Our Voices: Climate Study on Race

2021 Preliminary Update
Initial Qualitative Trends

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Initial Qualitative Trends Release Overview

- **This is a preliminary report of qualitative responses**
- **Includes themes identified from two questions:**
  - Have you seriously considered leaving?
  - Perceptions on the racist graffiti on The Rock in Fall 2020
- **These two questions received the greatest number of written responses**
- **Continued analysis is being conducted on the other qualitative responses**
- **Subsequent qualitative reports will be released on the aggregate level (all campuses and colleges)**
- **Final reports are expected in Fall 2022**

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Acknowledgements

The Climate Study Committee Co-Chairs
and
the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
would like to express our sincerest thanks to
Cristin Compton, Ph.D. (Communication Studies)
for her leadership on the qualitative analysis for the 2021 Climate Study on Race. This release and the subsequent analysis are a result of her leadership and dedication.

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Analysis Overview

- **2021 "Our Voices Matter" survey data**
  - 5,800 respondents
  - Considered Leaving: 1,004 responses to prompt
    - "Have you ever seriously considered leaving Kent State?"
    - Analysis is 142 pages long
  - The Rock: 1,721 responses to prompt
    - "How did learning about this event make you feel?"
    - Analysis is 255 pages long
  - Themes in following slides are brief & do not encompass the complete analyses
    - Data is overlapping and intersecting
  - Codes developed based on participant perceptions
    - Organized thematically & pragmatically

Selected Themes from “The Rock” Analysis

Selected Themes from "The Rock"- Emotional Reactions and Larger Social Climate

- **Emotional Reactions**
  - Negative emotions (e.g. disgust, anger, unease, etc.)
  - Some surprised; many unsurprised by event
- **Perceptions of Larger Social Climate, Race and "The Rock"**
  - Leadership/Politics in the US
  - Ohio and Surrounding Communities

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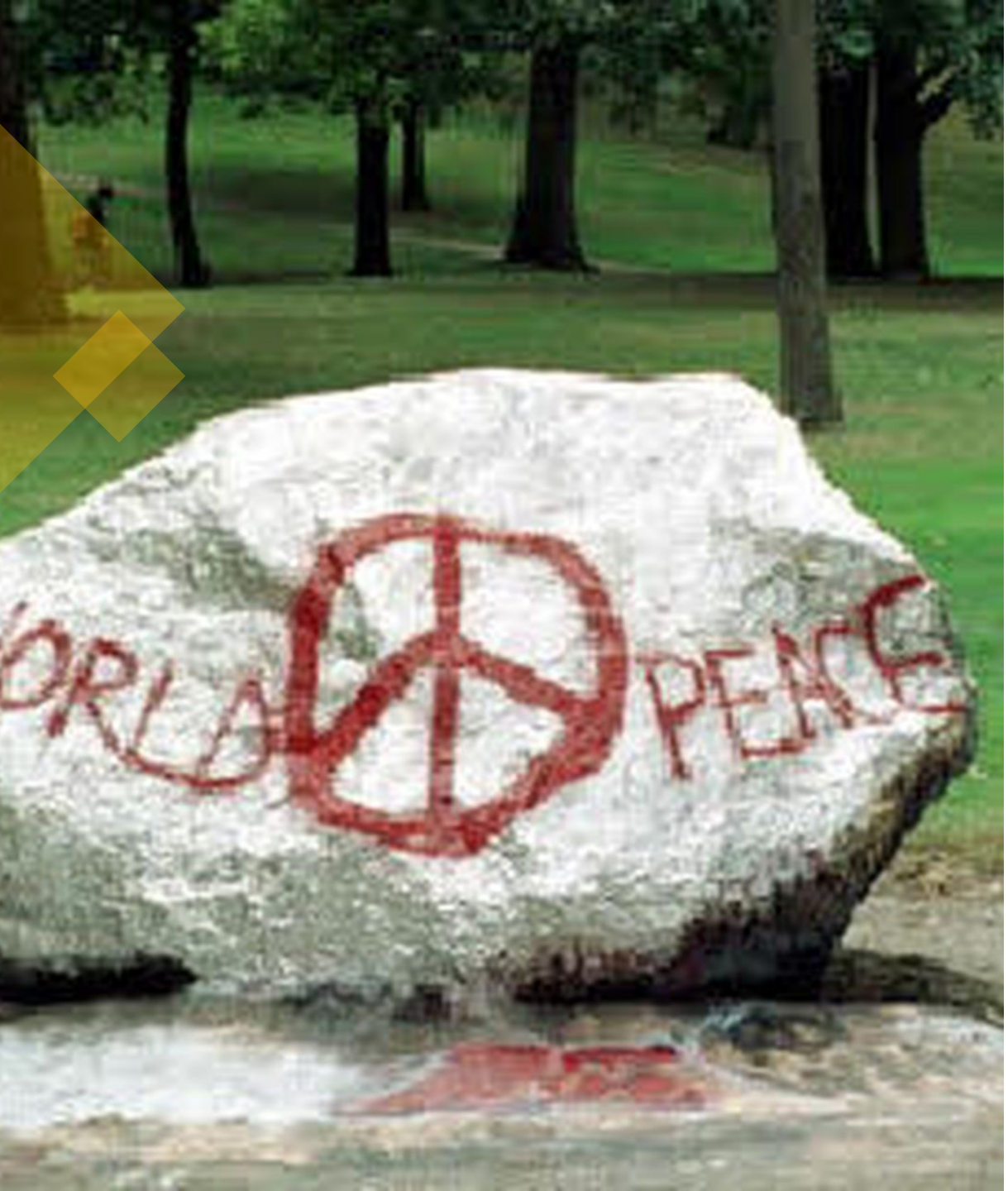

Selected Themes from “The Rock” - Perceptions of Messages and Reactions

- **Perceptions of Messages on “The Rock”**
  - Questions about the interpretation of messages on “The Rock”
  - Perception that messages are varying levels of problematic
- **Perception of Campus & Community-Centered Reactions**
  - Some did not know or felt indifferent
  - Some changed their perceptions of the University and/or community
    - Some considered leaving the University or questioned joining
    - Some felt unsafe; many expressed concern for others, particularly those marginalized because of race

Selected Themes from “The Rock”- Perceptions of Campus Response

- **Perceptions of Campus Response**
  - Satisfaction with admin and student response
  - Feeling conflicted about response
  - Campus response was too strong or inappropriate
  - Kent did respond but could do better
  - Kent’s response was not adequate, clear, or timely

Selected Themes from "The Rock"- Perception of Perpetrators and Cause

- **Perception of Perpetrators and Cause of "The Rock"**
  - Perceptions of the perpetrator
    - Identity
    - Intent
    - Affiliations
  - Kent's culture and policies led to "The Rock"

Selected Themes from “The Rock”- Perceptions on Moving Forward

- **Perceptions of What Kent State Should Do, Moving Forward**
  - Some communicated a desire to show support, learn or grow
  - Some expressed what to do or what’s been done with “The Rock”
  - Some provided suggestions for moving forward: Approaches to communication, education, and policy. For example:
    - Some suggested incorporating relevant topics and listening skills into the classroom
    - Some suggested encouraging a culture of zero tolerance
    - Some suggested conversations with stakeholders across campuses and the surrounding communities

Select Themes from "Why I Seriously Considered Leaving"

Select Themes from “Why I Considered Leaving” – Perceptions of Community Members

- **Identity-centered Experiences****
  - E.g., race & racism; religion; political identities; sex or gender; LGBTQ+; etc.
- **COVID-19 Experiences**
  - Campus rules
  - Personal wellness
  - Remote classes
  - Job (in)security, etc.
- **Mental Health, Ability, and Personal Wellness**
  - Stress/feeling overwhelmed
  - Personal mental health, ability, and wellness
  - Perceptions of support for mental health, ability, or wellness on or off campus, etc.
- **Perceptions of Feeling Unsupported or a Lack of Consequences For Perceived Harms**
  - Retaliation
  - No consequences post-reporting
- **Perceptions of Experiences With or Barriers To a Sense of Belonging**
  - Discomfort with campus climate
  - Perceptions of safety or safety services

**foregrounded for purposes of climate survey

Select Themes from “Why I Considered Leaving” – Student-Centered Experiences

- **Perceptions of Social Connections**
  - Making friends or connections
  - Want more interactions
  - Housing and food options
- **Perceptions of Academic Experiences**
  - Program structure
  - Advising
  - Experiences with faculty
- **Financial Reasons**
  - Tuition
  - Paying for college
  - Perception of a need for financial aid

Select Themes from “Why I Considered Leaving” – Workplace-Centered Experiences

- **Perception of Workplace/Program Culture or Practices**
  - Problematic experiences (communication, job (in)security, bullying, etc.)
  - Teaching or student challenges
- **Perceptions of Leadership or Supervisors**
- **Professional Growth or Opportunities**
  - Perceived barriers to promotion & advancement
  - Desire for full time employment

Select Themes from “Why I Considered Leaving” – Workplace Centered Experiences continued

- **Perception of Salary or Benefits**
  - Unsustainable salary
  - Pay scale
  - Raises and incentives
  - Workload and expertise (etc.)
- **Perceptions of Feeling Valued**
  - By the University
  - Value associated with role/rank

Next Steps

- Continued analysis is being conducted on the other qualitative responses
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2021 Climate Study on Race Committee Members

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