CHALLENGE

A Journal Of Research On African American Men

Winter/Spring 1999 • Volume 10, No. 1

***Challenge*: A Journal of Research on African-American Men**
The Journal of the Morehouse Research Institute
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Subscription. *Challenge* is published twice a year: September and May. The subscription prices (which includes postage) is $10 for individuals and $25 for libraries. Please remit the appropriate amount to Morehouse Research Institute, 830 Westview Drive, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30314-3773.

 ISSN-1077-193X

Publication of *Challenge* is made possible by a grant from the Ford Foundation and in-kind contributions from Morehouse College.

Printed by CRC Printing, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia

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Articles

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The Hegemonic Struggle and Domination in Black Greek-letter Fraternities

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Introduction

Hazing in black Greek-letter fraternities (BGFs) on the campuses of colleges and universities has been attacked by BGF national offices as well as college and university administrators.[1] Despite these efforts, the practice persists and shows few signs of subsiding.[2] Problems in studying hazing continue partly because scopes of inquiry are often limited to such a degree that the real practices which keep hazing alive are never engaged. One problem is that too little attention is paid to the historical roots of the organizations' initiation rituals (Jones, 1997). While a reconstructed view of the historical and contemporary importance of ritual is necessary, it is not the pull of ritual alone that mobilizes black men to endure and covet the punishment of hazing. A powerful and almost always overlooked companion to ritual, which serves to keep hazing alive, is narrative. Narrative is a coercive tool not only used in BGFs, but found in many other arenas. Commenting on narrative in his study of conflict in Northern Ireland, Allen Feldman (1991) asserts:

> No discursive object exists outside of, or prior to, a discursive formation. The self is always the artifact of prior

[1] It should be noted at the outset that the practice of hazing does not occur exclusively in undergraduate chapters of BGFs, nor does it only occur in black fraternal organizations. The practice crosses lines of race and age. This study centers on black fraternities, but in no way should be read as indicating that hazing does not exist in other organizations with different racial compositions.

[2] For an extensive record of reported hazing incidents refer to Nuwer (1990) *Broken Pledges*.

> received and newly constructed narratives. It is engendered through narration and fulfills a syntactical function in the life history. The rules of narration may perform a stabilizing role in the cultural construction of truth, but then self and truth are subordinate to the trans-individual closures of narrative (spoken or written) In a political culture the self that narrates speaks from a position of having been narrated and edited by others — by political institutions, by concepts of historical causality, and possibly violence (p.13).

BGF members function within such a political culture. Like all narrative, BGF narrative is coercive in that it is highly influential in shaping the psychologies of the groups' members and potential members alike. The political dimension of the narrative used within the BGF community should not be underestimated, though its impact has never been thoroughly examined. A particularly political, popular discourse is used within the organizations, because it inevitably determines modes of interaction between members. BGFs do not, in my opinion, autonomously create violent individuals (Jones, 1997). They do, however, provide a medium for violence to be imposed upon others. This imposition is sometimes so intense that some argue it borders sociopathic (Applebone, 1994; Harris, 1994). Certainly, a significant percentage of BGF members deny that they or the pledge process, as they have conceptualized it, are aimlessly violent or even negative. For example, one 1991 initiate states:

> People act as if no one can get positivity out of pledging. I can say that there were some serious positive aspects to my four-week pledge period. I feel that pledging engrossed in me such skills as conflict resolution, time management and creativity. I continue to use those skills in my life today — at work, in grad school, in community organizations, etc. Personally, I do not agree with Intake.[3] From talking with some fellow Greeks, their organizations are making changes to the membership intake process, because it just doesn't work. A lot of people want to make

[3] "Intake" is a new initiation process adopted by BGFs to curtail hazing. This process will be discussed in depth later.

> the process seem very primitive, barbaric, and . . . senseless. Well, I disagree and even if pledging presented problems, Intake certainly isn't the right answer to those problems. Intake as an answer in 1990 was not the right answer and it's not the right answer now. Isn't that evident?

Power, Hegemony and Domination

Agreement on whether or not the BGF pledge process is generative or not will probably not be engendered by this study nor is such a consensus its purpose. It is essential, though, that we utilize clear definitions of politics and power. Following Laswell, we will approach politics as the process which determines who gets what, when and how in a group or societal structure. Following a close variant of this definition, Maulana Karenga (1993) notes that the political process is ultimately concerned with "gaining, maintaining, and using power" (p. 311). Power, simply put, is the ability of some agent X to force some agent Y to do something agent Y would otherwise not do. These agents are not necessarily individuals. That is, agents X and Y may be social and/or political groups as well as individuals. In either instance, the central concern of politics is power and, conversely, any quest for power is (in one way or another) political. No matter if the researcher examines this process in system-oriented terms (Apter, 1977) or studies revolutionary structures and processes (Gross, 1974; McAdam, 1982), the works are examinations of power.

Harold Cruse (1967) correctly asserts that even though America is philosophically based on the notion of individual rights and privileges, real power can only be located in group structures. This stance mandates a de-emphasis of the individual and a re-situation of group and societal influence when studying politics and power in their many manifestations. There has existed the tendency to classify any group dynamics that lay outside the realm of electoral politics as non-political if not exclusively sociological (Gosnell, 1967; Ladd, 1969; Wilson, 1960). Hanes Walton (1985) is correct in criticizing this practice as myopic, because power and the struggle for it are the essence of the political and extend well beyond electoral activity. Interaction in many areas of everyday life is deeply political and is driven by overriding group dynamics which have been embedded in American society. Everyday life is, in fact, a reification produced by

(as well as a producer of) power. There is no innocent moment or inaccessible sanctuary in which everyday life can escape the continuous struggle for power. Try as they may, it is difficult (if not impossible) for individuals or groups to escape this reality.

While there is a very real difference in power potential between collectives and derivative groups, there also exists a political choice for both. The choice is whether to act and become agents or succumb to victimage and continue to be acted upon. It is here that we locate struggles which Gramsci (1971) refers to as hegemonic. Cultural and political studies have often invoked Gramsci's concept of hegemony to describe moments of national socio-political struggle, but the term remains ambiguous to many. Probably the most common perception of hegemony sees it as an almost universal process through which domination of one group by another is achieved through the construction of an ideological consensus (Gitlin, 1980; Williams, 1977). This formulation of Gramsci is not altogether correct. This is so because while hegemonic struggle always involves coercion and consent, it does not necessarily involve the negativity of domination. While power is necessary for domination to occur, domination and power are not the same. Power is not always negative. Domination, on the other hand, is marginalization marked by an exercise of supremacy over and oppression of another. This state is always negative. Hegemony, according to Gramsci himself, does not necessarily seek or equate to domination. Gramsci speaks of hegemony as having two faces. He remarks, "Permanent hegemony is always bad; temporary hegemony of one group or region may be beneficial to all. Hegemony of north over south in Italy has been bad but need not have been so" (1971, p. 130).

Domination occurs in multiple arenas and is necessarily preceded by the acquisition of political power. Only through the garnering and abuse of such power can one group marginalize and subordinate another. While these struggles can be societal (national or international), they also occur within social sub-groups. BGFs are one example of a terrain where such conflicts are played out. After we address the hegemonic struggle within BGFs, we shall look at a case which is clearly political in the traditional sense and utilize the argument to study black fraternities. In an unlikely comparison, it will become clear that the tactics employed by the American political

right to revive conservatism are very similar to the ones used to maintain a pledge process in contemporary BGFs that seems unable to rid itself of violence.

Educated Gangs? — To Pledge or Not to Pledge

If everyday life is political, then the narrativity of everyday life is also political and possibly hegemonic. This is so because narrative as a contributor to identity serves as a powerful force in constructing an individual's reality to an extent that often is not realized. Certainly, it is not physical force, but the exploitation of the desire to be BGF members (largely engendered by narratives of members of the organizations) which drives pledges' submission to acts which are condemned by organizational policy. Hazing's continuation is firmly locked in BGF narrative and, as we shall see, this is the reason for the failure of the groups' Membership Intake Programs (MIP), which were tailored to replace pledging. In BGFs, the language of domination revolves around the concept of pledging and it constructs criteria for acceptance. The greatest rift in BGFs to date may be the ongoing debate over whether the groups should reenact the traditional pledge process or continue to utilize MIPs for the purpose of initiating members. The differences between traditional pledging and MIP are striking.

The old process, which differed slightly from group to group, had five stages. The potential initiate: (1) attended interest meetings or "smokers"; (2) submitted his application and, if it was deemed satisfactory, would be interviewed; (3) "made line" (was accepted as a member of the incoming pledge class); (4) pledged; and (5) was initiated. Different chapters routinely embedded particular criteria for "making line." For example, some chapters required potential pledges to "come around" before the official smoker. Quite often, this process could lead to men who "came around" participating in what was colloquially known as "pre-pledging" — taking part in pledge activities that were not officially condoned by the national organization. Chapters such as these would usually decide who was to make line even before the official smoker took place, and the smoker became nothing more than a facade for senior fraternity and school officials. Some argue that this trend afforded active members a better opportunity to test and become acquainted with the men who were to join their fold. Contrarily, others contend that this

practice led to the exclusion of quality candidates who refused to submit to non-fraternity- sanctioned activities and the extorting of money and servitude from those who would.

The MIP process, which also differs slightly across organizational lines, is different from the pledge process in that the steps consist of (1) attending an "Interest Meeting"; (2) submission of application and interview; (3) acceptance; (4) initiation; and (5) participation in educational sessions. Noticeable is the absence of "pledging" (the educational sessions are used as substitutes). Beyond this, and maybe more important, the candidate is carried through the initiation ritual *before* he goes through the pledging substitute, and the educational sessions of the MIP eradicate a number of traditional interactions. The candidates are no longer considered members of a "line" so they are not required to dress alike, walk in line, or learn fraternity history and lore in a confrontational manner. This process was constructed in an attempt to bring hazing to a halt, and its supporters contend that the eradication of pledging is the only way to eliminate hazing. This is so, in their view, because hazing has become such an integral part of the pledge process that the two cannot be divorced from one another. The core assumption involved in MIP is that men who are initiated first will not submit to hazing because they have obtained the object of their desire — membership.

The MIP was initiated by BGFs after the Spring of 1990 in most chapters, but it has failed in achieving its goal of discontinuing pledging and the violent hazing that is usually associated with it. A member of Kappa Alpha Psi addressed MIP:

> I am not the one who has made past tradition; those who came before us did. Knee jerk responses to complicated issues is not advancement! I'm sure you would not deny that in many ways we were better off years ago. Sometimes when you advance too much you lose something important. In many ways we have lost our identity. Intake was in effect in 1991, however my chapter pledged us the old way. If I had to do Membership Intake and not be able to pledge — hell no, you could keep it. Whoever said you need a fraternity to achieve or help mankind? My advice to young men seeking such a thing would be to join an honor society, or NAACP or church action com-

> mittee. But if you're looking for brotherhood, find a fraternity chapter that has a pledge process. I would tell a young man not to fool himself; don't waste that few hundred dollars that he will spend on membership. Send that money to a charity. You can't buy brotherhood. Frederick Douglass said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress."

Soon after MIP was initiated, John Anthony Williams, Sr. (1992) completed a dissertation entitled "Perceptions of the No-Pledge Policy for New Members of Predominantly Black Fraternities and Sororities." While Williams' study focused on undergraduates, I believe the results to also be true of many graduate chapter members. Williams used a 26-item original survey to access three scales: (1) the Policy Awareness Scale, (2) the Hazing Tolerance Scale, and (3) the Policy Endorsement Scale. He came to a number of conclusions concerning BGF members. Members felt that (1) the policy (MIP) was enacted too quickly with little input from members at large, (2) hazing definitions were too broad, (3) insufficient time was allowed by MIP to teach the history of the organizations, (4) bonding is lost, (5) lifelong commitment is jeopardized, (6) the policy promotes disunity in chapter ranks, and (7) new members feel they get no respect and acceptance from older members.

Williams' findings indicated that MIP is shunned by many BGF members. Subsequently, pledging and hazing persist. The refusal to embrace MIP is largely because there has been, and continues to be, a great emphasis on storytelling among members of BGFs. These narratives usually revolve around activities common to men in general (i.e. athletics and sexual conquests). Unique to fraternities, though, is the "pledge story." A great factor which determines many members' sense of belonging or "bonding" is their ability to engage in the telling of these pledge/war stories. To be able to say that one has engaged in the very same or similar rites of passage as the brothers in his company is somewhat comforting and, in theory, builds brotherhood and allegiance to the organization (Jones, 1997).

The regarding of violence during this process as legitimating is pervasive among BGF members. In fact, the pressure to prove one's triumph over violent hazing and to engage in the "I pledged, too" discourse is so great in some circles that many members base a good deal of their fraternal worth on the abuse they received during the

pledge period. This is so because many members are only slightly concerned with an individual's post-pledge work and commitment to the organization. In one sense, this indicates that hazing — and the unique fraternity narrative it brings — is an attempt by BGF members to construct and maintain a collective memory and history distinct from that held by any other group. As Polkinghorne (1988) states, "The stories we encounter carry the values of our culture by providing positive models to emulate and negative models to avoid" (p. 14). A brother who has gone through the archaic pledge process, which includes brutal hazing, is looked on as a true or "real" member and accepted into the inner sanctum of a particular chapter even if he makes no further substantive contribution to the organization scholastically, intellectually, and communally. Acceptance is extended to such a member much more readily than to one who does make these contributions, but cannot attest to being abused during his initiation into the fraternity.[4] This leads active members and candidates alike to desire strongly the right to say, "I pledged!" One BGF member comments:

> The ritualization of hazing baffles me. The means are what's important now. The means have superseded the ends of developing a good brother. It's almost like the question is "can you withstand this?" "You can be a pathological, deviant fool, but if you can withstand what we're going to put on you, have proven your worthiness," which is really warped, but that kind of confusion pervades Greek life. There are some exceptions, but unfortunately it seems that the exceptions ultimately become alienated. They aren't "down." It's a shame, but stuff has become so topsy turvy that abnormality has become the norm.

In this progression, even the word pledge has become nebulous since the formation of BGFs in the early years of this century. Confusion of pledging and hazing is problematic and helps prevent the discontinuance of violence in the groups. In a focus group at a

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[4] This reality produces an all too often encountered quandary in BGFs concerning men who have never been initiated into the fraternities, but were pledged. The perennial question is, "Should we regard this man as a brother?" even if duly initiated members who followed the guidelines are marginalized. Quite often the answer is in the affirmative, which supports the view that it is not legitimate membership by the guidelines of the national offices, but pledging itself which gains acceptance.

Kentucky university, four undergraduate members of Kappa Alpha Psi were asked what they thought the differences between pledging and hazing were. To a man they all insisted that the two were the same. One member strongly stated:

> I've been in the frat for three years and I've never been to a set (pledge session) where there was no wood (paddling) or something like it. That includes when I was coming in. Bros (brothers) were constantly housing (beating) us — night in and night out. There's no other way to instill discipline, respect, and love of the frat in a "G" (pledge).

Another added:

> I don't think anyone is going to appreciate something that they don't have to work for. Pledging makes you work for the frat and that includes some physical stuff. So yeah, I don't see how you can have pledging without hazing. Why don't you tell me the difference, because I don't think there is one.

The same sentiment was articulated by a mix of undergraduate and graduate members at the 1995 National Pan-Hellenic Conference (NPHC) Collegiate Leadership Summit in Richmond, Virginia. In a focus group conducted by Dr. Jason DeSousa, former Assistant Executive Director of NPHC and Kappa Alpha Psi. BGF members along with their sorority counterparts submitted that pledging and hazing were synonymous — inextricably tied. Others, however, contend that pledging is not synonymous with hazing. In reality they are diametrically opposed. Their stance is based on the belief that a pledge is simply a vow to uphold the ideals of the organization. In this sense, anyone who knowingly violates these principles breaks his pledge or vow. Following this line of reasoning, the pledge process is merely an extension of the original pledge. What the process seeks to do is prepare the potential initiate for a life guided by the organization's principles. It, in effect, helps him to hold true to the pledge.

One member of Phi Beta Sigma asserted that pledging and hazing conflict with one another, even though many BGF members do not recognize this dynamic. This member saw pledging as "a rite of passage, which should developmentally enhance the individual intellectually, physically, and spiritually. This should be exclusive of

abuse. But, the pledge process should somehow measure a person's commitment." Interestingly, BGF members who support hazing also use "commitment" rhetoric. This apparent similarity between the pro- and anti-pledge process brings about commitment, but what does it bring commitment to? A Kappa Alpha Psi Chapter Development Specialist commented:

> Sometimes pledging the old way can almost make a brother less dedicated to working for the frat. I can't ell you how many brothers I meet who feel that the frat owes them something because they "pledged hard." They feel like they paid their dues during the pledge process and then rest on that. On the other hand, brothers who go through MIP usually don't have that mentality. They still feel that they have to prove themselves, but they do it in a different way — by working for the frat after they are initiated.

An Alpha Phi Alpha member continued to differentiate pledging and hazing:

> Hazing is a terrible distortion of pledging. The terms are often wrongfully used interchangeably, but hazing (unlike pledging) does not foster any real sense of binding between individuals. It only leaves bitterness in its wake on many levels. From personal experience, I really didn't want anything to do with guys who recklessly abused me, just because they were in positions of power for that period. The men that I really had lasting relationships with were the ones that tried to save me from the abuse, even if on the "QT" (Quiet Tip — doing so without others knowing). These guys sat us down and tried to give the whole thing meaning, you know? That's where I established my bonds, not with the crazies.

This member felt that discontinuing pledging, which he saw as a fruitful practice in order to stop hazing, was somewhat akin to "throwing the baby out with the bath water, but what else could be done?" Notably, he saw societal violence as the root of hazing. "You know, I think it's just part of the culture. This society has historically been permeated with violence and no portion of it is immune to the effects of it." He also noted that there was a serious question of black

machismo that came into play. There was and is a "distorted sort of pride which comes from being able to survive the abuse of hazing." As another Alpha said in the *Wall Street Journal*, "It's a manhood thing" (Delisser, 1994).

Some members believe that hazing has always been a part of the organizations. Others believe it was an activity created to mimic white groups. Others contend that it is a result of fraternity men going to World Wars I and II and bringing the hazing techniques of boot camp back to the fraternities. While opinions vary on exactly when hazing rose to its present place in BGFs, the stance that it has grown, if not in brutality, in randomness is supported by many members. A member of Alpha Phi Alpha posits that even the threat of death has not stopped this progression:

> The real question is, are we capable of coming up with a viable pledge process where there is no physical contact or mental denigration? Unfortunately, the very real answer is no! Brothers in my frat, as well as others, have been doing these things long after they knew they were wrong. Death has not become an effective deterrent, neither has suspension or expulsion from the organizations. What we've reaped are vastly intertwined codes of silence which hamper all efforts to reach the truth. Why? Because the desire to belong is stronger than the will of the truth in our groups. Even good men sometimes succumb to the ways of their compatriots. It's sad, but this is what peer pressure can do.

Another member of Alpha Phi Alpha addresses this situation:

> At one time when I would hear my cousins tell stories about pledging at places like Tennessee State and Fisk...I mean it was bad in terms of why they would relate and they romanticized about it in terms of it being a macho thing, but somehow...I have to be careful saying this, it seemed to have some purpose to it. Yeah, they were paddled, but I never heard them talk about being seriously hurt or even feeling like their lives were in jeopardy or that they were being victimized by sadists. I don't want to in any way rationalize what happened there, but it seemed different from the stories I hear now where

> you've got horror story after horror story of young men being brutalized, subjected to all kinds of degradation, traumatized, humiliated — in some cases murdered. Somehow I got the sense that there used to be constraints on how far you could go. Somebody was going to check you if you got out of hand, but now there don't seem to be any constraints. I mean it's like Rodney King on a college campus, but we've changed roles and suddenly fraternity brothers have become the cops.

The societal implication brought to the fore by this member is insightful. As Deborah Prothrow-Stith (1993) notes, fraternities and sororities serve a purpose that organizations rarely associated with them also serve. The obvious links between religious cults, secular secret societies and Greek-letter organizations are often drawn (Brunson, 1991; Carnes, 1989; Jones, 1997). These comparisons disturb very few Greeks in that these organizations are historically regarded as noble and positive in their own right. To mention black Greeks and gangs in the same breath, however, usually occasions uneasiness. Prothrow-Stith makes this venture, not in an effort to equate Greeks with gangs but to position Greeks as models to which gangs should aspire. Ironically, her attempt to elucidate the deviancy of gangs by contrasting them with fraternities and sororities inadvertently brings to light an important similarity which could all but destroy her argument that Greeks are "pro-social." Prothrow-Stith begins her discussion by pointing out that both Greeks and gangs speak to members' personal needs:

> Gangs satisfy a whole range of normal adolescent needs. The most significant of these is the adolescent hunger for peer approval and acceptance. But violent gangs are not normal. When young people feel that their lives are knit into the fabric of the society at large and when they face the future knowing that a fair share awaits them, they do not form or join gangs, although they do form social clubs, fraternities, sororities, and other age-mate groups. Violent gangs arise when young people face a future of limited opportunity and despair, when for military, political, social, or economic reasons the life that awaits a young person has been stripped of meaning and

validity (pp. 96-97).

It is ironic that Prothrow-Stith does not also attribute disfranchisement as an impetus for the formation of fraternities when, in actuality, it was an important factor leading to their founding. The point, though, is not where our attention will be focused, for she does realize that, practically and ritualistically, fraternities and gangs are not diametrically opposed.

> From a developmental perspective, however, antisocial groups, such as youth gangs and pro-social groups such as fraternities have a great deal in common. Both kinds of associations exist to provide members with an interim emotional base, one that gives substance to the ambiguity the adolescent feels when he is between the dependency of childhood and the independence of adulthood. Pro-social and antisocial, they provide young people with goals and objectives, a world view, and a place where they are valued. Group membership gives some purpose to life. The more adrift a young person feels, the more powerful the attraction of the peer group, but even well-adjusted young people need what groups offer.
>
> Rituals are one way anti- and pro-social groups satisfy the developmental needs of adolescents. Interestingly, these rituals tend to be similar, whether adopted by adolescents operating inside or outside the law. The secrecy typical of youth gangs and of many sororities and fraternities suits teenagers trying to carve out areas in which they can be separate and distinct from their parents and siblings. The idea of wearing special clothing, "colors" that identify members, provides young adults an outlet for their narcissism . . . . Initiation rituals, common to adolescent groups the world over, speak directly to the adolescent need to prove oneself. Usually prospective group members, be they sorority "pledges" or youth gang "wannabees," must undergo some sort of trial to prove their loyalty to the group. That's what pledge week, initiation rites, and hazing are all about. Once they pass, new members are allowed into the inner sanctum, where the affection and the loyalty of other insiders is guaran-

teed (p. 27).

It is difficult to contest Prothrow-Stith's stance that fraternities and gangs have similarities. But, those who contemplate the link between black gangs and black Greeks often pose the question, "Outside of educational differentiation, murder, and drug trafficking, what makes fraternities different from gangs?" Prothrow-Stith answers that the use of violence is the difference. But, as we have seen Greeks are violent. Violence's manifestations are certainly not to the same illegal degree in BGFs as they are in gangs, but initiatory violence is the same. To be sure, there is very little difference in the gang practice of new members being "beaten in" and the physical hazing that BGFs employ. Narratives from many members indicate that it is this hazing and this hazing alone that guarantees "the affection and the loyalty of other insiders" to the neophyte. A Kappa Alpha Psi member addressed the non-hazing pledge process:

> I was on line underground as an undergrad and was never initiated — you know how frat politics go, it just didn't work out. I later joined as a graduate member and the process at my chapter was totally different. As an initiate who has endured both the new and old processes, I must say that I did not gain a sense of closeness or bonding in the intake process the way I did during the pledge process. Not to say that my pledge process was perfect or even good, but it taught me many things, not the least among them being altruism and brotherly love. This whole idea of initiating somebody before they pledge is crazy. That's if they pledge at all. They can't appreciate it.

Another member of Kappa Alpha Psi commented:

> There's just something different about people who don't pledge. I mean, they're still in the fraternity, but they're different. It's like having an adopted brother or sister. You still love them, but they aren't blood —so it's different.

This is another comment that supports the stance that it is the violence itself, the hazing of the pledge process, which legitimates new members in the eyes of many of the already initiated. Some BGF members do not hesitate to admit this reality. For example, a member of Phi Beta Sigma remarks:

> I'm pro-pledging and I don't mind saying that. I wholeheartedly disagree with the position that pledging is bad or purposeless. Yeah, bad things can happen to people who pledge and they often do, but the vehicle itself is not flawed or faulty — people are. Pledging and hazing aren't the same, but they help to reinforce one another. I mean, I'm not saying that anybody should be killed or anything, but I think the struggle in pledging has to stay in place for our organization to remain viable as far as producing members who really love them.

From this perspective, pledging and hazing (at least in the contemporary sense) are inseparable as they relate to BGFs[5], and the melding of pledging and hazing is largely done with discourse. This discourse is important, because the meaning that narrative conveys about human experience requires the use of discourse. To try to separate pledging and hazing is akin to attempting to get rid of a pesky problem by simply calling it something else. In BGFs, pledging and hazing are interlocked and it is the discourse used within BGFs, not physical force, that convinces pledges to not only submit to, but desire participation in, the violence of the BGF pledge process.

Discourse and narrative are powerful in BGFs because they are used to differentiate and establish cleavages that separate members proper from perceived contagion. For example, one tool used to differentiate through discourse is the challenge or charge. The charge is a verbal tool used to identify a fraternity brother. One member asked a question, which on its face may seem very common, and the other member properly responds. Supposedly, members who have not gone through a pledge process will not be able to effectively respond to charges, because of inadequate exposure to the histories of the organizations and a good deal of unwritten traditional information. Ironically, even members who have been pledged often cannot respond to charges of members from different chapters and regions, because (like gang "sets") there exists a lack of cohesiveness in the fra-

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[5] For clarity's sake, with the realization that there is no clear distinction (in practice) between pledging and hazing for many BGF members, the reader should regard any mention of pledging from this pont forward as including hazing. This is not to say that I feel hazing and pledging are synonymous. It is to say that, for all intents and purposes when BGF members speak of pledging, they are usually speaking of the incorporation of hazing.

ternities' intake processes (even pre-MIP) and localized or regionalized traditions. Quite often, a member's allegiance to his particular chapter will greatly supersede his allegiance to the fraternity as a whole. Some members are quite often at a loss when they are faced with regional, chapter, or personally constructed charges. This inability of members to respond to charges that are not sanctioned by the fraternity has led to intra-fraternity violence in a number of instances, because one brother may feel that the other, from a chapter with which he is not familiar, is not "real."

The term "real" has very little to do with whether or not a member adheres to the ideals of, or actively participates in, his organization. In reality, it speaks to whether or not he was hazed. A member who does not go through the abuse of hazing is said to be "paper," in that he simply signed his name on paper and was allowed entrance into the organization without struggle. An Omega Psi Phi member addresses the respect that comes from hazing:

> You take wood (beatings) to show your love for the frat. How else can you prove to brothers and yourself that you really want it? It's showing love, you know? If a brother doesn't want you in his frat, he won't even give you the wood — he just won't * * * * with you at all. On the for real tip, if you don't prove yourself nobody is going to respect you. You're going to be "cat"[6] for the rest of your life. Tell me, would you rather get your * * * kicked for six weeks or get it kicked for the rest of your life, because bros don't respect you?

This is the tag that most young black men interested in fraternities seek to avoid at all costs. The self-consciousness of pledges concerning how they will be viewed (and subsequently granted or denied acceptance) by their potential fraternity brothers and continued adherence to what are regarded as traditional ideas and practices by active members fuel the pledge/haze process. Some members assert that BGF men do not haze because they really believe that abuse will make better members, but do so because the practice is one of self-gratification and personal domination. One member

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[6]"Cat" is another term of disrespect used among some black Greeks in some regions (at the writing of this piece, members of Omega Psi Phi) to denote a person who did not pledge properly.

stated, "Hey man, this process allows these people to have slaves and they refuse to let them go. These people do not even remain true to their own pledges to uphold the ideals and rules of the fraternities they claim to love so dearly, because they randomly break them by hazing." Other members sympathize and the passages below relay only a sample of the panorama of arguments levied against pledging as it is traditionally carried out in BGFs:

- When I was on-line, the phrase was "bump for your brother," which meant if he was to get a stroke, I asked for it instead. If he was getting beat down by visiting brothers, I was compelled to step up and take some heat. Looking back, would I do that again? Would I bump for my brother? Hell no! No sir. I would not step in and take a paddle in the face, or let them put "Icy Hot" on my [genitalia], or swallow an egg after it had been in three previous mouths — all for the sake of my line brother, no sir. It's nice to reminisce about the good old times and how we "grew" together, knew each other, loved each other, needed each other. But that line of BS is so played out it hurts even to say it. The truth is, we all wanted to be accepted by our fraternity so badly that we would have done just about anything they told us to do. We keep trying to make this a romantic experience, but we have forgotten that our big brothers would have hit us anyway; made us eat that rotten apple, drink that wine, skip class — regardless of whether we bumped for our brother or not.
- No matter what the fad is — gangsta rap, hip hop, etc. — we should consider the type of individual we are attracting to our organizations. As one brother said, "Trash in, trash out; trash out, trash in." People are even saying now that we seem to be portraying a "gang-like" image, which upsets some folks in our organizations, but what are we doing to make people say this,

[7] Alpha Phi Alpha, Omega Psi Phi, Phi Beta Sigma and Kappa Alpha Psi fraternities and Alpha Kappa Alpha, Zeta Phi Beta, Delta Sigma Theta, and Sigma Gamma Rho sororities.

you know? It was pointed out to me that there was a time when being a part of the Elite Eight[7] was something that was desired by many students, but only a few were accepted. These few tended to be those who were scholarly and upstanding members of the campus community — with exceptions as in any case. However, this perpetuated the image of organizations being about scholarship and community service because these were emphasized during the pledge process and after. Now, the focus is solely on "how did you pledge" As a result you get a bunch of people who can take a beat-down, but can't put together a community service project. Thus, the campus community and the black community as a whole begin to question the purpose of our existence beyond pledging, hazing and "kickin' it" at parties.

- In academic terms, I guess the move from pledging to MIPO could be considered a paradigm shift. However, in this case, as is the case with most drastic change, it has been rejected, and done so without being given full consideration. It is very popular today to look at pledging through rose-colored glasses. We all have an opinion of what pledging should be, and if it were a perfect world, we wouldn't be having this interview right now. But it's not a perfect world and the very ugly reality of any pledge process has been and, it seems, will continue to be ignored. We've got brothers who advocate slapping and punching as positive motivation to remember inane facts. We have brothers who think the receipt of those occasional slaps or paddling instilled a sense of pride, camaraderie and esprit de corps, the level of which cannot be matched by any post-pledge experience. I sincerely do not agree with this reasoning.

To be fair, for every argument against pledging there exists a counter. And these members are just as spirited as their brothers who argue against the continuation of the practice.

- Pledging, as it was intended to be was never dangerous or bad. When pledging is conducted as a "rite of pas-

sage," wherein the big brothers or sisters act as mentors, trying to bring the neophyte pledgee into consciousness, the process indeed is positive.

- This intake thing is so personal. I was one of eight and even though it has only been three years, we are in different parts of the country, we still keep in touch and even came back this past December for our anniversary — all eight of us. Would we all have been there if we didn't pledge? I doubt it. The funny thing is that I did not know a single one of them before my process into this organization. Pledging may not be the thing that causes bonding, but if it doesn't, it sure does begin the process. In my case, who knows if I ever would have even met my seven sands. We have cultivated a wonderful relationship that has grown since December 6, 1992, and are still cultivating it. Can brothers who do not pledge have the same kind of relationships — I don't think they can even comprehend it!
- Rituals are real valuable, particularly to us as Africans. We've always used rituals to reinforce our beliefs and our values and when done properly, that can be achieved. Every society has these types of rituals. Why? As a biologist, I know that nothing useless is conserved in nature — so why are these rituals? Perhaps they are needed and perhaps desired by the youth as part of their process of growing up. So what happens if the rituals that have been developed and refined over years and years are suddenly taken away and replaced with nothing? I suggest that if it is indeed a necessary activity for fraternal and social development, the youth will start creating their own to fill the vacuum. If it is not needed, nothing will happen. As a test of my hypothesis, which do you see? What is this thing called "underground pledging?" Hmmm.

Conservatism and Domination

Pledging and hazing continue because they are the "popular" things to do within the structures of BGFs in order to gain accep-

tance. This unquestioned adherence to the popular is not unique to BGFs. Some believe there has been a progression in America that has led to a preoccupation with the popular and rising apathy, or even nihilism, where the realm of transformative political processes is concerned (Allen, 1994). The American populace has grown less and less concerned with being aware of why they do what they do in everyday and political life. This is a necessary condition for hegemony. It is here, in the popular sphere that hegemony must "take account of and even allow itself to be modified by its engagement with the fragmentary and contradictory terrain of common sense and popular culture" (Grossberg, 1992, p. 246). Through these modifications, hegemony seeks to constantly reinvent the relations of state, economy, and culture. Grossberg, with the help of Stuart Hall, summarizes the relationship of the popular with hegemonic struggles:

> This [the sphere of popular culture] is where the social imaginary is defined and changes; where people construct personal identifications, priorities and possibilities; where people form and formulate moral and political agendas for themselves and their societies . . . . Hall, following Gransci, describes this as the need for any hegemonic struggle to ground itself in or pass through "the popular." The popular here is not a fixed set of texts or practices, nor a coherent ideology, nor some necessarily celebratory and subversive structure. It is the complex and contradictory terrain, the multidimensional context, within which people live out their daily lives (Grossberg, pp. 246-247).

There is much support for what is perceived by some as an end of history as far as rational-critical discourse is concerned (Alway, 1995; Cook, 1994). Divisions along monolithic racial, gender, or class lines by themselves do not provide us with a substantive understanding of what is at work, though all of these factors help us to understand the marginalization of particular subaltern groups. While these cleavages can never be discarded, the question as to which one serves to marginalize most extremely or most often is debatable and the answer changes from case to case. Close examination reveals that large anonymous factors are also at work to engineer social divisiveness and anxiety (Bhabha, 1994; Brecher & Costello, 1994; Dionne,

1995).

One of the most cogent examples of this anxiety and its political response is the United States congressional elections of 1994 in which the Republican Party seized the political reins of America by a startling percentage of the vote. A common opinion articulated by many was that Americans were weary of Democratic rule and this wave of popular discontent rose up to sweep the Democrats out of office (Peters, 1993). Certainly, discontent existed and remains to this day, but was it some type of a priori condition which manifested itself with no need of outside impetus or were there other factors at work? According to Grossberg (1992), this state of discontent is not one which spontaneously rises up from the masses. It is affectively and effectively engineered by what he calls popular conservatism.[8] Grossberg contends that the popular issues leading to public discontent are not the real factors driving the political machine of American society — they are only facades and the masses fail to recognize the true culprits.

What is really at work is a combination of factors which serve to bring about axial shifts in popular sentiment and subsequently provide a friendly environment for the growth of the popular conservative political machine (Grossberg, 1992; Porteous, 1992). To say that politics drives culture or that culture drives politics would be too simple (remember, many BGF members who support the pledge process defend it as a "cultural" phenomenon). The reality is that both are inextricably tied and Grossberg seeks to show how. Popular conservatism is not a political rebellion, but a rebellion against politics. It is a rebellion that breeds adherents to cynicism for cynicism is a necessary condition for popular conservatism to exist (Goldfarb, 1991). Popular conservatism is a rebellion against politics because it continuously diverts attention from the political and towards the social or cultural as reasons why discontent is present and therefore offers social or cultural solutions to alleviate suffering (Maffesoli, 1996; West, 1993).

Grossberg's engagement of the relationship between the political and the popular is rooted in Gramsci's (1971) hegemony. Grossberg concedes that hegemony is based on both coercion and

[8] Grossberg's term "popular conservatism" does not necessarily refer to the American Republican Party, though the Republicans utilize popular conservative tactics.

consent, but feels Gramsci's core/periphery model may not be dynamic enough to explain the modern American landscape. In an attempt to move away from a static engagement of American hegemony, Grossberg partially rejects Gramsci's idea of the non-flexible core and replaced it with what he calls the ruling bloc.[9] Grossberg comments:

> In a hegemonic struggle . . . the social field cannot be easily divided into two competing groups. The diversity of "the people" confounds any such simple divisions; for while the masses appear to be undifferentiated, social differences actually proliferate. The difference between the subordinate and the dominant cannot be understood on a single dimension. Power has to be organized along many different, analytically equal axes: class, gender, ethnicity, race, age, etc., each of which produces disturbances in the others. At the same time, those seeking to hold the dominant position do not constitute a single coherent group or class. Instead, a specific alliance of class fractions, a "bloc" which must already have significant economic power, attempts to win a position of leadership by rearticulating the social and cultural landscape and their position within it. This re-articulation is never a single battle. It is a continuous "war of positions" dispersed across the entire terrain of social and cultural life. At each site, in each battle, the "ruling bloc" must re-articulate the possibilities and recreate a new alliance of support which places it in the leading position. It must win, not consensus, but consent (p. 245).

The ruling bloc, then, is not static and realizes that it must constantly appeal to the popular by articulating and rearticulating as much as is needed that it is making a dynamic shift to some stable set of ideals — which are invariably past-oriented. Along these lines, Stuart Hall (1988a, 1988b) examines the advent of Thatcherism in Britain as reflective of this appeal to the popular where ideals, stabil-

[9] Grossberg's assessment of Gramsci's idea of the "core"as non-flexible may be somewhat inaccurate. It stands to reason, in fact, that Gramsci's idea of a *historical block* goes toward Grossberg's *ruling bloc*, though Gramsci can be said to run aground on the issue of class essentialism. This too is debatable, for Gramsci's overall arguments move well beyond issues of class.

ity, and threat are concerned. The driving force of Thatcherism was to identify an "enemy within" which threatened the very existence of good "Englishness" (Grossberg, p. 249). Of course, in order to make this appeal to the society and cause lines of division that perpetuated Thatcher's political power in English society, she had to present to the public what she felt this ideal "Englishness" was or had been. What happened in reality was that Thatcher created an emotive or affective myth which appealed to the masses. This adherence to a false history of what engendered English greatness, stability, and morality carried paranoid side effects such as racism and classism along with it, because there must be reasons for the loss of the mythic state. This was the same strategy used by Fascists in Germany, but with much more extreme results — the Holocaust.

This is also the case with American conservatism. The reasons for the loss of mythic America are largely temporal. They shift from external (the Russian threat, Khadafi, Hussein, Middle Eastern terrorists) to internal (affirmative action, welfare policy, the deviancy of homosexuals) depending upon the national crisis at hand. The progression of the popular conservative strategy, however, does not change. The conservatives move forward around the notion of a post-modern frontier. This is, they must put into place parameters which define when "America was what it should be" and when "America became what it is." This involves the historical designation of a period which marks the "fall of America" (Grossberg, p. 267). Like Thatcherism and Fascism, the popular conservatives must construct a glorious past which did not have post-modern problems. The problems that did exist supposedly could be handled in a quick, effective manner that was agreeable to the majority of mythic America's populace. The dividing line of this frontier is usually placed somewhere around the Vietnam years — the late sixties or early to mid-seventies. It sees the America of the fifties and sixties as what the country should be and the post-sixties period as the time of the "fall" into degeneration.

Certainly, the America of the fifties and sixties was quite different from the one we know today. Some of these differences however, especially the cultural ones, are not the reasons that America's "place" has changed on the global terrain. Popular conservatism, however, engenders the belief that these are the precise changes that have led

to the continued demise of America. This is the realm that not only allows the existence of racism, classism, ethnic conflict, sexism and other myopic divisions, but helps to create and cultivate them. Whether or not the popular conservatives believe their rhetoric is really not the point. The point is that past-oriented discourse is an essential tool of domination, because it serves to actuate the next stage in the process — what Grossberg calls affective epidemics.

These epidemics usually function in a diversionary manner. For example, one of the very real problems which drive the condition of American and the world is the growth in power of the disembodied multinational corporations which mandate the existence of Arendt's (1958) animal laborens (Barnet, 1994; Bhabha, 1994). No longer is the oppressed/oppressor dichotomy limited to the space of individual states. The economic pursuits of the multinationals are quickly turning the world into one which houses invisible economic giants and subaltern laborers. The focus of popular conservatism does not allow for the engagement of politics on this level. Popular conservatives push the reification of a totally different set of concerns. While the problems of race, ethnicity, class, and gender are quite real, the new global economy may be more relevant today in that it mixes all of these ingredients into a particularly explosive, fetishized, paranoid brew in post-modern America. Xenophobic cleavages, more than anything, present issues (largely mythic) that popular conservatives can seize and create misleading affective epidemics (Slakey, 1993). It must not be forgotten that cynicism is necessary for this "dumbing" of the masses. There must exist a general disinterest in alternate perspectives on the epidemics and a willingness to be lied to (Carey, 1995; Goldfarb, 1991).

> The apparent success of such manipulation cannot be explained by falling back on images of the masses as intrinsically manipulatable, as cultural and ideological dopes. In fact, vast numbers know or assume that they are being lied to, or else they seem not to care . . . . this is precisely the paradox at the heart of contemporary U.S. politics and of the new conservatism's success. A large proportion of the population is outraged by at least some of what is going on, yet they remain inactive and uncommitted. There is a feeling of helplessness: what can anyone do? (Grossberg, p. 258)

It follows that some thinkers believe, without a doubt, that America has become a "cynical society" (Ewen, 1988).

Ewen asserts that Americans are far less concerned with substantive political matters that dominate everyday life and are more consumed with the notion that their existence is defined by what image (be it false or not) they are able to present to their fellows. Because of a preoccupation with the anti-intellectual and non-political, popular conservative discourse becomes a tool which is capable of defining reality for a good percentage of the American populace. The preoccupation with image is intimately tied to Freire's (1990) evaluation of the oppressor's psychology, which carries over to the oppressed. In the Marxist tradition, Freire realizes the oppressed can easily buy into a system which he [the oppressed] cannot define himself independent of the oppressor. Both suffer from false consciousness in that the oppressor feels that "to have is to be" and the oppressed feels that "to be is to be like the oppressor."[10]

Ultimately, the construction of the post-modern frontier and the use of affective epidemics leads to the phenomenon of disciplines mobilization. The non-agents who arise from the popular conservative progressions are eventually caught in a cycle of conceptual movement which Grossberg said is the psychological equivalent of "spaces without places" (p. 296). These consumers of popular conservatism are constantly led along by the ruling block, blind, with no sense of direction or critical engagement of the very issues that are used to dominate them..

BGF Ruling Blocs and the Membership Intake Epidemic

An examination of the internal BGF debate over the pledge process makes it clear that a paradigm shift from pledging to MIP has not occurred. It is much easier to find members of the groups initiated after the implementation of the various MIPs who did pledge than it is to find ones who did not. Only two of the seventy-seven men interviewed for this study admitted to having gone through MIP

[10] In the black case, as with any study of marginalization, the temptation is to quickly accept the notion of false consciousness to explain the dilemma. While false consciousness is somewhat accurate, it brings with it the Marxist tendency to reduce the argument to material concerns. Material concerns are not to be discarded, but they do not provide a full picture in and of themselves. Considering this, an engagement of Du Bois' (1903) double consciousness would also be in order here (and possibly more accurate in the African-American case).

properly, even though a good number of them were initiated after pledging was outlawed. When we compare the identity narrative of pro-pledge BGF members (who seem to be winning the battle thus far when the groups' practices are studied) to that of popular conservatives we come full circle and see striking similarities in the tools used to maintain adherence to their agendas.

Hegemony, and in this case domination, always involves a struggle to define and re-articulate the popular or even the essential (Grossberg, 1992). As we have seen, simple membership does not necessarily lead to reification of the programs or practices espoused by organizational leadership. To the contrary, members' approaches are often defined by the very contexts and practices of which the national organizations disapprove. This is so because speaking the language of the popular is more important to many than remaining true to regulations of an organization whose purpose has already been altered by the constant progression of time. It is ironic that one member commented, "Who ever said you need a fraternity to achieve or help mankind?" He goes on to advise any young man seeking these goals to join an "honor society, NAACP, or church action committee." This is ironic, because BGFs were founded for these very reasons — achieving and helping mankind in their own particular way. The search for some elusive brotherhood notwithstanding, what other real purpose can the organizations serve?

Historically, these groups have raged against labels which brand them as "social." They fancy themselves as community service organizations whose mission is to better the life chances of the entire African-American community. It is obvious, however, that there exists a contingent of members to which this purpose is secondary, if not forgotten. If the perceived purposes of the organizations have indeed shifted in the minds of the members, then stated fraternity policy is for all intents and purposes inconsequential. With the progressive loss of memory concerning the macro-political roots of BGFs as socio-political movements, attention can be shifted easily from the political to the popular. This is so because the concept of pledging has moved from its place as sacrificial ritual with clear purposes in the Girardian (1989) sense to one of popular ideology. When positioned as such an ideology, it becomes unclear as to whether many members know why they continue to hold on to the process when it

does not accomplish the task it is invoked to accomplish. How this can be empirically proved or disproved, though, is not important to BGF members. What is important is the fact that, beyond anything else, pledging is a celebration of the pleasures of social differentiation. The rejection of MIP is an attempt to maintain the dividing line by maintaining the practice.

Just as hegemony in the popular conservative sense is organized around an explicitly defined national project of structuring social and political formations to define and mobilize the struggles of everyday life, the project of pledging speaks to the same mission within BGFs. In the BGF case, brothers who have been hazed (be it before or after 1990) form a powerful ruling bloc. This bloc of "real brothers" engages in a struggle with the anti-pledge movements for the hearts, minds, and bodies of entering members. Like the popular conservatives, they are winning. They win because this is not a struggle that speaks to logic or critical thinking, and maybe not even to achievement, scholarship, or altruism of any recognizable sort. It is one that speaks to actives' and potentials' moods, passions, desires, and volitions (Grodin & Lindlof, 1996).

To aid in its struggle against anti-pledge movements, the BGF ruling bloc must (like popular conservatives) establish the frontier which marks a decline in BGF strength of membership and purpose. This decline in fraternity viability, for these men, is marked by the adoption of MIP. Consequently, the MIP frontier is the enemy, for it is defined as the moment when "unhealthy" individuals began to be allowed into the fraternity and infected its body. All pro-pledge rhetoric invokes this belief in one way or another, and BGF affective epidemics are numerous. They claim that MIP members do not know history; have no or questionable love for the organization; did not work to join; are uncomfortable with "real" brothers; cannot handle challenges; have no respect for tradition; will not actively participate beyond the trivial aspects of the groups, etc. The list goes on and whether the assertions are true is not the issue. The fact of the matter is BGFs now have a population of "illegitimate sons" who are targeted as reasons to maintain the violent pledge process. The MIP frontier, as with all post-modern frontiers and the affective epidemics which accompany them, "distributed people and practices (and the investments that connect them) in a specific way" (Grossberg, p.

260). Participation in pledging divides BGF populations by identifications and processes rather than identities and contributions.

If the products of the MIP process are not considered enemies, they certainly exist on the other side of the frontier and are excluded from certain relations for they are plagued with "otherness." Little fraternal space is set aside for these men located outside of the popular conception of what entrance should entail. They are subsequently relegated to a nether world in which they are members of the organizations and not members simultaneously. The struggle in BGFs then is one which is very much concerned with defining what "matters." This is more than a philosophical question, because it involves a very real struggle to define the nature of authority in BGFs. The fact that national policies change, but chapter practices remain constant brings Hobbes to mind, "He is the ruler who rules." Clearly, the national organizations are not the sovereign: they do not rule — the violently initiated ruling bloc does. It is here that we find those that construct various crises in the organizations and use them to determine why, where, and when fraternal benefits are bestowed upon other members. This political process is one which does not work in one direction. Not only does the ruling bloc define parameters of acceptance, but parameters of acceptance also define members of the ruling bloc, for they are mobilized in a very disciplined manner which eventually seizes control of many of their identities (Digeser, 1995; Taylor, 1989; Trupp, 1987).

The assertion that pledging is a "cultural" construct that cannot be understood by outsiders may or may not be true, but there also exists the possibility that it is not understood by insiders. Either way, insiders continue to be moved by the project because of its emotive and social appeal. Undoubtedly, pledging does produce a common experience on some levels. Whether the experience is necessary, positive, or negative is debatable. But, it is clear that once someone enters this field of experience they quite often "find themselves almost uncontrollably situated on or at least pulled toward 'the right' regardless of their ideological relations (or lack of relations) with the Right" (Grossberg, p. 283). It should be clear that those who wish to maintain pledging must be considered the Right, for they espouse the conservative ideal of never letting go of the past, because to let go opens the door to destructive consequences. These conservatives,

like all conservatives, strive to establish substance and meaning where individuals are concerned based on an idyllic (or even mythic) past resting on a perception of "when fraternities were what they ought to be." The invocation of affective epidemics have far reaching ramifications as Grossberg indicates:

> Affective epidemics define empty sites which, as they travel, can be contextually re-articulated. These mobile sites are constantly fetishized, invested with values disproportionate to their actual worth. Their most important function is to proliferate wildly so that, like a moral panic, once an affective epidemic is put into place, it is seen everywhere, displacing every other possible investment. But unlike moral panics, such epidemics are not always negatively charged and they have no specific focal point of identity, working instead through structures of identification and belonging. Mattering places are transformed into vectors so that the concerns and investment of real social history become the ruins of a displaced, perhaps even misplaced, paranoia. In response to a condition that has been often characterized as "cultural weightlessness," the new conservatism establishes a daily economy of saturated panics. This leaves only two possibilities: either fanaticism or sentimentality, both struggling to make a difference within a condition of affective excess (Grossberg, p. 284).

Finally, whether pledging is driven by fanaticism or sentimentality is not certain. It is more than likely driven by both. What Grossberg is speaking to is the important invention and reinvention of fetishization and misplaced paranoia. Is it really possible that MIP, in and of itself, has or even could destroy the very fabric of black fraternities as some members believe? Conversely, is pledging the tool which can really deliver fraternities to and beyond old heights of success? Whether it can or cannot accomplish such a task, a number of pledging's features offer perplexing quandaries. The most obvious issues is the contradiction between the fraternities' stated rejection of pledging and members' actions which continue to perpetuate it. The reality is, regardless of whether the process is coveted or condemned by national officers or philosophers, its appeal con-

tinues to mobilize men. It not only mobilizes them, but mobilizes them with such force that it has all but closed off the possibility of a sustained, organized movement to dethrone it. In most circles, it has all but erased those fractions of the fraternities' populations that have not received its stamp of authenticity. These "paper" or "cat" individuals are not embraced, because they carry the contagion which is perceived as having the potential of unraveling the fabric of the fraternal orders. These MIP initiates are viewed as infectious, because their initiation experiences cannot compare to those of duly pledged members.

Engaging BGFs as having ruling blocs, a pledge frontier and epidemics established through narratives which mobilize potential initiates is telling. It is telling because these are the very factors which ultimately substitute a mechanical discursive tradition that locates blame for BGF shortcomings elsewhere, instead of attempting to find viable oppositional practices which would help eradicate the deficiencies. That many members do not remember the original purposes or adhere to the founding ideals of their organizations is clear. This lack of memory does not matter to them though, because the acceptance that comes with submission to violence is defined by powerful affective lines and practices, not logical reasoning. If this political memory were left intact or reconstructed, then it is here that we should locate a key to resistance to modern ritualization of random violence in BGFs. This is not to say that there is any single or simple conspiracy in BGFs to maintain pledging. It may be that members are involved in a complex conspiracy, but conspire without knowing they conspire. This unconscious conspiracy can be located in narrative, which is one of the most powerful tools of domination used to maintain any conservative structure. Such structures often effectively cause the realm of the Self to collapse into everyday fraternal life. As a result, the world of the individual is increasingly politicized upon the fraternities' contested terrain and loses sight of societies'. Subsequently, these men become more and more vulnerable. They are vulnerable because individuals desire to be accepted by the fraternal body, but can easily be rejected if the correct avenues of acceptance are not followed. This rejection (or perhaps more

important the threat of it) continuously subjects potential and active members to the surveillance of the accepted other. Individuals on this ruling bloc's mobile terrain make every effort to compensate for perceived shortcomings so as not be to be denied acceptance to or to be expelled from the space reserved for "real" members.

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Spatial Mismatch: A Third Generation Survey

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Introduction

As William Julius Wilson notes, "For the first time in the twentieth century most adults in any inner city ghetto neighborhood are not working in a typical week." (Wilson, 1996, xiii). There are a number of competing hypotheses to explain the persistence of urban labor market problems for minority workers. These hypotheses can generally be classified into demand side and supply side explanations. Demand side explanations include discrimination, the decline in demand for unskilled workers, and the lack of jobs for inner city workers. Job unavailability is generally attributed to deindustrialization, occupational bifurcation (skills mismatch), and employment deconcentration (spatial mismatch). This survey examines the recent literature on the spatial mismatch hypothesis, a research agenda that has generated a considerable level of empirical work for explaining the persistent problems of black workers.

The core proposition of the spatial mismatch argument hypothesizes that racial discrimination in the housing market, in tandem with the suburbanization of low skilled jobs, has contributed significantly to the high unemployment and/or low wages of inner city minority workers.

The spatial mismatch hypothesis has been the theoretical and empirical underpinning of a number of policy initiatives addressing

Research funded by the Ford Foundation.

inner city poverty, in particular the federal empowerment zone initiatives, the state enterprise zone programs, the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Moving to Opportunity programs, and the Gautreaux initiative in Chicago, among others.

Research into spatial mismatch has ebbed and flowed. The seminal paper in the area is Kain's article in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (1968). Kain's argument was that housing segregation negatively affected the distribution of black employment. Kain's research rested on data from a 1952 Detroit traffic study and a 1956 Chicago traffic study. These were metropolitan areas that were, and are, characterized by high levels of segregation. He found that black employment shares were a positive function of black residential shares and a negative function of commuting distance.

But Kain's work generated a considerable amount of counter evidence. Offner and Saks (1971) found that Kain's result depended critically on the functional form employed. On the positive side, Mooney (1969) found that non-white employment rates in different SMSA were

correlated with employment in the central city and the extent of reverse commuting. Bennett Harrison (1974) argued that white flight left blacks in a stronger position to compete for the remaining center city jobs.[1]

One turning point in the research was a paper by David Ellwood (1986), of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, that constituted significant counter evidence to the mismatch hypothesis. Ellwood focused on teenagers in the Chicago area. The analysis of teenagers (subsequently pursued by Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist) is valuable because it avoids the simultaneity of jobs and residential location — teenagers don't choose their locations. Ellwood found that (1) the employment experience of black and white teenagers in the same neighborhood was the same as that of those not in the same neighborhood; (2) white youth have better employment rates in border areas; and (3) black employment rates in areas in the west side of Chicago with many employers was the same as the employment rates in the south side of Chicago with few employers. More-

[1] Moreover, Harrison found that blacks living outside the central city had the same income as blacks living inside the central city. However, oddly enough, Harrison only looked at non-poor blacks in making the comparison.

over, no measure of accessibility improved the predictions of Ellwood's employment equation. He concluded, famously, that the problem was "race, not space."

While Ellwood's work cast doubt on the mismatch hypothesis among economists, sociologists sustained interest in the hypothesis; particularly Kasarda (1989) and William Julius Wilson in *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987). Wilson examined the complex conditions that led to the expansion of Chicago's black ghetto. One principal component of these complex conditions was structural economic change brought about by job flight from ghetto areas.

Among economists the work of Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist (1990, 1991) also helped to revive the hypothesis. Ihlandfeldt and Sjoquist found a significant impact of commuting distance on youth unemployment. They found that between one-third and one-half of the employment gap between black and white youth could be explained by job access. They also found that employer proximity to black residences and public transit increased the likelihood of hiring blacks.

Three major surveys, by Holzer (1991), Jencks and Mayer (1990), and Kain (1992) summarized the literature at the end of the 1980s. Holzer and Kain were more favorable in their assessment of the accumulated evidence. In his survey, Holzer concluded that (1) decentralization of population and employment had continued, (2) residential segregation had declined, but much more slowly for blacks than for Hispanics and Asians, (3) blacks in the central cities have less access to employment than blacks and whites in the suburbs, and (4) unlike other groups, blacks face higher wages in suburbs than in the central cities. None of this meant, however, that the spatial mismatch hypothesis explained lower employment for blacks.

Kain's survey did criticize the literature for using residential segregation as a measure of the mismatch. He argued that segregation measures, such as indices of dissimilarity, do not measure the distance of the ghetto from jobs. Jencks and Mayer were less sanguine; they concluded that the empirical evidences does not support the conclusion that residential segregation affects the aggregate demand for black labor.

There are several reasons for revisiting this literature. First, most of this research was performed on data that are now thirty to forty years old. As Jencks and Mayers observed, while discrimination may

have declined, spatial mismatch may have worsened since 1970. Moreover, the patterns of segregation may have changed. Second, the spatial mismatch thesis has rested on weak conceptual and theoretical foundations which have in part been addressed since 1990. Third, the earlier surveys called for an analysis of longitudinal data, which has since been undertaken. Fourth, the early literature generally covered only blacks and did not address women and Hispanics.

This paper provides a survey of the most recent spatial mismatch literature and a brief discussion of policy alternatives. The focus is also on areas ignored in previous surveys, in particular theory and policy, females and immigrants.

Are There Jobs Missing in the Ghetto?

The threshold question remains "are there jobs missing in the ghetto?" Jaworsky (19997) reports data to the effect that in six of the eight largest metropolitan areas almost all of the job growth took place in the suburbs during the 1980s. But Harrison's insight of population moving faster than jobs was subsequently confirmed in data provided by Kasarda (1989), who showed that Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, New York, and Philadelphia lost 500,000 jobs from 1970 to 1980, but lost 2 million people. This is also part of Mead's (1992) argument that there is an abundance of jobs for low skilled workers, but a reluctance on the workers' part to look for and accept those jobs.

There are 3.4 million non-working black poor, but no one estimates that nearly that many inner city jobs have been lost due to spatial mismatch. At a more particular level, Bendick and Egan (1988) found that in metropolitan Washington, D.C., 33 percent of the jobs were in the inner city and an additional 45 percent of the jobs were in the inner ring of the suburbs around the central city. Facts such as these suggest that at best the spatial mismatch argument is a partial explanation of the problems facing inner city workers.

Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

The theoretical work of Bruckner and Martin (1997), Martin (1997), and Arnott (1998) has raised several theoretical/conceptual problems with the spatial mismatch literature. Bruckner and Martin developed an island-city model to examine the welfare implications of restricted locational choices facing black workers. The effect of

restricted locational choices shows up primarily as longer commute times and higher housing prices. The Bruckner-Martin model is market clearing so no unemployment results.

Martin (1997) shows that job decentralization improves welfare. On the one hand, theory would predict that manufacturing would leave the central cities for the suburbs, as it has. Manufacturing has higher land-to-capital ratios, and those should migrate to areas where land is cheaper, assuming that transportation facilities are adequate. The big investment in highways that began in the 1950s facilitated the exodus of manufacturing from the central cities. On the other hand, housing discrimination with its attendant impact on commuting time reduces the welfare for blacks. But Martin notes that commutes can be compensated for through wages, housing prices, commute times, and neighborhood amenities. Thus, in the empirical literature there is a need to show that blacks are not compensated for longer commutes in the form of lower housing prices.

Arnott (1998) used a general equilibrium model to raise several other conceptual theoretical issues with the literature. First, he noted that spatial mismatch treats the suburbanization of jobs as exogenous, when in fact job movement may be a "flight from blight."[2] Second, there is no longer a black central city core surrounded by a suburban fringe. Third, why should not job decentralization result in a fall in the downtown wage rather than a loss of jobs? Fourth, what is the impact of job decentralization on educated black workers?

Simultaneity of Location and Jobs

The biggest conceptual problem has been the simultaneity problem — simultaneity of location and job status. Simply put, good workers move to good jobs, or, more particularly, there has been a selective migration of more employable blacks to the suburbs. Simultaneity was a problem, for example, with the Price and Mills 1985) study. Using the 1978 CPS files, they found that central city residence explained 6 percent of the 34 percent difference in wages between blacks and whites; 15 percent was due to employment discrimination. But their study did not control for differences between those blacks who moved to the suburbs and those blacks who stayed in the central city. Spatial mismatch can result from either supply or demand fac-

[2]Lemann (1991), at 81-83, 242-43. See also Benabou (1996).

tors. Jencks and Mayers (1990) concluded that the failure to study the simultaneity problem has been the central failure of the spatial mismatch literature.

The use of micro data focusing on youth to solve the simultaneity problem was a strength of Ihlanfeldt (1992). But establishing a spatial mismatch for youth does not establish spatial mismatch as the over-arching determinant for the state of urban Black America.

Another approach to solving the simultaneity problem has been through use of evidence from policy evaluation studies, the Gautreaux program in particular. The Gautreaux program grew out of litigation with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) in which the plaintiffs won a court ruling that the CHA had intentionally segregated blacks. As part of the settlement, the CHA was required to disperse some of its tenants. In the Gautreaux program some tenants were placed in the suburbs. Thus, residential choice was exogenous. Rosenbau and Popkin (1995) found significant employment effects from the Gautreaux program, even after controlling for personal differences. Those relocated to the suburbs were 13 percent more likely to find employment.

Longitudinal Research

Another approach to addressing this simultaneity is through longitudinal data sets. Holzer called for longitudinal research in his 1990 survey, and Kain (1992) suggested looking at personnel records.

Zax and Kain (1991), in a study of payroll records in Detroit, found that whites with longer commutes were more likely to quit their jobs than whites with shorter commutes, but the length of the commute made little difference to black quits.

The movement of a firm may also address the simultaneity problem, because then the firm is exogenous. Zax and Kain (1996) found that black workers were more likely to quit following plant relocation to the suburbs. Zax did not interview workers and treated the firm move as exogenous, when in fact the firm may have been moving away from black workers.

Fernandez (1994) did interview workers in his investigation of the relocation of a Milwaukee food processing plant. The plant moved from a central city location to a suburban location. Fernandez estimated the size of the disruption and cost. He found that there was a

spatial mismatch and that the impact was most severe for minorities. Fernandez had good evidence that the firm was not moving in order to change its work force.

Ross (1988) addressed the simultaneity problem by using longitudinal data in the Panel Study on Income Dynamics. He jointly tested whether race and job access had independent effect on the joint probability of changes in employment and residential location. He found that job access did have an independent effect on employment but race did not. The direct effect of race only occurs due to racial differences in residential location. He felt that this could be due to discrimination or differential information.

Tests for Mismatch: Wage Gradients

One long-standing approach to testing for mismatch has been to examine wage gradients. A positive wage gradient, that is, lower wages in central city, as taken as evidence of spatial mismatch. Or, more precisely, the suburbs should have a higher expected wage, where the expected wage equals the wage times the probability of employment. The textbook urban model posits employers locating in the center city, workers in the center city and suburbs, and those workers with a taste for larger houses living in the suburbs. If the income elasticity of demand for housing is greater than 1, then high income individuals live in the suburbs.

In the early literature, Danziger and Weinstein (1976) found little evidence of a wage gradient between ghetto and non-ghetto jobs. Straszheim (1980) did find a positive wage gradient for black workers, but not for white workers.

More recently, McMillan (1993), using 1980 PUMS data for Detroit, found that blacks required a premium to work in the suburbs. The problem in the previous literature is that, with the exception of Ihlanfeldt (1988), all the wage gradient studies viewed location as exogenous. McMillan avoided this problem by using maximum likelihood techniques. As a result, he found, unlike Ihlanfeldt (1988), strong evidence of selection bias in the estimated earnings functions. He found that while blacks commanded a premium for suburban employment, whites accepted a discount for working in the suburbs.

In a subsequent study, Ihlanfeldt and Young (1996) found that wages were lower in the city than the suburbs for the Atlanta fast

food industry. They found that access to public transportation and distance from the central city explained 69 percent of the variation in black employment in the fast food industry in metro Atlanta. Nevertheless, African Americans were more likely to seek employment in the central city.

In a recent study, Zhang (1998) failed to find a positive wage gradient in Cleveland. Zhang applied a two-sample t-test procedure to data from the Ohio Economic Development Database. Zhang found no statistically significant mean wage differences in 14 or 18 industries studied between central city and suburban firms.

Search

If blacks live farther from work, they may compensate for the greater distance by looking more for work. Holzer et al. (1994) did not find significant racial differences in the single farthest distance looking for work, but did find that unemployment spells were affected by job decentralization.

Rogers (1997) studied unemployment duration by estimating the probability of ending employment of a certain duration. She only studied men receiving unemployment insurance. She found that access to employment was associated with the duration of unemployment. However, the effect of access to employment on unemployment duration was sensitive to the definition of employment access.

Segregation and Restriction on Black Mobility

A key element in the spatial mismatch literature is that blacks are limited in their ability to move to where job opportunities are located. Suburban residential segregation has been taken as exogenously given. That is, discrimination and exclusionary zoning prevent black entry into the suburbs. Consequently, in the older literature one approach to studying the question was to examine the relationship between segregation indices and black employment. In the early literature, Master (1974) found that segregation indices did not predict unemployment rates for blacks. In contrast, Leonard (1987), in a study of Los Angeles and Chicago, found that distance from the ghetto was one of the strongest determinants of the racial composition of the labor force. Kain later replied that the spatial mismatch test was a test of the impact of segregation and job movement, not just segregation.

In all of this discussion restrictions on black movement to the suburbs is taken for granted. Yet there has been a massive move of blacks to the suburbs. The black population in the suburbs grew from 2.2 million in 1950 to 10.6 million in 1995, 31.9 percent of the total black population, the biggest migration of Blacks in history.[3] Can spatial mismatch be that bad if minority suburbanization has proceeded at such a rapid pace?

Kain (1993), while noting the sharp drop in all white census tracts, argues that segregation has not changed much. Kain's view has some support in the work of Nancy Denton who argues that phenomena identified as hyper-segregation in the analysis of the 1980 residential segregation data has not abated during the last ten years."[4]

As for black suburbanization, Kain had argued that blacks simply moved to suburban ghetto. Scheidnen and Phelan (1993) did find that the growth of black suburbs was in low income areas close to the central city. There was more rapid growth where blacks already in the suburbs.

But the literature does seem to ignore the audit evidence, in Atlanta and elsewhere, which often suggests that Hispanics face more housing segregation than blacks. But Hispanics face less spatial mismatch and less residential concentration.

Transportation and Travel Time

Another way of testing spatial mismatch is to determine whether or not it takes blacks longer to get to work. The early literature was not supportive of the mismatch hypothesis in this area. Meyer and Gomez-Ibanez (1981) found from review of transportation demonstration projects that there was little evidence that workers found new jobs with new bus service. They found that low-income workers used cars for 74 percent of their trips. Gordewn, Kumar and Richardson (1988) found that in the National Personal Transportation Studies from 1977-84 neither minorities nor low-income workers had longer commutes. More recently, Jaworsky (1997) found modest differences in travel time from high poverty areas versus low poverty areas using census data.

Recent work using the American Housing Survey provided evidence of longer minority commutes. Taylor and Ong (1995), in

[3]Thernstrom and Thernstrom (1998), at 211.
[4]Denton (1994), at 63.

using data from the 1977-78 and 1987 American Housing Survey, found that commuting patterns between white and minority workers, including unskilled workers, have been converging. They also found that, using a longitudinal analysis, the average commute time for minority workers living in minority areas (those who did not move) actually decreased. Minority commuters had longer commutes due to their reliance on public transportation. Gabriel and Rosenthal (1996), in a study based on the 1985 and 1989 American Housing Survey, found that holding neighborhood characteristics, wage and housing prices constant, blacks face longer commute time than whites. They did find that one-third of the commute was offset by neighborhood amenities.

The Ihlanfeldt/Sjoquist work also found evidence that commuting times, controlling for mode of transportation, are higher for Blacks.[5] Holzer, Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist (1994) found that access to cars raises the distance searched for work, wages and the probability of securing employment.

Hispanics and Minority Females

Hispanic youth, particularly Puerto Ricans, also have low employment relative to white youth. Ihlanfeldt (1993), using travel time as the measure of job access and the 1980 PUMS for his data, found that between 20 and 30 percent of the racial differences in employment rates between white and Hispanic youth could be explained by job access.

Interestingly, there has been considerably less research on the impact of spatial mismatch on minority females. In principal, spatial mismatch should be more important for minority females because women generally prefer to work closer to home. Moreover, minority females have the highest poverty rates. In an earlier study Vrooman and Greenfield (1980) rejected the spatial mismatch hypothesis for women.

More recently, McLafferty and Preston (1992) in a study of women in northern New Jersey found that black and Hispanic women had poorer job access, as measured by commute times, and as indicated by reliance on public transportation. Thompson (1997) looked at spatial mismatch for black , white and Hispanic females using the

[5]Sjoquist and Ihlanfeldt (1991). See also Ellwood (1986) Leonard (1987).

1990 PUMS and using the same three MSAs as Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist. He looked at working and non-working females. He found spatial mismatch had an impact on racial disparities in labor force participation rates

Policy Implications

The policy discussion has not been as detailed as the analytical discussion of spatial mismatch. Oddly enough, after all the detailed analysis provided in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, Wilson's policy proposals were basically job training and macroeconomic stimulus.[6] The connection of these proposals to spatial and structural mismatch is particularly weak. There are a large number of job creation strategies for the urban poor.[7]

If job access is the problem, then either people can be moved to where the jobs are, or jobs can be moved to where the people are. Currently, the principal strategy of moving jobs to people has been empowerment zones and enterprises zones. Empowerment zones bring jobs to the workers and improve community life. Research on federal empowerment zones has been limited. Empowerment zones have been generally criticized for lack of effectiveness. Papke (1997) found that the cost of job creation in empowerment zones has been too high. Hughes (1991) also concluded that it is too costly to reverse the movement of jobs from the central city to the suburbs.

Empowerment zones have relied on tax incentives for employment creation, much as the Targeted Job Tax Credit has done. Burtless (1985) found that in some instance such tax credits may stigmatize low income workers. Bishop and King (1991) noted very low levels of participation in employment tax credit programs.

Recently the SBA started a program of geographical procurement preferences.[8] Several states are discussing parallel initiatives. These programs have the advantage that employers are given a major revenue incentive, as opposed to a tax incentive, to hire, or at

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[6]Although Osterman (1991) did find that strong local macroeconomic performance did have a significant effect on poverty and unemployment in Boston.

[7]See Blank (1994) for a discussion. Of course, job creation in and of its self does not end poverty. Low income jobs may need supplemental assistance from the Earned Income Tax Credit and similar measures.

[8]See www.sba.gov/hubzone/questions.html. But note that there are no HUBzones in the metro Atlanta area.

least to locate near, workers in distressed areas. Geographical preferences do have the advantage that employers are given a larger incentive than tax incentives. It is too early to assess the impact of this initiative.

Insofar as private sector employers remain suspicious of the quality of inner city hires, public sector employment (PSE) remains an element of a job creation strategy addressing spatial mismatch. The standard criticisms of public sector employment approaches have been that (1) PSE jobs are bad, (2) PSE jobs are a substitute for private sector jobs, (3) PSE jobs are cream-skimming, and cost more than they are worth. An additional point, raised by Mincy (1994) is that public sector employment has targeted welfare mothers and not inner-city fathers.

Finally, some analysts continue to look at minority business development as a path to inner-city job creation. Michael Porter (1995) has argued that the problem with inner city job creation is that the wrong firms attempt to locate there. Bates (1994) has argued that while black firms disproportionately hire black workers, black firms should not locate in inner city neighborhoods.

To move people to where the jobs are, the moves can either be through better transportation, or people can move their residence. Transportation has been primarily through small projects such as the Moving to Opportunity Demonstration projects. But these projects met with political opposition and were canceled (Yinger 1996). Another approach to moving workers is challenging zoning restrictions. While there was important litigation challenging the racially disparate impact of zoning in the 1970s, that litigation has since quieted.

Conclusions

The evidence for spatial mismatch remains mixed. The biggest problem with the current literature is that in its attempts to provide increasingly technical responses to the simultaneity problem, there is less focus on separating what is structural isolation and what is social isolation. More important, the literature has not addressed the larger aggregate question: are there jobs missing in the ghetto? Whatever the theory and evidence shows, the policy initiatives based on the mismatch hypothesis have been halfhearted. But

whether the problem is social isolation or spatial mismatch, jobs will have to brought to the ghetto in a way that has not been the case so far. The geographical preferences hold the most hope as a new initiative in this troubled area.

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Fear of Crime Among African-American Males in Two American Cities: A Multivariate Analysis

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Abstract

This study examined the distribution of fear of crime and the influence of selected predictor variables of fear of crime among African-American male residents of Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, D.C. The sample consists of over 240 male participants between the ages of 15 and 99. An important anomaly was found: 73 percent of the Atlanta sample and 76 percent of the Washington sample do not view fear of crime as problematic in their communities. However, the other findings support existing research positing a relationship between fear of crime, age, marital status, and education.

Concerns about personal safety and the likelihood of being victimized are major problems in American society. Studies tell us that

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1998 annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology. Data for this paper were made available by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Data for *Research on Minorities, (1981): Race and Crime in Atlanta and Washington, DC* were originally collected by Julius Debro. Neither the collector of the original data set nor the consortium bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here. Direct all correspondence to Keith D. Parker, Department of Sociology, 711 Oldfather Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0324

a high percentage of Americans are afraid to walk alone in the neighborhood at night or visit community parks (Braungart et al. 1980; Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Parker and Ray 1990). Similarly, studies tell that fear of crime appears to be highest among the urban, aged, and women (Bankston et al. 1990; Hill et al. 1985; Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Rao and Rao 1988). The media of mass communications (e.g., books, films, magazines, newspapers, television networks, radio stations) also tell us that fear of crime restricts individuals' quality of life and freedom of movement. For example, in an editorial appearing in the August 1979 issue of *Ebony* magazine, the publisher stated that "Black communities from the Atlantic to the Pacific are becoming locked and divided camps, beleaguered and fearful places of bars, guards, alarms, metal gates and bolted doors."

This study describes the distribution of fear of crime and examines the influence of selected predictor variables on fear of crime among African-American male residents of Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington D.C. While previous research has identified some important correlates of fear of crime between racial and aged groups, few studies have focused on fear among African-American males without regard to their previous victimization experiences. By looking at characteristics of male residents from different cities, we may be in a better position to identify more clearly the characteristics of fearful black males in American society.

Previous Research

Fear of crime among segments of the population has been the subject of research over the past decades. Specifically, areas of research within the fear of crime literature have focused on 1) gender and fear of crime, 2) socioeconomic status and fear of crime, 3) age, and fear of crime, 4) education and fear of crime, 5) marital status and fear of crime, and 6) household income and fear of crime. The most persistent findings indicate that older people and females report higher levels of fear of crime (Antunes et al., 1977; Baumer, 1978; Braungart et al, 1980; Clemente and Kleiman, 1977; Ollenberger, 1981; Ortega and Myles, 1987; Parker and Ray, 1990; Parker et al., 1993).

Income and education have been examined frequently for their effects on fear of crime. In the general U.S. population, people re-

porting the lowest income and fewest years of schooling tend to report the highest levels of fear (Baumer, 1978; Braungart et al., 1980; Clemente and Kleiman, 1977; Ortega and Myles, 1987; Parker et al., 1993).

Several previous studies examined the relationship between marital status and fear of crime. The results generally indicate that individuals who are not married report higher levels of fear (Braungart et al., 1980; Parker, 1988). These studies suggest that, while there seem to be high levels of fear of crime among households with very young children, certain groups of unmarried people are especially fearful, particularly elderly people living alone and urban dwellers.

Methods

Communities Studied. Demographic characteristics of the two cities included in this study are provided for the purpose of identifying both similarities and differences in population size, crime rates and fear of crime levels. According to the 1981 Statistical Abstract of the United States, Atlanta, Georgia's 1980 population was 425,000. Of this number 283,000 (66.6 percent) were African Americans. Washington D.C.'s 1980 population was 638,000, of which 448,000 (70 percent) were African Americans. Although the population of Washington was larger than the population of Atlanta, the percentage of African American residents in the two cities is similar and is therefore suitable for comparative analysis.

Examination of the reported crime rates in each city is useful and also provides valuable information. According to the 1980 Uni-

Table 1
Attitude Toward Fear of Crime Among Residents of Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, D.C.

Variable	Atlanta Sample (N = 132)	Washington Sample (N = 108)
Fear of Crime...		
Not a Problem	72.9	75.7
Somewhat a Problem	19.4	20.6
A Big Problem	7.7	7.7

form Crime Reports: Crime in the United States, the number of index offenses (excluding arson) reported in Atlanta in 1980 was 59,394, or a rate of .13975 (offenses/population). The number of reported violent offenses (i.e., robbery, murder, forcible rape and aggravated assault) was 11,075, or a rate of .026. Property crime offenses (e.g., burglary, motor vehicle theft and larceny) totaled 48,319, or a rate of .1136. The total number of reported index offenses (excluding arson) for Washington was 63,668, or a rate of .09979. Regarding violent offenses, Washington reported 12,772 such acts, or a rate of .020. Washington reported 50,896 property crime offenses, or a rate of .0797.

These data reveal that in 1980 Atlanta experienced higher crime rates than Washington, especially property offenses. What is interesting about these data is almost identical percentages of residents of Washington and Atlanta expressed similar concerns about fear of crime. As reported in Table 1, 73 percent of the Atlanta sample and 76 percent of the Washington sample indicated fear of crime was "not a big problem"; 19 percent of the Atlanta sample and 21 percent of the Washington sample thought fear of crime was "somewhat a problem"; 8 percent of the Atlanta sample and 4 percent of the Washington sample believed fear of crime was "a big problem." We feel the identification of factors affecting fear of crime is important because it will help ascertain differences in fear of crime between the samples and also provide insight into the nature of this social construct.

Sample and Procedure. Data for this study are taken from the social survey titled Research on Minorities (1981): Race and Crime in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. Residents from four communities in Atlanta, Georgia, and four communities in Washington, D.C., were interviewed about a variety of crime and crime-related (i.e., psychological, sociological, criminological) issues.[1] Two communities in Atlanta and Washington, respectively, were designated high-crime areas and the other communities were designated low-crime areas. The principal investigator of this data set was Julius Debro.

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1 The survey measures the relationship between crime and fear of crime, sociodemographic, familial and religious factors within black communities in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. The data were collected through personal interviews using a multi-stage area probability sample.

The interviews were conducted during strategic times (the early evening) to increase the likelihood of reaching individuals at home. Contact was made with 624 residents and questionnaires were completed by 621 respondents. Approximately 240 respondents identified themselves as black or African American male and are included in this study.[2] The ages of the respondents range from 15 to 99 years.

Measurement Variables

Fear of Crime. Fear of crime was measured by asking respondents about crime and fear of crime in their community. This question asked about the problematic nature of "fear of crime" in the community. Response categories were "not a problem," "somewhat a problem," or "a big problem." While the question of what constitutes the best indicator of fear of crime has not been settled in the scientific literature, we feel the measure used here has strong validity and reliability because it taps the respondents' perception of crime in the community.

The independent variables consist of gender, marital status, age, designated crime tract, education and family income. Age is coded as teenager (15 – 18), young adult (19 –5), adult (26 – 64), and senior (65+); marital status is coded "0" not married and "1" married; community crime tract is coded "0" low-crime and "1" high-crime.

Family income is the total income from all sources last year: it is coded "O" no income, "1" $100 – 5000, "2" $5001 – 12000, "3" $12001 – 18000, "4" $18001 – 25000, and "5" $25001 and over. Education is measured as "O" still enrolled in high school, "1" less than high school, "2" high school graduate or equivalent–GED, "3" some college, "4" college graduate or professional training.

Description of the Samples

Table 2 contains descriptive information about the Atlanta and Washington samples (55 percent and 45 percent, respectively). These data show 62 percent of the Atlanta sample and 63 percent of the

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2 When analyzing the sample across racial identification it was found that respondents identifying themselves as "other" than Black or Afro-Americans numbered only 13 respondents: Black/African = 1; Black/West Indian or Caribbean = 6; Spanish = 1; Other = 5. To avoid any unfounded generalizations across race, and since the number of "nonBlack or Afro Americans" was too small for confidence in analyzing them as subgroups, we deleted them from our study.

Table 2
Sample Characteristics (Percentages)

Category	Atlanta Sample (N = 132)	Washington Sample (N = 108)
Age		
Teen	26	21
Young Adult	21	21
Adult	42	49
Senior	11	9
Marital Status		
Not married	62	63
Married	38	37
Family Income		
No income	2	
$100 – $5,000	10	5
$5,101 – $12,000	19	8
$12,001 – $18,000	37	15
$18,001 – $25,000	12	23
$25,000 +	20	49
Community crime tract		
Low crime	50	41
High crime	50	59
Education		
Still enrolled in school	18	19
Less than high school	27	16
High school graduate or GED	24	17
Some college	24	30
College graduate or professional training	7	18

Washington sample were not married; 50 percent of the Atlanta sample and 59 percent of the Washington sample lived in high-crime communities. Approximately equal percentages of the Atlanta sample and the Washington sample were still attending school (18 percent and 19 percent, respectively); 24 percent of the Atlanta sample and 17 percent of the Washington sample had completed high school (or the GED); 24 percent of the Atlanta sample and 30 percent of the

Table 3
Correlations

Variable	Atlanta Sample (N = 132)	Washington Sample (N = 108)
Age	.042	–.039
Marital Status	.059	–.071
Family Income	.026	–.072
Community crime track	–.167	–.048
Education	.252*	.041

*P < .01

Table 4
Standardized Regression Coefficients of Fear of Crime on Predictor Variables for the Atlanta and Washington Samples

Predictor Variables	Atlanta Sample (N = 132)	Washington Sample (N = 108)
Age	–.269	–.131
Marital status	.219*	.031
Income status	–.055	–.123
Crime rate of Tract	–.214*	–.060
Education	.274*	.028
R^2	.138	.019
Adj. R^2	.087	–.049

*P < .05 **P < .10

Washington sample attended college; 7 percent of the Atlanta sample and 18 percent of the Washington sample completed a four-year college degree or a professional degree or training. Two percent of the Atlanta sample reported zero income; 29 percent of the Atlanta sample and 13 percent of the Washington sample reported an annual income between $100 and $12,000; and 20 percent of the Atlanta sample and 49 percent of the Washington sample reported an

income of $25,000 or more. The Atlanta sample consisted of 26 percent teenagers and the Washington sample consisted of 21 percent teenagers; 21 percent of young adults comprised each sample; 11 percent of the Atlanta sample and 9 percent of the Washington sample comprised the senior population.

Results

Correlation analysis is used to assess relationships between fear of crime and the predictor variables. Table 3 discloses that a significant bivariate relationship exists between fear of crime and one of the predictor variables for the Atlanta sample: fear of crime and education $R = .252$, $p \sim .05$).

Contrary to expectations, zero-order correlations between age, marital status, family income, community crime tract and fear of crime are not significant for the Atlanta sample. Also, zero-order correlations between the predictor variables and fear of crime are not significant for the Washington sample. The absence of a significant relationship between these variables may indicate that other effects are present. In order to delineate the effects of the predictor variables on fear of crime, multiple regression analysis will be used. Findings from the regression analysis will be presented for both samples.

Standardized coefficients for the regression of fear of crime on marital status, family income, education, age, community crime tract for the Atlanta sample are presented in column one of Table 4. The findings show education (beta = .274), age (beta = -.269), community crime tract (beta = -.214), and marital status (beta = .219) have significant independent effects on fear of crime. People with higher levels of education, people living in high-crime communities, younger respondents, and people who were married reported a higher level of fear of crime than people with lower education levels, people residing in low-crime communities, older respondents, and people who were not married.

Column two of Table 4 contains the standardized coefficients for the regression of fear of crime on marital status, education, family income, age, and community crime tract for the Washington sample. Surprisingly, these findings show that none of the predictor variables had significant independent effects on fear of crime.

Conclusion

The first purpose of this study was to examine the distribution of fear among African American male residents of Atlanta, Georgia/ and Washington, D.C. The findings indicate that approximately 19% of the Atlanta sample and 21% of the Washington sample felt fear of crime was "somewhat problematic" in their communities. The findings also indicate that 8% of the Atlanta sample and 4% of the Washington sample reported fear of crime in their communities was "a big problem." In short, almost equal percentages of Atlanta and Washington respondents indicated fear of crime was problematic in their communities.

The second purpose of this study was to examine the influence of selected predictor variables on fear of crime among African American male residents of Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, D.C. The results for the Atlanta sample disclose that people with higher levels of education, people living in high-crime communities, younger respondents, and people who were married report higher levels of fear of crime than people with lower education levels, people residing in low-crime communities, older respondents, and people who were not married.

The demographic nature of the present sample restricts generalizability of the findings, but points the way toward a more extended analysis. Additional research may help determine if urbanicity is a conditional factor in fear of crime among African American males. Although none of the predictor variables had significant effects on fear of crime among African-American male residents of Washington, D.C., comparative urban and urban related research can be beneficial in two ways. First, assessing the predictive effects of selected variables on fear of crime among urban residents extends (potentially) the generalizability of research on fear of crime. Second, if different descriptive and causal patterns emerge from these analyses, a greater understanding of the manner in which urban environments influence personal feelings about crime can be determined.

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Before the Rescue Squad Arrived: Community Sponsorship of Exceptional African-American Children in Poor Communities

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Introduction

This paper presents the results of a small qualitative study of the social origins of black physicians from poor urban and southern communities. The study examines contextual factors in the communities of these high achievers that help to explain their great academic and professional success as young adults. We argue that it was the community that identified andnurtured these gifted children, thus making it possible for them to attend college and professional school. Within many communities there were indigenous traditions and resources that were mobilized for star students.

Researchers in the area of gifted and exceptional children have historically ignored African-Americans. this omission is just now being addressed with attention being paid to cognitive measurement issues and to concerns regarding the designing of adequate school programs to enhance the development of long-ignored exceptional children of color.

Still, there is a need to push emerging social scientific concerns about exceptional children of color populations, such as African Americans, beyond the critical realm of cognitive ability measurement and school programs. There is the at least equally critical

need to focus on contextual issues central to understanding the ways in which exceptional children in oppressed status categories come to manifest extraordinary intellectual abilities. Concretely, we must begin to think about the ways in which African-American and other exceptional children of color develop their unusual intellectual talents in matrixes of relatively stable patterns of human interaction, i.e. webs of social organizations, such as institutions, networks, peer groups and communities.

Ever since the origins of the exceptional children field in the early 1920s, researchers have focused on intellectually gifted children from middle/affluent class background (Terman, 1925). They have been interested principally in constructing and applying tests and programs geared towards identifying and educating the gifted based on the norms and values of middle/affluent Euro-Americans. Needless to say, this convention in exceptional children research has institutionalized a taken-for-granted cognitive map in research processes which has resulted in culture- and class-biased traditions in the relatively few studies done on exceptional children of color. This middle/affluent class bias has resulted in the "minute presence of African-American or other children of color in the collected data" being explained away in fictive biological (their "white blood") or middle-income socioeconomic terms (their "professional" family background), depending on the historical climate of opinion (Terman, 1925; Bond, 1972).

On the other hand, the success of exceptional children of color, especially African Americans, tends to be explained in terms of what could be called the burning house rescue squad metaphor. Simply, exceptional African Americans from impoverished families and communities are saved from perishing by powerful Euro-centric institutions and individual sponsors external to their communities who scoop them up, polish them up and send them on their way up the mobility ladder. Especially predominantly white private schools, universities, political parties, private philanthropic foundations, and media have been quite effective in taking the rescue squad credit for discovering and sponsoring the exceptional ghetto kid "just in time (Zuckerman, 1977))." Their testimonials of such heroic deeds, as well as testimonials of their grateful beneficiaries make great copy for mass consumption in a society in which publics assume that the

secret to African-American success is working hard and finding the bootstraps to pull oneself up (the "poverty to success" stories of Clarence Thomas and Colin Powell are the most recent high profile examples of such racialized mobility interpretations).

Both of these approaches miss a vital empirical point. Namely, regardless of the cultural biases of the mainstream press, political processes, and academic interpretations, not all non-affluent African Americans grow up in mud puddles of totally dysfunctional and otherwise negative environments characterized by social disorganization and cultural pathology. Indeed, history demonstrates that not a few African-American parents and other child care providers in poverty have and still do manage to do the necessary things to enable their children to realize their intellectual abilities and to move on outside the community to further develop their extraordinary gifts. At most, the Euro-centric social organizations which eventually propel their African-American beneficiaries into elite, high status occupations, institutions, and communities, are the means through which goals are achieved — goals set by indigenous sponsors years before the mobility patterns began.

It is hard for many mainstream social scientists to understand the importance of this observation since the conventional wisdom in the social sciences about poor African Americans and their social organizations and individual values and priorities is so negative. Nothing, so it is presumed by many, good comes out of the ghetto or the cotton field unless the person is identified and refined by some external, powerful agency. This widespread belief, which is especially apparent in the tone and focus of African-American underclass research in the social sciences (Jencks and Peterson, 1991), has encouraged oversights regarding the social organizational origins and development of intellectually gifted African-American poor children who make it through internalizing and applying coping strategies from indigenous sponsors.

Indigenous sponsorship, like mentorship in general, is a configuration in the form of a ladder a beneficiary uses to gradually climb out of the community and on to other social organizational settings for further life-broadening experiences. This definition of sponsorship differs from the usual individualistic notions portraying a master and a student in a one-to-one relationship. Sponsorship, if it is to work for the upwardly mobile, is more complex than that. It involves

the linking together in a vertical fashion of numerous persons who play crucial roles in identifying, grooming, protecting, and promoting the beneficiary; pulling him or her up through a complex society which is increasingly alien socially and culturally.

The Study

The author began to conceptualize these ideas in 1984 while exploring the life histories of a small sample (N=21, 11 females, 10 males) of African-American baby-boomer medical doctors. These doctors, who were overwhelmingly from small rural southern communities and graduates of black colleges, were defined as "socially deficient" by a prominent foundation program (Stanfield, 1996), which identified them during their senior year in college, placed them in a one-year post-baccalaureate program, and sponsored their admissions into white medical schools.

The foundation program, which recruited some seventy African-American fellows between 1966 and 1971, was rooted in culture of poverty assumptions that were common in 1960s efforts to expand equal access opportunities in higher education for African Americans. Perhaps the most common assumption foundation officers had was that by virtue of residing in the rural south and attending a black college, an African American was socially deprived to such an extent that he or she needed social grooming and additional academic prepping as well as financial assistance before being ready for entry into a white medical school. That was the purpose of the post-baccalaureate year spent in one of several elite private liberal arts colleges. It was to allow the African-American fellows to be coached in pre-med courses and to be exposed to upper middle class white academic culture. In this respect, the foundation program was a rescue squad approach to identifying and sponsoring the career mobility of exceptional African-American young adults viewed as being "socially deficient" due to their communities of origin and black alma maters.

The author was asked originally to write a public relations report on the impressive successes of the foundation program. Instead, he became interested in and negotiated to do pre-adulthood life histories of the program fellows as sources of their intellectual achievements and as resources that enabled them to eventually become

skilled in mastering and passing through alien modes of social organization and culture in their mobility pursuits.

Through administering an in-depth history instrument, the author found there was nothing magical or random about the arrival of sample members in undergraduate colleges, in post-baccalaureate colleges, in medical schools, or in professional practice. Most of them were from poor families and communities in terms of parental and other child provider occupation, income level, and educational levels. Most of the child providers had modest means of livelihood. Even those who were teachers were underpaid professionals with little or no mobility opportunities in the rural-based segregated communities in which most of them lived and worked.

Since the majority of those future doctors interviewed were born in the late 1940s, most attended segregated public schools and were confined to segregated, impoverished African-American communities. Even the few who had teachers for parents and/or other relatives lived out economically marginal lives excluded from more privileged local white communities.

All but a very few of the interviewees, especially those who are now on their way to becoming superstars in their professions, developed as children and adolescents the intellectual qualities that are essential for successful mobility in elite professions, institutions, and communities. Most (1) were avid pleasure readers as children, particularly in science fiction areas; (2) had highly disciplined study skills as children and adolescents; (3) were "good" at math and science in elementary and secondary school (not a few planned to be either a scientist or a medical doctor when they completed their education); and (4) by early adolescence had developed an extraordinary sense of independent thinking and goal setting. Also, most as children and early adolescents had a strong sense that there was not only another world beyond the community, but that they would get there one day.

If we forget community and family contexts, it is easy to understate the significance of the mentioned social skills and perceptions members of the sample developed during childhood and adolescence. The interviewed medical doctors grew up in tightly knit families and communities in which becoming a farm worker or a cab driver or a housewife was the norm, as was the assumption that high school was as far as most would go. The extended families, churches, and com-

munity-based schools in which most of them participated assured great authoritative adult control over the affairs of children and adolescents; especially since such social organizations more often than not enjoyed significant functional integration through overlapping leadership roles (that is, one's Aunt Susie was also one's Sunday School teacher and homeroom primary school teacher). Thus, norm deviation of any sort was difficult to the extreme in the tightly knit community in which most of the fellows were reared.

The key to understanding the ability for the future doctors to be socially different as children and adolescents, and to rise eventually above the typical social horizons of their peers and communities of origin, is the social organizational basis of indigenous sponsorship. Every interviewee was integrated into a configuration of sponsors forming various kinds of vertical chain links from early childhood through late adolescence. After leaving home, most actively attracted other sponsors who took over the process of guiding and promoting their mobility. The positive function of configurations of indigenous sponsors was most clearly apparent in the cases in which the future doctors were the children of illiterate parents or parents who had no noticeable interest in their children's intellectual abilities. In such cases, sponsors were often older siblings and other relatives who had at least some college experience or who had respect for education and intellect. In many cases, the sponsors were school teachers, especially in secondary school science and math fields.

Whoever the sponsors were, they (1) discovered the exceptional intellect of their charge; (2) created the social space and provided the resources for the charge to develop intellectual abilities relatively free from peer and community counter pressures; (3) networked with other sponsors in the community who recognized, encouraged, and protected the unique intellectual abilities of the charge; and (4) provided opportunities for the charge to become socially larger than the community.

Consider the case of Stanecia Leer (all names and places are fictitious) who was reared in rural Mississippi. Her parents separated while she was quite young. Her mother moved to Jackson when Stanecia was three, and her grandparents and other members of her community reared her. Although on the surface in a body of official demographic statistics Stanecia would be considered the victim of a

broken home, her comments explain how being passed around the community contributed to her academic success as a mathematician, student, and now as a physician.

> I came up in rural Mississippi, and in rural Mississippi we did a lot of harvesting for income. So, on a farm with my grandfather we used to pick cotton in our field, in other people's fields, and picking cotton you had to — in the day they would weigh the cotton and then somebody would tabulate the amount of money that the person made; even as a small child during those years, I was motivated to things especially mathematics wise; I was always interested in figures. For example, even [when I was] a very small child they would allow me to actually figure up the amount of work they did that day and allow me to actually figure up how much money they made at the end of the day without any questions and as I went on through this ... as I went along a lot of people continued to motivate me. I started out with a lady named Mrs. Bessy Russell and I really don't remember, I don't remember her, but what I remember is not exactly what my grandmother tells me. But, she took me as a child and taught me. I remember when I started elementary school I had come up with my cousins who were older than me, but I knew how to read before I started school and knew all my time tables.
>
> ***Stanfield:*** Who taught you that?
>
> ***Leer:*** I learned it from them, but this lady, Mrs. Russell, would take me to her house (she was a school teacher); apparently I wanted to read and I wanted to know and she answered many of my questions and then from there ... she taught me a lot, my cousins would be doing their homework at night and I recall just getting involved in their homework and actually learning how to do it and sometimes even better than they did, especially with things having to do with the mathematics area. I can remember those very early years before I even started elementary school. And then, when I went to elementary school, I got adopted by a family: Mrs. Russell who became my

> sixth grade teacher, and her daughter Clara, who was my eleventh grade homeroom teacher. But I got adopted by these people, and they just motivated you to do whatever you wanted. If you said something they would encourage you. I remember being in the sixth grade and her saying to me that she knew what I was going to do when I finished high school, and she said I was doing to college; and I don't remember saying that to her, but she said I did it. So, I'm off to college in sixth grade. So, I just got a lot of motivation from people and really being adopted by this family who made sure that I had sometimes just proper clothing and even when I got to take the SAT test, I remember not having some fairly minute bit of money to take that SAT test, but her daughter, Clara, made sure I took the test.

Communities, and more broadly, societies, have hierarchies in their social organizations. No matter how simple or complex, upward mobility in a particular community and in larger society is dependent upon the mobility aspirant's ability to develop a network of positive sponsors. A sponsor is usually an older and wiser person who acts as the aspirant's guide up the societal hierarchy.

What is so interesting about sponsorship, particularly among the poor and otherwise oppressed, is that in many, if not most, cases, the sponsor has never attained what he/she encourages his/her charge to become. The sponsor, through knowing there is a better world though never experiencing it first hand, gives the aspirant the motivation and the skills needed to eventually accomplish what the sponsor can only dream about.

Sponsoring is most successful when the sponsor acts more as a protector of talent and as a midwife of opportunity, than as a master demanding complete obedience and absolute conformity. This is because the sponsor is in and of the community, and therefore the charge must have the innovative ability to use learned skills and role modeling to transcend the community.

This observation is similar to what Harriet Zuckerman (1977) has remarked about the importance of work style models prominent scientists pass on to their future Nobel Prize winning students. She found that what enabled many Nobel Prize winners she interviewed

to succeed to such great career heights was their ability to adopt their sponsor's work style and apply it to a new set of problems. Sponsors who have "successful" charges encourage them to apply the values, interpersonal skills, and personality they themselves transmit to new situations and sets of problems.

This culture-expanding role of sponsors is crucial in communities in which mobility aspirants succeed by leaving the community and becoming upwardly mobile in a larger society premised upon a different cultural system. What happens is that the cultural attributes mobility aspirants learn from their sponsors — the values, coping mechanisms, and interpersonal skills — become the cultural baggage they bring with them while traveling up the socioeconomic ladder. Both in positive and in negative ways, these indigenous cultural attributes are transformed and applied in new settings: undergraduate school, medical school and medical practices.

To test these assumptions, the interviewed doctors were asked a number of questions about sponsors they had acquired from childhood through the present, or, during their late young adulthood years. Since the author wanted to explore the role of sponsors during preprofessionalization years, the questions were weighted towards sponsorship during the childhood and through pre-undergraduate school adolescent years.

With regard to their educational goals, every interviewed doctor had sponsors during childhood and adolescence, who encouraged and supported their educational attainment. In most, but certainly not all, cases, parents and other child care providers and teachers served as educational sponsors. In a few instances, siblings were educational sponsors. The issue of sponsoring illustrated the importance of extended families in African-American communities since not a few grandparents aunts, uncles, and, to a lesser extent, cousins served as educational sponsors.

Usually no distinction is made between various sponsorship roles. One way of making such a distinction is to categorize some sponsors as having inspirational resources while others have world-opening resources. Sponsors who inspire but have no "world opening" resources are expressive sponsors. Expressive sponsors provide the socioemotional resources and encouragement for their charges to achieve and provide the intellectual atmosphere, for career de-

velopment drive. But they have no tangible resources to help the mobility aspirant transcend the community and no influential contacts outside the community.

The ideal image of an expressive sponsor is a parent or grandparent "who doesn't know but wants his/her child to make something out of him or herself." Examples of expressive sponsors would be an older sibling who encourages, if not pressures, a young sibling into have focused achievement motivation; or a grandparent who "stays after" his grandson about being a doctor, though he does not have the resources to assure he becomes one. An example of the second case is seen in how Harvey Miller decided to become a physician during late childhood.

> ***Stanfield:*** Who was your major academic advisor during your high school years?
>
> ***Miller:*** My grandfather said to me when I was maybe about ten or twelve years old — he said " what do you want to do when you grow up?" as grandfathers typically do. And I said I wanted to be a scientist. He kind of chewed on that for a while. At some point later on, he said, "A scientist sounds all right. But I think you ought to be a doctor." He said, "You were born under the same sign that your uncle was born under and he's a doctor and he's doing very well in Detroit and I think you ought to pattern after him." I didn't really like that idea very much of course. I never was very comfortable with the idea of death and dying and blood and gore. And so, I avoided the issue. And he would keep saying each time we met, "Have you been thinking about what I told you?" He kind of pressed the issue a little bit. And finally I decided that after all science — medicine has a big scientific component to it and I didn't know exactly what or how science interfaced. But i knew that doctors have to use a lot of science in practicing medicine and maybe that wouldn't be too far off from my interest area anyway. So I started saying that I wanted to be a doctor around age twelve or so, thirteen, and his response was "That's my boy." And I kept getting positive reinforcement each time he asked me and I would say that I wanted to be a doctor.

And so that thought just became my goal. The more I said it, the more I believed.

Mary Soute offered some interesting insights about her expressive sponsoring parents. (Her father died before he could become an effective instrumental sponsor during her teenage years.)

Soute: Okay. Let's see, the most important influence I had in terms of people who motivated me to achieve and try to be better and strive for higher education was my grandmother on my mother's side. I was reared by her. My mother and father were old when I was born. My mother was like 45 and my father was almost 60 and they were both working and they had two older children, and so my grandmother took me when I was about eighteen months old and reared me here in Phoenix. I would see my parents and my brothers on the weekend, but my grandmother's major interest was the importance of education. She had educated her three children. My mother had attended nursing college in 1920, '23, and my uncle had finished college in 1917, so she was pretty active even back that early in 1917 and the '20s about education. She was strict back to me. My mother was less involved in education. She was an R.N., but she didn't really get excited about education. My father, on the other hand, having come out of a family that stressed education so highly, especially teaching and educating otherwise, spent a lot of time reading and teaching and reading poetry to me and that really stimulated my mind to compete with word math problems for fun. You know, he made education a fun sort of thing and he saw that as his role and as a part of his family's role in educating people. So, my grandmother, she was the biggest influence because she was around me the most. Because with her, it was a very emotional thing, education and the importance of education. Let's see, in elementary school, I never really remember being pushed in school to do well; I was just expected to do well by my grandmother. You become educated to be self-sufficient, not for the sake of learning.

Stanfield: Well, what were some of the thing which

they said or did to make you slowly become aware of the fact that these things really mean that she wants you to get educated?

Soute: Well, I don't recall anything specifically. I just recall being brought up in an environment where women were supposed to be educated, supposed to take care of themselves. They were not supposed to be dependent, but she never really pushed me in any one direction; she never really looked at my grades in elementary school, my cards and things like that. And my mother was even worse about things like that. My mother just never looked at the card, and I would even sign my own card and take it back. So, I was never really pushed to achieve, to be better than anyone else in the class. It's just that I think my father really made education kind of fund and interesting, but for my grandmother it was more practical: "You must be educated to support yourself."

Stanfield: Would your father quiz you, not to harass you, but to stimulate you, challenge you, etc.

Soute: He did; he would work math problems and try to make that fun. He would read poetry. He was the first person who introduced me to Longfellow and different poetry, when I was little, like in elementary school, so I really appreciate that and I tend to do that sort of thing with my son, now, just out of habit.

Stanfield: Was poetry your favorite kind of reading as a child?

Soute: Yes, as a child it was, and we would memorize things together. He and I would memorize things together.

Stanfield: Was there any other kind of reading that you liked to do?

Soute: Not particularly. I would read other things. Most of mine occurred at school; I don't know why. I don't remember becoming competitive in school or wanting to do better than other people until I was in high school. But by that time, my grandmother was dead and my mother really kind of let you grow up and do whatever you wanted to do. And by that time my father was begin-

> ning to decline. In high school, they were never really that active in what I did, but then when I graduated from high school, you know, the honors that I received, then they all became a little more involved. But I really never had any real push.

Instrumental sponsors not only inspire, but they have resources that open up the world for the mobility aspirant. That is, they not only know about the outside world, but also have the connections that assist the charge in mobility. They have money, know-how about college education procedures, and/or knowledge of the value of travel in human development. In one case, the interviewed doctor's father, who was an administrator at a historically black college, was her major instrumental sponsor. In most cases, an instrumental sponsor was a teacher who insisted that the mobility aspirant attend a particular college and would even do the application submission legwork.

Frequently, an instrumental and expressive sponsor were one and the same person. The resourcefulness of instrumental sponsors can be very important. This is because expressive sponsorship draws upon indigenous , intangible resources while instrumental sponsorship is premised upon useful connections with institutions of higher learning and other resources outside the community. Although all respondents had distinctly expressive sponsors, those respondents who have achieved the most also had a hierarchy of highly involved instrumental sponsors.

When there was no sponsoring in the home or when it was only expressive, school teachers and administrators became prominent instrumental sponsors. Two examples should suffice: Stanecia Leer and James Allen.

> ***Leer:*** I still had the reinforcement from this adopted family. They continued with me up into high school and through high school. Mrs. Smith — who I called my second mother — and her daughter were in the high school once I moved to Green County Training School. In junior high school, the principal of the high school, Mr. Fitse, became very interested in my mathematical abilities and encouraged my grandmother to encourage me to continue my education, and that was one of the interesting things.

Not that I thought I was special or anything, but I knew something was different and that's when I began to realize something *was* different. During harvesting season my cousins would have to stay home and pick cotton or corn, but my grandmother said to me, "¥You should go to school. You can't miss any days of school." I missed very few days out of school because Mr. Fitse, the principal of junior high, had said that I should stay in school, and she took it very literally that I should not miss any time out of school. Early September was harvesting time for cotton, and there were very few kids in school. I mean the teachers' kids were in school and [there were] a few of the others who would allow their kids to go to school, but i had to catch the school bus and many days when the school bus came by to pick me up I was the only person out of one or two people on that school bus headed to school. That's when I finally began to realize something was different, but I still didn't understand. The reinforcement was still there; it was coming from everywhere at that time. I just basically studied.

Allen. I had biological parents but I was adopted and don't know my biological parents. The adopted parents — I don't know how far my mother went in school. I imagine she had some, but I would doubt that she finished high school. My Dad, on the other hand, — and I don't know if this is true — my Dad told me he went to Black College, and naturally if he went there he had to have finished high school. I know he never said he finished Black College, but that did leave an impression on me so much that when I was in the sixth grade I told my sixth grade teacher, Miss Mary Brown — she passed around one afternoon asking us what we wanted to do when we grew up — I wanted to be an engineer and I wanted to go to Black College because my father had told me that and it had stayed in my mind. I mean, — you know how a kid is, teacher praises you or something — that sort of floored the old lady that I wanted to something like that (laughter), and I have only my memory to

credit, and my Dad had been taking the time at some point to tell me that — truth or falsehood — that he had done it.

Stanfield. Okay, well, tell me about your other relatives — uncles, aunts — that come to your mind that...

Allen: Well, my Uncle Bill, who was a father surrogate and a good friend of my Daddy — they worked on the highway together — I guess he probably finished the third grade, but you see, these were people who — the issue was that they all could write and they all could read. When I was three and her [mother] sister then took me to raise, and Uncle Bill was her common law husband. The four were really my primary sources of identification and provided me with parental guidance and instruction. Uncle Bill probably went to third grade, and my Aunt Susan — they were common lay people — I know she went to the third grade, but as I said they all wrote. They could read. She took the paper every day. The paper boy threw the paper into the yard. You know, we didn't own a TV, but in terms of basic skills , I could read and write pretty early. I recall the first day in school I could write my name. But, for the life of me, I've never been able to figure out how I learned. But I know that the first day — in fact the first morning — I agreed to go to the board and — either because the teacher wrote my name on the board and had me go up and copy what she wrote until I could copy my name or — in fact, as I think about it — this is the first time I've sorted out how that must have happened — that must have been the first time I learned to write, because she must have sent me to the board and wrote our name on the board, you know printed it out, and then had us come and try our luck at printing our names. And I liked it so much that when the time came to go for lunch — we broke for lunch and you could go home, you see, either to the cafeteria or you could go home — I still wanted to write my name. That was my first day in school. So the point I'm making is that those people were not scholars or were not educated people.

They were hard-working fold, at least my Dad and my Uncle Bill were. They worked.

Stanfield: Okay. What was it about your high school experiences in terms of courses, in terms of academic counseling by counselors and teachers, which directed you to go to college and eventually to medical school. Did you take a lot of science courses, in other words...

Allen: I guess from that first day in school my teachers became a major source of — they became parent surrogates in a sense for me — the different sort of parent and source of idealization and identification with — and so throughout elementary school and in high school I was a fairly good students. Because I was, you know, poor, poor people, in fact I was on public assistance. My aunt obtained public assistance for me, you see, so school became a major source of pride and a place where one could elevate one's self esteem and feel like you were somebody. And the teachers allowed you to, urged that and encouraged that. Now in high school, then, there were some teachers like Miss Hill, the vice principal who taught algebra and geometry — her rigorous style in requiring that you learn the logic of plane geometry and, you know, that you did word problems by thinking them through; and she just about wrote you have to work them over and over again.

Conclusion

When there was an instrumental sponsor in the home, such as a grandparent, parent, sibling, or aunt, there were more or less important sponsors picked up in other institutional settings. Those with sponsors at home were, for the most part, the children of school teachers and administrators. Two social organizational sources of sponsorship not mentioned by fellows were churches and school counseling offices.

In most cases, when the physicians entered undergraduate schools, they picked up instrumental sponsors who assisted them in making career decisions that lewd to admission into the foundation program, which selected fellows through consulting with faculty

members and administrators. The informality of the program's selection process for those young adults who not only had exceptional intellectual abilities, but, perhaps more important, those who had learned the benefits of attracting and cultivating mobility mentors well before the "rescue squad" arrived on the scene.

In conclusion, the most important point of this paper is that scholars interested in African–American exceptional children reared in poor communities need to expand their research designs to include indigenous contextual factors that help explain the development of such youngsters. More than that, indigenous contextual factors known to facilitate the development of exceptional African-American children in poor communities that can be modeled and replicated should be identified to increase the number of such extraordinarily talented human beings who fulfill their potential.

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Alcohol Use and Intimate Partner Violence in the City of Omaha, Nebraska

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Introduction

Alcohol is a common factor in incidents of interpersonal violence. According to the World Health Organization and research in the United States, alcohol is involved in a significant portion of rapes, assaults, and homicides (Fagan, 1990: 243). However, such findings are mixed, with studies indicating ranges from 40 to 87 percent of domestic assaults involving alcohol (Murphy and O'Farrell, 1997: 83; Gorney, 1989: 230). While those who abuse alcohol are more likely to be physically abusive to their domestic partners — and vice versa — (Gondolf, 1995: 275), it is commonly assumed that alcohol causes violence, a conclusion that is unsubstantiated (Gorney, 1989: 229). In fact, current empirical studies have difficulty in distinguishing whether alcohol is a contributing, resulting, or a spurious factor in relation to violence. This problem is especially true of domestic violence.

Some studies focus on alcohol use by the abusive partner while others examine victim intoxication. However, there is little research concerning how alcohol use by either affects the intensity of the incident (Miller and Downs, 1993: 138). This investigation examines alcohol consumption by victims and perpetrators and how such use affects physical injury and levels of violence. In addition, the effects of alcohol use by both parties together will be assessed as well as the general presence of alcohol.

effects of alcohol use by both parties together will be assessed as well as the general presence of alcohol. Apart from demonstrating any effect of alcohol on the severity of violence, this exploration may serve to illuminate the shadowy nature of the link between violence and alcohol.

The association between domestic violence and alcohol consumption is generally considered inconclusive (Kantor and Straus, 1987: 215-216). Although the phrase "precipitated homicide" was coined by Wolfgang to explain the prevalence of intoxicated victims, several other works demonstrate contradictory findings regarding the specific effect of either victim or assailant intoxication. Still, alcohol is considered an important correlate of domestic violence. Stout (1993), in her examination of males who had murdered their female intimate partners, revealed that 48 percent of the offenders had been drinking prior to the homicide. Additionally, 21 percent of these males believed that their victim had been intoxicated at the time she was killed (Stout, 1993: 89). Clearly, such a potentially volatile and lethal relationship merits further examination. The purpose of this investigation is to determine if the presence of alcohol affects the severity of attack or injury in domestic violence incidents.

Related Research

Fagan (1990) examines and criticizes many hypotheses linking alcohol to violence, contending that its presence does not directly or consistently lead to violence. He divides the various theories into four categories: biological/physiological, psychopharmacological, psychological, and sociological/cultural (Fagan, 1990: 248).

The Biological/Physiological Perspective. The first perspective rests on the premise that brain and glandular functions are temporarily altered by alcohol consumption. While this concept is widely accepted, the process by which these alterations take place is relatively unknown, making theory testing difficult. Additionally, as Fagan points out, when subjects are tested, they are generally not representative of the population (mainly college students), and are given only minimal doses of alcohol, which produces mixed results (Fagan, 1990). Thus, the existing physiological research provides little

conclusive evidence demonstrating that alcohol affects aggression in either a positive or negative manner.

The Psychological Perspective. The psychological perspective, conversely, contends that alcohol consumption causes personality changes that result in violence. This perspective holds two distinct and opposing viewpoints: (1) that alcohol produces temporary personality changes that facilitate violence and (2) that the changes produced inhibit violence. The first assumption is one of disinhibition, that the emotional or moral controls of individuals are relaxed with intoxication. Conversely, the second implies increased inhibition is brought about by the "numbing" of aggression. Each viewpoint, by itself, has been widely discredited (Fagan, 1990: 260). However, when taken in combination with other stimulus such as sexual arousal, external pressures (economic, interpersonal, et cetera) or depression, they gain somewhat more credence. Several studies in this area support a positive relationship between aggression and alcohol consumption. Unfortunately, these studies were conducted mainly in controlled settings with a homogenous group (college students) unlikely to be exposed frequently to the majority of variable external pressures (Fagan, 1990: 260).

Another popular psychological perspective is that alcohol merely reduces the threshold of threat perception. Thus, a situation that a sober person would find innocuous would be perceived as threatening by an intoxicated individual. Here, alcohol consumption is seen as reducing one's ability to perceive the consequences of his/her actions. While this theory has the most empirical support of all the psychological explanations, it does not take into account cross-cultural and sub-culture variation in alcohol consumption and the expectations thereof.

The Societal Perspective. Examination of the interrelationship between culture, alcohol consumption, and violence is the realm of the sociological/cultural perspective. Here, social influences and expectations affect the behavior and allow for the disavowal of undesirable social behaviors, such as violence. However, in other cultures, such as the Camba of Bolivia (Fagan, 1990: 271), there is no association between aggression and alcohol.

As another example, Parker (1993) puts forth three societal types in relation to alcohol. These are dry, wet, and mixed drinking

cultures.[1] Through analysis of national female homicide rates, he reports a significant relationship between female violent victimization and alcohol use for mixed drinking cultures (Parker, 1993:120). Since the United States is considered a mixed drinking culture, Parker contends that female victimization in the United States is directly affected by alcohol consumption.

Often alcohol is used as a justification for socially inappropriate or unacceptable behavior. This is based mainly on the violator's expectancy that the infraction will be excused because he/she has been drinking. Surprisingly, alcohol consumption by victims is found to have an inverse effect. More responsibility for a violent incident is attributed to the drinking victim than the non-drinking victim. The perception that alcohol use leads to aggressive and provocative behavior is one proposed explanation for this artifact (Dent and Arias, 1990: 186).

Specifically in the case of domestic abuse, intoxication provides the means for excusing or "normalizing" the relationship between victim and offender. The partners' image of themselves and their relationship as "healthy" is preserved by blaming the violence on alcohol (Gorney, 1989: 231). This facade extends to others' perception of the abusive relationship as well.

Other social influences affect the perception of alcohol and violence. For example, prior research indicates that alcohol use by either party serves as a legitimizing factor for violence. Responsibility attributed to violence male intimate partner is reduced when alcohol is present. Conversely, when the female victim is intoxicated, she is deemed more responsible for the situation than when the victim is sober (Dent and Arias, 1990: 186).

To test for the presence of a gender effect, Dent and Arias (1990) conducted a study of how alcohol presence affects observer evaluations of domestic violence incidents. All violence perpetrators were rated more negatively than all victims. However, alcohol use by the victim was viewed as more of a legitimizing factor for violence than perpetrator use. In other words, a drinking perpetrator was attributed less responsibility for the violent incident than

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[1]Dry drinking cultures highoy regulate the consumptionof alcohol. Wet drinking cultures socially integrate alcohol use into daily life. Mixed crinking cultures, as the name suggests, have aspects of both.

sober counterparts while a drinking victim bore more responsibility than sober counterparts. This effect appears to be situational rather than gender specific.

However, the Dent and Arias study did reveal some gender effect. Male victims of violence were considered to be more responsible for the incident when they had been drinking than female victims. In addition, the gender of the evaluator made a difference in how the scenarios were evaluated. Male evaluators were less approving of drinking women — independent of her role as the perpetrator or victim — while female evaluators were less approving of violent women independent of whether alcohol was present (Dent and Arias, 1990: 189).

The Psychopharmacological Perspective. Similar to the first perspective, psychopharmalogical theories of the relationship between violence and alcohol use the biological perspective as a partial explanation. It is paired with the psychological perspective so that the main thesis is that the interaction of both theories produces violence when alcohol is present. Thus, all of the factors of each perspective merge, suggesting that it is their combination that produces alcohol-related violence. Yet again, there is little support of a linkage between physical of psychological responses to alcohol consumption and violence.

Domestic Violence Power Theory. Additional to the theories outlined by Fagan, Gondolf (1995) proposes domestic violence power theory, which specifically addresses the link between alcohol and violence. A domestic violence specific theory, power theory explains the relationship between alcohol and domestic violence as symptomatic of a greater problem. Here, both alcohol use and abuse reflect the perpetrator's need for power. The abuser fulfills this need by exhibiting behaviors he perceives as "manly" and demonstrative of power and control — alcohol use and violence for example — thereby reinforcing the perpetrator's fragile masculinity. In this instance, violence and alcohol are not causally linked (Gondolf, 1995: 276). The findings of Kantor and Straus (1987: 224) support this theory, demonstrating that a combination of alcohol use, financial status, and approval of violence is the best predictor of domestic assault.

Conceptual Assessment

None of the empirical studies demonstrate a causal relation of alcohol to violence. While it is clear that aggression can increase with the presence of alcohol, it can also decrease. Additionally, there is no tangible link to biological, psychological, psycho-pharmacological, or cultural factors to explain either. Moreover, none of these proposed linkages address the competing explanations for the apparent relationship, such as reverse causation[2] or that the relationship is simply spurious (Cook and Moore, 1993: 154).

Part of the problem is measurement. Capturing the effects of alcohol is inherently difficult since they differ from person to person. Factors such as body weight, genetic predisposition, tolerance levels, et cetera, all influence how alcohol will effect the individual. As alcohol can also be considered a situational characteristic, one must additionally take into account the situational factors that coincide with the alcohol consumption (Weis, 1989: 147)., further adding to the complexity of its link to violence. This makes the establishment of any type of causation difficult. One purpose of the present examination is to shed some light on the nature of this relationship.

Definitions of Domestic Violence

A major problem with intimate partner violence research is defining exactly what constitutes domestic violence. One common scheme requires physically violent acts that occur more than once.[3] Conversely, others define domestic abuse as any physical victimization suffered by an adult female at the hands of her male intimate partner. Still others describe it as deliberate, serious, and repeated physical injury from a woman's spouse or as a woman being "repeatedly subject to any forceful or psychological abuse by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants her do to without any concern for her rights' (Johnson, 1987: 20-21).[4] Thus, some definitions require repeat victimization while others do not. Some require physical victimization or injury while others allow for verbal or psychological abuse. Additionally, some are gender specific regarding per-

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[2] The decision to commit violent acts causes alcohol use.

[3] Straus' scheme entails any or all of the following repetitive acts: throwing things at one's spouse; pushing, shoving, grabbing, alapping; kicking, biting, or hitting with a fist; hitting or trying to hit with something; beating up; threatening with a knife or gun; using knife or gun (Straus, 1978: 445).

petrator and victim. As a result of this definitional variety, the findings of the existing domestic violence studies are varied and mixed (Johnson, 1987: 22).

The data sets used for this investigation avoid the gender and relationship specifications as well as the multiple incident requirement. However, because of the sources and method of data collection, they are necessarily limited in the nature of incidents included.

The Data Sets

The data sets used here comprise non-aggravated misdemeanor domestic assaults for Omaha, Nebraska. The focus of this investigation is the Morehouse Research Institute data set. Following this, the Dunford et al. Data set provides for a supplementary comparison. The background of the city and each data set are described below.

The City: Omaha Nebraska.

According to the 1990 census, the city of Omaha, Nebraska, had a population of 335,795. With regard to race, 83.9 percent of the population were Caucasian, 13.1 percent were African American, and 2.9 percent were Hispanic. Additionally, 1.1 percentwere Asian and .7 percent were Native American.

82 percent of the population were high school graduates, and 23.1 percent hae a bachelor's degree or higher. Omaha hae a 4.7 percent unemployment rate. 76.3 percent of the general population were employed for 35 or more hours per week. When disaggregated by gender, 82.6 percent of males were employed for 35 hours or more per week as were 69.6 percent of females. The median annual income for males was $25,908 and for females is $17,710.

The Morehouse Data Set

Background. The Morehouse Omaha data set was gathered as part of a large, ongoing study conducted by the Morehouse Research Institute (MRI) in order to evaluate the Atlanta Police Department's Domestic Violence Intervention Unit. Omaha was selected as the

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[4]Notice that these definitions are gender specific in regard to victim and perpetrator. While ommonly reported victims of intimate partner violence are female, there are substantial numbers of male victims as well. There is no real way to estimate these numbers as male domestic victimization is vastly underreported.

major city for comparison in this study. To date, this project is still in progress.

To facilitate this comparison, police reports of domestic violence were manually coded in order to compile a data set comprising the entire Omaha non-aggravated misdemeanor intimate partner violence population. This entailed manual review of the paper police files from 1990 to 1995. Previous years were unavailable in hard copy format. Rather, they were obtainable only as microfilm. Due to this and other practical constraints, data collection was terminated at 1990. The Morehouse Omaha data, however, lists the complete population of police reported, non-aggravated misdemeanor domestic violence incidents from 1990 to 1995. This completeness of data has several benefits. Primarily, there will be no sampling error associated with the data set as it is the entire population. Additionally, any year-to-year variations or fluctuations should be smoothed out by the five-year period covered. Finally, each case in this set comes from a complete police report, minimizing problems with missing data.[5]

Limitations. One primary limitation is the omission of the non-aggravated misdemeanor incidences. As noted by the researchers who gathered this data, while such an exclusion was necessary to maintain the operational definition of domestic violence, the sometimes subjective nature of the distinction between aggravated and non-aggravated boiled down to a "judgment call" by the responding officer. As a result, there often appeared to be little actual difference, at least in the reports, between cases categorized as aggravated and those slated as non-aggravated.

Another limitation springs from the source of the data itself. One problem is the quality of the police reports. The researchers indicated that report quality was at its best for 1995 and degraded steadily in years prior to that. Additionally, as the information was gathered retroactively from police reports, there was no opportunity to obtain offender or victim-specific demographic data that was not present in the police report. While it would be possible to glean some patterns by merging census data with offense locations, for the purposes of this study it would result in the "ecological fallacy" of apply-

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[5]The exception to this is in weapon type. Often, the type of weapon/force used could not be substantiated as the offender was not present and/or the victim was unsure.

ing macro-level data to micro-level analysis. Thus, there is no way to measure victim or offender education, employment status, or income for example.

The Current Investigation

Hypothesis. In cases where alcohol is present, we predict that violence will be more severe than in cases where no alcohol is present. We expect this to hold true regardless of which party — or if both parties — is using alcohol. This hypothesis assumes that alcohol has a causal relationship with physical violence and its severity.

While there is no conclusive evidence that alcohol has a causal effect on violence, there are studies that support this contention. For example, there is evidence that interventions decreasing alcohol use reduce violent crime. One documented example of this is Norway's nine-week strike by alcoholic beverage distributors, which temporarily shut down the alcohol trade. A decrease in violent incidents coincided with this that could not be explained as a general downward trend (Cook and Moore, 1993: 151-153). In addition, a recent study by Cook and Moore (1993) suggests that interventions, such as an increased alcohol tax, could reduce violent crimes. The authors saw this as conclusive proof that alcohol use causes violence (Cook and Moore, 1993: 156-157).

If alcohol is a causal factor, one would expect violence levels to be more severe with its presence. For example, one causal linking hypothesis portends a disinhibition effect of alcohol which enables individuals to violate societal norms. It logically follows that this should also extend to the type and severity of violence. For instance, if an offender is incensed yet sober, he/she may attack the victim, quickly realize the damage, causing the anger to dissipate, and discontinue the violence. However, if the perpetrator is intoxicated, the associated disinhibition could impair his/her ability to realize the consequences of the attack. Thus, the violence continues until the anger is exhausted. Therefore, levels of violence intensity are expected to increase with perpetrator intoxication.

Additionally, we expect that victim alcohol use will have a significant effect on the level of violence. In a recent study, Miller and Downs (1993) discovered that women with alcohol problems[6] expe-

[6]These are defined as being enrolled in alcohol treatment programs or in court-ordered alcohol abuse programs as a penalty for drunk driving.

rienced higher violence levels perpetrated by their intimate partner than women without such alcohol problems.[7] This is strong evidence justifying the inclusion and test of the effects of victim intoxication on domestic violence.

Given the above reasons for expecting relationships between alcohol use by the offender and victim individually, it naturally follows that the same should hold true when both are intoxicated. Additionally, Saunders (1992) contends that alcohol consumption by both the victim and the perpetrator will facilitate violence through mutual hostilities and reduced inhibitions. This state would therefore enhance the likelihood of the eruption of violence.

The Data

The focus of this research is intimate partner violence and the effects alcohol may have on its severity. Thus, while the Morehouse data set contains information on family violence,[8] this information is excluded from the analyses since it is not relevant to the investigation at hand.

The Morehouse data comprises all police-reported, non-aggravated misdemeanor domestic violence cases from 1990 to 1995. For this data set, anything that was not categorized by the police as domestic violence was excluded from the analysis.[9] This leaves a total of 2,253 viable cases in the Morehouse data, out of 2,895.

Dependent Variable. For the Morehouse data set, there are three dependent variables that capture various aspects of violence severity. The first is a simple yes/no dichotomy addressing whether or not the victim was injured. This demonstrates the prevalence of physical versus verbal abuse as well as some inferences of severity. The second variable is an ordered listing of the type of physical injury sustained by the victim.[10] This gives a specific indication of the severity of abuse suffered. A third measure is the type of weapon/vio-

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[7] These women were drawn from women's shelters and random households.

[8] This is categorized as child abuse and neglect, parental abuse, elder abuse, and/or sibling conflict.

[9] For this set specifically, this includes family violence and "other" violence.

[10] These are: 1=none, 2=bruises and/or contusions, 3=cuts, abrasions, and/or lacerations, 4=stab wounds, 5=gunshot wounds, and 6=other. As several of the cases were missing this information (34 percent), these cases were excluded in the analyses with this measure as the dependent variable. Thus, the total number of cases used in those analyses is 1,464.

lence used by the perpetrator.[11] This allows for detection of changes in offenders' decisions in relation to alcohol presence.

Independent Variables. These are the four measures concerning alcohol in the Morehouse data set. These are use by the victim, use by the perpetrator, use by both participants, and a situational variable accounting for the general presence of alcohol. These variables are mutually exclusive. The four alcohol variables are formatted in a simple yes/no dichotomy and will be utilized as dummy variables. The alcohol presence will be excluded to serve as the reference category, while the other three will be entered into the regression.

Control Variables. Several factors are considered basic to research on intimate partner violence. These include age, income, employment, and education level of both the victim and the perpetrator as well as the type of relationship that exists between them (Johnson, 1987: 38). For example, studies from Gelles (1972) onward have found an inverse relationship between the perpetrator's level of education and the incidence of abuse (Johnson, 1987: 41). Nunes-Dinis and Weisner (1992) found that of people arrested for violent offenses, males had a higher proportion of alcohol presence than females. The authors conclude that drinking and violence interactions appear to be gender related, thereby justifying inclusion of a gender measure. Additionally, married offenders were likely to have both alcohol present and violent arrest offenses. This effect disappeared when domestic violence cases were removed from the sample. This further demonstrates the importance of controlling for victim/offender relationship (Numes-Dinis and Weisner, 1997: 129-142). Thus, in order to meaningfully evaluate the impact of alcohol on domestic violence, these factors will be controlled for.[12]

Results

Frequencies

The Morehouse Data. For the first dependent variable, the physically abused dichotomy, the frequencies indicate that the vic-

[11]These are: 1=physical force, 2=blunt instrument, 3=sharp/piercing, 4=handgun, 5=other, and 6=unknown.

[12]As it was gathered from the actual police reports themselves, the Morehouse data does not contain measures of education, income or employment status. However, as this is the complete population rather than a sample, this drawback is counteracted and complemented by the use of Dunford et al. set.

tim was physically abused in 1970 (87.4 percent) of the cases. For this variable the missing data was negligible at 51 (2.3 percent) cases. The second dependent variable, type of victim injury, the most common was bruises and contusions (38.0 percent) followed by cuts, abrasions, and lacerations (26.0 percent) and other (16.2 percent). Again, missing data was not a major obstacle as few cases did not have injury data (3.2 percent).

The frequencies for the final dependent variable, type of weapon/force, reveal that the most common attack is physical force (22.0 percent) followed by stabbing (16.4 percent) and blunt instrument attack (10.4 percent). Weapon/force type used is missing from 34 percent of this data set. Therefore, when this is analyzed as the dependent variable, the cases missing the weapon/force information are excluded from the analysis.

The distributions of the main independent variable, alcohol, indicate that its presence was relatively common. Both victim and offender were intoxicated in 331 (15.8 percent) cases. The offender alone had been using alcohol in 415 (19.9 percent) of the violent incidences. Conversely, the victim only had been drinking in 109 (5.1 percent) cases. Thus, alcohol. was presen in 40.8 percent of the cases of police-reported intimate partner violence.

The majority of the offenders fell between the ages of twenty and forty with age data missing for 139 (6.2 percent). The majority of the victims were between the ages of 19 and 38. Unlike the offender age information, there was minimal missing age data for victims (21 cases or .9 percent).

In regard to race, the majority of the offenders were African American (51.4 percent), followed by white (41.4 percent). Offender race data were missing in 74 cases (3.3 percent). Oddly, the majority of the victims were white (48.5 percent), followed by African-American (44.0 percent), confounding the principle that violent crime is intra-racial. Race data was missing in 87 cases (3.9 percent). African Americans are vastly over-represented in the domestic violence population as compared to the 1990 Census population for Omaha (13.1 percent).

In 67.4 percent (1518) of the cases, the victim and the perpetrator were living together. There was minimal missing data for this variable (1.7 percent). The offenders were overwhelmingly male (81

percent) while the victims were mainly female (79.8 percent)[13] Most of the victim-offender relationships fell into either dating (41.7 percent) or spousal (35.0 percent). The balance were ex-dating (12.7 percent), ex-spouse (4.8 percent) and house-mate (3.5 percent).[14]

The frequency distribution among police shifts[15] reveals that, indeed, of the three shifts, more incidents occurred during "C" (47.3 percent) than any other. However, "A" and "B" shifts combined comprise 51.3 percent of the total cases. The presence of these cases enables the capture of incidents neglected by the Dunford data. This is particularly relevant as it is possible that alcohol may have varied effects on violence depending upon the time of day

Regression

The variance Inflation Factor tests indicated severe multicollinearity problems among the race, gender, and relationship variables. As a result, these variables were collapsed in a variety of ways. Specifically, spouse and ex-spouse as well as dating and ex-dating again produced extreme collinearity. Additionally, one gender variable, gender of the victim was used in the regression,[16] and the racial variables were collapsed into a simple white/non-white variable. Once these modifications were made, both the Condition Index and Variance Inflation Fact tests revealed no further collinearity.

The baseline regression on the presence of injury was significant (.01) and explains 1.52 percent of the variance.[17] Victim/offender cohabitation was significant as were the relationship variable offender age and the police shift during which the incident

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13 The slight discrepancy between the victim and perpetrator numbers is explained by missing data. there was one variable measuring victim gender and one measuring offender gender. The victim data was missing in only twelve cases while the offender data was missing in thirty cases.

14 When these variables were later collapsed into dating/ex-dating and spouse/ex-spouse because of multicollinearity problems, the frequencies were: dating/ex-dating 55.2 percent and spouse/ex-spouse 39.9 percent.

15 The Omaha police shifts are "A"=Midnight to 8 a.m.; "B"=8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and "C"=4 p.m. to Midnight.

16 Since the overwhelming majority of the offenders were the opposite gender of the victim, it is understandable that this produced collinearity and thus it is also reasonable to exclude one of the measures.

17 Here, while neither the dating/ex-dating nor the spouse/ex-spouse variables were significant, the regression containing the dating/ex-dating variable had a slight better R square (.025) than the one containing the spouse/ex-spouse (.024).

occurred. Of the significant variables, all but cohabitation had a negative relationship with the presence of injury. The Betas indicate that of these three, cohabitation had the most influence on the variance.

Here, the baseline regression contain only the control variables on type of injury was also significant (.01), but revealed a disappointingly low R square of .038. However, the measure of victim/offender cohabitation, the gender of the victim and the relationship variables were all significant (.05)[18] Of these significant variables, only the spouse/ex-spouse yes/no dichotomy had a positive relationship with the type of injury. The Beta weights indicate that of these significant variables, the relationship variables are the most influential.

The final baseline regression was significant (.01) and concerned the effects of the control variables on the type of force/weapon used in the violent incident. The R square indicates that these variables explain 5.5 percent of the variance. Here, only victim/offender cohabitation and gender of the victim were statistically significant. The cohabitation variable had a negative relationship and the gender variable had a positive association with the type of force used. Of these two, the Betas indicate victim gender to be the more influential variable.

For the significant regression including alcohol presence on injury presence as the dependent variable, the same results as the chi-square were reflected. With demographic variables controlled, alcohol use by both (.01) was statistically significant. This had a positive relationship with the presence of abuse and the Betas indicate this to be the second most important significant variable. This indicates that alcohol use by both parties increases the likelihood of the presence of injury. The R square reveals that only 3.3 percent of the variance is explained by these variables. This is a modest improvement over the control variables alone.

In regard to the type of injury, the pattern of influence revealed by the statistically significant multivariate regression was the same as indicated by the chi-square. Alcohol use by the victim and by

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18Here both dating/ex-dating and spouse/ex-spouse were statistically significant (.01). The regression containing the spouse/ex-spouse variable explained slightly more of the variance (3.0 percent) than did the regression containing the dating/ex-dating variable (2.8 percent).

both parties was statistically significant (.05). Here, both significant alcohol variables had a negative relationship with extent of injury. The Betas indicate alcohol use by both to be the second most important significant variable and alcohol use by the victim to be the least important. Additionally, with the inclusion of the alcohol variables, offender race becomes significant (.05). The R square remained disappointingly low, explaining only 4.0 percent of the variance. However, this is improvement over the R square of the control model.

The regression, including the alcohol variables on the type of force/weapon used was statistically significant, but revealed that none of the additional variables had significance. However, their inclusion did improve the R-square from .051 to .056.

Table 1
Multivariate Regression on Presence of Abuse

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	T Score	Variance Inflation Factor
alcohol use by victim	.0565	.0328	1.722	1.061
alcohol use by offender	.0327	.0182	1.72	1.110
alcohol use by both	.0826	.0206	4.007*	1.152
victim white/non-white	-.0154	.0216	-.715	2.401
offender white/non/whie	.0032	.0221	-1.409	1.044
victim age	.0000	.0011	.024	1.981
offender age	-.0021	.0010	-2.034*	1.947
gender victim	-.0307	.0189	-1.625	1.092
police shift	-.0113	.0080	-1.409	1.044
vicetime offender cohabitation	.0743	.0156	4.744	1.060
spouse/ex-spouse	-.0134	.0148	-.904*	1.089
dating/ex-dating	.0209	.0146	1.427	1.089

*Significant at .05 or better F=5.674 RSquare=.03305

Logistical Regression

The appropriate follow-up statistical tool to measure the influence of alcohol on the type of injury and type of force would be

ordinal Logit since these dependent variables are ordered rather than continuous — violating the continuous dependent variable assumption of OLS regression. However, due to practical limitations, we were unable to perform these analyses.

This was not the case for the presence of injury. As this dependent variable is dichotomous, the most appropriate statistical tool to use in its evaluation is Logistical Regression. The baseline Logit indicated that victim/offender cohabitation, offender age, and police shift19 were all significant influences on the presence of injury. When the alcohol variables were entered into the Logit equation, alcohol use by both parties was found to be a statistically significant (.01) influence on the presence of injury.

Table 2
Multivariate Regression on Severity of Abuse

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	T Score	Variance Inflation Factor
alcohol use by victim	-.3962	.1808	-2.191*	1.059
alcohol use by offender	.0065	.1000	-.065	1.108
alcohol use by both	-.3009	.1129	-2.664	1.149
victim white/non-white	-.0017	.1194	-.015	2.431
offender white/non/whie	.2460	.1221	2.015*	2.474
victim age	-.0089	.0062	-1.433	1.992
offender age	-.0050	.0058	-.861	1.954
gender victim	-.1831	.1033	-1.772	1.090
police shift	.0233	.0442	.529	1.042
victim offender cohabitation	-.2882	.8555	-3.370*	1.061
spouse/ex-spouse	.4048	.0810	4.995*	1.098
dating/ex-dating	-.3649	.0803	-4.545*	1.088

*Significant at .05 or better F=6.8429 RSquare=.03874

[19] Specifically, if an offense occured during shift "A" it had a positive, statistically significant effect on the presence of injury.

Table 3
Multivariate Regression on Type of Weapon/Force

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	T Score	Variance Inflation Factor
alcohol use by victim	-.0988	.2019	-.490	1.059
alcohol use by offender	-.1301	.1116	-1.166	1.153
alcohol use by both	-.2053	.1180	-1.740	1.172
victim white/non-white	-.1422	.1310	-1.085	2.361
offender white/non/white	-.0971	.1346	-.722	2.401
victim age	-.0036	.0068	.531	1.961
offender age	-.0100	.0063	1.583	1.923
gender victim	.6506	.1054	6.172*	1.151
police shift	-.0296	.0491	-.603	1.054
victim offender cohabitation	-.1919	.0949	-1.021*	1.065
spouse/ex-spouse	.0903	.0899	1.004	1.084
dating/ex-dating	-.1197	.0886	-1.352	1.079

*Significant at .05 or better F=6.373 RSquare=.0563

Comparison

The purpose of using the two data sets in tandem is to overcome the limitations of each. We feel that the strengths of each data set complement and counteract the weaknesses of the other. In addition, since both data sets use the Omaha Police Department's operational definition of domestic violence, there should be minimal variation between the two sources in regard to what is classified as an incident of intimate partner violence. This avoids the definitional problems of previous research. Moreover, this pseudo-time series comparison can discern any temporal patterns or changes in the Omaha domestic violence population of incidents in regard to the relationship between alcohol and domestic violence over the past decade. Additionally, any discovered relationships present in both populations would be indicative of a stable association between alcohol and domestic violence rather than a spurious one.

The Dunford *et al.* Data

Background. From 1981 to 1982, Lawrence Sherman and Richard Berk conducted what came to known as the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment. Its principle objective was to determine how police intervention affected domestic violence incidence and recidivism — finding that arrest was best for preventing domestic violence recidivism. With the release of this conclusion and pressure from feminist and women's groups, several jurisdictions adopted mandatory arrest policies for all domestic violence cases (Gelles, 1996: 30, 32). However, as this was only a single investigation, the study required further exploration and subsequent replication before it could be widely accepted in the academic community.

As a result, the National Institute of Justice funded six replications of the Minneapolis experiment, one of which was conducted in Omaha, Nebraska. It is this replication that provides the comparison data. Conducted from 1987 to 1987 by Franklyn W. Dunford, David Huizinga, and Delbert S. Elliott, this sample comprises 577 misdemeanor domestic assault cases. In order to be included in the study, these incidents had to occur between 4:00 p.m. and midnight ("C" Shift) and meet specific eligibility requirements.[20] Additionally the researchers conducted victim interviews one week, six months, and one year following the reported incident.

Limitations

While the investigators were very thorough in designing a comprehensive post-incident interview instrument, their final results were plagued with missing data. This stemmed mainly from follow-up interview problems. Like the study it replicated, The Dunford study was beset with lack of victim participation in follow-up interviews. Only eighty percent of the victims completed the initial one-week follow-up interview (Dunford *et al*, 1990: 189).

Additionally, by limiting its sample to only offenses that occurred during "C" shift, the Dunford data leaves untouched a substantial portion of the domestic violence population. Thus, any possible differences between domestic violence events that occur at different times of the day would remain undiscovered.

[20]These were (1) established probably cause for an arrest for misdemeanor assault, (2) at least two people involved (an offender and a victim), (3) both parties of the assault were 18 years old or older, (4) the participants had lived together at some time during the year preceding the assault, (5) the suspect had no outstanding warrants.

Procedures for Constructing Variables

The Dunford *et al.* data were not initially in a format that allowed for each analysis or comparison to the Morehouse data set. For both data sets, race and victim/offender relationship needed to be broken down into simple dichotomies to be interpreted.[21]

As the actual time of offense was listed in the Morehouse data, there were as many possible values for this variable as there are minutes in the day. Subsequently, since the Dunford data included only those offenses occurring during police shift "C," it was necessary to isolate the police shifts of the Morehouse data incidents. This also allowed for evaluation of the importance of time of day to the alcohol/violence nexus.

To make the Dunford *et al.* data more comparable to the Morehouse data, the victim/offender relationships were collapsed from fourteen variables to nine. Measures such as father, mother, stepfather, and stepmother were collapsed into a measure of parent. Similarly, brother and sister were merged into one measure of sibling.

Similarly, the original variables in the Dunford et al. data set for violence severity required recoding into an ordinal scale before they could be used as a dependent variable. Inversely, the original measures of race and ethnicity as well as victim offender relationship required conversion from a categorical variable into a series of dichotomous dummy variables indicating the racial category of the offender and the victim.

The Data

As with the Morehouse data set, for the Dunford data set non-intimate partner violence was excluded from the analysis. Thus the number of cases drops from 577 to 552. Moreover, since only the first of the three interviews comprising the Dunford data concerns the actual reported offense, we use only the one-week subset of the Dunford data in order to capture the characteristics of the police-

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[21]Since these measures are simply categorical, they msut be entered into the regression as dummy variables. Thus, instead of two measures for victim/offender relationship, there became eighteen yes/no dichotomies. These are: house-mate, spouse, dating, ex-spouse, parent, sibling, acquaintance, and child. There are two of each — one for the victim and one for the perpetrator. Similarly, for victim and offender race/ethnicity, instead of two categorical variables, there became either dichotomous dummy variables. These are: white,black, Hispanic, and Asian. Again, there are two of each — one for the victim and one for the perpetrator.

reported violence incident.[22] Additionally, as one-week follow-up interviews were conducted for only eighty percent of the cases in the Dunford data set, pertinent data for a substantial portion of the cases is missing. As a result, the cases with the missing data were dropped from the analysis. This further reduces the number of usable cases in that data set to 448.

For the Dunford data, there are two dependent variables measuring the severity of abuse. The first is a simple physical injury/non-injury dichotomy. Again, this gives a rough estimate of the prevalence of physical injury versus mere threats of injury or verbal abuse.[23] The second is an ordered listing of the possible forms of offender action against the victim recorded in the Dunford study.[24] Additionally, the Dunford data contains the same four measures of alcohol presence for use as the main independent variable. Again, these variables are mutually exclusive.[25]

Frequency Distributions

The frequency distribution of injury reveals that a majority of the cases in the sample (79.9 percent) resulted in physical injury to the victim. This is somewhat lower than that found in the Morehouse data. The dispersion by type of injury indicates that the victim being "beaten up" was most common (30.6 percent) followed by "pushed/shoved/grabbed' (17/4 percent), "tried to kill" (16.5 percent, and "hit with something" (15.2 percent).

There are noticeable differences in the distributions of the main independent variables between the two data sets. Here, the frequencies indicate higher incidence of offender alcohol use (32.6 percent in the Dunford Data as compared to 18.4 percent in the Morehouse data), but lower instances of use by both parties (5.8 percent as com-

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[22]As mentioned previously, there are also six month and one year data sets that correspond to the follow-up interviews. We use the data from the interview closest to the reported incident since it is this session that directly addresses the incident.

[23]As these incidents are police-reported, it is not expected that the data will capture psychological abuse.

[24]These are: 1=threat, 2=throw something at victim, 3=push/shove/grab, 4=hit with hand, 5=bite/kick, 6=hit with something, 7=beat up, 8=stab or cut, 9=shoot, 20=tried to kill.

[25]It is important for the variable to be mutually exclusive so that they can be used together in the regression analysis. Were these measures notmutually exclusive, not only would it confound the result through duplication, but it would also produce severe probelms with multicollinearity.

pared to 14.7 percent). Yet, alcohol use by the victim was relatively comparable for both data sets (3.8 percent and 4.7 respectively). Overall, however, the presence of alcohol in any form is roughly equivalent between the two sources (42.2 percent and 37.8 percent respectively).

The most common offender to victim relationship was husband (42.9 percent) followed by lover/boyfriend (33.9 percent). Distantly behind that was ex-lover/boyfriend (13.7 percent). These percentages are nearly identical to those found in the Morehouse data. However, this variable demonstrated a problem with skewness. Again, victims were overwhelmingly female (95.8 percent) with the majority of the offenders as non-white (52.2 percent) and the majority of victims being white (54.1 percent). Most perpetrators and victims were between the ages of 18 and 37. All of these distributions are highly similar to those found in the Morehouse data.

In regard to the control variables, some useful variables are included in the Dunford data that are not present in the Morehouse data. For example, the most common offender education level was that of high school graduate (44.6 percent) followed by some high school (11.6 percent for eleventh grade and 10.0 percent for tenth grade). This is substantially lower than the Census estimate of 82.6 percent of the population having a high school diploma. Thus, for the Dunford data set, the educational level was substantially lower for those involved in domestic assault than it was for the general population of Omaha. Additionally, victim education demonstrated a problem with skewness.

The majority of offenders were employed (65.2 percent). Conversely, slightly more victims were unemployed (50.4 percent) than were employed (49.6 percent). These employment figures are substantially lower for both groups than those indicated by the 1990 Census data for Omaha.

The missing data problem occurred on a large scale for offender income. This measure was missing for 43.1 percent — a significant portion of the sample. The most common income level was $900 to $1500 per month (20.3 percent), followed by $600 to $900 (14.7 percent) and $300 to $600 (12.7 percent). Not surprisingly, the victim income information had the same problem with missing data (50.4 percent). Of the cases with data, most victims had income

from $300 to $600 (18.3 percent), followed by $600 to $900 (13.2 percent).

Statistical Analyses

Unlike the Morehouse data, Dunford data showed none of the alcohol variables had a significant relationship with the dichotomous injury variable. In regard to the severity of injury dependent variable, the chi-square indicated that at the .05 level it had a significant positive relationship with alcohol use by both participants (.016) and a nearly significant positive relationship with alcohol use by the victim (.071). Alcohol presence in general and alcohol use by the perpetrator did not have significant relationship with severity of injury.

None of the linear Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions for this data set were significant. This indicates one of several possibilities. First, it could mean that the variables simply do not explain a significant portion of the variance. This explanation is unlikely for two reasons. First, the chi-square revealed a statistically significant correlation between alcohol use by both parties and the severity of injury. Second, and most important, the Morehouse regression using similar variables was strongly significant, indicative of the strong influence of such variables on domestic violence.

Another, more plausible explanation is that the model is misspecified. A linear model could be an incorrect functional form. For example, the relationship here could be parabolic or perhaps any of the independent variables, the dependent variable, or a combination may need to be logged. The previously mentioned skewness problems with victim education and victim offender relationships indicate that these variables may require logging. However, the regressions conducted with the logarithm of these variables were not significant either. Thus, further examination of the specified model is necessary.

Conclusions

Analyses of the Morehouse data revealed that alcohol use by both parties increases the likelihood of injury presence. However, contrary to expectations, intoxication by the victim and by both parties decreases the severity of the violence. Also, different from our

expectations, weapon/force type demonstrated no significant relationship with any measure of the presence of alcohol. Disappointingly, there can be no meaningful parallel interpretation of the Dunford data set regressions since they were not statistically significant. However, the chi-square for the use of alcohol by both parties on severity of injury did indicate statistical significance.

In regard to the character of the domestic assault victim and assailant, the data analyses of both sets reveal that African-Americans are disproportionately represented in the domestic violence victim and offender population. Additionally, the average victim and offender have lower education and employment levels than demonstrated by the 1990 Census data. The alcohol was relatively common in both data sets, being present in over a third of the cases of each. These differences between this and the average population may hold the key to explaining the present of domestic violence or they may simply be indicative of varies police response and patrol patterns. This is, of course, an area for future exploration.

The Morehouse data additionally indicates that the police shift during which an incident occurred was significant for both the presence of injury and type of injury. There may be several reasons for this. It is possible that both change with simply the time of day, type of police personnel on duty, the presence of neighbors who might report the incident, a combination of these, or any of a myriad other factors. Therefore, the results suggest that future research in this area must take care not to limit itself to only one police shift.

Discussion

Despite efforts at overcoming the limitations of past studies, the present study produces mixed results. The strongly significant associations found in the Morehouse data set are counterbalanced by the total lack of significance of the comparable Dunford regressions. However, the fact that the use of alcohol by both incident participants is significant in the chi-square between both party intoxication and violence is intriguing. This indicates that there may actually be some effect of alcohol use by both parties on the severity of violence present in the Dunford data.

The findings of the Morehouse data are somewhat contradictory and further cloud the already murky relationship between alco-

hol and violence. On the one hand, it increases the incidence of violence. Yet on the other hand, alcohol presence decreases the intensity. Thus, it would appear that a combination of the theoretical explanations between violence and alcohol would best explain this complex relaitonship.

Naturally, it is prudent to be cautious in our interpretations. It is possible that the statistical significance found in the Morehouse data could merely be an artifact of the large sample size. Yet, because of the results of the Dunford chi-square, we believe that there is no reason to doubt the validity of the Morehouse results.

Most importantly, one must keep in mind the limitations of both data sets in measuring violence severity. Since both are comprised of only misdemeanor assaults, they necessarily will not capture the most severe instances of domestic violence. If alcohol does indeed have an exacerbating effect on the level of violence, it is possible that such an influence will not be found simply because the violence level requires felony categorization. Thus, both data sets would miss such incidents.

Additionally, both data sets depend upon police-reported incidences. The under-reporting of crime — especially within the family — is well documented. There my be intervening variables that cause some cases to be reported and others not to be. For example, the disproportionate representation of African Americans relative to their actual population in Omaha may be indicate of socioeconomic or racial factors that interact with police notification and/or response.

Moreover, we found it disturbing that both data sets registered the presence of stab and gunshot wounds under non-aggravated misdemeanor assault. Clearly, the use of such weapons should not constitute a misdemeanor offense. However, as the specific circumstances of such incidents were unavailable, we can merely question the police categorization of the event.

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A Note on the Effects of Language on the Perception of Racial Groups by Majority Group Members

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Introduction

From birth children are labeled, motivated and, unfortunately, sometimes stifled by words. Whether it is in the home, community, or in the school, it is obvious that they cannot escape words and their influence. While all children are sometimes negatively affected by words, it seems as if the devastation is often overwhelming for the African-American boys.

Most educators have for some years recognized the importance of self-esteem in relationship to academic performance. Yet, few seem to correlate the self-esteem and academic performance to the use of words. As educators, on a daily basis, we must recognize the power of words to make and break our young. Furthermore, we must be vigilant in leading others who impact upon the child to recognize the same and encouraging them to make and not break our young.

Many African-American males are dying by the hands of violence. This death is highly documented, but a subtle death is simultaneously occurring and going undocumented among the same population. It is a death by words. Negative words dominate their existence. They hear them at home, on the street, and in school.

Like other children, African-American males form their self-perception from significant others in their lives as well as surrounding conditions and circumstances. They encounter several hundred messages from their homes, communities, television, movies, and videos that limit, restrict, deflate, and destroy their dreams and negatively impact their views of themselves. These messages are often met with anger and frustration as these young men find themselves facing a bleak future. Hopelessness, alienation, and helplessness emerge in their behavior patterns as they unleash their penned up emotions on their teachers, classmates, friends, family members, and strangers, but more often other African-American males.

Given these alarming circumstances this article will:

(a) address the power of words as they are used in the home, school and community;

(b) underscore the importance of parents and educators being mindful of the potency of words; (c) stress the need for thoughtful use of words; and

(d) finally suggest verbal pitfalls to avoid in dealing with African-American males.

What's in a name?

> "Sticks and stone may break my bones, but names will never harm me "
>
> Anonymous

Little did we know when we chanted this saying how untrue it was. Names have a long-lasting effect on us, starting with something as basic as our name. Names often suggest qualities and characteristics of people, as pointed out by Canfield and Wells (1994). They state that names like Philip meant "Lover of horse," Peter meant "rock or stone," Henry meant "home ruler," Margaret meant "a pearl," and Judith meant "admired or praised." Last names like Cooper referred to "a man who made barrels", just as Smith meant "a blacksmith."

In biblical times names were regarded as closely related to the nature of the bearer (Martin, 1964). With this in mind and after conferring with many parents, it appears that more African Ameri-

can parents are reaching back to their African ancestry for names that connote strength.

It is important for educators and others to respect these names, rather than finding humor in them. Recognizing that negative associations and images can also be evoked by personal names, Canfield and Wells (1994) quoted Susan Robles who recommended that teachers combat this by teaching youngsters to take pride in the names they have been given. Additionally, educators should be ever mindful of the impact of names, even when they come in the form of labels such as "liar", "cheater", "thief", "stupid", "dummy" or "dunce."

Words and Self

How are thoughts generally transmitted? In words! Words that for the young African American male are too often viewed as deflating (Hutchinson, 1994; Foster, 1986). Henry David Thoreau (1854/1969) said "what a man thinks of himself, that is which determines, or rather indicates, his fate" (p. 10). With this in mind, it is not difficult to understand why the young African American male's fate doesn't look promising since he doesn't believe in himself, doesn't have faith, doesn't believe that he can be the "master of his fate" or "the captain of his soul." Giamatti (1984), the President of Yale University, analyzed Renaissance literature and concluded that to the Renaissance man "words were units of energy" and through their use "man could assume forms and aspire to shapes otherwise beyond his reach" (p. 103). Many African American young males never experience the helium effect of words. Hutchinson (1994), citing a questionnaire in which Black Enterprise Magazine asked blacks "if their hopes and aspirations were the same as the white middle class," noted that 61% said "yes." He concluded that the reason more than 61 % didn't agree was because America eternally finds nasty little ways to remind Black folks that they are still "niggers."

Bachrach (1985) in her introduction to *Slogans and Euphemisms* noted that with people who have severe and persistent mental disabilities, "words are immensely powerful devices" (p. 7) and very much control the dimensions of the mental health service system. Referring to the field of psychiatry, she stated that "words are used to mollify, evade, inflame and incite" (p. 7). Although Bachrach was speaking to her fellow Psychiatrists, I think her advice is appli-

cable to educators. She advises that "we need to work hard to educate ourselves to understand the power of words, as Giamatti described it — so that we can control them instead of letting them control us" (p.32). This is more important as we analyze the impact of words on our young.

Words in the Home

The development of self does not begin in formal school; it begins in the home with the child's first teachers, the parents and other family members. It is here that "the self evolves and thrives in the course of significant social interaction" (Johnson, 1992, p. 439). While the majority of what is transmitted is positive, in many instances it is not. "You are no good just like your daddy," "You act like a little sissy," " will never be anything," and "You are so dumb" are just a few of the deflating verbally abusives that parents have made. It is apparent that too many parents feel comfortable in using such put downs. What disturbs me most is that these damaging remarks are often made during the early, formative years of the child's life when he is forming the self-concept and personality are forming. Abatso and Abatso (1992) noted:

> ...young people come here as babies, without any self feelings. They develop a sense of self as they evaluate the perception of other people toward them. If they have fathers and mothers who call them ugly names, the name calling will prevent them from feeling a sense of respect. (p. 17)

Kelley (1962) stressed "the...self feeds on ideas, which come from other people" ·p. 15). These thoughts are internalized and sometimes actualized. With the enormous amount of "put downs," almost on a daily basis, many young African-American males grow up without being able to develop a sense of specialness or a sense of uniqueness. Without this sense, the risk of failure is increased.

Of a less threatening, but just as devastating, nature, we hear parents saying, "You are a bad boy" or "I couldn't do math when I was a child so I don't expect you to do well in math." It is not surprising when children respond to these self-fulfilling prophecies. After all, the parents did the mind-setting.

Twenty-six years as a public school educator and four years as the administrator of a black male youth mentoring program lead me

to believe this mind-setting is devastating in some African-American homes. The verbal abuse seems pronounced. Many parents are unhappy, stressed out and overwhelmed with problems. Misery appears to love company and is transferred through words. African-American young males are often verbally bashed and learn to do the same to others. Their lack of a sense of uniqueness, their lack of purpose, the instability of their lives often leave them feeling invisible. Awareness of the power of words and a new sensitivity to avoiding negative words can reverse this trend.

Peers and Words

The next set of molders of self-esteem are the child's peers. Almost all children have nicknames and many of them come from their peers. Some are complimentary, but many target explicit weaknesses. Canfield & Wells (1994) state that they are the most damaging and persistent occurrences of childhood. Thus, we hear children calling each other names such as Stinky, Dog, Butterball, Dumbo, Big Head, Baldy, Fatso, Skinny, Four Eyes, etc. Canfield and Wells (1994) concluded that "there may not be a young person anywhere who has not felt the sting of another's remark" ·p. 78).

Given the predominance of "jiving" in African-American communities, the sting often becomes more like a shark attack. Little is sacred or off limits. According to Kunmjufu (1986), "Black boys value their peers', walk, hat, "rap," and signifyin' more than anything else" (p. 160). Foster (1986) in his book Ribbin' Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens pointed out that black males, as well as almost all lower class urban male groups, play verbally and physically aggressive street corner games to a degree that they become semi-ritualized. The behavior consists of ongoing encounters intended to show skillfulness and superiority of one person over the other. He noted that African-American inner-city youngsters, especially males, have mastered the art of teasing, razzing, kidding, ranking, and denigrating the achievements and characteristics of others. Any error or physical defect or irregularity becomes a negative focus.

Children can be cruel to one another. It has long been known that how others feel about us helps determine in a large degree how we feel about ourselves. Bean (1992) called this the sense of connectiveness. With the barrage of negatives children hurl at one

another, especially among young African-American males, it is a miracle our young have any self-esteem at all. Canfield and Wells (1994) suggested that the trend can be reversed by having children give each other nicknames based on strengths, for example, Champ, Hoop (for a good basketball player) and Rocky (for a strong person).

Words and the Schooling Process

When children attend school, we can exacerbate the situation with remarks like "How can you be so stupid?" which translates into the child's mind "I am stupid." We say "that's dumb" and the child hears "You are dumb." If a teacher says "I've got my education; if you don't want to learn, then I don't care if you don't get your education," the child decodes this as "she doesn't care about me." "I'm sick and tired of your behavior" may be decoded as "she doesn't like me." Miller (1982) noted that children have an increasing ability to see themselves as objects to which actions or thought are directed by verbal symbols. African-American children at no different in this regard. In summary, Moustakas (1956) stated that meaning is not given; it is constructed.

Too many African-American young males have not fared well in school. They frequently "turn off to schooling, become underachievers and often are labeled and placed in special education programs. In a quest for academic excellence for these youth one may look at research on effective schools. Brookover and Lezotte (1984) isolated five correlates of school effectiveness. One of those identified was "high expectation." The though behind it was that students will rise to our expectations. Our expectations of others are expressed in words — words that can motivate or devastate. Johnson (1992) noted that school facilitates the child's emerging construction of self" and "the language environment of school learning constitutes a social context that is essential to the development of selfhood". p. 439). Johnson underscored the significance of others in the development of selfhood. She added "the potential that lies within each individual is realized only through social interaction" (p. 440). Scheffler (1991) said that the goal is maximal self-realization. Johnson (1992) noted "It is therefore of utmost importance that careful attention be given to the quality of these formal social interactive experiences and what the child can learn from them (p. 440). She added that as children

become adept in using verbal symbols, they become more able to meet the behavioral demands and expectations of others. This underscores the need for high expectations expressed through our words and behavior (behavior speaks too).

Chenfeld (1985), a teacher in Columbus, Ohio, who questioned when do we stop the celebration of learning, stated:

Language is the core, the key, the foundation of every class, subject, activity, the relationship. We should say languages — the language of the textbooks, printed materials, curriculum resources; the language of daily events — the give and take, instructions, directions, announcements, reactions, questions and conversations; the language of feelings — the "life and death" of the spirit conveyed through verbal and nonverbal communication; the power of the language of the teacher in helping children learn and grow together or the flip side of that power — the language of the teacher that conveys to children, "You're dumb. Look at those mistakes. This isn't good." The language of the shrinking of the spirit (p. 267).

Chenfield (1985) called a "Yes" teacher one who maintains a philosophy stamped with respect and regard for children, contrasting it with a 'No" teacher using a teaching situation to illustrate her meaning. In an example of the one situation, first graders were instructed to make a clock and be sure that all the numbers of the hours were written clearly. One child jumped into the assignment with enthusiasm. She carefully wrote the twelve numbers of the clock on a round paper plate. They were perfect, so beautiful that she decorated each number with a tiny flower around it. The teacher broke the spirit of the child by responding with a huge x across the face of the clock. Also angrily written (It scratched so deeply it tore the paper) was the message "Did not follow instructions."

Chenfield cited an old Yiddish custom, "When young children completed a page of study, their teacher dropped a dot of honey on the bottom of the page. The children were encouraged to dip their finger in the honey and taste its sweetness" (p. 268). She insisted that learning should always be sweet. Whether learning will be sweet or not depends on the words, verbal or written, that we choose as educators.

Thomas (1991) said "most educators agree that the use of positive reinforcement can have a powerful impact on student behavior.

They know when positive reinforcement is used consistently, it encourages desirable or appropriate behavior while modifying or extinguishing undesirable behavior " (p. 32). He added:

> The appropriate use of positive reinforcement is a vital skill in the overall pattern of delivering effective instruction. It can improve a student's self concept, promote participation in classroom activities, and modify or extinguish inappropriate behavior. Reinforcement can be physical like pat on the back, or it can be nonverbal, like a smile or nod; but it has the most impact when it is given verbally. (p. 33)

In a longitudinal case study relating academic failure to language, namely labeling, Juliebo and Elliott (1984) followed a child from birth to approximately age eight. They record his early success with learning language and reading skill, and then discuss his academic decline after being labeled a low achiever and a candidate for remedial classes. Given the label "remedial student" in grade two, this once bright, enthusiastic child adopted the label and behaved as a slow learner would. His school work continued to decline. A transfer to another school was the beginning of the child's academic salvation. His teacher, using words, began to rebuild his self-concept, rewarding him for improved work and encouraging his endeavors. The school year ended with the child having Bs in all areas of language arts. By the end of grade four he was awarded a commendation as the "Most Improved Student" in front of the whole school. Juliebo and Elliott (1984) concluded the study noting that whether or not the child will continue to grow positively depends on whether he again will meet a teacher who will destroy an already fragile self-concept.

Kirp (1974) observed that "adverse classification stigmatizes students, reducing both their self-image and their worth in the eyes of others' (pp. 12-13). Apple(1976) said we do not help children by using clinical and psychological labels, instead we place them in "educational slots." Interestingly, Juliebo and Elliott (1984) added:

> Labelling of course does not only refer to testing deviant behavior. Every time we write a comment on a child's writing, we are labelling. It does not take a kindergarten child long to realize that the "bluebirds" are brighter than

> the "canaries." Often too we only focus on cognitive labelling and affective problems are relegated to the unimportant. (p. 9)

Haynes (1986) reviewed perspectives underlying study skills. Under the motivational perspective, he identified *attribution* — "the assumption is that the tendency to attribute academic success or failure to certain causes can generate feelings of competence or incompetence in students and affect their subsequent performance", p. 3) and *self-esteem* — "the assumption is that the self-perceptions that students hold relative to their ability in certain subject areas influence their approach to studying and their performance in those subject areas" (p. 4). I believe both of these are affected by the verbal and written language. Both are determined by positive and negative messages one receives from others. Haynes (1986) pointed out:

> many students experience difficulty in school, not because of low intelligence, lack of ability or even lack of effort, but because they have made the assessment that they are incapable of performing well. Somehow, somewhere, from someone they received a negative message about their capability, internalized it, believed it and it has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. (p. 7)

Holiday (1991), in a brilliant discourse on how William Shakespeare wrote several plays (*The Merchant of Venice, The Tempest, Othello* and *Titus Andronicus)* which depict Jews and blacks in a very negative , stereotypical fashion, noted "the power of the pen" to bring injury to a person or group. He concluded that "words, whether spoken or written, are powerful in their expression" (p. 25). Haynes (1986) pointed out that the parasympathetic nervous system cannot be ignored because of its centrality in motivating and directing behavior. Likewise, the power of words cannot be ignored. Purkey (1991) combined the concept of invitations and disinvitations with the constructs intentionality and unintentionality to create four levels wherein people/educators function. They are (1) internally disinviting —, At this level people purposely behave in a harmful and destructive level towards themselves and others. They intend to demean, degrade, and destroy the value and work of themselves and others; (2) Unintentionally disinviting — At this level people behave in careless and thoughtless ways and their actions are seen as being disinviting toward others despite their best intentions. Their behav-

iors are ill-timed, poorly planned, misguided and extravagant. When messages are misinterpreted, gestures can be offensive and actions unclear. While the harm is unintended the damage still occurs; (3) Unintentionally inviting — At this level people note positive results but are uncertain what they did to achieve them. This leads to a lack of consistency; and (4) Intentionally inviting — This is the highest level of professional functioning. At this level people demonstrate an effective command of helping skills, a broad knowledge base and unconditional acceptance and regard for themselves and others. They consistently create messages and invitations enabling themselves and others to feel valued and worthwhile. These beneficial messages become the building blocks upon which to construct a healthy, well-functioning self-concept.

Purkey (1991) gave examples of unintentionally disinviting forces at work and seen in almost any school — the sign that reads "No Students Allowed in School Before 8:15 a.m." (although the temperature is below zero), or the teacher who consistently victimizes students with the "buts.' ("This is a good paper, Mary, but...").

Many urban schools, where the majority of African-American male youth are enrolled, are not seen as intentionally inviting. It should be the goal of all our schools to become intentionally inviting with staffs that practice behaviors and advocate policies, programs and processes that are intentionally inviting. Certainly the words we verbalize and write must be positive for this goal to be achieved.

In the real world we are faced, as Giamatti (1984) stated, "with symbols, codes and convention that may not simply shatter us but may also give our lives meaning and coherence" (p. 70). The bottom line is that words do have power. They have the power to build up people and convey the message that they are capable, while other words have the power to tear down people, leaving them with the impression that they are not valuable or capable. Unfortunately, too many African-American young males have experienced the negative messages of words.

Words and the Media

Hutchinson (1994) in the *Assassination of the Black Male Image* summed up how the media uses words in relationship to the African-American male as "the fine art of black male bashing" (p. 19). He referred to the Stuart murder in Boston where Chuck Stuart

killed his pregnant wife and blames it on a black man. Instantly, the media pumped up the unfortunate matter by printing horrorific stories about violence-prone young black men terrorizing the city. The authorities arrested thirty-nine-year-old Willie Bennett, an ex-convict with a long list of arrests. Hutchinson stated, "It probably would have worked, except for a few doubters who didn't just read the newspapers, they read Chuck Stuart" (p. 21). In truth, Stuart had brutally killed his wife.

When black leaders protested the coverage, the media retorted, "We're just doing our job and reporting the news" (Hutchinson, p. 21). The issues, however, with the black leaders was not the coverage, but the type of coverage. A Well-read, analytical person has to conclude that the press obsessively focuses on criminal acts by some blacks and excludes the good acts of so many others. The mind set seems to be that crime, especially black crime, sells papers. Look at the sensationalism with the Mike Tyson and O.J. Simpson cases and how the white American press allowed suppressed images of the black male to surface. In his book, Hutchinson gave many examples of "black male bashing" and noted that today "editors lace their features on African Americans with terms such as 'crime prone,' 'crack heads,' 'educational cripples,' 'poverty ravaged' and 'gang ridden.' (p. 22).

The media answers to nobody. It has power and exercises it recklessly when it comes to African-American males. Willie Bennett is just one example of an African-American man destroyed by racial, stereotypical words of the media. What about the law-abiding young black men who experience discrimination that stems from the fear of those who shiver at the mention of young black man? What does this widespread, predominant image do to innocent young African-American males who do not commit crimes or participate in gang activity and who are not menaces to society? First, it causes them to see themselves as others see them, in negative stereotypical terms.

If they survive negative indoctrination, often the young black negative image overwhelms them with obstacles that give them a defeatist attitude. Perceived as the "bogie man," the bottom line is they become the "losers," the real victims of words. If America is to assure that all of its citizens are productive, we must begin to hold the media accountable. Remember, there is no neutrality in life; if a

citizen is not contributing to the quality of life, he is subtracting from the quality of life. We can no longer afford to create social cripples stemming from ignorance and bigotry.

Words and Entertainment

Focusing on television and the entertainment industry, we can identify another influencer of self. It is believed that too many words used on television are damaging, especially for minorities. Raps are the new rage among our youth. There are stations that broadcast continuous music videos, most of them using rap music as the new medium. When one can understand what is said, often what we hear is derogatory. Without a doubt the message is too often counterproductive and negative as we mold values and virtues. Note that Bean (1992) identified values and virtues as another condition of self.

It is suspected that the movie industry has convinced whites and far too many African-Americans that the gangster lifestyle is synonymous with the young black lifestyle. In the black hype movies young African-

American brothers address African-American sisters as "bitches" and "hoes," call each other "nigger" as well as cuss, fight and shoot each other. White theatre patrons leave with their impressions of African Americans confirmed; but the sad thing about it is that our young African-American males leaving thinking that their words and behaviors on the screens are true representations of them. Words affect frames of reference. These frames of reference affect behavior. Now we have even more "Boyz in the Hood." Let's break the cycle.

Conclusion

Negative statements, put-downs have no place in life, especially in school. Parents must come to grips with this. The school, via its agents (teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and other staff members) must be ever mindful of this. We must select our words with wisdom, choosing the positive over the negative, eliminating disinviting language from our vocabulary and professional repertoire. We can choose to be a "beneficial presence" in the lives of children rather than a "lethal presence" in both what we say and do. Then and only then will words give positive self-definition and lead to positive life fulfillment.

African Americans have survived being kidnapped form their native homeland, the atrocities of slavery, the discrimination and bigotry embedded in the fabric of America, will the African-American male, however, survive the subtle, slow death of verbal abuse? Whether they do or not might depend on whether or not we recognize the power of negative words and adjust our language accordingly.

> We need to consider the role that schools and society in general have in creating low self-esteem in children. That is, students do not simply develop poor self-concepts out of the blue.
>
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> *Affirming Diversity*

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