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ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEWS

Africana Demography: Lessons from Founders E. Franklin Frazier, W.E.B. Du Bois and the Atlanta School of Sociology

Lori Latrice Martin

ABSTRACT

Four hundred years after the first settlement of enslaved people of African ancestry in Jamestown, Virginia, sociologists and demographers, using a host of techniques, are still trying to explain persistent disparities between Black and White people in the United States, especially the lack of Black progress on a host of social and demographic outcomes. There are many theoretical and methodological challenges associated with understanding such issues as persistent antiblack violence (at the hands of both state agents and vigilantes), income and wealth inequality, enduring asset poverty, school and residential segregation, the overrepresentation of Black children in under-resourced public schools, the criminalization and incarceration of Black bodies, the political disfranchisement of Black communities, displacement through gentrification, distressed neighborhoods, and poor health outcomes for Black people across the life course, among others. What are some factors that explain the difficulties sociologists and demographers face in adequately studying these important social issues? Why haven't sociologists and demographers been more successful in influencing public policy to address the challenges facing Black people in America? In what ways has the inability of sociologists and demographers to positively impact the lived experiences of Black people in America eroded public trust in these disciplines, and what can be done to (re)establish public trust in these disciplines? It is my contention that what is needed is a new intervention I call *Africana demography*, which builds upon the strengths of Black sociology and critical demography. The intervention proposed here should have the added benefit of affording recognition for many of the scholars denied their rightful place in the sociological and demographic canons.

Keywords: Africana demography, Black sociology, critical demography, race, demography

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A PROBLEM?

Sadly, people of African ancestry in America have most often been viewed as a problem and seldom as a people. This has been true from the day that the first people of African ancestry arrived and were brought and "settled" in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. Members of the dominant group have viewed those identified sociologically and demographically as Black as a problem. The problem during much of the seventeenth century was how to exploit the labor of individuals from central and West Africa for the benefit of the developing colonies. How could the dominant group justify the treatment of human beings of darker hues as property and not people? The answers came gradually over the century and with the outpouring of Black people's blood, sweat, and tears. Efforts to dehumanize and criminalize individuals with their own history and culture were pursued through private practices and public policies. The sentencing of John Punch to servitude for life in the 1640s was one of the first indications that Black people were to be treated differently from White people by the law. White indentured servants would be punished by having years added to their period of servitude, but never for life. Laws determining the status of children born to enslaved women—as always following the condition of the mother regardless of the identity of the father—were another example of the idea that blackness was pathological. The problem of how to maintain the supply of forced and unpaid labor changed course after the U.S. Congress banned the importation of slaves in 1808. Slave owners had to rely more on the natural increase of the slave population through the breeding of slaves like livestock and through other means—including the horrific sexual violence enacted upon Black women slaves, oftentimes by the individuals who claimed ownership of them.

How should the enslaved population be counted to prevent the political dominance of one region over another region? In order for the U.S. Constitution to be ratified by southern states, a notorious compromise was reached to count slaves as three-fifths

of a person. What should become of the free Black people who gained their status through manumission and gradual emancipation was another problem members of the dominant group faced. Colonization societies were organized and many introduced plans to send free Black people back to Africa or to places in the Caribbean to prevent them from working with enslaved Black people to dismantle slavery in America. What types of policies should be in place to return enslaved people who dared seek freedom in states and territories where slavery did not exist? Fugitive slave laws were passed, and the infamous Dred Scott decision of the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of such laws. What would White people do about the Black population if the institution ended? Even Abraham Lincoln did not believe Whites and Blacks could coexist peacefully. Black people were considered a burden that White people had to bear.

After the Civil War ended and the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, bestowing upon Black people citizenship, due process, and the right to vote, were passed, these changes presented a unique set of problems some White people resented being forced to address. The dominant group still viewed Black people as a problem where political representation, land ownership, and economic competition were concerned, as evidenced by the sadly short-lived period known as the Reconstruction era. The backlash to this relatively successful period of history included increases in the number of Black people who were lynched, the organization of antiblack terrorist organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, land takings, race riots, restrictive codes, convict leasing, and sharecropping, to name a few.

The problem of the New Negro in the early twentieth century meant the dominant racial group had to determine how to respond to a new level of consciousness among former slaves and their descendants who sought to take ownership over their newfound albeit tenuous freed status through accomplishments in sports, the arts, music, and literature, and through demands for the control of their images and resistance to challenges to self-determination.

The movement of millions of Black people moving from the South to the North in the Great Migration presented a problem for the dominant group. The limitations on immigration from Southern, Eastern, and Central Europe in 1924, like the bans of Chinese (1882) and Japanese (1908) immigration earlier, led to labor shortages in some industries, which caused many businesses to recruit Black laborers from the South. Whites in the South were faced with the dilemma of Black laborers seeking greater economic opportunities in the North and leaving the Jim Crow South behind. Northern Whites had to address the problem of welcoming Black laborers and at the same time not angering White laborers, especially White union laborers, who saw the migrants as unwanted competitors for limited employment positions, and whose presence might depress their wages. Despite the presence of so-called liberal Whites in the North, formal and informal practices kept Black people residentially segregated and relegated to under-resourced schools far away from their children, families, and friends.

The Great Depression introduced a new set of challenges for the nation as a whole. How to lift Americans—namely White Americans—out of the proverbial economic ditch was a priority. But domestic and agricultural workers—predominantly Black—were explicitly excluded from New Deal labor reforms and opportunities.

Black people had the audacity to want to take part in one of the greatest single opportunities for mass wealth accumulation in the nation's history, the establishment of the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933 and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934. The problem of how to exclude Black people from what is the most recognizable symbol of the American dream, home ownership, was resolved by excluding Black people from participating In these programs. HOLC and FHA underwrote loans for average Americans, thus fundamentally changing the terms of the home-buying process so that the dream of owning a home was open to (White) people beyond just

the truly wealthy, while Black people were systematically kept out of the home buying process through such practices as redlining. The mass construction of homes after the Second World War and the mass accumulation of wealth derived from it played important roles in the suburbanization of America and the assimilation of White ethnic groups formerly considered as separate and distinct races. In many ways, suburbanization served as a proxy for whiteness.

Accepting the shedding of Black blood in the world wars as enlisted men and women was fine but respecting their service by treating them and other Black people as human beings and as full citizens was a problem. The armed forces were not integrated until President Harry Truman's executive order of 1948.

The problem of educating Black and White children in separate facilities dominated the first half of the twentieth century. Black children were deemed intellectually inferior relative to White children and there were also concerns that if Black and White children attended the same schools they might interact socially, including sexually, which might lead to violations of miscegenation laws and informal norms regarding sexual relations between Black and White people. For some members of the dominant group acceptance of interracial relations was tantamount to racial genocide.

The bus boycotts by Black people in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953, and later in Montgomery, Mississippi, in 1955, was a problem for many. The refusals to accept segregated buses by Black patrons, who made up a substantial majority of the ridership, hurt the local communities economically. The loss to municipal bus services in these two cities were substantial and caused many members of the dominant racial group to ramp up efforts to quell movements to fight ongoing racial discrimination and antiblack sentiments. Black people complaining about the torturing of a fourteen-year-old boy in Money, Mississippi, in 1955 was a problem because their demands for justice in the case of Emmett Till brought attention to the ongoing antiblack sentiments that existed in the country.

The presence of new social movements, such as civil rights organizations, Black Power groups, and the Nation of Islam, was so problematic that federal, state, and local agencies infiltrated them and engaged in activities to influence the organizations, including creating dissension between key figures.

Not only were emerging Black organizations viewed as a problem, but also Black families themselves. Daniel Patrick Moynihan published a report where he identified what he viewed as the pathology of the Black family as a national crisis. His misuse of the works of the Black sociologist E. Franklin Frazier has not only negatively impacted how some view Frazier's legacy, but it provided great fodder for scholars, public policymakers, and the general public to blame Black women, especially Black mothers, for the challenges facing Black people as a whole. Although Moynihan was engaged in what W.E.B. Du Bois might consider "car window sociology," many other sociologists and demographers have provided some legitimacy for his work by making it among one of the most widely cited reports on the subject of Black families.

Increases in the number of distressed neighborhoods, crime, educational disparities, health challenges, and incarceration among the Black population were characterized as evidence of the pathology of Black families and Black culture. The problem, as told by many prominent scholars including sociologists and demographers, was that Black people followed a street code. Black people were influenced by a culture of poverty. Black communities suffered from a lack of social organization. Black people who were already in a position to benefit from some of the changes brought about the Civil Rights Movement constituted a new Black middle class. This Black middle class fled their communities of origin for more affluent areas, thus causing two critical problems. One problem was how to keep these more affluent Black people out of the White neighborhoods where they were not wanted but could afford to buy housing without ending up as a litigant in a housing discrimination suit. The other problem was

how to police and contain the relatively larger number of unemployed and underemployed Black people who were concentrated in communities where many of the residents were both poor and Black.

Claims of a postracial society notwithstanding, "How does it feel to be a problem?" is a question that has plagued Black people over the past few decades and continues to linger in their everyday experiences today. The Great Recession is a good example. Although people from Wall Street to Main Street were affected by the economic crisis, Black people not only suffered more than other racial and ethnic groups, as evidenced in the amount of loss to their overall net worth, but also were blamed by some for the crisis.

The election of the nation's first Black president did not significantly alter the perception that Black people were a problem. On the contrary, much of the fear among members of the dominant racial group, especially White men, was that the Obama administration would seek to address some of the problems associated with the Black population at White people's expense and to their detriment. This perception of Black people as a perpetual problem fuels White fervor and may be responsible, at least in part, for the election of Donald J. Trump and the upsurge in White supremacist ideology, evidenced by such events as the tiki-torch-carrying demonstrators in Charlottesville.

The time has long passed for sociologists and demographers to cease viewing Black people as a problem—intentionally or unintentionally—and to consider new ways of thinking about ways to study the Black people in which they are not objects and where their experiences, culture, and engagement with multiple sources of oppression are central to scholarly inquiries. Otherwise, the Black population is the perpetual square peg, which sociologists and demographers attempt to fit into theoretical and methodological round holes that simply don't fit. What is needed is a new intervention that I call *Africana demography*, which draws from Black sociology and critical demography. While Black sociology

has much to offer on the study of the Black population, it is limited in important ways, to which we turn our attention now.

WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY MISSING? MORE BLACK SOCIOLOGY

Efforts to establish Black sociology have a long history despite the fact that some contemporary sociologists remain unaware of its existence or the necessity for such an area of study. One need only look back at recent debates on social media regarding whether programs for some learned societies, such as the Eastern Sociological Society, are elitist and/or White-male-dominated for examples.

Although scholars such as W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier were engaged in research centered on the Black population in the late nineteenth century well into the twentieth century, what they were doing was not codified as Black sociology. Irving Louis Horowitz sought to establish the principles of Black sociology in the early 1970s. He did so by identifying broader problems within the discipline of sociology, particularly when it came to studying race. He described the transformation of studies about race into studies about small groups, which were more reflective of "psychological-introspective evaluation" (Horowitz 1973:8) than a systematic study of social structures and social systems.

Horowitz made another important observation about problems in sociology as they related to inquiries into the human behavior, social interactions, and social institutions involving Black people. For most sociologists, he argued, the so-called Negro problem was essentially a "deviant problem" (Horowitz 1973:8). This problem led to another problem, namely the ignoring of Black culture as a "liberating agency" and an emphasis on how to free Black people from a set of social conditions (Horowitz 1973:8).

The consequences of the problems identified by Horowitz were far-reaching for the sociology of the Black experience in America. The limitations were evidenced in the discipline's

inability to impact social and public policy and to bring about any meaningful societal change. Indeed, Horowitz when as far as to say that sociology was "proven so impotent in the face of current mass unrest" (Horowitz 1973:8).

Wilburn Watson (1976) built upon the work of Horowitz to not only provide a definition of Black sociology but also to distinguish it from sociological studies about people of African ancestry in the United States. In other words, Watson clarified the various ways in which people have defined or imagined Black sociology and then offered a working definition. Watson described one definition of Black sociology as any sociological studies conducted by Black sociologists. Another definition viewed any research conducted by Black sociologists that was specifically on the topic of race relations as Black sociology (Watson 1976). Studies that included some theoretical frame or substantive issues that were of concern to Black people were also a commonly held definition of Black sociology (Watson 1976). Finally, Black sociology was best identified "by the ideological commitment of the sociologist to the release of Black people from race-related social oppression" (Watson 1976:116).

The last definition is in keeping with the kind of work done by scholars like W.E.B. Du Bois, whose work Watson described as "inquiry initiated and implemented by sociologists whose social identity is Black, whose ideological allegiance, as expressed in the formulation of research problems and the interpretation of research results, is for the release of Black people from race-related social oppression, and whose primary research population is constituted by Black people" (Watson 1976: 118).

Du Bois was also likely to have understood that the concerns that some sociologists had about "value intrusion" was in many ways an illusion (Watson 1976:118). While many White sociologists studying race, presumably like many other White scholars studying race, believed that they could and should check their values at the door as they entered their research space, Black sociology recognizes the role of values and seeks to minimize its influence "through careful research design" (Watson 1976:118).

As Horowitz believed, for Watson Black sociology stands in sharp contrast to other so-called sociologies about Black people. Watson described these other forms of race-related sociologies. For example, there are undoubtedly Black sociologists engaged in research on the White population. But what Watson categorized as mainstream White sociology explores the social behavior of Black people within the context of beliefs that Black people have very little identity or culture worthy of preserving. Finally, Watson (1976) reviewed a body of literature where White sociologists studying race-related topics primarily studied White people with little concern for social change, which he understood as the antithesis of Black sociology.

Black sociologists draw, according to Watson (1976), from a rich "cultural 'data bank,'" including from sources of Black thought. Sociologists have long devoted themselves to legitimizing their existence and refuting any arguments or perceptions that sociology and other social sciences were not real sciences. Consequently, sociologists have built of thick disciplinary walls and constructed fortified silos that often limit their ability to understand the multilevel and multidimensional nature of a host of social issues, including challenges facing the Black population. Another consequence is that sociologists tend to lay patterns created for studying nonblack populations over observations of Black populations. When there is an empirical mismatch they declare the Black population pathological (Watson 1976). Watson contended that this is most evident in the application of three dominant theories to explaining the social condition of Black people: immigration-assimilation, structural functionalism, and culture of poverty. Current studies about the Black population in America still have the goal of "fitting the Black–White situation into a model rather than letting the situation determine the mode of explanation" (Watson 1976:389).

Watson concludes Black sociologists are in fact humanists and implies that Black sociology is generative. The work of Black sociology, while intended to address the race-based oppression faced by Black people, has implications for other historically mar-

ginalized groups in America and beyond. Thus Black sociology provides both the theory, methods, and action to aid others in mobilizing to address the tough challenges they face based upon other sources of oppression, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, social class position, etc.

In more recent years, Earl Wright II and Thomas Calhoun (2016) published articles and an edited book on the topic of Black sociology, citing the works outlined here and laying out key principles. Wright and Calhoun provide an important genealogy for Black sociology. The pair point to the first American school of sociology, not the Chicago School, but the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory. American sociology and Black sociology emerged with the work of people like W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier, whose research interests grew out of their personal commitments to social justice, and also to bias in existing disciplines and a general lack of interest in treating the study of the Black population as worthy of scholarly attention and inquiry.

In an attempt to further clarify the essential elements of Black sociology, Wright and Calhoun (2016) identified five principles. First, Black sociology should be led primarily by Black Americans. Previous definitions of Black sociology excluded nonblack sociologists altogether. Second, research is centered on Black Americans. Third, the research is interdisciplinary. Fourth, whenever possible, Black sociological research should be generalizable to other populations experiencing oppression based upon their racial identity, for example. Finally, research findings should have social and public policy implications.

There are a number of reasons that the idea of the existence of Black sociology historically and in contemporary times is hard from some White and some Black sociologists to accept. Some White and Black sociologists believe the United States and the discipline of sociology have entered a new era where race matters but maybe less. They cite the election of President Obama as one example. An increase in the number of Black students in sociology courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels may also provide some evidence for such claims. More sessions

at professional meetings on the subject of the Black population than in past years might be another measure. Even the election of Black people as presidents of American Sociological Association and regional associations might provide merit to the claim that sociology is more unified on the matter of race than ever before or that sociology is certainly more unified on the matter of race than other disciplines.

Many sociologists holding the aforementioned viewpoint are likely to be living in an academic bubble where they fail to realize how the reward system in the discipline is structured in such a way as to penalize Black sociologists, and others, who seek to critique or challenge the theories and methods that are deemed central to understanding virtually all sociological phenomenon and peoples. Black sociologists, for example, understand that the very decision to study the Black population may limit their ability to become tenured and get promoted. They are also aware that doing what they were trained to do by studying the Black population, which necessitates engagement with whiteness and the White populations, also places their very employment and at times their safety at risk. Let's look at the former argument in greater detail.

Frazier and Du Bois knew very early in their careers that the work they devoted themselves to was not considered on par with research conducted in other areas and on other populations. One need only look at the ways in which both were either misunderstood or virtually ignored as evidence of the marginalization of scholarship on the Black population, especially scholarship that was counter to the dominant narratives about the group. Similarly, Black sociologists today find it difficult to have their work appreciated in ways that nonblack sociological studies are conducted. In fact, many Black sociologists bypass so-called mainstream journals altogether based on anecdotal impressions or a careful empirical review of what typically is published in these mainstream sociological journals. They make a cost-benefit analysis and reach the conclusion that their work might find greater

acceptance and a more informed pool of reviewers in journals with the word "critical" in the title or in Africana studies journals that may or may not be discipline specific. Black sociologists can be penalized during the tenure and promotion process for not reaching what a department or an institution deems the minimum basic standard for productivity, or criticized for publishing in journals outside of the top-tier, in outlets that are not considered competitive by such often-controversial measurable outcomes as the impact factor. Moreover, Black sociologists may find it challenging to secure a book contract from a standard-bearer university press, given the nature of their work, or due to the limited number of potential reviewers. Thus they can risk being denied promotion, especially at institutions where a monograph is a prerequisite to tenure and promotion.

Stephen C. Finley, Biko Mandela Gray, and Lori Latrice Martin (2018) wrote about the challenges facing Black professors at predominately White institutions (PWIs) in a recent article published in the Journal of Academic Freedom. Several of the most high-profile cases where Black professors were the subject of attacks by "White virtual mobs" and constructively abandoned by the White administrators who hired them involved Black sociologists engaged not solely in studies on the subject of race, but specifically in Black sociology. Zandria Robinson and Johnny Smith are two such examples. The inability of White sociologists is acknowledge even the existence of Black sociology is evidenced in the debates on social media referenced earlier. The need for Black sociologists to periodically revisit definitions of Black sociology for the sake of clarifying what it is and is not has placed the relevance of sociology more broadly in question and has placed Black sociologists at personal and professional risks.

WHAT IS DEMOGRAPHY IGNORING? MORE CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is not alone as the subject of the criticisms that have been raised. The limitations of conventional or mainstream

demography were noted in a special issue of Sociological Forum at the close of the twentieth century. Hayward Derrick Horton introduced a new paradigm called critical demography in 1999. The special issue featured an essay by one of the most prominent conventional demographers then and now, Douglas Massey. The issue also included a host of articles related to race and gender to highlight the potential of critical demography to transform the ways demographers apply their techniques.

Horton (1999) came up with the idea of introducing a critical demography paradigm based upon his observation that demographers were unwilling to even consider using the term "racism" in their work. Power dynamics are central to understanding the social structure and thus central to understanding the many variables and concepts of interest to demographers. Horton proposed that critical demography would be explicit about the characterization of the social structure by dominant and subordinate groups.

Horton made several comparisons between conventional demography and critical demography. Conventional demography could be considered "mainstream" or White, male, heteronormative. For Horton, conventional demography not only ignores power dynamics, including discussions about racism and sexism, but also appears consumed with merely describing trends and reporting estimates, while critical demography is predictive and places the subject of analysis within an appropriate social context. Moreover, Horton observed that conventional demographers contend that data are mute and that theory gives them meaning. Contrariwise, critical demography holds that theory must take "a back seat to the articulation, elaboration, and application of theory" (Horton 1999:364–65). Conventional demography, Horton contends, operates from a position that demographic inquiries are apolitical and it thus accepts the status quo. He described that acceptance as tacit acceptance, while critical demography explicitly challenges the social order. Finally, another major difference between conventional and critical demography is that the

former assumes objectivity and views demographers as independent actors engaged in rigorous scientific inquiry. In other words, conventional demography is assumptive (Horton 1999). Critical demography not only questions the area of study but also questions demographers, hence, Horton made the claim that critical demography is reflective.

In an effort to get ahead of criticisms that it was too narrowly focused, Horton makes it clear that critical demography is best understood as "an umbrella large enough to accommodate a broad range of topics" (1999:364). This is evidenced in many of the other articles published in the special issue of Sociological Forum. For example, there is an article about feminist demography and another about nuptiality and fertility within the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In the same issue, Douglas Massey (1999), a demographer and coauthor of the book American Apartheid, described what critical demography meant to him. Massey appeared to equate critical demography with scholar-activism, which is not something that Horton included in his description of the paradigm. Nevertheless, Massey made it clear that writing for and reaching out to audiences beyond demographers was different and distinct from the creation of rigorous scientific research. He thought that this was particularly important for demographers receiving public funding to support their research. Massey described several ways in which he engaged with the public, from responding to media inquiries to writing books and other reports for public consumption.

It is noteworthy that Massey (1999) felt the need to let conventional demographers know that engagement with the public for the purpose of bringing about social change was not outside of the scope of the work of demographers. He did see this work as separate and distinct from works where demographers establish scientific validity. Black sociologists have rarely made such distinctions, as mentioned previously, and often engaged in scholarship on the Black population for the primary purpose of challenging the status quo and bringing about the liberation

of Black people. Engaging in work Massey (1999) described as the signature of a "critical demography" is and was foundational for Black sociologists and for other Black scholars in other fields of study.

Despite support from critical demography as evidenced in the special issue referenced above, including the essay from Massey, few people have responded to the call to consider critical demography as a paradigm of the future. Much like Black sociology, critical demography has much to offer but is limited. What is required is a unifying area of study I call *Africana demography*.

WHAT IS NEEDED? AFRICANA DEMOGRAPHY

Black sociology is an important discipline that has been ignored for many generations despite its impact on American sociology more broadly. The failure to account for the significant role of Black sociology and Black sociologists means that generations of scholars have not been adequately exposed to the theories and methods of people like W.E.B. Du Bois, despite Du Bois's historical importance, and despite E. Franklin Frazier's having served as the first Black president of what is now known as American Sociological Association (ASA) as the first Black person ever to become president of a learned society in the nation. Far too many graduate students across America do not read Du Bois in their required theory courses; undergraduate students may read a paragraph or two in introductory textbooks about Du Bois and the existence of racism and sexism in the discipline's past. When asked why Du Bois is not required reading, typical answer is, "Well, we can't read everyone." Du Bois, Frazier, etc., are not just run-of-the-mill sociologists, however; they are giants in the field and deserve to be denied no longer.

Although many sociologists consider themselves demographers and engage in a range of population studies, all demographers are not sociologists and all sociologists are not demographers. Consequently, one cannot equate Black sociology with a particular form of demography. Black sociology can

undoubtedly inform ways of thinking about demography, especially in studies concerning people of African ancestry in the United States.

Similarly, while critical demography is useful in critiquing conventional demography, it is also limited insofar as the Black population in America is concerned. Critical demography, admittedly, accommodates "a broad range of topics" (Horton 1999:364). It may be used to understand the case of African Americans, as Horton (1999) addressed in a follow-up article to the 1999 article in Sociological Forum where he introduced the concept of critical demography, but the African American or Black population is not its focus.

Africana demography must include research that is led primarily by Black Americans. *Africana demography* involves research that is centered on Black Americans. It derives much of its explanatory and predictive power from the cultural data bank of Black Americans. Additionally, *Africana demography* generates research that is, when possible, generalizable to other populations experiencing similar types of oppression. Research findings must have social and public policy implications and must involve sharing findings with non-academic audiences.

DISCUSSION: MISTRUST, POLICY MONITORING AND THE COLOR WALL

The implications and potential for *Africana demography* are great. Sociology and demography are both often silent on some of the most important and historical social and demographic events of American history. Failing to account for the impact of the historic baby boom of the 1950s is just one example. Baby boomers have changed virtually every social institution over their life course from the construction of schools to shortfalls in social security. Additionally, absent an understanding of and appreciation for *Africana demography* the mass exodus of hundreds of thousands of Black people from the South to the North beginning in the early part of the twentieth century is referred to as the Great Migration,

while Africana demographers, such as E. Franklin Frazier, contend that a more appropriate label is the Second Emancipation.

Moreover, the social and demographic significance of not only the Civil Rights Movement but also other important social events has been ignored by sociologists and demographers or misunderstood and therefore examined in very limited ways. For example, much attention has focused on the Black middle class without a reasonable definition for the group. Attention has also been devoted to the poor or Black underclass, with little to no attention devoted to the Black working class, which, historically, has been far more numerous than either the Black middle class or the Black underclass. It is important to note too that there were a number of resistance organizations during the 1960s and 1970s—the Nation of Islam, Black nationalist groups, and the Black Power movement—that had an impact on the social and demographic lives of Black people in the United States. These seldom figure in interpreting changes over time for the Black population, especially in geographical areas where these groups and movements had the most influence. To be clear, their influence reached far beyond arbitrary geographical boundaries and were viewed by government and police agencies as so influential that many were under surveillance or infiltrated.

Sociologists and demographers have been largely silent more recently on the killings of Black people by law enforcement officials and vigilantes. Most seem willing to leave the work to criminologists, who often provide the theory and the data to support the actions of those involved with the unnatural deaths of Black men and Black women across the country. The silence and the failure to engage in debates about a matter that has so gripped the attention of the nation—leading to the #BlackLivesMatter movement and White responses like #BlueLivesMatter—has contributed to the mistrust and indifference some feel toward social sciences such as sociology and demography.

Sociologists and demographers have become in some ways monitors of social and public policies, including those impact-

ing Black people, while doing very little to bring about positive changes that would lead to their liberation. Taken together all of these issues have ensured that W.E.B. Du Bois's claim that the color line would be the defining issue of the twentieth century would be true through the foreseeable future. Sociologists and demographers have not succeeded in erasing the color line but have succeeded in fortifying walls of whiteness around the disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Africana demography is an important intervention with the potential to make sociology and demography as relevant as in the days of W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier by linking the techniques and rigorous scholarly inquiry of both disciplines to the principles of Black sociology and the fundamental tenets of critical demography with blackness, not whiteness, as the center. Understanding that whiteness is not normative and blackness is not essentially pathological is important.

It is also imperative that sociologists and demographers afford W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier and others from the Atlanta School of Sociology their rightful place in the annals of history. If colleges and universities, especially PWIs, are serious about recruiting and retaining a diverse study body and they are serious about recruiting and retaining Black professors then they must allow undergraduate students and graduate students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. The days of excluding Du Bois from introductory textbooks or making only a passing reference to him have long passed. Similarly, mentions of Frazier's work only within the context of controversial works by people like Daniel Patrick Moynihan in disingenuous. Both scholars are deserving of far more. Including their work in graduate-level courses may not only help to attract Black graduate students but also help to retain them. Showing a respect and appreciation for Black sociologists and Black demographers may also assist with the recruitment and retention of Black professors.

Feeding the pipeline from undergraduate programs to doctoral programs is key to the future of demography and sociology. Regional and national organizations, such as Eastern Sociological Society, Population Association of America, and so forth are also likely to see increases in the membership of Black graduate students and Black professors and more diversity on the programs and in leadership positions.

Black scholars within sociology and demography have an expectation that their fields would do better because they presumably know better. Sadly, this is not the case. Racial disparities between Blacks and Whites in America persist and they persist for a multitude of reasons. Mainstream sociologists and conventional demographers can no longer bury their heads in the sand or remain on the sidelines. They must be open and honest about the roles they have played in the maintenance and fortification of the color line over time and embrace *Africana demography* as a legitimate field that can be in dialogue with mainstream sociology and conventional demography to bring about the liberation of Black people in America—or else both disciplines will continue to celebrate narrow improvements in the racial income gap, while all but ignoring the insurmountable racial wealth gap. They will forever join in the chorus of those blaming the victim, all the while claiming concern for social structures and social systems. *Africana demography* is needed now more than ever.

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Subjective Social Status, Resiliency Resources, and Self-Concept among Employed African Americans

Verna Keith and Maxine Thompson

ABSTRACT

Studies that examine the relationship between social class and self-esteem find only moderate to weak associations. Resource-based measures of social class (e.g., education, occupation and income) do not reveal the main processes of self-concept formation – reflected appraisals or social comparison. Subjective social status (SSS), a measure of relative social position, is sensitive to referent groups (e.g., friends or relatives) used in social comparisons, an important process in self-formation among racial/ethnic groups. Using the data on African American respondents in the National Survey of American Life (NSAL), this article examines SSS, along with perceived economic strain, as predictors of self-esteem and self-efficacy in the context of household income, occupation, education, and chronic health stressors, perceived discrimination, and resiliency resources. Findings show consistent robust positive direct effects of SSS and perceived economic strain predicting self-esteem and self-efficacy. Education is the only resource based social class indicator that is associated with both constructs.

Keywords: African Americans, subjective social status, discrimination, self-esteem, self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

African Americans consistently report higher self-esteem than other racial and ethnic groups (see Twenge and Crocker 2002 for meta-analyses), but report lower self-efficacy than other groups (Coleman et al. 1966; Hunt and Hunt 1977). A plausible explanation for the paradox of high self-esteem and low self-efficacy

among African Americans is that self-esteem and self-efficacy are driven by different social processes (Hughes and Demo 1989). Michael Hughes and David Demo argue that self-esteem is driven by within group processes that protect African Americans from inequality while self-efficacy is not. Self-efficacy is more responsive to social inequality processes such as discrimination and financial instability. They conclude that "black self-esteem is insulated from systems of racial inequality or discrimination, while personal efficacy is not," (Hughes and Demo 1989:132) and suggest that this explains why African Americans have relatively high self-esteem but low personal efficacy.

Our current research extends Hughes and Demo's (1989) study of the determinants of self-esteem and self-efficacy using the 2001-2003 National Survey of American Life (NSAL). We take as a starting point their hypothesis that "black self-esteem is insulated from systems of racial inequality or discrimination, while personal efficacy is not" and we introduce important concepts that were not included in their study, namely subjective social status, perceived financial strain, and personal experience with racial discrimination. Subjective social status reflects one's perceived position in the status hierarchy and emerges from a social comparison process, which is also a source of self-concept development. It includes relational information such as comparison of self to others or the perception of how others might judge one (Singh-Manoux, Adler and Marmot 2003). Research on health and social status suggest subjective ranking captures the psychosocial consequences of relative status position and is more strongly related to quality-of-life outcomes than objective social status (Netuveli and Bartley 2012). Subjective social status (SSS) is broader than the concept "relative deprivation." It is a composite assessment of an individual's current circumstances, past experiences and future prospects. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the association between social class and self-perception is stronger for subjective social status than to differences in resource-based indicators of social class that usually tap a

moment in time. Few studies on self-esteem and self-efficacy, to our knowledge, have explored the relative influence of resource based social class (e.g., education, income and occupation) and subjective social class for self-perceptions. Further, we investigate a second measure of subjective social class, economic strain, a measure of the subjective perception that one's income is inadequate, and which is found to undermine selfconcept (Angel et al. 2003; Pearlin et al. 1981).

In addition, we draw from stress research which shows that interpersonal discrimination is consequential for mastery and that resiliency resources such as social supports lessen or buffer the impact of major stressors. The current study extends prior research by investigating the direct linkages between objective social status, subjective social status, racial discrimination, resilience resources, and self-esteem and self-efficacy among employed African Americans. It is possible that one's subjective relative rank, which captures reflected appraisals and social comparisons, as well as subjective assessment of income adequacy, are more important than objective resource based measures of social class. We begin by focusing on the processes through which the self develops and how the processes complement the relevancy of subjective or objective social status.

SELF ESTEEM AND SELF-EFFICACY

Self-esteem and self-efficacy are components of the self and, though related, the two components are conceptually distinct (Chen, Gully and Eden 2004). Self-esteem refers to individual feelings of self-worth, self-approval, and self-respect and are grounded in a symbolic interaction conceptual framework (Mead 1934) which assumes the self emerges from negotiation among participants in social interaction. Self-efficacy originates in Albert Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory and refers to the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute a course of action required to manage a specific situation. Personal self-efficacy, although related, differs in that it refers to a self-

assessment of agency, mastery, effectiveness, control, and competence across a variety of different settings (Gecas 1989). Personal self-efficacy is a relatively stable, generalized competence belief. Self-esteem and personal self-efficacy are closely connected. When self-esteem is high, personal self-efficacy tends to be high as well and when self-esteem is low, self-efficacy is low (Chen, Gully, and Eden 2004). Both concepts are influenced by social situations and experiences; yet, they are derived from different processes.

Morris Rosenberg and Leonard Pearlin (1978) identify three fundamental processes for evaluating the self: reflected appraisals (or perceived judgments of others), social comparisons and selfawareness. According to Bandura (1986), the three sources of self-efficacy (e.g., mastery experiences, verbal judgments of others, and social comparison to others) differ in the strength of their influence on self-efficacy beliefs. The self-appraisal process is based on Charles Cooley's (1902) looking-glass self and holds that self-perception is a product of how people believe that others perceive them. Early research found self-esteem is related to the way we think others perceive or judge us (Miyamoto and Dornbush 1956; Quarantelli and Cooper 1966), but not to how we are actually viewed by others (Shrauger and Schoeneman 1979). Perceived influence of others as well as verbal judgments that others provide are weaker sources of self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1986). Social comparison theory (Festinger 1954) assumes that individuals adjust their evaluations about themselves through comparisons to similarly situated others. Social comparisons made with other individuals can be powerful influences on self-esteem and self-perceptions of competence. Self-awareness, grounded in attribution theory (Bem 1967), suggests that we learn about ourselves in the same way that we evaluate others—we observe our behaviors or interactions, particularly successes and failures. Bandura (1986) emphasized mastery experiences as most influential source of self-efficacy. Markers of higher education achievement, income and occupational status confer a sense of control, competence, and mastery (Bandura 1986). Thus, self-esteem originates from

interpersonal processes and judgments; personal self-efficacy originates from performance experiences and judgments.

SOCIAL CLASS, SELF ESTEEM AND SELF-EFFICACY

The association between social class and self-perception (i.e., self-esteem and selfefficacy) has been studied by social psychologists who are interested in the influence of social structure (Rosenberg and Pearlin 1978). Social class, as measured by income, occupational prestige, and education, is positively related to self-efficacy. The relationship is not strong, but consistent (Gecas 1989; Gecas and Seff 1989; Gurin, Gurin and Morrison 1978). In contrast, the relationship between social class and self-esteem is not straightforward: some studies find a positive relationship, some negative, and some find no relationship at all (e.g., Mullis, Mullis and Normandin 1992; Rosenberg and Pearlin 1978; Trowbridge 1972; Wiltfang and Scarbecz 1990).

In a meta-analysis of 446 samples, Jean Twenge and Jennifer Crocker (2002) conclude social class has a small but significant positive relationship with self-esteem, and changes across the life course. Studies of adults find indirect effects of social class on self-esteem when examining conditions of work or the social organization of work; most notably that work and job satisfaction are central to feelings of self-efficacy, which, in turn, is associated with higher self-esteem (Gecas and Seff 1989; Schwalbe 1985; Staples, Schwalbe and Gecas 1984). Adults with high social statuses have more resources, power, and successes which lead to favorable self-esteem.

These inconsistent findings may result from a tendency to use a one-dimensional measure of social class that oversimplifies social stratification and masks complex theoretical issues. For example, an early analysis by Howard Kaplan (1971) did not find a significant association between social class and self-esteem using a unitary measure combining education and occupation (i.e., the Hollingshead's Index of Social Position). However, when using multiple measures of personal and situational salience of social class the association was significant at the .025 level (Kaplan 1971).

These findings highlight the importance of multidimensional measures of social class as well as measures that tap personally relevant information such as subjective social status.

THE CURRENT STUDY: SUBJECTIVE VS. OBJECTIVE SOCIAL STATUS

Given the concerns of previous research, the present study uses an adult sample of employed African Americans, multiple indicators of resource based social class variables, as well as introduces alternative, subjective conceptualizations of social class to interrogate associations between social class and self-concept. Subjective social status (SSS) is assessed by asking individuals to use a ten-rung ladder to position themselves in their community, indicating its relevance for the social comparison process for developing self-esteem and self-efficacy. Education, occupation, and income are resource-based differences in access to opportunity structures. These factors identify a concrete position in status hierarchies. Studies in health research show SSS is related to health status independently of objective economic indicators (Adler et al. 2000; Ghaed and Gallo 2007; Gruenewald, Kemeny and Aziz 2006; Operario, Adler and Williams 2004; Ostrove et al. 2000; Singh-Manoux, Marmot and Adler 2005) and for different populations including healthy White women (Adler et al. 2000), White and Asian American women (Castro, Gee and Takeuchi 2010; Ostrove et al. 2000), Hispanic adults in Texas (Franzini and FernandezEsquer 2006), and African Americans in the Jackson Heart Study (Subramanyam et al. 2012).

Recent research examines whether SSS is sensitive to the referent group used for social comparison; however, the findings are unclear. Using longitudinal data from a panel study of youth, Beverly Stiles and Howard Kaplan (2004) report that Blacks and Hispanics were more likely than Whites to perceive their income level to be lower than their friends and relatives while only Blacks were likely to consider their income lower than the national norm. Other research shows that Blacks have a higher SSS when using

the referent of "others in the same race/ethnic group" (Wolff et al. 2010a; Wolff et al. 2010b), but that there are no race/ethnic differences when using the referent norm "others in American society." Social psychologists assert that strong ethnic group identity is associated with higher SSS (Zagefka and Brown 2005) and that low-status groups prefer to make comparison to "like others" in order to improve their self-esteem and self-assessment (Suls and Wills 1991). Based on previous literature, we examine the following hypotheses:

> H1a: Objective status indicators (education, income and occupation) are unrelated to self-esteem; but have a positive association with self-efficacy.
>
> H1b: Subjective social status, a measure of comparative ranking, is positively related to both self-esteem and self-efficacy.

In this study, perceived economic strain is also used to capture a second dimension of subjective class standing. Perceptions of economic hardship result from evaluations that income is inadequate to meet financial obligations (Kahn and Fazio 2003), and stress literature suggest that exposure to prolonged financial hardship tears down positive evaluations of self (Pearlin et al. 1981). Jade McLeod and Donald Kessler (1990) argue that the economically disadvantaged report poor psychological well-being because they are exposed to greater amounts of stress which increases their vulnerability. Similarly, Rosenberg (1986) claims that to the extent low social status is devalued, individuals in low-status positions may also come to devalue themselves. Though these experiences are more prevalent among the less affluent, more affluent individuals may also perceive an imbalance between income and need due to debt, life style aspirations, and other demands. Following Hughes and Demo (1989), we also expect job satisfaction to bolster self-worth and feelings of control. We offer the following hypotheses:

H1c: Economic strain, a measure of perceived income inadequacy, is negatively related to both self-esteem and self-efficacy.

H1d: Job satisfaction, a measure of one's affective assessment of one's work role, is negatively related to both self-esteem and self-efficacy.

RACIALIZED EXPERIENCES AND RACIAL IDENTITY

Racialized experiences have long been linked with adverse mental health of African Americans (see Fanon 1952; Grier and Cobbs 1968; Pierce, 1970). William Grier and Price Cobbs seminal work on Black rage drew attention to the insidious effects of racism on the psychic and self–image of Black Americans, and Chester Pierce developed the concept "microaggressions" to illustrate how even minor occurrences of racial discrimination in everyday life can have a significant impact on mental health. Racism-induced stress emanates from the experience of racial discrimination and harassment. Discriminatory experiences are demeaning, degrading and offensive. Recurring interpersonal encounters such as being treated with less courtesy than others, being verbally abused or receiving poor service in public establishments are commonly reported experiences among African Americans and pose a substantial threat for their well-being (Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Schulz et al. 2000). Systemic barriers to upward mobility persist in all spheres of African American life including employment, health care, education, and criminal justice system. Studies report racial discrimination has deleterious effects on physical and mental health of African Americans (Brown et al 2000; Prelow, Mosher, and Bowman 2006; Turner and Avison 2003) and racial discrimination is treated as a unique stressor in stress research. According to D.W. Sue, C.M. Capodilupo, and A.M.B. Holder (2008), Black group identity and perceptions of the cause of their group's conditions determine how they view themselves. Thus, racialized experiences are important determinants of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

In this article, we focus on the determinants of self-esteem and self-efficacy among African Americans using data from the 2001 National Survey of American Life. To our knowledge, only one study employing a nationally representative sample of African Americans has examined the association between social class and self-esteem in the context of other social variables that are known to have an important influence in shaping their subjective well-being and self-evaluation. Using data from the 1980 National Survey of Black Americans, Hughes and Demo (1989) examine the determinants of multiple dimensions of self-perception—self-esteem, personal efficacy, and racial self-esteem. Their research is grounded in the assumption that self-esteem develops in social interactions and environments where people have meaningful relationships in face-to-face contact. Therefore, African Americans rely on reflected appraisals and social comparisons in interpersonal relationships within the family and community and both processes are important determinants of self-esteem.

A second assumption underlying Hughes and Demo's research is that self-efficacy is more responsive to the structural systems of inequality that block efficacious actions for marginalized groups. Hughes and Demo argue racial discrimination and its control of objective resources limits opportunity for efficacious actions and is part of the everyday reality of African Americans. Educational attainment, income and occupational prestige, indicators of social class and achievement, are unrelated to self-esteem or feelings of personal worth. In contrast, inequalities in education, income, and occupation prestige explain low self-efficacy among African Americans.

Hughes and Demo's (1989) research provides the initial evidence that different processes operate in shaping the self-esteem and self-efficacy of African Americans. To capture their underlying assumptions, their analyses included indicators of interpersonal relationship (e.g., interaction with family and friends and church involvement), traditional status attainment and work condition as indicators of social class, and a system blame measure

for discrimination, but not day-to-day experience of discrimination. Interestingly, system blame or discrimination was not associated with either self-esteem or self-efficacy. Hughes and Demo (1989) conclude that Black self-esteem is insulated from systems of social inequality, while personal efficacy is not, and suggest that this explains why African Americans have relatively high self-esteem but low personal efficacy. The belief that racial discrimination, rather than individual failure, accounts for low achievement among Blacks is irrelevant to personal self-esteem and personal efficacy. A large body of literature has linked the experience of day-to-day discrimination to deleterious psychological outcomes for African Americans including low self-esteem and depressive symptoms (Williams, Neighbors and Jackson 2003). The stress associated with the experience of everyday racism ranks high on the list of problems African Americans present in counseling (Constantine 2007).

Alicia Cast and Peter Burke (2002) have argued that self-esteem is an outcome for self-verification process that occurs within groups. Essentially their argument is that identification with a social group increases an individual's self-worth and efficacy-based self-esteem. Verification of group based identities produces self-esteem because it signifies approval and acceptance. Thus, having a positive sense of ethnic identity is related to positive individual self-esteem. Some researchers argue that ethnicity might be an important source of strength and, therefore, beneficial for self-perceptions. Consistent with Hughes and Demo's findings of a positive relationship between racial and personal self-esteem, recent research on African Americans provide evidence of a positive relationship between ethnic identity self-esteem and self-efficacy (Hughes, Kiecolt, Keith, and Demo 2015). African Americans who possess high ethnic pride and ethnic identity are more likely to hold more positive attitudes about themselves and engage in more efficacious actions. We offer the following hypotheses.

H2a: Perceived race discrimination has a negative effect on self-esteem and self-efficacy.

H2b: Racial identity has a positive effect on self-esteem and self-efficacy

H2c: Perceived race discrimination and racial identity mediate the influence of objective social status on self-esteem and self-efficacy.

RESILIENCY RESOURCES: SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Research on social stress, vulnerability, and resiliency has particular relevance for understanding how African Americans develop self-perceptions. The stress literature also suggests that resiliency resources, such as social supports from family and friends, as well as church attendance, are coping resources that protect psychological vulnerability of persons in marginal or stressful environments. A well-established literature demonstrates the importance of social support in facilitating well-being. Moreover, Rosenberg and Simmons (1971) argue that the positive reflected appraisals from family and friends account for positive self-esteem of African Americans.

Similarly, research demonstrates broad salutary effects of religion on a range of outcomes including functional impairment (Koenig, Larson and Larson 2001), mortality (Musick, House and Williams 2004), depression (Schnittker 2001), self-feelings (Idler 1995), and happiness (Ellison and Levin 1998). Religion may serve as a source of social relationships and social integration. Persons who attend church more frequently report more social ties and more frequent interactions with others as well as more positive evaluation of their social ties. Thus, church attendance provides the opportunity for positive self-verification. Studies examining the effects of religion on race and well-being have found that, for African Americans—particularly those with fewer resources—stronger religious commitment is beneficial for life satisfaction (Ellison 1998; Levin, Chatters, and Taylor 1995), self-esteem (Elli-

son 1993), mental (Ellison 1995; Musick et al. 1998), and physical health (Ellison et al. 2000). We examine the following hypothesis:

> H3a: Resiliency resources have a positive influence on self-esteem and self-efficacy.
>
> H3b: Resiliency resources mediate the influence of social class on self-esteem and self-efficacy

METHODS DATA AND SAMPLE

The data for this project comes from the National Survey of American Life (NSAL) which are part of the Collaborative Psychiatric Epidemiology Surveys (CPES) data collection (Alegria et al. 2007). The NSAL was administered from 2001 to 2003 to a sample of 6,082 individuals eighteen years of age and older in the United States with a response rate of 73 percent. The survey was designed to examine racial and ethnic differences in psychological disorders, distress, and service use and includes African Americans (N=3,570), Afro-Caribbean (N=1,438), and non-Hispanic White (N=891) adults. For the current study, we restrict analyses to employed African Americans; yielding an analytic sample size of 2,108 respondents with complete data. The mean age is 38.45, slightly more are females (53%), and 40 percent are married.

Dependent Variables: (a) Self-esteem is measured by Rosenberg's ten-item Self-Esteem Scale. An example of an item in the index is "I feel that I am a person of worth". Responses range from 1, "strongly disagree" to 4, "strongly agree". The alpha reliability coefficient for the index is .76. (b) Self-efficacy is the sum of six items from Pearlin's mastery scale, which includes the following example, "No way can I solve some of the problems I have". Responses range from 1, "strongly disagree" to 4, "strongly agree". The alpha reliability coefficient is .70. Items were coded so that high scores indicate high self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Objective Status Variables: (a) Education is number of years of schooling. (b) Two categories of occupation are used: white col-

lar or professional/white collar occupations and nonprofessional occupations. Nonprofessional occupation is the reference category. (c) Household income is total household income logged.

Subjective Status and Work Variables: (a) Measures of subjective status include subjective social status, financial strain, and job satisfaction. Subjective social status is measured by a ten-item ladder anchored by 1, "worst possible way of life for you" and 10, "best possible life for you" (Adler et al. 2000). Subjective social status represents the social comparison process in self-evaluation. (b) Three items measure perceived economic strain. Respondents were asked to indicate "how difficult is it to meet monthly expenses": 1 for not too difficult to 5 for extremely difficult. "Are you better off financially than 10 years ago?" Responses are 1, "better"; 2, "same"; and 3, "worse". The third item ask respondents if they "worry that income is not enough." The responses are 1 "not at all" to 4 "a great deal." The alpha reliability coefficient is .67. (c) Job satisfaction, a subjective assessment of one's occupation, is measured using one item that asks how satisfied respondents are with their jobs. Responses are reverse coded and range from 1, "very dissatisfied" to 4, "very satisfied."

Racial Experiences and Racial Identity: (a) We focus on racial discrimination rather than unfair treatment generally because it is arguably the most insidious (Stetler, Chen, and Miller 2006) and because it poses a greater threat to identity (Williams and Williams-Morris 2000). Discrimination is measured by ten self-report items of day-to- day discrimination such as "treated with less courtesy, called names, followed in stores." The items are coded 0 for never to 5 for almost every day. The alpha reliability coefficient for the index is .88. (b) Racial identity is measured using two indicators. First, group evaluation is measured by six items that capture positive and negative attitudes about African Americans as a group. The six items are: How true do you think most African Americans are: 1) intelligent; 2) lazy; 3) hardworking; 4) give up easily; 5) proud of themselves; 6) violent. Response categories range from 1 "very true" to 4 "not at all true." Items 1, 3, and 5 are reverse coded. The reliability coefficient is .62.

Second, closeness is measured by asking respondents to indicate how close they are in their ideas and feelings to eight categories of African Americans: "Blacks generally" and Blacks who are "poor," "young," "upper-class," "working-class," "older," "elected officials," and "Black professionals." Response range from 1, "not close at all" to 4, "very close" and has an alpha coefficient of .87.

Friends, Family, and Church: Support from and involvement with friends, family, and church members represent resources which tap into the reflected appraisal process of self-evaluation. (a) Friend involvement is measured using a three-item index that ask 1) how often do friends help you out, 2) how often do you help out your friends, and 3) how close do you feel towards your friends. Responses to the first two items range from 1, "never" to 4, "very often," and from 1, "not close at all" to 4, "very close" for the third item. The alpha coefficient for the index is .74. (b) Family emotional support is measured by asking respondents how often your family 1) makes you feel loved and cared for; 2) listens to problems; 3) express interest in your well-being. The response categories are 1, "never" to 4, "very often". The alpha reliability coefficient is .76. (c) These questions and response categories are repeated to ascertain emotional support from church members, with non-affiliated respondents coded 0. The reliability coefficient is .72.

Control Variables: The control variables are age which is measured in years; married coded "1" and not married "0"; female coded "1" and male "0". In addition to acts of discrimination, persons in marginal status position—race/ethnicity and low social class—also experience more chronic health conditions. Chronic health problems may also decrease self-esteem. Using national data, Toni Antonucci and James Jackson (1983) found persons with health problems had lower self-esteem scores than healthy persons and that increasing severity of health problems was associated with progressively lower self-esteem. The chronic health condition variable is a count of sixteen chronic medical conditions. Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, and the empirical range of all the study variables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

	Mean	Standard Error	Empirical Range
Dependent Variables			
Self-Esteem	36.82	0.11	19-40
Self-Efficacy	20.23	0.10	8-24
Resource Based Status			
Education (years)	9.93	0.09	1-14
Professional/White Collar	0.36	0.02	
HH Income (Logged)	10.36	0.03	5.30-12.21
Subjective Status/Work			
Subjective Social Status-SSS	7.29	0.04	1-10
Perceived Economic Strain	5.21	0.07	7-12
Job Satisfaction	3.12	0.02	1-4
Racial Experiences & Identity			
Racial Discrimination	9.97	0.37	0-50
Closeness	10.06	0.11	0-16
Group Evaluation	19.22	0.11	9-24
Friends, Family, Church			
Friend Involvement/Support	14.23	0.08	4-19
Family Emotional Support	9.76	0.06	3-12
Church Emotional Support	2.44	0.03	0-12
Control Variables			
Age	38.45	0.39	18-83
Gender-Female	0.53	0.01	
Married	0.36	0.01	
# Chronic Health Conditions	0.91	0.03	0-7

Table 2. Regression Analyses for Self-Esteem (Standardized Coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Age	0.040	-0.046	-0.059	0.011	0.057	-0.050
	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]
Female	0.001	0.019	0.003	-0.019	-0.022	-0.016
	[0.15]	[0.12]	[0.12]	[0.15]	[0.15]	[0.13]
Married	0.078[b]	0.054[a]	0.028	0.072[a]	0.089[b]	0.039
	[0.22]	[0.15]	[0.21]	[0.21]	[0.23]	[0.22]
#Chronic Health Conditions	-0.120[c]	-0.077[a]	-0.068[a]	-0.102[b]	-0.117[c]	-0.062[a]
	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.08]
Education	0.120[c]		0.121[c]	0.129[c]	0.110[c]	0.115[c]
	[0.05]		[0.04]	[0.05]	[0.04]	[0.04]
Professional/ White Collar	0.071[a]		0.054[a]	0.063[a]	0.074[a]	0.051
	[0.23]		[0.20]	[0.24]	[0.22]	[0.20]
HH Income (Logged)	0.083[a]		0.031	0.077[a]	0.073	0.032
	[0.17]		[0.16]	[0.16]	[0.17]	[0.15]
Subjective Social Status-SSS		0.303[c]	0.308[c]			0.282[c]
		[0.07]	[0.07]			[0.07]
Perceived Economic Strain		-0.190[c]	-0.154[c]			-0.133[c]
		[0.06]	[0.05]			[0.05]
Job Satisfaction		0.098[c]	0.104[c]			0.082[b]
		[0.11]	[0.11]			[0.10]
Racial Discrimination				-0.168[c]		-0.077[b]
				[0.01]		[0.01]
Closeness				-0.123[c]		0.067[a]
				[0.03]		[0.02]
Group Evaluation				0.096[b]		0.077[b]
				[0.03]		[0.03]
Friend Involvement/Support					0.107[c]	0.079[b]
					[0.03]	[0.03]
Family Emotional Support					0.113[b]	0.051
					[0.06]	[0.05]
Church Emotional Support					0.050	0.004
					[0.08]	[0.07]
Constant	36.23	37.36	37.44	36.67	36.11	37.40
R	0.07	0.21	0.23	0.13	0.11	0.26

Standard errors in brackets. [a]p<0.05, [b]p<0.01, [c]p<0.001

Table 3. Regression Analyses for Self-Efficacy (Standardized Coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Age	0.004	-0.053	-0.065a	-0.023	0.016	-0.061[a]
	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]	[0.01]
Female	-0.020	0.002	-0.010	-0.040	-0.042	-0.035
	[0.18]	[0.20]	[0.19]	[0.16]	[0.20]	[0.19]
Married	0.032	0.023	-0.005	0.026	0.037	0.001
	[0.25]	[0.22]	[0.23]	[0.24]	[0.24]	[0.22]
#Chronic Health Conditions	-0.166[c]	-0.131[c]	-0.121[c]	-0.145[c]	-0.164[c]	-0.113[c]
	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]	[0.09]
Education	0.131c		0.129[c]	0.134[c]	0.123[c]	0.121[c]
	[0.05]		[0.05]	[0.05]	[0.05]	[0.04]
Professional/ White Collar	0.050		0.030	0.043	0.053	0.029
	[0.22]		[0.20]	[0.22]	[0.20]	[0.20]
HH Income (Logged)	0.094[b]		0.036	0.087[b]	0.082[b]	0.032
	[0.12]		[0.12]	[0.12]	[0.12]	[0.12]
Subjective Social Status-SSS		0.199[c]	0.204[c]			0.179[c]
		[0.06]	[0.06]			[0.07]
Perceived Economic Strain		-0.234[c]	-0.200[c]			-0.173[c]
		[0.04]	[0.04]			[0.04]
Job Satisfaction		0.079[a]	0.085[b]			0.062[a]
		[0.13]	[0.13]			[0.12]
Racial Discrimination				-0.176[c]		-0.097[c]
				[0.01]		[0.01]
Closeness				0.062[a]		0.013
				[0.03]		[0.02]
Group Evaluation				0.122[c]		0.101[c]
				[0.03]		[0.03]
Friend Involvement/Support					0.053	0.035
					[0.03]	[0.03]
Family Emotional Support					0.121[c]	0.072[a]
					[0.05]	[0.05]
Church Emotional Support					0.059[a]	0.030
					[0.07]	[0.07]
Constant	20.43	21.10	21.22	20.82	20.38	21.26
R	0.08	0.17	0.19	0.13	0.11	0.22

Standard errors in brackets. [a]p<0.05, [b]p<0.01, [c]p<0.001

ANALYSIS

We conducted ordinary least-squares regression analyses on each dependent variable. The analyses proceed in several stages. For each outcome, we first ran models that included the control variables and objective indicators of social status class (education, occupation and income). We subsequently evaluated models that included subjective dimensions of status in the absence of objective indicators of social status. This strategy allows us to see the independent effects of SSS and resource-based measures. We then examine the effects of subjective status in the context of resource based measure of social class. This is followed by progressively adding in measures of racialized experience and racial identity (racial discrimination, closeness and group evaluation) and the resiliency measures (church involvement, family emotional support and group evaluation) that might explain the observed social inequality effects. Models were compared to one another to determine if the block of measures were statistically significant and improved the amount of explained variance in the dependent outcome. The tables present standardized coefficients.

RESULTS

Tables 2 and 3 show the regression models for self-esteem and self-efficacy, respectively. According to Hypothesis 1a, resource-based measures of social status will have a positive effect on self-efficacy, but are unrelated to self-esteem. The results of Model 1 provide partial support for this hypothesis. Of the resource-based measures of social class, education and household income have a positive effect on self-efficacy, but the measure of occupation status is not significant. Surprisingly, all three resource based measures show positive significant effects for self-esteem. This finding is inconsistent with findings reported by Hughes and Demo (1989). Model 1 explains 7 and 8 percent of self-esteem and self-efficacy, respectively.

Results depicted in Models 2 indicate support for Hypotheses 1b, 1c, and 1d. Subjective social status (SSS) has a positive

robust association with self-esteem and self–efficacy. The coefficients for job satisfaction are positive and modest. Persons who are satisfied in their job report positive self-esteem and self-efficacy. Although perceived economic strain has significant negative association with both measures of self-perception, the effect of economic strain is competitive with that of SSS in predicting self-efficacy. The variables in Model 2 explain 21 and 17 percent of the variation in self-esteem and self-efficacy respectively. Overall, the coefficients for the resource measures of social status are modest in comparison to that of subjective measures. Looking at Model 3, we see that SSS has positive significant effects on self-esteem and self-efficacy in the presence of resource-based measures, suggesting the importance of social comparison for self-perception. However, the effect of household income is no longer a significant predictor of self-esteem or self-efficacy in the context of SSS and other subjective status measures. There is little change in the coefficient for education suggesting education is a stable reliable measure of social status.

Model 4 adds measures that represent racialized experiences that African Americans encounter in their day-to-day interactions and racial identity. Hypotheses 2a states that race discrimination will have negative association with self-esteem and self-efficacy; and 2b states that racial identity will have a positive association with self-perceptions. Both hypotheses are supported. So, the respondent's experience with race discrimination is independent of group identity concerns. Hypothesis 2c states the racialized experiences will mediate the effect of objective social status for self-esteem and self-efficacy. This hypothesis is not supported.

Resiliency measures tap social connection to significant others in the respondent's social network and allows us to examine the assumption that interpersonal relationships play a critical role in shaping self-esteem and self-efficacy among African Americans. The third set of hypotheses predicts the resiliency resources will have a positive association with both self-esteem and self-efficacy as well as mediate the influence of objective social class.

Results in Model 5 reveal the expected positive relationship for the family emotional support and church involvement predicting self-efficacy, but not self-esteem. Friend support and family support have significant positive effects on self-esteem. Do the resiliency resources mediate the effect of resource-based social class variables on self-esteem and self-efficacy? We find so empirical support for this hypothesis. To the degree that the resiliency resources of church involvement, support from family and friends capture the reflected appraisal process, they do not eliminate the self-awareness or self-attribution which is captured by the resource measures.

Model 6 is the full model that includes measures for the control variables, resource measures of social status, subjective social status, racialized experience variables and resiliency variables. SSS has a significant association with self-esteem and self-efficacy net of the objective social status measures. Education is the only objective social status variable that has a significant effect on both the outcome measures. In each instance, the effect coefficient for SSS and economic strain are larger than that of education. Looking at self-esteem, the coefficient for SSS is three times larger than the effect for education and it is 1.7 times larger than the effect of education predicting self-efficacy. Of the other measures, financial strain, job satisfaction, and perceived discrimination remain statistically significant in the final model for both self-esteem and self-efficacy. Group evaluation coefficients have significant positive effects on both self-esteem and self-efficacy. For the resiliency resource variables, family emotional support predicts self-efficacy and friend emotional support predicts self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

This study replicates other studies that examine the association between social class and self-esteem and self-efficacy for African Americans. In addition, this article compares the effects of a subjective measure of SES (SSS), along with financial strain and job satisfaction, and objective measures of SES (income, occupation

and education) on self-esteem and self-efficacy. Our findings demonstrate that subjective dimensions of social status, especially perceived social standing, accounts for a significant part of the relationship between SES and self-esteem and SES and self-efficacy. In fact, SSS is the most robust predictor of both self-esteem and self-efficacy and is influential over and above objective status indicators. Our finding suggests that social comparisons are more important than social inequality and racialized experiences as well as social resilience. While we have no direct evidence, we assume that the social comparisons were class-based and not necessarily confined to one's ethnic group. Our findings show an independent effect of racial group evaluation for self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Second, our findings do not support the traditional findings of occupation status and income as predictors of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Education was the only traditional measure of SES that significantly predicted self-esteem and self-efficacy in the context of SSS and other subjective indicators of class. Household income and occupation status are variable and more likely to be influenced by fluctuations in the economic marketplace. Occupation and income are not psychologically central to the self-esteem or self-efficacy for employed African Americans in this instance. Education is a more stable characteristic of SES and one indicator over which individuals have some control. Education, we argue, is an indicator of one's intrinsic sense of self-worth as well as providing experiences that make one more efficacious. In that way, SSS and education provide a better assessment of a person's future prospects, opportunities and resources.

Our findings do not support Hughes and Demo's research (1989) on predictors of self-esteem and self-efficacy. They argued that "black people may generally attribute individual success and failure to a discriminatory system beyond their control, thereby rendering social class irrelevant to black self-esteem" (Hughes and Demo 1989). Following Marylee Taylor and Edward Walsh (1979), Hughes and Demo (1978:151) argue that "system blame

would lead to more positive self-image among blacks". We find perceived racial discrimination has a negative effect on both self-esteem and self-efficacy. Our measure of perceived racial discrimination, a scale not available to Hughes and Demo, captures acute stereotypical social interactions that occur on a day-to-day basis and not discrimination that is distal to every day interactions and well-being.

Our study is not without limitations. We capture status, both subjective and objective, at a very limited time and are unable to address change over time. Similarly, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data we are unable to explicitly determine causal direction. It is possible that self-esteem and self-efficacy influence feelings of subjective social ranking. In addition, there are other measures of key constructs such as racial identity that may have yielded different results. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, our article makes a contribution to the literature. Our study indicates that socioeconomic standing may indeed impact Black self-concept, but it is more dependent upon subjective dimensions of social class than upon objective measures typically used in research. It offers a plausible explanation for the apparent "paradox" of high self-esteem but low mastery among African Americans.

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Exclusive Religious Beliefs and Social Capital: Unpacking Nuances in the Relationship between Religion and Social Capital Formation

Daniel Auguste

ABSTRACT

Religion has long been associated with the promotion of social capital and social well-being. It has also been implicated, however, in the promotion of social division and exclusion. Using data on indicators of exclusive religious beliefs and social capital collected by the World Values Survey across forty-seven countries, this study sheds light on this apparent paradox. Results from mixed-effects ordered and binomial logistic regressions show that, on the one hand, the greater the extent to which people believe in the authenticity of their own religion and the inauthenticity of others, the less likely they are to accept immigrants, people of a different race, or those who speak a different language as neighbors. They are also less likely to trust people of another religion and nationality. On the other hand, results show that religious individuals are more likely than their nonreligious counterparts to trust people of another nationality and to accept immigrants, people of a different race, and those who speak a different language as neighbors. These findings reveal an important distinction between individuals' overall religiosity and their exclusive religious beliefs. The findings help explain why religion has been implicated simultaneously in the promotion of both social cohesion and exclusion. Finally, this analysis suggests that the connection between religion and social exclusion may be a consequence of religious intolerance rather than religiosity.

Keywords: social capital, social inclusion, social exclusion, religion

> We live at a time in which polarization and exclusion are burgeoning and considered the only way to resolve conflicts. We see, for example, how quickly those among us with the status of a stranger, an immigrant, or a refugee, become a threat, take on the status of an enemy. An enemy because they come from a distant country or have different customs. An enemy because of the color of their skin, their language or their social class. An enemy because they think differently or even have a different faith.
>
> —Pope Francis, in his homily for the Ordinary Public Consistory for the Creation of New Cardinals (November 2016)

We are observing an increasing use of religion as justification for social exclusion and anti-multiculturalism in many countries around the world. Fifty-five years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. brought similar phenomena to public attention in the United States when he stated that "the church is the most segregated major institution in America…eleven o'clock on Sunday morning…[is] the most segregated hour of America" (1964). Recent research using data on religious affiliation across six countries (Canada, China, Jordan, Turkey, United States, and South Africa) found that children from religious households demonstrated a low level of altruistic behaviors and a high level of punitive behaviors compared to those from secular households (Decety et al. 2015). However, research also finds that religion fosters civic engagement, philanthropy (Lam 2006; Lim and MacGregor 2012), community empowerment and development (Barnes 2005; Pattillo-McCoy 1998; Reese and Shields 2000), and altruism and social cohesion (Putnam and Campbell 2010:456–61).

How do we reconcile these seemingly paradoxical narratives about religion as a source of social cohesion and its common use to justify social differentiation and exclusion in contemporary societies? This study sheds light on this apparent paradox by examining the link between individuals' exclusive religious beliefs and the tendency to form bonding social capital (i.e., the

propensity to accept and trust familiar or like-minded others) and bridging social capital (i.e., the propensity to accept and trust unfamiliar or unlike-minded others). Exclusive religious belief is here conceptualized as the degree to which individuals believe in the authenticity of their own religion and the inauthenticity of others. Thus, the analysis examines the impact of the extent to which people believe in the authenticity of their own religion and the inauthenticity of others on their propensity to form bonding and bridging social capital. By emphasizing individual exclusive religious beliefs, as opposed to disproportionately focusing on religious affiliations (as in most previous research), this study improves our understanding of the multifaceted ways that religion may influence social capital.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptualization of Social Capital: Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Social capital is understood as social relationships and social norms, such as social network interaction and trust (Bourdieu 1985; Coleman 1988). Building on this conceptualization of social capital, research has identified two primary forms of social capital: *bonding* and *bridging* (Putnam 2000:22). *Bonding social capital* refers to the tendency of people to engage in social interactions and form trust with people like them or like-minded others. *Bridging social capital* pertains to the tendency of people to form trust and social networks with unlike-minded and unfamiliar individuals, such as people of different races, religions, nationalities, or belief systems. Bonding social capital is characterized by network closure and tends to reinforce group homogeneity, whereas bridging social capital tends to foster network diversity and social inclusion (Storm 2015). I use this typology of social capital to examine the relationship between exclusive religious beliefs (measured as the extent to which people believe that their

religion is the only acceptable religion) and the tendency to form bonding and bridging social capital.

Review of Relevant Research on Religion and Social Capital

Understanding the link between religion and social capital formation has long been a focus of sociological inquiry. Scholars like Alexis de Tocqueville ([1835] 1954) and Emile Durkheim ([1912] 1995) pioneered the study of religion and social capital development, and this branch of research has gained increasing popularity among social scientists with the new conceptualization of social capital offered by the political scientist Robert Putnam in his famous work *Bowling Alone* (2000) and by the work of James Coleman (1988). In the United States, some argue that religion constitutes a key source of community cohesion and is one of the most important forms of social capital endowment (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Research also suggests that religious Americans are significantly more likely to develop friendships and social interactions with people who are socially and racially different from them (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Other research goes further to conclude that Protestant values and norms foster social trust within religious communities that spill over to the broader community (Fukuyama 1995). The basis of this argument is that religious communities provide a safe environment for social interactions and the development of interpersonal relationships necessary for the formation of trust that stretches across social and racial divides (Fukuyama 1995).

Research conducted in other countries echoes this conclusion from U.S.-based research about the positive impact of religious community on social cohesion and social capital (Dingemans and Van Ingen 2015). For example, using data across German regions and generalized trust as a measure of social capital (i.e., trust in most people), Richard Traunmüller (2011) finds that people who are affiliated with a religious denomination demonstrate a greater propensity to trust in most people than their nonreligious counterparts. In the United Kingdom, research also

finds that people who identify as Protestants are more trusting of others than those who are nonreligious (Storm 2015). Using data from fifteen Western European countries, other research finds a similar association between generalized trust and religion (Paxton, Reith, and Glanville 2014). The common conclusion in these previous studies is that religiosity (commonly measured as affiliation with a religious denomination) constitutes a key determining factor of social capital and cohesion.

Building on the argument about religion as a source of social capital endowment, some research tries to disentangle the potential relative effects of different religious traditions on social capital production. In doing so, this research theorizes that some religious ideologies tend to promote stronger symbolic boundaries between insiders and outsiders than others (Welch et al. 2004). Scholars argue that religious traditions promoting clear boundaries between insiders and outsiders tend to foster strong in-group trust and networks but also promote out-group distrust, intolerance, and distance between unlike-minded others (Traunmüller 2011). Although empirical evidence lags behind theoretical claims about differences in religious traditions, a common conclusion emerging from this theoretical approach to religion and social capital stipulates that Protestant religions tend to instill in people religious values that create a culture of trust that extends to the broader society. On the other hand, research claims that non-Christian religious values, such as Buddhist, Islamic, and Confucian values, tend to promote strong in-group trust but out-group distrust and social exclusion (Fukuyama 1995).

Within this sub-branch of research, some studies also emphasize the relative importance of different subsets of the Christian religious traditions for the promotion of social capital. Some scholars argue that Catholic and conservative Protestants have a greater tendency to form trust in people they know and socialize more with like-minded others compared to mainstream Protestants (Blanchard 2007; Welch, Sikkink, and Loveland 2007). In the United States, research shows that social distance, measured

as residential racial segregation, is greater in counties where the conservative Protestant population is high (Blanchard 2007). Other scholars find that, in the United States, White Protestant religious organizations tend to be characterized by network closure and strong in-group social connection (Altemeyer 2003; Emerson and Smith 2000). These studies, overall, emphasize a greater importance of mainstream Protestantism in fostering social capital as compared to non-Christian, Catholic, and conservative religious traditions.

Although these findings seem to dominate the narrative about the relationship between religion and social capital, recent research shows them to be inconclusive. For example, research suggests a greater and positive impact of non-Christian religious tradition (compared with their mainstream Protestant counterparts) on bridging social capital formation. Research conducted on U.S. college campuses finds that students who identify as Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist are more likely than their Protestant counterparts to engage in cross-racial interaction (Park and Bowman 2015), have roommates of different racial groups, and participate in cross-racial/cultural awareness activities training (Cole and Ahmadi 2010). Within this line of inquiry, some go further to question the argument about the positive association between religion and social capital. Hence, some scholars argue that because religion tends to create trust through in-group socialization and networks, religious diversity, for example, may lower social integration; consequently, religion may adversely affect social capital formation (Delhey and Newton 2005).

In the same vein, testing the argument that religion facilitates the formation of social trust that bridges across social groups, in an experiment that paired individuals within unknown social networks, research shows that being religious has no impact on the likelihood that individuals will trust unfamiliar network members (Paciotti et al. 2011). This finding echoes Eric Uslaner's (2002) argument that religion may present a barrier to trust, as it may foster strong bonds between individuals within a given

religious organization at the expense of outsiders. Using survey data from a range of U.S. states and 105 countries, other results show that respondents who acknowledge that religion is important in their lives have a low tendency to place trust in most people (i.e., generalized trust) (Berggren and Bjørnskov 2009). Similarly, studies conducted on U.S. college campuses show that being religious and a member of a student religious organization are adversely related to cross-racial interaction (Park 2012; Park and Kim 2013). In summary, these studies highlight the inconsistencies in empirical research about the relationship between religion and social capital formation. This variability indicates that existing empirical analyses do not fully capture the complex and multifaceted ways in which religion influences social capital and may facilitate social cohesion. Thus, in addition to denominational affiliation, a closer examination of personal beliefs may improve our understanding of the multidimensional nature of the relationship between religion and social capital.

Theoretical Link between Personal Religious Beliefs and Social Capital Formation

As stated above, the heavy emphasis on religious affiliation combined with inconsistent findings in existing research highlight the need for a greater emphasis on personal religious beliefs (as opposed to grouping individuals based on their religious affiliations) that represent more directly the theoretical link between religion and the process of social network development (i.e., relationship-building, social trust, and attitudes toward others). I focus on personal beliefs because denominational affiliation provides a limited understanding of the extent to which individuals adhere to the precepts of their denominations (Lam 2002:408), hence how religion influences individual social interactions and behavior. For this reason, I contend that personal religious beliefs, and particularly those pertaining to inclusionary or exclusionary attitudes, are important to fully capture the extent to which religion may influence individual social interactions. Therefore, I will examine the extent to which an individual's exclusionary

religious beliefs influence the likelihood of forming bonding and bridging social capital.

To this end, I situate my theoretical framework in the symbolic boundary literature, detailing sources of symbolic distinctions people make between themselves and others (Lamont and Molnár 2002). Symbolic boundaries generate group identity by excluding people perceived as outsiders while including those considered insiders (Alexander 2006; C. Taylor 2002). The symbolic boundary literature also demonstrates that religion (often conceptualized as denominational affiliation) is an instrument that people use to draw symbolic differentiations (Edgell and Tranby 2010) and form "subcultural identities" (Smith 1998). However, although religious affiliation reveals important aspects of the processes underlying symbolic boundary creation, empirical analysis of how the process of boundary creating operates on the personal level to produce differential propensities to form bonding and bridging social capital is insufficient. This is unfortunate because, net of religious denomination, one may expect perceptions about social differentiations between people and social groups to be more pronounced among people who hold strong views about symbolic differences between their religious traditions and other religions. That is partly because beliefs (both conscious and subconscious) that people hold tend to shape their life philosophy or values, which in turn often influence their behavior (Smalley 2011; Swidler 1986), including their social interactions and tendency to develop trust in others. Thus, because religion tends to influence people's moral standards, personal religious beliefs that embody inclusive or exclusive values provide a clearer understanding of the mechanism by which religion influences socialization patterns (i.e., people's decision to socialize with and trust people of different ethnic, racial groups, and cultural background or with those who are like them) than measures of religion that group individuals into religious affiliations.

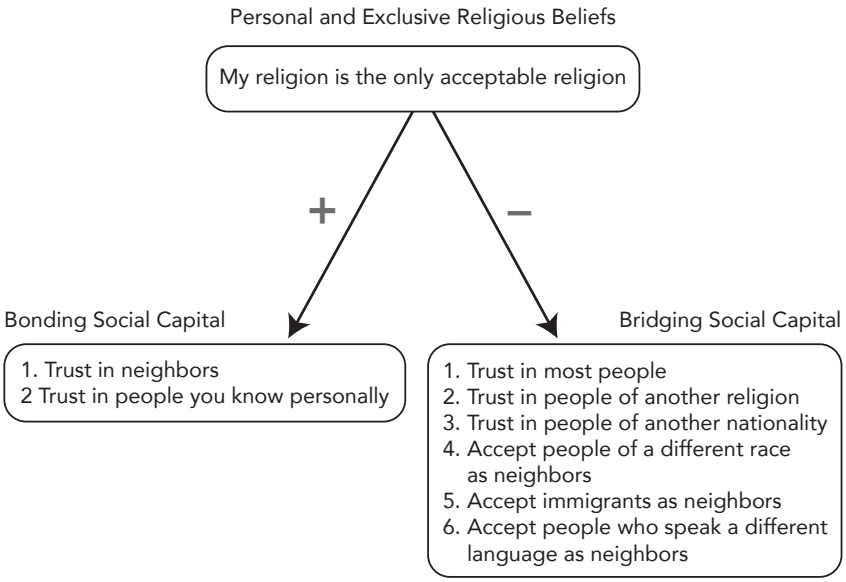
In this regard, someone who believes that there are strong differences regarding the authenticity of their religion and other

religions may also hold views about social reality and human nature that are marked by strong symbolic and social differentiation between social groups and individuals. In the same vein, because *birds of a feather flock together* (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001), people who believe that there are strong differences in the authenticity of their religion (compared to other religions) may be less likely to form social networks with individuals who are different from them. These people may also be more likely to form inclusive social networks and trust with people of similar worldviews or racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. In other words, personal religious beliefs that embody inclusive religious values may be more strongly associated with bridging social capital, whereas exclusive religious values may be more strongly associated with bonding social capital. That is, the worldviews of people in this study who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion may be characterized by social exclusion values and differentiation. Based on this argument, I propose the following hypotheses (see Figure 1 for a summary).

Hypothesis 1: The greater the extent to which people believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion, the greater the tendency they have toward forming bonding social capital as defined here.

Hypothesis 2: The greater the extent to which people believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion, the lower the tendency they have toward forming bridging social capital as defined here.

Figure 1. The link between personal and exclusive religious beliefs and bonding and bridging social capital.



DATA, MEASUREMENT, AND METHODS

Data

The World Values Survey (WVS) examines changes in values and beliefs across the world and how those changes relate to transformations in other social phenomena. The WVS is a country-representative survey administered to individuals aged eighteen years and older in approximately one hundred countries, representing roughly 90 percent of the global population. The data were collected using face-to-face interviews and interviews conducted by telephone in remote areas. The survey now contains six waves of data spanning 1981 to 2014. This analysis is conducted using data from the most recent wave (i.e., Wave 6, 2010–2014), which enables me to capture the current state of attitudes about social trust and acceptance and the potential influence of religious beliefs on these attitudes. After conducting listwise deletions, the sample size includes 50,371 observations distributed across for-

ty-seven countries. The countries under study here are Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Estonia, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

Measurement of Exclusive Religious Beliefs and Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Eight dependent variables are examined in this study. *Exclusive religious beliefs* were measured by asking respondents how much they agreed with the following statement: "The only acceptable religion is my religion." Possible responses were treated as a dichotomous variable where "agree" and "strongly agree" are coded "1" and "disagree" and "strongly disagree" are coded "0" (see Table 2 for detailed description). Answer choices for this question were originally strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), and strongly disagree (4).

Bonding social capital is represented by two items measuring trust in familiar others. Respondents were asked how much they trusted (1) "their neighbors" (2) and "people they know personally." Choices were treated as ordinal outcomes, which rank from lowest to highest levels of trust. *Bridging social capital* variables were measured using two sets of questions. First, respondents were asked how much they trusted (1) "most people," (2) "people of another religion," (3) and "people of another nationality." Possible responses were also treated as ordinal outcomes, ranking from lowest to highest levels of trust. Second, respondents were asked to indicate whether they would like to have as neighbors (1) "people of a different race," (2) "immigrants or foreign workers," and (3) "people who speak a different language." Possible responses are treated as dichotomous outcomes, with yes = 1 and no = 0 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for personal and exclusive religious belief, bonding and bridging social capital variables

Variables	Response	N	%
My religion is the only acceptable religion	Disagree	27,402	54.45
	Agree	22,969	45.60
Bonding Social Capital			
Trust in neighbors	Do not trust at all	3,477	6.90
	Do not trust very much	11,119	22.07
	Neutral	213	0.42
	Trust somewhat	25,338	50.30
	Trust Completely	10,224	20.30
Trust in people you know personally	Do not trust at all	2,717	5.39
	Do not trust very much	9,307	18.48
	Neutral	144	0.29
	Trust somewhat	26,532	52.67
	Trust Completely	11,671	23.17
Bridging Social Capital			
Most people can be trusted	Need to be very careful	37,853	75.15
	Neutral	641	1.27
	Most people can be trusted	11,877	23.58
Trust in people of another religion	Do not trust at all	11,139	22.11
	Do not trust very much	17,831	35.40
	Neutral	1,497	2.97
	Trust somewhat	17,599	34.94
	Trust Completely	2,305	4.58
Trust in people of another nationality	Do not trust at all	12,058	23.94
	Do not trust very much	18,073	35.88
	Neutral	1,597	3.17
	Trust somewhat	16,564	32.88
	Trust Completely	2,079	4.13
Would accept people of a different race as neighbors	No	9,121	18.11
	Yes	41,250	81.89
Would accept immigrants as neighbors	No	11,521	22.87
	Yes	41,250	81.89
Would accept people who speak a different language as neighbors	No	8.339	16.56
	Yes	42,032	83.44

N=50,371; Countries=47; World Values Survey, Wave 6, Years=2010-2014

Individual and Country-Level Control Variables

Other individual-level factors, independent of one's religious beliefs, may influence the type of people with whom one socializes and the tendency that one has to trust familiar or unfamiliar people. For example, employment, education, marital and parental status, health condition, age, and income may be important influences. For instance, an employed person may be more likely to encounter people outside his or her close network of family and friends than an unemployed individual. Moreover, research shows that schools tend to provide opportunities for people to meet other individuals from different social backgrounds (Borgonovi 2012). Thus, employment and education may affect differences in socialization patterns and the propensity to form trust outside of one's personal religious circle. Men and women tend to exhibit different socialization patterns (Benenson 1990; Rose and Rudolph 2006) and propensities for trusting others (Haselhuhn et al. 2015). Some scholars suggest that men are more trusting than women (Alesina and La Ferrara 2000). Being parents, particularly of young children, can also alter the structure and size of social networks (Cronenwett 1985). Moreover, older individuals tend to be more trusting than their younger counterparts (Welch, Sinkink, and Loveland 2007). Given the theoretical importance of these individual-level factors for social interaction and trust, I account for them in this analysis.

Given the importance of religious community for social capital formation (Putnam and Campbell 2010), an individual's religious denomination is controlled for in this analysis based on whether respondents belonged to a religious denomination. Answers vary significantly across individuals and countries, but are classified into five categories: (1) Catholics, (2) Protestants, (3) non-Christians, (4) Muslims, and (5) Nonreligious. Table 2 presents the description of these variables. The countries differ greatly in their level of economic development (measured as gross domestic product per capita [GDP/capita] in U.S. dollars). For instance, in the years the survey was conducted (2011–2014),

the U.S. GDP per capita was $46,568.60 (2011), Sweden's was $40,890.70 (2011), Mexico's was $13,430 (2012), and Nigeria's was $16,29.50 (2011), whereas Zimbabwe had a GDP per capita of only $369.15 (2012). Research implicates differences in economic development level in cross-country differences in social capital development. Some scholars argue that the radius of trust in others tends to be greater in developed societies than in their less-developed counterparts (Delhey, Newton, and Welzel 2011). To account for individual-level differences in bonding and bridging social capital that may be due to economic disparities, this analysis controls for differences in economic development levels across countries. Twenty-one control variables are examined (see Table 2 for a detailed description of these variables).

Methods

This study assumes cross-national differences in exclusive religious beliefs. For this reason, multilevel modeling techniques are used, permitting the estimation of cross-context dynamics that may influence how personal religious beliefs shape social relations and attitudes pertaining to the formation of bonding and bridging social capital. Furthermore, the social capital variables used here are measured on both binary and ordinal scales (see Table 1 for a detailed description). As a result, mixed-effects logistic regressions for ordered and binary outcome variables are employed using Stata 14. The analysis is conducted in two stages. The first stage tests the initial hypothesis that the greater the degree to which people believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion, the greater the tendency to form bonding social capital. To this end, the analysis estimates the effect of the independent variable *the only acceptable religion is my religion* on the two dependent variables that measure bonding social capital: (1) *trust in neighbors*, and (2) *trust in people one knows personally*. The next stage tests the second hypothesis that the greater the extent to which people believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion, the lower the tendency toward forming bridging social capital. The analysis estimates the effect of the independent variable,

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the control variables

Variables	Description	%	N
Religious Denominations			
Muslim	Respondent is a Muslim=1, other=0	18.62	9,378
Christian Religions	Respondent belongs to a Christian faith religion=1, other=0	29.70	14,962
Non-Christian Religions	Not a Christian faith religion=1, other=0	12.36	6,227
Catholic*	Respondent is Catholic=1, other=0	21.12	10,639
Other Religions	Other religion categories=1, other=0	1.64	827
Nonreligious	Respondent is not religious=1, other=0	16.55	8,338
Employment Status			
Employed	Respondent is employed=1, other=0	55.56	27,987
Unemployed	Respondent is unemployed=1, other=0	8.03	4,043
Retired	Respondent is retired=1, other=0	13.04	6,566
Housewife	Respondent is a housewife=1, other=0	15.05	7,582
Student	Respondent is a student=1, other=0	6.91	3,482
Other Employment	Respondent's employment is nonclassified=1, other=0	1.41	711
Other Demographic Variables			
Female	Respondent is female=1, other=0	52.97	26,680
Ever Married	Respondent is ever married=1, other=0	64.39	32,434
Cohabited	Respondent is cohabited=1, other=0	7.22	3,636
Has a Child/Children	Respondent has child/children=1, other=0	72.59	36,566
Has Poor Health	Respondent has poor health=1, other=0	5.32	2,678
		Mean	SD
Age	Respondent's age, Range:18-99	42.52	16.48
Position on Income Scale	Respondent's position on the income scale: 1=low, 10=high	4.92	2.04
Educational Attainment	1=no formal education, 9=university education	5.73	2.41
Economic Development			
GDP per capita, Logged	Country-level economic development in GDP/capita	9.29	1.15

N=50,371; Countries=47; World Values Survey, Wave 6, Years=2010-2014

*Catholic is treated as a separate category to parallel previous research that contrasts the propensity of Catholics to form social capital with that of other Christian traditions such as mainstream Protestants.

the only acceptable religion is my religion, on the six dependent variables measuring bridging social capital: (1) *most people can be trusted*, (2) *trust in people of another religion*, (3) *trust in people of another nationality*, (4) *accepting people of a different race*, (5) *accepting immigrants or foreign workers*, and (6) *accepting people who speak a different language as neighbor*s.

RESULTS

The Relationship between Exclusive Religious Beliefs and Bonding Social Capital

Models 1 and 2, in Table 3, test the impact of religious exclusivity attitudes on the bonding social capital measures while controlling for individual-level factors and countries' level of economic development. However, they do not control for individual religious affiliation. In Model 1, the coefficient that gauges whether respondents believe their religion is the only acceptable religion is positive and significant ($b=0.21$, $p < 0.001$; odds=1.23). This result suggests that respondents who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion are 1.23 times more likely to place trust in their neighbors compared to those who do not hold this belief. Model 2 assesses whether these same beliefs affect trust in people they know personally. However, this indicator is insignificant, suggesting that religiously exclusive attitudes are no more or less likely to influence such trust.

Models 3 and 4 (Table 3) test the robustness of the results from Models 1 and 2 by controlling for religious denominations using the four dummy variables. Results in Model 3 show that denominational affiliation does not eliminate the effects of exclusionary attitudes on trust in neighbors ($b=0.122$, $p<0.05$). Yet the influence of such attitudes is diminished compared to the baseline model. This significant reduction in the effect of exclusive religious beliefs after controlling for religion affiliation indicates that religious community matters for social capital formation. Yet personal religious beliefs are still important in influencing trust in neighbors. Model 4 considers trust in people whom respondents know personally. However, as in Model 2, denominational ties do

Table 3. Mixed-effects ordered logistic regressions of bonding social capital.

	Bonding Social Capital			
	Trust in neighbors	Trust in people you know personally	Trust in neighbors	Trust in people you know personally
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
My religion is the only acceptable religion (disagree=Ref.)				
Agree	0.21[c]	0.09	0.12[a]	-0.02
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Religious Affiliation (Nonreligious=Ref.)				
Muslim			0.62[c]	0.36[c]
			(0.05)	(0.05)
Christian Religions			0.19[c]	0.13[c]
			(0.03)	(0.03)
Non-Christian Religions			0.27[c]	0.09
			(0.05)	(0.05)
Catholic			0.26[c]	0.14[c]
			(0.03)	(0.03)
Others			0.10	0.16[a]
			(0.07)	(0.07)
Individual Level Controls[d]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Economic Development[d]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Random Coef. (country, my religion= only accept. religion)	0.14[c]	0.19[c]	0.16[c]	0.19[c]
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Random Intercept (country)	0.37[c]	0.23[c]	0.35[c]	0.35[c]
	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Observations	50371	50371	50371	50371
Log Likelihood	-57527.80	-55742.20	-57419.70	-55720.70
Countries	47	47	47	47

Standard errors in parentheses. [a]p<0.05, [b]p<0.01, [c]p<0.001
[d]see Table 2 for description

not affect the insignificant influence of exclusionary attitudes on personal trust levels. Results in Models 3 and 4 highlight nuances in the relationship between personal religious beliefs, religious denomination, and social capital formation. They suggest that the effect of personal religious beliefs on social capital varies by type of bonding social capital.

Several additional observations: Although controlling for religious denomination in Model 3 does not eliminate the effect of personal and exclusive religious beliefs on bonding social capital, the religious affiliation variables have significant effects on bonding social capital. This finding is consistent with existing research that emphasizes the importance of religious organizations for bonding social capital (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010). In Models 3 and 4, each of the religious indicators are influential, which suggests that respondents who are affiliated with a religious denomination are more likely than nonreligious individuals to exhibit bonding social capital. For instance, in Model 3 (Table 3), people who belong to the Muslim, Christian, non-Christian, and Catholic religious categories are, respectively, 1.86 (odds =1.86), 1.20 (odds =1.20), 1.31 (odds =1.31), and 1.29 (odds =1.29) times more likely to trust in neighbors compared to their nonreligious counterparts. Together, these results show that both personal religious beliefs and religious affiliation may foster bonding social capital. The following analysis considers bridging social capital formation.

The Relationship between Exclusive Religious Beliefs and Bridging Social Capital

Models 1–6 in Table 4 examine the effects of exclusionary religious beliefs on the six measures of bridging social capital and control for economic development, religious denomination, and the individual-level controls. Model 1 tests the effect of the exclusionary attitudes on the likelihood that one will trust in most people. This relationship is not significant. Next, Model 2 tests the effect of the exclusionary attitudinal indicator on the likelihood that one would trust in people of another religion. This relationship

Table 4. Mixed-effects ordered binomial regressions of bridging social capital.*

	Bridging Social Capital					
	Trust in most people	Trust in people of another religion	Trust in people of another nationality	Accept people of a different race as neighbors	Accept immi-grants as neighbors	Accept people who speak a different language as neighbors
	(1) OL	(2) OL	(3) OL	(4) BL	(5) BL	(6) BL
My religion is the only acceptable religion (disagree = Ref.)						
Agree	-0.08	-0.50c	-0.47c	-0.42c	-0.26c	-0.32c
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.09)
Religious Affiliation (Nonreligious=Ref.)						
Muslim	0.03	0.47c	0.29c	-0.32c	-0.06	-0.24c
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Christian Religions	0.03	0.37c	0.26c	0.05	0.14b	0.19c
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Non-Christian Religions	-0.08	0.26c	-0.01	-0.08	-0.05	0.04
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)
Catholic	-0.37c	0.25c	0.18a	0.10	0.20	0.16
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Others	-0.37c	0.25c	0.18a	0.10	0.20	0.16
	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Individual Level Controls[d]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Economic Development[d]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GDP per Capita, Logged	0.23	0.41c	0.46c	-0.03	-0.20	-0.09
	(0.13)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.10)
Random Coef. (country, my religion= only accept. religion)	0.10b	0.14c	0.13c	0.19c	0.18c	0.27c
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.08)
Random Intercept (country)	0.94c	0.36c	0.40c	1.11	1.07	0.89
	(0.21)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.25)	(0.23)	(0.21)
Observations	50371	50371	50371	50371	50371	50371
Log Likelihood	-26422.7	-61676.5	-61634.0	-20909.4	-24215.9	-20858.4
Countries	47	47	47	47	47	47

Standard errors in parentheses. [a]p<0.05, [b]p<0.01, [c]p<0.001
[d]see Table 2 for description | *OL=Ordered Logit; BL=Binomial Logit

is negative and significant (b=–0.502, p< 0.001), meaning that respondents who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion (compared to those who do not hold this belief) are less likely to trust people who belong to other religions. Additionally, the exclusionary attitudinal variable undermines trust in people of another nationality (b=–0.467, p< 0.001, Mode 3).

Model 4 estimates the effect of the exclusionary attitudinal variable on the likelihood that one would accept people of a different race as neighbors and suggests negative effects (b=–0.42, p<0.001). This means that people who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion are less likely to accept people of different races as neighbors compared to people who do not share this religious belief. Model 5 investigates the impact of beliefs that one's religion is the only acceptable religion on the likelihood that one would accept immigrants or foreign workers as neighbors; this relationship is also predictive and negative (b=–0.262, p<0.001). Finally, the impact of exclusionary views on acceptance of people who speak a different language as neighbors is examined in Model 6. Negative effects are apparent (b=–0.320, p<0.001). In summary, I find negative and significant effects of the variable that assesses exclusionary religious beliefs on five of the six measures of bridging social capital.

The results also demonstrate that religion affects social capital on multiple levels. It can be adversely or positively associated with social capital formation depending on the measures of religion and social capital employed. In Model 3 (Table 4) the negative effect of exclusionary beliefs (b=–0.47) and positive effects of denominational affiliations (b=0.29 for Muslim, b=0.26 for Christians, and b=0.09 for Catholic) on acceptance of people of another nationality evidence this argument. The consistent negative effect of exclusionary religious beliefs and the inconsistent effects of religious denomination on five measures of bridging social capital (Table 4, Models 2–6) support my argument that, in addition to religious affiliation, personal religious belief is important for understanding nuances in the ways that religion

influences social capital formation. These results also highlight the importance of religious affiliation for social capital formation, which is consistent with previous research (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010).

These findings improve on previous research; they show that the importance of religious denomination depends on types of social capital. For instance, only being a Muslim has a significant effect on acceptance of people of different races and that effect is negative (b=−0.323, Model 4) and only being a Christian has a significant and positive effect on acceptance of immigrants (b=0.135, Model 5). In sum, these findings support both my argument that existing research has not fully captured the multidimensional ways that religion relates to social capital formation and that personal religious beliefs are crucial for understanding the nuanced relationship between religion and social capital development.

DISCUSSION

Since the works of Emile Durkheim ([1912] 1995) and Max Weber ([1905] 1930), religion has been associated with the promotion of social welfare, cohesion, and development. In contrast, religion has also been implicated in the nurturing of division and oppression, such as racial segregation, discrimination, and White supremacy in general, and as justification for social exclusion, such as anti-immigrant and nationalist rhetoric, in particular (Ben-Nun Bloom, Arikan and Courtemanche 2015; M. Taylor 2016). By examining the relationship between individuals' exclusive religious beliefs and bonding and bridging social capital, this analysis provides empirical tools to reconcile this apparent paradox of religion as both agent of social cohesion and division.

A key finding here suggests looking beyond religious affiliation and considering personal religious beliefs to better understand some of the benefits and challenges associated with religious beliefs. By simultaneously examining the influence of individuals' exclusive religious beliefs and denomination on bonding and bridging social capital, this analysis shows that

both sentiments of social exclusion and inclusion may emerge. Overall, my findings show that people who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion tend to be less trusting and accepting of diverse people, while at the same time religious individuals (compared with their nonreligious counterparts) are more trusting and accepting of unfamiliar others. These findings indicate that the relationship between religion and social capital is complex. Different dimensions of religion may have differential impacts on social capital formation.

The results of this analysis also show that what many respondents believe about the authenticity of their religion (compared to other religions), independent of individuals' religious affiliation, reveals why religion may promote both social inclusion and exclusion. Furthermore, these findings demonstrate that the way social capital is conceptualized is also crucial for understanding the complexity through which religion influences social inclusion and exclusion. Depending on how social capital is measured, research may conclude that religion serves as a bridge uniting a society's social strata, whereas others may find religion to be a source of division and exclusion. This argument is supported here by the finding that the effect of religion on social capital varies by different measures of bonding and bridging social capital.

Moreover, my findings suggest that research that uses only generalized trust (i.e., trust in most people) as a measure of social capital could conclude that religion has no effect on social capital formation. However, using both generalized trust and other measures of social capital as was done in this endeavor provides a more systematic examination of the different ways that religion affects social capital formation. The importance of how social capital is conceptualized is also demonstrated, given that religious affiliation had a significant effect on some measures of bridging social capital here and no significant effect on others. For instance, the results show no significant difference between those affiliated with a religious denomination (except for Muslims and Christians) and the nonreligious in the likelihood of

accepting people of different races, immigrants, and people who speak a different language as neighbors. Thus, the inconsistent previous research may be partly because religion relates differently to various aspects of social capital and because prior studies often used a narrow range of measures of social capital.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present analysis suggest that the effects of religion may vary based on its conceptualization (e.g., personal religious beliefs and religious affiliation) and how social capital is measured. Conceptualizing religion both as denominational affiliation and individuals' exclusive religious beliefs and considering multiple measures of bonding and bridging social capital, this analysis illustrates ways to reconcile the seemingly contradictory findings in previous research about the relationship between religion and social capital. These results show that religion can both foster and hinder social capital development. My finding that respondents who believe that their religion is the only acceptable religion express diminished acceptance of people of different races, immigrants, and people who speak a different language than those who do not hold such a belief lends support to this argument. Individuals who hold such religious beliefs may express superiority that fosters exclusion of diverse groups.

Yet that religious individuals, overall, have a high propensity (as compared to their non-religious counterparts) to accept immigrants, people of different races, and those who speak a different language, and to trust people of another nationality, demonstrates that religion may also promote social inclusion and acceptance of multiculturalism. These findings suggest caution when reducing individuals to religious categories or affiliations. Thus, this study demonstrates that understanding individuals' personal religious beliefs is also crucial. The empirical analysis supports my argument that denominational affiliation provides a limited understanding of the extent to which religion influences one's social interactions. The findings also justify Pui-Yan Lam's (2002) concern about using solely religious affiliation for under-

standing the ways that religions influence individual behavior. In sum, the findings support my theoretical framework (summarized in Figure 1) that exclusionary religious beliefs will increase the tendency toward forming bonding social capital but decrease the propensity toward building bridging social capital.

Although this analysis shows that individuals' exclusionary beliefs undermine the formation of bridging social capital, due to data limitations this analysis did not investigate other potential motives such as economic, ethnic, class, or political identity-based motives for creating symbolic boundaries that include some people while excluding others. In-depth interviews across groups may glean additional motives and motivations for both inclusive and exclusionary behavior. Furthermore, given the findings of this study and the multilevel nature of the relationship between religion and social capital illustrated in this study, future research may extend this analysis to the impact of societal-level religious beliefs on potential cross-country differences in social capital. For example, research suggests that the radius of trust in others (i.e., the width of the circle of others that people imagine when they say "they trust in most people") varies across cultures and by level of economic prosperity (Delhey, Newton, and Welzel 2011). Future research might examine the potential influence of societal-level religious beliefs that embody the values of religious superiority and exclusion on the radius of trust in a society.

Finally, the finding of a significant and systematic influence of exclusionary religious beliefs on bonding and bridging social capital may have implications for understanding sources of community activism and development. This is important because research finds that religiosity (Calhoun-Brown 1999), the theology of church ministers (Reese and Shields 2000), and religious rituals, such as prayer, music, and social justice sermons (Barnes 2005) influence community activism and development. Building on the findings of this analysis and these prior studies, future research may improve our understanding of the process by which religion influences social activism by examining potential links between people's exclusionary and inclusionary religious

beliefs and their propensity for engaging in community activism. Answers to such queries may improve not only our understanding of the multifaceted nature of the processes by which religion influences social capital but also our knowledge of the underlying mechanism of the observed link between religion and community action for social change.

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More than Just Incarceration: Law Enforcement Contact and Black Fathers' Familial Relationships

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ABSTRACT

Racial inequality in law enforcement contact persists in the United States. Black men are disproportionately arrested and stopped by the police compared to White Americans. One collateral consequence of law enforcement contact for Black men is its effect on family life. In the current study, we examined the association between law enforcement contact and Black fathers' familial relationships. Using panel data, our results show, for fathers, both measures of law enforcement contact are associated with lower levels of relationship quality but not co-parenting. For mothers, only fathers who were previously incarcerated were associated with lower levels of relationship quality whereas both measures of law enforcement contact were associated with lower levels of co-parenting. We recommend policy efforts focusing on low-income families should also work in tandem with criminal justice policies to ensure optimum family and children's outcomes, especially among Black fathers.

Keywords: Black fathers, Black families, law enforcement, co-parenting, racial stratification

In the United States, it is well-documented that Black men have a higher probability of experiencing law-enforcement contact than other racial and ethnic groups (Alexander 2012). For example, Black men make up about 6 percent of the general population but represent 50 percent of the incarcerated population (Mauer and King 2007). Although reasons for incarceration vary, it is after

being released that many Black men experience stressors and strains that impede their civic, social, and economic opportunities due to the stigma of a criminal record (Pager 2003). Incarceration is not the only way Black men encounter law enforcement. For instance, a growing number of studies highlight that Black men are disproportionately stopped by the police while driving (Warren et al. 2006). In 2011, it was estimated that 13 percent of Black men are pulled over in a traffic stop compared to 10 percent of White men (Langton and Durose 2013). Although these percentages represent a small gap in traffic stops, Black Americans are more likely to be searched (Higgins et al. 2011) and are more likely to perceive excessive force on the part of police officers (Weitzer and Tuch 2004) than Whites. Thus, for Black men, incarceration and police stops represent multiple forms of law enforcement contact.

One collateral consequence of law enforcement contact for Black men is its effect on family life (Haskins and Lee 2016; Western and Wildeman 2009). Studies show that one in nine Black children has had a parent in prison (Murphey and Cooper 2015). The separation from intimate partners and children can be especially challenging as former inmates find ways to reintegrate and reconnect with their communities and families. For example, being previously incarcerated comes with a set of challenges that has implications for former inmates' involvement with their children (Geller 2013; Perry and Bright 2012) and the mother-father relationship (Western and Wildeman 2009). In regards to intimate relationships, research on incarceration and family has paid much attention to divorce and marriage (Lopoo and Western 2005; Massoglia, Remster, and King 2011). Although this line of research has informed our understanding of the incarceration and family nexus, focusing on marriage and divorce may overlook important familial processes for Black families because many incarcerated men are unmarried fathers (Pattillo, Western, and Weiman 2004). As such, focusing on the impact of incarceration on marriage and divorce may exclude the population that is

over-represented in the penal system. Thus, for the current study, we are interested in the association between law enforcement contact and the familial relationship (e.g., relationship quality and co-parenting) among both married and unmarried fathers and their child's mother. Similar to this prior study, we contend being previously incarcerated is associated with a number of challenges and stressors that may place strain on positive relationship functioning (Comfort et al. 2018; Turney 2015). To our knowledge, only one study has examined the association between incarceration and relationship quality among fathers' incarceration using a nationally representative sample (e.g., Turney 2015). We build on Kristin Turney's (2015) study by focusing on both incarceration and police stops, and restricting our sample to Black fathers.

Even more, whether police stops affect families is less clear. Racial inequality in police stops may influence the lack of trust in police among Black Americans (Pew Research Center 2016), especially in a time of heightened sensitivity to police shootings and killings of unarmed Black men and women. In a recent Gallup survey, one in four Black men (ages eighteen to thirty-four) states that he has been treated unfairly by police within the last month. Black men being stopped by police may generate stress and strain, which, in turn, affects relationship quality between mothers and fathers. For instance, police stops may (a) reinforce racial subordination and (b) generate frustration and helplessness (Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014; Lerman and Weaver 2014). Given that individuals within families are inextricably linked (Cox and Paley 1997; O'Brien 2005), such frustration and agitation may not only affect fathers' relationship quality but also spill over to affect their child's mothers' view of the relationship. Thus, the purpose of the current study is to examine the impact of incarceration and police stops on Black fathers' familial interactions with their child's mother.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRIOR RESEARCH

Contextualizing Racial Inequality in Law Enforcement Contact

The disproportionate amount of Black men who encounter law enforcement contact does not happen within a vacuum. To understand the persistent racial gap in law enforcement contact, we use racial stratification as a conceptual framework to help contextualize race and criminality in the United States. Racial stratification suggests that (a) race is socially constructed, (b) racial groups are hierarchally structured, and (c) although racial domination and oppression shifted from overt (e.g., slavery, Jim Crow laws, etc.) to covert (e.g., colorblind racism), racial inequality persists across a number of indices of well-being, including law enforcement contact (Alexander 2012). Similar to proponents of critical race theory (Delgado and Stefancic 2017), proponents of racial stratification argue that racism is endemic to the US, and racism manifest itself through laws and policies, social practices, and discourse (e.g., Bonilla-Silva 1997; Omi and Winant 2014).

Thus, the persistent racial gap in law enforcement contact is an outcome of a racially stratified social system. The maintenance of the racialized social system is contingent upon racial ideologies. To understand racial ideologies, we rely on Ashley Doane's (2017) definition, which sees ideologies as "collections of beliefs and understandings about race and the role of race in social interaction—ideas that are anchored in existing social (material) relations" (976). Racial ideologies work to make sense of racial inequality to either maintain (dominant groups) or challenge (subordinate groups) the racial status quo (Bonilla-Silva 2017; Doane 2017). From this perspective, the over policing of Black bodies is justified because racial ideologies imbuing the state (i.e., policies and laws) encode crime within race (Blackmon 2009; Muhammad 2011). To illustrate this, we follow Keon Gilbert and Rashawn Ray's (2016) argument that the socio-historical origins of policing and criminalizing of Black males post-Civil

War carried forward to shape contemporary policing policies. Specifically, Gilbert and Ray view Black men's encounter with law enforcement as a continuum whereby the law enforcement tactics morphed over time, including (a) the prison industrial complex, (b) lynching, and (c) stop and frisk policies. These changing techniques reflect the fluidity of racial ideologies, and thus the maintenance of racial status quo. Given the prevalence of both incarceration and police stops for Black men, these experiences may carry over into their day-to-day lives, including their familial relationships.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACT AS FAMILY AND INTERPERSONAL STRESS

Given the historical and contemporary context of policing in the United States, law enforcement contact may serve as a stressor for Black men and families (Taylor et al. 2018; Western and Wildeman 2009). To elucidate how, and in what ways, Black fathers' encounter with law enforcement affect relationship quality and co-parenting between parents, we rely on two separate theories of stress. First, we use family stress theory to understand the link between being previously incarcerated and family outcomes. Second, to adequately capture the association between police stops and familial relationships, we draw on the stress spill over hypothesis. We rely on two disparate theories because each perspective differs in the point of emphasis. For instance, family stress suggests when individual family members face stressors, the impact reverberates throughout the entire family system, which, in turn, presents challenges for other family members (Conger, Conger, and Martin 2010; McCubbin and Patterson 1983). In regard to stress spill over, this line of reasoning suggests that interpersonal experiences with stressors in one life domain (e.g., work) can spill over to other domains (e.g., family life) (Neff and Karney 2004). For the current study, we contend that police stops may work as a type of interpersonal stressor to impact familial relationships.

Incarceration as family stress.
Prior research on incarceration and family life relies on family stress theory. For example, mass incarceration has removed large numbers of men from their home communities. This can create a ripple effect that distorts the social norms of the community and can become a part of children's socialization process (Roberts 2004). Post-release, these formerly incarcerated fathers are faced with myriad invisible punishments that are associated with their history in the criminal justice system. These include difficulty securing gainful employment, as well as disqualification from several public assistance safety net programs such as Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Miller, Mondesir, Stater & Schwartz 2014).

While most of the extant research on formerly incarcerated fathers focuses on the implications for their children, there is an emerging literature examining the impact on the men themselves. In *Fatherhood Arrested*, Anne Nurse (2002) concluded that going to prison necessarily separates fathers from their children, partners, and families, making maintaining strong bonds and attachments difficult, if not impossible. In addition, men learn that emotionally disconnecting from life on the outside is functional in order to cope with the constant threat of violence inside of the prison. In a qualitative examination of incarcerated African American men, Brian Tripp (2001) found that fathers felt stress from knowing that they were not and could not provide financially for their children while they were incarcerated. They were concerned about being replaced by another man in their children's lives. These feelings were also connected to concerns about their wife's or girlfriend's potential infidelity.

Paternal incarceration has also been associated with negative outcomes for children and families. In a study featuring data collected from 185 fathers in a maximum security prison, Cheryl Swanson and colleagues (2013) concluded that the fathers' incarceration served as a barrier that hurt their ability to develop

or maintain positive relationships with their children. Other researchers have explored this topic, including Armon Perry and Mikia Bright (2012), who analyzed data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing study and found that the children of Black men with a history of incarceration had more severe behavioral problems than children of never-incarcerated fathers. Allison Dwyer Emory (2018) extended this work as she sought to better understand the relationship between paternal incarceration and children's behavioral problems. Through the use of structural equation modeling, she found that changes in family well-being accounted for most of the association between paternal incarceration and externalizing behavior.

Fathers' involvement is heavily shaped by the quality of the co-parenting relationship (Fagan & Kaufman 2015). In addition to reporting lower levels of relationship quality before incarceration, mothers who had children with ever-incarcerated fathers were also less likely to marry and more likely to divorce, report lower levels of shared parenting responsibility and cooperation, and higher rates of domestic violence (Wildeman & Muller 2012; Turney 2015). Previous research has also found that fathers' responsive parenting was negatively associated with cumulative incarceration time (Modecki & Wilson 2009). Kristin Turney and Christopher Wildeman's (2013) explanation of the countervailing consequences of paternal incarceration revealed that among men who had been in prison, there were dramatic decreases in the engagement of these formerly resident fathers. Moreover, the relationship between the fathers' incarceration and their parenting behaviors was largely explained by changes in the fathers' relationships with their children's mothers. As a result, the authors concluded fathers' incarceration significantly increased the likelihood of mothers' repartnering in an attempt to offset the losses of the biological fathers' income and involvement, resulting in possible multiple partner fertility and increased family complexity. Similarly, Bruce Western and Natalie Smith (2018) found that incarceration leads to family complexity via multiple partner fertility that

makes fathers' involvement and the co-parenting relationship even more tenuous.

Despite the contributions of these studies in advancing the state of knowledge related to the fallout from men's incarceration, still relatively little is known about the ways in which fathers' incarceration impacts their relationships with their children's mothers (McKay, Comfort, Grove, Bir & Lindquist 2018). To fill this gap, a recent special issue of *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* was dedicated to examining the challenges facing intimate partners and co-parenting relationships including how they manage the separations and disruptions to family routines that accompany a male partner's incarceration (Hairston 2018) using data collected in the Multisite Family Study on Incarceration, Partnering and Parenting (MFS-IP). The MFS-IP includes longitudinal data collected from close to two thousand couples in five states and focused on their experiences before, during, and after a male partners' incarceration. The study contains both quantitative and qualitative data and includes several follow up STET data collection waves including nine, eighteen, and thirty-four months post release (Lindquist, Steffey, McKay, Comfort & Bir 2018).

The special issue includes several articles with analyses that have implications for co-parenting relationships. Tasseli McKay, Christine Lindquist, and colleagues (2018) study participants' perceptions of family life before and during incarceration. The results revealed that for many of the men, their efforts to maintain active roles in their children's lives were made more difficult by the fact that they had at least one minor child that they did not live with, engage with regularly, or support financially. These couples co-parenting relationships were further strained by the high cost of telephone calls and visits, partners and children being subjected to undesirable prison visitation environments, and mothers being left to serve as the sole financial provider and caregiver. In another study, McKay, Feinberg, et al (2018) revealed a decrease in the percentage of fathers coresiding with their children from 70 percent pre-incarceration to 50 percent post-incarceration.

This decrease in co-residence rates was accompanied by fathers having to adjust to their new realities post-release, including negotiating access to their children with their co-parents, scheduling visitation times, and finding transportation. The authors concluded that this played out as mothers worked to either support or constrain fathers' attempts to maintain relationships with their children.

Finally, Megan Comfort and colleagues (2018) examined couples relationships during men's post-incarceration transition back into the community. In describing some of their experiences with reentry, the couples reported several challenges that they felt unprepared and ill-equipped to handle. These challenges included reports of a deterioration in men's and women's reports of relationship perceptions. This led the authors to conclude that the prison environment may have shaped the couples' communication and interactions by making it difficult to discuss sensitive subjects, which ended up being temporarily smoothed over during the vulnerable time of incarceration. Furthermore, women often felt a sense of obligation to be care takers while their partners were in prison, but were let down when their expectations of a more traditional and reciprocal relationship post release went unmet. With these recent studies as a backdrop, we seek to build on previous research by exploring not only the relationship between paternal incarceration and parenting relationships, but more broadly, the relationship between law enforcement contact and parenting relationships among Black men, a group that is disproportionately involved with law enforcement and involved in so-called fragile families. As such, we hypothesize fathers who were previously incarcerated will report lower levels of relationship quality and co-parenting than fathers who were not previously incarcerated.

Police stops as interpersonal stress.

Although a number of studies examine the association between incarceration and family life, limited attention has been given to police stops and parental relationships. This is surprising given

the substantial growth in studies on racial inequality in police stops. For example, studies show Black (and Hispanic) drivers, compared to White drivers, experience a disproportionate number of police stops (Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014), officers show less respect to Black drivers (Voigt et al 2017), and racial bias remains a key mechanism in police stops, even in states with legal marijuana laws (Pierson et al 2017). These encounters lead to negative emotional responses such as anger and frustration (e.g., Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014).

How might police stops affect familial relationships? To answer this question, we draw on spill over hypothesis. Family researchers suggest that individuals face a number of environmental stressors external to their familial relationships. As such, stressful events may reduce individuals' self-regulatory resources and adaptive strategies to manage familial problems (Neff and Karney 2004). Given these cross domain associations, we posit that police stops, especially when these stops do not result in any consequence, becomesa unique stressor whereby Black men are reminded in their position in the racial hierarchy. This notion is in line with "driving while Black." For the current study, we are particularly interested in what Charles Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody, and Donlad Haider-Markel (2014) refer to as *investigatory stops* whereby individuals encounter police stops but are not ticketed or arrested, which leads to a deep source of frustration and annoyance among those who are stopped. We hypothesize that fathers who experienced police stops will be associated with lower levels of relationship quality and co-parenting compared to fathers who did not experience a police stop.

MEDIATING MECHANISMS: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH

To the extent that law enforcement contact affects fathers' relationship with their child's mother, the association may operate through fathers' adverse economic conditions and parents' mental health. Specifically, adverse economic circumstances and parental mental health may mediate the association between

law enforcement contact and familial relationships. Scholars persistently show that encounters with law enforcement—being previously incarcerated and police stops—are associated with the depletion of economic and mental health resources. These findings have important implications for parental relationships. For example, there are numerous studies that indicate that parents' adverse economic conditions and mental health are associated with lower levels of relationship quality between partners.

Economic conditions.

To adequately engage this extensive body of research on law enforcement contact, we separate adverse economic conditions into subjective (e.g., economic hardship and unemployment) and objective (e.g., neighborhood disadvantage) indicators. In regards to subjective measures, previously incarcerated men tend to suffer from limited job prospects and economic adversity (Pager 2003; Western 2006). Objective measures of adverse economic stress tends to focus on neighborhood disadvantage. Aggressive policing tends to take place disproportionately in disadvantaged geographical locations with large African American populations (Geller et al. 2014; Sewell and Jefferson 2016; Sewell, Jefferson, and Lee 2016).

Economic conditions lower levels of relationship quality. Proponents of family stress model argue that adverse economic conditions have debilitating consequences on the quality and stability of intimate relationships (Conger et al. 2010). Economic strain limits parents' ability to carry out their role as good parents, which generates tension and frustration between parents. Previous research gives support to the family stress model. For instance, Deadric Williams and colleagues show that economic hardship leads to higher levels of relationship distress (contemplating ending the relationship) for both mothers and fathers (Williams and Cheadle 2016; Williams, Cheadle, and Goosby 2015). Moreover, economic conditions such as unemployment and neighborhood disadvantage have negative impact on relationship quality (Bryant et al. 2010; Cutrona et al. 2003).

Mental health.
The potential impact of law enforcement contact on relationship quality may also operate through the depletion of mental health resources. For instance, previous research shows that incarceration was associated with measures of psychological well-being compared to fathers who were not incarcerated (Brown, Bell, and Patterson 2016; Turney, Wildeman, and Schnittker 2012). In addition, previous research shows that aggressive police stops are associated with a number of mental health problems (Geller et al. 2014; Sewell et al. 2016). Increasingly, scholars are beginning to frame mass incarceration and its impact on individuals and families as a public health concern, which is especially important given racial inequalities in health (for a review, see Wildeman and Wang 2017).

Parents' mental health also has deleterious effects on relationship quality. Scholars contend that depressed parents may exhibit a number of behaviors such as irritability and impatience, offer less affection and support, and engage in more negative interactions between parents (e.g., Conger, Conger, and Martin 2010). Empirical studies show parental depression is associated with elevated levels of relationship distress (Williams and Cheadle 2016; Williams, Cheadle, and Goosby 2015) and lower levels of co-parenting (Williams 2018). Taking together, *we hypothesize that adverse economic conditions and mental health will mediate the association between law enforcement contact and familial relationships*.

DATA & METHODS

To address the research hypotheses, we used data from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study (FFCW). The FFCW is a nationally representative, longitudinal study that follows an urban birth cohort of 4,898 children and their parents (3,712 unmarried and 1,186 married births) in twenty U.S. cities with populations of 200,000 or more. The study began in 1998–2000 with 4,898 mothers and 3,830 fathers. At baseline, mothers were interviewed in person while in the hospital within forty-eight

hours of giving birth. Parents were re-interviewed when the child was one, three, and five years of age. (For more information concerning the FFCW study, see Reichman et al. 2001.)

Although data were used from the baseline through the five-year surveys, we pooled data from the Year-3, Year-5, and Year-9 follow-up surveys because the key independent variables (e.g., stopped by the police and previous incarceration) were both measured during those years. Our sample begins with 1,604 Black fathers at Year-3. We dropped 289 respondents (18%) because they did not participate in Year-5 follow-up survey and another 338 (21%) who did not participate in the Year-9 follow-up surveys. Another two respondents (< 1%) were deleted because the child's father was unknown at the five- and nine-year surveys. Eight respondents were dropped due to missing data in the key independent variables. This resulted in a final sample of 967 respondents. Due to different levels of missing data in the dependent variables over time, the within person samples were as follows: For fathers, the samples include 2,729 within-person years for relationship quality and 2,667 within-person years for co-parenting; for mothers, the samples include 2,648 within-person years for relationship and 2,599 for co-parenting.

Familial Relationships

To measure *relationship quality*, we used mothers' and fathers' reports to the following question: "In general, would you say that your relationship with him is (1) excellent, (2) very good, (3) good, (4) fair, or (5) poor?" The responses were recoded so that higher scores reflect higher levels of overall relationship quality. *Co-parenting* at the three-, five-, and nine-year follow of surveys ($\alpha > .70_{\text{fathers;}}$ $\alpha > .84_{\text{mothers}}$) was measured using fathers' and mothers' reports with the following items: (a) "When (father/mother) is with (child), he/she acts like the father/mother you want for your child"; (b) "You can trust (father/mother) to take good care of (child)"; (c) "He/She respects the schedules and rules you make for (child)"; (d) "He/She supports you in the way you want to raise (child)"; and (e) "You and (father/mother) talk about prob-

lems that come up with raising (child)." Response options are for each item are *rarely true, sometimes true,* and *always true*.

Law Enforcement Contact

We measured law enforcement contact using two separate items, police stops and previously incarcerated. To gauge police stops, respondents were asked, "Other than for a minor traffic violation, have you been stopped by the police, but not picked up or arrested?" Responses were (0) no and (1) yes. Father's incarceration was gauged by asking parents the following question: "Has father ever spent any time in jail or prison?" Responses were (0) no and (1) yes. Fathers were considered previously incarcerated if either parent reported the father was incarcerated because individuals may underreport incarceration (e.g., Geller et al., 2012).

Mediating Mechanisms

To gauge economic stress, we rely on four measures. First, economic hardship at each year was measured by mothers' responses to eight dichotomous indicators (no = 0, yes = 1) such as "received free meals" and "had trouble paying rent or mortgage." The measure of economic hardship was created by summing scores to each of the eight items across the survey years. Second, poverty was measured as household income-to-needs ratio was based on official U.S. poverty thresholds from the Census Bureau, adjusted by family composition and year; a ratio of 1 or less indicated that the family lived in poverty. Thus, the item ranges from (0) out-of-poverty to (1) in-poverty. Third, *unemployment status* was measured by asking each parent the following question: "did any regular work for pay last week." Responses were (0) yes and (1) no. Last, *neighborhood disadvantaged index* was gauged by four items: (1) percentage of families below poverty level in 1999, (2) percentage of family households with kids <18 headed by females, (3) percentage of civilian labor force (16+) unemployed, and (4) percentage of households on public assistance. Each item was standardized and summed.

To tap into mental health, we rely on both parents' depression. *Mothers' and fathers' depression* was measured using the Com-

posite International Diagnostic Interview-Short Form for Major Depression (CIDI-SF). Mothers who experienced dysphoria and/or anhedonia for a two-week period most of the day or every day were asked additional questions regarding the following: (1) "losing interest," (2) "feeling tired," (3) "changes in weight," (4) "trouble sleeping," (5) "trouble concentrating," (6) "feeling down," and (7) "thoughts about death." Mothers who affirmed at least one stem question and at least three of the other seven questions were considered depressed (1 = depressed, 0 = not depressed).

Control Variables

The control variables for the present study are organized by (a) partners' individual characteristics, (b) couples' characteristics, and (c) child's characteristics. First, parents' individuals' characteristics include: family status, family status change between Year-3 and Year-5, mother is of another race. Mothers' and fathers' *age* was measured (in years) as continuous variables and mothers' and fathers' *education* level was measured using four categories: (1) less than high school, (2) high school or equivalent, (3) some college or tech training, and (4) college graduate or more. *Religious attendance* (at the one-year survey) was measured by asking parents "how often do you attend religious services?" Responses range from (1) never to (7) every day. We also included a variable to indicate whether parents *lived with both parents at age 15*. We include an item to reflect whether the child's father was currently incarcerated at Year-1 (0 = no; 1 = yes). Fathers' *illicit drug use* was defined as ingestion of at least one illegal drug, at least once in the year preceding interview, such as sedatives, tranquilizers, amphetamines, analgesics, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD/hallucinogens, and heroin. Responses range from (0) no drug use to (1) any drug use.

The analysis includes five items that gauge *pro-family attitudes* (e.g., "The important decisions in the family should be made by the man of the house," ranging from 1 [*strongly disagree*] to 4 [*strongly agree*]); six items that tap into *pro-marriage attitudes* (e.g., "It is better for a couple to get married than to just live together,"

ranging from 1 [*strongly disagree*] to 4 [*strongly agree*]); and, two items to gauge *gender distrust* (e.g., "Men/Women cannot be trusted to be faithful," ranging from 1 [*strongly disagree*] to 4 [*strongly agree*].

Couples' characteristics include reported *number of children* in the household at the one-year follow-up and parents' *fertility history*, which was gauged with two separate measures. First, a measure was created to indicate whether the focal child is a higher order birth or first birth (0 = first birth, 1 = higher order birth). Second, dummy variables indicating *multi-partnered fertility* (at one-year follow-up) were used to capture whether mothers and fathers reported having a child with another partner—neither parent has a child by another partner (reference), father has child by another partner only, mother has child by another partner only, and both parents have a child by another partner.

Child characteristics include *child's health* (mother's report at one-year) with responses ranging from (1) poor to (5) excellent." *Child temperament* was measured using six items from the Emotionality, Activity, and Sociability (EAS) Temperament Survey (Mathiesen and Tambs 1999); responses range from (1) not at all like my child to (5) very much like my child. Child's *sex* (0 = girl; 1 = boy) was also included in the analyses.

ANALYTIC STRATEGY

For the multivariate analyses, we pooled the observations from the Year-3, -5, and -9 follow-up surveys. The pooled data were structured so that each observation for each individual was represented by a separate record. The pooled data violate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression assumption of non-independence. The random-effects models adjust for this violation by implementing a generalized least squares solution in which weights were assigned on the basis of a combination of within- and between-individual covariance (Johnson 1995). The random-effects regression equation was expressed as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \mu_t + \beta X + \gamma Z_i + \alpha_{it} + \varepsilon_{it},$$

where Y_{it} represents refers to the value of the outcome variable

for individual i on occasion t, μt is the intercept that varies over time, βX_{it} is a vector of time-varying variables, γZ_i is a vector of time invariant variables, each αi represents differences between persons that is a random variable with a normal distribution, and ε_{it} represents within-persons error (Allison 2005).

We examine four analytical models separately for fathers and mothers. For Model 1, we analyzed the effect of both previously incarcerated and stopped by the police on familial relationships. For Model 2, we enter the measures of adverse economic conditions stressors (economic hardship, unemployment, and neighborhood disadvantage index) to the analyses. In Model 3, we enter mental health measures to the analyses, net of statistical controls. Model 4 includes the mental health measures (both parents' depression). Each model includes a number of covariates to account for potential spurious effects. In auxiliary analyses, we executed the analyses using ordered logistic random-effects regression model to take into account the non-normal distribution of relationship quality. The findings were substantially similar to the random-effects models, which treats relationship quality as normally distributed. Thus, for ease of interpretation, we report the random-effects results.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the mean, percentages, and standard deviations for the dependent, key independent variables, and the demographic characteristics for mothers and fathers in the analytical sample. Fathers' and mothers' relationship quality and co-parenting slightly decreased over time; however, the average levels remained relatively higher (see Table 1). For police stops, a quarter of the fathers experienced a police stop, and this was consistent over time. The percentage of fathers who were previously incarcerated increased over time from 44 percent at Year-3 to over half of the respondents (52%) by Year-9. In terms of mental health,

14 percent of fathers were depressed and 23 percent of mothers were depressed. Mothers were, on average, younger than fathers. Both fathers (39%) and mothers (41%) were more likely to have a high school diploma. More parents did not have a multi-partnered birth (48%). Table 2 shows means and standard deviations for relationship quality and co-parenting by law enforcement contact. We estimated mean differences between groups using two-tailed *t* tests. On average, fathers who experienced police stops

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for dependent, independent, and control variables, by fathers and mothers.

	Fathers			Mothers		
	Mean or %	SD	% not missing	Mean or %	SD	% not missing
Dependent Variables						
Relationship Quality						
Year-3	3.71	1.07	88.93	3.21	1.31	95.44
Year-5	3.42	1.23	97.72	3.16	1.30	91.83
Year-9	3.29	1.31	95.13	3.08	1.29	86.55
Co-parenting						
Year-3	3.75	0.37	88.62	3.51	0.66	92.76
Year-5	3.61	0.58	98.86	3.48	0.68	91.20
Year-9	3.29	0.57	88.31	3.42	0.70	84.79
Focal Independent Variables						
Police Stops						
Year-3	24.12					
Year-5	28.99					
Year-9	26.19					
Previously Incarcerated						
Year-3	44.05					
Year-5	47.05					
Year-9	52.84					
Adverse Economic Conditions						
Economic Hardship	0.73	1.11		1.01	1.32	
Fathers' Unemployed	25.57					
Neighborhood Disadvantage	0.00	1.00		-0.004	1.00	
Mental Health						
Parental Depression	14.18			23.34		

Table 1, continued.
Note: Control variables are weighted using city sampling weights.

	Fathers			Mothers		
	Mean or %	SD	% not missing	Mean or %	SD	% not missing
Control Variables (Weighted)						
Family Status at Year-3						
Married	30.78					
Cohabiting	28.54					
Romantically Involved	9.35					
No Relationship	31.33					
Relationship change	32.56					
Mother is of another race	7.22					
Age	29.43	7.71		26.17	5.98	
Education						
< than high school	24.98			27.50		
High school	39.89			41.01		
Some college	28.54			26.20		
College graduate	6.59			5.28		
# kids in the household	1.69	1.51				
Multi-partnered Fertility (MPF)						
No MPF	47.76					
Fathers MPF only	37.67					
Mothers MPF only	38.31					
Both parents MPF	45.84					
Lived w/both parents at age 15	38.81			37.56		
Traditional gender attitudes	2.67	0.45		2.62	0.42	
Traditional family attitudes	2.26	0.47		2.04	0.38	
Gender distrust	2.36	0.54		2.31	0.52	
Religious service attendance	3.47	1.32		3.72	1.32	
Father was in-jail at Year-1	2.92					
Fathers' Drug Use	14.49					
Child's temperament	2.59	0.80				
Child's health	4.56	0.74				
Child is boy = 1	55.16					

Table 2. Mean and standard deviations for familial relationships by law enforcement contact.

	Fathers (Police Stops)				Fathers (Previously Incarcerated)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Relationship Quality								
Year-3	3.50[a]	1.07	3.78[a]	1.06	3.54[e]	1.08	3.77[e]	1.06
Year-5	3.13[b]	1.27	3.53[b]	1.20	3.20[f]	1.24	3.50[f]	1.22
Year-9	3.02	1.33	3.38	1.29	3.06[g]	1.30	3.54[g]	1.28
Co-parenting								
Year-3	3.69[c]	0.40	3.76[c]	0.35	3.72	0.39	3.75	0.36
Year-5	3.48[d]	0.69	3.67[d]	0.51	3.56[h]	0.60	3.63[h]	0.56
Year-9	3.27	0.54	3.29	0.58	3.23[i]	0.61	3.35[i]	0.52

	Mothers (Police Stops)				Mothers (Previously Incarcerated)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Relationship Quality								
Year-3	3.02[j]	1.37	3.27[j]	1.29	2.92[p]	1.35	3.44[p]	1.24
Year-5	2.90[k]	1.34	3.27[k]	1.27	2.85[q]	1.31	3.43[q]	1.23
Year-9	2.79[l]	1.32	3.18[l]	1.26	2.69[r]	1.25	3.48[r]	1.21
Co-parenting								
Year-3	3.35[m]	0.77	3.56[m]	0.61	3.36[s]	0.76	3.62[s]	0.55
Year-5	3.34[n]	0.76	3.54[n]	0.63	3.37[t]	0.74	3.58[t]	0.60
Year-9	3.30[o]	0.77	3.47[o]	0.67	3.26[u]	0.76	3.59[u]	0.58

Note: Means with identical superscripts denote statistically significant difference (two-tailed t-test).

and who were previously incarcerated reported lower levels of relationship quality and co-parenting compared to fathers who were not stopped by police and were not previously incarcerated based on both fathers' and mothers' reports. Similar to the full sample, relationship quality and co-parenting slightly declined for all groups.

Multivariate Results

Table 3 shows the results from the random-effects analyses across four models for fathers' report of relationship quality (Panel A) and co-parenting (Panel B). For relationship quality (Panel A; Model 1), fathers who reported being stopped by police (β = -.13, $p < .01$) or being previously incarcerated (β = -.16, $p < .10$) reported lower levels of relationship quality compared to fathers who experienced no contact. In Model 2, we included adverse economic conditions to the analyses, net of the control variables. The association between both measures of law enforcement contact and relationship quality remained statistically significant with the inclusion of the adverse economic conditions. Among the economic variables, only economic hardship was associated with lower levels of relationship quality. Model 3 adds the mental health variables to the equation. No mental health variable was statistically associated with relationship quality. In the full model (Model 4), fathers who experienced a police stop and were previously incarcerated was related to lower levels of relationship quality.

For Panel B, we examined the association between law enforcement contact and fathers' report of co-parenting. The results revealed that law enforcement contact and co-parenting did not yield a statistically significant association. In Model 2 (Panel B), the results showed that economic hardship was associated with lower levels of co-parenting, neighborhood disadvantage was associated with higher levels of co-parenting, which was counter to our expectations. In Model 3, only fathers' depression was associated with lower co-parenting levels. In Model 4 (full model), economic hardship was no longer statistically signifi-

Table 3. Unstandardized regression coefficients for relationship quality and co-parenting (fathers' reports).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	se	B	se	B	se	B	se
Panel A:								
Relationship Quality								
(N = 2,729 within person)								
Law Enforcement Contact								
Police Stops	-0.13[c]	-0.05	-0.13[c]	-0.05	-0.12[b]	-0.05	-0.12[b]	-0.05
Previous Incarcerated	-0.16[c]	-0.06	-0.14[b]	-0.06	-0.15[b]	-0.06	-0.13[b]	-0.06
Economic Conditions								
Economic Hardship			-0.09[d]	-0.03			-0.08[c]	-0.03
Fathers' Unemployed			-0.03	-0.07			-0.02	-0.07
Neighborhood Disadvantage			0.06[a]	-0.03			0.06[b]	-0.03
Mental Health								
Fathers' Depression					-0.14[a]	-0.09	-0.10	-0.09
Mothers' Depression					-0.14[a]	-0.11	-0.07	-0.07
Constant	3.92[d]	-0.42	4.02[d]	-0.41	4.03[d]	-0.42	4.12[d]	-0.42
Panel B:								
Co-parenting								
(N = 2,667 within person)								
Law Enforcement Contact								
Police Stops	-0.0128	-0.021	-0.0127	-0.021	-0.0076	-0.021	-0.01	-0.02
Previous Incarcerated	-0.0159	-0.028	-0.0073	-0.028	-0.0156	-0.028	0.00	-0.03
Economic Conditions								
Economic Hardship			-0.0292[b]	-0.012			-0.0215[a]	-0.013
Fathers' Unemployed			-0.0176	-0.032			-0.011	-0.033
Neighborhood Disadvantage			0.0422[c]	-0.015			0.0427[c]	-0.015
Mental Health								
Fathers' Depression					-0.0934[b]	-0.04	-0.0796[b]	-0.04
Mothers' Depression					-0.0614[a]	-0.034	-0.0496	-0.034
Constant	3.778[d]	-0.196	3.815[d]	-0.195	3.816[d]	-0.196	3.860[d]	-0.194

[a]p<0.10, [b]p<0.05, [c]p<0.01, [d]p<0.001

Note: All models control for the following variables: family status, relationship change, mother is of a different race, parents' age, education, # of kids in the household, multi-partnered fertility, lived with both parents at age 15, gender attitudes, family attitudes, gender distrust, religious service attendance, father was in jail at Year-1, fathers' drug use, child's temperament, child's health, and child's sex.

Table 4. Unstandardized regression coefficients for relationship quality and co-parenting (mothers' reports).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	se	B	se	B	se	B	se
Panel A:								
Relationship Quality								
(N = 2,648 within person)								
Law Enforcement Contact								
Police Stops	-0.08	-0.05	-0.07	-0.05	-0.08	-0.05	-0.07	-0.05
Previous Incarcerated	-0.38[d]	-0.06	-0.38[d]	-0.06	-0.38[d]	-0.06	-0.38[d]	-0.064
Economic Conditions								
Economic Hardship			-0.08[c]	-0.03			-0.07[c]	-0.03
Fathers' Unemployed			0.05	-0.07			0.05	-0.07
Neighborhood Disadvantage			0.01	-0.03			0.01	-0.03
Mental Health								
Fathers' Depression					-0.05	-0.09	-0.05	-0.09
Mothers' Depression					-0.14[a]	-0.08	-0.09	-0.08
Constant	3.13[d]	-0.42	3.08[d]	-0.41	3.17[d]	-0.417	3.11[d]	-0.42
Panel B:								
Co-parenting								
(N = 2,599 within person)								
Law Enforcement Contact								
Police Stops	-0.09[d]	-0.03	-0.09[d]	-0.03	-0.09[d]	-0.03	-0.09[d]	-0.03
Previous Incarcerated	-0.17[d]	-0.03	-0.16[d]	-0.04	-0.17[d]	-0.03	-0.16[d]	-0.04
Economic Conditions								
Economic Hardship			-0.06[d]	-0.014			-0.05[d]	-0.01
Fathers' Unemployed			-0.032	-0.04			-0.03	-0.04
Neighborhood Disadvantage			0.0286	-0.019			0.03	-0.02
Mental Health								
Fathers' Depression					-0.05	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05
Mothers' Depression					-0.09[b]	-0.04	-0.05	-0.04
Constant	3.13[d]	-0.23	3.14[d]	-0.23	3.18[d]	-0.23	3.17[d]	-0.23

[a]p<0.10, [b]p<0.05, [c]p<0.01, [d]p<0.001

Note: All models control for the following variables: family status, relationship change, mother is of a different race, parents' age, education, # of kids in the household, multi-partnered fertility, lived with both parents at age 15, gender attitudes, family attitudes, gender distrust, religious service attendance, father was in jail at Year-1, fathers' drug use, child's temperament, child's health, and child's sex.

cant. Neighborhood disadvantage, however, not only remained a significant correlate of co-parenting, but also the association remained positive. All in all, the results supported our hypothesis for family stress and stress spill over as it relates to relationship quality but not for co-parenting. Moreover, our mediation hypotheses were not supported by our analyses.

Table 4 displays the results for fathers' law enforcement contact and mothers' report of relationship quality (Panel A) and co-parenting (Panel B). In Panel A (Model 1), the results revealed that fathers who were previously incarcerated (compared to fathers who were not previously incarcerated), mothers reported lower levels of relationship quality; however, no association emerged for police stops. In Model 2, we included the measures of economic conditions. The parameter estimate for previously incarcerated did not change, and only economic hardship emerged as statistically significant (β = -.08, $p < .01$). In Model 3, we enter mental health characteristics to the analyses. No association emerged between fathers' and mothers' depression. In Model 4, having fathers who were previously incarcerated was associated with mothers' report of lower relationship quality levels, and economic hardship was associated with lower relationship quality levels.

In Panel B, we estimated the association between fathers' law enforcement contact and mothers' report of co-parenting. In Model 1, fathers who experienced police stops (β = .09, $p < .001$) and who were previously incarcerated (β = .17, $p < .001$) were associated with lower levels of co-parenting. Model 2 includes economic conditions, and only economic hardship was associated with lower levels of co-parenting. For Model 3, we entered mental health variables. Mothers' depression was associated with lower levels of co-parenting (β = .09, $p < .05$). In Model 4, fathers' law enforcement contact remained statistically significant and negatively related to co-parenting. For the mediating variables, only economic hardship was associated with lower co-parenting levels. Overall, the findings for mothers revealed support for family stress theory but partial support for stress spill over.

Similar to fathers, economic conditions and mental health did not mediate the association between law enforcement contact and familial relationships, and thus did not provide support for the research hypothesis.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to understand the association between Black fathers' law enforcement contact and their familial relationships with their child's mother. We contribute to the burgeoning research on Black men and law enforcement contact in the following ways. First, we included two measures of law enforcement contact: police stops and previously incarcerated. Second, we used both fathers' and mothers' reports of familial relationships, and included two separate measures to take into account the quality of the relationship between parents, and how parents work together for the well-being of their child. Third, our analyses take into account important potential mediators (e.g., economic conditions and mental health) that have been shown to be related to both law enforcement contact and relationship outcomes. Fourth, we used racial stratification and racial ideologies as conceptual frameworks to provide a socio-historical context to understand racial inequality in law enforcement. Last, we show how law enforcement contact operate as stressors that adversely affect familial processes. Results from our study revealed new insights that both advance and challenge prior research.

First, our results support family stress theory (e.g., McCubbin and Patterson 1983), which posits that stressors can reverberate throughout the entire family by placing strain on how parents engage with one another. Our study focused on fathers who were previously incarcerated as a unique family stressor. This line of reasoning is similar to prior research on the deleterious effect of incarceration on families. Although our study provides some additional evidence on the link between incarceration and relationship quality (Turney 2015), our findings differ from Turney's (2015) study using the same data. For example, Turney shows

that previous incarceration was associated with mothers' reports of relationship quality but not fathers. Our findings, however, show that Black fathers' previous incarceration is associated with relationship quality for both mothers and fathers. The divergent findings may be due to our restricted sample of Black fathers. Even more, we build on these findings by showing a similar link between incarceration and co-parenting, which is in line with prior studies (e.g, McKay et al 2018). These findings are especially important because a considerable number of Black children have or had a parent incarcerated (Murphey and Cooper 2015), and parental incarceration is linked to a number of adverse child outcomes (Perry and Bright 2012). Thus, the extent to which the formerly incarcerated Black fathers and their child's mother foster a relationship post-incarceration is vital for families and children's well-being.

Second, our study provides some support for stress spill over. For instance, police stops was also associated with lower levels of relationship quality and co-parenting. Similar to other interpersonal stressors (i.e., work stress) on familial relationships (Neff and Karney 2004), Black fathers who are stopped by police may view this type of law enforcement contact as an interpersonal stressor that spill over to family life. Drawing from studies on racial inequality in investigatory traffic stops (Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014), Black fathers may be reminded of their position in the racial hierarchy by challenging their citizenship rights in symbolic ways (Lerman and Weaver 2014). As such, these experiences may set off an array of negative emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, etc.) that spill over to familial relationships. From this perspective, a police stop may not only be stressful in and of itself, but may also exponentially stressful in its reflection of the historical and contemporary ways law enforcement treats Black Americans. For instance, studies indicate that Black Americans not only rely on their own experiences but also from patterns of events with law enforcement from the community more broadly (Brunson 2007). More empirical research

is needed to understand how police stops affects family life for Black fathers.

Third, our results reveal less support for adverse economic conditions and mental health as mediators between law enforcement and measures of familial relationships. That is, adverse economic conditions and mental health did not fully account for the adverse impact of law enforcement contact on relationship outcomes. Despite this, the direct association between mental health and economic adversity on familial relationships is worth noting. For instance, fathers' depression was associated with their own report of co-parenting. These findings give credence to previous research on the link between parental depression and co-parenting (Williams 2018).

In addition, economic hardship was consistently associated with lower levels of relationship quality and co-parenting for both mothers and fathers. These findings support a long line of research on families' economic adversity and relationship quality (e.g, Conger, Conger, and Martin 2010; Williams and Cheadle 2016). Although we expected all economic variables to be negatively associated with relationship quality and co-parenting, neighborhood disadvantage was positively associated with fathers' report of relationship quality and co-parenting. Although this finding was contrary to our hypothesis, one prior study revealed similar results. For instance, C.E. Cutrona and colleagues (2003) found an unexpected positive association between neighborhood-level economic disadvantage and marital quality. We speculate that our findings may be due, in part, to the prevalence of fathers who live in disadvantage neighborhoods. As such, mothers' and fathers' interactions may reflect some level of resilience whereby parents work together for their child despite disadvantage. More research is needed to address the link between neighborhood adversity and relationship quality.

Finally, the findings revealed important divergent gender patterns in the association between law enforcement contact and familial relationships. Although we did not explicitly hypothe-

size gender variations, we acknowledge these differences because they may be helpful in guiding future studies. In our analyses, being stopped by police was associated with lower levels of relationship quality for fathers but not mothers. We postulate that these different gender patterns may reflect fathers' interpersonal experiences. For instance, fathers may not feel fully supported by their child's mother in the context of being stopped by the police, especially given the prevalence of Black men's encounter with law enforcement. In regard to co-parenting, both measures of law enforcement contact were associated with lower co-parenting levels for mothers but not fathers. These findings may reflect how co-parenting in measured. For instance, parents are asked about their relationship with the other parent. As such, mothers may exhibit high levels of co-parenting regardless of fathers' law enforcement contact, and mothers, on average, tend to carry out the lion's share of parenting in families (e.g., Williams 2018).

Although our findings add to a growing body of research on law enforcement contact among Black men, we note some limitations. First, we only document fathers' encounters with law enforcement and not mothers. This limitation is noteworthy given the increased attention to Black women and law enforcement contact. Second, our measure of police stops lack detailed information. Thus, we are unable to ascertain how these fathers were treated during the encounter with officer. Third, we do not know the reason for fathers' previous incarceration, as the circumstances surrounding incarceration may impact fathers' relationship with their child and their child's mother. Last, as with many longitudinal studies, sample attrition remains an issue. Thus, for our study, the estimates may be conservative as fathers who were previously incarcerated at the earlier years were more likely to not be in the sample at subsequent years.

In conclusion, the results in the current study demonstrate law enforcement contact among Black fathers have detrimental outcomes in familial relationships with their child's mother. Our findings indicate that, for Black fathers, familial relationships are

affected by more than just incarceration as our results show that police stops have a deleterious impact on familial relationships. As such, understanding Black family life requires researchers to take a more holistic approach that takes into account (a) the social construction of race and (b) the mechanisms that reproduce racial inequality in the United States as these processes have far-reaching implications for Black men and their families. Understanding the factors that impede positive relationship functioning may prove to be valuable given that Black families report lower levels of relationship quality relative to Whites and Mexican Americans (Bulanda and Brown 2007), and supportive intimate partnerships have important implications for racial disparities in relationship dissolution (Bryant et al. 2010) and health (Koball et al. 2010). Thus, policy efforts focusing on low-income families should also work in tandem with criminal justice policies to ensure optimum children's and family outcomes, especially among Black fathers and families.

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Training the Hands, the Head, and the Heart: Student Protest and Activism at Hampton Institute during the 1920s

James E. Alford, Jr.

ABSTRACT

Campus unrest and social justice activism at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) predate the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Black students and alumni had always taken an active role in the governance of their institutions even in the face of establishment opposition. This article focuses on activism and protest at Hampton Institute during the1920s. As at most HBCUs of the period, students and alumni at Hampton were unhappy with the racial and authoritarian situation on their campus. Refusing to accept the conditions at their institution, organized alumni and students led the charge for change, and in 1925 and 1927, both groups challenged institutional policies involving race and equality on their campus. Although Hampton students were at the center of most of the campus unrest, it is important to note that alumni were quite instrumental during the 1925 protest concerning Jim Crow segregation. Due to their activist spirit, students and alumni were able not only to make subtle changes to the faculty and staff at their institutions, but also to radically transform the political and social climate on their campus. As a result of their concerted efforts, Hampton witnessed more student autonomy, greater alumni representation/involvement, and the integration of faculty, staff, and senior administrators.

Keywords: HBCUs, student protest, alumni activism, Hampton Institute, Jim Crow, Black education

Campus unrest at Hampton Institute involved a variety of issues, the crux of which centered on an inflexible White board of trustees and administration. The mid-1920s marked a pivotal turning

point in the history of the institution, when a half-century of strict paternalistic policies alongside problems of racial authoritarianism were challenged. Frustrated students fought White officials to secure their social, political, and intellectual freedom on campus.

The initial dissatisfaction began with students who complained that vocational and industrial training at Hampton had long outlived its usefulness and that the time had come to transition from a normal school to a university. Hampton students believed that the school "had failed to adjust its academic and disciplinary policies to make allowance for the fact that Hampton was no longer a school for docile elementary students but for men and women who could think for themselves" (Wolters 1975:247–48). In addition to students pushing for higher academic standards and more student autonomy, they also challenged Jim Crow segregation at their institution and urged the board of trustees to enact policies to desegregate their campus. "Hampton, which in the 1920s accepted the dictates of white Virginia and provided a segregated Jim Crow residence and dining room for white visitors, was 'the pet of philanthropy'" (Wolters 1975:26). Students brought their issues before the board of trustees and members of the Hampton community, demanding immediate changes in institutional policies. In many cases they stood alone, except, when it came to the issue of segregation, alumni became involved and were eager to support the students' position.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE INSTITUTE

Founded on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay in 1868, Hampton Institute began as a private normal and agricultural school for African Americans in Hampton, Virginia. Shortly after the Civil War, the American Missionary Association presented General Samuel Chapman Armstrong with the idea of leading an institution for freedmen. In their endeavors to spread their education crusade across the South, the American Missionary Association considered Hampton, Virginia, to be the ideal location to estab-

lish a school for free Black men and women (Anderson 1988; Richardson 1986). Who else better suited to lead this new school than General Armstrong, a former officer in the Union Army and commander of one of the few Black infantry units during the war. Not only was the missionary society impressed by Armstrong's military services, but they were equally impressed by his background as the son of a prominent missionary family who had labored for years to help the native people of Hawaii. Armstrong continued his family's missionary legacy by working for the Freedman's Bureau immediately after the Civil War, championing the cause of Black education. He seemed to be the model candidate to direct the missionary society's new school (Armstrong and Ludlow 1971; Schall 1977; Zaki 2007).

There is no doubt that the roots of Hampton Institute run deep in the life of General Armstrong. Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute's mission, "to educate the hands, the head, and the heart," was conceived in the mind of Armstrong as to the foundation on which to build a great institution for the newly emancipated men and women who had suffered the bondage of slavery in America. His vision for the institution sprang from the ideals of the missionary work of his parents, which assuredly had a strong bearing on him as a principal at Hampton. Furthermore, his role as commander of a Black unit during the Civil War was also key to his vision at the institution; his experiences with these Black soldiers aroused his interest in the welfare of Black Americans. And lastly, his philosophical approach to industrial education was influenced by the relationships he forged with wealthy northern industrialists who were staunch proponents of vocational training for Black Americans. Armstrong's Hampton was not just simply a manifestation of a missionary's dream; at the core of its purpose was to train Black teachers for the South in the area of vocational and industrial education (Anderson 1988; Armstrong 1971; Schall 1977; Zaki 2007).

Armstrong served as Hampton's principal for twenty-five years, during which time a wave of industrial education for Black

people swept across the South. Hampton was a model of independence and resourcefulness "combined with a self-sustaining institutional economy complete with a farm, dairy, machine shop, home economics, and shoe repair" (Thelin 2004). Armstrong's vision for Hampton was far more than the economic success of the institution, he was also deeply concerned for the success of his students. The influence that he had on the students at Hampton was evident due to the extraordinary work they were able to accomplish. "Armstrong's legacy was absorbed by its students, and they applied it to their lives. Many students became teachers, professionals, and leaders within their communities fulfilling Armstrong's desire to see them be of service to their communities" (Zaki 2007). His most prized student, Booker T. Washington, assisted in the founding of Hampton's sister school, Tuskegee Institute, in Alabama. Following Washington's tenure at Tuskegee, another one of Armstrong's pupils, Robert R. Moton, was appointed to lead the school. The Armstrong years at Hampton brought not only national acclaim to the school's unique educational program but also tremendous wealth and growth to the campus. Because of Armstrong, the "Hampton Idea" was strongly cemented into the minds and lives of his students, alumni, faculty, and staff. Armstrong served as principal of Hampton Institute up until his death in 1893, after which, the board of trustees appointed Hollis Burke Frissell to be his successor (Schall 1977; Wolters 1975; Zaki 2007).

The next half-century of leadership at Hampton would continue to define the school's history by enacting policies and forging community relations in ways that set the school apart from other Black institutions of the period. The principals and presidents who served Hampton from its founding up until the early 1940s were committed to keeping alive the Armstrong legacy at Hampton. During Frissell's administration, the institute made major strides in building Hampton's industrial and vocational programs. "Frissell's emphasis on vocational training was part of a larger effort to ingratiate the institute with those who believed

that blacks should be trained for subordinate positions in American society" (Wolters 1975:231). Although the institute offered a two- and three-year program, it did not offer a bachelor's degree, as did other Black emphasis on industrial and agricultural education tended to overshadow its latent function as a normal school whose mission it was to educate African Americans for the teaching profession. The institute's commitment was to economic development as opposed to the training of a Black intelligentsia (Anderson 1988; Drewry and Doermann 2001; Jones 1980).

Dr. James E. Gregg, who took over from Frissell, convinced the board of trustees in 1920 to consider seriously changing the normal school program because, as he noted, "accrediting agencies in several southern states had begun to demand college training for all certified teachers" (Wolters 1975:233). He persuaded the board to expand the two-year program to a four-year program, and during his leadership at Hampton the first bachelor of arts degree was offered in education. Nevertheless, because of the continuous controversy at Hampton regarding industrial training verses classical education, he diplomatically reminded trustees, alumni, and the white community that "Hampton's distinctive place of highest usefulness…is without question that of technical and professional college" (Wolters 1975:236). He guaranteed all who would listen that "Hampton would not forsake any of the characteristics that made it famous in the years gone by—characteristics which included wholesome respect for hard work and hand skill, as well as for character, moral fitness, trustworthiness, and dependability" (qtd. in Wolters 1975:236). Despite Gregg's promises, Hampton was accredited as a university in 1927. Even after moving the "institute" to "university" status, however, Gregg maintained that Hampton was not a liberal arts college and had no intention of becoming one.

During the 1920s, a new generation of college students entered Hampton prepared to challenge the majority White board of trustees and administration regarding the primacy of industrial education and for a controlling interest in the insti-

tution. Long gone were the days of Armstrong's Hampton, half a century past. The student demographics at Hampton had changed; they were more mature and aware of the social and political world surrounding them. Students were determined to force the institution to grow up and mature alongside them. Upon graduating from Hampton, these young men and women represented a new cohort of Black graduates who were more concerned than ever with the condition of Black people in the United States. As students, they battled with paternalistic administrators and as alumni, they fought against Jim Crow segregation (Dailey, Gilmore, and Simon 2000; Litwack 1998). The issues they faced as students and alumni brought about a change in attitude. A new class of racially astute graduates were born and they refused to accept being placed at the bottom of the social caste system. Thus, campus unrest irrupted at Hampton Institute in 1925. The chain of events that began the first round of protest mostly involved the local White community, the board of trustees, and Hampton's National Alumni Association (Anderson 1988; Wolters 1975; Zaki 2007).

JIM CROW TAKES A SEAT ON CAMPUS

The trouble at Hampton started on February 21, 1925, with an overwhelming number of Black and White Virginians crowding Ogden Hall to see the Denishawn Dance troupe perform on campus. The dancers stirred up quite a commotion among prospective guests. A trustee commented that the performance was sold out because "the dancers were practically naked and therefore everybody went" (Wolters 1975:239). The two-thousand-seat auditorium was nearly filled to capacity, leaving very few seating options for late arrivals. Like most events held in Ogden Hall, everyone sat segregated according to their race. Dr. James Gregg stated, "The members of each race have sat by themselves by natural instinct in all of our gatherings, and there has been no cause for complaint on that score" (JEG 1925, HUA). As the hall filled, however, White attendees who could not find special seating were

forced to cross the color line and accept seats next to their "Negro friends" at Hampton. Mrs. Grace B. Copeland, the wife of Newport News Daily Press editor Colonel Walter Scott Copeland, arrived late for the event and was "ushered to the only remaining seats next to some Negroes" (Wolters 1975:239). Outraged that she was seated in the "Colored section," Mrs. Copeland complained to her husband, who used his position as editor to the Daily Press to scold the institution for permitting racial mingling (JEG, Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America 1925, HUA).

On March 15, 1925, Colonel Copeland called Hampton to task regarding the matter in an editorial in the Daily Press entitled "Integrity of the Anglo-Saxon Race." Copeland's article condemned Hampton and Dr. Gregg for teaching and practicing "social equality between the white and negro race" (Smith 2002:38) He warned Dr. Gregg, "We are going to have serious trouble if you do not protect our citizens and our womanhood against this horrible practice of social equality" (Race Separation folder 1925, HUA). Copeland's strategy was to arouse fear in the minds of White Virginians that the mixing of the races would lead to chaos and destruction. "There will be no power on earth to prevent the nigger from entering our homes and marrying your daughter," Copeland commented (Wolters 1975:240). He went even further to suggest that racial integration would eventually lead to "mongrelization" and that Hampton's current policies, or lack thereof, did nothing to prevent such an enormity.

Many members of the Hampton community were surprised at Copeland's criticism and found it to be unwarranted considering his dissatisfaction with the institution stemmed from nothing more than seating arrangements. For Colonel Copeland it was certainly more. He argued that there were "beautiful white women in the nude with nigger youths gazing at them and there was the flower of our womanhood seated next to the blacks" (Wolters 1975:240). Surely the Black patrons posed no threat to Mrs. Copeland but this did not stop her husband from seiz-

ing the opportunity to make an example out of the situation at Hampton. The news of the editorial spread throughout Virginia and Copeland demanded that Dr. Gregg offer a public response. In a letter to the Daily Press, Gregg replied that "Hampton's policies certainly do not encourage social mingling of the races under circumstances which would lead to embarrassment of either side" (JEG 1925, HUA). Nonetheless, Colonel Copeland had made his point. As he had hoped, numerous members of the local White community joined him and his crusade to force the institute to set clear and concise policies concerning racial intermingling. Colonel Copeland maintained that "The fault [did] not rest with the white people of Virginia nor with the colored people. The fault rests, and will rest, with the management of the school at Hampton" (JEG, Daily Press 1926, HUA).

Although Dr. Gregg had offered a response to the Daily Press with the hope that the matter would be settled, Colonel Copeland was not at all satisfied with the principal's reply and several months later called upon the local branch of the Anglo Saxon Club to organize a mass meeting at the city courthouse to discuss the "race problem" at Hampton. Colonel Copeland arranged for John Powell, the founder of Virginia's Anglo-Saxon Club and father of the "Racial Integrity Law," to address the concerned crowd. During his speech, Powell reminded the citizens of Hampton, Virginia, that "The Anglo-Saxon race has no moral right to amalgamate with any colored race, for in so doing it would destroy itself…Amalgamation would mean the destruction of the Anglo-Saxon race in America and the substitution of a race of mulattoes" (JEG, Anglo-Saxon Club folder 1925, HUA). Powell, a staunch opponent to interracial socialization, argued that he would rather "every white child in the United States were sterilized and the Anglo-Saxon race left to perish in its purity" rather than risk the chance of being mixed with black blood (JEG, Anglo-Saxon Club folder 1925, HUA). He warned the people of Hampton and Newport News that "if you don't make a start now…you will wake up in the hereafter to find that

your grandchildren are negroes" (JEG, Massenburg Law folder 1926, HUA).

Copeland and Powell waged a war against Hampton Institute and made a successful appeal to the White public to join the battle. Many local White people already opposed Hampton and believed that the school gave Black people aspirations to becoming equal citizens. Much of the resentment toward the institution quite possibly stemmed from the fact that White Virginians were uncomfortable with a "Negro School" that had accumulated such a tremendous amount of wealth (Anderson and Moss 1999). It was reported in the local newspaper that Hampton was "the richest institution in Virginia and money by the millions [are flowing] into its Endowment Fund" (JEG, Daily Press 1925, HUA). White Virginians believed Hampton had become a school for "uppity Negroes" who were dissatisfied with their subordinate place and something had to be done to remind them of their social position. At the close of the meeting, it was decided that the club would appeal to the Virginia legislature to pass a law that would require separate seating for all races in public assemblages within the state. Upon the club's request, local representative Captain George Alvin Massenburg drafted the bill and introduced it to the state's General Assembly. The Daily Press and the Anglo-Saxon Club were gaining statewide support and it was only a matter of time before the proposed bill would be voted into law (JEG, Daily Press 1926, HUA; Wolters 1975).

The incident that occurred in Ogden Hall, coupled with Colonel Copeland's and Mr. Powell's rhetoric, had caused old issues of racial disharmony to resurface between the Black and White communities in Virginia. Once Hampton administrators, students, and alumni heard the news, their immediate concern became the future of the school and how race relations might be strained between the institution's stakeholders and the local community if such a law was passed (Fields 1982; Gilmore 2008; Wolters 1975). Never in Hampton's fifty-seven year history had it been necessary to enact such a policy. Students and alumni

at Hampton were both outraged and disappointed by the local community's attempt to enforce Jim Crow policies on their campus. They tried to appeal to the general public, stating, "We are of the opinion now that it is useless to try by legislation to debar any groups in this country from any of the higher and better things which this civilization offers" (Hampton Alumni Journal 1925, HUA). For a half-century, Black and White citizens of Hampton and Newport News, Virginia, had coexisted peacefully without the need for such strict measures. Jim Crow politics had forced Hampton Institute into a social and political war between White Virginians and Black stakeholders. The institute's board of trustees stood squarely in the middle of the confrontation. While White political groups tried to force their issues, Black alumni and student groups petitioned the board of trustees to resist Jim Crow segregation on their campus (Hampton Alumni Journal 1926:4, HUA).

At a hearing before the Senate Committee on General Laws at the capital in Richmond, many gathered to argue their position. Dr. J. F. Love, of the Baptist Foreign Mission board, strongly opposed the measure, stating, "It would apply to Chinese and Japanese students attending the University of Richmond and he believed it would be a reflection on the whites" (JEG, Race Separation folder 1926, HUA). Rev. W. P Johnson, a Black minister in Richmond, declared, "It would disturb the pleasant relations now existing and that it would cause unrest; that it would have a bad effect on the radical element among the negroes" (JEG, Race Separation folder 1926, HUA). Love and Johnson were concerned about how such a law would go beyond the borders of Hampton and lead to unwanted misunderstandings among the races throughout the state of Virginia. The biggest concern, however, came from Hampton's alumni association and board of trustees; one group feared the school's reputation was at stake and the other feared for the reputation of their race.

In the spring of 1926, a poll of prominent alumni and ex-students from all sections of the country was conducted concerning

the proposed segregation law. The results from the survey were submitted to the board of trustees in April of that year. The report indicated that any attempt to enforce segregation on Hampton's campus "would destroy the great usefulness of the institution to Negro People and would lose the friendship and confidence and goodwill which it has taken the school fifty years to win." Alumni further argued that "such a spirit as this manifested by these leaders is unchristian and unwise and founded upon prejudice and jealousy and needs no contradiction. That such action is unnecessary is shown in the fact that the best elements in both races are self-respecting enough to avoid forcing themselves where they are not wanted." Alumni firmly believed that the bill would lead to strained race relations and serve as an embarrassment to Hampton (Hampton Alumni Visitation Committee folder 1926, HUA). Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, editor to the Crisis, admonished the White board and administrators at Hampton by arguing:

> When white folk…come voluntarily as our guests we welcome them and treat them with every courtesy, although we cannot expect for our students reciprocal courtesy from them. But when they demand the right to cross this color line which they themselves have drawn, and then to have a second and internal drawing of race distinctions inside a Negro institution, we say, No. You are not compelled to enter this colored world and it is monstrous when you do come as guest to ask us to insult these already twice-insulted people…No other civilized group in the world is asked to accept such personal insult in their own homes and schools and in their own social life as you demand of these Hampton Negroes. (Du Bois 1973:59)

Leaders of the alumni association were careful not to point blame at the board of trustees. Their condemnation was targeted to the public, specifically the Anglo-Saxon Club. It was hard for alumni to conceive the idea that the board would even consider siding with the Anglo-Saxons and its band of followers. The

Alumni Association summed up its position by stating, "The one great hope of the alumni is that the administrative forces of the institution will always conduct policies in such a way as not to lose the confidence of her constituency" (Hampton Alumni Journal folder 1926:1, HUA).

The stakeholders with the most influence and power to change public opinion were on Hampton's board of trustees. Unfortunately, they found themselves embattled within their own ranks concerning the incident in Ogden Hall. Homer Ferguson, a trustee, who was in Europe during the performance, stated, "Such a show should not have been given there." He declared before the Senate Committee that "the condition complained of would be corrected or he and the other southern trustees would resign" (Board of Trustee Minutes 1926, HUA). Ferguson had drawn a clear line between board members from the North and the South, implying that the South had its own code of rules to follow in the form of Jim Crow segregation, which he and other southern trustees intended to respect. Hampton's board members were clearly at odds with regard to how they would handle an imposed Jim Crow policy at the institution.

In addition to the divisiveness on the board, Dr. Gregg was struggling with how to direct the institution through these turbulent times. He tried to reassure alumni that Hampton would not compromise its integrity and that there would be no cause for segregation laws to be adopted on their campus. Expected to uphold the policies at Hampton and challenge the proposed segregation bill, Dr. Gregg instead took an "on the fence" approach to the racial problems plaguing the institution. He, in turn, tried to restore confidence in White Virginians that Hampton had no desire to teach social equality. His efforts at straddling the issue were unsuccessful and only gave cause for more distrust from both alumni and the White community (JEG, folder 1926, HUA).

Concerned that the situation at Hampton was growing out of control, the governor of Virginia, E. Tee Trinkle, wrote Dr. Gregg to offer his opinion on the matter. The governor warned Dr.

Gregg that he could not lend his fundraising support to a school that encouraged the "mixing of the races." It just so happened that at the time, Governor Trinkle was in the midst of helping Hampton and Tuskegee with a big fundraising campaign and wanted to threaten Principal Gregg that his support for Hampton would depend on the direction that he and the rest of his fellow board members decided to take. Trinkle stated, "Naturally you must know that I do not approve of social equality between the races for I believe nothing worse could happen to the white and black people of this country than for this doctrine to prevail" (JEG, Massenburg Law folder 1925, HUA). As a means of quelling Governor Trinkle's concerns, Dr. Gregg wrote the following letter to the governor:

> Hampton Institute has always sharply disapproved of any such social intimacies as might conceivably lead to intermarriage or to illicit intercourse. In the delicate and difficult task of trying to be fair to our Northern white supporters, our large Negro constituency, and our sincerely-valued Southern white friends, we cannot hope, I suppose, to please and satisfy all three groups all of the time. You need not fear, and no one need fear, that Hampton Institute, either in its teaching or in its practice, will do anything to break down the truest and soundest tradition of the South with respect to individual and racial self-respect, courtesy, and justice. (JEG, Massenburg Law folder 1925, HUA)

Undoubtedly this was a political move by Dr. Gregg to secure the governor's support regarding the fundraiser, but it also led to speculations that Dr. Gregg had no real intention to fully back alumni opposition to the bill. The governor, the Daily Press, and the Anglo-Saxon Club all had a tremendous influence on the decisions that were being made by Hampton's administration. It was quite evident that Dr. Gregg and the board of trustees' failure to confront White Virginians were out of fear that they would lose favor both socially and politically among their peers.

Notwithstanding their efforts to appease both sides, Hampton was suffering, and students and alumni were growing restless over the situation (JEG, Massenburg Law folder 1925, HUA).

Although the Alumni Association had hoped that they could convince the board to take a stance against the Jim Crow policy, it was quite evident that nothing would be done. They soon realized that all their efforts were for naught. The board had failed to stop the legislation and the Massenburg Bill passed both houses of the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority, becoming a law in the state of Virginia. Just as Copeland, Powell, and the Anglo-Saxon Club had hoped, the new bill required the separation of "White and Colored persons" in all public assemblages, stating:

> Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia, that it shall be the duty of any person, persons, firm, institution or corporation operating, maintaining, keeping, conducting, sponsoring or permitting, any public hall, theatre, opera house, motion picture show or any place of public entertainment or public assemblage which is attended by both white and colored persons to separate the white race and the colored race, and to set apart and designate in each such public hall…refuse or neglect to comply with the provisions of the section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars no more than five hundred dollars for each offense. (JEG, House Bill 30 1926, HUA)

Once the measure was passed, a number of alumni and friends of the institution urged Hampton to litigate the matter in the courts. Trustee Robert R. Moton, a Hampton alumnus and principal of the Tuskegee Institute, warned that "if Hampton should retire without a vigorous protest it would alienate many alumni and other blacks who expected Hampton to serve as a chief advocate of Negro interest" (Board of Trustee Minutes folder 1926, HUA). Once again, the Alumni Association pressed

the board of trustees to fight the matter, arguing that members of the Hampton community should not be subjugated to Jim Crow laws on their own campus (Hampton Alumni Visitation Committee 1926, HUA).

In the end, Dr. Gregg took the advice of Dr. R. E. Blackwell, president of Randolph-Macon College, who recommended that Hampton not fight the audience-segregation matter in court. Blackwell argued that to litigate the matter "would be taken as proof that Hampton was using non-segregation in Ogden hall as an entering wedge to break down all race distinction." This would ultimately stir up bad feelings against Hampton and the school would lose many of their northern and southern White friends who gave freely to the school. Dr. Blackwell declared, "We shall simply have to tell our colored friends that nothing will be gained by a court victory." It was suggested that Hampton quietly close Ogden Hall to the public and confine its audience to its students, alumni, and the Black citizens in the community. He assured Dr. Gregg that "the whole matter will pass out of the minds of our people and the law will become a dead letter. The issue would inevitably die unless it is made a race issue by being carried to the courts" (JEG, Massenburg Law folder, Blackwell letter 1926, HUA). In addition to Dr. Blackwell's advice, it was brought to the attention of the board of trustees by the school's attorney that the new law required only public assemblages to be segregated, and that private meetings limited to invited guests would not come under the law. After careful consideration, the trustees decided that "to comply with the law it would be necessary to discontinue holding public entertainment and that in the future all entertainments would be private, open only to the school community and invited guests" (Board of Trustees Minutes 1926, HUA). The hostility against Hampton Institute arose from a select group of White Virginians who forced Hampton's board of trustees to accept Jim Crow policies on their campus. The national Alumni Association was joined the fight, setting in motion the first wave of activism at Hampton during the 1920s by alumni to influence administrative and institutional change.

THE STUDENTS WILL LEAD THEM: PROTEST AT HAMPTON

Shortly after tensions subsided concerning the Massenburg Bill, Hampton Institute was on the brink of yet another racial battle, this time involving dissatisfied students. At the heart of the matter were students demanding a greater degree of participation in institutional governance as well as more rights and freedom on campus (Drewry and Doermann 2001; Fass 1977; Geiger 2000; Roebuck and Murty 1993; Wolters 1975). Students refused to back down and allow the administration to dictate unfair policies, which they believed created "hat-in-hand and me-too-boss Negroes."

The controversy at Hampton began in 1926 when students broke a longstanding tradition and refused to sing what they referred to as "plantation melodies." Students found the musical arrangements to be demeaning and redolent of the olden days of slavery in America. Student stakeholders felt "Negro spirituals" stood in direct contrast to the progressive changes brought on by the New Negro Movement in America (Locke [1925] 1968). The singing of "slave spirituals/plantation songs" was a point of contention for students at several other Black colleges and universities during the 1920s and 1930s as well (Logan 1969; Wolters 1975).

Since Hampton's founding, it had been compulsory for the entire student body to sing Negro spirituals at the Sunday evening chapel service. Not only was the singing of these melodic spirituals compulsory, but the students were also forced to sing the songs before White members of the community who found the "plantation songs" entertaining. White guests at the institute were encouraged to attend the Sunday services mostly because the administration and board of trustees believed that it was good publicity for the school as well as a great way to attract potential donors. The Jubilee Singers at Fisk toured the United States and the world, raising considerable sums, and a number of Black colleges and universities hoped to have similar success (Anderson 1988; Logan 1969; Richardson 1980; Wolters 1975). But

starting in the 1920s, students began to develop strong objections to the songs, believing that they greatly contributed to the demoralization of Black culture and progress. In the spring of 1925, Hampton's choir disrupted a performance in Washington by walking off the stage in protest rather than singing spirituals to a segregated audience. Quite naturally, the administration disapproved of their insolent behavior and insisted that they adhere to the rules and traditions of the institution. Despite the administration's threats, rebellious students stood firm in their beliefs even at the risk of being disciplined or sent home (Board of Trustee Minutes folder 1925, HUA; Wolters 1975:250).

Singing spirituals was part of a larger problem for students. The main issue was the administration's paternalistic attitude toward student life. Hampton students saw themselves as mature college men and women as opposed to adolescent high school boys and girls. School officials, however, controlled every aspect of campus life leaving students with little to no autonomy to make decisions concerning affairs on their campus. On Saturday, October 8, 1927, a group of frustrated students decided to challenge the administration's rigid rules by participating in a spontaneous demonstration on campus (Wolters 1975). Once again, the heart of the trouble began in Ogden Hall. That evening while viewing a movie, students asked for the lights to be turned off in the auditorium, which was the norm for a film viewing. When the chaperons for the evening refused to comply, angry students responded by "stomping their feet in protest" and yelling "lights out, lights out." Notwithstanding the students' objections, the lights remained on for the duration of the film. Upset students departed Ogden Hall and immediately began to strategize their approach to addressing conditions at Hampton. Student protesters considered a change in policy for viewing films in Ogden Hall to be "the climax of a long series of insults, and as they returned to their dormitories their resentment flared into rebellion" (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA). The next morning when students brought the matter before the school's administration, the follow-

ing excuses were given to the student body: "An instructor had twisted his ankle while stumbling in the dark the week before"; "the lighting was being tested," and "chaperons complained of too much kissing over there in the dark by mischievous students" (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA). Whatever the case might have been, students dismissed the administration's claims and moved forward with their protest plans.

During Sunday chapel service, students at Hampton stood united in protest against what they deemed to be unfair school policies and a paternalistic administration. Angry students refused to fully participate in the morning and afternoon church services that took place in Ogden Hall. Once again, most of the student body refused to sing the spirituals. Not only were students rebelling against the previous night's ruling on lights, but they were also objecting to the many compulsory rules that the school had in place to control them. What made matters worse was that Hampton had invited W.T.B. Williams, a field agent for the Jeanes Fund, and Sir Gordon Guggisberg, governor of the Gold Coast, to the school as special guests that morning. Hampton students used this opportunity to protest against school officials, knowing the embarrassment it might cause (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA).

The following Monday, hundreds of students refused to attend class. Due to the students' insolent behavior, Dr. Gregg suspended classes for the rest of the day and ordered separate meetings between the male and female students to take place in Ogden Hall. At those meetings, Gregg scolded the students for instigating an unwholesome environment on campus and refused to listen to their grievances. To make matters worse, Gregg dismissed the students' claims and tried to trivialize the incident to nothing more than a group of insubordinate and disrespectful students who chose to express their dissatisfaction over the administration's minor decision to leave the lights on in Ogden Hall (JEG, Student Strike file 1927, HUA). What Dr. Gregg failed to acknowledge was that the situation at Hampton had become

more than just about defiant students and lights in Ogden. A changing culture of student activism was beginning to take shape on campus. The Pittsburgh Courier, a Black newspaper, commented, "The present day youth cannot be treated in the same manner they were treated twenty-five years ago" and Hampton was "still run more like disciplinary barracks or reform schools… than like educational institutions attended by the sons of free men and women" (Wolters 1975:248). The incident in Ogden Hall merely symbolized the long overdue shift at Hampton. For years frustrated students had opposed the administration's autocratic rule over campus life. Determined students organized on campus and coordinated their strike efforts to formally address Dr. Gregg and his administration. A Student Protest Committee, consisting of twenty-one male students, was established to bring the student grievances before Hampton's administration (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA).

PROTEST AND GRIEVANCES

At the forefront of the campus protest stood the men of Hampton Institute. Male students locked their doors in James Hall and refused to submit to room inspections. In addition to that, several young men continued to boycott classes and refused to comply with school officials who were demanding complete compliance. As a tactical measure, Hampton men were placed in charge of the strike efforts to ensure a high level of respect and cooperation from both the students and the administration. C. L. Spellman, a member of the Student Protest Committee, pointed out that "not a single dollar's worth of institutional property was damaged during the time…So complete was our control over the students that they would have literally torn buildings down brick by brick if the word had been given" (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA). From the onset, the main objective of the student body was to conduct an organized and peaceful protest. Unlike student revolts that occurred at other colleges and universities, there was never any intent to publicly humiliate, destroy, or attack the

character and reputation of Hampton. All that was asked of Dr. Gregg and his administration was that they seriously consider the list of concerns that were being put forth by the student body (Wolters 1975).

On Tuesday, October 11, 1927, Dr. Gregg agreed to meet with the Student Protest Committee under the following conditions: that students return to class immediately and that order be entirely restored to campus. Students agreed to the terms with the understanding "that there be no ineligibility rules or punishment inflicted upon the participants of this protest" (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA). Reasonably, students thought that this was a fair request seeing that no one had been harmed and no property had been damaged during the campus demonstrations. After each side had come to a mutual agreement, Dr. Greg called the Student Protest Committee to his office at 7 p.m. Tuesday evening with the hopes of putting the student protests to rest. The committee presented Dr. Gregg with a list of seventeen grievances. This list of demands included better food in the dining hall, dancing on special occasions, a calling day for secondary students, better laundered shirts, longer Christmas holidays, and a more effective student council composed exclusively of students and without faculty participation. In regards to academic standards, the committee requested that high-school students be allowed to study until 10:30 p.m., that a system of permitted "cuts" be inaugurated, that announced electives always be made available and to permit college students to enroll in more elective courses, that all courses listed and outlined in the catalog be offered, that in three of the schools the educational system be improved, that resignations be demanded of a number of White teachers whose apparent education was below that of the average student, and that in selecting future teachers more emphasis be placed on formal academic preparation and less on religious spirit (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA).

Although the Student Protest Committee had taken careful

consideration in presenting their list of demands to Hampton's administration, there appeared to be a strong degree of resentment and frustration against several of the student strike leaders. Even though Dr. Gregg and his administration agreed that several of the Student Protest Committee's demands were reasonable, their actions proved otherwise. For years, Hampton's administration had exercised a certain level of paternalistic control over student life and for the first time in the history of the institution, their authoritarian rule had been called into question by students. Administrators insisted that student strike leaders be punished for their insurrection as a warning against future protest and rebellious behavior (JEG, Student Strikes 1927, HUA). Dr. Gregg and his administration's decision to take disciplinary actions against the student protesters came as a complete shock to the student body (Wolters 1975). What happened next changed the entire peaceful discourse between students and administrators during the 1927–28 strikes at Hampton Institute.

Peace at Hampton lasted for a day, and by Thursday, October 13, 1927, the student strikes resumed. Outraged and disappointed students refused to give in to administrative demands to punish the student strike leaders. As expected, student protesters grew impatient with Dr. Gregg because he and his administration failed to deliver on their promise of amnesty. On Thursday morning, many of the students decided to support the admonished strike leaders by standing in protest with them. Dr. Gregg responded to the renewed strikes by recommending to the board of trustees that the institute be closed until further notice. The board accepted Gregg's recommendation by vote and decided that Hampton should remain closed until order was completely restored. They specified that insubordinate students be given the choice to pledge their allegiance to the institute or leave. In addition to that, every student was forced to reregister and promise his or her loyalty and cooperation to Hampton. All those students who refused to declare their allegiance to the institute were cast out and instructed to never return (Board of Trustee Minutes 1927, HUA).

As for the student strike leaders who were elected to organize and spearhead the campus protest, many of them were automatically expelled without consideration. "Two hundred students were either banished or refused to take the new loyalty oath." Altogether, the disciplinary actions imposed by the administrative board resulted in the sanction, suspension, or expulsion of sixty-seven students. Of that group, five were dismissed, twenty-seven suspended, and ten readmissions were undecided. Those students who were dismissed were not allowed to return and those who were suspended were not allowed to return during the 1927–28 academic session (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA).

When Hampton reopened on October 25, 1927, several measures were put in place to control student behavior and to ensure that there would be no more insurrections. Soon after students signed their oaths of loyalty, reenrollment commenced almost at once. Out of fear, students found themselves forced to give in to the administration. Their only options were to stay at the institute and bear with the current attitude of hostility or return home and face the wrath of their disappointed parents (Du Bois 1972). Just as they had hoped, Hampton's board and administration had sent a clear message to students that insubordination would not be tolerated. The spirit of student activism had been crushed under the weight of a no-nonsense majority White board of trustees who simply would not allow for any rebellious thoughts or actions to take place at Hampton. As the public weighed in on the events at Hampton, it was heavily debated whether there was any merit to the students' claims or had outside forces such as Black academic-activism and the New Negro movement incited the campus demonstrations (Du Bois 1972; Locke [1925] 1968; Wolters 1975).

Several concerned individuals external to the institution believed that student leaders had been coerced by outside agitators to rebel against the administration. Some authorities dismissed the protest at Hampton as "the work of disobedient boys and girls who were led on to do what they did" (Hampton

Alumni Journal, Student Strikes 1927:5, HUA). The chief question looming about the community was whether or not Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois had any involvement with the campus unrest. During the 1920s, Du Bois's name had become synonymous with Black student movements at many of the Black colleges and universities throughout the country. He was openly embroiled with the campus protest taking place at his own alma mater Fisk, and many of his opponents believed that he served as a behind-the-scenes agitator and had chosen Hampton, among other Black schools, to push his personal agenda for Black higher education (Du Bois 1972; Franklin 2003; Richardson 1980; Wolters 1975). Despite these allegations, "The students claim that ever since the iniquitous Massenburg Bill which required the separation of the races in public halls of Virginia, including Hampton School, that the Principal of the school [had] been less social with the students than ever before" (Sit-In and Demonstrations 1927, HUA). Moreover, angry students wholeheartedly believed that Dr. Gregg had "placed in some of the trades departments of the school white men from the Ku Klux sections of the Peninsula." Students complained that conditions at Hampton had become almost intolerable because of subtle racist influence, such as "putting white men over Negroes, some of whom could not write a sentence of English correctly" (Du Bois 1972:34). The once docile student body that had accepted uncritically and unprotestingly every rule put in place by Hampton's paternalistic administration was now ready to challenge their authority.

Hampton's administration and board of trustees seized every opportunity to discredit student rebels and convince the public that Hampton was still a school dedicated to industrial education for Negros who well understood their place in the segregated South. Once the institute reopened, "Appeals were made to the Alumni for assistance in every way in selecting students who [were] earnest and who have fine standards of conduct and can be counted upon to cooperate with those in authority in maintaining Hampton's 'Good Name'" (Board of Trustee Min-

utes 1927, HUA). Hampton's administration was well aware of the fact that publicly, the scandal of student unrest had raised doubt in the minds of those who had long supported "the Hampton Idea." Since the institute's early days, critics had ridiculed the school for its stance on industrial education and now, the protest had "given Hampton's foes an extra weapon and has amazed and discouraged some of its sincere friends" (Hampton Alumni Journal 1927:5, HUA). Nevertheless, student strikes forced alumni to take a position concerning the matter.

Although the board of trustees at Hampton had tried to subdue the student body by closing the school and forcing everyone who reenrolled to pledge an oath of loyalty to the institution, a climate of disobedience and rebellion among students against the administration persisted for more than a year after the strike had ended. By this time, not only were students dissatisfied with the current state of affairs at Hampton, but many graduates and faculty also began to question the leading authorities at the institution. To make matters worse, Dr. Gregg had not done much to contain or mediate the situation. Institutional stakeholders immediately cast the blame on him for allowing the situation at the school to spiral out of control (Du Bois 1972).

Although Hampton graduates were thankful for the White northern missionaries and philanthropists who during the founding of the institution did so much in the cause of developing Hampton and providing educational opportunities for the Black South, these same graduates along with a new generation of alumni felt the institution could no longer avoid the responsibility of appointing Black faculty and administrators. The 1927–28 strike had not overtly been about desegregating the institution as much as it had been about more student autonomy on campus. Compounded by students' resistance to an autocratic administration, alumni groups were able to use that leverage to force their issues on an already taxed board who were losing control of the school. As the students continued to fight, the National Hampton Alumni Association made their point clear as well: "We desire for

a mixed faculty which shall be composed of a larger proportion of Negroes than at present and that in administrative positions there be a larger colored representation" (Hampton Alumni Journal 1928, HUA). In the end, students and alumni strategically brought their concerns to the forefront and made the board take notice.

Dr. Gregg was no longer able to pacify the disgruntled hearts and minds of those loyal Hamptonians who had once revered his leadership. He lost favor with the Black community because he was no longer in harmony with what Black students and alumni wanted at their school. In fact, even the White papers suggested that "if the principal could not sympathize with the viewpoint of Negroes because he is a white man then he ought to resign and leave the school to be run by someone who is in sympathy with their viewpoint" (Newspaper clipping from the Norfolk Virginia-Pilot 1927, HUA). In May of 1929, Dr. Gregg did just that; he tendered his resignation to the board of trustees, which they accepted immediately. Dr. Gregg's era at Hampton ended with much-needed changes at the institution. While students gained more freedom on campus and strides were made by alumni to desegregate the faculty and staff, the matter of Hampton appointing its first Black president was still uncertain.

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"High Tech Lynching": White Virtual Mobs and University Administrators as Policing Agents in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Few professional environments have led to more threats of violence recently than at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs). White virtual mobs (WVMs), conservative bloggers, dissatisfied students, and internet vigilantes use social media and electronic communications to intimidate and organize campaigns against Black professors. White administrators are often complicit, usually siding with the assailants. Although various publications have reported on controversies involving Black professors and statements made both inside the classroom and on social media, few academic studies have explored these controversies by simultaneously offering genealogies of such attacks, theoretical explanations, methodological considerations, and policy implications. This article addresses these lacunae by making three important interdisciplinary interventions utilizing Black Sociology, African American religious studies, and Africana philosophy. Specifically, we first offer a recent history of academic cases of African American scholars who were victims of WVMs, contending that academic victims of WVMs were *lynched*. Consequently, we argue for expansion of the notion of lynching, suggesting that WVMs and White administrator complicity result in particular kinds of professional and social "deaths" of the victims. Second, we theorize WVMs acting in solidarity with White administrators as *regulatory technologies* that police and threaten the careers and safety of Black academic professionals, And last, we assert that to make sense of WVMs, their persistence and endurance, it is necessary to apprehend them as *religious* and part of an expansive complex of whiteness as religious. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of understanding assaults on Black faculty by WVMs.

Keywords: White virtual mobs, regulatory technology, religion, religion of whiteness, lynching, university administrators, race, whiteness

> My anxiety only deepened as I heard Anita Hill vilified as a traitor to her race. I had originally sympathized with Thomas for the same reason most black people did—the historic memory of white on black violence. Although I thought it was outrageous when Thomas labeled the hearing 'a high-tech lynching,' I understood that evoking images of white justice meted out on the burning body of the black male, Thomas elicited sympathy. This history black people knew.
>
> —White (1999:14)

> Wave on wave, each with increasing virulence, is dashing this new religion of whiteness on the shores of our time.
>
> —DuBois (1920 [1999]:18)

LOW-TECH/HIGH -TECH LYNCHINGS AND WHITE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS

The history of lynching in America is at once invisible and hypervisible, as evidenced by the absence of anti-lyching laws well into the twenty-first century, and the simultaneous opening of a historic lynching museum (Equal Justice Institute, 2018). The confounding combination of visibility and invisibility, of thought memorials and unthought inaction, raises considerable questions about the nature and history of lynching in this country.

More specifically, this dialectic of disclosure and concealment pushes us to ask a simple, yet pressing question: If lynching has only recently been deemed a federally illegal mode of extrajudicial and virulent violence, is it possible that lynching persists legally in the current moment? This article answers this question in the affirmative, but argues that the reality of lynching has mutated and expanded. In other words, we claim that lynchings still occur in the United States—albeit in different guises. We claim that WVMs are comtemporary manifestations of lynch mobs; as such, WVMs force us to examine classical definitions of lynching (Finley, Gray, and Martin 2018; Rheingold 2003).

We argue here that lynching has a subtler—and for this reason, more diffuse and therefore more pernicious—presence than its previous historical incarnation, and we do so by exploring how universities and the administrators tasked to protect them enact violence against their faculty of color by in/advertently fostering the emergence and physical actualization of what we (2018) call White virtual mobs (WVMs), which we define as a collections of individuals who operate inside and outside of institutions and use various social media platforms not only to comment on so-called "controversies" but also to threaten, harass, terrorize, and otherwise bully people of color, especially African Americans and faculty of color. We mark WVMs as *regulatory technologies* which are best understood as *religious*. White universities (and the "White" here adjectivally modifies both the universities and the administrators tasked to protect them), as Sara Ahmed (2007) describes them phenomenologically, are catalysts for a religious valorization of whiteness that polices—and, in many cases, produces violence against—the bodies and thoughts of faculty of color. While we focus on faculty of color, particularly black faculty, in this article, we nevertheless contend that this logic of lynching extends beyond the university into the larger society.

WVMs protect whiteness from being marked and made visible and, therefore, insulate White racial structures both inside and outside of academic settings from potential disruption. Universities have been shown to provide protection for whiteness (Burnsma, Brown, and Placier 2013; Forsegren 2017). White virtual mobs cannot function effectively without the sanction of White elites in college and university administrative positions.

As the article "Affirming Our Values: White Virtual Mobs, African American Scholars, and the Complicity of White University Administrators" (Finley, Gray, Martin 2018) suggests, higher education administrators constitute an essential facet of WVMs and provide the institutional power that is a necessary condition for the efficacy of their terror. We extend that argument here by focusing specifically on the nature and function of White virtual mobs.

We make three important interventions and extensions from an interdisciplinary perspective, linking African American religious studies, Africana philosophy, and Black sociology. First, we offer a recent history of academic cases of African American scholars who were victims of WVMs, contending that academic victims of WVMs are *lynched*. To make this point, we compare the features of classical lynchings, often times associated with the Deep South (although lynchings took place, and continue to take place, across the United States) to contemporary attacks on Black professors on social media and electronic modes of communication (such as emails and telephone calls). We therefore expand the notion of lynching, suggesting that WVMs and White administrator complicity result in particular kinds of professional and social "deaths" of the victims. Second, we theorize WVMs, which act in solidarity with White administrators, as *regulatory technologies* that police and threaten the careers and safety of Black academic professionals. We maintain that it is crucial to understand these attacks as persistent and enduring technologies, not confined to the use of contemporary social media and electronic forms that are linked to historic modes of White supremacist social maintenance such as classical lynching. Third, we assert that to make sense of WVMs and their persistence and endurance, it is necessary to apprehend them as *religious* and part of an expansive complex of whiteness as religious, which is to say, they constitute structures of the *religion of whiteness*. As such, White university administrators participate in and perpetuate the religion of whiteness through various enabling actions that implicitly sanction and encourage the violence of WVMs against faculty of color in PWIs across the United States.

We begin with an examination of scholarly literature about traditional White mobs and White mob violence followed by a discussion of White virtual mobs. We then explore changes in the definition of lynching and offer our own expanded definition, which includes literal and figurative Black deaths. We define *death* as the process whereby someone or something becomes

inert or meaningless, which may include someone's career, or "good" name (Heidegger, 1962b). Our discussion of White virtual mobs includes a number of case studies involving Black scholars, who we argue may suffer black deaths, or high-tech lynchings, as a result of their work on race. Next, we examine the ways that white virtual mobs may best be understood as religious. Then, we further outline how White virtual mobs function as technologies and we examine the roles of the identified technologies. Finally, we conclude with a discussion about the theoretical, methodological, and policy implications of our work.

WHITE VIRTUAL MOBS AND HISTORIC LYNCH MOBS: TOWARD A COMPARATIVE EXPANSION OF THE CONCEPT OF LYNCHING

Violence against black bodies, institutions, and communities is not new (Lindsey 2018; Spillers 1987; Teague 2018). Violence was, and still is, used as an important tool to maintain the system of physical bondage, to infringe upon the civil rights of people of African ancestry, to enforce segregation, to stabilize a system of intellectual hegemony, and to maintain a racialized caste system for the generations that followed (Hine, Hine, and Harrold, 1999; Michael 2009; Morris 1984). Antiblack violence was aimed at reinforcing and legitimating myths about white supremacy and black inferiority, which included efforts to criminalize and control black populations (Fanon 1952). Among the most horrific and sadistic examples of the use of violence as a form of torture and terrorism rooted in antiblack sentiments were the many acts of mob violence occurring between Reconstruction and the 1960s. Definitions of what constitutes mob violence have changed over time to include extralegal murders of black people who were accused of threating the values of White communities to actions involving three or more individuals (Waldrep 2000).

Just as definitions of mobs have changed over time, so too have definitions of lynchings changed over time (Tolnay and Beck 2018). For a time, scholars looking back on White mobs

focused primarily on the gratuitous violence against Black bodies that united and stabilized White communities and reinforced the racial status quo in America with a particular focus on key actors. (Tolnay and Beck 2018) Lately, scholars have reconsidered whom to include as participants in White mobs (Ohl and Potter 2013). White people—men, women, and children included—both angrily and cheerfully participated in lynchings and racism across the country both actively and passively, that is, through inaction and tacit support (McLaughlin 2007; Prince 2017; Yancy 2004). Increasingly, conceptualizations of White mobs expanded to include individuals, groups, and institutions complicit in the domestic terrorism aimed at Black people in America across the South and the North (Ohl and Potter 2013). Thus, White mobs must include witnesses refusing to identify perpetrators, journalists publishing defaming stories about Black people or refusing to publish stories about White mob violence (Ifill 2003; Yancy 2004).

Likewise, WVMs seek to maintain and justify White supremacy and assault and terrorize Black bodies, communities, and institutions. WVMs, like those of their forefathers and foremothers, rely upon the complicity of a broad spectrum of White people and predominately White institutions to continue to harm Black people in material, physical, psychological, political, and professional ways. Where White virtual mobs differ is in their simultaneous *function* as a technology and in their use of technology to protect against perceived attacks upon White supremacy, which involves fusing the grammar of old and what some scholars call *new racism* (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Collins 2005). We will return to the distinction between function and use of technology later in the article.

Among the most prominent examples of high-tech lynching enacted by White virtual mobs against individuals embodied as Black in this century are the recent attacks on Black scholars, especially at predominately White institutions (PWIs) where administrators seek not to defend the constitutional and academic

freedom of experts in their employ but rather are often complicit in inciting White virtual mobs. We now turn to an examination of scholarly literature about traditional White mobs and White mob violence followed by a discussion of virtual White mobs.

THE SPORT AND SPECTACLE OF WHITE MOBS

Antiblack violence has taken on many forms throughout the course of American history (Olaloku-Teriba 2018). It may be described much like play when the violence is done for its own sake; it is often informal, spontaneous, and guided by emergent norms (Coakley 2008). Antiblack violence also takes the form of dramatic spectacle, which can be defined as actions to entertain an audience for the purpose of attaining rewards (Coakley 2008; Hartman 1997). Furthermore, antiblack violence can take the form of a sport where antiblack violence is well organized, well established, officially governed, with an eye towards both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Coakley 2008). White mobs engaged in the lynching of Black men, women, and children, and in the destruction of black institutions, and in wiping out entire Black communities by way of race riots (Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riots of 1921 2001). These forms of antiblack violence provide some of the best evidence of why White mobs formed, how White mobs have functioned, and how definitions about White mobs and lynching have changed over time.

Vincent Franklin is among scholars who have examined violence against Black people historically, and White mob violence in particular. Franklin (1975) used the race riots in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1918 to address a number of issues seen not only in that specific time and place, but also in cities and rural communities across the nation. According to Franklin (1975), competition for valued resources such as housing and jobs often proceeded the formation of White mobs. An inability to restore what Whites in a community perceived as an "accommodative pattern of race relations" was another precondition to emergence of White mobs (Franklin 1975:348). Preserving the image of a city,

region, or state may have also contributed to when and where White mobs formed (Beck, Tolnay, and Bailey 2016).

White mobs also coalesced for other reasons—and even emerged for no reason at all (Hine, Hine, Harrold 1999). A Black veteran refusing to take off a military uniform, a witness testifying on behalf of a Black defendant, a leader promoting racial uplift, and any person exercising the right to vote might also contribute to the formation of a White mob (Ifill 2003). White mobs were also known to form when Black people protected their property (Martin 2013). White aggression was almost always met with Black aggression (Franklin 1975).

Harvey Newman and Glenda Crunk found similar patterns in their work on the race riots in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1906. Harvey and Crunk (2008) described the ways in which White mobs were motivated by prejudice, fear, and socioeconomic conditions to engage in antiblack violence. White mobs, according to Harvey and Crunk were not limited to those individuals engaged in the physical torture of lynching victims, but also included the cheering White men, White women, and White children gathered to witness the event. (Harvey and Crunk 2008; cf. Yancy 2004).

Although White mobs were comprised of people from across the sociopolitical spectrum of White communities, what united them was their belief in the superiority of the White people and the perceived benefits of racial segregation (Harvey and Crunk 2008). The real issue for White mobs, according to Harvey and Crunk, was how to control the Black population, and the solution was white mob violence. Even for those White residents in the numerical minority wishing to put an end to violence, the underlying motivation was not the realization of the humanity of their fellow Black citizens; rather, it was their concern for the loss of profits to elite White business owners. (Harvey and Crunk 2008). Sherrilyn Ifill (2003) estimates that about 3,500 Black people were lynched in the United States between 1865 and 1968.

Efforts to portray lynchings in history and popular culture can tell us a great deal about their role in promoting domestic

terrorism against Black American citizens; but they often perpetuate inaccurate stereotypes of White mobs. For example, White mobs are often portrayed in movies and in historical accounts as "crazed" as opposed to "collective, deliberate, and controlled" (Ohl and Potter 2013, 187). The historical evidence that extensive planning and publicity went into many lynchings shows how wrong some scholars and others have been in their interpretations of lynchings (Ohl and Potter 2013).

Charles Waldrep chronicled the changes in the definitions of mobs and lynching in an article published in the *Journal of Southern History*. He connected the agendas of various civil rights organizations to efforts to quantify lynching, which required operationalizing lynching. In the first decade of the twentieth century, lynching was understood as the murder of a Black person(s) that was sanctioned by the community. In the following decade, the definition was changed to include the murder of a Black person by three or more persons. By the 1930s, lynchings widened to include deaths of Black people without community support. During the 1940s, following a meeting of anti-lynching groups in Tuskegee, Alabama, lynching was define as an act in which "killers need only believe they acted 'in service to justice, race, or tradition' to qualify as lynchers" (Waldrep 2000:98). Waldrep concluded that "understanding lynching as a powerful symbol, a symbol with a history distinct from that of the racial violence itself, will allow historians to unravel the true story of how America has, sometimes justified and, at other times, fought against barbaric violence" (Waldrep 2000:100).

We agree with Waldrep's conclusion that anti-lynching advocates understood that "lynching was too powerful a word to be surrendered so easily" (2000:88), and here we extend the definition of lynchings beyond positive renderings to include *figurative and social deaths that may involve many of the characteristics of corporeal or historical lynchings, such as the suppression of the truth, slander, proxy targets, the criminalization of blackness, presumption of guilt, shame, degradation, and the legitimization of the myth of whiteness as normative*.

WVMs, then, function in our contemporary society as lynch mobs. This is especially the case as it relates to their assaults on Black scholars at PWIs, which have increasingly appeared over the last decade and are particular to the social media age (Flaherty 2013). Additionally, we show that administrators play an important role in promoting the *high-tech lynching* of Black scholars (much like Southern journalists and others promoted the actual lynching of Black people in the past) by chastising Black scholars in the public sphere to excuse high-tech lynchings so that White people and the public as a whole view them as justified and normative (Waldrep 2000). We see high-tech lynching as carrying the same logic of historical lynchings, but they are different in that these lynchings occur as a direct result of technological advancements, such as social media and conservative websites.

We see lynching, including high-tech lynching, as a symbol of a perverted American culture that is in need of a new vocabulary and grammar that takes into consideration associated rhetoric, symbolism, and meaning of lynching in all its forms. We use the term in a way that is not to be confused with Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas' use of the term. Thomas used the term, as Deborah Gray White (1999) observed in the first epigraph, to solicit sympathy and to deflect attention from claims he sexually harassed Anita Hill and was not suitable for a lifetime position on the Supreme Court. Thomas, at least in part, was successful on both fronts, because of the symbolism and meanings associated with lynching.

We understand the symbolism and meaning associated with lynching and discuss lynching as a *religious and regulatory technology* that does not evoke sympathy, nor does it deflect from core issues such as racism and whiteness; rather, our use of the term places race and whiteness as foundational to understanding attacks on Black scholars and the complicity of administrators at PWIs.

WHITE VIRTUAL MOBS AND BLACK SCHOLARS OUT OF PLACE

White virtual mobs could not exist and be efficacious without the support, tacit or explicit, of White institutional elites such as college and university administrators (Finley et al. 2018). White people—including White university administrators—angrily and cheerfully, actively and passively, contribute to contexts and climates in which White virtual mobs thrive. We argue that these administrators are also complicit in the material and intangible outcomes of their actions. The following case studies provide some evidence of White virtual mobs at work and the critical roles White administrators often play in providing structural support that is necessary for WVMs to work.

The desire to placate anti-intellectual and antiblack sentiments has manifested itself in a number of controversies. Shannon Gibney, for example, was attacked based not upon her academic writings, but on comments she made in the classroom. Dr. Gibney, a full-time, tenured professor at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, was teaching an introductory course in mass communications and was challenged by a White male student who eventually lodged a complaint against the professor. The university's reaction constructed a false equivalency and conceptually faulty interpretation of its policy against "racism in all its forms." Such a move echoes the recent tweets and statements by the current president, who was quick to draw his own false equivalency after the Charlottesville White supremacist demonstration (Mercia 2017). The assumption was that there are many forms or racism beyond antiblack racism, including antiwhite racism, or colloquially "reverse racism."

In the case of Gibney, and others, like that of Dr. Larycia Hawkins, professor at Wheaton College, who was chastised for showing solidarity with members of the Islamic faith while employed at a conservative Christian college, show the many ways that administrators at PWIs use their "bully pulpits" to provide the proverbial rope and fire for White virtual mobs. This would

be repeated in assaults on a number of other Black scholars, including Tommy Curry, Johnny Williams, Zandria Robinson, George Yancy, and Saida Grundy, to name a few (Graham 2016; Hetter 2015; Jaschik 2015; Quintana 2017). Through official public statements and public comments, administrators at PWIs cosign on broader efforts to suppress the truth about the critiques made by Black scholars, ignore the slander Black scholars endure, and facilitate attacks on proxy targets by making it seem as though attacks on whiteness and White accomplishments are commonplace in institutions of higher education. The failure of administrators at PWIs to defend Black scholars and instead to issue apologetic statements and disciplining faculty lends to efforts to delegitimize blackness in similar ways as historical lynch mobs criminalized it.

THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY: WHITE RESENTMENT AS POTENTIATED SOCIOPOLITICAL ENERGY

Despite the various apparatuses that attempt to maintain its social-ontological validity, the myth of normative whiteness does not come sui generis. It is not an inherent state of the world. As Lewis Gordon once put it, "to be white requires the choice of whiteness as a project" (1994:147). Because whiteness is a project that must be chosen, it is also a project that must be *maintained*. To choose whiteness as a project requires more than microcosmic decisions at the interpersonal level; it extends beyond the level of "alt-right" members posting outright racist invective. In fact, the choice of whiteness—whether in its more violent and explicit form (alt-right) or in a more implicit, liberal, and "values-oriented" approach (see Finley, Gray, Martin, 2018)—requires a series of techniques that encourage such choosing. The choice of whiteness, the decision to develop and then maintain structures that reinforce the normativity of whiteness, therefore requires a *technology* (from the Greek *technê*, or intentional and skilled know-how, which includes art and culture), a modality of engagement that

continues to (re)produce normative structures whereby whiteness maintains its normative legitimacy as supreme.

We do not use the term *technology* lightly. While White mobs historically formed in the wake of White resentment at the very appearance of or "belief" in the possibility of Black freedom, contemporary White mobs—as evidenced by the Charlottesville catastrophe—often emerge in digital spaces, which maintain and expand a sociopolitical, sociocultural, and social-ontological reservoir of White supremacist resentment. From social media to conservative news websites proffering the most violent and vicious White supremacist and antiblack sentiments, White mobs have, in more recent times, also taken on what Brian Massumi (2003) calls a *virtual* character. As Massumi once put it, "the virtual… is a realm of *potential*. In potential is where futurity combines, unmediated with pastness" (2002:30). And it is this potentiality, this space of possible possibility, that captures quite succinctly the nature of the "virtual" in *White virtual mobs*.

The "virtual" need not be understood in terms of contemporary digital gadgets; the virtual, as we said above, is meant to connote potential. Whiteness—and particularly, White resentment—is available as a resource to be harnessed and manifested at any moment. Recent hashtags, online articles and magazines, and social media posts are, therefore, not expressions of a new or even "remixed" version of White virtual resentment; they are merely new through which an already given historical context of White resentment is expressed.

Contemporary WVMs form not because a particular president has been elected, but instead because the United States has cultivated, vindicated, and sanctioned a historical ("pastness") context of and predilection toward White normativity and white supremacist resentment. From the police neglecting to prevent lynchings, to the various wars on drugs and crime, to the current president's equivocation about the violence in Charlottesville, we are consistently met with the fact that the U.S. sociopolitical context has all but legalized White entitlement. This sense of

entitlement is challenged when it is (perceived to be) attacked; resentment forms as a result, and it is encouraged by the state, maintaining its potency, awaiting actualization (Finley and Gray 2015). All one needs is a trigger.

By discussing virtual potentiality, we have already moved into the realm of the technological. In his essay "The Question Concerning Technology," Martin Heidegger conceptualized technology as the transformation of the (putatively) natural world into what he calls "standing-reserve" (Heidegger 1993: 322). Heidegger (1993) explains, "Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering" (1962a:322). This standing-reserve is nothing less than the re-ordering of nature into reservoirs of potentiality awaiting actualization—by which Heidegger means *use*. The technological, in other words, *needs and reproduces the virtual*.

Technology is no mere utilization of a device or the perpetuation of scientific and machine progress; it is, at base, a structure of perception, a mode of engagement, that cannot but help to turn the entire world into a context of potential resources awaiting use and availability. Heidegger calls this "enframing" (1962a:325-26). Technology "enframes" the world as a totalizing context of standing-reserve: water is put to use to build hydroelectric energy; the sun is siphoned for its solar energy; land masses are no longer beautiful landscapes, but instead "mined" for the minerals they contain (one need only think of the current president's attempt to "bring coal back" as a modality of technological engagement or the last president's authorizations of fracking in the wilderness or pipelining of sacred indigenous land).

Enframing, as such, is a "way of revealing" (Heidegger 1962a: 318). But this revealing is no mere disclosure. The technological mode of revealing is connected to *truth* and *normativity*; it is not (merely) expressed through the use of particular gadgets, networks, or mechanized and scientific advancements, but instead comes to its fullest "presence in the realm where…truth

happens" (Heidegger 1962a:319)." Heidegger will eventually tell us, however, that the "truth" attendant to "enframing" is also a kind of concealment; by turning everything into standing-reserve, the essence of technology, the "enframing" that sets upon the natural world in order to siphon its various energies does so because it already has a sense of what is needed. The very "disclosure" of technology already situates the world as resources to be used, instrumentalizing the world according to whatever needs or desires society may desire or need. And there may be no clearer site of standing-reserve than blackness itself.

WHITE VIRTUAL MOBS AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS AS REGULATORY TECHNOLOGIES OF DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT

Heidegger's (1962a) discussion of technology affords us the possibility of thinking about the technological in ways that exceed and ground the contemporary use of machines. But, embedded within Heidegger's account of the essence of technology is a flaw, a blemish. This blemish is blackness. Blackness has historically been articulated as labor potential, as enfleshed matter awaiting form. This "form" comes to us as the Black body. If Heidegger's standing-reserve is an "objectless" space, if it is the constellation of material and affective reservoirs from within which technological machines are both conceived and created.

Ultimately, what this means, then, is that technology is *not* a neutral enterprise (we need only think of atom bombs and chemical warfare as relatively recent examples). If modern technology—the kind of technology in which Heidegger is interested—is the paradigm through which we get high-tech machines and networks like cell phones and social media, and if this modern technology has its roots in an essential enframing that turns objectless standing-reserve into particular objects of use and convenience; then one of the clearest—and we might even say, the *originary*—site of technology, of the essence of technology, is the enframed mutation of African society (the flesh) into individual Black slaves

(Black bodies). The reality is that modern technology's heritage, its provenance, comes to us *through* violence, and this violent history has been perpetuated through a host of "developments" whose primary goal is the eradication of life itself (think of the weapons we mentioned earlier). In not wrestling with (one of) the originary site(s) of technological reproduction, technology in its very essence conceals its own violence and therefore falsely believes itself to be neutral—or, at worst, "progressive."

What does this have to do with lynching—let alone lynching as a technology? Everything, it turns out. Theologian Anthony Pinn—to whom we'll give even more attention in the next section—once wrote that slavery and lynching were rituals that transformed enslaved Africans into *objects* and tools of comfort and efficiency (Pinn 2003:49). These rituals operate as the technological mechanisms through which the enslaved are reproduced as tools; it is *through* such rituals that the standing-reserve of Black flesh is transformed and then sustained as the tool that is the Black body. Therefore, these ritual technologies are most-accurately understood as religious, given the social and preternatural alchemy that is necessary for the conversion of blackness from standing-ready flesh to *object-tools*.

These rituals were not only violent; they were *normative*. Which is to say, these rituals served an important function for regulating Black behavior and reinforcing White superiority. No longer tools in service of agricultural or industrial production, Black bodies were now a tool in service of reinforcing the social order of white normativity. Or, as we noted earlier, "Killers need only believe they acted 'in service to justice, race, or tradition' to qualify as lynchers" (Waldrep 2000:98). A lynched Black body was, and is, a technological creation serving to regulate Black behavior. In other words, lynching, like the auction block, was a mechanism through which technology *regulates* behavior. And this was not simply the case in the past.

Responses to Black faculty under attack by White virtual mobs often reinforce the objective and objectified status of Black

bodies, in general, and Black professors, in particular; these White institutional responses participated in the technological transformation of a human life into a tool for White convenience. And in this way, they participated in the technology of lynching, in the technological transformation of a relational being into an object of comfort, use, and efficiency. We are only grateful that Gibney, unlike so many other Black victims (e.g., Keeanga-Yamahtta, Tommy Curry, Johnnie Williams, Saida Grundy, George Yancy, Larycia Hawkins, et al. [Dias 2016, Flaherty 2013]) did not become the strange fruit of traditional lynchings.

LYNCHINGS AS RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA: "LYNCHING" AND WHITE VIRTUAL MOBS IN THE RELIGION OF WHITENESS

Why were lynchings so significant? This is a deeply pressing and vexing question that deserves a response, since lynchings in America are gruesome occurrences that ostensibly contradict all the "universal" values of freedom, equality, justice, and democracy. Lynchings were obviously rooted in deep desire and central meaning. Indeed, lynchings and WVMs and White university administrators as forms of contemporary lynch mobs, co-constitute a regulatory technology that is best understood as *religious*.

We've already discussed lynching as a regulatory technology. Here, we deepen discussion by returning to Anthony Pinn. His *Terror and Triumph: The Nature of Black Religion* theorizes lynching as a primary ritual of White religious history in the United States (Pinn 2004:52-77). We will return to the notion that lynching is a ritual White religion, but first it is important to ascertain what is meant by "religion," for it is not necessarily the worship of deities, the adherence to creeds, or formal institutional realities. For Charles H. Long ([1986] 1999), one of the foremost theorists on religion and author of *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion*, religion means "orientation—orientation in the ultimate sense, that is, how one comes to terms with the ultimate significance of one's place in the world." Long contends

that religion is "more than a structure of thought; it is experience, expression, motivations, intentions, behaviors, styles, and rhythms" ([1986] 1999:7). Which is to say, religion is embodied, and, as such, its experiences, expressions, motivations, and the like, give rise to particular forms of thought, which are nuanced by, for example, cultural contact and the resulting (re)orientations. Religion is, therefore, fluid rather than static, and those phenomena that have come to represent religion in the popular imaginary, such as belief in gods, creeds, sacred texts, aesthetics, rituals, and institutions are secondary and tertiary effects and cultural developments—which function in and as attempts to rupture history and to secure freedom and fullness and the forms of social and cultural capital that will help to ensure such (Pinn 2004).

Drawing from Long, Pinn suggests that religion, at its core, is a "quest for complex subjectivity" that "addresses the search for ultimate meaning" (Pinn 2004:157). While Pinn is specifically writing about Black religion, this notion of religion as a quest for complex subjectivity is meant to point from the particular to the general. It describes the human search for meaning and the ways humans organize their worlds to make them coherent, so that they might apprehend their places in the world in the ultimate sense. "Religion," then, can and does take many forms, from seemingly mundane practices to those that manifest in formal settings and apparently secular contexts. It is complicated and broad and entails multivariate meaning making practices and processes that cannot and should not be assumed always to be ethical nor positive. In this regard, religion is a neutral descriptor, which can and does take many forms in the lived world, beyond religion as a merely a social institution, to include that of whiteness.

WHITENESS AS RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION OR THE RELIGION OF WHITENESS

Philosopher George Yancy defines whiteness as "a synergistic system of transversal relationships of privileges, norms, rights, modes of self-perception and the perception of others, unquestioned pre-

sumptions, deceptions, beliefs, 'truths,' behaviors, advantages, modes of comportment, and sites of power and hegemony that benefit whites individually and institutionally" (2004:7-8), and scholars have recognized this complex of whiteness as a religious orientation (Finley and Martin 2017; Perkinson 2003; Perkinson 2004; Perkinson 2014; Weed 2017). Taking Long's definition of religion, it is not difficult to imagine that whiteness has been a primary means by which those who are signified by the category have come to engage, understand, and organize the world, such that it becomes meaningful. Whiteness has been and *is* the primary religious lens through which White people have come to understand the world and their place in it in the ultimate sense. Yancy's definition of whiteness makes it clear that this racialized way of living in the world is all-encompassing (perhaps short of totalizing) in that it mediates relationships of privilege with others in various ways. White bodies therefore function as sites of power individually, corporately, and institutionally. Whiteness thus operates as a changing-same across semiotic fields.

Hierarchal racial taxonomies at whose apex whiteness is fixed are seen and lived as "the 'natural' order of things" (Yancy 2004:15), such that whiteness functions as the "Transcendental Signified within the specious taxonomy of naturally occurring racial kinds, [in which] whiteness is deemed that center from which all other *racial differences* are constituted" (Yancy 2004:10). Which is to say, whiteness as Universal Subject is *the* "invisible (or unacknowledged) center" (Yancy 2004:2). Historian of religion James Perkinson frames this racial complex simply as "the religiousness of such a whiteness" (2014:64).

Unlike Yancy, however, we would frame whiteness as a matter for *theory of religion*. The interrelation of race and religion, and race as religion (and, therefore, religion as a racial category) should come as no surprise. DuBois' essay, "The Souls of White Folk" in *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* ([1920] 1999:17-29), is a scathing interpretation of "the new religion of whiteness" (18), in which whiteness *as* religion was no mere metaphor. DuBois

understood whiteness literally as a cruel, violent, and avaricious religion in which whiteness—not capitalistic desire, which was also a product of this religious orientation—led to "curious acts" (17). Among these manifestations is warmongering and "mob" behavior. Whiteness, for DuBois, articulates itself through various forms of violence, obfuscating this reality by framing White people as moral leaders of the globe. But DuBois sees through their machinations by drawing upon that which whiteness despises the most—*blackness*.

DuBois locates his methodology of engaging and interpreting whiteness from within a particular tradition of African American religious knowledge production known as *conjure* (Chireau 2003), which is ultimately the reference for his entire project, given the expression as the title of his book, *Voices from Within the Veil*. The "veil" is important here; in his most well known text, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), DuBois introduced the concepts of "veil," "second-sight," and "seventh son" as ways of describing the phenomenology of Black consciousness. The religious connotations should not be missed here; DuBois's sociological analyses are structured by religious terminology culled directly from Black magical and conjuring traditions.

In having this "second-sight," in articulating what he will call "clairvoyance," DuBois apprehends truth, not (simply) with his eyes but in the direct and unmediated experience of *seeing* and therefore *knowing*, which transcends the empirical. This African American convention privileges intuitive ways of knowing, modes of perception which are not bound by material reality, or by cause and effect epistemologies, but, rather, through archaic ways of noetic production that are extant in African American culture.

DuBois claims that clairvoyance allows him to *see* whiteness as a specter, a wayward soul. DuBois notes that his knowledge does not come from intimacy with White people, nor through relations of subjugation. Albeit his precise epistemological insight of whiteness, he suggests, was generated by and through a mode

of being concomitant with African American folk religion, and, therefore, not the high science of the objects of his gaze, it was, nevertheless, verified: "I know their thoughts and they know that I know."

Since DuBois, numerous scholars have explicated the history of the modern emergence of race and religion as inseparable concepts (Finley 2018; Vial 2016; Carter 2008; Nonbri 2010; Walker 2010; Perkinson 2004; Pinn 2004; Long [1986] 1999; Smith 1991). Of those theorists, perhaps none is greater than Charles Long and his monumental *Significations*. According to Long, race has *religious origins,* and *religion* is a *racialized and imperial category*. The two emerged in modernity in complex processes of signification, which were the imperial products of cultural contact and conquest (Long [1986] 1999), and nascent "whiteness" was at the epicenter of these processes. Long is the clearest on this as well as extending our conversation of a racialized "center," which is important for apprehending whiteness as religion. (In fact, this center is the very genesis of religion). Long declares that the modern notions race and religion were the result of colonialism and Europeans' contact with "the others" (in the fifteenth through twentieth centuries) whom they named in contrast to themselves. They also named the life-ways and life-worlds of colonized people. As a result, race and religion emerged as new conceptions in and of the modern age. In other words, they were *signified*. The West "created" (or recreated) the cultures of "non-Western" people as products of complex signification. What Long means by "signification" is "the ways in which names are given to realities and peoples during this period of conquest; this naming is at the same time and objectification through categories and concepts of those realities which appear as novel and "other" to the cultures of conquest" ([1986] 1999:3).

The processes of colonialism and imperialism operated out of a center, what Long calls "Western ideology" ([1986] 1999:85, 86). That is, the origins of race and religion were a function of the center, the origins of nascent whiteness (or White supremacy).

Whiteness became the raison d'être for the existence of race and religion, categories of otherness, which point back to and signal whiteness as magisterial. In this sense, whiteness is deific, which is to say, of God (Finley and Gray 2015). This has been especially true in the United States of America.

WHITE VIRTUAL MOBS AS RELIGIOUS RITUAL

Returning to Pinn (2004) and the notion of lynching as White religious ritual, we argue that—as a lynch mob and *regulatory technology*—WVMs and the university administrators who have almost universally supported them (some of them have been neutral at best), perform the *same* function. In other words, they enact the same religious ritual as nineteenth-century and early-to-mid twentieth-century lynchings, in the classical sense of the term.

In *Terror and Triumph*, Pinn argues for two "rituals of reference" (2004:48-51; 71-77, 215), the slave auction block and lynching, both forms of terror that instituted a sense of dread in Africans and enacted and stabilized their place in the world as objects. This was an individual and communal experience in that the rituals spread terror and dread throughout the entire slave community. Slave auctions and other forms of terror served to associate *pain* with blackness, which became (and continues to be) a constitutive element in the white imaginary about the nature of blackness (Hartman 1997). These rituals also established White people as subjects (Pinn 2004). Slave auctions allowed White people to celebrate whiteness as *given*, as the central racial group in the universe, as slavery functioned as a mechanism to maintain control over Black bodies.

At the same time, the auction block, slavery as an institution, and the notion that Black people could endure pain, which made them perfectly suited to slavery in American ideology, allowed White people, ironically, to maintain a sense of humanity even while providing White entertainment and pleasure (Hartman 1997). Since Black people were seen as jovial, playful, and blissful in the context of terror and pain, White people were able to jus-

tify themselves as essentially "good" by providing an opportunity for Africans to participate in civilization. With the official end of legalized slavery in the United States (c. 1863-1865) came the need to develop new mechanisms for controlling Black bodies, which would also reinforce Whites' status as subjects and Black peoples' place as objects when they perceived Black people to be out-of-place, which meant that the system (which was always connected to a cosmogony of White mythic right to "own the world" as DuBois says) was out of order. Lynching served this purpose and was seen by Whites as reinstituting a God-given order (Pinn 2004).

Lynching was Pinn's second ritual of reference. As we noted earlier, following Ronald Grimes ([1982] 1995), Pinn (2004) argues that rituals were systematic activities, repeated over time, that were held in founded spaces (in the case of WVMs, in the virtual space of the internet and other electronic spaces). These rituals had socioeconomic and cultural significance, but they were primarily religious rituals. Lynching, as a ritual of White religiosity, which stabilizes and reproduces a system of social relations that posits whiteness as the ultimate "truth(fulness)" of the social order, reinforces Black people as historical objects, whose identity within the system, then, is cosmologically fixed. The Black knows no truth, and any challenge or critique of whiteness by scholars is met with a similar violence by WVMs and is stabilized by White elites, who hold authoritative positions in the academy. As we (2018) argued previously, this is exactly what occurs when African American scholars are perceived as out-of-place by White communities and have to be put back in their places by WVMs.

WVMs are religious, then, not because White hegemony is socially constituted nor because the hierarchical social arrangement happened by chance or by merit, due to hard work, ingenuity, and superior genius of Whites but because it protects this arrangement as the way of the cosmos. WVMs participate, with other rituals and technological mechanisms, in the maintenance whiteness as the invisible and presumed center of social life in

America and around the world. They are responses to White need and desire to protect what for them is their birthright as White. Any challenge, political, economic, or intellectual, to this deeply felt and deeply ensconced system of unearned benefits is met with symbolic and physical violence through the technologies of lynching.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? SCHOLARLY IMPLICATIONS

The high-tech lynching of Black professors who engage in the work in which they were trained is a regulatory technology that is religious. Performing their work in the tradition of legendary scholars such as W. E. B. DuBois, which includes addressing race, whiteness, and the multiple forms of oppression Black people face in the world, is conducted with an aim toward truth, the disruption of those systems, and the liberation of Black people, necessary for the human fulfillment about which DuBois wrote.

To this end, this article offered a genealogy of such attacks on African American faculty, offered theoretical explanations about how best to describe and understand them, and addressed a number of methodological considerations, including new ways of thinking about, defining, and operationalizing lynching. We addressed the oversights in the literature by making three important interventions and extensions from an interdisciplinary perspective, namely by African American religious studies, Africana philosophy, and Black sociology and by offering a recent and empirical history of academic cases of African American scholars who were victims of WVMs and complicit university and college administrations. We compared the features of traditional lynchings to contemporary attacks on Black professors through social media and electronic modes of communication. Then we began what we hope is an ongoing conversation about expanding the notion of lynching. We theorized WVMs in solidarity with White administrators as *regulatory technologies* which police and threaten the careers and safety of Black academic professionals and attend

various forms of violence and death. We asserted that to make the most sense of WVMs and their persistence and endurance, it is necessary to see them as *religious* and part of an expansive complex of whiteness as religious. This article points to the importance of interdisciplinary collaborations and the significance of religious studies, more specifically, theory of religion, which is often left out of scholarship on race, whiteness, and, in this case, forms of lynching.

The implications of the scholarly arguments made throughout the article are far reaching. Black scholars and others have a responsibility to address assaults on the work and rights of their colleagues in a manner that is not only descriptive but placed in appropriate historical and contemporary contexts. In doing so, we contribute to an effort to understand how and why such attacks occur and thus limit their appearances and, if possible, to eliminate them altogether. Our article also points to the need to consider not only the genealogy of such enduring concepts of lynching but to explore the ways in which such concepts may change their forms, but not their functions. Administrators at PWIs must demonstrate the same loyalty to the Black professors in their employ that the Black professors show to their disciplines and to the mission and vision of the institutions where they work.

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Racialized Categorical Inequality: Elaborating Educational Theory to Explain African American Disparities in Public Schools

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ABSTRACT

The causes and effects of African American disparities in public education are often misunderstood and misinformed. Current educational theory focuses on individual achievement by students in a vacuum, rather than exploring the ways in which racialized categorical inequality has affected generations of African Americans across a variety of settings and institutions. Instead of elaborating on the myth of a color-blind or race-blind society, I will examine historical dimensions of race, racism, and racial inequality by exploring systemic, institutional mechanisms of inequality, which will provide a more accurate, evidence-based narrative. Synthesizing key theories of critical demography, historical categorical inequality, systemic racism, and other related themes, this essay develops a theory of racialized categorical inequality. This new paradigm incorporates key tenets of earlier work, while examining historical evidence and current events to discover how well the new paradigm could assist in the development of a research agenda that could improve understanding of African American disparities. Following this discussion, I make three recommendations for future research. First, use the racialized categorical inequality paradigm as a starting point for research questions, methodological considerations, and the interpretation of findings. Second, pay closer attention to race, racism, and racial inequality when examining African American experiences in public education. Third, researchers and research agendas should not make the erroneous ideological assumption that we have become or are moving toward becoming a race-blind or color-blind nation, as historical evidence builds a convincing case against this.

Keywords: racial inequality, African Americans, educational disparities

The disparities of African American students versus students of other racial or ethnic backgrounds in public education is a topic which is underspecified and understudied. Despite the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling outlawing separate but equal schools more than a half century ago, public schools in America are still far from equal. Although there is much contemporary rhetoric calling for race-blind or color-blind policies moving forward, the history of African Americans is filled with overwhelming examples of racism, prejudice, discrimination, and segregation. In many American cities, schools are deeply segregated by race, neighborhood, income, and wealth. In fact, public school students largely receive educations of different quality depending on local school district funding, location, and resources. While social class and its influence on neighborhoods remains an important area of study when exploring reasons for distinctions in public schools, race and racism sit at the core of American institutions and are the primary driving factors in the lives of generations of African Americans. The purpose of this work is to examine racialized categorical inequality and how this has impacted African Americans in public schools by reviewing existing work in this area, and then offering a more nuanced approach.

Previous work looking at disparities of African Americans in public education has concentrated on both individual and institutional approaches to the issue. Several of these approaches will be explored and discussed to discover how they may better inform current African American experiences in public schools. Earlier scholarship on critical demography argued for the importance of including racism when examining the concept of race. Hayward Derrick Horton (1999) contended we cannot look at race and its resulting impacts without exploring how racism has contributed to the social construction of race. Although socially constructed, race and racism have a powerful reality in African American educational outcomes. Geoffrey L. Wood (2017) extended this discussion by arguing for the importance of critical demography as a mechanism for detailing public education disparities. Rather

than concentrating on individual student achievement outcomes, critical demography offered the ability to look at power and social structure differentiation, which have historically impacted African Americans in public schools.

Charles Tilly (1998) provided another promising approach on historical categorical inequality, and this could be applied more usefully to the African American experience in public schools. In a theory incorporating multiple levels of analyses, Tilly argued that once dichotomous and separate categories are set historically, these categories were then reified through individual and institutional interactions to create durable inequality. Other scholars contended that these patterns of inequality in income and wealth were both pervasive and historical. Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro (1997) examined differences in White and Black wealth over twenty years ago, while Shapiro (2017) has argued recently that disparities in wealth between Whites and nonwhites continues to grow at an unprecedented pace. Early scholarship by Derrick Bell (1992) and continued by David Gillborn (2015) have noted the continued importance of race and racism in public school disparities for African Americans. Further work by Cedric Herring (2004) examined the relevance of skin color in how racial categories are defined, and then how these categories are used to label individuals in the supposedly color-blind era. In addition to recent scholarship on race and racism and its direct impact on educational disparities, Robert B. Reich (2015) and Thomas Shapiro (2017) have continued the discussion of social inequality more generally and the ways in which race and racism have remained defining, often utilized characteristics for African Americans.

The evidence and scholarship on the topic of racial disparities in public education is not new, but remains unfocused. Work continues to advance in this area in siloed disciplines, which have failed to connect the pieces of the story. This article will explore these educational disparities more thoroughly by examining details within the relevant literature on the topic, to discover how

these can be linked to form a more comprehensive theory. Following a review of the literature, I discuss pertinent connections to current events impacting African Americans in public schools will be discussed with the goal of connecting theoretical underpinnings with empirical evidence. After exploring evidence, I discuss how we interpret our findings as well as exploring directions for future research in this area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Demography

In earlier work, Horton (1999) outlined the distinctions between conventional and critical demography, and then argued that critical demography was more important in discovering nuanced historical processes affecting African Americans. While conventional demography has relied on static variables, trends, and estimates of changes in population parameters, critical demography is explanatory, predictive, and explores dimensions of power and social structure. Although events are not packaged for quantitative analyses as conventional demographers would prefer, contextual and relational nuances remain important for structural explanations of how and why. Also, conventional demography relies on assumption on the ways in which society should work, but critical demography examines issues of social structure differentiation and power (Wood 2017).

Critical demography can further be extended as an explanatory paradigm when examining historical dynamics of race and racism. It is impossible and careless to evaluate our public schools through a lens where power is excluded as a factor. Social differentiation and power have set the stage in our public schools since the founding of this country, and these pieces are critical for both diagnosing and solving problems in American public schools (Wood 2017).

Public schools prescribe standardized tests to determine how well individual students are learning. Similar to conventional demography, with respect to analysis of the data, these

tests attempt to show which schools are performing well, and which ones are doing poorly. However, this level of analysis is at the individual level, while institutional factors are ignored. Rather than comparing individual students on test results, it is imperative to look at levels of variation in income and wealth of neighborhoods, and how this might impact school outcomes. It is not a question of individual achievement, but of differences in social structure and power among the schools in question.

America has a well-known history of residential segregation by race. A critical demography lens allows exploration of these high levels of racial residential segregation and its impact on public education. Although school resources come from a variety of governmental sources, most school funding comes from property taxes, based on local real estate property values. Property values vary a great deal by neighborhood in that homes located in the suburbs, typically occupied by whiter, wealthier families, tend to have higher property values than those located in inner-city neighborhoods, occupied by poorer, minority families (Wood 2018). Income and wealth differences in richer suburbs versus poorer urban neighborhoods have an amazing effect on the funding local schools receive. Students in urban schools do poorly on standardized tests when compared with their richer suburban counterparts, not because the individual students are inferior, but because the gap in resource allocation between urban and suburban schools is so large. Data is collected at the state and federal level with respect to educational outcomes, however this data is collected with little regard to the role of racism, gender bias, historical experiences on parents' education and occupation, disparities in household income due to unequal treatment in the labor market or values of homes based on residential segregation by race (Wood 2017).

Horton (1999) has argued convincingly that we cannot understand the concept of race without understanding the role of racism, and this is as true for residential segregation by race as it is for public school segregation by neighborhood. These pair-

ings are remarkably similar in both power and structure. As race cannot be properly understood without examining the power of racism in historical socioeconomic perspective, race in public schools cannot be addressed without first uncovering the history of racism, its impact on the social structure, and the resulting different levels of power that social structure differentiation produces in American society (Wood 2017; Wood 2018).

Historical Categorical Inequality

When considering the historical development of race and racism in public schools, Tilly (1998) explored the ways in which individual patterns were set, and then incorporated into institutional processes. He argued paired unequal categories set inequality in place and this inequality allowed organizations and institutions to use these patterned sets for decision making. Much like conventional demography discussed earlier, status attainment research focused on individuals, and tended to ignore contextual, social structure, and power relations (Tilly 1998). Tilly argued against status attainment models, as Horton (1999) argued against conventional demography for, similar reasons. The role of paired unequal categories to set categorical inequality is congruent with examining the ways in which power and social structure shape outcomes in critical demography.

In the case of segregated neighborhoods and public schools, these categories of inequality formed over time and were then used to determine how resources would be allocated. Tilly stressed such categories resulted in an unequal distribution of rewards and privileges from the moment the categories were conceived. Once these categories were set, Tilly further argued four mechanisms allowed categorical inequality to develop: exploitation by elites, opportunity hoarding by non-elites, emulation, and adaptation. Over time, organizational processes and societal decisions on access to resources would be assigned based on these positions. In fact, Tilly argued durable inequality depends largely on the institutionalization of categorical pairs, rather than on individual racism (Tilly 1998; Wood 2017).

Tilly contended the institutionalization of categorical pairs set the stage for durable inequality in the following ways. Paired and unequal categories were developed, which consisted of asymmetrical relations across a socially defined line, with the usual impact of unequal exclusion of each network controlled by the other. In the US experience, the most salient historical asymmetrical relation for African Americans has been and continues to be the color line. Once formed, these categories take on a life of their own: they can be replicated and used across a number of venues with little cost to institutions or society in implementing them. Exploitation by elites occurred when powerful, connected people command resources to increase their own return, while limiting outsiders through exclusion processes. Much of the history of African Americans has been one of racism, discrimination, segregation, and systematic exclusion. Opportunity hoarding by nonelites occurs when members of a categorically bounded network, that is, White middle-class and working-class people, acquired access to a resource that was valuable, renewable, or subject to monopolistic control, preventing others from accessing the resources. People in wealthy and powerful positions tended to use the first of these, while people in middle-class and less powerful roles opted for the second. In Tilly's work, his focus was on social class cleavages with respect to exploitation and opportunity hoarding. However, these can easily be adopted to historical differences of race as the mechanisms are similar.

At an institutional level, emulation and adaptation led to further reified categories of inequality. Emulation occurred when these models were copied from one setting to another or across existing social relations. Adaptation happened as daily routines and structures were modified over time so categorical inequalities became embedded in more organizational and societal structures. Historical experiences in these categories gave participants different and unequal preparation for performance in an organization. Much of what observers interpreted as individual differences that create inequality were actually the consequences

of categorical organization. For these reasons, inequalities by age, citizenship, class, educational level, ethnicity, gender, race, and other apparent contradictory principles of differentiation form through similar social processes and were to an important degree organizationally interchangeable (Wood 2007). Further, the basic mechanisms, which generated categorical inequality, operated over multiple unequal outcomes such as income, wealth, power, prestige, and race. The intersections of these mechanisms created much of the distinctions we see between unequal categorical groups. Tilly concluded durable categorical inequalities were not formed by individual decisions like racism, prejudice, or discrimination, but instead were formed by the interrelationships of social ties, networks, organizations, and finally societies, which base decisions on differential access to resources on categories (Tilly 1998). So, in the case of segregated neighborhoods leading to the differential outcomes in public schools, Tilly's work offers a convincing narrative on how early decisions became embedded into institutional mechanisms.

Other Pertinent Theories

Building on earlier critical race theory by Bell (1992), Gillborn (2015) examined the importance of intersectionality as a component in studying how race and racism work in tandem in the area of education. Although the focus of his research was the intersections of race, gender, and disability and its resulting impact on education, Gillborn argued that racism remains of primary importance for critical race theory scholars in three interrelated ways. First, he contended empirical primacy, as a central axis of oppression in the everyday reality of schools, was crucial. Gillborn contended that while other factors matter, racism and racialized dialogues continued to take center stage when exploring historical trajectories of African Americans in education. Second, Gillborn argued for the relevance of personal/autobiographical primacy, and stated how critical race scholars viewed themselves and their experience of the world, matters for critical race theory scholarship. Finally, Gillborn stated the need for political pri-

macy, as a point of group coherence and activism, in its ability to mobilize. He concluded that to continue the conversation on the importance of race and racism in education, we must discontinue to support the mainstream assertion that racism is irrelevant (Gillborn 2015).

In related work, additional literature discussed schools as sorting machines, through the lens of categorical inequality (Domina, Penner, and Penner 2017). Thurston Domina, Andrew Penner, and Emily Penner contended that despite their perceived equalizing nature, schools are social sorting machines, creating categories that serve as the foundation of later life inequalities. This work builds on earlier work of Tilly and others and extends the theory of categorical inequality to education, focusing particularly on contemporary American schools. They discussed how schools create a range of categories or tracks, and then use these categories to create barriers. Once barriers are created, schools adopt and reinforce these categories through the use of existing mechanisms, which then serves in building categorical inequality both at schools and beyond. Edward Bonilla-Silva (2017:8) continued this line of reasoning by arguing often SAT scores and academic achievements were discussed in racial terms, when in fact these were socially constructed on how race was defined and reified to reinforce racial order.

In his examination of the impact of race on racism, Joe R. Feagin (2001) argued for six tenets of systemic racism theory. These were the White racial frame, the extraordinary costs and burdens of racism, resisting systemic racism, undeserved impoverishment and undeserved enrichment, social reproduction of wealth, and rationalizing racism. Feagin contended systemic racism tends to promote and reward whiteness, and that this was especially true in the educational arena. He argued each of the tenets can be seen in public schools. Perhaps, the White racial frame and distinctions of reward by race were the most obvious, but these tended to work together to create an elite construction of society that reproduced systemic racism (Feagin 2001).

Other work sought to explain the American stratification system by looking at the development of historical categories and the consequences these categories have for inequality over time (Massey 2007). In his work, Douglas S. Massey (2007) argued that once a surplus is created, then categorical distinctions set inequality in place. Then, mechanisms of exploitation and opportunity hoarding allow for the development of prejudice and discriminatory actions. As this continued, powerful groups were able to use both cultural and social boundaries to create barriers and then segregated groups of people into a socially inferior position. Similar to work by Horton and Tilly, Feagin's idea of the importance of power and social structure differentiation cannot be overstated.

Although work by Charles indell Patton (2015) emphasized the importance of historic opportunity hoarding in employment by Whites, he contended that these impacts could be extended to both the criminal justice system downstream, and even to the educational system upstream. He further examined the impact of segregation and jailing on the Black employment rate. In this, he focused on earlier theories of historical materialism, social closure (Parkin 1979), and durable inequality theory by Tilly. Using historical evidence on Black employment rates from the 1940s forward, he concluded that black employment rates, segregation by neighborhood, and jailing of Blacks were well connected to opportunity hoarding by Whites.

Finally, other scholarship looks at how race and skin complexion are co-mingled into the African American experience as we move into a potentially color-blind era. In an edited volume, Cedric Herring and his colleagues explored how skin color matters for structural decisions made, which directly and indirectly affect the racialized stratification system in America (Herring, Keith, and Horton 2004). Herring argued that most Whites in the United States believe that race is no longer a factor, because people receive what they earn on the basis of talent and effort (Herring, Keith, and Horton 2004). So, while society focused on

individual differences in skin color as a source of difference, at the same time, these were dismissed as causing any structural inequality decisions worthy of note. Bonilla-Silva (2004) contended that the US is moving away from a biracial society and toward a tri-racial one, with a layer of honorary Whites in between. He further argued that this creation of a three-tier society will not create a color-blind one as some think, but will instead deepen divisions between those at the top and bottom of the hierarchy. Although predictions by Herring and his colleagues and Bonilla-Silva are now fifteen years old, we have seen the ways in which individual distinctions based on skin color, perceived blackness, and the usual prejudice and discrimination present at both individual and institutional levels continue to divide our society.

Synthesis into Racial Categorical Inequality

Although Horton (1999) and Tilly (1998) examined the impact of power and social structure on potentially differential outcomes for African Americans, each did so from a different starting point, yet arrived at similar places. In the development of critical demography as a paradigm to augment or even replace the static, functional nature of conventional demography, Horton focused on the ability of critical demography to describe racism, rather than just race alone. For African Americans in the past and today, race and its accompanying racism remains the salient determinant factor of life chances. Rather than focusing on the status quo, Horton stated that new ways of thinking about power and social structure were needed to advance the scholarship in this area. Tilly took an historical approach, examining how categories are formed and then take on a life of their own both at the individual and institutional levels of analysis. Tilly's arguments on the ways in which exploitation, opportunity hoarding, adaptation, and emulation worked as mechanisms in the development and enhancement of categorical inequality are important in discussing how racialized categorical inequality has grown and become reified in America.

Scholarship drawing on critical race theory and its impact on education, schools as sorting machines, how historical social stratification has developed in the United States, the interconnectivity of categorical inequality with employment and the prison system and its potential applicability in education, and the importance of skin color both culturally and structurally in the color-blind era allow for the consideration and development of a new theoretical paradigm. After reviewing and considering relevant literature on the disparities of African Americans in public education, it is prudent to consider if it is possible to develop a more nuanced theory of racial categorical inequality. Although some promising work has begun in educational theory, it could still be elaborated further through considering racialized categorical inequality and its impact on public education outcomes.

The importance of well-established and entrenched boundaries between unequal groups resonates across the literature explored. For African Americans, the color line—race and racism—remain at the core of their experiences at multiple levels. Whether we look at differences in social reproduction of wealth by families over time, unequal treatment in housing, public education, employment, or the judicial system, the experiences of African Americans resonate well with racialized categorical inequality. The history of African Americans is one where racism and power combine, often with horrible outcomes. Once systems of categorical inequality were created on the basis of race and racism, individual prejudice and discrimination grew. As initial unequal treatment accelerated, the creation and reinforcement of mechanisms of institutional discrimination coupled with racism, quickly led to cultural and structural condition toxic to generations of African Americans.

In developing a racialized categorical inequality paradigm, it is important to look at the explanatory power of the theoretical underpinnings: how these theories best fit the evidence. In the next section, historical and current events will be discussed to discover how components of this new paradigm fit. Experiences of

African Americans differ greatly from those of their White counterparts. One cannot look exclusively at public education without exploring both events occurring downstream and upstream from decisions made the educational arena. It is hoped these historical examples and evidence will allow for the initial testing of the explanatory potential of a theory where race and racism are linked with differential power and social structure dynamics at multiple levels of analysis. This is not the end of the consideration of the worth of racialized categorical inequality, but rather the beginning of new scholarship which may better inform the life chances of African Americans.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND CONNECTION TO CURRENT EVENTS

The history of African Americans has been one of pain, sacrifice, triumph, and hostility. Initially, Africans came to America not by choice, but as victims of the slave trade as far back as the 1620s. As Black slaves arrived on American soil, categorical inequality based on race became established. Race, and the color line, was the earliest and most well defined boundary in dividing and segregating people. As the nation grew, so did the prejudice and discrimination toward Blacks as well as power differentials which would affect outcomes for years to come. Some may ask, is it really necessary to go back 400 years to examine historical events that none of us now were alive to witness. Proponents of a color-blind or race-blind society are asking us to do exactly that. However, in order to understand how racialized categorical inequality has developed, this historical process that allowed it to thrive are worthy of discussion.

After the US Civil War and the Thirteenth Amendment, Blacks were no longer treated as property on plantations in the American South, and began to receive more citizenship rights. In fact, during the Reconstruction, Black men eagerly took advantage of the right to vote and hold political office. Despite these amazing advances, Blacks and Whites remained segre-

gated. Blacks had won their freedom from slavery, but the slave system was quickly replaced by separate but equal facilities almost everywhere in the United States, and Jim Crow laws in some locations. Once the unequal categories, differential access to power, individual and institutional forces of racism, and segregated neighborhoods and schools were in place, overcoming these disadvantages would take far more than legal changes that magically made everyone equal. In fact, historically, changes in policies in education, housing, voting, and employment have not had high levels of impact in the Black community.

After the *Brown* decision in 1954, there was a move away from segregated schools and neighborhood de jure, but racially segregated neighborhoods and schools remained in practice throughout much of the country. Today, the color line matters as Americans live in segregated neighborhood, go to differently funded schools, worship in separate settings, and maintain a social distance that goes back 400 years. The events of the past continue to affect the present, and will likely affect the future.

Scholarship by Oliver and Shapiro (1997) and Lori Latrice Martin (2013) have looked at wealth and wealth formation and elaborated differential outcomes for Black and White families. Shapiro (2017) has continued the arguments on the importance of wealth twenty years later. What these authors found was that the historical development of wealth was more uneven than income. Demographers and social scientists tend to use income as the primary measure of socioeconomic status, but differentials of wealth by race are far more dramatic. One key reason for this is that wealth shows the historical processes of accumulation of resources across multiple generations, while income is simply a snapshot from today. Shapiro (2017) estimated that Black families have just a dime for every dollar of wealth held by White families. The social reproduction of wealth has worked in tandem with racialized categorical inequality. Historical processes of racism, segregation, and differential treatment both individually and institutionally have handicapped multiple generations of Black families.

Importantly, wealth is passed down through families and allows inequality to be reproduced into the next generation. Family wealth as well as sources of income frequently determines where one lives. The choice of housing is based on wealth held and income earned over a period of time. However, housing choices are not simply a product of economics. Race plays a huge role in determining where people live. Historical patterns of racial segregation, discrimination in lending, and the pattern of homogenizing Blacks as a single group beset with problems and dilemmas has affected African American housing chances and outcomes for decades (Patterson 1997; Oliver and Shapiro 1997; Shapiro 2017).

The relevance of housing for the education experiences of African Americans is significant. Where one lives often determines where one goes to school. In many American cities, neighborhoods remain segregated by race. African Americans go to poorer, inferior, resource deprived schools due to the neighborhood in which these schools are located. In many states, as much as 50 percent of income for local schools come from local property tax dollars, which are based on the values of the properties (Shapiro 2017). Homes in racialized, segregated neighborhoods are often worth less than homes in middle-class suburbs. This creates an institutional racialized issue as different levels of resources flow to schools based on these housing and neighborhood considerations.

Bonilla-Silva (2017) extended this line of thought by discussing the racial isolation of whites in terms of friendships. Despite Whites' claims of racial integration, few report having many Black friends. He further inquired why it is that integrated schools have not produced meaningful platforms for interracial interactions. Bonilla-Silva argued that school tracking often separates students by race within schools, and racial integration comes late in a student's career, often not until high school (2017:124-26). He concluded that the emphasis on individual achievement may also prevent students from engaging in cross-cultural or multiracial contact.

Continuing to examine the historical evidence and relevant current events are important with respect to employment and the criminal justice system. The quality of education received directly relates to the type of employment achieved in later years. Although individual outcomes may vary, we tend to see African American students living in poorer housing, receiving inferior educations, landing in lower-level jobs, and more frequently entangled with the criminal justice system. These events are not due to chance, or the liberty of a free market society, but are instead due to racialized categorical inequality, that continues to plague African Americans.

DISCUSSION

So when evaluating African American disparities in public schools, there is much to consider. Educational theory tends to focus on individual levels of achievement and status attainment outcomes to measure the progress of students, yet historical evidence and connections to current events shows this to produce a flawed analysis in the case of African Americans. It is not just a question of individual achievement on equal footing in similar places; rather, African Americans live in poorer neighborhoods, attend inferior schools due to residential segregation by race, and are subject to high levels of individual and institutional discrimination due to systematic racism. For these reasons, existing educational theory does a poor job of providing explanations for African American disparities in public schools.

One of the major flaws in examining African American disparities in public schools is the lack of systemic explanations. Most educational theories and studies look at individual-level outcomes, without taking any racialized categorical inequality into account. This inequality is deeply embedded in the American system of social stratification. As discussed previously, racialized systems exist across multiple areas: wealth, income, neighborhoods, housing, employment, and education. Although education is one system worthy of examination, it cannot be looked at in a vacuum without considering the other impacts of racialized

categorical inequality, which both affects educational attainment, and is affected by it.

Rather than rely on individual explanations or status attainment arguments occurring in a vacuum with no racial or social contexts for student outcomes in education, what is needed is a systematic approach incorporating a body of scholarship aimed toward the creation of a racialized categorical inequality paradigm. By synthesizing components from other scholars looking at how race, racism, and racial inequality developed through historical differentials in power, social structure, and the reproduction of inequality (Bonilla-Silva 2004, 2017; Feagin 2001; Horton 1999; Tilly 1998), a racialized categorical inequality approach can offer new insights for scholars examining African American disparities in public schools. Despite discussions of the advent of a color-blind or race-blind society, historical evidence and current events both indicate this has not happened. Rather, this color-blind approach is ahistorical, myopic, and ignores institutional and systematic trends that have impacted generations of African Americans on the basis of race, racism, and racial inequality.

There are a few ways in which a newly constructed racialized categorical inequality paradigm could be helpful in future research. First, rather than examining student achievements, test scores, and academic merit based on individual students' accomplishments, scholars examining public school outcomes should use this paradigm as a starting point when constructing research questions, methods of inquiry, and interpretation of findings. Events occurring in public schools don't occur in a vacuum independent from other institutions. It is important to consider an historical, and structurally informed way of examining differences in public schools. Second, if policy makers are to address African American disparities in public education directly, much more attention must be paid to the social construction of race, racism, and racial inequality and how these have developed over time in public education. Residential segregation and what that means for housing values and available property taxes for schools, how

school districts are unevenly funded at the local level leading to huge differences in resources, and then how these resource differentials contribute to educational inequality by race are topics which policy makers should consider. Each of these separately and combined have enormous impact on the disparities of African Americans in public schools. Finally, we need to acknowledge that we are not in a color-blind or race-blind society. Despite the rhetoric and propaganda that we as a nation have moved to society that is completely based on individual talent and merit, historical evidence and current events shows that this is not the case. African Americans remain behind Whites on almost every socioeconomic measure in areas of wealth, income, education, housing, and employment. Yet, many argue these racialized distinctions are due to individual choices and behavior, rather than a history of racialized categorical inequality. Our public schools' administrators, legislative policy makers, and the nation as a whole need to made aware of the evidence and facts with respect to differential access and treatment by race. The developing of research based on racialized categorical inequality, and an education of the public on the ways America is not a color-blind society, are starting points in the enlightenment process, which can help future generations in our society.

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Black Women's Words: Using Oral History to Understand the Foundations of Black Women's Educational Advocacy

Gabrielle Peterson

ABSTRACT

This essay explores class-based and race-based resources Black women incorporate into their educational advocacy strategies by using Black feminist methods of oral history and archival analysis. Adding to Jennifer Nash's (2019) characterization of Black feminisms as defensive, I explore Black women's motherwork strategies during the process of racial desegregation of schools in southeast Michigan from the mid-1960s onward. I argue that beyond highlighting the legacy of Black women's involvement in education and racial socialization, the emphasis on class in Black feminist analysis can reveal differences among Black women's accumulation of resources that shape their motherwork strategies. I add that Black feminism is a form of analysis that understands Black women through their multiple, marginalized identities, which can also inform investigative techniques that the undermine narratives of "pathology" and "oppositional culture" that plague Black mothers. This work responds to the parental involvement and educational inequality literature that has sought to choose whether race or class was more salient in explaining racial differences in educational attainment. Instead I rely on a more intersectional approach that acknowledges the structural barriers to education while also using historical methods to examine the diverse strategies Black women implement to combat multiple forms of discrimination.

Keywords: segregation, education, parental involvement, Black feminisms

> The children had done pretty well in school and everything, but we had to spend a lot of time in school. Not so much advocating for our children, but being a presence, so that, for example, in those early years, I was a noon supervisor. I was on the PTO. I volunteered for almost everything. I felt like I got to be there because I didn't want a teacher to say, "Oh, well, I would have let you know that so-and-so wasn't doing this, but I was waiting until our marking period." No, they would see me just about every day, either me or Ronald. We were almost always there. —Wendy Woods (2019)

Since studies of parent involvement have sought to replace oppositional culture explanations for the educational achievement gap with theories of capital deficiency (Massey et al. 2003:7), Black women's educational advocacy is often omitted from these perspectives. The advancements in social science have not improved the controlling images of Black women's sexuality, violence, and morality (Roberts 19 97:8) used to explain their purported harm to communities and families. More specifically, studies that focus on Black children's oppositional cultures to schooling (Fordham and Ogbu 1986) or Black women's inability to activate cultural capital in educational institutions (Lareau and Horvat 1999) ignore the evidence of structural racism, which limits the flow of resources to the most marginalized in school systems (Lewis-McCoy 2014) and completely elides the history of Black mothers' development of alternative racial and class-socialization strategies in educational advocacy (Cooper 2009). Black feminisms have historically combatted these representations with direct action, critical analysis, and narrative-based research methods (Collins 2009;[1] Etter-Lewis 1991a). The Black feminist concept of *motherwork*[2] (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014; Collins 2000; Cooper 2009) is useful for describing Black women's combination of care and activism in their response to discrimination in their children's schools. The more popular concept of *intersectionality*[3] is one of many Black fem-

inist theoretical frameworks that emphasize the role of race, class, and gender in defining Black women's experiences of oppression (Crenshaw 1991:1245). This essay uses the broader framework of Black feminisms for its multidimensional contributions to academia, and the way it resists tendencies among mainstream applications of intersectionality that, due to homogenization of race and gender oppression, downplay Black women's diversity (Nash 2019). This homogenization of Black women on the axes of their gender and racial identities ignores the scholarship that demonstrates the divergent experiences of middle-class and poor Black Americans, as well as examples of strategic assimilation which reproduces these intraracial differences (Lacy 2007).

Appreciating diversity among Black women helps scholars understand how class contributes to variations in motherwork strategies. Black feminisms offer historical evidence of Black women's commitment to their children's education through "traditional" and alternative forms of parental involvement despite their exclusion from educational opportunity due to interlocking structures of racism, classism, and sexism (Cooper 2009). My class-conscious application of motherwork extends literature that describes the way Black mothers equip their children with knowledge on how to navigate the White mainstream, and cultural experiences to maintain connections to their Black identity/community. Ashley Farmer characterizes the salience of race, class, and gender to Black women in the radical influences they drew from their participation in communist, feminist, and antiracist movements for their own articulation of their identity as Black women (Farmer 2017). Black Panther women's combination of racial pride and educational empowerment is evident in the numerous examples of Black women's incorporation of cultural awareness into their community education programs (Collins 2000; Farmer 2017). Furthermore, more contemporary applications of Black feminist analysis demonstrate the simultaneity of race, class, and gender in Black women's awareness of educational inequality, and their adoption of motherwork strategies of

presence, *imaging*, and *code-switching* (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014). Though these studies offer a lot of evidence of discrimination and resilience on racial and gendered lines, there is less analysis of the ways class differences contribute to the cultivation and activation of different applications of motherwork strategies, and how they reproduce different educational outcomes. As this essay demonstrates, the nuance that emerges from narrative methods reveals the heterogeneity of Black women's educational experiences that shape the expectations they have for their children's educations, and the resources they employ to socialize their children.

Interviewee Wendy Woods's experiences in an educational tracking system contributed to expectations for her children's schooling that did not fit within the limited opportunities local school districts offered their Black students. Her defensiveness is evident in her awareness of the discrimination in Ann Arbor schools and her enactment of motherwork strategies of presence in the PTO and in her children's classrooms where she observed unfair treatment. Her college education shaped her cultivation of important Black activist networks, which she drew upon for her children's racial socialization, and that provided the guidance to help send her children to a private school. Literature on motherwork mainly emphasizes Black women navigating public educational institutions with little regard to the privileged (Khan 2011) or privileged poor (Jack 2014) who make the decision to send their children to private or alternative schools.

This data is combined with archival evidence of Black women's advocacy within local government during the closure of a segregated school, as well as excerpts from oral history interviews of Black women who recount experiences of segregation in Ann Arbor. A review of oral history interviews creates the context for understanding educational discrimination in Ann Arbor, children's extracurricular involvement, and Black cultural capital experiences, as well as various enactments of motherwork strategies. A more thorough analysis of Woods's description of the influence of her educational and activist experiences reveals

the impact these experiences had on the decisions she made regarding her children's upbringing. I argue that Black feminist sociology critically responds to the lineage of theories of parent involvement that suggest Black children and their families develop "oppositional cultures" to schooling. Instead, it considers the legacy of Black women who have historically understood and responded to the structural and interpersonal forces that restricted their access to equal education by developing a methodology and direct action to resist discrimination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mainstream perceptions of Black women's educational advocacy build upon misrepresentations surrounding their commitment to their families. This review considers race-based and class-based assumptions surrounding Black women's investment in child-rearing and demonstrates the benefits of Black feminism as a response to those misconceptions. Black feminisms as both an analytical strategy and methodology are essential to understanding Black women's role in their communities and in their families. This review seeks to make a case for the study of the class-based resources and opportunities that Black women may draw upon in advocating for their children.

Racial Explanations

Race-based explanations for student achievement suggest that the unique experience of enslavement fosters cultural beliefs and moral behaviors among Black people that demonstrate their devaluation of education. Signithia Fordham and John U. Ogbu's (1986) "acting White" concept described the formation of a racial identity among descendants of slavery that influenced Black children to malign their coethnics for doing anything associated with White identity—including doing well in school. The oppositional culture explained by Fordham and Ogbu is connected to a legacy of literature that used cultural pathology to blame Black families for the conditions observed in Black neighborhoods (Roberts

1997). Cultural arguments implicated parents, specifically Black mothers, for leaving "each succeeding generation to a life of poverty, delinquency, and despair" (Roberts 1997:7). As a result of these cultural arguments, both Black mothers and Black children were targeted by mechanisms—including but not limited to coerced sterilization (Roberts 1997); the war on drugs (Alexander 2011), the school-to-prison pipeline (Ferguson 2000); school push-out (Morris 2016); and carceral continuum (Shedd 2015)—that contributed to the reproduction of racial inequality. Prior to studies by Karolyn Tyson, William Darity, and Domini R. Castellino (2005) and Angel L. Harris (2011), Fordham and Ogbu's 1986 study allowed scholars to draw simplistic contrasts between racial identity and educational achievement among Black children, and as a result, their families.

Subsequent literature emphasized Black children's commitment to their education, but still decentered women in these perspectives. Harris (2011) described how Black children received messages about the importance of schooling from their families, despite prevailing evidence of a racial achievement gap. Studies also found contrasting evidence from earlier studies regarding the influence of messages from peers. For example, Tyson, Darity, and Castellino (2005) found that Black students took pride in educational achievement despite negative attitudes peers expressed about education. These findings raised important considerations regarding the role of families in the educational motivations of their children. More importantly, these studies replaced cultural arguments with structural analysis of the discipline and other systems such as tracking systems embedded within schools that contribute to racial achievement gaps. Despite the importance of these findings on Black children's and families' values on education, more work needs to be conducted to address Fordham and Ogbu's (1986) negative association between Black racial pride and educational aspirations. A structural intersectional analysis considers how class, race, gender, and other identities shape mothers' ability to help their children navigate educational insti-

tutions. My essay adds to findings about the role of familial messages in Black students' educational attitudes, the importance of motherwork to influencing Black children's commitment to their education.

Class Explanations

Certain theorists sought to amend the oppositional culture arguments by focusing on the ways the reproduction of class intergenerationally relates to differences in educational attainment. These scholars followed class-based theories that educational institutions and homes are sites where children learn how to reproduce their class identity (Bourdieu 1984; Lareau 1989; Lareau 2000; Lareau 2011). Using the capital framework outlined in Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) study of the elite, Annette Lareau's (2011) work compared the concerted cultivation strategies middle-class families enact in order to reproduce their class position in their offspring with the natural growth strategies of the working class. Middle-class parents' efforts to reproduce financial, cultural, and social capital among their children influenced the extracurricular activities that they signed their children up for, and ways they taught their children to interact with authority figures (Lareau 2011). This emphasis on class was also echoed in her earlier work and other work that focuses on the ways parents leverage resources to curate their children's educational trajectories (Horvat, Weininger, and Lareau 2003; Lareau 1989; Lareau 2011). The studies explore forms of parent involvement related to education, like participation in parent-teacher organizations (PTOs), or volunteering in children's classrooms (Lareau 1989; Lareau 2011; Lareau and Horvat 1999). More importantly, studies of parent involvement demonstrate ways that middle-class and elite parents leverage their nonfinancial resources to pressure teachers and administrators into ceding to their demands for their children's educational preference (Horvat and Lareau 1999; Horvat, Weininger, and Lareau 2003; Weininger, Lareau, and Conley 2015). This strategy is of course compounded by wealthy parents' ability to improve their children's instruction through money by creating a system where

educational disparities are consistent with income inequality. Ultimately this research relies on evidence that class contributes to differences and that racial differences work distinctly. While the class-based approach is helpful for combatting more cultural arguments, it does not account for the interlocking institutions of class, race, and gender that further constrain Black women's activation of capital for their family's interests.

Intersectional analysis acknowledges that solely class-based arguments are insufficient for understanding the persistence of antiblack discrimination that occurs in school settings. Studies of Black mothers in schools explore the obstacles they experience in their advocacy (Bailey-Farkhoury and Mitchell 2018; Horvat and Lareau 1999). While Horvat and Lareau (1999) mainly apply the framework of class capital, they accounted for race in contributing to the challenges of working-class Black mothers in school settings. Their observations revealed that having cultural capital is not enough; it has to be valued in the context, and the one who possesses it needs to know how to activate it (Lareau and Horvat 1999). Horvat and Lareau concluded that working-class Black mothers' distrust of the school system made it difficult for them to build the same relationships of that were essential to their White peers' successful negotiations with teachers for their children's interests. They argued that working-class Black women's differences in class capital, and their inability to activate that capital, contributed to conflict with teachers. Lareau and Horvat's (1999) study is useful for its acknowledgment of Black women's awareness of discrimination in the schools, but the emphasis on class ignores the racial-gendered socialization that is significant among children and their mothers in educational settings (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014). In relying on class-based assumptions to explain Black mothers' difficulty in helping their children, Horvat and Lareau (1999) missed the significance of racism—or even gendered racism as Cooper (2009) describes—that constrains Black women's thought and expression within educational institutions. A Black feminist approach would consider the salience

of class, while also engaging race and gender to understand the ways the activation of capital requires privilege.

Cultural Capital versus Black Cultural Capital

While the class-based perspective is helpful, allegiance to it suggests that race and class are not simultaneously important, especially among parents who may socialize their children not only to participate in the middle class, but also to maintain allegiance to their race (Lacy 2007). The Black cultural capital perspective calls into question the tendency of earlier educational researchers to choose a side in the race-versus-class debate created over seemingly competing explanations for the racial achievement gap.

Although discussions of racial socialization do not always consider the intersections of race-based and class-based childrearing among racial minorities, work on the Black middle class shows how parents enact class-based and race-based socialization for their children. The theory of strategic assimilation is significant for demonstrating how Black people participate in the White mainstream through work and schooling but maintain connections to their coethnics through participation in organizations and maintenance of ties to the Black community (Lacy 2007). Karyn Lacy's (2007) book applies the important concept of Black cultural capital to describe the different forms of capital Black middle-class parents cultivate and share with their children. Initially theorized by Prudence Carter (2005), this concept reflects the value ascribed to Black identity and history among Black people. The concept also accounts for cultivation strategies that combine racial heritage with general preparation for the future. This application of culture deeply contrasts oppositional culture models, which suggest Black culture promotes contradictory values to the mainstream, when, in fact, Black parents teach their children how to navigate both Black and White spaces. Lacy (2007) provides the basis for this understanding of parents' race-based and class-based cultivation strategies, though more research needs to be conducted that centers Black women's efforts in reducing their social status and racial identity among their children.

In this essay, I seek to add to conversations on Black cultural capital by demonstrating the way Black women value it as much as more "elite" forms of capital that will help their children succeed. Interview excerpts that span experiences from the latter half of the twentieth century to present demonstrate how Black women leveraged finances, social networks, and cultural heritage in order to foster positive racial identities among their Black children, while also preparing their children for success in Eurocentric schools.

Race + Class + Parent Involvement

Most recent literature on the racial disparities in educational attainment assert that both race and class contribute to constrained access to educational opportunity among Black children (Lewis-McCoy 2014). R. L'Heureaux Lewis-McCoy (2014) responds to both oppositional culture (Fordham and Ogbu 1986), and concerted cultivation (Lareau 2011) theories to demonstrate the misconceptions inherent in their explanation of the educational achievement gap. Lewis-McCoy (2014) uses interview and historical analysis in order to describe the structures that limit poor and minority parents who try to help their children earn an education. His structural intersectional perspective attributes mechanisms within school systems that unequally distribute opportunities and resources by race. Lewis-McCoy's analysis demonstrates the benefit of intersectional perspectives to understand the role of the structural arrangements in the persistence of the racial achievement gap, but this broad analysis of power does not center on Black women's efforts to combat these forces.

Black feminisms are a useful analytical and methodological tool for specifying Black women's history of disfranchisement and community contributions within a field that has championed cultural pathology arguments. Noting the inadequacy of race-sex comparisons to understand Black women, Deborah K. King (1988) emphasizes Black women's multiple jeopardy to explore the simultaneous, not additive, dimensions of race, gender, and class oppression in their lives. This perspective, like theoretical

approaches to Black feminisms, emerges from Black women's social marginalization from movements that advocated for only one of their identities, and other forms of institutional exploitation that due to their inherent racism and classism were different from the experiences of White women. Black feminism in this essay captures what Patricia Hill Collins (2000:6) describes as the tension between the suppression of African American women's ideas and the intellectual activism in the face of that suppression, and a recognition that this production occurs within a political context that seeks to thwart it. Other essential work in this review demonstrates the possible ways a Black feminist perspective can contribute to the development of a more critical understanding of parent involvement.

As an analytical strategy it requires the understanding of role of race, class, and gender in Black women's lives. This emphasis on class is helpful for understanding differences in back women's activism. In the context of community commitment, the middle-class and working-class perspectives offered rich, but in some ways divergent perspectives of Black women's community engagement. Lacy's (2007) text demonstrated Black middle-class women's investment in their communities through participation in social organizations that allowed their children to socialize with children of their same race and class. Her emphasis on the middle class allowed Lacy (2007) to highlight the organizations in which Black women participate in order to reproduce their status among their children. Though mainstream conceptions suggested that poor Black women don't care about their children and families, the movement was in fact a site where Black women created their own educational systems. Farmer (2017) explores how working-class Black women created Saturday schools and important cultural programming to promote race pride among Black children plagued by racial discrimination and handicapped by segregated schooling. Citing community organizations that emerged in segregated cities across the country, Farmer was able to offer a variety of examples of educational programs that Black women

created for cultural education like Amina Baraka's African Free School (2017:107); empowerment like the "us women" movement (98–99), and even job programs like the Oakland County Community School (90). Farmer's text is essential for associating Black women's harsh physical labor with the form of reproductive labor via educational advocacy in which they chose to participate in order to improve their families' conditions.

Farmer's radical history is complemented by Camille Wilson Cooper's exploration of Black women's racial consciousness, cultural traditions, and empowerment efforts relating to their children's schooling. She importantly characterizes Black feminist work as a combination of care with the dismantling of power structures (Cooper 2009). Cooper uses Black feminist concepts to combat a field of social science that promoted deficit perspectives of Black mothers. According to Cooper, these representations of Black women not only extend to racist research, but also associate whiteness with the perception of caring. Like Lareau (1989), Cooper (2009) acknowledges Black mothers' awareness of discrimination's impact on their children, and the stereotypes surrounding their involvement. Cooper's (2009) intervention is significant not only for contradicting the legacy of literature that emphasizes Black motherhood as deviant, but also for the ways she regards race, class, and gender in her discussion of it. Overall theories of parent involvement that choose race or class leave holes in the analysis that are not only symbolically violent, but also underestimate the influence of structural discrimination in schooling and the way Black mothers combat it. Cooper (2009) explores how, historically, Black women participated in their children's education by reading to and encouraging them, as well as through direct action in protests and through membership on school boards (Cooper 2009:381). Ultimately these characteristics and interview data prove that Black women have high expectations for their children's schooling and that they hold their administrators accountable for fulfilling those expectations. Chasity Bailey-Farkhoury's (2014) discussion of motherwork adds to

this historical overview, more specifically motherwork strategies that Black women employ.

Black feminist scholars in describing Black women's community contributions associate it with an ethic of care (Cooper 2009) or motherwork (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014; Collins 2000). Described by Bailey-Farkhoury (2014), motherwork strategies included efforts that Black women enacted in response to awareness of racial discrimination in educational settings. Motherwork associates this cultivation work with all of the other reproductive labor that Black women contributed in the form of bodies, or as laborers. Despite this history of domination that is interlaced with Black women's reproductive labor, educational advocacy is a site where Black women exercise their agency to help their children succeed academically. Bailey-Farkhoury (2014) specifies these motherwork strategies by categorizing them into presence, imaging, and code-switching. These strategies are unified by their incorporation of race-based and class-based socialization strategies. Black feminist educational perspectives offer multiple examples of care and action that Black women incorporate in their navigation of educational opportunity.

Oral History

I draw from intersectionality the definition that it is not just a form of analysis, but also a methodology and an action (Collins 2000; McCall 2005). Collins's (2000) description of Black feminist thought originated in the activism of Black women from the antebellum period to present. Her text reviews how Black women of different eras leveraged the media to resist discrimination. I rely on this concept for the way it allows me to center Black women in analysis, methodology, and description of action. Black feminist thought reflects the African American women's experiences, interests, and standpoints in themes relating to work, family, motherhood, and political activism (Collins 2000:269). Due to systems of segregation and suppression, Black feminist thought is considered subjugated, and thus the methods used to uncover it require more creativity. Additionally, Black women intellectuals

contend with the academic emphasis on objective generalizations (Collins 2000:279), despite the knowledge that values, experiences, and emotions are important. Dialogue is important for Black women's creation of an alternative knowledge production connecting their activism to an oral tradition. This connection between activism, oral methods, and research is further supported by Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis (1991a) who argues that oral history is a way for Black women to "speak out" against the forces that silence them. The historical use of oral tradition in African American culture is used specifically to break from intellectual standards that have excluded Black women. Black feminists have described the importance of oral history to the reformative power of Black feminist theory and methodology.

This essay employs oral history or narrative text because of the way it captures the nuance associated with the intersections of Black women's social identities as they emerge in dialogue. As a method, Etter-Lewis (1991b) argues that oral history is sensitive to culture and thus is a method that allows researchers to understand the tendencies in language that connect to Black women's double discrimination. For example, Black women's tendency to minimize their achievements reflects the various ways society convinced Black women their ideas are not important (1991b:48). In her interviews of Black women, Etter-Lewis also acknowledged that a significant theme that emerged unifying the women surrounded the importance of education (1991b:49). I follow the work of Black feminists who employed oral history (Bailey-Farkhour 2014; Cooper 2009; Etter-Lewis 1991a, b) to explore the salience of education to Black women.

This literature review makes a case for analyzing race, class, and gender collectively as opposed to choosing which of these three types of identities are more salient for understanding educational inequality and activism. While early educational literature used race-based (Fordham and Ogbu 1986) and class-based (Lareau 2011; Lareau and Horvat 1999) explanations for the educational achievement gap, more recent literature engaged the

intersections of structures of race and class that impact children's lives (Lewis-McCoy 2014). Structural intersectional research is further enhanced by analysis that features Black women who are traditionally represented in media and social science literature as dysfunctional. A Black feminist perspective of parental involvement instead engages the intersections of class, race, and gender in the educational advocacy of parents. Borrowing from Black feminisms, this essay explores Black women's motherwork (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014; Cooper 2009) using oral history and archival data—showing the benefits of the Black women–centered analysis and methodology to a field and a larger educational system that has misunderstood the intentions of Black mothers.

METHODS AND FINDINGS

This study combines a case study of a desegregated school with oral history interviews in order to explore Black women's contributions to their children's education even as media reports, policies, and even investigations negated these important political roles. I initially entered the field with an interest in a historical case study of integration by conducting qualitative interviews. =In trying to understand my early investigations I realized the benefits of oral historical method as a (Black) feminist method. Throughout the process, my questions were guided by insight I received from local Black activists. A community meeting on the history of the Underground Railroad in Ypsilanti led by a Black women genealogist, for example, revealed that a local high school had formerly been a segregated elementary school in a formerly Black neighborhood. This history was documented by a book about the Black history of the town written by two Black women community historians.[4] Local Black women's contributions to my project were early evidence of community involvement that made me question my whole theoretical understanding of Black womanhood.

In addition to Black natives' interest in Ann Arbor, it and other cities in southeast Michigan have been the site of important findings related to education and segregation. Lewis-

McCoy's (2014) study provided important context for understanding educational inequality in Ann Arbor. Though there was important research on racial inequality in education in the city, there was not much exploration of the efforts of mothers to combat that inequality. While Cooper (2009) offered the perspective of Detroit Black mothers, his work did not replace the experiences of Black mothers in a college town like Ann Arbor. In addition to the literature on education, I was interested in the regional history with segregation. Studies have explored the impacts of racial residential segregation (Desmond 2017) and desegregation (Perry 2017) in Milwaukee, Chicago (Massey and Denton 1993), and more. The historical context provided in literature about segregation in the Midwest and Ann Arbor made it a great site to explore how the most vulnerable reconcile with the impacts of segregation on the school system.

I watched and reviewed transcripts from public oral history interviews conducted of senior residents in Ann Arbor and the neighboring city of Ypsilanti, Michigan. The Ann Arbor District Library and the Ypsilanti District Library collaborated to produce the Ann Arbor Living Oral History Project. Covering topics of community, education, housing, entrepreneurship, and more, the oral history collection features personal accounts of racial discrimination and social change in the community. Of the thirty-two interviews in the collection, I coded fifteen for themes relating to segregation, racial identity, education, and childrearing. Drawing from Bailey-Farkhoury's (2014) explanation of presence, imaging, and code-switching as elements of motherwork, I reviewed excerpts on Black women's parenting that exemplified these concepts. The oral history interviews were employed to provide a variety of examples of Black women's motherwork activities during the local history of desegregation.

I reviewed a local archive of Ann Arbor newspapers for all evidence relating to the closure of what was formerly called the Jones School and its reopening as what is now known as Community High School. I recorded a chronology of moments and

decisions that the newspapers noted as significant changes within the system. This started from the school's opening in 1867, and its relocation in 1922, and featured the period from 1963 to 1985 when the city sought to desegregate the schools. The city received federal funding, and during this period conducted a series of five studies relating to the racial demographics in schools—one piloted by a local sociologist. In addition to the more explicit decisions that marked progress in this process, I also was intentional about analyzing any piece relating to Black femininity.

In addition to the way community members' Black feminist thought informed my study, I was also moved by a Black girl's resistance described in a newspaper article. I realized that my traditional ways of reading or understanding this period of integration among Black people would be inadequate. She writes:

> What have they done to the Jones School? I just like it the way it was because it looked better that way. The kitchen was the same, but the rest of the rooms aren't the same. They used to have lots of desks. Now they have pop machines, offices, and they changed around the chalkboards they used to have. Jones School was a school for a long time. I don't see any people here now. It was more girls than boys in each class. They used to show lots of movies and plays in the auditorium. They once showed Sleeping Beauty. Now they messed up the whole school to me. I liked it before they put all the offices and stuff like that in. That's what I think of Jones School." (Ann Arbor News, April 19, 1966)

This student's memory first captured a perspective that is often lost in studies of education—that of young people (Boocock and Scott 2005). More generally, though, her resistance to what many thought of as a beneficial form of integration contradicted the large-scale changes that were occurring in her city, and in her country. Her words reflected a less-discussed resistance to integration among Black people who felt that racial dispersal would undermine the power Black institutions formerly had in

segregated communities, and also contribute to the marginalization of the minorities in predominantly White spaces. Of most import, her text demonstrated the importance of narration to understand Black women's lives.

Narrative or oral methods are both associated with feminist and African American traditions and can be valuable for honoring the importance of emotion in research. I learned oral history method from Emily Lawsin, a lecturer at University of Michigan, and a community historian and expert on Filipino women in Detroit (Galura and Lawsin 2002). Oral history to her, and to other oral historians, can be a feminist practice, because of the ways it considers the silences women experience in life and in research. Oral history methods thus encourage listening techniques that capture a story, which connects better to the more traditional systems of knowledge production (and circulation of ideas) that are prevalent in the Black community.

I conducted a separate oral history interview with a mother, former city council member, and program director named Wendy Woods. I was prepared to ask her questions about her educational background and her experiences with race relations in the city. The narrative methods of oral history encouraged me to pay attention to the themes that seemed most important to her. My project was still focused on the general structural process of school desegregation, but her narrative revealed her personal commitment to education during her life course. She described her personal motivations in school, her activism in college, and her application of these lessons to her own efforts to improve her children's education in Ann Arbor public schools. Though I had initially entered the field inductively equipped with theories of segregation, after the interview I realized that I needed to familiarize myself with educational and even Black feminist literature to provide a basis for understanding the work she was describing. This essay reflects how my faith in the veracity of Black feminisms that emerged from the interview allowed me to challenge the canon, and to challenge as well the research methods that

in the past did not feature these examples of Black women´s educational literacy.

There were many takeaways from the interview, but I walked away feeling like my personal and academic understandings of Black womanhood were renewed. From Woods's early years in Ohio to her leadership years on the Ann Arbor City Council, she testified to the support from Black women in navigating discrimination and participating in community. She articulated her investment in this support through the time she spent in a variety of notable Black women's organizations—Links, Delta Sigma Theta, and Jack & Jill to name a few. Despite this impressive list of organizations, she expressed her own hesitation about the classed messages that are associated with these groups—messages that exacerbate distinctions among Black people. Still, she was able to rely on these organizations for help navigating the difficult racial and in some ways gendered terrain of White and Black Ann Arbor. Black women helped her in her early years prior to her relocation to the area as well, as women often fought with different strategies in their efforts to assert leadership in their early civil rights demonstrations.

In contrast to controlling images, her oral history revealed a theme prevalent among Black women who despite a largely individualistic national narrative prioritized community, represented in the activism for education. As I sat in the interview, I was literally experiencing the support that Woods described as she raised her own children. She was naturally interested in my topic due to its obvious connections to her life's work, but she was also interested in me and my navigation of the university. As we sat in the office surrounded by plants—to represent the degree she earned from the university after having left Wittenberg years prior—she asked questions that showed her interest in my successful completion of my program. It was then that the connection between town and gown for Black women was made more meaningful by her care.

I started to imagine the Black women integrating universities as the same ones who, due to gendered expectations for

postgraduate routes, enacted similar strategies when sending their children to newly integrating schools. In some ways Woods continued that same fight on the front lines of her undergraduate institution, in her office on campus—creating a safe space for Black people and their ideas on predominantly White college campuses. Woods's description of her undergraduate activism along with her advocacy in Ann Arbor schools for her children indicates Black women's investment in their own and their children's education, and it significantly shaped my Black feminist analytical strategies.

LOCAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In the few years preceding the Black Action Movement in Ann Arbor the declaration that segregation was unconstitutional contributed to an interesting local case within the national process of desegregation. From 1965 to 1985 the Ann Arbor News references five studies that were conducted to understand the "racial imbalance" in Ann Arbor public schools. This was accompanied by a three-year federal grant under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, which designated funding to school districts as an incentive to create desegregation plans.[5] The first school that was closed in Ann Arbor was the Jones School. A review of articles published in the Ann Arbor Daily News offers important historical context for understanding the history of discrimination in Ann Arbor schools and an intertwining timeline of Black women's efforts to push-back. In the articles about the school closure just before Wendy and Ronald C. Woods moved to Ann Arbor there are some great examples of Black women's citizenship and negotiation of race and gender identity in this racially tense period. Oral history interviews collected by the Ann Arbor District Library explore themes relating to discrimination in schools; examples of the cultivation and activation of cultural and Black cultural capital; and implementation of motherwork/othermother strategies. The interviews were primarily focused on Black history in Ann Arbor, and the twenty-five respondents were

able to refer to the important events that occurred during their lives. This review highlights interview excerpts from several of the twelve Black women interviewees who attest to their experiences of desegregating the neighborhoods and schools. Their narratives also offer very important examples of educational interventions. Combined with articles from the Ann Arbor Daily News, these sources offer a variety of examples of Black mothers' parent involvement, from the 1960s to present.

These oral histories help us understand the salience of low expectations for Black children in public schools to Black women's defensiveness. As students started integrating schools, Black mothers became aware of the interpersonal and structural obstacles to their children's education. Due to the overrepresentation of White teachers even in Black schools, Black women recount personal and second-hand experiences in schooling that asserted that teachers did not encourage their Black students. Rosemarion Blake, for example, described how, when she attended the integrated Ann Arbor High School, her White teachers often did not encourage her, due to their low expectations of Black students' postgraduate opportunities. College students who were involved in the Black Action Movement championed the issues of Black teachers and the issue of low expectations for Black children at all educational levels. Joetta Mial testified to the significance of these two related characteristics in the demands she and others raised as part of the Black Action Movement. These interpersonal examples suggest the limited opportunities for social mobility for African Americans, and the role of educational institutions in making Black students settle for an inferior education and Eurocentric curriculum. More overt examples of structural educational inequality—tracking, school push-out—are experiences Black women draw upon as they seek to assist their own children's navigation of educational opportunity.

Oral history interviews also exemplified concepts central to Bailey-Farkhoury's (2014) characterization of motherwork. Of the three different characteristics of motherwork, presence was

exemplified in some women's accounts of participation in the PTO. Barbara Meadows recounts her advocacy for her children. Examples include her work on the Human Relations Commission, as she transitioned from focusing on neighborhood segregation to the dearth of Black teachers in the schools. An additional part of motherwork that is salient within these interviews is the concept of "othermothering"—where Black women intervene in the educational trajectories of all Black children. Meadows's description of her work with the Human Relations Commission is an example of her commitment to the benefit other Black children, and even parents. In her job working for Ann Arbor public schools, she often assisted at an alternative school for young mothers. While her job title dictated that she focus on special ed, she often used her spare time to create programming for the children she was interested in helping. Her narrative describes the significance of presence to Meadows's and other women's interventions in the school system.

The interviews, in addition to demonstrating presence, also demonstrated the concept of imaging (Bailey-Farkhoury 2014). While imaging has a variety of characteristics, the centrality of the cultivation of Black cultural capital—through exposure to Black leaders and more—was significant to Black women's motherwork. This interplay of cultural capital and Black cultural capital was an important combination for the multiple spheres Black children/adults navigate/participate in. Mial's research on the Black Action Movement was accompanied by her own experiences cultivating Black cultural capital. Key moments included her meeting Martin Luther King Jr. She used a strategy described by Bailey-Farkhoury (2014) as exposing children to influences. Additionally, her celebration of the Afrocentric tradition of Kwanzaa was another form of Black cultural capital that was significant to a Black nationalist movement that emphasized connections to the continent of Africa. Similarly, Meadows participated in early "Negro History Week" started by Black historian Carter G. Woodson.6 These oral histories represent the

significance of Black history to the adult and child lives of these interview respondents.

In addition to Black cultural capital, interviews revealed the cultivation of traditional forms of capital through participation in extracurricular activities. Black children participated in activities that facilitated their acceptance in White and or middle-class social groups. For example, Lydia Belle Morton recounts participation in local fine arts programming. She joined the Glee Club and A Capella Club. In addition to cultural work, Morton's father's leadership of the local Boy Scout troops demonstrates the significance of other forms of cultivation. Her male peers were involved in the Boy Scouts, and she had personal experiences in the Girl Reserves before a local Girl Scouts chapter was started. Some interviewees also recounted athletic activities. Shirley Beckley recounts experiences as a member of the synchronized swimming team. Lareau (2011) asserts that middle-class parents put their children in athletic programs in order to encourage socializing among peers of their class, and the positive character growth that comes with participation in team sports. The oral history interviews indicate that even during the period of segregation, Black children actively participated in activities among White peers, which allowed them to foster class-based networks in addition to their connections in their segregated neighborhoods. More specifically, this participation in fine arts, scouting, and athletic extracurriculars not only challenges assumptions of gendered extracurricular involvement, but also offers evidence of the variety of activities in which Black parents enrolled their children. These forms of involvement demonstrate that parents combined Black cultural capital with the forms of cultural capital that are represented in the parent involvement literature.

The advocacy for race-based and class-based resources in their community was exemplified in the testimony of Joan Adams and Walter Blackwell before the City Council (Ann Arbor Daily News, February 16, 1967). This is an example of Black women's extension of motherwork within school administration. Adams

and Blackwell referenced the funding allotted to antipoverty programs under the Elementary and Secondary Act, which was awarded to Ann Arbor so the town could address its issues of segregation. They highlighted how the enrichment funds were from the "antipoverty" initiatives of the federal government, and thus could address the needs apparent in their segregated community. According to the report, the first year had a year's worth of funding spread over a few months of the fiscal year, and during the second year, funds were cut by 15 percent and administrators were forced to make them stretch. Adams and Blackwell informed the school board that interest had declined for the federally funded programs and proposed better programming, equipment, and space. The *Ann Arbor Daily News* article says, "The spokesmen called for increased parent involvement in the programs, creation of teenage activities club, improvements in the summer recreation program and the incorporation of Negro history into American history courses." This advocacy has an interesting connection to Black Panther and civil rights era educational programming, which was facilitated through community organizations, though here the advocates were leaning on federal and local support for their work.

The importance of extracurricular activities was further emphasized by NAACP president Emma Wheeler (*Ann Arbor Daily News*, June 10, 1965). In a letter signed by 300 parents, she stressed the imperative of having afterschool activities for Black children. She was most concerned with the lack of options following the closure of the local Jones School. Her statements highlighted the persistence of racialized educational inequality due to the lack of resources in the Black community, and the efforts by White parents to exclude Black children. Wheeler cites Angell Elementary school as one site where White parents organized against enrollment of Black children in their schools via through the school busing system. The letter highlighted the need for access to a playground and offered a vision for other educational resources. More specifically, Wheeler advocated for a community library

that people could access within the predominantly Black neighborhood. Wheeler was not only concerned with children as she also advocated for the adoption of adult educational programs. Her letter was an example of the care and activism that Black women combine in their motherwork. It also showed the significance of extracurricular activities to Black students' educational attainment and development.

Ultimately these oral histories offer local examples of Black women's parent involvement during the contentious period of desegregation. The omission of a thorough class analysis assumes that the women covered in the interview had the same experiences at the intersections of their race and gender identities. There are similarities between the themes that emerged in the Ann Arbor District Library collection of oral histories. The interview conducted with Wendy Woods excerpted below offers similar themes of race-based and class-based socialization strategies and elements of motherwork. The interview diverges from this data because of Woods's eventual decision to send her children to private school. While ultimately there are a lot of similarities between the testimony of Woods and the other oral histories, the next section will emphasize the socialization experiences that contributed to Woods's more unusual navigation of the public school system, and eventually her transfer of her children to private school.

DISCUSSION

The interview with Wendy Woods revealed the significance of class in the educational opportunities she received through tracking and even in her ability to attend college. During her upbringing, her class privilege was in so many ways mitigated by her racial and later, her gender identity. As a parent, she initially based her expectations for her children's education on her experience of tracking. Despite her efforts, her continued issues with discrimination in the school encouraged her to rely on class-based and race-based resources to send her children to private

school. This discussion draws upon theories of parental involvement, Black feminisms, and Black cultural capital to demonstrate the interplay between race, class, and gender in Woods's efforts to navigate her own, and later her children's education in segregated schools. Across the excerpts one sees her defensiveness in her awareness of discrimination and her motivation to use her resources to provide her children with the education she believed they deserved.

Educational Opportunity

Like the children in the Ann Arbor district, Woods at a young age learned about race through her experience in the educational setting. Her early experience in a tracking program also gave her a framework to understand the way the segregated school system contributed to stratification in education systems that directly shaped life chances. In her Cleveland district, for example, Woods experienced a tracking system that allowed her to participate in extracurricular activities that improved her cultural capital through participation in fine arts:

> Cleveland was an interesting school system at the time. It was like a lot of other big city schools, it was segregated, but it also, I think, had made a major effort to put in place many programs which helped students to be prepared to go to college. it had something called an enrichment class or a program called Major Work, which was good in that it gave some enriched materials to children, but then it also had alongside that was what I call a tracking system in that a child might be placed into what was not as challenging a track, and pretty much stayed in that track through junior high and high school years. I was fortunate enough to be in the enrichment class, I guess, or section, so to speak. From about the fourth grade on, we had a foreign language and we had instrumental music. And so, was learning French at a very young age, which was good. Again, I do know that there were other children probably just as smart as all the rest of us, but who might

> be on more of a track that was turning them more toward the trades or stenography and stuff like that, which are certainly honorable, but it was just the way things were then.

This quotation details the cultural capital that she earned through her participation in enrichment programs—she got language and music courses. It also offers insight into the experiences that shaped an early awareness of the educational trajectories that Black children could be placed in that contribute to participation in lower-prestige work.

Black Cultural Capital

A significant aspect of nonfinancial class-based resources are the contacts that people are able to leverage for their own gain. Lareau (2011) offers the social capital framework to understand the contacts that parents rely on in order to assert authority in the system. The race-based Black cultural capital framework offers the significance of Black friends for not only offering race-based, but also class-based resources for parents and their families. Woods described her graduate school friends:

> Many of our friends were also in graduate school. We lived up on North campus in what they called student housing, but it's actually student and faculty and staff housing. That was a really great experience because many of us who are African Americans and some other persons of color bonded together. Here, we have little children, but we're also growing ourselves, and getting to know each other, and those kinds of things. Those were really some great years. In fact, when our sons were little, I think one of the first rallies we took them to was when Hughey Newton came to campus to Hill Auditorium and spoke. Even things like that. We always grew up in the movement with them.

This quotation emphasizes the significance of a like-minded group to their own maintenance of these cultural community

collections. Also important was seeing how children were raised in this community. Attending the antiracist march is a form of cultivation that the parents were able to employ. The strategic assimilation framework here is very helpful for understanding how Wendy Woods maintained connections to Black students even as she pursued an advanced degree.

Another example of strategic assimilation demonstrates other institutions that were significant for inculcating Black culture.

> Yeah. In fact, as we were raising our children and they were younger, we lived on the other side of town, over by Huron High School, and the elementary school they were going to was Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School…It's a predominantly White school. So there's probably only three or four African American children in each class, if that many. Probably not that many.
>
> One of the things Ronald and I felt was really important was to make sure that we somehow stayed tied to the black community. We joined Second Baptist, so that our children would have that religious experience. He's a Baptist anyway, and I just later converted to being a Baptist.

Overall the commitment to incorporate racial socialization within educational attainment demonstrates a larger pattern among the privileged to remain aware of all forms of culture. Khan (2011) explores how White children at prep school often listen to hip hop. Students attain cultural capital from knowledge of elite taste, but Khan also argues that their cultural capital emerges from knowing about other, less prestigious cultures. While I am not offering a cultural hierarchy, I am paralleling the ways people of influence cultivate elite tastes, while also emphasizing significance of incorporating consumption from more marginalized populations.

Examples of Class in Black Women's Educational Advocacy

Woods's initial activism was race-based, but her experiences in early activism demonstrated the significance of the intersections of class. While the emphasis of parent involvement literature explores how parents fulfill their children's needs, a more Black feminist approach considers the work that Black women do for other families as well. In the life of Wendy Woods, her educational advocacy began in her high school and college protests. These experiences demonstrated the intersection of these two identities, which were cultivated through this activism—and later emphasized in her children. In high school she writes how the visit of Dr. King raised some really important questions of class divisions in the neighborhood—emphasizing the limits of race-based activism with the persistence of class inequality among Black people. She says:

> My activism probably started a little bit earlier in high school, mainly because of what was going on with the civil rights movement that we would see on television and things like that. Also, Martin Luther King would come to Cleveland from time to time and there were a couple of marches for jobs and things like that. He came to our high school and spoke. I remember hearing him speak in the auditorium and everything at the time. It was interesting because by and large, most people there were very supportive of Dr. King and everything, but there were some people who were not real happy with him, and that was because of his stance against the Vietnam War. We actually had a number of young men from our high school, who after [graduation enlisted].

Similarly, as a college student, race was of growing importance in terms of the activism. She recounts how students advocated for better classes, more Black professors, and even created an organization called the Concerned Black Students to facilitate discussion with the administration. Additionally, they

worked with other race-based activists on other college campuses as a form of solidarity. She describes her experience rallying for change, and eventually leaving the college:

> So at Wittenberg, not only were things happening nationally, you know we were all talking about this. But we also noticed that we didn't have, I think there were only about maybe two faculty members that were black on Wittenberg faculty. Like I said by then there were about forty-fifty black students. Wittenberg was located about fifteen or twenty miles from Wilberforce University and Central State University. And I think then, for a couple of years that those schools and Wittenberg had sort of had some faculty exchanges which brought some African American faculty to the campus and they taught some courses. I don't think they taught courses that in fact necessarily focus on African American experience but at least there was putting some persons of color in front of the student body which was, which was good. And so as we began thinking about it and coming together there were a couple of instances on campus that sort of made us feel like we ought to get an organization together and sort of begin to see how to change the community. And so, and I want to say it was 1968. Maybe we did a lot of meeting and things like that. But eventually we presented a list of demands to our university, I think with about ten or fifteen, you know, demanding things like an increase in African American faculty; more students; more funding for Upward Bound courses, really important things. And when we received a response from the university that was basically no, we decided to actually, that we would leave campus.

As she got older, this same vigor was translated in her activism in Ann Arbor among graduate students, and even in the classroom. Black feminisms give us an important framework

because these ideas acknowledge how Black women are aware of the discrimination in schools and seek to combat it with their efforts. Woods's comments suggest an awareness that is evident in the scholarship on Black women's parent involvement regardless of race.

While generally there are a lot of similarities in Black women's awareness of educational inequality, their class still plays an important role in the options they are able to offer their own children—independent of the school system. This quotation, where Woods acknowledges that her educational experiences were significant in the demands she made of the schools, offers insight into the role of class privilege in influencing parents' advocacy.

> When they were in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, Ronald had grown up in Cincinnati, Ohio, and had attended public schools the whole way, but the high school he went to was Walnut Hills High School. It's a public school, but it's almost like a private school because you have to take a test to get into it. It's a lot of AP courses and all like that. He had high expectations and high experiences for education. Then remember I told you what I had, my experience was in Cleveland with the high expectations and everything.
>
> So when our children went to school, that's what we were expecting, and that's what we wanted. We were always there saying, "Why not? Why can't they?" When it was time for them to go to junior high school, we were talking. I was like, "Man, this is really going to be something because now each one of them is going to have about five teachers." We're going to have to be doing it.

Outside of the influencing their demands for their children's educations, class helped facilitate their children's transition to private schools. This decision to attend private school is a form of strategic assimilation that Black women enact to avoid further discrimination in the public school setting. Additionally, this quotation

demonstrates how the decision was tied to Woods's Black cultural capital—the same space where she cultivated activist networks were sites where people were starting their own schools, and even able to offer her advice for enrolling her children in private school.

> A couple of our friends in other places had actually started some independent Afrocentric schools. In fact, one of our friends, Carmen N'Namdi, Carmen and George N'Namdi had started a school in Detroit. A couple of different people had started schools in Detroit. We were thinking, "Should we try and do that or something?" Then another people that we didn't know quite as well, who were a little bit older than us, had older children, had put their children in Greenhills School. They said, "Wendy, you really ought to think about that." But it was expensive. They're like, "But they have good financial aid, so why don't you just see?" That's what we did and Greenhills did give us really good financial aid for Raleigh and Renin to go there. So we went that way.

This excerpt is important because it demonstrates the Black cultural capital that Woods drew upon in order to address the discrimination in the schools. Despite her hesitance over the cost, Woods's ability to rely on her educated friends' knowledge of the private school system reflects a level of social capital that reflected class privilege.

CONCLUSION

Black feminisms add to studies of parent involvement acknowledgment of Black women's history of involvement and a more intersectional analysis of the identities that contribute to this participation. As a form of analysis, it allows scholars to use the same data that undermines Black women's commitment to their family's education to provide different conclusions. It is also a methodological tool and a platform for action. Earlier historical

analysis demonstrates examples of Black women's advocacy in a city council to receive federal funds, offering also insight into the ways their requests were repressed by political leaders. In this essay, oral history methods offered important insight into the class-based influences that shape educational attainment, as well as the way Black mothers incorporate racial and class-socialization in the rearing of their children. Overall the incorporation of Black feminist analysis and oral history methodology encourages us as citizens and as scholars to challenge bias by actively listening to Black women's words.

In 2017, over half a century following the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Act, Michigan implemented the Every Student Succeeds Act—which drew from the original ESEA in order to encourage parental involvement as a part of a strategic plan to increase the ranking of Michigan public schools. This emphasis on parental involvement contrasts the data that finds no class differences in the high involvement among Black and Latino parents in homework help and other educational activities (Massey et al. 2003). There has been little change in the pressure on parents to address structural conditions that shape educational inequality, and even less progress in redressing the "devaluation of Black motherhood" (Roberts 1997). This work connects an enduring legacy of tension between state interventions in poverty and Black women's local efforts to empower their communities to the educational system. Further research needs to be conducted to unveil Black women's experiences navigating state-imposed expectations on parenting, while confronting the realities of raising Black children in a racist society.

NOTES

1. This essay cites the revised second edition of *Black Feminist Thought*, which was originally published in 1990. Collins's early characterizations of motherwork are cited in more recent applications of the concept by Cooper (2009), Bailey-Farkhoury (2014), and Bailey-Farkhoury and Mitchell (2018).

2. *Motherwork* refers to the types of work and meaning attached to Black women's work in both Black and White neighborhoods. It refers to their constellation of mothering activities (Collins 2000:224), which motivated participation in institutional transformation and other activism. It engages all minority women as blood-mothers and othermothers who are involved in children's lives through professional involvement, volunteer work, and cultivation practices. The specific aspect of the othermother role that Collins (2000:225) focused on was the educational advocacy of anonymous slave mothers, a mother from Detroit (227), and other Black Feminist activists who centered educational achievement as a part of Black community development.

3. Collins (2000:21) writes, "*Intersectionality* refers to particular sets of intersecting oppressions, for example intersections of race and gender, or of sexuality and nation. Intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice." This essay draws from sources that highlight the structural inequality in school systems that shape educational inequality for minorities of multiple marginalized identities. Crenshaw (1991:1245), in her description of the structural intersectionality plaguing victims of intimate partner violence, says, "[T]hey must also confront the multilayered and routinized forms of domination that often converge in these women's lives…Many women of color for example are burdened by poverty, childcare responsibilities, and the lack of job skills."

4. *Another Ann Arbor* draws on local archival data from the Bentley Historical Library and personal collections of Black Ann Arbor residents. It provides a pictorial history of covering themes of social life and business enterprise, among other important milestones in Black Ann Arbor history.

5. According to Paul (2016) funds were allocated for "professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs and the promotion of parental involvement."

6. Woodson was an important figure who wrote *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933) about the way Black racial identity is targeted in public schools. His advocacy of a Black cultural week (championed in schools) is important inspiration for the intersection of Black cultural capital and mainstream educational education that has been exemplified by the Black educational advocates historically, and reflects characteristics of Black women's educational advocacy described in this essay.

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Suicide in Color: Portrayals of African American Suicide in *Ebony* Magazine from 1960 to 2008

Kamesha Spates
with Michael Kreiter and Jacqueline Coffey

ABSTRACT

Using *Ebony* magazine, a top circulating magazine for Black readers, we examined the types of content published on the topic of suicide over the last nearly fifty years (1960 to 2008). Using content analysis, we approached this study with the following questions in mind: (1) How frequently has suicide-related content been published in *Ebony* magazine? (2) What is the nature of the suicide-related content? (3) How has the content changed over time? Our findings demonstrate that the frequency of articles published on the topic of suicide have significantly declined since the 1970s and 1980s despite rising trends in suicidal behavior among Black people; we also found that the vast majority of the suicide-related content published was dedicated to paying homage to celebrity or high-profile suicides. Magazine portrayal of suicide in *Ebony* provides important cultural knowledge about Black suicide significant to larger conversations about suicide.

Keywords: African Americans, suicide, portrayal, magazines

> Suicide is "blacker" than we care to admit, and we can only save our children by talking about it and taking action. —*Ebony* Magazine

The most recent suicide completion rates suggest that White males committed approximately 70 percent of all suicides (Drapeau and McIntosh 2016). In 2016, White individuals committed 30,658 suicides, which equates to almost 84 deaths per day, compared to Black individuals who committed 2,504 suicides, a

loss of just under seven African Americans per day. Until recently, the scientific community has focused efforts on studying high risk populations. Consequently, the topic of suicide remains understudied among Black populations (Jedlicka, Shin and Lee 1977; Rockett, Samora and Coben 2006; Satcher 1999; Spates 2014).

The shortage of sociocultural knowledge about suicide outcomes of Blacks, coupled with widespread perceptions that Blacks rarely participate in self harming behaviors, poses a unique set of challenges to researchers (Davidson, Potter and Ross 1999; Griffith and Bell 1989; Jedlicka et al. 1977; Kirk 2009; Lester 1998; Poussaint and Alexander 2001; Taylor-Gibbs 1997; Walker, Lester and Joe 2006). In an ethnographic study conducted among Black clergymen and their congregant members, Kevin Early and Robert Akers uncovered the widespread belief that suicide is seen as a "white thing" (Early and Akers 1993). Almost a decade later, suicidologist Alton Kirk, the author of *Black Suicide: The Tragic Reality of America's Deadliest Secret*, candidly shared his beliefs on Black suicide prior to studying the topic as he states: "I felt then, as did most Black people in the community, that suicide was a 'white thing'; Black people didn't commit suicide" (2009:1). My research (Spates 2014) found that a belief seems to be shared among Black women. Through in-depth interviews, I find that Black women's views of suicide is intimately connected to their perceptions of self-harm as a White thing.

Recent shifts in suicide trends are forcing researchers to reexamine previous notions about Black suicide and dismantle myths that suicide is a "White thing" (Bridge et al. 2015; Joe et al. 2009). Suicide rates among Black children ages five to eleven have surpassed those of White children for the first time in history (Bridge et al. 2015). Black teen girls also appear to be especially at risk (Joe et al. 2009). Additionally, suicide among Black individuals increased by 83 percent from 1981 to 1994 (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention 2015; Grant 2013). The trend continues as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2013) revealed that there was a 25 percent increase in suicide attempts

among Black Americans between 2001 to 2013. Moreover, there has been a dramatic increase in suicide among younger Black people ages fifteen to twenty-four in recent decades, and it is now the third leading cause of death for African Americans in this age group (Drapeau and McIntosh 2016). Findings from a recent study concluded that by the age of seventeen, 4 percent of Black teen males and 7 percent of Black teen females would have attempted suicide (Joe et al. 2009). Despite these increases, suicidal behavior is still largely seen as a "White thing" (Barnes and Bell 2003; Joe and Kaplan 2001; Rockett et al. 2006; Spates 2014).

Prominent studies that investigate portrayals of suicide in the media in the United States often make no mention of race, provide little social context about the victim, or focus mostly on aspects of suicide contagion (Gould 2001; Phillips, Lesyna, and Paight 1992; Stack 2005). For example, Kessler and colleagues (1989) examined TV networks reporting of suicide on ABC, CBS, and NBC while Steven Stack (1988) and Ira M. Wasserman (1984) used the *New York Times* as their primary sources of data. Examining how the media shapes perceptions of suicide is important, but we argue that the media's "color-blind" approach to reporting suicide is, in part, responsible for lingering perceptions that suicide is a "White thing." This study uniquely contributes to race and suicide literatures as well as to media studies by taking a closer look at how nondominant media outlets portray Black suicide.

Ebony magazine seems to be dedicating increasingly more print and digital space to covering discussions of suicide and mental illness. We undertook this research to examine the nature of suicide-related content published in *Ebony* magazine. Understanding portrayals of suicide in Black-centered media will help generate knowledge about suicide-related discussions in culturally specific environments. Research on cultural knowledge about Black suicide is important because the issue is often erased in larger conversations about suicide in general. Aggregate statistics are more representative of White suicide since White individuals make up the bulk of suicide victims.

In this essay, we make use of the racial cultural framework to assess a prominent Black media outlet's portrayal of Black suicide in the United States, namely the nature of suicide-related content in *Ebony* magazine directed toward Black American readers from 1960 to 2008. Reviewing *Ebony* magazine articles over a nearly fifty-year time period allows the authors to examine the portrayal of suicide and how it has changed over time within a prominent media source. Specifically, three questions are addressed in the current study: (1) How frequently does suicide-related content appear in *Ebony* magazine during the time span of 1960 to 2008? (2) What is the nature of the content? (3) How does the content vary over time? Knowledge that we gained from this project provides insight into the types of suicide-related content aimed at audiences and the implications of these findings.

SUICIDE IN BLACK COMMUNITIES

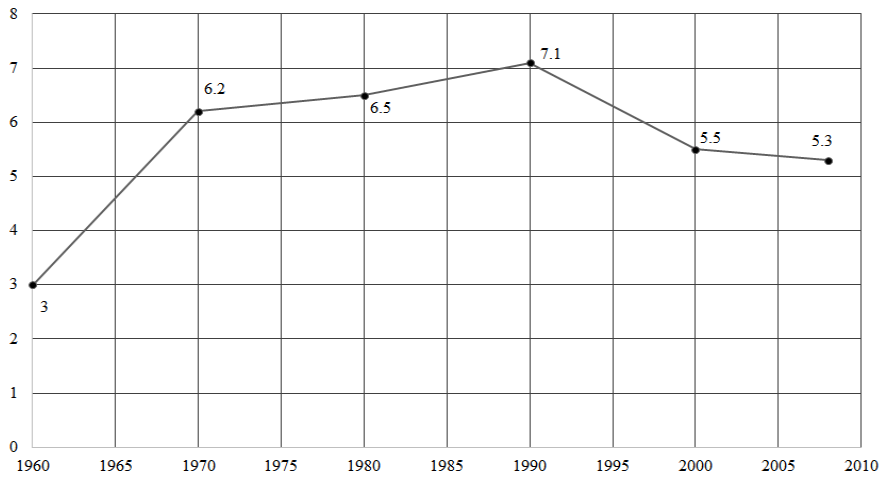
Between 2001 and 2009, over a quarter of a million Americans lost their lives to suicide. This equates to a loss of nearly one person every fiifteen minutes. As such, suicide in the United States is the tenth leading cause of death, resulting in twice as many deaths each year as homicide (U.S. HHS 2012). When addressing these disheartening statistics in 1999, Surgeon General David Satcher (1999) stressed the importance of developing a national strategy for suicide prevention. Later, in 2012, Surgeon General Regina Benjamin prioritized suicide prevention as an urgent issue (U.S. HHS 2012).

Because of these statistics, suicide is now deemed a national health problem. However, a closer look at suicide statistics by race reveals stark differences. In general, men of all races are more likely to kill themselves than women (Canetto and Sakinofsky 1998; Schrijvers, Bollen and Sabbe 2012), yet women are more likely to attempt suicide. In 2013, there were nearly half a million (494,169) non-fatal suicide attempts in the United States (CDC 2013). Data indicates that there are at least twenty-five suicide attempts for every completed suicide (Drapeau and McIntosh 2016). Many more people are hospitalized, treated in ambulatory

settings, or not treated at all because of nonfatal suicide attempts (Crosby and Molock 2006; Office of Statistics and Programming and Prevention 2015). Black women have historically maintained the lowest suicide completion rates of all racial and gender groups, and they hold the lowest attempt rates of all other women (Bender 2000; Rockett et al. 2006). In 2013, there were 24,266 suicide attempts by Black women compared to 182,447 attempts by White women.

Given the fact that the authors of this study bring attention to suicide-related content published in *Ebony* magazine from 1960-2008, it is important to provide details on Black suicide during these time periods. Chart 1 shows the rates of suicide among African Americans by year. In 1960, there were 3.0 deaths from suicide per 100,000 African Americans. By 1970, this rate had more than doubled, to 6.2 per 100,000. As discussed later in the results, there was also a large increase in the number of *Ebony* articles about suicide from the 1960s to the 1970s. However, the trends in the later decades vary.

Chart 1. Suicide death rates among African Americans from 1960 to 2008 per 100,000.



Source: Denter for Disease Control. April 2012. "1060-2008, United States Suicide Injury Deaths and Rates per 100,000." in WISQARS Website, edited by Fatal Injury Reports and Leading Cause of Deaths Reports: www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html

Researchers have identified several sociocultural factors that increase the risk for suicidal behavior among Black populations. It is also important to note that these risk factors vary across subgroups. For example, according to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (2013), victims of childhood sexual abuse, particularly Black teen girls between the ages of thirteen and seventeen, are more susceptible to self-harm. Additionally, it appears that middle-aged Black males between twenty to thirty-four years of age are more inclined toward self-harm. In fact, the CDC (2015) estimated that approximately 44 percent of all suicides that occurred among Black males in 2014 were among Black males between the ages of twenty and thirty-four. In general, Black male suicide victims tend to be younger than their White counterparts at the time of their death (Lemon 2008; Rowell 2010). As for Black youth, poverty combined with perceived racism and discrimination is an important risk factor in suicide. Also, Black individuals that lack adequate support systems, those that are divorced or widowed, and those that reside in the South or Northeast regions of the United States appear to have increased risk factors (Suicide Prevention Resource Center 2013).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

Perceptions within scientific communities of Black people's immunity to suicide within scientific communities have contributed to the deafening silence around the issue of Black suicide. However, conversations about Black suicide are becoming commonplace among Black Americans (Spates forthcoming). This is due, in part, to widespread coverage of Black celebrity deaths by Black media outlets. For example, on February 1, 2012, Don Cornelius, age 75, committed suicide. Cornelius, a prominent TV show host and producer most noted for his role as the founder and host of *Soul Train*, left behind friends, family, and many grieving fans stunned at the fact that he took his own life. Within hours of his death, dozens of blogs and articles surfaced urging African Americans to have a much-needed discussion about suicide in the Black community.[1]

In the months that followed Cornelius's death, news announced several other Black celebrity suicides, including Lee Thompson Young, Junior Seau, and Karyn Washington. These deaths ignited conversations in the Black community about suicide among Black people across the web. Accordingly, African Americans are speaking up about the need to discuss the "forbidden" topic of mental health and suicide (Ikpi 2012). Black media outlets such as TheRoot.com, NewsOne.com, BlackEnterprise.com, and Ebony.com have produced countless articles aimed at increasing discourse among Black Americans on the topic of suicide. In response to the suicide of Lee Thompson Young, Ebony.com published an article titled "Black Suicide: When Prayer Is Not Enough." The author, Donald E. Grant (2013), opened the article with the claim that:

> Mental health concerns are among the biggest and most dangerously tabooed topics in Black America....It's clear that a very naked discussion on mental health is long overdue. Who will lead this charge in a community where these issues remain cloaked in invisibility?

Suicide rate increases among segments of the Black population coupled with the suicide deaths of high profile Black Americans have propelled unprecedented discourse within the Black community. Therefore, focusing on Black media's response to the issue is more important now than ever.

While we can clearly see the connection between Black media coverage and public discourse, scholars should take a closer look at the nature of the content published on the topic of suicide aimed at Black audiences. Magazines remain an important source for those seeking culturally relevant information to be distributed to large numbers of people. According to a recent survey, over two-thirds of Americans still read magazines (Nicholas and Mateus 2016). In this study, we analyzed *Ebony*, the nation's oldest and highest-circulating of any Black-focused magazine (Pratt and Pratt 1996), to examine coverage of suicide. This article

asserts that understanding discussions of suicide in Black media will help generate knowledge about the particularities of suicide and perceptions of suicide among the Black population versus the aggregate information circulated in "mainstream" media that often makes no mention of culture or race, thus reinforcing suicide as a "White thing."

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO STUDYING SUICIDE

Emile Durkheim's theories continue to serve as a basis for contemporary suicide studies (Durkheim 1897). Durkheim declared that social integration and social regulation were two variables that could be used to predict suicidal behavior. He argued that the degree to which an individual is regulated by a group or society impacts suicide rates. In terms of social integration, Durkheim noted that suicide is most likely to occur when a society or group is characterized with either high or low levels of integration. Thus, Durkheim's basic premise is that inadequate or excessive amounts of social regulation or integration are powerful predictors of suicide.

Although Durkheim (1897) failed to directly apply the tenets of his theory to explain suicide rate variance by race, several studies expand his work. For example, Charles Prudhomme (1938) highlighted the importance of Black people's reliance on their social ties and networks as an explanation for their lower rates of suicide. He concluded that Black individuals appear to utilize interpersonal ties more often than White individuals, thereby placing more of an emphasis on social integration, which contributes to their lower rates of suicide (Prudhomme 1938). Several decades later, Robert Fernquist (2004) confirmed that Black women's use of their social ties appears to mitigate suicide risk, particularly among single mothers. Fernquist (2004) believed that an explanation of this phenomenon rested in the fact that single motherhood often requires a greater reliance on others, thus minimizing chances of social isolation.

Following Durkheim's (1897) lead, others have confirmed that the weaker a person's religious identity or degree of religious participation, the higher the risk for suicide (Van Poppel and Day 1996). This premise seems to be especially applicable to Black individuals, who self-identify as the most religious group in the United States (Lugo et al. 2008). Widespread evidence suggests that religious participation mitigates risk for suicide, particularly among Black people (Early 1992; Gibbs 1997; Stack 1998). Moreover, Jan Neeleman, Simon Wessely, and Glyn Lewis (1998) found that orthodox religious beliefs and higher devotion contribute to African Americans' low levels of suicide acceptability and thus suicidal behavior. This finding is in line with other research showing that Christians who sporadically participate in religion are more likely to kill themselves than regular participants (Goldsmith et al. 2002).

A more recent body of work stemming from Durkheim's suicide theory focuses on instances of excessive integration and regulation in contemporary society. In one study, researchers argue that excessive bouts of integration and regulation are not always as harmful as Durkheim previously thought. Instead, they claim that excessiveness may buffer suicide risk, particularly in cases where integration or regulation serve as additives to an already protective group, such as belonging to high-quality network (Abrutyn and Mueller 2016). Nicholas Recker and Matthew Moore (2016) build on Durkheim's theoretical approach by interjecting notions of Robert Putnan's theory of social capital which can be used to indirectly measure social integration. Using data from the Center for Disease Control, they found that counties with higher amounts of social capital had lower suicides rates (Recker and Moore 2016).

A vast body of contributions to the literature exists to highlight the uniquely complex conditions that Black women navigate in the United States (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2007; Collins 2000, 2009; Farrington 2003; Gray-White 1999; Jones and Shorter-Gooden 2003; Krieger and Bassett 1993; Lerner 1973; St.Jean

and Feagin 1998; Staples 1973). Consequently, social scientists call into question the paradoxical relationship between Black women's social conditions and their suicidal behaviors. Literature on the Black-White paradox attempts to uncover why African Americans' suicide rates are significantly lower than all other groups, despite their physical, mental, and social circumstances (Rockett et al. 2006). While the Black-White suicide paradox is important to address, much of this work focuses attention on interrogating the accuracy of the statistics and unpacking the extent Black suicide rates are either misclassified or underreported (Rockett, Kapusta and Coben 2014; Rockett et al. 2010).

Until recently, scholars that wrote about suicide among African Americans offered very little insight into Black people's patterns of suicide. Davor Jedlicka, Yongsock Shinn, and Everett S. Lee (1977) argued that there are no presently existing theories to explain racial differences in suicide rates, and until recently, this finding remained true. In 2014, Y. Joel Wong, Cara S. Maffini, and Minkyeong Shin introduced the racial cultural framework to make sense of suicide-related outcomes among communities of color. The racial cultural framework added the following three elements to the study of suicide among people of color. First, it focuses on illuminating structural inequities (such as racism and discrimination). Second, it disaggregates data, particularly among of underrepresented groups, to better assess culturally relevant factors. Third, it recommends that prevention and intervention efforts should stem from the "ground up," created in collaborations with the communities (Wong, Maffini and Shin 2014).

We find the racial cultural framework most helpful in examining portrayals of suicide in Black media outlets. *Ebony* magazine was founded to highlight the challenges and triumphs of Black Americans. In an article published in *Ebony* magazine titled, "The *Ebony* Story," the publishers speak to why *Ebony* magazine was created:

> We wanted to give Blacks a new sense of somebodiness, a new sense of self-respect. We wanted to tell

> them who they were and what they could do. We believed then—and we believe now—that Blacks needed positive images to fulfill their potentialities. (1995:80).

The article later goes on to discuss *Ebony*'s deliberate attempt to counter negative stereotypes of Blacks in the United States. The editors state:

> In keeping with this Mission, *Ebony* began chipping away at old stereotypes and replacing them with positive Black images by highlighting the achievements of Black men and women that had heretofore been ignored by general press. So systematic had been the exclusion of Blacks from White-controlled media that many people, including—sadly enough—a fair number of Blacks had serious doubts about Blacks' ability to perform as well as their White counterparts. (1995:82).

We extend the use of the racial cultural framework into Black media spaces to understand the nature of these portrayals. We will identify culturally relevant factors circulated for almost half of a century to others looking to examine suicide-related topics among culturally diverse media outlets. Before we discuss the methods and findings that support this framework, we offer a brief overview of media and suicide.

MEDIA ANALYSIS OF SUICIDE

According to the San Diego Supercomputer Center, U.S. media consumption is at an all-time high (U.S. HHS 2012). Experts define media as a form of mass communication that includes, but is not limited to, broadcasting, publishing, and the internet. Consequently, content (print or digital) circulated through media channels is more likely to be seen by large numbers of people now than ever before. The embedded nature of media in everyday life makes its influence similarly difficult to escape. Magazines are products of media and represent the cul-

ture in which they are produced. Previous research (Clarke 2013; Rintala and Birrell 1984; Schlenker, Caron and Halteman 1998; Seale 2003) has identified magazines as an important source for gaining a better understanding of society and individual experience. Juanne Clarke (2013:418) noted that "mass, high-circulating, magazines are significant as reflectors and reinforcers of dominant cultural ideas."

Media Portrayal of Mental Health and Suicide

Previous research (Clarke 2013; Seale 2003) notes that magazines are a useful source of data for studying mental health-related topics. Clarke (2013) uses content analysis to examine whether portrayals of children's mental health issues have changed between 1970-1990 and 1991-2010 periods in *Chatelaine* magazine. Through Clarke's analysis, she finds that children's mental health issues are more likely in these periods to be depicted in a pathological nature than during earlier time periods. These portrayals include increased coverage on topics of psychiatric risks, psychiatric diagnoses, and pharmaceutical interventions. In his overview of the importance of media studies in the sociology of health and illness, Clive Seale (2003) discusses the influence that mass media has on individuals when they are making decisions about their own health care as well as their perceptions of health policies. Seale conducts a meta-analysis of how mental health issues are depicted in the media. He concludes that media representations help to co-create meanings of illness and recovery (Seale 2003). In addition, Seale encourages researchers to pay attention to what is being published as well as responses from readers.

Other scholars have also turned to media sources to better understand suicidal behavior. For instance, Steven Stack, Jim Gundlach, and Jimmie Reeves (1994) examined the link between magazine subscription and youth suicide rates. Specifically, they were interested in how heavy metal subculture influences youth suicide, using subscriptions to the magazine *Metal Edge* as a proxy for attitudes within the community. Additional data was obtained from the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics for

suicide data and the U.S. Census Bureau for population data. The analysis was limited to the fifty states in 1988 due to data availability. Results indicated that stronger ties to heavy metal subculture accounted for higher rates of youth suicide (Stack et al. 1994). Such studies affirm that examining magazine content, messages, and subscribers can provide insight into viable cultural beliefs about suicide.

Analysis of magazine content can reveal cultural-specific information as well. For example, Clarke (2006) examined the portrayal of death in twenty of the high-circulating magazines available in Canada but published in either Canada or the United States. The sample consisted of sixty-three articles that included the search term "death" from the years 1991, 1996, and 2001. The common theme from Clarke's media analysis suggests that death is portrayed in magazines as something that "was, could be, or should be *within our control*" and ultimately is a choice (Clarke 2006:157). While this study explored death more broadly, suicide was a relevant topic. Clarke found that portrayals of suicide focused mainly on celebrity suicides or suicides that had cultural meanings associated with them. These findings suggest that portrayals of death in magazines illuminate individualism and personal choice, which are noted as societal characteristics of Canada and the United States.

These studies provide insight into how media, specifically magazines, can be utilized to examine the culture and society in which they exist. Using magazines to examine suicide is essential to inform the current research that aims to look directly at the portrayal of suicide in media. One aspect missing from previous research, however, is the way that race impacts discussions of suicide. In fact, Clarke (2006) acknowledged that in her media analysis, the magazine articles she examined ignored several factors, including race and ethnicity, gender, and income. Similarly, while Stack, Gundlach, and Reeves (1994) did control for the Black population in their analysis, there is no further discussion of race and its relation to suicide.

Media Portrayal of Black Suicide

Although it is evident that magazines are important within society, studies about the portrayal of suicide among Black individuals in magazines are limited. In fact, examinations of media sources in general within this topic are virtually nonexistent. Literature that discusses suicide within the Black community focuses instead on protective factors, support, and prevention efforts. These studies highlight the importance of recognizing the unique circumstances of African Americans to understand suicide within this community (Castle et al. 2011; Joe et al. 2014; Lincoln et al. 2012; Wong et al. 2014). Consequently, culturally specific recommendations and prevention efforts are needed to appropriately discuss and address suicide in these contexts. The racial cultural framework provides an important theoretical underpinning for scholars interested in examining portrayals of suicide outside of mainstream media outlets.

METHODS

The racial cultural framework argues that an integral part of any suicide prevention and intervention efforts within communities of color should stem from understanding cultural constructs (i.e., beliefs, values, and norms) and acknowledging that social inequalities shape these constructs. While Wong Maffini, and Shin (2014) do not directly apply the tenants of the theory to media, social scientists have long established the media's failure to depict Black Americans accurately in the mainstream media (Berger and Luckmann 1967; Collins 2000, 2009; Diawara 1993; Feagin 2014; Littlefield 2008). Hence, many of the prominent Black media outlets to date were created in response to counter commonplace stereotypical notions of blackness in the media.

Choosing Ebony

Ebony provides a forum for culturally relevant information that is influential to readers. The magazine was created by John H. Johnson and first released in November 1945 (Glasrud n.d.).

According to its website, *Ebony* is "the heart, the soul and the pulse of Black-America"; moreover, "it's more than a magazine, it's a movement" (*Ebony* 2017). J. Spencer Condie and James W. Christiansen (1977) and A. George Gitter, Steven M. O'Connell, and David Mostofsky (1972) noted that *Ebony* is one of the largest Black-oriented publications (Condie and Christiansen 1977; Gitter et al. 1972). It has the highest estimated readership in terms of Black-oriented magazines (Pratt and Pratt 1996), and its current readership has reached nearly 11 million (*Ebony* 2017). Because *Ebony* is a staple in Black media and press, the authors chose this magazine as the data source for this research.

In addition to its vast readership and popularity, *Ebony* was also important to this research because of its target audience. Choosing a data source that was not only familiar with Black culture but also had adequate information on the subject of Black suicide was a necessity for gathering adequate data. Because *Ebony* caters to a Black audience, we were confident that depictions of Black suicide would be available within issues of the magazine. Other researchers also noted choosing *Ebony* due to its target audience (Condie and Christiansen 1977; Hirsch 1968).

A subject like Black suicide, or suicide in general, is likely portrayed differently based on the source reporting on it. Since *Ebony* is oriented to Black readers, the way it portrays suicide conversations is undoubtedly different than magazines that do not specifically cater to a Black audience. Similarly, since the topic of Black suicide is understudied, and because we focused on Black suicide rather than suicide in general, choosing a magazine such as *Ebony* was essential to gather enough data on the topic.

Last, we were interested in the depictions of Black suicide over time. *Ebony* has been around for nearly seventy years. Thus, we were able to collect *Ebony* articles related to suicide over several decades, allowing for longitudinal comparison. Other studies that utilized *Ebony* noted its longitudinal nature as a reason for its use as well (Condie and Christiansen 1977; Gitter et al. 1972; Hirsch 1968).

Sample

The sample was composed of selected articles from *Ebony* magazine, which is published on a monthly cycle. Articles were drawn from *Ebony*'s online public archive consisting of 575 issues spanning from November 1959 to December 2008. A search of the archives returned 142 articles containing the word "suicide." These articles came from 95 different monthly issues, representing 16.5 percent of all archived issues. We downloaded these 95 issues and analyzed the 142 articles for content related to suicide. The articles we collected spanned from September 1961 to November 2008.

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software was used to render the downloaded PDF images as text searchable. A text search of the 95 collected issues found 512 mentions of "suicide"; however, this likely underrepresented the actual number of "suicide" mentions due to the fact that some of the scans, typically of the older issues, were not high quality. Regardless, it is our opinion, based on our interpretation of the titles of articles not included in the final sample, that relatively few instances of suicide-related texts were not represented in the search results.

Each instance of "suicide" was examined in the context of its paragraph and categorized for its relevance to our project. Cases of "suicide" used as a linguistic expression, such as "economic suicide," or suicide mentioned as a possible side effect in medical advertisements were excluded from the sample. The reduced sample consisted of 110 articles from 79 monthly issues. The sample was further restricted to only those articles with at least two mentions of suicide in the text. This process ensured that the final sample of articles had at least some attention given to suicide rather than just a momentary mention. The final sample of *Ebony* articles consisted of 40 articles from 37 issues, with 377 total mentions of the word "suicide."

Because few studies exist on the topic of suicide portrayals among Black individuals, we used qualitative analysis and inductive theorizing. Our theoretical results are based on the strength

of theme repetition and distinctiveness in the sample. Each article from the final sample was coded and categorized based on its content relevant to suicide, including its manifest and latent meanings. In the first phase of analysis, each researcher read, coded, and generated emergent codes independently as a form of open coding (Elo and Kyngäs 2008).

As a method to enhance the validity of our findings, the independent coding was then compiled and compared in the second phase of analysis. Articles that were coded in different categories were discussed until a consensus was reached among all the authors. Only through several independent reading and coding sessions could an intimate familiarity with the content of the articles be reached, which was a necessary prerequisite for the second phase.

In the third phase of analysis, thematic categories that shared similarities were merged. Again, this required discussion and consensus among the researchers. Nine themes emerged from this process representing conceptual categories that were distinct from one another and were uniquely defined by their respective empirical content: examples of high-profile suicides; physical and mental health; suicide trends and prevention; advice; suicidal behavior among non-celebrities; structural causes for suicide; Black history; books and movies; and suicide researcher. Each article was then reassessed by the research team for appropriateness in its coded theme.

RESULTS

Of the forty articles included in the final sample, nine profiled celebrities, making celebrity profiles the most common theme. Table 1 shows the number of articles significantly referencing or specifically focused on suicide by theme and decade. Suicide-related articles were most common in the 1970s (n = 15), which had nearly double the decade with the next highest occurrence of suicide articles, the 1980s (n = 8).

Chart 2 indicates the number of suicide-related articles that *Ebony* published in each decade. The number of suicide-related

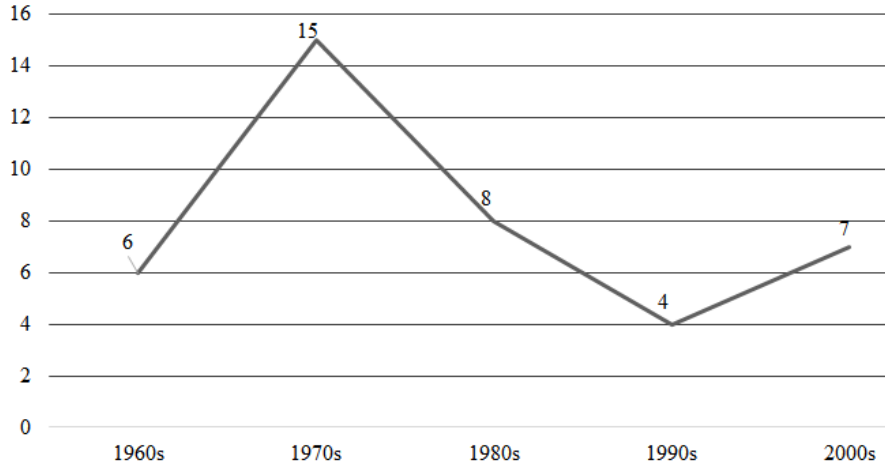
publications peaks during the 1970s (n = 15) and is least frequent in the 1990s (n = 4). During the 2000s, the number of articles published related to suicide begins to increase again (n = 7).

Table 1. Article themes by decade, n = 40 (%).

	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	All
Examples of High-Profile Suicides	1 (11)	3 (33)	2 (22)	2 (22)	1 (11)	9 (99)*
Physical & Mental Health	0 (0)	3 (43)	1 (14)	1 (14)	2 (29)	7 (100)
Suicide Trends & Prevention	1 (14)	3 (43)	1 (14)	0 (0)	2 (29)	7 (100)
Advice	0 (0)	2 (40)	2 (40)	1 (10)	0 (0)	5 (100)
Suicidal Behavior among Non-celebrities	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (99)*
Structural Causes for Suicide	0 (0)	2 (67)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (100)
Black History	2 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (100)
Books & Movies	1 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (50)	2 (100)
Suicide Researcher	0 (0)	1 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (50)	2 (100)
	6 (15)	15 (38)	8 (20)	4 (10)	7 (18)	40 (101)*

* Rounding error.

Chart 2. Number of suicide-related articles published by Ebony in each decade, 1960s–2000s..



Each individual theme also followed this trend, except for the three least common themes, which only had two occurrences each, making any trend indiscernible. Table 2 provides a description of each theme, along with an example quote from an article categorized by the researchers as belonging to that theme. The following subsections further detail the meaning and composition of each theme. We report this data as if there are no cross-sections of categories for any articles. This is a matter of how we chose to code the data. Some articles could possibly be coded into multiple categories. For instance, most of the articles coded as "structural causes of suicide" also contained information that could be coded as "suicide trends and prevention." We, however, chose to focus on the primary emphasis of the articles based on our collective interpretations of the content. Thus, in this essay, we analyze discrete categories of what we interpret the principal intent of each *Ebony* article's author to be.

Examples of High-Profile Suicides

Nine articles from the sample were about famous individuals. Only one article, from December 1988, was about more than one celebrity. It discussed famous Black individuals who died young, while the others focused on one celebrity specifically. The articles about a specific celebrity varied in type and included interviews, biographical accounts, and a book excerpt. Interviews were with Diahann Carroll, whose husband, some suspect, committed suicide (November 1979), as well as Sammy Davis Jr. (March 1980) and Tyler Perry (October 2008), both of whom contemplated suicide. The biographical accounts included stories about the mysterious deaths of Dorothy Dandridge (March 1966, August 1999) and Donny Hathaway (April 1979), along with John Roseboro, who also contemplated suicide (January 1979). The book excerpt was from Richard Pryor's book, in which he discussed his suicide attempt (September 1995) where he lit himself on fire.

Table 2. Description and frequency of article themes (n=40) with content related to suicide from *Ebony* magazine.

Category	Description	Example	**Frequency n (%)**
Examples of High-Profile Suicides			**9 (22.5)**
	Articles about a celebrity that has thought of, attempted, or committed suicide	"The man was singer Donny Hathaway, and police reported his death a suicide" (Apr. 1979).	
Physical and Mental Health			**7 (17.5)**
	Articles that treat suicide as a possible consequence of other physical or mental health issues	"If there was ever any doubt that postpartum depression has become a major health issue for women, it was erased by the recent string of murders and suicides involving suffering mothers of all races" (Oct. 2001).	
Suicide Trends and Prevention			**7 (17.5)**
	Articles featuring recent Black suicide statistics and contemporary methods of prevention	"Paul Curtis, whose office (the National Center for Studies of Suicide Prevention) is responsible for establishing and supporting suicide prevention centers in many areas of the country, labels the rise in young Black suicides as the main challenge of his organization" (May 1970).	
Advice			**5 (12.5)**
	Articles that offer advice to readers about suicide specifically or that mention suicide	"The very fact that you did write indicates that you do not want to die; so do not persist in ignoring the help of those who are best equipped to give it—the professionals. Immediately contact a suicide prevention center in your area" (Jan. 1982).	
Suicidal Behavior among Non-celebrities			**3 (7.5)**
	Articles about an individual that has thought of, attempted, or committed suicide	"Eight days after the incident, Gen. Ownby's death was ruled a suicide" (Jul. 1985).	
Structural Causes of Suicide			**3 (7.5)**
	Articles that discuss Black suicide in the context of social structural causes	"Suicide—Due to a number of societal stresses, experts say, the suicide rate among Black males has more than doubled in the past ten years" (Aug. 1983).	

Table 2. continued

Black History		**2 (5.0)**
Articles about Black history that discuss or mention suicide	"…and were indeed lucky to be brought to America under whatever conditions, to be 'civilized' and 'christianized.' But the Blacks did not believe in their good fortune. Many leapt into the sea en masse; many others mutinied; every kind of method of committing suicide was attempted" (Aug. 1965).	
Books and Movies		**2 (5.0)**
Articles that discuss a book or movie that mentions or is about suicide	"Exploring the relationship between Blacks and the White medical world, the two authors outline the historical, cultural and social factors that contribute to the problem of suicide and following dangerous lifestyles that may end in death and suggest ways for turning the situation around" (Nov. 2000).	
Suicide Researcher		**2 (5.0)**
Articles about the life and work of suicidologists	"This fall, Dr. Poussaint will release the book *Lay My Burden Down: Unraveling Black Suicide and the Black Mental Health Crisis*, which he co-authored with Amy Alexander" (Jun. 2000).	

Note: Themes were created inductively based on data.

Physical and Mental Health

Seven of the articles referred to suicide as a possible consequence of a physical or mental health issue. The specific health issues were the main focus of these articles, and suicide was used to give the writing context. For example, an article from July 1979, highlighting how Black women have overcome obesity, described depression and thoughts of suicide as issues faced by some of these women before their weight loss. Another article, from October 2001, used extreme cases of mother-child murder-suicides to

emphasize the prevalence and threat of postpartum depression. Articles from 1974, 1975, and 2000 described suicide and suicide ideation as an increasing problem caused by more people suffering from depression and related mental health issues. Two articles, from 1988 and 1998, listed several health issues faced by the Black community, both mental and physical, including suicide.

Suicide Trends and Prevention

There were seven articles that strongly featured suicide, especially recent trends and methods of prevention. All of these articles followed a similar format, whether focusing on the Black population in general (July 1965, May 1970, December 1976, March 2006), Black men (April 2001), Black women (September 1973), or Black youth (September 1981). These articles typically began with anecdotal cases of suicide ideation, prevented attempts, or successful attempts. Then the articles explored current research on the topic of suicide, mostly relying on statistics that demonstrated that suicide was increasing among African Americans. Finally, the articles concluded with advice on how and where to seek help, or how to recognize and offer help to a potential suicide victim, usually by establishing or improving interpersonal communication or referring readers to a suicide hotline.

Advice

Advice was given to readers in two of the articles through a column called "The *Ebony* Advisor," where readers write in and the magazine offers researched answers. "The *Ebony* Advisor" advice from January 1982 was to a young man who was thinking about committing suicide, and in August 1999, suicide was mentioned as a symptom of depression by a woman who wrote in about a boyfriend. A third article, from February 1977, was written as guidance on coping with tragedy and gave general advice to those who may begin to think of death or suicide. Two other articles, also from January 1982 and February 1977, were Letters to the Editor where readers wrote in regarding a previous article about suicide and how they felt the article was helpful.

Suicidal Behavior Among Non-Celebrities

There were also suicide-related articles written about individuals who were not famous. All three of the related articles focused on one person. These individuals had either committed suicide or been affected by the suicide of someone else. For example, an October 1972 article was about an assistant principal who committed suicide. This article discussed relevant race issues at the school that impacted the man's decision to commit suicide and how those events affected students. The other two articles were about professional men: one a prison warden (July 1969) and the other a major general in the Army (July 1985). The prison warden article discussed suicide in two contexts: the warden's suicide and suicide as a recorded cause of mysterious deaths of inmates. The article on the major general, on the other hand, focused on a man who conducted an investigation of the death of a general, who, it turned out, committed suicide.

Structural Causes of Suicide

Three of the articles, when discussing suicide, focused mostly on its social structural causes. For example, an article from October 1971 was a personal opinion expressed by professional comedian Dick Gregory about how widespread suicide is actually genocide inflicted by an oppressive, racially stratified society. Another article from August 1972 focused on the young Black man and structural difficulties he faces, such as poverty, street gangs, and the Black-White wage gap. In the article, suicide was used as a metaphor for confrontational liberation movements. The last article was written in August 1983 and again focused on young Black men. In it, issues of masculinity, violence, and suicide are used to explain why Black women outnumber Black men.

Black History

Two articles on Black history mentioned suicide. The first article discussed the beginnings of the slave trade in North America (September 1961). Similarly, the second article discussed the slave trade in regards to its effects on Western culture and Black indi-

viduals, specifically Black men (August 1965). Both mentioned suicide in reference to Africans who attempted and committed suicide in order to avoid the fate of slavery.

Books and Movies

Two articles discussed a book or a movie plot that involved suicide. *Ebony* magazine has a column called the "*Ebony* Bookshelf" where new books are highlighted and briefly summarized. One article from this column featured the book *Lay My Burden Down: Unraveling Suicide and the Mental Health Crisis among African-Americans*, by Dr. Alvin Poussaint and Amy Alexander, which is about the increasing suicide rates of Black youth (November 2000). The other article discussed the movie plot of *The Comedians*, in which one of the characters commits suicide (June 1967).

Suicide Researcher

Two articles focused on the life and work of a particular suicidologist: Dr. Alvin Poussaint. One article from December 1972 was a transcribed discussion between Dr. Poussaint and Reverend Jesse Jackson about Dr. Poussaint's work on Black self-hatred and how it has been "grossly exaggerated" based on the fact that White suicide is far more common. The second article, from June 2000, was a biographical account of Dr. Poussaint's life, including his life as a grandfather, his consultations for *The Cosby Show*, and his books about suicide.

DISCUSSION

Findings from this study offer a rare look at portrayals of suicide in a prominent Black media outlet. Racial cultural framework suggests that researchers studying suicide should acknowledge the unique circumstances that communities of color face, including cultural constructs surrounding the topic. *Ebony* magazine serves as a cultural medium to investigate how representations of suicide in the media intersect with cultural attitudes and beliefs about suicide.

The current study sought to highlight the frequency and the nature of suicide-related materials printed in *Ebony* magazine across just under a fifty-year time span. We also aimed to examine the nature of this content. Our findings build on an existing body of scholarship that uses print and electronic media sources to better understand cultural perceptions about suicide as well as how magazines and other print media can be used to disseminate information about suicide (Beautrais, Horwood, and Fergusson 2004; Clarke 2006; Jonas 1992; Martin 1998; Nicholas and Mateus 2016; Stack et al. 1994).

This study expands the existing literature by focusing on the nature of suicide-related print media aimed entirely at Black audiences over an almost fifty-year period (Castle et al. 2011; Joe et al. 2014; Lincoln et al. 2012; Wong et al. 2014). Our findings reveal that just under half (45 percent) of the stories published on the topic of Black suicide highlight incidents of celebrity suicide. To illustrate, the magazine saw fit to print details on Donny Hathaway and Dorothy Dandridge's suicides while also highlighting Mary J. Blige and Monica's struggles with depression and suicidal ideations. Previous studies that examine the media's impact on suicide in mainstream media suggests that suicides should receive only minimal coverage (Niederkrotenthaler et al. 2010; Stack 2003). Further, Stack (2005) finds that entertainment or political celebrity suicides are fourteen times more likely to trigger contagion or copycat suicides. Our findings cause one to call into question whether concerns of copycat suicides are warranted for media outlets aimed at mostly Black audiences. Perhaps the editors of *Ebony* magazine saw fit to publish stories about celebrity suicides to pay homage to key figures in the Black community. We do know that many of the celebrities' deaths, suicide attempts, or publicly shared suicidal ideations would rarely receive coverage in mainstream media sources.

A closer look at how frequently suicide-related content appeared in *Ebony* magazine during the time span of 1960 to 2008 revealed suicide-related content appeared most frequently during

the 1970s (38 percent) and least during the 1990s (10 percent). This is an interesting finding given the fact that suicide rates among Black Americans peaked in 1990, at a rate of 7.1 per 100,000 (CDC 2012). Meanwhile, *Ebony* magazine appears to be increasing its frequency of publishing suicide-related content. We see that in the 2000s, *Ebony* published almost as many suicide-related articles as it did in the 1980s (seven articles and eight articles, respectively). Of the suicide-related content published in the 2000s, just over fifty percent of the content aimed to educate readers about suicide trends, share prevention information, or provide advice about suicidal ideations to the *Ebony* audience. We speculate that the upsurge in suicide-related content in *Ebony* magazine is a direct response to the increasingly more common incidents of suicide among certain Black subgroups.

We found that the majority of the articles were categorized under the following three themes: suicidal behavior among celebrities, physical or mental health, and suicide trends and prevention. While the articles on celebrity suicides provided insight into the events leading up to the celebrity's death, the majority of the articles categorized under physical and mental health appeared to be written with the intent of communicating scholarly information on suicide in layperson's terms. For instance, in December of 1976, Camille M. Rucker published an article titled, "How to Prevent: Suicide Prevention Experts List Clues That Are Helpful in the Detection of Persons Bent on Taking Their Lives." In this article, she offers tips on practical steps that people can take daily to prevent suicide in the Black community.

A final empirical insight gained from this study is related to mentions of race. Unlike articles on suicide printed in mainstream media outlets, nearly 100 percent of the articles printed in *Ebony* magazine specified that they were speaking about "Black suicide" or made mention of race in their discussion. This reveals that notions of suicide were seen to occur within a racialized space. Scholars interested in disseminating suicide prevention materials to Black Americans should consider openly acknowl-

edging empirically grounded socio-cultural factors related to suicidal behaviors among Black Americans. Doing so may also aid in efforts to dismantle the widespread belief that suicide is a "White thing."

Theoretical contributions are also evident in this study. The racial cultural framework provides researchers with a "blueprint" to reduce suicide outcomes within communities of color. We expand the relevancy of Wong and colleagues' (2014) theoretical approach to studying Black suicide using popular cultural media. The racial cultural framework encourages researchers to work directly with communities of color to gain a better understanding of how structural inequalities and cultural constructs influence suicidal behaviors. *Ebony* magazine provides insight into a form of nondominant culture that caters to an audience of mostly Black readers and is in fact the most circulated magazine specifically published for a Black audience (Pratt and Pratt 1996). This is most evident in our thematic results such as "structural causes of suicide" and "Black history," both of which make specific references to suicide as a possible response to racial inequality, a connection that would most likely be ignored in dominant cultural media outlets utilizing color-blind frames. Other themes we found, such as "examples of high-profile suicides" and "suicide trends and prevention," discuss Black suicide specifically, whereas dominant cultural outlets are more likely to ignore race in discussions of suicide.

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge a few limitations of this study. First, while *Ebony* magazine is an acceptable starting point, we realize that there are a number of magazines aimed at Black audiences that are worthy of a similar analysis.[2] Secondly, the cultural dynamics highlighted in this study do not speak to the heterogeneity of the Black "community." We found this to be the case in nearly all of the content published in *Ebony* magazine. Future researchers should consider this and perhaps seek out content aimed at members belonging to specific Black ethnic group audiences. In alignment with the racial cultural framework, it is

important to give attention to how cultural constructs may vary by ethnic group.

CONCLUSION

Dominant culture maintains its status through cultural institutions, like the media, to naturalize the favorable values. However, popular culture represents a challenge to dominant culture because it is nonconforming and often gives voice to the marginalized (Brown 1997). For this reason, we chose to examine how a nondominant media outlet portrayed Black suicide. This approach specifically positions popular culture as a possible challenge to dominant culture. It allows for the analysis of culture representations that are nondominant while still linked to dominant culture, either through directly challenging dominant ideologies or being unknowingly influenced by them. It helps answer questions about Black suicide that quantitative analyses cannot.

The significance of this study rests in the fact that we qualitatively assess portrayals of suicide in a prominent Black media outlet over a nearly fifty-year time span. While findings reveal a significant decline in the publication frequency of suicide-related content in *Ebony* magazine, *Ebony* continues to serve as an important source of cultural knowledge about Black suicide. An imperative point to carry forward is that nearly all discussions of suicide occurred within a racialized context. For example, the editors of *Ebony* often discussed the social problems (i.e., discrimination, racism, poverty, etc.) plaguing Black Americans as a framework for suicide-related articles. Even among the articles classified as "suicide trends and prevention," reports often rationalized why the information was relevant to Black Americans. This is a unique finding in that studies that discuss suicide in the media rarely speak of race or any other factors, macro or micro, surrounding media representation of suicide (Kessler et al. 1989; Stack 1988; Wasserman 1984).

Moving forward, researchers should consider where Black Americans may go to find suicide-related content and why. Recent

studies suggest that nearly two-thirds of Americans get news from social media sources at least some of the time (Gottfried and Shearer 2017). Additionally, nonwhites (74 percent) are more likely to turn to social media for their news compared to their White (64 percent) counterparts (Gottfried and Shearer 2017). Conventional color-blind efforts to address suicide as a national public health issue could go unnoticed by African Americans if the call fails to mention cultural-specific information or fails to consider nontraditional media venues to disseminate information. Non-traditional sources ranging from social media (i.e., Black twitter and Facebook) and blogs (Afropunk.com, hellobeautiful.com, theroot.com, etc.) appear to provide a platform for Black Americans to discuss these issues.

Also, additional research is needed to assess how *Ebony*'s suicide-related content comes across to the intended audiences. A question that needs answering is whether *Ebony*'s decision to focus significant amounts of attention on high profile suicides is ideal. Or do readers wish to read more about laypersons' struggles with the issue? In a recent article published on *Ebony*.com titled, "Black Suicide: When Prayer Is Not Enough," readers posted 163 comments in response to the article. Many of the posts included personal details about struggles with suicide and depression. ConfessionsLA states:

> My beautiful and talented brother lost his battle with bi polar disease 13 years ago in the exact same fashion. Yesterday was an emotional day when I heard of this young man passing who was only 3 years older than my brother was when he lost his battle with this awful disease. So sad, so tragic and hopefully this will make people take a closer look at mental health diseases. Thank you for this insightful piece.

In response, Rfpatt, responds, "I understand the emotions you faced this week. My emotions were raw this week as I relived my son's suicide that occurred in the same manner 4 months ago." Seemingly, *Ebony* and other Black media outlets provide a

unique space for Black audiences to read about and potentially discuss suicide. This is especially important given the fact that conversing about suicide in the Black community is largely seen as taboo.

ENDNOTES

1 Sources include but are not limited to theroot.com, madamenoire.com, essence.com, ebony.com, atlantablackstar.com, and blackamericanweb.com

2 http://www.blacknews.com/directory/black_african_american_magazines.shtml

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Book Review

Black British Graduates: Untold Stories

Amanda Arbouin

London: Trentham Books, 2018

Reviewed by Derrick Brooms

Black British Graduates: Untold Stories by Amanda Arbouin presents a longitudinal perspective of ten African-Caribbean individuals across their educational experiences and graduate careers. Arbouin uses a life-trajectory research approach to distill their educational experiences in a retrospective analysis, which has great currency for the contemporary state of affairs for Black learners in the United Kingdom. In an effort to extract and nuance the participants' experiences, Arbouin combines reproduction theory, critical race theory, Black feminist theory, and intersectionality in order to frame the study. In addition to an analysis of race and education, this work explores how Black graduates in the UK experience the intersection of race, class, and gender in their careers and educational journeys. Arbouin's complex theoretical framework and explicit focus on a Black perspective allows an in-depth analysis of contributing factors and supports in their lives.

In chapter 2, Arbouin examines students' secondary school experiences and offers insight into the gendered differences of the participants' experiences. Arbouin provides an intersectional analysis of race, class, and gender to show that most participants did not reach their full potential. In particular, the intersections of race, class, and gender impacted their school trajectories as the students experienced racial stereotyping from teachers, lacked school-based support, and received insufficient emphasis on academic achievement. As it relates to the young women in

the study, Arbouin found very few examples of teachers actively encouraging students and they received poor careers advice that often contradicted their talent, intellect, and aspirations. For the young men, their secondary school years were filtered with hostile teacher-student relationships; they identified their investments with their peer group "as a source of conflict and a root cause of their underachievement in school" (24). Additionally, the encouragement that they received for sports supported their prowess, which feeds into another racial stereotype about Black males' supposed natural athletic inclination, and also contributed to their own lack of interest and motivation to learn. Importantly, while their parents' own backgrounds informed how they engaged with school or not, most participants received considerable encouragement from their families (seemingly away from school) and their family discourses typically centered on "education as a key to success" (31).

Chapters 3 and 4 examine their pathways and experiences in higher education. In chapter 3, Arbouin finds that the majority of participants followed nontraditional routes to higher education and these pathways were informed by their lived experience (e.g., professional experiences, social mobility, encouraging teacher, political awakening, career change). A major catalyst for pursuing higher education were peers who attended college, which helped the participants see higher education as an achievable option. In addition, people in positions of authority in participants' lives and who believed in their capabilities also provided critical support for their college aspirations and eventual matriculation; these individuals were African-Caribbean and/or were involved actively in improving conditions in African-Caribbean communities. Arbouin identified motivational differences across gender lines as the women participants cited pleasure of studying as a major motivation and they were supported by family expectations that supported and encouraged their further studies. The male participants experienced family expectations as a pressure. Overwhelmingly, though, their families—which included imme-

diate family, the community and church—offered unwavering belief in the participants and then sustained them in their educational paths.

In Chapter 4, "Learning to Achieve," Arbouin reveals how race, class and gender converged on the participants' higher education experiences. The three key findings in this chapter include: (1) the difficulties participants faced in fitting in, mostly due to lecturers' low expectations of students and lack of institutional support; (2) the role of informal Black social networks, which included peers as well as the presence and support of Black staff who helped enhance their university experience; and (3) insecurities about their own academic ability, which was rooted mostly in their race and class backgrounds. Additionally, Arbouin found that women participants mostly went on to a master's degree and although they maintained high interests for obtaining a PhD the gender dynamics of time, financial pressures, and balancing childcare with career ambitions all were considerable barriers and challenges that thwarted their aspirations.

Chapter 5 explores participants' graduate careers where Arbouin finds that they "experienced a bitter-sweet combination of success in gaining entry to professional careers and frustration at battling against oppressive organizational structures that constrained rather than developed them" (82). This chapter brings together two critical themes that are revealed throughout the work. The overpowering impact of race, class and gender in the participants' lives is evident in each chapter as well as their aspirations, coping strategies, and educational/career pursuits. These intersecting identities mattered greatly in how these participants experienced and tried to navigate both educational institutions as well as life in Britain. At the same time, and precisely because of their identities, the participants in Arbouin's study also saw and experienced inherent tensions between opportunities and limitations at each stage of education as well as in their graduate careers. The ongoing barriers, lack of (institutional) support, and racism that participants experienced make clear the ways that

race, class and gender matter in their lives and also reveal the dire importance of family and community support. While the rhetoric of education as a passport to success can be supported in family discourses and even across society, Arbouin shows that this passport is highly racialized, gendered, and classed.

Black British Graduates is a critical work that provides an insightful view of the lives of a select group of African-Caribbean individuals trying to navigate education and employment in Britain. This work is essential reading for those interested in better understanding Black educational experiences as well as educational inequality and its effects in the UK. Mapping participants' experiences across educational levels, revealing the pulls and pushes as they navigate various educational institutions, and keeping their intersecting identities front and center in this analysis are salient and powerful in helping unearth the complexities of Blackness within Britain. That participants achieved educationally in spite of and not because of their institutions also shows how education institutions continue to deny and neglect Black students regardless of locale. As Arbouin expertly argues, praising those individuals who are able to navigate the pressures, barriers and challenges is shortsighted and, in fact, privilege those who "make it through" and is complicit in supporting these skewed institutional practices. Instead, greater efforts are needed to dismantle the systems that continue to oppress and deny Blacks educationally and in employment as well. Arbouin's longitudinal view of these participants' lives help show how early educational experiences inform and impact one's aspirations, further education, and even employment.

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Book Review

Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's Southside

Eve L. Ewing

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018

Reviewed by Kierra Toney

Eve L. Ewing's *Ghost in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side*, is a compelling, purposeful and reflexive example of critical race theory (CRT) in education. Ewing displays the rigor and quality of a critical race theorist by employing four methodological approaches in four chapters on the school closures in Chicago's southside neighborhood of Bronzeville. Each chapter centers around the central question of the book: "Why do people care so much about schools that the world has deemed to be failing?" (6). Ewing reveals that the answer to this question is as multifaceted as the historical moment in which it is situated. Between January 2015 and January 2016, Ewing sets out to find this answer using: "field observations, document analysis, review of audio transcripts and interviews with community members" (6). Upon reading this book, one will find that each carefully dictated approach is necessary to unveil the answer to the above question.

In chapter 1 "What a School Means", Ewing tells the story of a community whose outrage over the attempted closure of their beloved school lead to a month-long hunger strike and a bittersweet victory. In 2011, Dyett High was deemed one of many schools in Bronzeville to be "failing" and therefore to be phased out and ultimately closed. The efforts of Revitalize Dyett, a collective of community members, helped push the administration of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to reopen Dyett; however, the reopening was a textbook example of interest convergence to serve the

political interest of the mayor. This victory left mixed emotions as a representative of CPS announced "We *all* fought for Dyett. Together." erasing the efforts and realities of the coalition whose members weren't even allowed to be inside of the final public hearing (46).

Ewing uses Chapter 2 to examine how Bronzeville's present issues with racial tension is connected to its past. During the time of Ewing's research, community members saw the school district's decision to close fifty-four schools by the end of the academic year, 87 percent of which were majority Black, as "a part of a historical pattern and larger plan to push Black residents out of Chicago" (55). The CEO from 2012 to 2015, Barbara Byrd-Bennet, was adamant that the closures were not racist but instead due to the schools being "underresourced and underutilized", eluding CPS culpability. In this chapter Ewing expertly covers the Great Migration, racial violence, restrictive real estate covenants, as well as the rise and fall of public housing. This history of systemic racism is plain to see and generationally felt to those who lived through, yet somehow goes completely unacknowledged by the administratiors of the school district who deny any fault in its reification.

Chapter 3, "Dueling Realities," covers just that, the dueling realities which represents each side of the debate around three school closures in the Bronzeville community. Between observations and testimonies, Ewing discusses counternarratives, institutional mistrust, accountability, power, neoliberalism, and racism. She contends, "From beyond the Veil, these schools look irredeemable. But for those within the Veil, there's more to the story" (p. 96-97). This DuBoisian concept describes the scene of the public-school closure hearings which Ewing observed as being more "like a trial, with each school acting as defendant" where it seems the fate of the school had been predetermined (95).

Chapter 4, "Mourning," eerily covers the aftermath of school closures, and the countless other losses the Black community has borne as a result of battling racist systems of oppression. This

chapter also provides the reader with a rational for the title. The narratives Ewing captures are stories of mourning institutions which as she puts it "makes them ghost stories" (153). Ewing writes, "*Institutional mourning* is the social and emotional experience undergone by individuals and communities facing the loss of a shared institution they were affiliated with" (127). Even further, this chapter approaches grief surrounding these institutions from an Afrocentric perspective to reflect the *complicated grief* experienced by students, parents, alumni, and teachers of these "failing" schools. The loss of these schools is experienced by the community as "unjust deaths" which "renders mourning at once personal and historical" (142).

Ewing reveals to the reader in the conclusion of the book that she is not anti-school-closures; rather she is concerned with "expanding the frame with which we see school closure as a policy decision" (158). There is an understanding that change is inevitable and yet there is always a choice to enact change in an "ethical" way (162). It is the framing of the "underutilization" of schools in Bronzeville which the community members take issue with; the lack of accountability. Though Ewing acknowledges the "myriad ways CPS enacts harmful policies" against Black people, could the solution to this one case of injustice really be a simple as reframing (162)? While I agree with the notion that solutions to issues are constrained by the frame through which we view them, the conclusion could have benefitted from Ewing giving concrete examples of how the conflict around school closures could have been resolved had CPS considered reframing.

Ewing's *Ghost in the Schoolyard* is a critical work for those interested in urban education, sociology of education, community relationships, and the nexus of school-community partnerships. In investigating why communities fight for their schools, Ewing finds that answers to such a question have been systemically camouflaged by majoritarian logic, bureaucratic denial of responsibility, and the historical ramifications racist policymaking. Ewing determines that the people who care so much about the closure of

the schools discussed in this book know that school closures are about more than the school buildings themselves; they know that racism is pervasive and recognize the power of Black collective memory. Ewing insist that others follow her lead by setting "our sights on what it would look like the get things right" in regard to education and "integrate those visions into our rhetoric and our strategy" (165). In this way Ewing displays the revolutionary and liberating capabilities of CRT.

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