasher at a high-end Burger joint long before they became trendy, almost three decades ago. At the restaurant, Abdul learned the basics of butchering, a skill that he was able to leverage later in his career. He said, “once you was the butcher in a spot, you pretty much was the man!”. He was recruited by larger chains for his skills as a butcher, eventually becoming a butcher in one of the most exclusive steak houses in Miami. He described this as “the big leagues. It was no longer Tacos and French fries”. However, after a few years with the steak house he wanted to get out of butchering and work as a chef. By that time, he had learned the ins and outs of the chef positions, and his expertise in meat butchery all but ensured he was competent when it came to the proper cooking techniques for the various types of steaks. In his words, “I was doing everything the chefs were doing and more but was told I was not good enough to be a chef”.

After nine years with the company, he realized his expertise as a Butcher had become a handicap. He said, “I got sick of being grandfathered into a certain position, so they can keep looking good”. He left the company to start his own food truck business.

He realized that the confines of the food truck were not for him, so he started a "trap restaurant", cooking and selling food out of his house which allowed him to accumulate enough money to open his own Neo Soul restaurant in Overtown, the historical heart of Miami's Black community.

Of all the chefs, Abdul seemed to be impacted the most by racism in the restaurant industry. He was constantly overlooked for promotion, which meant that he was consistently living with financial precarity. The daily micro and macro racial aggressions he experienced took their toll on him. He recalled, how he was repeatedly denied a raise and promotion. He said,

"My butchering skills came into play, and that really help, because once you have that and you could maintain the meat, you got a little value. So, once you got a little value you could have a little leeway and do what you want, to say that have value cause they only tell you that you're worth a certain amount, which is not cool… Every restaurant I went into I try to do everything so I could be the man and make the most amount of money in there. That was what's up. What I hate is that there is always a cap. And I just don't understand that. I'm doing everything that the chefs are doing, plus more, and maintaining it consistently. But they are telling me I'm not good enough to be a chef… I'm working at a high pace, in high-volume restaurants for years at a constant pace and the same story. They want to grandfather you in a certain position, just so that you can keep them looking good, without thinking about my kids, my family, you know, my personal growth, or anything like that. So you know, after years of them getting me right to the door, and me tilling my kids, I'm expecting a pay raise they slam it right in your face. And then they bring in somebody that don't have as much experience as I may even

have. Don't you wind up having to show them what to do? And they get your job. And that is so disheartening, like it takes a lot of wind out of you and it makes you feel bitter. And this is a common theme. I worked in the Coral Gables area, on the Beach, I mean, it's all the same (Abdul - 46 year old, Black-American, male. Chef-Owner).

Abdul did catch a break, when he left the fancy steak house and moved to a hip, more relaxed restaurant in Wynwood. Within 6 months he was able to work his way up to Executive Chef. Although the position didn't last long, it gave him the confidence he needed to strike out on his own in his current successful venture. But even that new venture, applauded by celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey and Gail King presented challenges when the city recruited and paid millions of dollars to Marcus Samuelson, a Black Swedish chef, to come to Miami and open a branch of his successful Harlem Soul Food Restaurant, Red Rooster. It is quite remarkable that Samuelson, who came to New York and made a name for himself with his avant-garde Swedish gastronomy ended up producing Soul Food in what seemed to me to be a marginalization of his work, a constriction of sorts that kept him in the designated Black Food restaurant lane. Also notable is the fact that the city didn't provide Abdul's lauded small business with similar resources, and if anything, they left him struggling to keep his new business open when they imported his famous competitor.

The systemic nature of racism, and its negative impact on the everyday experiences of Black chef's was evident in Abdul's story as well as the events that transpired as Abdul was traveling to the focus group. Abdul arrived about 20 minutes late for the focus group with his 7-year-old autistic son in tow. He seemed flustered and rushed but didn't say anything. When I asked what happened, he explained that he had

been pulled over and harassed by police on his way there for driving while Black. After a number of questions about where he was going and what he was doing on the only street in and out of campus because he did not fit the profile of a student, he was ticketed and released for driving a few miles over the speed limit.

Abdul's story in its entirety, is emblematic of the theory of systemic racism, a concept which refers to "the foundational, large scale, and inescapable, hierarchical system of US racial oppression devised and maintained by whites and directed at people of color" (J. Feagin and Elias 2013, 936). Central to the idea of systemic racism as a state sanctioned system of oppression, is the role of white superiority which effectively devises, creates, enforces, and reinvents when necessary, anti-Black oppression and marginalization (J. Feagin and Elias 2013; J. Feagin 2006). In turn, systemic anti-Black oppression ultimately boosts white power and privilege. Contemporary expressions of systemic racism such as the roadblocks Abdul encountered in his professional development and limited compensation, as well as his experiences in everyday life is an extension of the racialized plantation politics from earlier generations in the days of colonialism and slavery. This current form of systemic racism reflects the historically contingent and embedded nature of racial oppression in all aspects of our society, our institutions and everyday life (J. R. Feagin 2020). For the chefs, even those that experienced white adjacency, their well-being and opportunities for professional success was largely determined by a white dominated society that still viewed Blackness and Black labor as something they controlled to perpetuate their own wealth and social standing. The thing about racism, particularly within the myth of our current post racial

society, is that it is almost inescapable, even for those who are white adjacent (Kalwant 2018). Even when everything is going well, it can always get you.

Each of these participant's stories demonstrates the variability of Blackness within restaurant labor, both as an identity and as a lived experience. Cynthia was raised in the projects, an all-Black bubble within the larger demographic of whiteness that was expanding to include Latinx immigrants. Cynthia watched as Latinx immigrants received opportunities while the people in her community who were restricted by the tethers of systemic racism were being portrayed primarily as criminals and thugs. When she stepped out of her community, she brought her authentic Black self – her hair was always a bright shade of blonde and elaborately coiffed under her chef hat. Her accent was straight up Black and from the hood. She used Black slang, and when she was nervous or agitated, she became hyper-verbal and loud, presenting in a stereotypical urban way that made white folks nervous. This tension that came about when she tried to navigate white spaces often ruptured, effectively limiting her ability to progress within the system as illustrated by the struggles she shared about working with white Latinas and white men. The intersection of her gender with her race and class positioned her on the lower rungs of the hierarchy. As a Black woman, her subjugation to white Latinx bosses, and co-workers was compounded, and therefore she struggled to succeed as a chef, despite her talent and her college education.

Abdul was positioned similarly to Cynthia. He too was born and raised in Miami's inner city and was unapologetic about his Blackness. Abdul was approaching middle age, and as a Black man trying to make a way in Miami, he had experienced a lifetime of racism. During the focus group, when we were discussing the use of

derogatory racist language by his white co-workers on the line, as well as the issue of him being repeatedly passed over for a promotion; Abdul remarked, “why is this so normal? Makes you real bitter. But when you snap, you look like an angry Black man”. Abdul’s comment speaks volumes about his frustration with his social position. His language, accent, appearance and refusal to assimilate into respectability politics through code switching and deference to white superiority meant that he often had to “suck up” the anti-Black racism leveled against him, directly or indirectly, if he wanted to keep bringing home a paycheck. But even that wasn’t guaranteed, as raises and promotions were used as a carrot to keep him in the job as a highly skilled butcher, but ultimately never delivered as promised.

Abdul recognized his position was essential to any successful high-end steak restaurant and was able to leverage that skill when he needed to resist the oppression of white supremacy. Abdul’s native Black, inner city, positionality ranked him lower on the hierarchy, but above Cynthia, because he had gendered professional capital as a butcher, while she was positioned as another inner-city Black woman who could cook. At the same time, the intersection of his race, gender, education, and class position, made him a more visible target in the racial politics of the industry. While most butchers are men, it is rare to find a Black man working as a butcher in the restaurant industry. Typically, these specialized positions are occupied by white men with years of formal European training. Abdul’s presence in and of itself presented a conundrum in the racial politics of the restaurants he worked in. White male chefs were highly dependent on Abdul’s butchering skills. Had he been white, he more than likely would have been included in the inner social circle, paid well and on the executive team. Because he was Black, his labor was

exploited and devalued. Further, his Blackness was socially constructed as an Angry Other, with little or no regard for him as a person. This construction of his Blackness in opposition to whiteness, reified and reinforced white male privilege and power in the kitchen.

While I was in the field, I often had time to interact with Abdul's son, who was always in the restaurant or at our Chef Collective meetings. He was a funny kid, petite like his dad, with thick coke bottle glasses. He loved to draw pictures for me, one of which I saved in my field notes, as a reminder of the impact of my work, but I digress. I observed Abdul with his wife and family and found him to be a gentle man. He spoke with a soft, old Florida southern accent. In all the times I was at his restaurant, I never once heard him raise his voice in stress or frustration. I had a hard time imagining him as "an angry Black man".

Of all the participants in the focus group, the one that seems to fit right in the middle of the Black racial hierarchy is Brad. He grew up in a small, picturesque town on the Hudson Valley in upstate New York. As one of the few Black families in the town, he learned early and fast, how to navigate whiteness. He was a smart kid, always in AP courses; but the town was so white, he was always just one of 3 Black kids in town's school system. Brad's white sounding name was an advantage in his social mobility and gave him credibility when he "talked white". Of all the chefs, Brad had the least formal or on-the-job training, yet he was able to use his early experience in sales and as a former restaurant general manager to navigate Miami's political bureaucracy to open his restaurants. Brad's activism and leadership is also remarkable and demonstrates his keen understanding of systemic racism, as well as a willingness to create community and

collaborations in resistance. Although he only had a high school degree, and a couple of years of college, his understanding of race and racism, and his ability to synthesize and articulate the issues would rival that of any renowned scholar.

I place Brad in the middle of the Black hierarchy because despite his lack of a formal education, his wife's position as an attorney, as well as his "double consciousness" enabled him to move fluidly between the urban grit of Black impoverished spaces, and the more sophisticated locations of white dominated restaurants. Early in his career "he sought to assimilate more and tone down his Blackness", but after some time in South Florida, he became "unapologetically Black". In reference to his stance as a proud Black man he stated,

> "I chose to say, you can feel what you want to feel, but I'm going to be who I am. And this is, this is what I am. I am not going to run from it. I'm not going to run from my heritage. I'm not calling everything we do ghetto or whatever else. I actually realized that a lot of stuff we do is genius. We make away when there is no way you know and um, and that's kind of been my path." (Brad – 38-year-old African American male. Chef/CEO).

Brad was a charismatic leader as demonstrated by his tri-county Chef's collective. The informal organization served as a space where he felt "individual Black and brown [culinary] professionals can come together and leverage their collective might. He was able to access grants and government funds to do regular appearances promoting his healthy meal delivery service in public spaces across Miami. His wife's legal expertise supported his grassroots effort, specifically by helping young chefs grow their businesses under the radar in "Trap Restaurants" – the term for informal, unlicensed, home-based

take our restaurants in Black neighborhoods. His ability to code switch from Blackness to whiteness, using vernacular, body language, and appearance, gave him fluidity within the spectrum of Blackness and placed him within striking distance of the racial category of white adjacency. However, pigmentocracy – the social ranking based on skin color often meant that he had to defend his social position because of his darker skin tone, such as the time he was targeted at the Farmer's market. Nevertheless, his resilience, and ability to perform respectability politics within the industry gave him access to resources for his business and the community most Black struggled to find.

At the top of the racial hierarchy within this small focus group would be Ian and Martin. I'll start with Ian who has accumulated the most visible success. He's the co-host of a television show about Caribbean cuisine and has published a cookbook with recipes from the show. He's the culinary spokesperson for a prominent Jamaican food product company, and travels across the United States performing his culinary magic at Food Festivals and special events on their behalf. He has been invited to represent Jamaica at a Chef's forum at the United Nations, and at the James Beard Foundation. His social media feed is a constant montage of culinary trips and appearances in beautiful locations across the Caribbean.

During the focus group he shared several stories about the anti-Black discrimination he experienced while working his way up through the ranks. Like Abdul, he had been passed over for promotions, and watched while white men with less skill and experience got promoted over him. He told a story of being laid off, only to receive less severance than his white counterparts. But in contrast to the other three male chefs, Ian

was single and without children. He did not have the family and financial responsibilities that yoked the other men to jobs where they had to tolerate racism. He was unencumbered in this way, which worked to his benefit. It meant that he could quit jobs where he wasn't being treated well, and his Jamaican pedigree, the privilege that came from his ethnicity, all but ensured that another opportunity would come his way. Yet, his success didn't come without the experience of racial oppression. He spoke with a seasoned even-keeled, honesty about the emotional, personal and business challenges he faced over the years as he struggled find his way in the white male dominated restaurant industry. It seemed as if he had somehow found a way to make his peace with the ongoing racism, perhaps because of his status as a semi-celebrity chef, and the socioeconomic benefits that came with that position. Yet, I think there were other factors at play that brought him greater peace of mind and success.

A significant part of Ian's appeal to the foodie circuit was his Jamaican heritage. He was tall, dark and handsome, and as old school folks would say, he cut a dashing figure, especially in his chef whites. He spoke with a Jamaican accent that had been polished over the years to smooth out the patios and intonations many English language challenged Miamians struggled to understand. His culinary expertise was upscale Caribbean cuisine which endeared him to the upper echelons of Miami's Black and Afro-Caribbean community. This was his niche, his groove. He basked in the US glow of an imagined Jamaican culture, using popular international Jamaican foods and slogans to market his business. His success could be attributed in part to his exploitation of the idea of Jamaicans as "cool", and Jamaican food as "exotic". His ethnicity when intersected

with his gender, and the fact that he presented in a non-threatening way to whites contributed to his increased advantage and continued success.

Martin, a self-described "hard-working man" who grew up in Miami, was also able to leverage attributes that white men in the industry found less threatening. His parent's middle-class status as well as his Puerto Rican heritage provided social capital throughout his career. Of all the participants in the focus group, Martin gravitated the most towards whiteness, sometimes even engaging in anti-Black performances. The following exchange during the focus group illustrates his perspective:

> **Martin:** When I got hired, like, I joke about this a lot with my employees and my chef team, that my GM doesn't really know I'm black because I like, I play the role. You know, I know how to act. My Mom… *I was raised very well!* [emphasis his], I know how to speak around certain people.
>
> **Researcher:** Your Mom's from the Dominican Republic?
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> **Martin:** No, my mom is from Jamaica, Queens. But she's Puerto Rican,
>
> **Researcher:** Oh, she's Puerto Rican.
>
> **Martin:** She's Puerto Rican. I'm half Puerto Rican, but she looks like, she looks Black. You know, she's got awards for like, top 50 African American CEOs in her field. You know, I was raised around that. But my Dad's from the projects. So… like, I know, how to hang out with people

> and I know how to hang out the other side. You know, I know both sides. I know when to be the man I want to be and I know, when I have to act a certain part. But like my boss, when I got hired, I was talking to him, I was speaking to him, during my interview and I was talking about my mom, that she went to Brown. My boss said, "Oh, that's why you speak so well!". You know, like saying that's why you're so like, you're like the different Black guy. Right? You know, you know? Yeah, you're not the regular like, you know, like, you're like the different side.
>
> **Ian:** YOU AIN'T GOIN, AIN'T GOIN SHOOT UP!
>
> **Brad:** YOU AIN'T GO WILD UP, YOU KNOW!
>
> [Laughter].
>
> (Focus Group-Black Chefs & Owners, Pos. 314-316)

In this exchange, we see that Martin performs whiteness in an effort to minimize the stigma of Blackness. He uses the story of this performance within the focus group to signal to us that he's different. By saying he's also not one of them, he's effectively saying he's not one of us. When he speaks about his Dad coming from the projects, he draws from the trope of "pull yourself up by your bootstraps", which is reinforced in our discussion when he talks about how his father was a strict disciplinarian who for his "14th birthday gave me job applications as my birthday gift" (FGJW01-Black Chefs&Owners, Pos. 28). He also speaks about "hanging out with the 'other' side", inferring that his family had moved on up, and that he could no longer be considered as

one of them. His discussion of his ability to move in and out of Black spaces, was different from Brads, in that he positioned himself as one whose primary position was outside of the ghetto, and his privilege and relationship to Blackness allowed him to enter that space if and when he chose to do so.

After this exchange, I asked Martin, "if he talked white"? He responded as follows:

> "100%, but when I want to. You know, I know who to… like, when I'm with the numbers [investors], I know how to articulate very well. I know how to talk to certain people. I know how to... when I talk to my regular friends or my whatever. It comes out differently, you know... but even with my wife, I talk more white because she doesn't like, she wants me to be... very um well spoken, you know, she doesn't want me to be; because she has the same thing you know, because her mom taught her that you have to be very proper. Because my wife's Latina, you know, and it's easier to be the white, Latina, than it is the Hispanic Latina. You know, like from Miami, you know, so my wife is 100% Ecuadorian, but she can pass as almost like white, half-white, half Latina. So, she wants me to be the same way, where like, I can walk the talk. If I put on my turtleneck and nice pants and shoes and a belt, and have my Burberry glasses on, and like, you know do the whole look, then no one questions me. (Martin, 28-year-old Black/Puerto Rican male. Executive Chef/Director of Culinary Operations)

We can see from his response that Martin was deliberate about performing whiteness, both as a professional and social strategy. His investment in whiteness required that he distance himself from Blackness, and that he signals his difference from "regular Blacks". He exhibits a social superiority predicated on colorism. He believes he has improved his rank because of his marriage to a "white Latina", and his proximity to whiteness through his gender and class position. Martin's social location may at times include white adjacency, as he periodically has access to resources reserved for whites because of his business partnership with whites, and because of his internalized color-blind ideologies such as the myth of meritocracy which I would argue is anti-Black. His story is emblematic of many Blacks attempting to position themselves as elite, which is often used as a coded word for white.

Can the Haitians Speak[18]*?*

In almost every single restaurant I visited during my fieldwork, the dish pit was inevitably staffed by Haitians. This was in line with my own personal observation working in restaurants since the mid-eighties in Miami, as well as what previous literature reported about the industry (Addy et al. 2011; Stepick and Stepick 1990).

Haitians fill an important void in the restaurant business. For the most part, they are willing to do the jobs most US citizens would rarely consider, especially at such low wages. Black, monolingual, Kreyol-speaking Haitians are usually the dish crew, the janitors, and the prep cooks, working long hours on their feet, under horrible conditions. As dishwashers, they get sprayed repeatedly by the back splash that comes from the dish

[18] This is a reference to Gail Spivak's canonical article, Can the Sub-Altern Speak.

hose they use to pressure-wash the crud left on dirty plates. Every time they lift the door to the dishwashing machine, they are assaulted by steam and chemicals that are at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit, as required by the health department for proper sanitation. By the end of the night, they are soaked through. They're usually provided with gloves, and a flimsy plastic apron, but rarely do they get equipment that keeps them dry or prevents their hands from becoming cracked, swollen and blistered from all the water and chemicals. When the toilet backs up, they are called to clean it. When the trash is overflowing, they are the ones that haul the bins outside in the sweltering Florida heat, to the fly and rodent infested dumpster. They mop the floors, clean the grease traps, and they scrub the toilets, among other menial tasks.

To be sure, the plight of many new Haitian émigré's is indeed dire. They escaped a country where over 6 million people live on $2.41 per day, to come to Miami, so they can have a better chance at providing for themselves by working in these low-level positions for the state's minimum wage of $8.46 per hour ("The World Bank in Haiti - Overview" 2020). While this appears to be a remarkable financial improvement, $8.46 per hour is around $1200 per month after taxes, which is $600 less than the $1800 median cost of a one-bedroom apartment in Miami (R. Rodriguez 2017). As a result, most Haitians who work menial minimum wage jobs in the restaurant industry often live in cramped housing and other less than optimal conditions. Gentrification of Haitian enclaves such as Little Haiti, has further restricted housing accessibility for Miami's Haitian population, and so many also incur long bus rides, and expensive travel costs as they have to live far away from where they work. They have extremely restricted access

to the multiple wages of whiteness: good housing, good jobs, and a good education (Roediger 1999).

In an effort to better understand the lived racial experiences of Haitian workers, I organized a focus group of Haitian restaurant workers so I could fathom their perspective of race and racism in the restaurant industry. I enlisted the support of Sant La, a Haitian neighborhood center in North Miami. They recruited nine women and one man, all monolingual Kreyol speaking Haitians. Seven people worked as dishwashers, two worked as servers, while another worked as both a cook and a dishwasher. The only man in the group was a dishwasher. We held the session in the conference room at Sant La, a space that was familiar and comfortable for the participants. I hired certified Haitian Kreyol speaking translators to help facilitate the session.

To begin the session, I asked the participants to share what they felt the best thing was about working in restaurants. I clarified the question by asking what were the benefits of working in restaurants? I asked this question as an icebreaker, to establish camaraderie among the group and get a general sense of their thoughts about working in the industry. Here are some of their responses:

> "The best thing? Well, the restaurant is not somewhere that pays a lot. It's something that you do as a starter. It's not somewhere where you can stay a long time. The good point is that we are a team and we work together[19]."

> "For me, I discovered the Jewish kitchen. I learned how they work, how they do things, and that was an experience for me. The Jewish food is

[19] The inference is that they work together as a team.

different from Haitian cuisine. They take the meat, with all its blood and sauté it. It was new for me."

"The people that have good experiences are the people that get tips!!!" [Round of laughter].
"They know they are going to go home with money every day. But for me, there are times when you are working at restaurants that don't give tips."

"When I was working at a restaurant. I had the experience where the chef there really welcomed me. He spoke nicely to me. But sometimes when you are working in restaurants, they are chefs that are just brutes."

"They do not respect you. They get in your face and they tell you whatever they want to say. There are some chefs, we find, that are very, very, very, disrespectful. As this was the first time that I have worked at a restaurant, (I've been there for two to three years now), I see that it's normal."

Within the first ten minutes of our conversation, participants brought up the disrespectful treatment they received from chefs. It was difficult for them to say good things about their work environment because of the pervasive hostility they collectively faced on the job. The last comment about the chef "getting in her face" was something I had observed

more times than I care to count while working in restaurants. As one research participant remarked in an earlier interview, “Restaurants are full of Assholes!” Restaurant kitchen culture is brutal. Incivility, racism, sexism, homophobia and crass vulgarity, are all too often part of the culture.

This hostile environment is fueled in large part by the way in which kitchens are organized along a hierarchical brigade system, based on European military systems created by colonizers centuries ago. In a restaurant brigade, cooks are organized into departments or stations, where they have one or two supervising chefs. Chefs and their departments are then ranked in a hierarchical structure based on the importance of their role in the overall production of the kitchen. At the pinnacle is the Executive Chef whose position is equivalent to that of a military general. He has the ultimate authority and power over all the workers and the final say in decisions. Modern restaurant kitchens are still organized by this system, although based on the type of restaurant, less formally, and with fewer production departments. However, a persistent legacy of the old Brigade is the trope of the authoritarian chef, as a brutal dictator who screams and yells, bullying his way through the kitchen. This trope is reinforced by celebrity chefs such as Gordon Ramsey, who are known for their authoritarian rule of the kitchen.

The domain of the restaurant kitchen is a mini-society, “a world with a social structure and culture” (Fine 2009, 112). This culture in restaurant kitchens is linked to a power structure, that uses “symbolic boundaries” to include and Other, workers in the kitchen (Lamont and Fournier 1992). One such boundary in the restaurant is the dishwashing station which is usually located in the back of the kitchen, away from view of the guests. The dish station, and the dish machine serves as a physical barrier between

the dishwasher and the other workers. While in operation the machine perpetually spews hot steam at the end of every 3-minute cycle. The dishwasher stands next to the machine with an adjacent stainless-steel table, where workers pile plates of dirty dishes, pots, pans, and kitchen equipment that need to be scrubbed, washed, rinsed and sanitized. Above the table is a shelf with plastic glass racks, that are filled with dirty glassware by the servers. Inevitably, the dishwasher gets splashed with food debris and the remnants of left-over drinks, multiple times throughout the shift.

In Miami, I observed that the dish station was often positioned on route or adjacent to the toilets, and almost always, it was close to the rear door. While this location serves a practical purpose in that it keeps the noise and offensive odors away from the diners, it also serves to reinforce inequality among restaurant workers. Society places little value on physical, dirty work, relegating workers who perform these tasks to the lowest social classes. Within the mini society of restaurant culture, the spatial location of the dish pit, and even the name "dish pit", magnified these social differences. The location of the dish area as a confined physical boundary close to the trash or where human excrement is processed, reinforces ideas that workers within this space are inferior.

Physical cues such as the uniforms of the workers become symbolic markers of distinction that signal rank and reinforce inequality. Dishwashers usually wear patterned kitchen pants and a "utility shirt", with a flimsy white, disposable, plastic apron, and rubber gloves. Prep cooks wore a similar uniform, except they generally received a white cloth apron. Chefs wear "whites" – a term that refers to a long-sleeved chef's jacket, with cuffed three-quarter length sleeves, black pants, a calf- length white or light-colored

apron, and clogs. Some still wear the tall chef's hat known as a Toque, which adds a good 8 inches in visual height and makes for a more commanding and intimidating presence. Language also serves as another symbolic point of difference. Most Haitian dishwashers are monolingual Kreyol speakers, who don't speak either of Miami's preferred languages, Spanish or English. This results in crude, one-word, childlike attempts at communication, often with a lot of hand gestures when needed. This linguistic difference reinforces ideas that Haitian people are uncouth, and less educated, and by inference, less than human, which in turn becomes justification for their subordination, domination and exploitation.

When chefs "get in the face of dishwashers", they are performing "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu, Bourdieu, and Passeron 1990; Lamont and Fournier 1992). They use domination to invade the worker's personal space, infantilize, and humiliate that worker in front of their peers. This weaponization of the power differential serves to reinforce their superiority vis-a-vis the oppositional binary of the dishwasher's inferiority. This performance of supremacy has a subordinating effect on the dishwashers, effectively coercing their submission to the chef's authority. It also serves to legitimize the culture of the restaurant industry, within which hostility related to racism and misogyny is normalized through the use binary relations, front of the house/back of the house, distinguished chef/dirty dishwasher, dominant/subordinate, belonging and exclusion.

In one restaurant where I worked some years ago, the binary of belonging and exclusion lead to the mistreatment of the back of the house, Black, Haitian dishwashers as entertainment for the front of the house, white, bartenders. I recall an incident where

two white, male, bartenders thought it would be funny if they used the slop from the overpour mat that sat under the glasses where they made drinks, to make a sweet sugary "iced tea" for the dishwashers. The mixture was deliberately potent, resulting in one of the dishwashers getting pulled over and thrown in jail for a DUI while driving home. The consequences of this joke were severe. The dishwasher became part of the criminal justice system, and had to navigate the costs of bail, and court appearances. He incurred untold additional expense while he was restricted from working because he was in jail. Furthermore, the arrest jeopardized his immigration status, as the worker was a recent immigrant and not a US citizen. In turn, the white bartenders were entertained when they heard of the dishwasher getting arrested. When the dishwasher returned to work, they teased him, as if they were buddies. The dishwasher angrily responded to him in Kreyol. I couldn't understand everything he was saying, but his body language, and the tone of his voice, made it very clear he was justifiably incensed.

The Experience is Unequal: They wouldn't do the same to an American!

As the focus group of Haitian workers progressed, they shared some of their lived experiences with racism. An issue that several participants agreed with was the unequal distribution of work. One woman explained,

> "I could be working there and I'm Haitian, and I'm working as a server. They have me working there with an American, the experience is unequal. How they would burden me with work, they wouldn't do the same to the American. The American could be sitting there doing nothing, and all the work, you are to be doing it".

When I asked for an example, she said:

> "I could be a server. Like I am serving on the line..., if I'm working with an American now, they can just talk on the phone, leave, and they can go spend the time they want outside. But you still have to work there on your own. And the person [boss] could come but the boss won't reprimand them. You, you could come one second late and they mark you as such on the computer."

I probed further and inquired about the race of the Americans she spoke about. She responded,

> "It doesn't matter what color. White, Hispanic, Black, White Americans, Black Americans, Hispanic, it doesn't matter. It's the Haitians that they target!" (JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 196-199, 204, 208, 213)

After this exchange, I asked why she thought they were targeted? The participant responded in a very matter of fact tone:

> "It's because we're Haitian."

When I probed some more, another female participant chimed in:

> "In my opinion, I think they do it because Haitians do not speak English, and do not speak Spanish, so they do that. Because my job said to me, the Chef said, "Momma, you no speak English, no speak Spanish, you wash dishes"".
>
> [Laughter]

At this point, the only male participant jumped in:

> Yes, for example, I've been working. I've been there for quite a while. But there is someone that's just arrived, and they're an American. Yet when the boss does something to me, it is really difficult for me to defend myself. I have a lot of difficulties to defend myself. She/he is Hispanic, I don't speak Spanish. It is really difficult to defend myself in English. The American on the other hand, he can even, he can even speak aggressively to the boss because it's his language. So, in contrast, the boss is careful, so that he doesn't, so he doesn't trample over their rights..... Because the Americans speak better than me. He speaks English better than me. I do not speak English. He won't do him just anything because he understands that he [the American] could defend himself even perhaps better than the boss himself. (JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 264 - 273)

The conversation above demonstrates the extent to which some Haitian workers are singled out for disparaging treatment on the job, while workers from different races and nationalities receive better treatment. Those that are singled out are required to do more work, for less money, and under more rigid conditions. As immigrants on the fringe of the outer margins of a white dominated Latinx community, these workers are keenly aware of their low social position and that their oppressors regard them with contempt. Mingled within the oppressor's disdain and condescension is the racialized trope that they are doing them a favor, and that Haitians in general should be grateful for the opportunity to live and work, here in the United States. All around them, there is talk of the American dream, a double standard and an unattainable ideal given the limitations of their

positions. These workers are effectively colonized within a social system that positions every other social group – Black Americans, Afro-Latinx, Black Anglo-Caribbean, Hispanics, and white Americans as superior and better than them.

In my analysis of this conversation with Haitian workers, I found that it was the intersection among race, language, nationality and skill that placed Black Haitians within a color caste system in Miami's restaurants. Most saliant was the combination of race and language. As the participants repeatedly discussed in our focus group, they felt that language was the greatest source of disparagement which constrained their professional and socio-economic success. However, this too is layered and complicated. According to Anthropologist Paul Brodwin, the subjectivity of Haitians within the African diaspora is locally produced. In Miami, this holds true, and as such, Black Haitian workers experience subjectivity in various degrees, depending on their intersection social position. Some Haitians who held privileged positions in the front of the house, did not report marginalization, or lack of opportunity as a result of their race, gender, nationality, or language. However, all of those Haitian workers spoke English, and several also Spanish, giving them a distinct advantage in the restaurant workplace, where ethnolinguistics often determine who belongs, and who doesn't. Bi and tri-lingual Haitians had access to better opportunities through education and professional development. In an industry that's increasingly focused on the commodification of Blackness, multi-lingual, Haitian women have a distinct advantage in the workplace. They have practical skills related to their work positions, however there is a latent perception of certain Haitian Black women as exotic and hyper-sexed, which makes the restaurant a more desirable and exciting place for white and white adjacent patrons in search of tropical, Miami, adventure.

To be clear, this is the social location of many Black, monolingual, Kreyol speaking Haitians working in restaurants, not *all* Haitians who work in Miami's restaurant industry. While I would consider the position of Haitians who only speak Kreyol in the restaurant industry as below the working class, or subproletariats, this designation can sometimes be precarious. This precarity was evident during the actual focus group, when one of the Haitian translators repeatedly infantilized the participants, by policing their behavior in the same way one might manage an elementary school classroom. Participants were asked to raise their hands when they wanted to speak, and admonished to curtail their behavior with, "No sucking teeth, or rolling of the eyes when you hear something that you do not like" (JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 2). In this way, the focus group itself became a place where subjugation was localized. The power dynamics of the situation subjugated the participants to the research team, facilitators and translators, a fact that I found ironic, given that the ultimate purpose of this project is to eliminate these types of power dynamics that result in oppression and reinforce racial stratification. Yet here we were, a group of Black middle-class Caribbean immigrants who were also socially ranked as less than, treating our ilk with condescension. In some ways this was a reflection of the extent to which broader ideologies of racial superiority had been absorbed and were now performed akin to the racial superiority of whiteness. Other within group expressions from participants and translators that indicated complicity to the reproduction of race and class-based hierarchies with a deference to whiteness was a conversation about Haitians and Blacks, and their perceived lack of unity as compared to Hispanics and Jews. The male participant opined:

> "You see the Hispanics dominate. They're everywhere. Even if they don't know one word of English. When it's brethren from their nation, even if they are not exactly from the same country, if they are Dominicans or even if they are not directly from the Dominican Republic, they could come from Argentina, as long as they are Hispanic, they will make a way to help each other out, regardless. They have unity amongst themselves. What our sister just said, that, perhaps Blacks do not have the same unity." (JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 498-503)

While bi and trilingual English, Spanish and Kreyol speaking Haitians have more social capital in the workplace because of their language skills, the perception of some participants in this study is that these workers also suffer stigma, albeit much less than the others. Participants were also keenly aware of the role of race and ethnicity within the US context, and how it operates broadly in Miami. When asked about this particular issue, here is what some had to say:

> "Were it not for the laws that protect Black people, they would be worse off. But even still, they make a way for discrimination to happen. It happens nonetheless. It doesn't happen openly/blatantly... A white person, a Black person, a Hispanic person comes, it's once the white has finished going through, the Hispanic has finished coming through, Haitians are third, um not just Haitians, but Blacks will come third as well. Even if the Black person is smarter, if they have more knowledge than the Hispanics. Well, you're going to ask me for a reason why I think that, and well, one of the reasons is that, well, there are a lot of Hispanics

> that are ahead, because this country has a lot of Hispanics.... Let me say clearly, if you are Black, if you speak their language as well, they have a little more appreciation for you too. If you're Black and speak Spanish, even Haitians, then you sort of go up a notch. (JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 476-513)

As the participant pointed out, the ability to speak Spanish in Miami is a form of social capital that will rank you higher within the social hierarchy. However, this too is complicated and guided by the racial politics of the US Black-white Binary. If we set these English and Spanish speaking Haitian workers aside, a more egregious and uneven power dynamic between the Haitian worker and their non-Haitian co-workers and managers is quite visible. These power relations are often rooted in pigmentocracy, as evidenced by the concentration of dark-skinned Haitians in the back of the house, while those who hold more prestigious positions in the front of the house are light skinned. Additionally, French speaking Haitians immigrants hold an elevated social status. Their bi-lingual (French and Kreyol) abilities signal that they are better educated than their mono-lingual compatriots. In Miami's bustling tourist industry, where many visitors are Francophones, French becomes a linguistic advantage, that can ease stigmatization and discrimination.

Data from this focus group demonstrates that non-Haitian workers, specifically those who are white and benefit from their dominant social location use this distinction to exploit monolingual Kreyol speaking Haitians, a vulnerable group of workers, for cheap labor. Within this uneven power dynamic, there is also an element of cruelty and violence

that emerges through the way in which Haitians are spoken to and treated in the workplace, as demonstrated by the torment inflicted upon them by the white bartenders who sought to entertain themselves at their expense.

Earlier, when the male participant in the Haitian focus group spoke of not having the language skills to defend himself, his story implied he was being spoken to in a derogatory and disrespectful way mainly because of his limited language skills. While this may be significant and to some extent true, in that Haitian's unique monolingual isolation makes them more vulnerable to abuse, it also appears as if it is the intersection of their race, nationality, class and language that have positioned them at the bottom of the hierarchy. In many ways, this positioning and the co-related contempt evident in the way they are spoken to and treated seem to suggest that their positioning has many similarities to that of the lowest castes in India (Wilkerson 2020). The treatment Black monolingual Kreyol speaking Haitians receive while working in restaurants could be considered inhumane. The derision, contempt, and ethnic hostility this group of Haitians has experienced is similar to that that of the untouchables, the lowest caste in the Hindu religion. Drawing from the work of Isabel Wilkerson, this particular group of Black Haitians working within a racialized system in the restaurant business can be considered part of race and ethnic caste because of the rigid social hierarchy that they are born into, their relegation to inferior positions, and the contempt that is expressed towards them (Wilkerson 2020). These workers are subproletariats who live in extreme poverty, perform the 'untouchable jobs', and are segregated from those with a higher social status in the workplace, as well as in the community. For sure Kreyol speaking Black Haitians

occupy the lowest rung among workers in Miami's restaurant industry, and within Miami's society.

Acutely aware of their positionality and frustrated by the indignities they occur at work, the participants in this focus group had a message for their white bosses. Here's what they wanted them to know:

> "Be careful! You see us Haitians?" Ha! It's not that we are animals. We have complete understanding in our heads. We are not dense or stupid. you see us in this position, it's because we need to live that we've placed ourselves in this position. But we have intelligence. I want you to understand that we were the first independent nation. Sometimes, we have to behave in a certain way, in a subservient way, because we have no other options, and we have to survive. But don't mistake our behavior, our sort of, subserviency for stupidity. We are very smart people. Don't forget we were the first Black Republic. We helped Americans fight for their independence"….

Another participant joined in:

> "Well, me personally, in my job, there are other nationalities that only want to make money. Like they want to receive the money and not do anything to earn it. But me as a Haitian, I would feel small, if all I wanted to do was just get money, and not do any work for it. I would like to say to the boss that Haitians are good workers. For me, I do not like it when bosses pressure me too much. I don't like to be exploited"…

A third person added her comments:

"You know, there may be another nationality that is closer to the boss than myself. But it's not that Haitians are not intelligent enough for that. Haitians are a people that are very, very, smart. You could have achieved your level/status and it could very well be that it was not because of your intelligence. It could be because of the difference of race or privilege that you were given. Do not think that I am stupid because of that… If you see that, you yourself can do it, that you can be a boss, I can be a boss. Listen, we can do it…

And I would also like to ask about an increase in pay!"

(JWFG03-Haitian, Pos. 885 - 919)

4. WHITE ADJACENCY: THE SOCIAL CAPITAL OF RACIAL HYBRIDITY AND IN-BETWEENNESS

Introduction

> "What do you mean, uh… race and racism? What I wanted to say to you is that since you guys are studying race, that would have been, I'm from a race, you're from a race, and South America is a race? Or race in general, Black or white?" (Alejandro - 54 year old, Brazilian, mixed race, gay male, Restaurant Manager.)

The questions above were posed to me at the beginning of my interview with Alejandro, a 54-year-old, mixed-race[20], Brazilian general manager for a trendy fine dining restaurant in gentrifying Little Haiti. Alejandro was trying to ascertain what exactly I meant by race and if I was speaking of racial identity from a US or Latin American and Caribbean perspective, a question that's particularly relevant in Miami, where racial categories are closer to those found in Latin America, which has categories of white, Black and mixed, or in some cases what sociologist Bonilla-Silva refers to as a third category of "honorary white" (Bonilla-Silva 2004). In this chapter, I will discuss white adjacency, a racial category I position as interstitial and hybridized, variable in its content, sometimes in between the boundaries, other times a mixture of races, and then sometimes, still even more complex with intersectional social identifiers that allocate privilege and social capital. This chapter will examine the contours of white adjacency in Miami, both in the

[20] I use the term "mixed-race" to refer to people who identify as belonging to two or more races.

Latinx and Black communities. But first, I will share more about Alejandro, as his story is important in illustrating some aspects of the category of white adjacency.

At the time of our interview, Alejandro had been living in Miami for 22 years. He left Brazil in his late twenties to escape an authoritarian father and live in the US as an openly gay man. He had an MFA that he turned into a side hustle as an interior designer. Alejandro's immigration status was undocumented, and so he could only work "under the table" in the informal economy. Sometimes this reality meant that his side hustle as an interior designer became high-end painting gigs in the steady stream of restaurants opening in gentrifying neighborhoods in Miami. This is how he came to be the general manager for a boutique restaurant and entertainment space in Little Haiti, a neighborhood experiencing rapid gentrification, located on the edge of the Miami Design District. He was doing a design job for a group of restaurant investors, when he seized an opportunity to fill in for a bartender. A handsome, sociable, man who loved entertaining, bartending was a good fit for him, especially with a more eclectic, progressive crowd. Plus, it was good money, cash, and under the table. Eventually, he made himself an asset to the investment group, and took on the role of managing special events, openings and the restaurants themselves. Alejandro had found a way to use his education, good looks and sexual orientation to his advantage. His intersectional identity as an artistic, gay Brazilian man positioned him as "fabulous" and socially desirable to Miami's cosmopolitan elite, many of whom were also gay.

To a large extent, Alejandro was unhindered by his immigration status because his intersectional identities positioned him as "white adjacent", a term I use to describe non-white people with life-changing access to the resources of whiteness. In Alejandro's

case, his racial ambiguity, education, sexual orientation, multi-lingual skills, and artistic sensibility gave him access to the upper echelon of Miami's social hierarchy. He lived in an exclusive gated neighborhood on the Bay and socialized with some of the most influential people in Miami's exclusive high-end, artistic community. Aside from the fact that he couldn't leave the country, the impact of his immigration status on his quality of life was minimal. As a racially ambiguous, Queer, Brazilian, artist, he was different, and unique, yet at the same time his Latinx identity meant that he belonged to Miami's dominant social majority. His inclusion in Miami's Latinx community gave him the social capital he needed to successfully traverse the racial and ethnic politics of Miami both inside and outside of the formal economy, and to make a life for himself. Alejandro's social location as white adjacent provided access to well-paying restaurant labor opportunities with tips and cash payments, an enviable position for anyone, much less someone who is undocumented.

As with the racial categories of Black and white, the third racial category of White adjacency is diverse and stratified as exemplified by Alejandro's story above. As mentioned in chapter one, I define white adjacency as those whose intersectional position within the racial hierarchy gives them proximity to the power and privilege of whiteness While an extensive discussion of this racial category is more suited for a monograph and beyond the scope of this chapter, I will nevertheless use narratives of selected case studies of participants to illustrate how white adjacency operates among workers in Miami's restaurant industry. In the first half of this chapter, I will examine white adjacency in mixed race people, working in the restaurant industry, while the second half will address Black workers who are white adjacent. Specifically, this chapter will address

the ideas about racial hierarchy that workers bring with them from their country of origin, and how these ideas are influenced by American concepts of race. It will examine some of the ways these differences play out in the workplace, as well as how the intersections of race, gender, nationality, language, class and sexual orientation operate to shape race privilege and discrimination among Miami's restaurant workers.

Latinx and Hispanic: Miami's New Race?

Early in this study, I used the anthropological Free List method to get a sense of what counted as an instance of racism for restaurant workers. I went into popular restaurant districts in tourist destinations such as Wynwood and The Design District, and trendy upscale food halls to interview restaurant workers and ask them to list as many examples of racism in the restaurant industry as they could think of. While the exercise produced a robust list of examples of racism, such as Blacks being called racial slurs, the telling of racist jokes and Hispanics[21] getting more hours, what was also salient was the way in which most of the participants identified their race. When given the prompt "how would you identify your race and nationality", 18 of the 32 participants wrote Hispanic or Latino, or indicated a Latinx country or place of origin such as Peru, Puerto Rico and Mexico. Of those 18 participants, 2 also identified as Black, as indicated by their primary modifier, i.e. – Black Latino. Upon prompting the other 17 for their US racial identity, 10 respondents identified as white, and 5 as mixed or other. One respondent was adamant they were simply and only Latino.

[21] In this instance, I use the term Hispanic because that was how it was reported in the data. My use of the term Hispanic in this chapter is interchangeable with Latinx, which I use as a gender-neutral term to describe people from Latin America.

This phenomenon of primary racial identification as Latin or Hispanic was not limited to the free list participants. I also encountered similar positions in the semi structured interviews. One exchange about racial identity with Pablo, a 38-year-old, second generation, Cuban American Restaurant Manager working at a prestigious Steakhouse went as follows:

> Researcher: Now, I'd like to ask you a little bit more about race. How do you identify racially?
>
> Pablo: How do I identify racially? As Latin.
>
> Researcher: Do you identify as white?
>
> Pablo: Yes.
>
> Researcher: Okay. And what does it mean to be white?
>
> Pablo: Um, I always just thought it just meant like the color of your skin. Like, if you broke down white and Black, I've obviously got less pigment than you… So that's what I thought, as a child growing up, like when you look at things in a Black and white manner. But then as I got older, I realized that culturally I actually have a Latin culture… I'm…, I'm Hispanic. When I realized that the kids, I'm going to school with, you know, they're not bringing the same lunch that I am, because there is a difference in the differences. My background, you know, how I grew up at home, but yes, at the end of the day, I identify myself as a white Latino. (Pablo 2019)

As with the majority of Free List participants, Pablo responded to the question about his racial identity by asserting his Latinx ethnicity. Only after my prompt did he indicate that he felt he was white, a response that I felt was largely contextualized by the subject matter and my own racial identity. At first, I was perplexed and irritated by the participants' tendency to collapse their race and nationality into Miami's most salient category of identity, Latinx or Hispanic. My irritation caused me to be more reflexive about the participants' way of describing their racial identity. I noticed that the participants who self-identified as Black, always identified first as Black, followed by their ethnicity. So, for example, respondents said they were Black Jamaican, African American, or Black Haitian. Some were just Black. Period.

These expressions of Black identity made me reflect upon my own evolving discovery of my Blackness. I was born and raised in Jamaica, a country where 90% of the population was Black. Yet, I truly didn't discover what it meant to be Black until I came to the United States. By this I mean that in Jamaica, my Blackness was erased though tropes of colorblindness, such as the country motto, "Out of Many, One People". My middle-class life was shaped by "uptown" cultural expectations – I would go to the best schools, and only date men from "good families", with parents in prominent social positions. It wasn't until I came to the United States that I truly understood what it meant to be Black; i.e. to live in a constant state of racial subjugation and perpetual disdain while at the same time, knowing that just the very nature of our existence, not to mention our success, is evidence of our tremendous resilience and strength. Over the forty years that I have lived in Miami, I have contested the ideology that supports the subjugated position of my Blackness, as one that "properly signif(ies) inferiority", while

simultaneously recognizing anti-Black racism as a shared global experience of marginalization and oppression (Winant 2001). This contestation has not always neatly aligned with the pro-Black activism from the late sixties that I admire, instead, my rebuke of marginalization took the form of Black Jamaican respectability politics. Culturally, I was raised with very strict rules about appropriate "lady-like" behavior. Hair must be pressed, coiffed and as long as possible, because as my mother liked to say, "A woman's hair is her crowning glory". I was raised to speak the Queen's English, and so when I spoke Jamaican Patois at home or with my friends and family, there were rules that ensured that our words, dialects, and inflections were more sophisticated and refined than the more guttural Patois spoken by Jamaicans who lived in cramped squalor in the tenements of Kingston, or in rural agricultural areas. Education was "part of the matrix of respectability" in our culture (Queeley 2015). To this day, some forty years after graduating high school, the first thing most Jamaicans ask when newly introduced, is which high school you attended. Schools are ranked and indicative of a class hierarchy, a phenomenon I also observed while working in Haiti. All this aside, it was my lived experience in America that forged my Black identity. My life was racialized similarly to the way in which class was operationalized in Jamaica. The recognition of my Anglo-Caribbean privilege and elitism in combination with US racial constructs and practices furthered my passion for racial activism and heightened my awareness of racial inequality.

As I examined the affirmative responses to Blackness from this perspective, it occurred to me that some of the participants may have had a similar experience that would also cause them to embrace Blackness. Regardless, it is an interesting

juxtaposition with the white and mixed participants who primarily identified as Latinx or Hispanic and seemed to reject Blackness. When pressed, the non-Black participants seemed to surrender to whiteness, as if it was a social category they had no choice but to join, because it was ordered so, as the natural default. Such was the case with one of my participants Isidora, a 26-year-old server who was a second-generation immigrant from Chilean and Nicaraguan parents. Isidora worked at a Soul Food destination restaurant popular with tourists and locals in a gentrifying, historically African American neighborhood. When I asked her how she identified racially, she responded as follows:

> "I don't even know if I'm Black, or I guess Hispanic. But then Hispanic is like white. I don't even know… Cause that's two different things to which I'm also both of those. These are things that never really have been taught to me. I just kind of try to read about it… I don't feel like any of those things. But just as far as like when I would go to school and fill out papers, they would be like, put white. So that's literally just because; for like forms, it was just to fill out a paper. That's what I've put. But it's not something that I really identify with, like, truly. I don't feel like maybe any of those fit correctly". – (Isidora - 26 year old, white woman from Chile and Nicauragua. Server.)

Isidora's struggle with her racial identity reflects the tension between race and ethnicity many workers with diverse Latinx identities experience when trying to navigate US ideas of race. As I explained earlier, I considered this feigned racial indecision which almost always resulted in their alignment with whiteness, a rejection of the US Black –

white racial binary, more specifically as a rejection of Blackness as the ultimate racial nemesis (Morrison 1993). I felt that my participants' response was feigned in response to my positionality as a Black female researcher, the subject matter and the context of the situation. Had I been a white Latina, the response more than likely would have been a resounding affirmation of their alignment with whiteness. However, as more and more participants continued to respond as Latino, I also realized there was more to their response than the facile or obvious. I concluded that this response was a type of racial formation that erupted as a result of the ongoing confrontation between processes of US racialization and cultural constructs of race in Latin America.

Within this racializing process, immigrants negotiate race by distancing themselves from African Americans while situating their identity within the distinctions of language and national origin (Pessar 2014). At the same time, they also realize their Latinx identities will be devalued in a hegemonic white society, and so in addition to distancing themselves from Blackness, many Latin American and Caribbean immigrants make more of an effort to maintain cultural connections with people from their home country in order to reinforce ideas of social belonging that they brought with them when they migrated (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 2005). Hence the proliferation and exaltation of different ethnic enclaves, foods, music, art, and culture in Miami. These differences create boundaries, that act as markers of identity. Situated within a system of racial capitalism such as the restaurant industry, it is inevitable that these markers of inclusion and exclusion become appropriated, exploited, and racialized.

In Miami, a majority Latinx city[22], racial identity sits comfortably at the nexus of language and national origin; and as such, it made sense that when asked about race and nationality, participants would primarily identify as Latinx or Hispanic. Not only is most of the city bilingual, in some Latinx enclaves such as Little Havana, Westchester, and Hialeah, Spanish is spoken almost exclusively. This racial framework of Latinx identity reflects the lived quotidian reality that most of the Spanish speakers in Miami are immigrants from Latin America, who share a mutual first language as well as several other aspects of Latinx culture, such as language, food, music, and cultural traditions. Brazilians are also included in Miami's Latinx culture, although they speak Portuguese and not Spanish. In the 2000's the value of the Brazilian *Real*[23] was very strong in comparison to the US dollar, which prompted increased Brazilian investment in Miami real estate, more Brazilian migrants and visitors, as well as an uptick in resources for the growing Brazilian community such as English language classes for Portuguese speakers. Ultimately, because of the proximity of Portuguese to Spanish, many Brazilians in Miami adapt and accommodate Spanish speakers, as well as the broader, shared culture of Latinidad (Carter and Lynch 2015).

While these different characteristics of Latinx culture, and ethnicity are distinct in and of themselves, there is hybridity and a convenient homogenization of Latinidad within this racial formation. Individual nations, cultures, customs, food, and language become homogenized in racial solidarity that eschews the social location of Blackness at the bottom of the hierarchy. This rejection of Blackness is also consistent for Latinxs

[22] In Miami Dade County 70% of the population is Hispanic. In the City of Miami, a subsection of Miami-Dade County, 60% of the population speaks Spanish ("U.S. Census" 2010).
[23] The *Real* is the official currency of Brazil.

racialized as Black both in their home country and within the United States. Black Latinxs are more likely to select the racialized category of Latinx or Hispanic, often regarding Blackness as a mutually exclusive other (Aja 2016; Cobas, Duany, and Feagin 2016; Duany 1998).

It is important to note that this complicated construction of Latinx or Hispanic as a racial category is not unique to Miami. This categorization exists in other Latinx dominant regions in the United States such as El Paso and San Antonio in Texas and is constructed from similar Latinidad ethnolinguistic tenets. Within these regions, the racialized category of Latinx simultaneously diminishes and maintains the boundaries between nations and ethnicities and so when it is interjected into the US racial system, pigmentocracy and class become the primary delineators of race (Frank, Akresh, and Lu 2010; Telles 2014). These findings reflect the scholarship on ethnic groups and boundary making, which finds that social categories are about the process through which boundaries are diminished or maintained as opposed to the content of these categories (Bailey 2005; Barth 1969). In Miami, the racial project of Latinx identity similarly uses boundaries to create belonging and exclusion. However, Miami's racial project differs from other Latinx dominated regions because of significant and persistent Cuban hegemony, the influx of wealthy South Americans, and the impact of increased migration from differently raced countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This shared Latinx social identity disrupts the framework of the US Black-white binary, demonstrating that race continues to be an ongoing process of social differentiation rather than a static condition. The social construction of race among Latinx participants appears to be different, yet historically, it is familiar. In the early

1900's immigrant groups such as Jews, Italians and Slavs were considered "races", while now they are widely viewed as ethnicities (Waters 1990). While some scholars consider Latinidad to be an ethnicity, the evolving construction of Latinx ethnic identity as a racial category is indicative of the complexity of racial identity in majority minority Latin American and Caribbean immigrant communities where there is a rejection of traditional US racial identifiers (Caminero-Santangelo 2007). As a result, Latinx or Hispanic has become a widely used racial category largely in contestation of the Black-white US racial binary. The racial system in the United States is clearly anti-Black, with systemic forces of oppression that stack the deck against those who are racially defined as Black. This reality forces immigrants to choose a racial identity other than Blackness, which supports the formation of Latinx identity as a race.

The construction of Latinx identity as a homogenized racial category doesn't always attend to the diversity and relations of power that operate within the category. For example, within Miami's Latinx community, there is a white Cuban hegemony, situated at the intersection of pigmentocracy, power, and politics. As a result, whiteness in Miami has expanded to include the political Cuban elite, and other white Latinxs with economic power and social capital. In contrast, Blackness continues to be stigmatized and positioned as a social location for darker skinned people, with few economic resources, and little access to political power. In addition to the US racial categories, there is a third racial category of non-white people that I refer to as white adjacent. Those that I categorize as white adjacent can be mixed-race, or Black. White adjacency includes those whose ethnicity, education, class, and language intersect to place them on the upper margins of the category of non-white, giving them proximity and access to the resources

of whiteness as property (Aranda, Chang, and Sabogal 2015; Cobas, Duany, and Feagin 2016; Waterston 2008). Each of these tri-racial categories are dynamic, fluid, and constantly in flux, overlapping each other, and often blurring the divides; however, even when the categories are homogenized in Latinidad, the bifurcated Black-white polarization remains and manifests itself in the distinct ways Miami's Latinx community treats non-whites such as those who are mixed and Afro-Latino. Race in Miami has more in common with the tri-partite racial system in Latin America and the Caribbean (Herring 2002; Bonilla-Silva 2004).

Cubans are the political and economic leaders of Miami-Dade County. In Miami's Latinx community there is considerable fluidity between whiteness and white adjacency; however, in the Cuban community, there is a tendency to associate Cuban identity with whiteness (Aja 2016). The following exchange with Pablo, the white male, Cuban restaurant manager who discussed his racial and ethnic identify earlier in this chapter, illustrates the way in which some Cubans consider race both in Cuba and in the United States. In this excerpt, we were discussing the significance of race in his family and in his Cuban culture. We had discussed his arrival to the States with his parents, and how when he first moved to the US, they lived with another family of white exiled Cubans who took them in. I wanted to know more about his early experiences with race, and so that was where this excerpt began.

> Researcher: What would your parents and families say about race and racism growing up in Cuba?

Pablo: Growing up in Cuba? Like if they experienced racism? Umm... Not much. There wasn't really much discussions about like any, um, racial topics as far as… you know, back home or in Cuba.

Researcher: Do you think it's fair to say they probably would say that there wasn't any racism in Cuba.

Pablo: Um, I've heard… Um, me and my father had discussions about this, actually. And he has said that that in Cuba, it was different. I don't know if maybe… I think what he was trying to say at the time was, it's like the racial divide in this country was different than it was in Cuba. Because what he would say, is like Black people in Cuba, you don't even consider them as Black people. You just consider them Cuban. Like they were just kind of cultural. It was more [like] culturally, the lines were grayer. And that's what he was at least trying to tell me in these conversations. It was always like, whenever it was a topic about race in this country, I think what he was just basically telling me, is like it wasn't as divided as it was here. And it was just like gray or it's like, you know, Black Cubans associated just as Cubans. They really didn't, I mean, I'm sure there still was a division, but it wasn't as bad as it is here.

Researcher: Mm hmm

Then, I guess one of the things I wonder about in terms of your parents, is how come they didn't have any Black friends? As Cubans? Like, where are the Afro Cubans? Why didn't they have friends that were Afro Cuban here?

Pablo: Um, here in this country?

Researcher: Yes.

Pablo: Well, you know, that's a good question… Um…
I don't remember even meeting many, growing up either, like in just my parents circle every once in a while, I'd come across an Afro Cuban. My dad has a friend now that's an Afro Cuban, actually, that I met recently, but I just didn't see many growing up to tell you the truth. So, I don't know if it was statistically there were… there wasn't as many around, or if maybe, you know, culturally, they were segregating themselves. Maybe the Afro Cubans were hanging out more with other Afro Cubans and the white Cubans were staying, you know, hanging out with other white Cubans. But, like I said, I didn't see many growing up. And even till today, I would say, I'm more aware of Afro-Cubans after working in the restaurant industry, I've worked with a lot more, um, Cubans of color, whether they be Afro-Cubans or just, umm… like, uh mixed, you know… umm…

Researcher: Mestizo, or?

Pablo: Yeah, or whatever they would call them.

Researcher: What do you call mixed Cubans?

Pablo: Um, Mulatto sometimes, they'd use the term. That's what I thought growing up. I thought Mulatto meant you were just a mixed person.

Researcher: So, you heard the word Mulatto growing up?

Pablo: Yes. That's what they would use for you know, like a, like a mixed Cuban, or mixed you know, like I said, one parent of African American descent, one of white, probably Spanish descent or something. Um, But, yeah, I just didn't see many of them growing up. And even till today, um... I probably met more mixed Cubans, than I could say I even meet white Cubans now, or just Black Cubans. I think, I just see more mixed culturally, than I had before.

Researcher: Do you think that's a generational thing, maybe?

Pablo: Um, Yeah, I think it's just over generations. There were a lot of, from like, what my parents tell me, there was a lot more Africans, um, living in Cuba over the last, you know, forty, fifty years that I guess, which is true; Castro, I know Castro had ties to African countries where he would send military forces. I've had friends that have fought in Africa. They were in the Cuban military, and they would go to Africa and fight and Cuba, uh, they would have African soldiers come to Cuba too. So, I think there was more Africans brought into the island over the last forty, fifty, years and they integrated with the people. And I think there's just been more mixed and Afro-Cubans now than there were before.

Researcher: So, the increase in the Afro-Cuban population is because of Castro's ties to the continent, and his involvement with different African countries?

Pablo: Yes, that's what I've been told from people that have lived on the island over the last forty, fifty, years, and that there was a higher importation of Africans into the country.

Researcher: Interesting. Hmm.

Pablo: But then I've never looked up the statistics on that, or anything like that, but it might be something to look into. But I have heard that from a

lot of people that have come from Cuba in the past twenty, thirty, years. And they say that the African population or the mixed population is a lot higher. There's not as many white Cubans as there were, you know, let's say 50 years ago, and obviously a lot of them, those families fled as well.

Researcher: Right, right. So, these people who are saying this are primarily white?

Pablo: Yes, uh-huh.

(Pablo - 38 year old, white Cuban-American, male. Restaurant Manager.)

In my conversation with Pablo above, he espouses a color-blind narrative that dismisses the racialized presence of Afro-Cubans in Cuba, by claiming that culturally they were all Cuban (Aranda, Chang, and Sabogal 2015; Bonilla-Silva 2006). Yet this flattening of Cuban identity didn't carry over to his parent's social circle. When I asked why, when growing up in Miami, a Cuban mecca, his parents didn't have any Afro-Cuban friends, he seemed perplexed, and agreed it was a question worthy of deeper consideration. Further, his claim that an increase in Afro-Cubans on the island was a result of Castro's involvement with people from different countries in Africa, demonstrates his white Cuban exile lens, which attributes the Blackening of Cuba, and anything else they may find problematic on that island as a change that manifested because of the Castro regime. The narrative Pablo presented aligned Blackness with Castro and communism, thus reaffirming his own Cuban whiteness as anti-communist.

His claim also erased the racialized impetus behind the Cuban revolution and presented a whitened version of what it meant to be Cuban. While his claim that an influx of Africans led to an increase of mixed race and Black Cubans in Miami was factually incorrect, it did however point to the fact that he felt there was a significant and growing third racial category of mixed-race people, which supports my argument of a third racial category of white adjacency.

In my study, participants who identified as mixed race had different combinations of races and ethnicities and resulting variable identities that shifted contextually. What was constant was the fact that most mixed-race participants in my study had access to tangible benefits of whiteness. For example, a hostess, who I would include in the category of Maître Divas, which I elaborate on later in the chapter, identified as a Jamaican-American, mixed race, Black woman. She worked in a lucrative position in the front of the house. Another participant of mixed race was Chinese Jamaican. She owned a famous Jamaican restaurant in South Miami, and although she was of mixed race, her primary identity was Jamaican. Another mixed-race participant, a 26-year-old server assistant, defaulted to an identity of mixed, because his inter-racial, Guyanese, Puerto-Rican and Brazilian parentage was simply too complicated to explain. He shared with me that growing up in Miami, he vacillated between Asian cliques, Black cliques and white cliques depending on where he thought the "cool people" hung out. He was also privileged in that he grew up in Little Haiti in a huge South Florida mansion. His parents were antique and art dealers, and when I visited him in his parents' home, there was a distinct bohemian, artsy vibe. While his title as server-assistant or busser seemed lowly, he was working for a prestigious restaurant in the design district, that had global

recognition. His white adjacency as a person with mixed race positioned him perfectly for better paying restaurant work. While it is an obvious conclusion that mixed-race people are not exclusively Latinx; in Miami, most as Pablo expressed, would be identified as such. In that regard, the racialized category of mixed is a continuously contested spectrum of difference juxtaposed against this particular social and historical moment in Miami where Latinidad is naturalized as the preferred dominant culture.

Like all the other racial categories, white adjacency is stratified. It follows the hierarchical contours of pigmentocracy; however, it is not confined by the hue of one's skin. As such, it often operates outside of the US racial boundaries.

Historically, Blacks have always had to address stigma, and naturalized perceptions of themselves as inferior while navigating racial politics. As a result, white adjacency is particularly challenging for Anglo Blacks in Miami, who don't have the cultural capital of Latinidad. As a result of the Latino dominance and Cuban hegemony, Black Latinxs are often placed higher on the social hierarchy than Afro-Anglo-Blacks. However not all Black and dark-skinned Latinx immigrants have the same experience, and as such some navigate US racial politics by rejecting Blackness as a primary identifier all together. In my research, I encountered dark-skinned workers from the Dominican Republic who without speaking, would automatically be considered to be Black because of their dark skin. However, when I interviewed these workers, they completely rejected any association with the racial category of Blackness. While this is more of a reflection of the complicated racial politics of the Dominican Republic, it nevertheless troubles ideas of Blackness and what it means to be Black in Miami (Candelario 2007).

One woman, who worked as a hostess, was adamant that she was not Black, asserting instead that she was Dominican. Another, a 19 year old man, who worked as a bar-back and busser, told me while walking me to my car late one night, “they can say whatever they want about me, they can call me Asian, white, or Black; I don’t care, but no, I don’t identify as Black”, effectively acknowledging the fact that although he may present as Black, he wholeheartedly rejected that descriptor (Adolfo 2018). Significant to this discussion is the US Census data which found that Dominican immigrants who identify as Black or Mulatto had double the poverty rates of their lighter-skinned compatriots (U.S. Census 2010). This suggests that lighter-skinned immigrant racial identities have greater social capital than that of their darker skinned counterparts.

In his research on Dominican Americans, Linguistic Anthropologist Benjamin Bailey argues that “social differentiation based on language or national origins are much more salient in everyday life than the perceived presence or absence of African ancestry” (Bailey 2005, 286). Bailey contends that while Dominicans often match criteria for identification in the Black-white US binary, their daily lived experiences, such as who they interact with, and what language they speak, what type of music they listen to, have more resonance in an environment where these distinctions create more salient categories of inclusion and belonging, than do racial categories of Black or white (Bailey 2005).

In the same way, immigrant workers in Miami who would be considered non-white in other parts of the United States, prefer to view race as a continuum. The extent to which this view is shared depends on specificities of phenotype, geography and social contexts. Triracial ideologies are common in Latin America and the Caribbean, so when these ideas are transported to the United States, and then juxtaposed against the

subjective and performed social categories of non-whiteness that effectively diminishes social positions, there is a tendency to reject these categories altogether and instead embrace alternate multi-racial, ethno-linguistic categories of belonging. These emerging racial categories allow for more movement across races, thus creating hybridized and interstitial identities along and within a spectrum of ethno-racial, linguistic, difference (Pessar 2014). These racial identities formed in between the margins of the three different races and in combination with gender, ethnicity, nationality, language, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation also allow for broader understandings of racial formation and by extension white adjacency. This argument can be applied to everyday life in Miami's restaurant industry where language is a more common denominator than race, yet the boundaries of difference are strategically reinforced through other mechanisms such as job position, difference in discipline, compensation and promotion. These dominant ethnolinguistic categories provide some explanation about the free-list participants' propensity to identify racially as Latinx or Hispanic; categories that supersede Blackness and provide increased proximity to whiteness. That said, the category of white adjacency in Miami also includes Non-Latinx Blacks with higher socioeconomic status, such as Anglo and Franco-Caribbean Blacks whose numbers have increased over time due to increased migration since the mid twentieth century, and into the 21st century. This this vignette about Chef Antoine, illustrates the shifting dynamics of white adjacency.

Chef Antoine

One of my initial interviews was with an uber-talented and accomplished Black, male, Haitian chef who I will call Antoine. Antoine has worked in the restaurant industry for

almost 20 years. He's done several tours of the Food TV circuit and worked as an executive chef in numerous hotels and restaurants across South Florida. In addition to his hands-on training, he has a degree in culinary arts, as well as a master's in hospitality management. I met with him at one of the restaurants he owns, at the time, a relatively new venture in a luxury shopping mall in one of the wealthiest areas of Miami. We had an in-depth conversation for about two hours during which he shared with me his experience growing up Haitian in the Bahamas, as well as the racialized experiences he had in Miami while working as a Chef. He told me about an incident that happened a couple of weeks earlier, when a new server at the restaurant mistook him for the dishwasher and asked him to take his dirty dishes back to the dish pit. After we had a good laugh about that, he went on to tell me that racism was also very prevalent in his Haitian community. He said:

> "There's a difference between every people in Haiti. Yes, it's funny because that's a whole different type of racism, the types of complexities and all that has to do with the hue of your skin. It's, if you're a lighter touch of brown then you were this type of class. It's just, it's even more weird than here. That's because how you get placed in your class system depends on your skin color; and then everything else comes into play, you know where do you go to school and so on and so forth. How well do you speak French and you know who your friends are" … "they look at your skin color and automatically place you somewhere, whether they speak to you or they know you or not. If you have a darker skin color that means you're way at the bottom and again, depending on how or whether they

> speak to you or not. (Language is important here because, the better French you speak, the more status and privilege you have). He continued by saying, "I went to the best school. So, with that, you know, *you being who you are,* you have to present yourself in a certain way"[24] (Antoine - 37 year old Black, Bahamian-Haitian, male Chef and Restaurant Owner.).

That last sentence resonated with me in terms of my own complicated and often privileged Anglo-Afro-Caribbean positionality. It made me question the type of information he chose to share with me. From my field notes, I wrote:

> "I noticed that Antoine was initially reluctant to address racial issues directly in much the same way that whites are reluctant because it's not something that affects them personally. Yet, over the course of two hours he had shared several experiences he had with racial discrimination – growing up, dating, driving while Black, and also what it was like being a Black Haitian chef with business partners who were white and Middle Eastern. Antoine simultaneously found race to be a problem and not a problem and went on to describe racism as a chip on people's shoulders. He invoked the myth of meritocracy and felt that if he worked his way up, others could as well" (Williams 2018).

It felt as though Antoine viewed me as a Black woman who transcended race through education and social class, much like he viewed himself as a modern-day version of the fictional Jeffersons who moved on up. I sensed that our shared culinary training and Afro-Caribbean identity which placed a high value on education as a ticket out of

[24] Antoine is describing colorism, inter-racial discrimination among non-white people. I am highlighting colorism as a form of racism within Miami's Haitian and Caribbean community.

oppression, made him consider me his social equal. At the end of the interview when he was completing the surveys, I had a moment to study his physical appearance. I noticed that Antoine was very good looking in a Western way. He had chocolate colored skin, and was fit and muscular, with perfectly straight white teeth. He was wearing what I call the GQ uniform - a fancy leather jacket, white t-shirt, super expensive jeans, and carried himself with Obama like charisma. I couldn't help but wonder, is this what whiteness looks like on a Black man? Antoine wasn't white, but could he be white adjacent?

Blackness as Social Capital

By any measure Antoine's career trajectory has been exceptional. When we consider the way in which he continues to navigate the impediments of systemic racism throughout his career, his success becomes even more extraordinary. Antoine had to traverse the structural racial politics first as a Haitian immigrant in the Bahamas, and then as an immigrant in Miami. These transnational experiences, in combination with his national identity as Haitian, caused him to reject the status quo subjugation typically experienced by Black Haitians, thus disrupting the narrative that suggests that Miami's racial order is fixed and bifurcated. At the same time, I must note that such exceptionalism inevitably reinforces systemic inequalities rather and disrupt it. His comments on Haitian racism as "a whole different type of racism", and "even more weird than here", suggests that he has a keen understanding of Miami's transnational habitus, and the way in which social identifiers operate intersectionally to determine one's placement within the racial order (Bourdieu 1984b).

Antoine's presentation of self in his personal and professional choices – a well-to-do white girlfriend, designer clothing, a college degree, and affluent business partners signal that he is cosmopolitan, accomplished, multi-lingual, and college educated. His time living in the Bahamas as a boy allowed him to cultivate a British inflected Bahamian accent when speaking English, which effectively disguised his identity as Haitian and mediated the status quo assumptions of Black Haitianness in the restaurant industry as less than, unworthy, incapable, and positioned at the bottom of the color-caste system. Antoine's Haitianness is more complicated because it is mediated by markers of Anglophone identity that position him above Haitians. It must also be noted that Antoine's success was also tokenized, in that he was the example and shining star of American success despite the odds. By his own account, his story was representative of the color-blind myth of meritocracy. In many ways, Antoine's social location as a white adjacent, Black Haitian man, destabilizes the meaning of Blackness in Miami's restaurant industry, and more significantly, his presence is a contestation of Haitian subjugation within the racial hierarchy.

Maître Divas: Commodification of the Black Female Aesthetic

During my field work, I noticed that several upscale restaurants in Wynwood, an arts and culture district in Miami, had one or two Afrocentric, Black women greeting and seating guests. Some of these restaurants even had these women working as managers. I noticed that the women all had a similar "look". Many of them wore long box braids, twist-outs, or a massive afro, and their earlobes were adorned with the signature Black girl hoops. Their attire was

Afro-bohemian with flowing dresses, bell bottoms, and low-slung belts. There was a distinct similarity between their “look” and that of many Black influencers on social media or in music videos. These women were cool, and as old school Black folk would say, you could tell from the expression on their faces that they didn’t tolerate stupidity. I coined the term Maître Diva within the framework of Black vernacular to describe these women as fabulous, fashionable and fearless. Maitre Divas are highly desired as hostesses and maître' d's, because of their no-nonsense approach to running the front of the house of the restaurant, as well as their aesthetic which contributes to the restaurant’s fabulosity factor thus attracting a more cosmopolitan crowd. One of my participants, a white, gay, middle-aged man who has worked as a restaurant manager on South Beach since the nineties reported that in the early years, he was told to only hire servers and hosts that looked Italian or European. As more Latinos especially wealthy South Americans started to patronize the restaurant, he was told to hire Spanish looking and speaking people. Most recently, with the rise in popularity of South Beach as an urban venue, his hiring instructions shifted, and he was told to hire, "pretty black girls”.

bell hooks describes this phenomenon best when she wrote that:

> The commodification of Otherness has been so successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling. Within commodity culture, ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture. (hooks 2009, p. 21)

In her work *Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance*, bell hooks argues that desire for the racial Other is heightened in the imagination of the racially dominant because of stereotypes that mark encounters with the racial Other as intense, dangerous, sensual and sexual (hooks 2009). hooks argues that "processes of commodification and consumption displace the Other and eradicate the Other's historical significance" (2009, p. 31).

In interviews with Black women participants who work or have worked as restaurant hostesses, the narrative of Black women's hypersexuality is a common theme. Most of the women felt that they were recruited to work at the restaurant because of their physical appearance. Some reported incidents that revealed sexual attraction from white men who were their managers or co-workers on the job. One young woman who I will call Imani, reported that before she worked at the restaurant, she would go there after school with her friends when she was a high school senior. One of the managers would flirt with her and invite her to come and work at the restaurant. When probed about his intent with his offer and if she thought he was attracted to her, she responded, "yeah, but I just brushed it off". When asked for an example she said,

> "You know sometimes stuff would get too personal, like if you have a boyfriend and all this other stuff. I mean I was just 16 or 17. I mean, you know how you can tell the difference between someone who's trying to get to know you, or someone who's just prying for something... you know, something in me just didn't feel right when he was too around". (Imani - 21 year old, Black American woman. Server/Host)

Another participant, a voluptuous thirty-five-year-old Black woman, who I'll call Alicia, didn't mince words. In response to a question about the role of her gender at

work she quickly responded, “there are a lot of white men that want to fuck me or wanted to fuck me. In the industry, men who have owned things or with power have come on to me, disgustingly” (Alicia - 35 year old, Black American woman, Busser and Cashier).

Her response reflects my own personal experience working as bartender while in graduate school. At one event where the dancer and I were the only Black people in a crowd of hundreds, I noticed a middle-aged, white man trying to get my attention, from behind two people who were ahead of him. I raised my index finger, and said, one moment please, signaling that I would take his order after I served the guests who were ahead of him in line. When it was his turn, he came around the bar into my workspace and got within inches of my face. He looked me in the eye and said in a provocative way, “Don’t ever say no to me again for the rest of the night” and thrust a hundred-dollar bill into my pocket. It was unnerving, patronizing and offensive, but I needed the money and the job, so I pocketed the cash and didn’t tell anyone.

My participants were not as unnerved as I was by white male sexual attention. After Alicia told me that there were men that just wanted to have sex with her, I asked her to tell me more about how she came to that understanding. We had the following exchange:

> Alicia: “Okay, so when I worked at the hotel, on Sundays they had a huge party, a soiree, and I hosted the front door. Well not host, but I was the cashier, right?

Researcher: For the Sunday party?

Alicia: Uh huh. Um, I was just working like to make extra hours or whatever, and I would always get hit on by the white men who went to that party. Like they would be there with their blonde, big-boobed girl, but always would come back and bring me a drink and like chat me up. They liked to chat up the young Black girl with Blonde dreadlocks and blue eyes. So yeah.

Researcher: Did you ever flirt with them?

Alicia: Oh, yeah! To get tips? hell yeah girl!

Researcher: Yeah?

Alicia: Yeah, do something strange to get some change!

Researcher: Like what, what would you do?

Alicia: You flirt, you talk back, and you don't necessarily… fuck em. You do things. You just sit there, and you talk, and you talk about your life or whatever you want with them and, and you know, since I

would let them in, they would slide me a $100 bill or whatever (Alicia 2019)

According to anthropologist Ann Stoler, sexuality was used in post-colonial societies to classify “colonial subjects into distinct human kinds, while policing the domestic recesses of imperial rule” (Stoler 1995, 4). Similarly, Blackness in restaurant work is marked, performed and delineated by the white male sexual gaze, and his subjugation of Black women’s bodies. Black women such as Alicia, working in front of the house positions have learned how to navigate and exploit this reality. The restaurant industry is unique, in that a significant portion of its labor compensation is distributed in the form of tips, and as such women in particular have to engage in social, emotional, and sexual labor in order to maximize their earnings. This pay for play labor scheme becomes more complicated when white authority and sexuality are enacted so that Black women become a “racially erotic counterpoint” in the performance of white dominance (Stoler 1995, 4).

In addition to the sexual component, participants also seemed to struggle with navigating the tension between being "unapologetically black" as Alicia put it, and “the little white girl inside of me" in a Duboisian type of "double consciousness”(Du Bois 1999). Alicia went on to explain that the little white girl inside of her likes rock music and wears light blue colored contacts which she claimed as her “natural” eye color. Her recollection of this experience reminded me of Toni Morrison’s novel “The Bluest Eye”, in which a dark-skinned, young Black girl, commonly regarded by many in her community as ugly because of her deep

hued pigmentation, fantasizes about having Blue eyes, which will effectively whiten her and solve her problems, one of which is a result of sexual violence. In an imitation of art, I found that Alicia's decision to wear Blue contacts and claim them as her own, mimicked Toni Morrison's character's rejection of Blackness.

Of all the Diva's, Alicia was the most stereotypically Black, and quite notably, she reported that she struggled to get a job in the restaurant industry. She was a large woman, with dark skin, big lips, a wide nose and nappy hair. Sometimes she wore an afro. Other times, she wore long, blonde dreadlocks that skimmed her hips. She spoke with a proper British accent, and frequently called people, "dahling", even although she was from a small town in South Carolina. The tension between her cultural Blackness and her embodiment of whiteness as a rejection of Blackness was evident throughout our interview. She referred to herself as "the white sheep" in her family, demonstrating that she occupied a dual position of resistance and complicity.

Alicia was not the only Maître Diva that distanced herself from Blackness. When I asked about race and racism, a young Haitian woman who I'll call Gabrielle, responded with annoyance by saying, "I just really don't like these topics. For me they are too marginalized". After a discussion in which she acknowledges the racial segregation of the restaurant she goes on to say, "I don't find discrimination in restaurants, I only have positive things to say. Everyone is treated the same. I always feel respected". ("Interview - Gabrielle, Young, Black Haitian Woman. Hostess." 2019)

Gabrielle's experience as a young, English speaking, Black, Haitian woman is quite different from that of most Black Haitians working in the restaurant industry. In a focus group of ten Black Haitian dishwashers who were all monolingual Kreyol speakers, they all reported incredibly horrible experiences of discrimination in the workplace that bordered on abuse. When I asked what they wanted their white, male, bosses to know about them, they told me that they wanted to be treated with respect and dignity.

Gabrielle's assertion that she always felt respected, was contrary to the experience of Haitian dishwashers. Her contention that she was always respected indicated to me that she felt she was different from "most Black Haitians" and so therefore she was treated with respect. Her claim of colorblindness in the restaurant industry dismissed the tangible realities of anti-Black discrimination, thus reinforcing narratives of equal access and the Myth of meritocracy. Alicia and Gabrielle's rejection of Blackness reinforced deeply held cultural beliefs of whiteness as superior, and highly desirable, thus reproducing perceptions of white superiority that lead to racial inequality. Their rejection of Blackness was an attempt to embody whiteness, and the more desirable aspects of white cultural identity. This bolsters Cheryl Harris' argument that whiteness is a tangible good, as valuable as property (Harris 1993). Those who were white or white adjacent, had access to more professional opportunities, better compensation, and more rewarding work. These benefits have a domino effect in that they are also realized by families and communities who have greater access to resources. In this way, the power and privilege of whiteness becomes a tangible social, cultural, and economic benefit,

that is conditionally available to non-white people positioned in adjacency to whiteness.

Historically, Black women's bodies have been a symbol of service-oriented labor, as evidenced by personal and historical accounts of Black female domestic help. In the case of restaurant labor their service positions demand an additional level deference to the power of the guests. As such, these women are often required to meet certain conditions related to skill and appearance, and compared to white, female, participants, endure a significantly greater burden of sexual aggression in the workplace. This is compounded by the fact that a significant portion of their earnings are driven by a pay to play scheme where the women must not only perform the essential tasks of their jobs such as seating guests, managing the floor, and the cash, but are also required to entertain and please their guests. This effectively creates an eroticization of racial power in the workplace, which is an additional burden that Black women have to navigate. This eroticization of racial power also reflects "misogynoir", a term coined by Moya Bailey, which reflects "the specific hatred, dislike, distrust, and prejudice directed toward Black women" (Bailey and Trudy 2018). While it is a considerable improvement that Black woman are increasingly being hired for positions in the Front of the House, the motivation behind their re-positioning and the way in which they are commodified is problematic. Ultimately, the strategic placement of Black women in guest facing supervisory roles is a form of racial capitalism, within which economic value is extracted from the labor of people of color.

Racial Capitalism: An Ongoing Project that Cooks Up Inequality

Racial capitalism is an ongoing project in Miami's restaurant industry. White chefs profit from the labor, intellect, and culinary traditions of non-white people from Latin America and the Caribbean through the normalized exploitation of ideas and people. Miami's signature "New World Cuisine" is an example of this form of appropriation and racial capitalism. New World Cuisine is a style of cooking that incorporates many of the foods and flavors of its immigrant community. It was "discovered" in the late eighties by a white male chef named Norman Van Aken. Together with his three colleagues, Allen Susser, Mark Militello and Douglas Rodriguez, who were also white and male, they became known as the "Mango Gang" after they supposedly put Miami on the culinary map with their "New World Cuisine", a contemporary fusion of the foods and flavors of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Van Aken's "discovery" of New World Cuisine has many metaphorical parallels with Columbus' discovery and subsequent colonization of the New World. The most obvious of these is that the foods, flavors and culinary techniques that the chefs "discovered" were not in fact new, but had existed for decades, if not centuries, and were frequently used by people from different cultures across Latin America and the Caribbean. Foods that were central to New World cuisine such as oxtail, goat, plantains, mango, and black beans were already in wide use in South Florida's immigrant communities; however, these ethnic communities and their foods were largely invisible to American mainstream cuisine.

I would argue that it was whiteness that primarily enabled the Mango Gang to appropriate the culinary knowledge and skill of their mostly Black, immigrant prep cooks while working them long, hard hours, and paying them subpar wages. Restaurants were and still are segregated by race and gender, so kitchen workers are usually Black and Brown, working-poor men. This colonization of labor, ideas and culinary skills was not only evident in the racial segregation of their kitchens: it was crucial to their success. In presenting their “discovery" of new-found cuisines, Rodriguez and the Mango Gang exoticized the “natives’”” food, thus

reaffirming their own role as wise white chefs, whose knowledge of food and cooking was superior to that of the "natives”[25]. The ethnic and racial stratification that resulted, Othered the knowledgeable traditional cooks and ensured that Caribbean and Latin-American foods in Miami could only be legitimized by white male chefs.

This creates an interesting paradox. The vibrant, inclusive, multi-cultural community in which immigrants are portrayed as American success stories is also the place where structural racism limits opportunities for low-wage immigrant labor and reproduces racial and social hierarchies. The consumption of New World and other gourmet Miami fusion cuisines relies on a white, elite, foodie culture that is positioned in opposition to the Other through class and race, yet at the same time consumes the Other for pleasure and social capital, concurrently reinforcing the boundaries of difference: class and race (hooks 2009). This consumption is further problematized by commodification of the Black aesthetic, an often-intangible idea of Blackness as cool,

[25] The term "natives" is used allegorically as a parallel to Columbus' story of discovery.

and Miami's appropriation and fetishization of Blackness for neo-liberal, multi-cultural, marketing, and tourist promotions (Thompson-Summers, 2018).

In her analysis of culinary tourism, Molz a noted food scholar, builds on hooks' theory, arguing that white western tourists “consume the Other through food, without acknowledging the complex histories, power relationships, mobilities or even the migrants ... that make this food available" (Molz 2007, p. 82). For Molz, privileged consumption includes eating for fun and curiosity and positions national and ethnic differences as a novelty. This perception, in turn, reinforces the relational social statuses and relative hierarchies which separate the privileged from the othered. Molz’s theory of privileged consumption can be applied to the phenomena of Maitre Divas. In Miami, privileged consumption of exotified food and culture is fueled by the fetishization of difference. Miami is a place to see and be seen, and there is a perception that a visit to the city is a glamorous, hedonistic, experience. In the restaurant industry, performances of gendered-Black otherness satisfies a craving for what is different, adventurous and filled with “sabor”, the Spanish word for taste, or what hooks would call the racialized seasoning that is the spice of life. My findings indicate that hiring Black women is spurred mostly by concern for the bottom line. There is no evidence to suggest that the restaurant owners' intent with regard to hiring Maitre Divas was to positively diversify their staff or participate in cultural exchange and sharing as a means of promoting healthy and egalitarian cultural consumption (Pitcher 2014).

To conclude, in the daily making and unmaking of racism, Miami's restaurant industry is a mechanism through which race and class privilege are reproduced and

given credence (Johnston & Baumann 2014; Pitcher 2014; Santiago-Valles 2005). Food is part of daily life. W*ho* prepares, serves, commodifies, and consumes food within specific spaces and *ho*w they do so both reflect the social stratification and racial politics of society at large. In their analysis of Culinary Capital authors Nacaratto and Lebesco (2013) argue that society does not allocate a single, static value to particular foods, consumption patterns or styles of service. Instead, culinary capital is perpetually changing, in accordance with value shifts across the culinary habitus, as relevant actors display, exchange and usurp various levels of social, economic and political power (Bourdieu 1986; Naccarato & Lebesco 2013).

Miami's hybrid fusion cuisine and the correlated phenomena of Maître Diva's demonstrate the ways in which white authority and structural advantages, enabled the dominant group to shift the discourse and image of these foods, transforming these cuisines from underrated and insignificant cookery into expensive and exotic gastronomy. The "gourmetification" of these provincial foods perceived as non-white cuisine as well as the presentation of Black women as an exotic Other in White dominated spaces allow modern Miami restaurants to position themselves as highly desirable, hip, urban and cosmopolitan.

5. WHITENESS: AN INVISIBLE, TANGIBLE, ONGOING PROJECT OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER

Introduction

The sparse attention to the role of whiteness in studies examining the racial stratification of restaurant workers is particularly troubling, given the US restaurant industry's long entanglement with race and racialization (Z. Brewster 2009; Z. W. Brewster and Nowak 2018; Z. W. Brewster and Rusche 2012b). Imported into the Americas during colonialism, the US restaurant industry is steeped in a history of white hegemony and racial segregation (Rawson and Shore 2019). As I will demonstrate further in this introduction, whiteness was an integral part of the restaurant industry's evolution, and continues to play a role, albeit quietly and with troubling optics, in the persistent racial stratification in the industry.

When I use the term whiteness, I am speaking of the structural advantages of race typically available to people with light skin and European features who embody white racial identity. These advantages and forms of privilege are of material benefit, with tangible value, taken for granted and normalized (Chen 2017; Frankenberg 1993a; Harris 1993). Often, those who are white are oblivious of their admittance into this preferred social category (Frankenberg 1993a). They habitually dismiss disparate lived experiences due to systemic inequities choosing instead to see the negative outcomes as rooted in poor lifestyle choices, and individual circumstances (J. R. Feagin and Vera 2000).

Feagin describes this worldview as "the white racial frame", which he defines as, "a broad and persisting set of racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, interlinked interpretations and narratives, and visual images. It also includes racialized emotions and

racialized reactions to language accents and imbeds inclinations to discriminate" (J. R. Feagin 2020, vi). This dominant racial framework permeates all aspects of cultural beliefs and social behaviors and is reinforced systemically through the practice of white hegemony. It is foundational to the way in which actors traverse the racial habitus of the workplace, as it makes whiteness the sought-after social category for those who are non-white (Fanon 2008). For those who are white, they have to be mindful of transgressing the rules of whiteness, and of living a life that deviates from the idealized construction of whiteness as a superior, affluent, privileged and powerful position. For some whites, intersectional factors such as poverty, gender, sexual orientation, and language coalesce in such a way that the social position of whiteness is diminished. Whites who transgress the rules have difficulty accessing the privileges of whiteness, because they are often pushed to the outer margins such as those known by the racial slur "white trash" (Hartigan 1997a). While the term suggests a contamination of whiteness, and generally refers to poor whites, it has also been contested, and asserted as a racial and social identity. White trash as a "rhetorical identity", provides a different perspective of white cultural formation, which includes a re-inscription and affirmation of the privilege of whiteness within an intragroup contest (Hartigan 1997a, 319).

I acknowledge that critics will challenge these definitions as being essentialist, or even racist, yet it should be understood that while I recognize the heterogeneity of whiteness, this discussion of whiteness in the restaurant industry necessitates a grouping of white racial identity that "conceptualizes whiteness as a configuration of meanings and practices that simultaneously produce and maintain racial cohesion and difference in two main ways: (1) through positioning those marked as 'white' as essentially different from

and superior to those marked as ‘non-white’, and (2) through marginalizing practices of ‘being white’ that fail to exemplify dominant ideals” (Hughey 2010, 1290). While the terms “white” and “white people” refer to a racial classification, the term whiteness refers to the advantages given to those who are white, such as resources, power and opportunity. For this reason, white people have a vested interest in maintaining and ensuring whiteness (Lipsitz 2006; Dyer 2005).

By grouping white racial categories into these two categories of practice for analysis, it provides an opportunity to examine white racial formation as an active project that sometimes falters and flourishes. Within these fits and spurts of the expansion of the dominant racial category, we can see the extent to which whiteness operates to reinforce its ranks or obstruct racism. That said, I do not intend for this discussion to only focus on whiteness as a destructive process. Part of my motivation for studying the role of whiteness in racial stratification and the exacerbation of racial inequality, stems from a desire to better understand racial division and racial connection. This discussion considers the evolution and possibilities of whiteness as a social location from which there is increased allyship, as well as a position from with there is the potential for the development of a culture of activism and more extensive, and systemic anti-racism work. As a scholar activist, I’ve written this chapter in an effort to make a unique contribution to anthropological and sociological discussions about race and racism in restaurant labor, thus providing insight into how whiteness is operationalized in restaurant labor, with the ultimate goal of improving race and gender equity, professional opportunities, and working conditions in the restaurant industry for those who are non-white.

An Industry Built on Whiteness

The modern American restaurant originated in the mid-eighteenth century in Paris, France, as a fancy soup shop, described by historians as a "consommé[26] shop with great decor, higher prices and a well-heeled clientele" (Rawson and Shore 2019, 30). Soups were considered to be tonics, and so the first restaurants advertised themselves as spaces where patrons could enjoy warm comforting broth. The most popular restaurants were frequented by the wealthiest people, the white bourgeoisie, who would pay high prices for "restorative cures" in fashionable spaces (Rawson and Shore 2019, 30). These spaces and places of restoration, now known as restaurants, were designed to provide an elevated multi-sensory, dining, experience for the upper class. The rooms were beautifully decorated, the china and silver used to serve the consommé were exquisite, and the service provided to patrons was individualized and discreet; all enduring hallmarks and traditions that continue to define the upper echelons of modern day fine-dining establishments (Rawson and Shore 2019). Over time, the restaurant menu expanded to include a wide array of foods that were cooked to order, at almost any time of day, as reflected in the current incarnation of fine dining restaurants. The modern restaurant was built on an ideology of European distinction, taste, class, and sophistication, and created for the upper echelon of society, in essence it was created for those who were white.

While the concept of a restaurant was evolving into a French elitist space, the French were also just emerging from the French and Haitian Revolution, where in Haiti, a

[26] Consommé is a French term for a perfectly clear, fat-free broth, made from animal bones that have been simmered for hours with aromatics to extract the maximum flavor. Consommé's are typically garnished with small, expertly cut, decorative vegetables.

French colony had defeated their colonizers in a brutal war, to become the first Black Republic. Historical accounts of the life of Toussaint L'ouverture, the leader of the Haitian revolution show that he languished in a French prison for 8 months before his death. Louverture's treatment by the French reflected their attitudes towards Blacks during that time. While it is not explicitly documented, it can be assumed that these early incarnations of restaurants were exclusively for well-heeled white folks, their families and friends, given the importance of French Noblesse and the bourgeoisie class structure at the time.

In 1837, Delmonico's opened in New York City as the first known restaurant in the United States. It had all the elements of luxurious French restaurants, "an elegant room, smart waiters, a choice cellar, and superior cooking" (Rawson and Shore 2019, 32). The first US restaurant was also segregated by gender, effectively restricting the patronage and labor to white men. This changed in 1868, when a group of wealthy white women hosted a luncheon at Delmonico's for the writer Charles Dickens, effectively ending the practice of restaurants as exclusive spaces for white men, and introducing well-to-do women as restaurant patrons (Ewbank 2018).

The color line was not as easily traversed and so racial inequality remained a constant factor in the US restaurant industry. It wasn't until civil rights legislation that discrimination against Blacks in eating places was prohibited. Nevertheless, this didn't completely abate the practice of racially discriminate service and hiring which my research and that of others demonstrates is still rampant today (Dirks and Rice 2004; Sarumathi Jayaraman 2016; Saru Jayaraman 2011; Reyes, Benner, and Jayaraman 2015). In 2015, one hundred and seventy-eight years after first opening, Delmonico's was the

defendant in a lawsuit filed by its tipped employees who claimed the restaurant failed to pay a full minimum wage, overtime wages, and compensate workers for the costs of maintaining a uniform as required by law ("Current Cases | Delmonico's Steakhouse | Fitapelli & Schaffer, LLP" 2015). The charges amounted to wage theft and exploitation of vulnerable and financially precarious workers, a common occurrence in the restaurant industry, even today. Most often, as discussed in previous chapters, those that experience the greatest and harshest forms of exploitation in the restaurant industry are women and people of color. Although race and gender are not explicitly stated in the lawsuit, social mores of that time suggest that many of those impacted also experienced other forms of subjugation under the leadership and legacy of white European owners. While the last owners of Delmonico's were not related to the original founders, their shared European cultural sensibilities are rooted in centuries of white privilege and power that shape the US restaurant industry.

In this chapter, I examine the role of whiteness in Miami's restaurant industry, and how whiteness is experienced, imagined, and deployed in the everyday experiences of restaurant work. Drawing from ethnographic data, I share vignettes that illustrate the materiality of whiteness, the way in which it is embodied, how it shapes what different bodies can and cannot do, how it is experienced and how it is lived. I examine the role of Anglo white women navigating their new minoritized roles in Miami's majority Latinx restaurant industry, and the way in which they "hope" for change. Lastly, I discuss how whiteness is reproduced in the everyday work of restaurants, and how this maintains a culture of racism. While I primarily draw from interviews with those who identify as white, this chapter also includes the perspectives of those who identify as non-white. I

analyze ethnographic data from participant interviews to investigate the way in which whiteness is operationalized, and the ways in which it manages workplace behavior and racial stratification.

White Allyship

After graduating Summa Cum Laude with an associate's degree in culinary arts from Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island, I accepted a culinary fellowship at the Johnson and Wales University (JWU) in North Miami. The campus was just about to open, and my role was similar to that of a teaching assistant. Most of the faculty were new to the University, and since I had just graduated and was familiar with the JWU culinary curriculum and requirements, my job was to help the chefs acclimate to the JWU way standards of food production, or so I was initially told. There were three of us hired as Fellows, to help with the opening of the school. All three of us were Black. Two were men, and I was the only woman. When we weren't helping the chef instructors, we spent our time working in the storeroom, going to Publix to buy small items that didn't arrive on time, and delivering packages to offices.

That first semester, I was assigned to assist a new chef who was teaching institutional food production. The chef was a tall, white American man who had several years of experience cooking in hotels and restaurants; however, this was his first foray into culinary education. I remember I was amused by the fact that his toque[27] kept falling off because he was so tall it would get knocked off every time he was under the exhaust hood. He would also sweat profusely, so the paper toque would get wet around the rim on

[27] A toque is the traditional tall, white, pleated, chef's hat worn in European kitchens.

his forehead, disintegrating and become even more unstable. Eventually, he would just leave it off. The school was very strict about uniforms, and I recall the Dean admonishing him on a couple of occasions for not wearing his toque.

Working as a Fellow meant that my workday started at 6:00 am. I began by preparing elaborate breakfast platters, and continental breakfast platters for VIP's. Once those were ready, I would help the chef and the students prepare the hot breakfast buffet for the students and staff, which was filled with a steady supply of eggs, bacon, sausage, pancakes, waffles, fruit, yogurt, coffee and tea. The institutional food class served double duty. It was both a classroom where students learned to produce large quantities of food, and a place where large numbers of students would go to get fed. In other words, our classroom was also the cafeteria. A couple of weeks into the semester, I noticed that the chef I was assigned to was speaking to me with an attitude. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but he was impatient with me for no reason, and when he spoke to me, it felt as if it was with derision. Soon, he started to intensely criticize my work, even the smallest and simplest assignments. I couldn't do anything right. He began to harass me, not sexually but verbally and emotionally in a menacing way. He would stare me down and make rude comments about my cooking skills. I reported his behavior to the Dean, who brushed off my complaint. A couple of days later, I was standing next to him in class with the "mis en place[28]" for his demo when he said something to me, but I didn't catch it because of the noise from the hoods. Irate that I didn't respond, he suddenly shoved me hard, hitting my shoulder. Understandably upset at what was now a physical attack, I went to the Dean for a second time to complain about the chef. The Dean, a white Jewish man who was also a

[28] Mis en Place is the French culinary phrase that means everything in its place. It's the term used to indicate an organized set up for food preparation.

holocaust survivor and known for his no-nonsense attitude, came back with me to the kitchen where he confronted the chef in front of the class. The chef denied that he had physically assaulted me. The Dean then asked if anyone saw the chef shove me. The class was silent for what seemed like forever, until a white male student spoke up, backing up my claim that I had been shoved. The Dean immediately fired the chef, who left in a firestorm of profanities, and then returned to steal the meat slicer. He continued to harass me for a couple of weeks after his dismissal by repeatedly phoning my home and calling me racial slurs. I quickly changed my number, and never heard from him again.

Twenty-five years later, while walking my dog at the park, I ran into the white man who had come to my defense that day that day in the kitchen. I'll call him Adam. We started sharing stories about working as a chef when we realized that we both graduated from the same culinary school. Within moments of that disclosure, he recognized me from that memorable day and started shouting excitedly, "I know you; I know you; I know you! You're not going to believe how I know you", and enthusiastically recalled the entire story. We stayed in touch, and once I started conducting interviews for my dissertation research, he agreed to be a participant in my study. He was now a chef for a multi-unit, corporate foodservice management company that provides foodservice for restaurant and catering facilities in institutions, universities, corporations and conference centers across the United States. He was managing the culinary operations for one of their restaurants. I went to his home to interview him, and this is some of what he shared about his experience as a white, male, Jewish chef, managing a staff of mostly Black and Latinx cooks and dishwashers.

Taking a Knee to Mitigate the Uprising

Researcher: So, you had mentioned earlier that you worked at Gordon-Wallace and Grant, towards the end of the Obama administration when Kaepernick was going down, and the racial politics in in the nation were heating up.

Adam: Blowing up!

Researcher: So how did that affect the racial politics at work?

Adam: It affected it a lot. They looked down upon, they looked at us as slave drivers and plan.., and you know, there was, we had a little uprising.

Researcher: What? What happened during the uprising? And when you say…

Adam: Nobody wanted to work. All my employees, both shifts.

Researcher: Both shifts?

Adam: Like all of a sudden, nobody wanted to work. And I was like, what are you guys doing? What are you doing? We have a job to do. [They said] Not for them. That wasn't for me. They were rebelling against my higher ups.

Researcher: Who are your higher ups?

Adam: You know, the directors.

Researcher: The directors of Corporate Restaurant Food Empire?

Adam: Of that unit. Of that [restaurant] unit at Gordon-Wallace and Grant.

Researcher: And the directors were mostly…?

Adam: Latin. And they, and they cater to the white and Latin people for promotions and so on.

Researcher: When you say they were Latin? Could you be more specific in terms of their nationality.

Adam: Columbian.

Researcher: Columbian?

Adam: And they stick together.

Researcher: Were they recent Colombian immigrants? Were they…?

Adam: One was, and one grew up here. One was the director, and the other was the general manager. They were both young. They were thirty. In their thirties. They were young, young, young. Their first big position. And all they did was push, push, push. And there was noooo… oh, they didn't know how to balance.

Researcher: Did they push people of color differently than they pushed…?

Adam: Absolutely.

Researcher: How so?

Adam: They would just, they hated seeing you stand around or taking a break or anything.

Researcher: So, what did, what would they do?

Adam: Write you up.

Researcher: So, if you were a person of color, you are more likely to be written up by a Colombian manager in that particular restaurant?

Adam: Absolutely.

Researcher: How do you know this?

Adam: Because I saw it. I was there. I had to do crazy stuff. Like I have to have meetings and kneel on one knee and say I'm with you. What are you doing?

Researcher: What do you mean kneel on one knee?

Adam: Like Kaepernick. Kneel on one knee. [And then I said] I'M WITH YOU!!!

Researcher: In the meeting you…?

Adam: In the meeting, in front of those directors. Oh, they were mortified. They were moooortified!

Researcher: What happened?

Adam: I couldn't get anything done.

Researcher: *Everybody* was rebelling?

Adam: They were rebelling!!!

Researcher: In what way?

Adam: They wouldn't work.

Researcher: So, did they come to work?

Adam: They came to work, alright, and went, fuck you! Yep.

Researcher: So, they would show up?

Adam: And then they would say, Oh, I gotta go home. For whatever, I got a family emergency. They would fuck with them. They would screw with these people, because they screwed with them. But I was seeing all kinds of stuff. I would try to keep this team together, any sort of way. There was once I mean; they were making nothing. So, I would have empathy. I didn't have much sympathy, but I had empathy. Because I would have sympathy if I knew you were trying super hard. And then you just couldn't get it. And then that's fine. And I'll shuffle you around like a good coach. But there was so much pressure from up top. I don't have time for anything else.

Researcher: How do they pressure you?

Adam: They call me in the office and yell and scream at me and show me the video of what they're doing? Oh, this is what you're not paying attention to? You suck.

Researcher: So, they had cameras in the kitchen? cameras? Cameras?

Adam: Yeah, they could really, they could zoom in on your, on your phone and see what you're looking at. Really beautiful cameras. Yeah, big money so they could see details.

Researcher: So, they call you in and then yell at you?

Adam: And then I'd have to go out and say to my people, I wouldn't yell at anybody. I would try not to anyway, right? Just say, Listen, you're not helping me. Right? They're on my case. Can you not do this? Can you not do that? Because this is what they're watching. There's cameras everywhere. We're not alone. Never think you are. I would explain this to my people all the time. What are you guys doing? What? Why? Why are you making my job harder? Our job is to keep these guys happy. And keep our customers happy. And it's not that hard. Same thing every day, right? Trying to get everybody in a Zen mode. But man, it was hard. Because

they, at one point there was someone dying in my crew. They had family members die once a week for like eight weeks. And nobody had money to bury anybody.

Researcher: Wow.

Adam: So now somebody's mother's sitting in state somewhere. Who knows? And they don't even know how they're going to bury her. It's so they have this pressure and that pressure. And they, you know, unfortunately, most of these guys had like four or five kids with four or five different women. So, they're working 40 hours a week and getting their pay garnished. And then walking away with 20 bucks. That was their fault (Adam - 50 year old, white Jewish-American, male chef.).

Whiteness, Allyship and Performance Politics

In my analysis of Adam's interview, I think it's important to begin by acknowledging the fact that he's a well-meaning white man who cares about his workers. Our first encounter in that classroom over 25 years ago shows that he was not afraid to take a stand for people in support of victims of oppression even when it's unpopular and difficult. In the time that I came to know him during field work, we spoke candidly about his work, his frustrations, and his joys that came from making a difference. He was quite proud of mentoring a young Black woman from St. Lucia and helping her to get her a prestigious culinary internship. He got to know her family and was personally vested in helping her

advance in her career. He also shared with me his concern for his Black workers, especially those who were Haitian, who weren't paid a living wage and were often late or no shows for work because they would get pulled over and sometimes arrested for driving while Black. He hated the toxic working conditions of his job, the surveillance and racially disparate punishments in particular, but felt he was stuck due to his own struggle to maintain a middle-class lifestyle, and the fact that he was now middle-aged, and reticent to start a new career, or find a new job. The saying, "better the devil you know than the devil you don't" comes to mind as an accurate descriptor of his professional situation.

That said, I found Adam's story about taking a knee at work to be incredulous. When I met with him at his home for the interview, it was a cool January morning. The windows were open, and we sat at his dining room table enjoyed a cool breeze. He offered me coffee and seemed quite relaxed as we made small talk before we began. His white Russian girlfriend was friendly and came in and out a couple of times during our meeting.

I was surprised that our interview took such an interesting turn. I was taken aback by Adam's theatrical performance of racial solidarity, as he was quite loud and animated as he recalled the specifics. I was also surprised by his candid and matter-of-fact way of talking about low wages, harsh punishments and surveillance that were part of the culture of his kitchen.

In solidarity with his workers, and simultaneously in self-interest, Adam boldly challenged the racial politics and division within his kitchen by co-opting the symbol of a movement created to protest racial injustice and the fatal killings of Black men by police.

His cause was not as urgent or dire, nor did it truly have anything to do with Black subjugation, or racial equity. While his form of protest was a result of the mistreatment of Black workers in the kitchen, his ultimate aim was to get them back to work. Adam's political performance diminished the gravity of Kaepernick's peaceful protest, effectively centering his whiteness, and sending out an appeal to his mostly Black staff that he was "with them" so they would comply with the directors' work requirements and thus make his life easier. This tactic inadvertently made light of the systemic racism his workers were experiencing as well as the toxic work environment within which they worked. I would even argue that Adam's taking a knee could be considered interest convergence, in that he took a knee only because their interests aligned. While he probably agreed with the politics of Kaepernick's protest, his performance was a stretch, and spoke of his desperation to get his bosses off his back, more so than it did about the rights of his Black and Latinx cooks. In studies of performance and protests, scholars have found that performance often intertwines normative social and cultural behaviors and their resistance to them (D. Taylor and Steuernagel 2015). These behaviors make claims such as, "I am with you" and denounce abusive conditions. Although Adam's performance centered his needs as a chef struggling to manage poorly paid, racialized employees resisting oppression, it also aligned him with the workers in solidarity against the directors, the corporation and the working conditions.

Yet this too is complicated, and not free from white racial bias. At the end of the conversation, when Adam was talking about his worker's multiple children with different women, he appeared to blame them for the fact that after their wages were garnished for child support, so they ended up with $20/paycheck, as opposed to finding blame with an

unlivable wage, and systemic racism that reduced their opportunities and cast serious restrictions on their life outcomes. Adam's comment is in alignment with the dominant white racial frame which reflected his Judeo-Christian beliefs about normative familial behavior and was rife with moral judgement castigating the men's sexual behavior and family choices. In this way we see the complexity of racialized beliefs and how they operate to juxtapose the alleged racial inferiority of Blackness against and eventually in definition of white superiority.

By positioning the men with multiple children by different mothers as deserving of financial insecurity, Adam reinforces racial tropes that say Black men are bad fathers. He is blind to the racialized burden of an inappropriate value system, because he has been indoctrinated in a belief system promoted by white hegemony that rewards traditional heterosexual married families and demonizes anything contrary. These beliefs are rooted in the plantation politics of colonialism, which positions Black men and women as normatively sexually deviant and incapable of performing "traditional" family roles (Hamer 2001).

Although Adam's taking a knee is complicated, from his worldview, the essence of his gesture reflects his support for racial justice, and by extension his support for his Black cooks. At the same time, his comment about his workers' paternity and baby mama's is in alignment with the white racial frame and reinforces perceptions of white supremacy. For his cooks, the real consequences of Adam's racialized beliefs about Black men's inability to be good fathers is a narrative that justifies the punitive lack of resources and opportunities for Black fathers and their children. This justification comes from a deeply internalized belief of white superiority which inadvertently colors racial

interactions, thus reproducing the negative cycle of systemic racism. This is one aspect of the contagious and insidious nature of white racism.

Another example of how white racism operates in this restaurant is through the power of white upper management, in this case, the Colombian directors. Miami is unusual in that the high concentration of foreign-born citizens has created a reconfiguring of US ideas of racialization. The US racial category of whiteness in Miami has expanded to include well-educated, lighter-skinned, bi-lingual (English and Spanish), socially mobile Latinxs. Upwardly mobile South Americans such as the directors fall into the category of whiteness, not solely because of phenotype and class, but also because they fall into the most desirable type of immigrant, one that is perceived as deserving of the right to live in the United States (Aranda, Chang, and Sabogal 2015).

This ideology of "deserving immigrants" in Miami has a direct correlation to whiteness and worth, as the criteria for those who are deemed deserving is "rooted in class, status, and cultural hierarchies" which all "privilege whiteness" (Aranda, Chang, and Sabogal 2015; Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003). "The good immigrant is the one who comes by legal means, works hard, and becomes as close to white as possible" (Aranda, Chang, and Sabogal 2015, 159). Within the narratives that construct frames of good versus bad, and deserving versus non-deserving immigrants, is the belief that undeserving immigrants are undignified, lazy, and incompetent, which we see playing out in a highly segregated restaurant workforce.

In the case of Corporate Restaurant Food Empire, the white Columbian directors were good immigrants who likely viewed the darker hued, working class, immigrant cooks as untrustworthy and inept. They had a sophisticated surveillance system which

they used in classic Foucauldian style to create a carceral structure of surveillance, in an attempt to enact control (Foucault 2012). In other words, as a dominant group they had hegemonic power over the workers both white (Adam) and Black (the cooks), and as such used the threat of punishment, being written up, publicly admonished, not receiving a raise and the threat of losing their jobs and income to get workers to do what they wanted them to do.

While this use of power and authority is typical in most capitalist organizations, it is particularly problematic in this situation because of the racial, economic, social, and cultural power differential at play. According to Adam, Black and brown workers were singled out for harsher treatment by the directors, which probably also meant they were less likely to receive promotions, raises, or better working conditions. The non-white immigrant cooks were considered underserving, treated as such and automatically denied consideration and resources for upward mobility within the workplace. Black Haitians fall into this category of undeserving immigrants, as they are often thought of as dirty, uncouth, and believing in Vodou, which is the antithesis of good Judeo-Christian beliefs. Black Americans working as prep cooks are not immigrants but because of their low-paying jobs and diminished socioeconomic status are largely considered representative of the ghetto or hood, and also positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy.

By using techniques such as camara surveillance, racialized practices are attributed to performance, and punishments are claimed to be distributed fairly, although most workers such as Adam know that in reality, this is fallacious. This is one of the impacts of whiteness on racial stratification; it reproduces white supremacy, and Black

subjugation, and rarely allows for those in marginalized positions to escape their bottom place location.

I Married a Trans-Girl and Other Forms of White Marginalization

Another of my white participants, Geena, was a 33-year-old woman, from Virginia. A recent arrival to the city of Miami, she had worked for many years in rural Virginia as a short order cook in a Bagel shop, and in the front of the house as a server. She generally worked in casual and family style restaurants, which didn't require the precision knife skills of fine dining and thus provided some cover for her physical disability, cerebral palsy. As a result of her disability, she walked with an uneven gait and had limited use of her left hand, which was smaller than her right. The fingers on her left hand curled uncontrollably into a loose fist. Sometimes her hand dangled from her arm as she walked. She became a cook despite her disability and was quite adept in the kitchen although as she said with a raspy, smokers, laugh, "When I hold a knife, I look funny". She used her forearm to steady items she was carrying against her body or to stabilize food on the cutting board when needed. Geena moved to Miami from Virginia about nine months before our interview. She was married to a Trans-woman and came to Miami to escape the pervasive threat of violence that she and her wife lived with ever since her wife's gender re-assignment transition began. She stated that she "came for the sunshine, the beach, the vibe, the nightlife and the adventure" (Geena - 33 year old, white American lesbian woman. Line Cook.)

When we first met for the interview, Geena was working as a line cook in a well-known, European-styled restaurant in Miami's Design District. The restaurant was a cozy

eatery that felt like a Parisian bistro with less than a couple dozen tables, around 40 seats. It was popular with locals and tourists alike for lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch. Geena shared a great deal with me about her experience working as the only Anglo-white woman in the restaurant. She felt the owners, both female immigrants, one from the Middle East, the other from Argentina; were openly racist, and told me that when speaking about dark skinned people from the Dominican Republic one the owners allegedly said, “Oh, those people steal, they can't hold jobs, they are dirty. They make that food, they're dirty” (Geena, 2019). Geena said the word dirty came up often in reference to Blacks, or dark-skinned immigrants. She also shared that in some respects she felt she was treated differently because she was a lesbian, and her wife was transgender. She recounted the following about the first time her co-workers realized she was married to a trans-woman.

> Geena: The first time Quinn came in…Yeah, [giggle], I didn't know she was coming. I have a terrible habit of not telling people she's trans. I just say she's my wife. Because I really don't know how to tell people. That's a really weird thing to say. Right? You know, you never know. When I told them I was a lesbian, every single one of them was like, No. Nooo! Why would you do that? You can't have babies. What's wrong with you? What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me?
>
> Researcher: Wow. And little do they know?

Geena: Uh huh. What my actual story is? Right? Right, right and yeah, so to tell them, straight out, I just didn't. So, one night she's tagging me and a little drunk, and decides, I'm going to go see my wife.

Researcher: What's tagging? Spray painting?

Geena: I'll tell you later, okay.

Researcher: Okay.

Geena: But so, she comes down, she's a little drunk. She just wants to see me and give me a kiss. So, she comes in. It's at night and I'm working with Maria. It's early, early, on. Maria doesn't like to work, so she's sitting at a table. And so, she comes in and Maria looks at her like you piece of shit, you nasty, nasty, human being. Doesn't say a word, not to Quinn, not to me, ever. But the look on her face was just pure hatred. Wow. Yeah. And then the next time Quinn comes in, she just comes into the kitchen. And Frida, the head waitress. She's like, that's your wife? I said, Yeah. And she said, is she a football player?

I said, no.

She didn't know.

Researcher: How do you know?

Geena: Cuz, she didn't.

I didn't tell anybody she was trans. So, she's like, that's the biggest woman I've ever seen.

And I'm like, Yeah, she's a big girl.

(Geena, 2019).

When I heard more about Geena's history, I learned that she came from a white working-class family, with "traditional" American values. Her family were politically and religiously conservative and she only recently disclosed her wife's gender re-assignment to them once she was safe in Florida, hundreds of miles away. An educated woman with a bachelor's degree, she spoke at times with a very proper accent, which sometimes seemed to be British. She enunciated her consonants, which I find unusual for Americans. Geena told me that her degree was in literature, and that she aspired to be a writer. I imagine that this aspiration had something to do with her accent. Geena and her wife struggled financially. They lived in a run-down studio in Little Haiti, partially anchored by a massive old banyan tree. She told me that when it rained heavily, her bed would get wet. At night, rats often ran over them in bed while they slept. Yet, for the most part, she was happy. She had lived in abject poverty for most of her life, so financial precarity was nothing new to her. The game changer was that she and her wife no longer had to hide their secret identities. They could be their authentic selves.

Despite the fact that Miami offered Geena greater personal freedom, her work presented some unexpected challenges. For starters, there were linguistic barriers. Almost all of her co-workers spoke Spanish except her. The nationalities of her co-workers read like a Benetton commercial. Almost exclusively female with only one male worker, they

were from Spain, Morocco, Argentina, Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Other than the owners, the only person that spoke some English, albeit broken, was the lone male employee from Uruguay. All the food orders that came into the kitchen from the servers were in Spanish, and all of the written and verbal communication was in Spanish. I asked Geena if they required Spanish speaking staff when they hired her, and she said no. There was no language requirement as a condition of employment. Fortunately, Geena had taken Spanish in high school, so she was able to get by using a combination of basic Spanish, sign language and gestures, nevertheless her newfound ethno-linguistic and racial minority status wore on her and created misunderstandings and tensions on the job. When I asked how her co-workers would have been identified racially in Virginia, she said "they would all be considered Mexican, even the ones that are considered white here" (Geena, 2019). I pointed out the irony that none of her co-workers were actually Mexican, and she laughed. I went on to ask how she felt being the only non-Spanish speaking person, or the Gringa as her bosses called her. She said, "It made me feel like I was in a different country" (Geena, 2019). She went on to explain as follows:

> Geena: It made me feel like I was in a different country. Like to be honest, because… Because... they felt like, you know, they don't really feel like they have any real rights. Or there's like there's no breaks. You get in trouble for using your phone. They all have kids. You know, it's nighttime and the kids, you're gonna want to check on their kid. Yeah. And we didn't have an employee bathroom. That was off limits. It was only for the owners.

Researcher: So where did you use the bathroom,

Geena: The small bathroom for the restaurant. Which was really hard because it's a small restaurant so you're waiting like three hours to pee. Sometimes, you know, cuz like you're cooking too, so you can't you know, you can't leave the kitchen if you're cooking right?

Researcher: So, when you get a break, you gotta run and go and then there are other people are in there. So, you gotta wait and then it gets busy and you can't go?

Geena: But it's like, since there were no breaks. You weren't allowed to take a break.

Researcher: How long was your shift?

Geena: Sometimes only like five hours, so no big deal, but sometimes nine and a half. Like on my brunch days for nine o'clock I get there like 8:45 and work till seven. It's like that's a long time, and like you mess up an order, you're… I don't know. Just… it felt like the owners were more like dictators, you know.

Researcher: Authoritarian?

> Geena: Yes, with their own little stake in the world. You better play by their rules kind of a thing.

Minoritized White Women

Geena's lived experience and social identity is contrary to popular discourses of whiteness in the United States. She's not a woman of privilege and power, instead she's a working-class lesbian, married to a transgender woman, living in poverty. Geographically, she and her wife lived in a community of Black Kreyol speaking, working-class, Haitians, who are socially positioned at the bottom of Miami's racial hierarchy. Although Geena and her wife felt more liberated from transphobia by living in Miami, they still regularly experienced violence and harassment from their Haitian neighbors and other people on the streets of Miami. They rode bikes, walked or used public transportation, so their vulnerability to public attack was amplified. Geena shared stories of her wife being spat at, hit, or having their bike tires slashed on several occasions. In the social hierarchy of life in Miami, their status as white women was regularly subjugated and degraded because of the intersection of their race, class, gender and sexual orientation.

In the restaurant, Geena was tokenized and minoritized as the only mono-English speaking person of US origin, and because she was a lesbian. As a US born white woman from a region of America that was culturally white, Geena now had to navigate a new type of whiteness that didn't privilege her, Miami's white Latinx hegemony. Over 50% of Latinx people in the last US Census identified as white, so while the United States may be experiencing a diminishing number of white Anglo Americans, the racial category of

whiteness has expanded significantly to include Latinx people, especially in places like Miami (Hartigan 2005; "U.S. Census" 2010).

When Geena said she felt as if she was in another country, she was effectively saying she no longer felt white, because she understood whiteness as a dominant and superior racial category. Within her new minoritized status, she was suggesting that she now knew what it felt like to be Black, or in certain places, under certain conditions, what it felt like to be an immigrant. She wasn't treated with respect. People didn't automatically assume the best of her, nor did they seek out her opinion, or treat her as a credible and competent cook. Her response to my question about how she felt as the only non-Spanish speaking "Gringa" in the restaurant spoke to the significance of harsh, disparate treatment as a mechanism of othering and excluding those that don't fit within the ascribed parameters of belonging within restaurant culture. The marginalization she experienced in the day-to-day operations stemmed from a confluence of her inability to communicate effectively, surveillance, punishment, and her subjugation to discourses from her bosses and co-workers who were overt in their beliefs of race, class, disability, and heterosexual superiority. Additionally, she was devalued within the organization as a human being. Within a couple of weeks of working at the restaurant the owners gave her keys so she could open and close the restaurant when they were unable, yet they wouldn't let her use the employee bathroom which they privatized for their personal use, and instead inhumanely required Geena and the other employees to work hours without a bathroom break because they couldn't use the restroom designated for guests. These factors compounded her minoritization and stigmatization as radically Other within the social order of the restaurant.

Another participant, Mindy, who was also a white female cook, similarly spoke of the discomfort she experienced as a minoritized white woman in the kitchen. Unlike Geena, Mindy was Jewish, straight, and from a liberal, wealthy, family. She fell into cooking while in high school, after she bailed out one of her mom's friends who had taken on too much by trying to do all the cooking for a large party. Once she graduated from high school, she started working in different restaurants and eventually ended up working at one of the largest hotels on Miami Beach, with traditional European departments such as a Bakery, Butcher, Pastry shop, Fish and Seafood. She spent two years working there, rotating through the departments and honing her culinary skills. Her experience was very different than Geena's. Here is some of what Mindy shared:

> Mindy: That was where you got to know, the people you were working with. And that was where I learned as my father told me, I learned that you can't live on $5 an hour, because there was a gentleman there named Sammy, who was from Brooklyn, a really nice Jewish man who had fallen in love with this Peruvian woman. She was a maid in the in the hotel, he was a cook. They had two children, and they lived in a studio on 71st and Collins and they couldn't afford to have a car. And I was this for lack of a better word, rich kid from Coral Gables. I mean, I was always harassed for being rich, even though they had no idea where I came from or who I was. They just assumed I was rich and, I'm in their clothes. You know, like I'm not wearing jewelry. I'm not wearing an expensive watch. Right?
>
> Researcher: Right. Right.

Mindy: I don't know where they got it from. But I got to know, all these people who are surviving on minimum wage, barely surviving on minimum wage and, you know, deciding not to go to the doctor because it was too expensive, or trying to eat as much food at lunch as they could,

Researcher: Cause they couldn't afford food?

Mindy: yup, and that forever, you know, kind of stuck with me ((Mindy 2019).

For Mindy, working in the kitchen brought to bear a heightened sense of awareness about her own class privilege, especially in comparison to the plight of others struggling to make ends meet. Lost on her were the subtle differences that set her apart from the rest of the crew and signaled to them that she was from a well-to-do social class. Mindy went on to tell me about the overabundance of testosterone in the kitchen and how that negatively impacted her work experience. I then asked about her identity in the kitchen. Here's how she responded:

Researcher: How many other people were working in the restaurant that look like you?

Mindy: Nobody.

Researcher: So, you were the only woman?

Mindy: I was the only woman, and I was the only white woman. Like Caucasian woman. There were Hispanic women.

Researcher: Okay.

Mindy: At the restaurant in the hotel, there were approximately 125 cooks on staff, okay, and there were six women. And then there were these eight Haitian women, but they weren't counted in the 125 because they literally spent their days like peeling potatoes, potatoes, you know, and making chicken stock and stuff like that. They had their own kitchen. I went in there once. They were lovely women. But yes, I was the only white woman. The only time I was not the only white woman was when I worked with a woman who was part of the husband-and-wife team and she was a white woman.

Researcher: Okay.

Mindy: Uh huh. And you know, she was away while he was away. Yeah.

Researcher: So, do you think your race was an advantage?

Mindy: No!

Researcher: No?

Mindy: No!

Researcher: Whiteness was not?

Mindy: No!!! because I was… I was immediately written off as rich. Okay, and unrelatable.

Researcher: Okay, because you're white?

Mindy: Yeah.

Researcher: So, had you been Black or from…

Mindy: I think… If I would have been Hispanic… I think if my skin had been darker and I didn't have you know, I didn't have blue eyes, then, I think I might have been accepted more. I also think it's interesting because my mother's an English professor, my mother told me that as I said, working in restaurants my sophistication level in speaking, declined.

Researcher: Oh really?

> Mindy: Yes, because I was working among people who had substandard English or English was a second language. So, they weren't quite sure what they were doing. Right. And my mother kept pointing that out to me. You know, she said, you know, you don't use big words anymore. And I found that I hadn't even noticed that. (Mindy - 48 year white, Jewish, woman. CEO).

In this exchange Mindy is adamant that she's the only white woman in the kitchen except when the Peruvian woman is working. She doesn't consider the other Hispanic or Latina women to be white, which is noteworthy given that Mindy was born and raised in Miami, has experienced Miami's changing demographics, and comes from a liberal background. I find this remarkable in terms of Mindy's ideas of cultural and racial boundary making and I'm left wondering if it's pigmentocracy combined with a shared religious connection – both Mindy and the Peruvian woman are Jewish – that causes Mindy to categorize the Peruvian woman as white.

Regarding gender, the title of Sojourner Truth's speech, "*Ain't I A Woman"*, came to mind as I listened to Mindy speak about numerical gender disparity in the restaurant industry. It was significant that the Haitian women were not included in her count, supposedly because they worked in their "own kitchen" and that she qualified them as being "lovely women", as if the expectation is that they would be something other than pleasant and lovely. I would contest Mindy's position and argue that the Haitian women were not included in the count because they are considered invisible and insignificant due to the intersection of their race, gender, class, nationality and language. This othering of the Haitian cooks, and physical separation is symbolic of Haitian worker's positionality

as outsiders at the bottom of the color-caste system in the restaurant industry. Mindy's description of the women she worked with, reflects perceptions of who matters, and who does not, in Miami's restaurant culture.

Lastly, Mindy's belief that she experienced some form of reverse discrimination and that her whiteness was not an asset is an example of her white fragility. Robin DiAngelo describes white fragility "as the defensive reactions so many white people have when their racial worldviews, positions, or advantages are questioned or challenged" (DiAngelo 2011). Additionally, DiAngelo goes on to say that the defensiveness that arises during episodes of white fragility serves to maintain "white comfort" and positions of white superiority in a racially inequitable society from which whites benefit (DiAngelo 2011).

Mindy ascribes her feeling as an outsider to reverse racism. To her, this rare occasion where she is in the numerical race and gender minority is an experience of racial discrimination. At the same time, she fails to recognize how her race and class privilege operated on the job to get her cross-trained in multiple departments, something that the other cooks, such as the Haitian women who "had their own kitchen", were not invited to do. She attributes her promotions on the job to her skill and hard work. While I know of Mindy's work, and for sure I agree that she is talented, I also know there are others just as skilled as she, if not more so, that were not afforded the same opportunity, in part because of their social position.

In my own experience working at the same hotel as a supervising chef for a high-profile event several years later, I found the white European chef's in charge of operations to be overtly racist and hostile, deliberately sabotaging my work and that of

another Black Female Chef. Had that been Mindy's experience, I would empathize with her claims of "reverse racism". Later in the interview Mindy explains that the combination of her race and class position was a detriment in becoming part of the crew. For example, she said it took several months before she was invited to sit with the crew and have lunch. She told me she agreed with her mother's argument about her language because she was doing whatever she could to relate to her co-workers. She told me about one of her co-workers who was saving to buy a new pair of Reeboks and how she stifled her inclination to gift him a pair, knowing it would end her credibility and inferring that he would have been embarrassed. Of her non-white co-workers who she tried so hard to fit in with, she said, "I was in awe of them" (Mindy 2019).

Mindy reasserts her white superiority when she talks about her mother's observation that her language had become less sophisticated while working in the kitchen and that she stopped using "big words". In light of her contention that she was the only white woman in the kitchen, Mindy's claim that the quality of her grammar deteriorated while working as a cook reinforces narratives that kitchen workers are uneducated and unsophisticated, thus reifying the back of the house as a space of Blackness while simultaneously positioning herself as white, superior, and other, because of her command of the English language. These are some of the discourses that take place in the subconscious, that drive implicit bias, and overt racism, thus maintaining whiteness as naturalized, desirable and superior within the restaurant's social order.

Conclusion

Across the board, almost all of the participants I spoke with in interviews, focus groups, through participant observation or free listing, spoke of restaurants they worked in as having a hostile and toxic work environment. This was the most consistent response to questions about how whiteness impacted the work environment. It was through toxic, white, male masculinity, that the restaurant industry became known for its culture of toughness, endurance, heavy drinking, intoxication, and sexism. Two of the restaurants discussed in this chapter regularly used camera surveillance to monitor employee's behavior on the job. In both of these restaurants, employees resisted this type of 24/7 supervision, where their every move was scrutinized through slow work, or no work. Ultimately, both of these locations that used camera surveillance had an extremely hostile work environment, where employees were spoken to derisively, yelled at, and called names. In other restaurants where the hostility was less overt, there were still complaints of racist and sexist jokes during work, gossip about employee's sexual orientation, and who was sleeping with whom.

The cultivation of a hostile work environment was not just the job of men, as demonstrated by the two female owners of Geena's restaurant. The women had adopted toxic, white, masculine behavior as a managerial tactic, which backfired in their daily operations. In my own experience working in a restaurant during grad school, I witnessed female managers scream expletives in the kitchen about female customers who dared to complain about the service and quality of food. Unfortunately, this type of incivility has become part of the culture of restaurant work. Throughout this project, workers have shared with me multiple ways in which racism is deployed in the everyday such as marked jobs, harsher work assignments, infantilizing workers, no breaks or few breaks,

and limited access to promotions and better paying jobs. I've also seen how racism is embodied in workers – from the financial repercussions to health concerns – stress, hypertension, diabetes, substance abuse, and obesity. At the end of the day, it is white Latino and Anglo men that own the culture of this type of hostility in the restaurant industry, as they have embraced the militaristic tough guy attitude as part and parcel of what it takes to succeed if you want to work in kitchens.

In studying the effects of whiteness, it is abundantly clear to me that if we want to change restaurant culture, so it is less sexist, and racist, the first thing we need to change are the people perpetuating the sexism and racism. Some corporate restaurant chains have enacted diversity, equity and inclusion training, but that is not enough, unless it is practiced in the everyday. What resonates with me about whiteness is the hope that white women in particular express about a more equitable industry. From my interviews and observations, it seems as if white women are more inclined than white men, to understand how racism operates, even though at the end of the day they act in ways that support and reify white superiority. I've examined the way in which whiteness operates in the restaurant industry, not solely to define white cultural identity and problematize it, but also to produce knowledge about the relation of power to race, gender, class, ability, nationality and sexual orientation, in large part so we can disrupt the hegemony of toxic whiteness in the restaurant industry.

6. CONCLUSION: WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BUT WE HAVE SO MUCH FURTHER TO GO

This dissertation makes several contributions to the field of critical race studies, and the anthropology of race. Using an intersectional framework, this research project examined the intersecting roles of race, gender, class, nationality, language, sexual orientation and disability in the construction of social hierarchies in restaurant labor. Within this study, I paid close attention to the role of whiteness in the stratification of restaurant labor, particularly as it impacted ideas of race and racism that Latin American and Caribbean workers brought from their home country, and how these ideas shifted when they had to negotiate the US Black-white binary. Each of the chapters in this dissertation shows this in several ways, first through an analysis of the social conditions in Miami that produced this hierarchy, along with a thorough review of the existing literature. Next, I addressed the research methods and methodology, and how I would use intersectionality to explore the nuanced ways racism was operationalized in everyday restaurant work. The body of this dissertation, the chapters on Blackness, white adjacency, and whiteness, unpack the contours of Miami's tri-racial categories, as well as the instances of overlap.

I began my field work by asking restaurant workers to "Free List" examples of racism in the restaurant industry. While this exercise produced very salient and concrete examples of what workers considered to be instances of racism, such as reduced professional opportunities, lower wages for Blacks and Haitians, and racially disparate tipping practices; it also introduced me to the possibility of a tri-racial system in restaurant labor, as opposed to the US Black-white, racial binary. As I analyzed the data

related to identity, I realized that my research reaffirms scholarly findings that in Miami, Latinx identity is both an ethnicity and a racial category. This understanding led to my primary finding that racial politics in Miami followed a tri-partite model of racial categorization similar to that which is found in Latin America and the Caribbean. I determined that these categories were Black, white and a third category that I call white adjacent. I define white adjacency as a racial category of non-white people whose intersectional position within the racial hierarchy gives them proximity to the power and privilege of whiteness.

In chapter 3, I use ethnographic data to explore the stratification of Blackness. In this chapter I explore the impact of gender, class and nationality on the intragroup ranking. It is here that I first introduce the concept of white adjacency, by discussing Black chefs who although tokenized in a dominant white culture, have also managed to access the tangible resources of whiteness. These chefs have partnered with whites or worked in elite white organizations, which has enabled them to become successful restaurant owners, operators, and executive chefs. Through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups, I learned that their success was not happenstance, or due to exceptionalism, although to be certain, they were hard working and deserving. Instead, I argue that they became white adjacent because of an intersectional identity that included factors that whites found desirable, and as such gave them entrée to privilege and power. This chapter also addresses Haitian color caste system in the restaurant industry, which positions monolingual, Kreyol speaking Haitians at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

In chapter four, I discuss white adjacency as it applies to those who identify as "mixed", as well as Blacks who like the chefs in chapter 3, are positioned in lucrative and powerful restaurant positions. Class and pigmentocracy are substantial considerations in this chapter as they pertain to the racial ordering of workers so for example, well-educated, mixed race and Black participants had substantial advantages. Most significant in this chapter, is a discussion of "Maître Divas", a term I coined to describe Black women working in the front of the house as hostesses, managers, and Maître D's. In my analysis of Maitre Divas and their role in the restaurant industry, I discuss the commodification of the Black aesthetic, as a marker of racial inclusivity, as well as the way in which racial capitalism is deployed in the exploitation of Black bodies, demonstrated by an analysis of data pertaining to the Maître Divas. This chapter also examines the hypersexualization of Black women working in supervisory front of the house positions, and how they exploit men's sexual advances in an act of resistance. Chapter four also examines the exploitation of the Maitre Divas and other Black workers, as a form of racial capitalism. In this chapter my analysis of the preference for whiteness from the perspective of people of color contributes to anthropological scholarship on tri-racial formations in labor by specifically interrogating the role of ethnicity, class and language as it relates to racial hierarchy. This project also addresses non-white access to the resources of whiteness, by those who are positioned in proximity to whiteness, in a third racial category that I refer to as white adjacency.

In chapter five, I present rich ethnographic data which demonstrates the stratification of whiteness. In this chapter, class is again a significant marker of delineation across the spectrum of whiteness. This chapter also address the challenges

minoritized white women face while working in Latino dominated kitchens. It includes a discussion and analysis of a physically disabled white female participant who was married to a white transgender woman, and how she faced discrimination in a Latina dominated kitchen because of her sexual orientation and disability.

This dissertation project thoroughly explores racialization among Miami's restaurant workers, and the findings suggest that an intersectional approach to understanding and navigating the complicated dynamics of race may mitigate the entrenched race and gender segregation. While there are certainly improvements in opportunities for non-white workers, the industry will need to be more strategic about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Policies that reward restaurants that diversify their staff, particularly in the front of the house, and promote living wages for those in the back of the house would certainly help in addressing racial inequality. Further, the restaurant industry would be well served by strategic training and planning that reduces the culture of incivility within which discrimination festers. Through this project, I've encountered grassroots organizations strategically supporting and promoting marginalized restaurant workers. I've also encountered white chefs and owners who are deliberate about hiring a diverse staff and paying living wages. We've come a long way, but we have so much further to go.

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APPENDIX

A. Semi-structured Interview Matrix

Date of Interview	Participant	Pseudonym	Latino	Race	Gender	Nationality	Position	Language	SES	Age	Educ	FOH/BOH	Pol Orient
12/13/18	SSIJW01	Antoine	N	B	M	Bahamian-Haitian	Exec Chef/Owner /Investor	English/Kreyol	High	37	BS	BOH	Liberal
1/8/19	SSIJW02	Reggie	N	B	M	African American	Dish	English	Low	45	NHS	BOH	N/A
1/9/19	SSIJW03	Bradley	N	W	M	White American	Rest Mgr	English	Med	66	BS	FOH	X lib-liberal
1/13/19	SSIJW04	Isidora	Y	W	F	Chile/Nicaraugua	Server	Eng/Span	Low	26	HS	FOH	Moderate
1/15/19	SSIJW05	Adam	N	W	M	White American - Jewish	Chef	English	Med	50	AS	BOH	Moderate
1/30/19	SSIJW06	Alicia	N	B	F	African American	Busser	English	Low	35	HS	FOH	Moderate
2/1/19	SSIJW07	Imani	N	B	F	American	Server	English	Low	21	BS	FOH	Slight Lib
2/19/19	SSIJW08	Holli	N	Mixed	F	Jamaican American	Hostess	English	High	47	BS	FOH	Liberal
3/14/19	SSIJW09	Althea	N	B	F	St. Lucia	Pastry	English	Low	60	BS	BOH	Liberal
4/23/19	SSIJW10	Malcolm	N	B	M	African American	Chef Owner	English	Low	65	JD	BOH	Anarchist
5/6/19	SSIJW11	Brenda	N	W	F	White American	Bartender	English	Low	60	BA	FOH	X liberal
5/11/19	SSIJW12	Geena	N	W	F	White American	Line Cook	English	Low	33	BS	BOH	X liberal
5/12/19	SSIJW13	Aliyah	N	B	F	African American	Chef Owner	English	Low	41	BS	BOH	X liberal
5/17/19	SSIJW14	Jacob	Y	W	M	Cuban-Am	Rest Mgr	English	Med /High	30	BS	FOH	Moderate
6/10/19	SSIJW15	Jean	N	B	M	Haitian	Mgr-Empl	English/Kreyol	High	64	HS	FOH/Adm	Liberal
6/10/19	SSIJW16	Pablo	Y	W	M	Cuban-Am	Rest Mgr	Eng/Span	Med	38	BS	FOH	Slight Lib
6/10/19	SSIJW17	Sharon	N	Asian	F	Jamaican	Rest Mgr	English	High	56	MBA	FOH	X liberal
6/13/19	SSIJW18	Mindy	N	W	F	White American - Jewish	Owner/CEO	English	High	48	BS	FOH	Liberal
8/2/19	SSIJW19	Mateo	Y	W	M	Guatemala	Pantry Cook	Eng/Span	Low	31	HS	BOH	Moderate
8/5/19	SSIJW20	Nicolas	Y	Mixed	M	Guyana/PR/Brazil	Server Asst	English	Med	26	AA	BOH	Moderate
1/28/20	SSIJW21	Alejandro	Y	Mixed	M	Brazil	Rest Mgr	English/Port/Span	Med	54	MFA	FOH	Moderate

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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Williams, J. (2020). The Mango Gang and New World Cuisine: White power, privilege and race in the commodification of Latin-American and Afro-Caribbean foods. In H. Garth & A. Reese (Eds.), *Black food matters: Centering Black ways of knowing in the wake of food justice*. University of Minnesota Press.

2019 Ethnographies of/on Whiteness: Race and Racism, Collaborative Research, and Knowledge Production in and Beyond Anthropological Practice. [Organizer]. Four paper panel for the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, 2019.

2019 "Race, Space, and Nationalism in Miami, Cuba, and Puerto Rico." Cuban Research Institute, Twelfth Conference on Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Miami, FL, February 15.

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"I'm not racist, but…": Reflections on what researcher positionalities tell us about whiteness. [co-authors: Erin Tooher & Saira Mehmood] presented at the Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference, Las Vegas, NV, February 24, 2020

2019 "Tres Leches, Café con Leche, and Chocolat: Reflections on Shades of Whiteness in Miami's Latino-dominant, Restaurant Industry." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting for the American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, BC, November 23

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"The Maître Divas of Wynwood: Culinary Consumption and the Black Aesthetic in Hipster, Haute, Cuisine." Paper presented at the Annual Society for Applied Anthropology, Portland, OR, March 21.

"'I'm Not Racist, but…': Reflections on What Researcher Positionalities Tell Us about Whiteness." [co-authors: Maya Kearney, Erin Tooher, and Judith Williams]. Paper presented at the AES/ALLA/ABA Joint Conference, St. Louis, MO, March 15.

"The Maître Divas of Wynwood: Culinary Consumption and The Black Aesthetic in Nuevo Latino Cuisine." Paper presented at the Cuban Research Institute, Twelfth Conference on Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Miami, FL, February 15.

2018 "New World Cuisine: White Power, Privilege, and Race in the Commodification of Latin-American and Afro-Caribbean foods." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Jose, CA, November 16.

"Let's Talk about Race for Real: Lived Experiences of Whiteness, Community Based Participatory Research and the Road to Sustainable Discourse." Roundtable participant, Society for Applied Anthropology, PA, Pennsylvania, April 7.

"Disrupting Whiteness – A Critical Review of Current Literature on Race and Racism in Restaurant Labor." Paper presented at Annual Society for Applied Anthropology Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, April 4.