

# Increasing Ethical Sensitivity to Racial and Gender Intolerance in Schools: Development of the Racial Ethical Sensitivity Test

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This article is an attempt to develop a measure of ethical sensitivity to racial and gender intolerance that occurs in schools. Acts of intolerance that indicate ethically insensitive behaviors in American schools were identified and tied to existing professional ethical codes developed by school-based professional organizations. The Racial Ethical Sensitivity Test (REST) consists of 5 scenarios that portray acts of racial intolerance and ethical insensitivity. Participants viewed 2 videotaped scenarios and then responded to a semistructured interview protocol adapted from Bebeau and Rest (1982). After a 2-week interval, this procedure was repeated. Stability of the REST across time was determined by using the overall test–retest coefficient. Internal as well as interrater consistency was also calculated for each scenario. Overall findings indicate promise for the REST as a reliable measure to assess racial and ethnic sensitivity.

Key words: ethics, gender, race, school, tolerance

Schools in the United States are undergoing major alterations in their student bodies as the demographics of this country continue to change. It is expected that soon the nation's public schools will consist primarily of students of color and students for whom English is not their native language. However, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel who work with diverse children and their families are

predominantly White women. Sadly, conflict often accompanies diversity, and as one author stated, “The patchwork quilt of races, religions and ethnic groups often frays—and sometimes is torn to pieces” (Harrington-Lueker, 1993, p. 15). Statistics underscore the fact that bigotry, bias, and racism are problems that schools cannot ignore. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights indicate a dramatically high number of complaints about gender, racial, and ethnic harassment (Office for Civil Rights, 1999).

Racial and gender intolerance need not involve physical conflict or be maliciously motivated to be hurtful or harmful. Professional faculty and staff, often out of ignorance, hold negative stereotypes that prevent them from treating persons different from themselves with respect and dignity. Disapproving and distrustful attitudes toward women and students of color can subtly be conveyed through a tone of voice, posture, and gesture, as well as in overt statements. All of these intentional and unintentional daily acts of intolerance subsequently can adversely affect the way these students feel about themselves, their peers, and their schools. This, in turn, can affect their adjustment to school and their academic success. Educators and other professionals have the responsibility to acquire the knowledge and skills to respond to intolerant behavior in ways that are ethically defensible and consistent with the ethical codes of their profession.

Our work is an attempt to develop a measure of ethical sensitivity to acts of racial and gender intolerance that occur in school settings. We present the rationale and theory on which our work is based. We discuss the method for developing the video scripts containing instances of professionals’ racial and gender intolerance. We present and compare a number of professional ethical codes that guided the development of these scripts, and we offer a description of the process of filming the scenarios. We describe the videotape materials themselves and the development of the scoring instruments designed to assess ethical sensitivity. We conclude with a discussion of the findings from our study to establish the reliability of our instrument, and we describe future directions for this research.

## REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Our work on the development of the Racial Ethical Sensitivity Test (REST) was informed by two sources in the literature: professional ethics and Rest’s (1983) theory of ethical development. The phrase “ethical sensitivity” was coined in 1983 by the psychologist James Rest. Rest proposed that rather than viewing morality as a unitary process, it would be useful to view it as a multifaceted phenomenon, consisting of four psychological components. Component I, ethical sensitivity, is the identification of the salient ethical aspects of a situation. This component involves recognizing different possible lines of action and the ways each line of action will affect the parties concerned. People who are ethically sensitive are aware of differ-

ent possible choices of action and how each line of action can affect the parties concerned. They can conceptualize cause–consequence chains of events that might follow from one’s action. The psychological processes of ethical sensitivity include empathy and perspective-taking skills.

Component II, moral judgment, entails formulating the morally ideal course of action by integrating the various moral considerations and weighing moral principles. Once a person is aware of the different possible lines of action and how other people would be affected by each one (Component I, ethical sensitivity), the person judges which line of action is more morally justifiable (Component II, moral reasoning). Component II has been extensively researched using Kohlberg’s Moral Judgment Interview (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987) and Rest’s Defining Issues Test (Rest, 1979).

Component III, moral motivation, involves deciding what one actually intends to do. Simply because the morally ideal course of action has been defined does not mean that a person will choose to follow it. Moral motivation determines the importance given to moral values when compared to other motives. Failures in ethical action due to deficiencies in Component III occur when a person does not put moral values higher than other values. This may occur, for example, when other values, such as protecting one’s self, or gaining recognition or success, exert more influence on action than concern for doing what is right. Rest (1983) cited Hitler and Stalin as examples of failures in Component III, moral motivation. That is, their ethical failures were not due to deficiencies in awareness of the impact of their action (Component I) or their inability to figure out what would be the just thing to do (Component II). Rather, Hitler and Stalin can be seen as having set aside ethical considerations in pursuit of other values.

Rest’s (1983) final component, Component IV, involves moral action. Moral action entails the execution and implementation of one’s intentions. A person might be ethically sensitive, be able to make good moral judgments, and place a high priority on moral values, but if this person lacks the skills to behave in a moral way (e.g., to assist a drowning man), or is distracted or discouraged, then moral failure will occur. Moral action requires a person to have moral character, ego strength, perseverance, strength of conviction, and courage. Although psychological resilience and moral character do not guarantee adequate moral responses, a certain amount of each is necessary to carry out a line of action. Thus, moral failure, according to Rest, can occur because of a deficiency in any of the four components, and all components are important determinants of moral action. Rest’s first component, ethical sensitivity, provided the theoretical framework for this project. Specifically, our work developed a measure of Component I processes, ethical sensitivity for professionals working within the context of schools.

Rest (Rest & Narvaez, 1994) was fond of quoting President Lyndon Johnson: “It is not doing what is right that is hard for a president. It’s knowing what is right.” Preparing professionals to discern the right course of action must start with the rec-

ognition of ethical issues. Ethical sensitivity is the ability to identify the ethical issues in a situation by (a) making inferences from individuals' verbal and nonverbal behaviors, (b) identifying what others affected by the situation want or need, (c) anticipating their reactions to one's attempts to help, and (d) responding with appropriate affect. The primary assumption in research on ethical sensitivity is that something one might do or is doing can affect the welfare of someone else. Discerning that a situation requires a moral response is the first step in the process of moral action.

The project described here advances earlier work directed at increasing professionals' ethical sensitivity to real life dilemmas in the professions of dentistry (Bebeau & Rest, 1982), counseling (Volker, 1984), medicine (Self & Baldwin, 1994), nursing (Duckett & Ryden, 1994), and sports (Bredemeier & Shields, 1994). Bebeau (Bebeau, 1994; Bebeau & Brabeck, 1989; Bebeau, Rest, & Yamoor, 1985) has conducted the most extensive work on ethical sensitivity. She has demonstrated that ethical sensitivity can be reliably measured, can be demonstrably improved through education, and is distinct from moral reasoning (Component II).

Our work on the REST also extends previous attempts to measure ethical sensitivity by using videos to depict real life instances of racial and gender intolerance; previous work has relied primarily on audiotapes. Videotapes are better stimuli for assessing ethical sensitivity, because part of the construct requires awareness of verbal and nonverbal cues that indicate a moral or ethical problem. Finally, our work extends previous work on diversity training and multicultural education by linking ethical sensitivity to existing professional codes of ethics of multiple school-based professions.

Ethical concerns related to racial and gender intolerance clearly cut across professional disciplines (Kline & Brabeck, 1999). The use of ethical codes in training professionals who work in schools is most developed within the field of psychology (e.g., Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998). Although a professional code of ethics for teachers and teacher educators is a relatively recent development (Freitas, 1998), other school-based professions have developed ethical codes that guide professional practice. Their work and that of other professional organizations guided our attempt to identify a set of ethical principles common to different school-based helping professions (see references with asterisks for professional codes consulted).

In the remainder of this article we report our efforts to (a) identify instances of racial and gender intolerance in secondary schools that require an ethical response, (b) use Rest's (1983) theory to develop a measure of the psychological processes engaged in when being ethically sensitive, (c) tie the issues of racial and gender intolerance identified in school settings to existing professional ethical codes developed by school-based professional organizations, and (d) examine the reliability of our instrument.

## ETHICAL SENSITIVITY: SCRIPT AND VIDEO DEVELOPMENT

In creating a set of videos that served as stimulus materials for assessing ethical sensitivity, we first developed a summary of ethical codes from school-based professions. The ethical codes reflect the ideals that various professional organizations offer as necessary for ethical professional practice. We developed a grid of the ethical principles articulated by the professions of teaching (National Education Association Representative Assembly, 1985), school administration (American Association of School Administrators, 1996), psychology (American Psychological Association [APA], 1992), school psychology (National Association of School Psychologists, 1985), counseling (American School Counseling Association, 1992), social work (National Association of Social Workers, 1996), and nursing (American Nurses Association, 1985). In addition, we included the codes developed by specialty groups working with diverse populations (Office of Ethnic and Minority Affairs of the APA, 1993) and women (Feminist Therapy Institute, 1990). The comparison of ethical codes (available from Mary M. Brabeck) served as a guide for identifying ethical dimensions of the acts of intolerance that we depicted in the scenarios.

Intolerance and discrimination within educational settings has adverse academic (Steele, 1999; Vogt, 1997) and psychological (Thompson & Neville, 1999) impacts. Although there have been attempts to educate school-based professionals to increase tolerance, embrace diversity, and overcome stereotypes (e.g., D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991; Marshall, 1999; Rudney, Marxen, & Risku, 1999), results are conflicting. Most efforts to increase tolerance and cultural competence lack a theoretical rationale for aspiring professionals. We reasoned that if aspiring professionals understood that their professions expect and even require certain kinds of ethically defensible behavior, they would be more likely to adopt these behaviors. There is some evidence within professional psychology that knowledge of professional ethics increases ethical behavior (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). We attempted to build a measure that would embed ethical principles in depictions of acts of gender and racial intolerance and insensitivity.

We identified six principles common to all professional codes that we reviewed that had implications for working with diverse populations as suggested by the guide of the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs of the APA (1993) for providers of psychological services to ethnic, linguistic, and culturally diverse populations. Our work was further informed by the Feminist Therapy Institute (1990) guide to working with girls and women.

The first ethical principle, *professional competence*, involves conducting oneself in such a manner as to bring credit to oneself and one's profession. This principle requires one to continually strive to achieve professional competence, including cultural competence. The second ethical principle, *integrity*, consists of

an awareness for one's professional values, needs, and limitations and of their effects on one's work. This ethic includes an effort to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory practices. The third ethical principle, *professional and scientific responsibility*, involves ethical collaboration among professionals to meet the needs of others and holding colleagues to ethical and professional standards. The fourth principle is *respect for others' rights and dignity* and involves treating others with respect, safeguarding confidentiality of others, and being aware of individual, cultural, and role differences. The fifth ethical principle, *concern for others' welfare*, consists of recognizing the impact of adverse social, environmental, and political factors in assessing needs and keeping the welfare of the client or student paramount. The last ethical principle, *social responsibility*, consists of helping others understand the extent to which racism or biases can cause suffering and working to improve society and social policy so as to serve people better. Of course, these principles are grounded on the overarching principles of justice, beneficence, and nonmaleficence and virtues, a discussion beyond the scope of this article. See Kitchener (2000) and Brabeck (2000) for discussions of the philosophical foundations of ethical principles relevant to professional practice.

The second task was to identify acts of intolerance that indicate ethically insensitive behavior in American schools and the creation of plausible depictions of such acts. Summaries of newspaper and magazine articles from the popular press were collected and distributed to a racially and ethnically diverse team of graduate students who read and highlighted the reported instances of intolerance that were relevant to our work. In addition, we conducted four focus groups with minority university students who reflected on their own school-based experiences. Students from the graduate schools of education, nursing, and social work participated in four separate discussions. In assigning volunteers to focus groups, we attempted to balance the groups in terms of ethnicity and gender. In spite of these efforts, most groups contained 6 to 8 participants and were primarily a mix of African American and Latina women. The focus groups were facilitated by diverse teams of women and men.

Each focus group addressed the following questions:

1. As you think about the teacher–student (therapist–client, nurse–patient, or social worker–family) relationship, have you encountered instances of ethnic or gender insensitivity?
2. Think about a collegial relationship or relationship with supervisors, principals, department heads, physicians, and so forth. Have you encountered instances of ethnic or gender insensitivity?
3. As you think about discussions of school policy, such as teenage pregnancy, school violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or discussions of curriculum, have you encountered instances of ethnic or gender insensitivity?

4. As you think about your encounters with parents or family members of a child with whom you have worked, have you encountered instances of ethnic or gender insensitivity?

The groups lasted for approximately 90 min and were tape-recorded and transcribed. The focus group transcripts were distributed to a core group of research assistants to identify common themes and experiences and combine these with the issues that had been found in print media. The research team members then wrote short descriptions of instances of racial and gender intolerance that could be developed into scripts. Team members assessed the scenarios for their realism, the number of ethical issues and instances of intolerance included, the ethical principles violated, the subtlety of the issues, and the degree to which these would be plausible to convey in video form.

Eight scenarios were selected and sent to a professional playwright. From the eight rough drafts, five scenarios that reflected five different school contexts were selected. The following five situations are depicted in the videos:

**Faculty Lounge:** Two teachers are discussing a student in front of a new faculty member. The two veteran teachers discuss the student's academic and private life in stereotypical and derogatory ways. They show no concern for her privacy and a complete disregard for her rights to confidentiality. In addition, it is clear they have no understanding of her culture. When the new faculty member tries to share her thoughts and stand up for the student, she is met with hostility and ridicule.

**Math Class:** A teacher who usually teaches honors math is asked to teach a basic math skills class. A second teacher is observing the class. Throughout the class, the math teacher demonstrates his cultural ignorance and incompetence in teaching a math class of this level. He makes stereotypical remarks and, in his attempt to connect with his students, allows racial and gender bias to affect his interaction with his students. He never considers that his teaching style might be the reason that things are not going well in the classroom.

**Northside High:** An announcement is made in a high school that a student (White boy) has been killed in an accident. The student body is told a memorial service has been arranged, special counselors will be available, and contact numbers will be posted, and the student body is asked to pray for the family. After the announcement, two Black students come to talk with the school counselor. They speak with her about how, a couple of weeks ago, a friend of theirs (African American boy) went to the hospital in critical condition after being shot, an event that these two boys witnessed. They are hurt that none of the special treatment being offered the White boy and his friends was made

available to them and their friend. They make it clear that they believe racism is the reason for this discrepancy. The school counselor, rather than listening and trying to meet their needs, defends herself and denies any discrepancy.

**Residence Hall:** A meeting is being held in a residence hall. A White girl stands up and complains that the Latina girls speak Spanish in front of the rest of them, and she thinks they should not be allowed to do so. The house mistress allows an unproductive fight to grow between the Spanish-speaking girls and the White girls. When the Latina girls assert that they have the right to speak their language, they are told that the school has a policy against speaking foreign languages. The house mistress defends the school rule without considering the racial discrimination inherent in it. When a Latina faculty member tries to defend the girl, she is not listened to and is treated rudely.

**Basketball Practice:** A Black student is a few minutes late for practice and is chewed out by the coach in front of the team. He is then punished by being made to run extra laps. Meanwhile, a White student is sitting on the bleachers making out with his girlfriend and ends up being even later than the first student, in addition to being out of uniform. The coach chides him for being a “stud” and does not make him do extra laps. The coach yells out stereotypic slurs while the Black student runs laps, and then tells the White student that Black students keep “guys like you” out of school. Later, the Black student complains to his guidance counselor about the racist behavior of the coach. His counselor minimizes the problem and tells him to stick it out, stating that he needs basketball to get into college. This is despite the fact that the student is on the honor role.

Margaret Hunt, a professional playwright, developed several drafts of the scripts. After each draft, members of the research team assessed the draft to ensure that the ethical dilemmas depicted were directly related to the professional codes of ethics. For example, the Faculty Lounge scenario depicts a conversation between two faculty members about a Latina student who is not achieving in class. The script reads as follows.

Parker: She’s not the sharpest crayon in the box?  
 Lynch: No. It’s hard to tell ’cause she never speaks up.  
 Parker: She never shows up, either.  
 Lynch: It’s not just that. Latin American immigrants—they don’t speak up. The girls, I mean. You noticed that?  
 Parker: I got her into the reading program—she’s dyslexic. I got her on Ritalin for hyperactivity. I can’t carry her to class and make her speak up.

This exchange portrays a violation of the respect for people's rights and dignity as well as a breach of confidentiality. When a final draft for the script was completed, filming began. The videos were directed by Howard Enoch, Theater Director at Boston College, and edited by David Corkum, Director of Video Productions. Actors in these productions were Boston College drama students, members of the research team, professional actors, and Boston College staff members who volunteered their time.

## THE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The interview protocol was adapted from a semistructured interview used in the Dental Ethical Sensitivity Test (Bebeau & Rest, 1982). The interview questions were designed to address the participant's identification of ethical issues violated in the video depictions of racial and gender intolerance in schools.

The following provides an example of the interview protocol for Scenario 1, Faculty Lounge.

1. Imagine you are Ms. Highland. How do you respond to Mrs. Parker? What is your reaction to the entire conversation among Mrs. Parker, Mr. Lynch, and Ms. Highland?
2. Use one or more of the following prompts to elaborate on the above answer:
  - a. Explain why you said what you did.
  - b. What is it about the scenario that lead you to say ....
  - c. You said ... can you explain you rationale for taking that course of action?
  - d. Can you tell me the reason that you would respond this way?
3. How do you think Mrs. Parker and Mr. Lynch would interpret and react to the course of action you think Ms. Highland should take?
4. What do you think are the issues in the scene you just witnessed? This question can be followed by probe questions to clarify. The following are acceptable questions to ask:
  - a. "You said [repeat student's response]; can you tell me more about why that is an issue?"
  - b. "What was it in the scene that made you feel [repeat student's response] was an issue?"
  - c. "I'm not sure I understand what you meant when you said [repeat student's response]; can you explain it to me?"
  - d. "Can you expand on why you consider [repeat student's response] is an issue?"
5. Are there are any other issues?
6. What do you think a professional teacher like Ms. Highland ought to do in response to the issues you noticed?

7. What arguments might be offered against the recommendations you have made?
8. It is likely that in your professional practice you will encounter a student like Lourdes. Do you think what you will actually do for that student is the same as what you said you would do for Lourdes here? What is the difference between your actual course of behavior and your theoretical course of behavior? Why is there a difference?
9. Is there anything else you would like to say or comment on?

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCORING RULES FOR THE RACIAL ETHICAL SENSITIVITY TEST

A pilot study was conducted to develop a scheme for scoring responses to the interview questions. Nine graduate students, eight women and one man, from the Education Department at Boston College were interviewed. Each participant had previously taken courses both in multicultural issues and professional ethics. Some participants viewed only one video, whereas other participants viewed all five. After viewing a scenario, participants were interviewed using the semistructured interview format, as previously described. In total, 24 interviews involving nine participants and five videotaped scenarios were conducted by the same interviewer. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. These interviews were used to develop the scoring system.

There were two phases in the development of the scoring system. First, we examined the degree to which the principles identified in the professional codes of ethics were present in the interviews; we looked to see if participants could identify the violations of the six ethical principles (competence, integrity, professional and scientific responsibility, respect for others, concern for others' welfare, and social responsibility), even if they did not name them as violations of principles. Each of the five members of the research team independently read each transcript to see if the principles were evident in the protocol and found numerous examples of responses that indicated interviewees saw that something was wrong (e.g., respect for persons were violated, the welfare of the person was not a paramount consideration, confidentiality was not kept, etc.).

In the second phase of development of the coding scheme, the research team met and viewed the scenarios together, noting each behavioral instance of racial or gender intolerance. The six principles embedded in the videos covered a wide range of behaviors. For example, the principle Respect for Others' Rights and Dignity covered the following behaviors in the Faculty Lounge video:

1. The lack of respect for professional colleagues.

2. The violation of the student's right to confidentiality.
3. The disrespectful comments about the student's intelligence.

Each video portrays a number of complex ethical issues (ranging from 5 to 9 issues) regarding gender and racial intolerance. Faculty Lounge has 8 issues; Math Class has 6 issues; Residence Hall has 9 issues; Northside High has 5 issues; and Basketball Practice has 9 issues. Thus, the REST consists of a total of 37 instances of ethical violations that participants were asked to identify. We then identified each of the ethical principles violated by the issues portrayed (see example from the Faculty Lounge scenario in Table 1).

Next, each of the protocols (transcriptions of interviews) were assessed on whether they identified each of the behaviors and the degree to which they identified and commented on each of the instances of ethical sensitivity depicted in the video. The coding was as follows: (a) A score of 1 would mean that the participant did not identify the behavior in the scenario, (b) a score of 2 would mean that the interviewee was able to identify the unethical behavior, and (c) a score of 3 would mean that the participant recognized the unethical behavior and was able to elaborate on this and further note its complexity. Thus, the range of possible total scores was from 37 (identified no issues) to 111 (scored 3 on all issues).

An example drawn from the scenario, Faculty Lounge illustrates the scoring process. In this video, two faculty members violate Lourdes's right to confidentiality by gossiping about the student in the cafeteria in front of a new faculty member. They discuss private details about the student's life, such as abuse and her learning disabilities. The seasoned teachers are not considering the student's right to privacy, the effect on a new faculty member's perception of the student, or how this might affect this student's education and the services she receives from the educa-

TABLE 1  
Summary of Ethical Issues and Relevant Ethical Principles in Faculty Lounge Scenario

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Issue No. 1: Mr. Lynch's lack of self-awareness and resulting stereotypic remarks (integrity, respect for others' rights and dignity).
Issue No. 2: Mrs. Parker's lack of self-awareness and resulting stereotypical remarks (integrity, respect for others' rights, and dignity).
Issue No. 3: Mr. Lynch's lack of cultural knowledge and its effect on his competence as a teacher (competence, concern for others' welfare).
Issue No. 4: Mrs. Parker's lack of cultural knowledge and its effect on her competence as a social worker (competence, concern for others' welfare).
Issue No. 5: How Ms. Highland is treated professionally (professional responsibility, respect for others' rights, and dignity).
Issue No. 6: Ms. Highland's responsibility to speak out (professional responsibility, respect for others' rights, and dignity).
Issue No. 7: Confidentiality (respect for others' rights and dignity).
Issue No. 8: Mrs. Parker's responsibility to confront students (social responsibility).

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tional system. Here are some examples of responses given to interview prompts that were scored as 2.

I feel like there are tons of confidentiality issues here. They are totally speaking about this student freely.

I feel like they were talking about this girl and no one was there to defend her.

This is a breach of both confidentiality and Lourdes's right to privacy, and it was coded as 2, indicating the interviewee showed awareness of the issue.

An example of a response that was coded as a 3 reflects the complexity with which the interviewee views the issue of confidentiality:

I think one's confidentiality is really important and we need to respect a student's privacy. . . . I think that it's good for teachers and other professionals to discuss students, but I think it needs to be in the context of you know you want to serve the student well, we don't just want to talk about this. [This conversation] could have jaded my interpretation and probably my experience next year when I have her in class. So that kind of thing perpetuates negatives in the same kind of way that it perpetuates the positives. But neither one really serves the student well.

This response illustrates the complexity of the behavior and was coded as 3.

In the Faculty Lounge scenario, there are eight behaviors a participant could identify as violations of ethical principles. Each of these behaviors violates an ethical principle (see Table 1). A total of eight items are ratable in this scenario. A total score of an interviewee's level of ethical sensitivity may be obtained by summing these eight scores. Scores range from 8 to 24, with an 8 meaning no issues or unethical behaviors were identified, and a score of 24 meaning they saw all eight of the behaviors and were able to elaborate and note the complexity of the issues.

To further refine the scoring scheme, each of five research team members rated the interviews independently and subsequently met as a group to compare our results and determine interrater agreement. We rated a total of 19 interviews (144 issues). Rater reliability across the pilot data for each item (issue) of each interview protocol ranged from .50 to 1.00. Rater agreement for five raters was between .80 and 1.00 for 77% of the items rated. We then discussed any discrepancies between the raters and determined a final score for each issue that was agreed on by all raters. By reaching this consensus on the scoring for each interview, we were able to refine the scoring rules and develop a scoring system that can be used to train new raters.

## TEST OF THE STABILITY OF THE REST

During the summer of 1998, 42 participants were shown two of five videotaped scenarios and given a semistructured interview, a self-report questionnaire, the

Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS; D'Andrea et al., 1991), and a short biographical questionnaire.

Forty-two students from a large metropolitan Northeastern university participated in this study. The sample included 10 male and 32 female students whose ages ranged from 21 to 43 years ( $M = 26$ ,  $SD = 5$ ). Students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds constituted 19% of the sample with 5 African Americans, 2 Asian Americans, and 1 Latino. Although most of the participants were graduate students ( $n = 34$ ), there were 8 undergraduate seniors in the sample. Of the participants, 41% reported an annual income of \$40,000 or less, 28% reported between \$40,000 and \$80,000, and 30% reported \$80,000 or more.

Although there is a large body of literature regarding professional competence in relation to racial and gender issues, there are very few empirically validated tools for evaluating one's racial or ethical awareness. The MAKSS was the only measure we found that was both related to our topic and held up as psychometrically reliable. The MAKSS was originally developed to evaluate the impact of multicultural counseling training on graduate students. D'Andrea and colleagues (1991) identified the importance of communication skills, knowledge about minority populations, and awareness about one's attitudes toward ethnic minorities as essential to competent counseling with diverse clients. D'Andrea et al. reported alpha levels of .75, .90, and .96 for the MAKSS subscales, respectively, with a sample of 90 graduate students in three different multicultural counseling courses and two courses that served as comparison groups. They reported subscale intercorrelations of .45 (pretest) and .32 (posttest) for awareness and knowledge, .32 (pretest) and .32 (posttest) for awareness and skills, and .51 (pretest) and .11 (posttest) for knowledge and skills. Factor analysis revealed factor stability for the skills and knowledge subscales but showed that the awareness subscale reflected a more multidimensional construct. Content validity consisted of matching items with course objectives and with the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (Ponterotto & Alexander, 1996). Pretest and posttest analyses revealed a significant difference in gain scores between the multicultural courses and comparison groups on all three scales.

The biographical questionnaire included information on gender, racial and ethnic background, education level, and annual income level of the participants. It was also used to characterize the participants of the study and assess their self-report of exposure to gender and racial diversity.

Two weeks later, the participants viewed the same two scenarios and answered the same interview questions. Neither the MAKSS nor the biographical questionnaire was given during the 2-week follow-up session. The interview transcripts were scored by two independent trained raters. We examined the internal consistency of the REST, stability of scores over time, rater agreement, and the relation between the REST and the MAKSS questionnaire.

## RESULTS

Cronbach's alpha levels to examine internal consistency for each scenario ranged from .27 ( $n = 10$ ) to .74 ( $n = 17$ ; see Table 2). Clearly the number of participants influenced the alpha levels. These alpha levels are good for a new instrument that relies on a newly formulated scoring scheme and newly trained raters. They also indicate that additional work needs to be done on the scoring rules, especially for the Basketball Practice scenario. Internal consistency for the MAKSS's three subscales ranged from .60 to .88 and compares favorably with previous data when sample size is taken into consideration.

Rater agreement for each scenario is reported in Table 3. Percentage of perfect agreement between two raters ranged from .584 to .778 for the first testing and from .638 to .815 for the second testing. The total agreement ratings over all five scenarios was .697 for Time I and .720 for Time II. These data indicate that there are moderate and acceptable levels of agreement across scenarios.

Stability between test administrations was assessed through a test-retest correlation of scores on each scenario. A total of 39 participants completed the same interviews at Time I and Time II. Test-retest reliability for each scenario is reported in Table 4. Stability between test administrations was further assessed through a test-retest correlation of total scores. The overall test-retest coefficient was .652 ( $p < .001$ ) for 37 participants who completed both testings. Although all participants completed the same two interviews in both testings, it must be noted that the participants may achieve their scores with different combinations of scenarios. An examination of the means of total scores indicated no changes in the overall sam-

TABLE 2  
Alpha Levels and Total Sample Size for Each Scenario of the Racial Ethical Sensitivity Test, the MAKSS, and Time I and Time II

Scenario	Time I		Time II	
	$\alpha$	$N$	$\alpha$	$N$
Math Class	.69	19	.74	17
Northside High	.59	16	.69	16
Residence Hall	.42	12	.70	9
Faculty Lounge	.64	20	.49	20
Basketball Practice	.46	13	.27	10
MAKSS-Awareness	.60	42		
MAKSS-Knowledge	.71	42		
MAKSS-Skill	.88	42		

Note. MAKSS = Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991).

TABLE 3  
Rater Agreement for Each Scenario

Scenario	Time I		Time II		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Math Class	.584	19	.714	16	.643	35
Northside High	.694	17	.737	16	.717	33
Residence Hall	.682	14	.696	9	.687	23
Faculty Lounge	.750	20	.638	20	.694	40
Basketball Practice	.778	15	.815	10	.790	25
Total	.697	85	.720	71	.700	156

TABLE 4  
Means and Standard Deviations for Time I and Time II for Each Scenario

Scenario	Time I		Time II		No. of Items
	M	SD	M	SD	
Math Class	2.31	.35	2.24	.31	6
Northside High	2.26	.41	2.01	.50	5
Residence Hall	1.94	.31	1.84	.41	9
Faculty Lounge	2.01	.34	1.93	.30	8
Basketball Practice	1.74	.26	1.81	.21	9
Total	2.00	.33	1.99	.35	37

ple with 40 participants at Time I achieving a mean score of 2.00 ( $SD = .33$ ) and 37 participants at Time II achieving a mean score of 1.99 ( $SD = .35$ ).

Although the MAKSS was deemed a moderately reliable instrument ( $\alpha = .60-.88$ ; see Table 2) in this study, it failed to correlate with any of the scenarios or with totals for Time I ( $r = .03$ ) or Time II ( $r = .05$ ). This may indicate that the REST is measuring a construct independent of multicultural counseling knowledge, awareness, or skill and that additional investigation is needed.

## DISCUSSION

The REST presents an original approach to examining development of a complex ability. The instrument is theoretically grounded in Rest's (1983) four-component model and based on principles identified in codes of professional ethics developed by school-based professions.

The REST provides a reliable measure of ethical sensitivity to instances of racial and gender intolerance that is stable over time (2-week interval). Our review of instruments that assess the impact of multicultural interventions, or efforts to

measure the development of racial and gender sensitivity, revealed a great need for reliable and valid measures. We believe the results of this study indicate promise for the REST.

Although work to refine the scoring system and assess its relation to other similar scales is needed, the results indicate that this approach has potential value for both professional development and research on interventions to promote professional ethics and tolerance.

The REST provides a means for moving discussions of cultural competence and ethical sensitivity to intolerant behavior, out of the realm of political correctness. Instead, it ties identifying and acting on intolerant behavior to professional ethics and to the professions that developed the codes of ethical behavior. In so doing, it also may tap the psychological processes of Rest's Component III, moral motivation. Additional research is necessary to examine this possibility.

It is important to note that the REST assesses professional tolerance as opposed to a personal multiculturally aware value system. Vogt (1997) noted that individuals in a diverse society must learn to tolerate each other if there is to be equality and peace. Without tolerance, these other qualities are impossible. He further explained that tolerance is not that everyone agrees with or likes each other's beliefs or ways of being, but merely accepts and lives peaceably with these differences. Vogt believed that tolerance could be taught within the schools through intergroup contact and by direct teaching methods. The assumption behind our work is that direct teaching using professional ethical codes as a textbook may improve ethical sensitivity. Although we did not directly test that assumption in this study, we intend to do so in the future.

Young professionals in training can be expected to learn the codes, know how to apply them to various scenarios, and take action in accordance with them. In this way, part of their professional duties includes ensuring equity and fairness in the school or counseling environment. In other words, they are expected to behave tolerantly and promote tolerance in others. Because this concept does not expect people to change their personal beliefs, only to behave in accordance with a professional code of conduct, it bypasses the defensiveness, fear, and anger involved with trying to change another's personal belief system. This is not to say that seeking change at a personal level is unimportant; clearly, this is important work as well. However, promoting tolerance sets up standards of fairness in a more immediate and tangible way that benefits students and consumers faster than would occur if we waited to change the hearts of all professionals.

We plan to use the REST to investigate the relative impact of courses in ethics and courses in multiculturalism on the development of racial ethical sensitivity. We also are examining ways to standardize the interview process through the use of CD-ROMs. Finally, we intend to examine the teaching interventions most potent in raising scores on ethical sensitivity. We have clearly demonstrated that uni-

versity students reflect a range of sensitivity to issues of intolerance embedded in the videotapes we developed. The next step is to see if, as Bebeau (1994) reported, educational interventions, either multicultural or ethics courses, or direct training with the REST, increases ethical sensitivity.

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