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Foreword

Created to honor the memory of Dr. Ronald E. McNair, the McNair Scholars Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program offers its students access to what is normally an inaccessible part of academic life for undergraduate students. The program was conceived to further the academic development and interests of students seeking to pursue a doctoral degree in the sciences, mathematics, economics, and other fields in the academy. In its ninth year on our campus, the McNair Program has become an important avenue for students seeking to pursue a doctoral degree.

Recently Dr. Michele Foss-Snowden, Ms. Malee Xiong, and Ms. Carlotta Moore joined the McNair Program staff, bringing new insights and enthusiasm to join that of Dr. Susan Heredia and myself. They will all serve as valuable members of the McNair Program. Ms. Suzanne Gerbasi, who was with the program since its early days, will be missed. She moved on to exciting new opportunities in April 2008. We wish her continued success in her endeavors.

This journal edition offers you thoughtful articles authored by undergraduates under the direction of their faculty mentors. Through their research, these McNair scholars have synthesized the connections between theory, research, and the generation of new knowledge in their fields of study. I am proud of all the scholars, faculty mentors, and the program staff for the time and effort they have invested in the success of this journal and the McNair Scholars Program at California State University, Sacramento.

I hope that you find the readings to be thought-provoking and insightful.

Chevelle Newsome, Ph.D.
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Principal Investigator and Director for the
  McNair Scholars Program
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UNDERSTANDING CHICANA COLLEGE ASPIRATIONS: ACCESS AND LIMITATIONS IN SOCIAL CAPITAL

Diana Barela

Dr. Miguel Ceja, Faculty Mentor

ABSTRACT
This qualitative study examines the Kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) educational experiences of five Chicana college students enrolled at a four-year university. Using the sociological concept of social structure and human agency, the interviews focused on the institutional obstacles these students experienced during their K-12 education; and explored how they overcame these obstacles through the use of social capital in pursuit of a college education.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher uses the term “Chicana” to represent females born in the United States of Mexican immigrant parents. Also known as “Mexican-Americans” and “Latina/o,” the group examined in this research consists of the largest sub-group within the US Latino population (US Census Bureau, 2000). It is imperative that we study the Latino population because of the social implications this growing minority group holds for the future of California and the nation. Latinos make up the largest minority group in the US (National Center for Education and Statistic, 2005); within California alone, Latinos are the largest of all ethnic groups enrolled in K-12 public schools (California Department of Education, 2005). Latinos have the lowest national college attendance rate when compared to any other ethnic groups (US Census Bureau, 2000), and the highest high school dropout rates in the nation. Understanding what assists the minimal amount of students who are able to attend college is necessary to help improve the social conditions of Latinos. In an effort to understand the role of social capital in the educational experiences of Chicana students, this research explores factors that may have hindered and/or contributed to these five Chicanas’ college aspirations. Furthermore, this study focused on a combination of structural factors in their K-12 experience and the social capital that was available to them, both in and out of school.
There is a small body of research on the topic of Chicana college aspirations (Ceja, 2006, 2004; Delgado Bernal, 2001). Many of the related studies focus on family influence and support, including perceived cultural strengths and weaknesses. The concept of acculturation is seen as one factor that explains college attendance for Mexican-American students. “Acculturation theory” has been a useful framework to explain how individuals change or adapt their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors when living in a multicultural society (Flores, Ojeda, Huang, Gee, & Lee, 2006). According to Berry’s (2003) multi-dimensional acculturation model, the acculturation process varies along four different strategies: integration (bicultural), assimilation (Euro-American oriented), separation (Mexican oriented), and marginalization (disassociated from both cultures). Since Euro-American culture dominates most facets of the US educational system (Flores et al., 2006), it is assumed that the level of Euro-American oriented acculturation influences Mexican-American students’ educational goals. Flores et al. (2006) tested Berry’s (2003) theory to determine whether acculturation toward both cultures is related to educational goals, utilizing a regression analysis of 105 Mexican-American high school students (51% women and 49% men) educational experiences. In the context of this study, acculturation was linked to problem-solving appraisal and career decision-making self-efficacy. “Problem-solving appraisal” is the likelihood of seeking career services, and clear decision-making when it comes to educational and career goals; while “career decision-making self-efficacy” is defined as an individual’s belief that he or she can complete certain tasks related to making a career decision. This study found that Euro-American oriented problem-solving appraisal contributes to the educational decisions and goals of Mexican-Americans, whereas Mexican oriented acculturation and career decision-making self-efficacy did not.

A similar questionnaire, also dealing with acculturation theory, was used by Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain (2007) to examine how family contributes to postsecondary educational attainment of Mexican American youth. Their study compared the responses of 104 recent high school graduates, half of which were in college at the time of the study. The researchers found a positive correlation between mothers’ education and students’ degree of Euro-American oriented acculturation to college attendance. These findings suggest that students’ decision to attend college is influenced by their parents’ ability to transmit their knowledge of the education system to their children. Although most Mexican immigrant parents in the US value their children’s education, within the context of a Euro-American oriented educational setting they may lack the information needed to successfully maneuver
through the complex US educational system (Ceja, 2006, Gonzalez et al., 2003).

In contrast to Flores et al. (2006) and Hurtado-Ortiz et al. (2007), other studies found that strong ethnic identity helps students attain greater academic achievement. Delgado Bernal (2001) touches on the subject of bilingualism and biculturalism in her unique approach to understanding and analyzing Chicanas’ educational experiences, using the concept of mestiza consciousness. “Mestiza consciousness” is the way a student balances, negotiates, and draws from her biculturalism, bilingualism, commitment to communities, and spiritualities, in relationship to her education. An analysis of interviews and focus group data with 30 Chicana college students found that communication, practices, and learning that occur in the home and community – pedagogies of the home – often serve as a cultural knowledge base that helps students survive and succeed within the US education system. In accordance with Delgado Bernal’s findings, another longitudinal survey of 123 Latino college students by Ong, Phinney, and Dennis (2006), studied the protective influence of psychological and family factors on academic achievement of Latino college students. The findings showed that family support and strong ethnic identity help students of low socio-economic status attain greater academic achievement.

A related study on family influence by Ceja (2004) emphasized the pertinent role parents play in the development of Chicana students’ college aspirations through direct and indirect influences. Through interviews of 20 Chicanas, Ceja found the different ways Chicanas perceive and come to understand the manner by which their parents influenced and shaped their educational goals and aspirations. Some of the direct influences included parents encouraging them to do well in school and go to college. Indirect influences included parents stories of past struggles and witnessing parents’ present struggles. The importance of education was based largely on parent’s limited past and present social, educational, and occupational conditions. The participants understood that their parents’ lack of education and English fluency, as well as their immigration status, were some of the main factors that situated their parents in the margins of society. For these Chicana students, their parents’ experiences provided strength and motivation to aspire to a college education and served as a vivid reminder that they did not want to struggle like their parents did.

Many of the studies provide insight on the positive influence family and culture play in helping develop college aspirations among Chicanas. Other scholars have found additional influences upon Chicanas who decided to pursue a higher education, such as their available social capital. “Social
“Cultural capital” is the knowledge of norms, values, beliefs, and lifestyles of groups to which people belong (McNamee & Miller, 2004). While cultural capital was not addressed in the studies that focused on acculturation theory (Flores et al., 2006; Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007), it is possible to connect the positive relationship found between Euro-American oriented acculturation and educational goals and attainment, to students’ greater accumulation of cultural capital. Cultural capital mediates access to opportunity and social mobility, to “fit in” and “look and know the part” is
to possess cultural capital (McNamee & Miller, 2004). Since Euro-American is the dominant culture in the US, it is assumed that greater acculturation (i.e. cultural capital) will translate into greater knowledge of college planning and educational attainment strategies.

However, contrasting studies also found that strong ethnic identities help Mexican-American students’ academic achievement. These studies relate more to family support (i.e. social capital), which is also helpful in promoting social mobility. Utilizing the sociological concepts of social and cultural capital, it is possible to understand and reconcile these conflicting studies. Euro-American oriented acculturation is helpful in accumulating cultural capital, which allows for greater institutional knowledge and resources, while stronger Mexican-American ethnic identities is associated with the accumulation of social capital in the form of family support toward Chicanas’ college aspirations.

**Institutional Factors**

It would be unreasonable to place the sole responsibility of adolescents’ academic achievement on family and culture. Institutional support and/or constraints greatly affect human agency as well. Institutions have historically privileged certain groups of people (the dominant group), while simultaneously discriminating against others based on their class, race, and/or gender. This study incorporates the institutional factors that may support or hinder progress with respect to obtaining a higher education. It takes into account Chicanas’ K-12 educational experience in relation to their class, race, and gender.

Racial segregation continues to be a social problem with Latinos concentrated in low-income neighborhoods. Neighborhoods determine what school a student will attend, which reflects the economic resources of the neighborhood in which the school is located. Hence, Latino families are often relegated to schools that offer fewer resources than other schools. Valuable resources include good counselors, teachers, facilities, supplies, and courses, which increase students’ chances of attending a four-year college (Oakes, Rogers, Silver, Valladares, Terriquez, McDonough, Renee, & Lipton, 2006; Tierney & Hagedorn, 2002; Garcia, 2001). There continues to be a large racial disparity, whereby Latino students receive less access to these important resources, especially within the state of California (Oakes et al., 2006; Tierney et al., 2002; Garcia, 2001). These disparities can be found between and within schools. Even if minorities attend racially diverse schools, they tend to be placed in lower-level classrooms through the use of school curriculum tracking systems (Oakes et al., 2006; Tierney et al., 2002; Garcia 2001). Access to less rigorous coursework also leads to lower college entrance exam scores,
a requirement for admission at many universities (Oakes et al., 2006; Tierney et al., 2002; Garcia, 2001). The presence of social capital can help mediate some of the disadvantages of attending low-income schools.

The more familiar sources of social capital are with the educational system and college-choice process, the greater likelihood they help prepare students for admittance into the best universities (Oakes et al., 2006; Tierney et al., 2002; Garcia, 2001). The sooner this type of assistance comes into students’ lives, the less likely students are to fall behind and struggle to meet college requirements later on in school. Although social capital is imperative to academic success, attending low-income K-12 schools and/or being placed in lower-level curriculum tracking still puts these students at a disadvantage when compared to students that come from more affluent families and/or neighborhoods (Oakes et al., 2006; Tierney et al., 2002; Garcia, 2001). Still, access to positive social capital continues to provide needed guidance to some of these students in meeting their college goals. Social capital usually comes from a combination of resources both in and out of school; family being the most common outside emotional support, and practical inside support coming from institutional agents like school teachers and counselors. Figure 1 provides some examples of what may influence Chicana students’ college aspirations, based on the review of the literature. It is important to note that factors illustrated in Figure 1 may vary in intensity and influence depending on the individuals’ experience.
METHODODOLOGY
The researcher conducted qualitative interviews with five college freshman Chicanas attending a four-year teaching institution in northern California. Consistent with qualitative research, a purposeful sampling was used to recruit participants from the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). The original intent of the researcher was to limit the study to six Chicanas with the following characteristics: (1) born in the US of Mexican immigrant parents who never attended college, and (2) are the first person in their immediate family to attend college (first generation). The researcher was unable to recruit six participants who met this criterion. Instead, the researcher completed five interviews, and although two of the participants did fulfill all the original requirements, three of them did not. One student had a mom who went to college in Mexico, but did not graduate. Two students had older siblings who started attending college before them. Having that slight variation in Chicana backgrounds allowed the researcher to compare the participants’ experiences.
All participants were females who were born and raised in the United States. They were freshman college students who went straight from high school to a
four-year teaching institution. All participants had Mexican immigrant parents (born and raised in Mexico), who have very limited English fluency (or none at all), and have never attended college in the United States. Participants also grew up in low-income households.

Semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Themes utilized in the interviews were derived from Figure 1 (page 10) and include: (1) K-12 educational experiences; (2) available social capital; (3) How these experiences created obstacles and/or facilitated pursuing a higher education, and how constraints were overcome; and (4) How their experiences related to their social position (race, class, and gender).

The researcher built trust and validity with the participants through constant communication and affirmation during and after the interviews. After the interviews, the researcher contacted the participants by e-mail to verify all the information was correct upon transcription; and asked them to explain any needed information that was still unclear and/or missing. Participants were also contacted to verify that their answers were being interpreted and analyzed accurately by the researcher.

RESULTS

While conducting the interviews, most of the participants did not recall much detail about their elementary educational experience. Therefore, the researcher decided to include only their educational experience from 7th through 12th grade. The logic for choosing a time period that begins in seventh grade is that some elementary schools go up to 6th grade. Another reason to include seventh grade is because, even if sixth grade starts in middle school, some schools do not require students to begin an official track until seventh grade, when students are placed in differing curricular levels, such as Pre-Algebra and Algebra. Curriculum tracking systems vary between schools, but for the purpose of this study, findings beginning from seventh grade were best suited for its participants.

7th – 12th Grade Education

Three out of the five participants went to schools with poor facilities, environment, resources, teachers, and counselors. For example, Cristina shared,

*The schools I went to were pretty run down, some classes didn’t even have floor. They had floor, but it was cement, they didn’t have anything like tile or carpet. Some desks were really old, books were really old. School supplies, teachers didn’t really provide, you needed to bring your book and your pencil and things*
like that. But books, sometimes we didn’t have enough. So we’d have to share, things like that.

It is also interesting to note that these were low-income schools in which the majority of the students were Latinos. However, what made even more of a difference, according to these three students, were the curriculum courses they were either placed in or signed up for. Their academic struggles within these inadequate schools were either exasperated or overcome in large part by the types of courses they took. These three Chicanas had different curricular experiences in each of their schools: average, positive, and negative (see Figure 2). Even though they went to similar schools, Cristina, who signed up for what she considered a very good curricular track, had the most positive overall experience compared to the other two. Marisol considered her curricular track, which encouraged students to go into the health field after high school, to be average. According to Marisol, she was placed in classes that were not very challenging:

I guess the health academy encouraged us to attend a university, well a lot of the students, when I go back home, they ended up working at Target or just like a community college, a lot of them go to the local one.

Figure 2: Participant Curricular Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marisol</td>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>Health Academy Bata (average)</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>first bad, then good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristina</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>AVID (very good)</td>
<td>AVID (very good)</td>
<td>AVID (very good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>ESL (bad)</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marisol’s overall 7th through 12th grade education was a bit of a struggle, mainly because she hung out with the wrong crowd at the beginning of high school, noting:

I guess it depends on the crowd you hang out with because as a freshman and sophomore I hung out with a crowd that just didn’t want to go to class and that changed I guess, because I started hanging out with a different group of people, and those people were more into school. Those people right now go to universities.
as well, they really helped because they keep you on track with homework and tests.

The third student, Laura, was placed in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and was kept there even when she was receiving good grades. She felt this set her back, because they were all lower-level classes with bad instructors. Her overall experience was negative. As Laura indicates, she had to struggle with the counselor to get into high-level college preparatory courses:

My counselors in high school, I didn’t really like them, because I went to them when I was a junior or sophomore to see how I was doing, if I would be able to go to a four-year. And he didn’t really pay attention. He would just give me classes just to graduate from high school. And I saw them, and was like I don’t need these, I need better classes so I can transfer to a four-year. And up to my senior year, he kept doing that.

In comparison, the remaining two Chicanas who went to more ethnically diverse schools considered their schools to be average and excellent, and even though they were placed in what they perceived to be the ‘regular track’ classes, this was not considered a bad thing (see Figure 3). For instance, Veronica thought her schools were average, and although she did mention having some bad high school teachers, her overall educational experience was positive:

I was placed in high level classes, but it’s the teachers themselves, they wouldn’t go the extra mile, they wouldn’t push you into doing your best, just everything that I turned in, well obviously like I tried my best, but I felt like they could have been more encouraging and teach us beyond what was actually needed. I wish that their standards would have been higher, not only for me but for the rest of the students as well.

Figure 3: Participants Views of ‘Regular Track’ System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Regular track (average)</td>
<td>Bad (high school)</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Regular Track (very good)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elena, on the other hand, had the most positive experience out of all five participants. She went to a slightly more affluent middle school, and a much more affluent high school. She always felt she was taking the right classes, and everyone at the schools were very helpful and supportive:

What I liked about my middle school was that they always praised academic success. Like for everyone that did well, they always gave a certificate or something like that. So that was really nice, it was very helpful. The teachers approached me, ever since I was in eighth-grade, like you know after high school this comes, and you should really look into this. I didn’t know anything about it, so that was nice. The high school that I went to had a lot resources, I think that it had everything that we needed as students, the library, career center, counselors, and they just had different departments and stuff like that. The teachers were amazing; the high school was really nice.

All five participants at least attempted to take Advanced Placement (AP) classes during high school. Veronica did not know they existed until the middle of high school, when she took two years of AP Spanish. She wished she would have received that information earlier on, so she could have taken more of them. Marisol started off on the wrong foot in high school and did not pass AP English as a freshman. As a result, the school did not allow her to continue taking AP English courses. Cristina was part of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) track, which encouraged students to take some AP classes. She did take a few, but said she preferred AVID classes because she felt more comfortable with the majority of Mexican students in AVID than she did in the AP classes, which predominantly had white students. She noted:

I was in the AVID program in middle school, they really helped me prepare for college. They’d take us to colleges, and pretty much helped us. You had to sign up for it. They looked at your grades, because you needed at least a 2.5 GPA to get into AVID, and saw what kind of classes you were taking, and that’s when they put you in the AVID program. And basically, I liked the AVID program better because I took IB classes, like advanced, and I really didn’t like it. So I just stuck with AVID because they separated us from other people. In your AVID classes you had the same students all day, in all your classes. There were more Mexicans in AVID than in the IB program, which had
mostly Caucasians. I felt more comfortable with the Mexicans than I did with them.

Elena, who was in the most advanced curricular track, took three AP classes, one of which was AP Calculus.

All the high school teachers that I had, the counselors, and faculty, were very helpful, they were awesome. I also felt like I was in the right classes. They were very helpful, they were the ones who told me what to take, especially the career counselor. They were just very helpful, I feel like they were always motivating me. I saw them as a group of friends, they knew that I was motivated, so they knew that I would do good and they would always push me. With my classes, like I said, I always felt like I was taking the right classes. For example, my freshman year I started Geometry, and then I went up until my senior year, my fourth year I took AP Calculus. They were very encouraging, all my teachers. My classmates were very supportive too, that affected my learning in a positive way. I always continued to study harder; I was able to enroll in three AP courses, AP US History, AP Spanish, and AP Calculus. And I did receive academic counseling, especially during my junior and senior year when I was about to graduate. When I went to the career center I was placed in the four-year plan. They would help me prepare for college, step-by-step.

Although Laura was placed in one of the worst curricular tracks, through her determination to take college preparatory courses she managed to get into one Honors and one AP course.

Standardized testing for college entry, such as the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT), were not a big factor in most of the students’ decision to attend college. Three of the five participants received average scores. Elena, who had the most rigorous coursework, received good scores. Laura, who had been placed in the lowest level classes, received rather low scores on her SAT/ACT, which were not high enough for entrance into the university she really wanted to attend. Figure 4 shows the relationship between the students’ curriculum and teachers to their participation in Honors/AP classes and test scores.
Social Capital
The participants’ schools and tracking system had a large impact on their overall satisfaction with their academic preparation for college. For these students, the academic support programs they were part of were important sources of motivation to continue on to college. These programs emphasized the importance of doing well in school and obtaining a higher education. As Cristina notes:

The first time I remember hearing about the possibility of going to college was in 8th grade, when I joined AVID, because that’s when they started talking about the importance of going to college. At the beginning I thought you just graduated from high school and that was it, you just went to work, because that’s what people from my family do, they graduate from high school, some don’t even graduate, but the ones that do just go to work.

The academic support programs not only motivated these young Chicanas, but offered them counseling, and in some cases tutoring and peer support (see Figure 5).
According to Cristina:

The AVID teacher was like your mom in high school, since she got you when you’re a freshman and had you throughout your senior year. Throughout the four years, she was really helpful and encouraged me to take AP classes, like I took some. She was really encouraging. And the other AVID teachers too, because they dedicated their time to show us, for example, I’m not good in math, the teacher would stay after school and show me step by step until I really understood it, so I think that was really helpful. My classmates in AVID were also very supportive. Tuesdays and Thursdays were our tutorial days. Some kids had pre-calculus, and if you had less, they would help you. We helped each other out and encouraged each other, like if you got a C, let’s try to get a B; things like that.

Veronica’s report that follows suggests that counseling played an important role in helping fulfill her college aspirations by helping her choose classes, fill out forms, receive valuable information, and provide continued support and encouragement.

The counseling I received was mostly from the Migrant Education Program, those counselors were a big reason why I am here today. They always encouraged us to do our best in our classes, so we could meet the requirements to be able to attend college. I did talk to my school counselor also, but he wasn’t as supportive as the Migrant Education Program was. The Migrant Education Program is shown as MEP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Academic Support Programs</th>
<th>Counselors</th>
<th>Tutoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>MEP (very good)</td>
<td>MEP (very good)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marisol</td>
<td>MEP (good)</td>
<td>MEP (very good)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristina</td>
<td>AVID (very good)</td>
<td>AVID (good)</td>
<td>AVID (good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>MEP (good)</td>
<td>School and MEP (very good)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>MEP and Upward Bound (good)</td>
<td>School (bad) and MEP (very good)</td>
<td>Upward Bound (good)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program told me I needed to take all the A-G requirements. They talked a lot about the GPA, they would always tell me to get it up there, but as far as the AP classes and honors they wouldn’t say anything either. They did tell me that I had to take the SAT and ACT and that it was important because it was reflective on if you were going to get into college. They told me about the College Board, a website where you could take sample questions.

In contrast to the counseling received from their academic support programs, four of the five participants received little or no help from their school counselors, who the participants said were absent, busy, and/or discouraging. Cristina shared her discouraging experience with her school counselor:

Well, I had a weird experience with a counselor. We had an AVID counselor and she quit, because she got a better job as a principal at some elementary. So they were looking for an AVID counselor, and in the meanwhile, I had a normal counselor. He was really disrespectful, he didn’t pay attention to you. It was really harsh, because at some point in my senior year, because this happened in my senior year, I was trying to get my transcripts and things like that, because I needed it for my college applications. So I told him, and he said I shouldn’t even worry about that right now, just worry about graduating because you’re not going to make it into a university, focus more on graduating and we’ll try to get you into a community college. I was in shock, because I wanted to go, and that was really hurtful. He didn’t even look at my GPA. He just looked at me, and said don’t worry about that, just try graduating. I just left, I didn’t know what to say.

While the lack of sufficient help from the school counselors was another constraint most of these Chicanas experienced in attempting to pursue a higher education, it was overcome by the assistance they received from their academic support programs. Only Elena, who attended the more affluent high school, was very pleased with the counseling services provided by her school’s career center. Still, all five of the participants were part of an academic support program, which provided very helpful counseling services.

Most of the students’ social capital came from within their schools, particularly when it came to obtaining practical information related to their college aspirations. Outside of school, all of the participants mentioned their
families as the number one source of motivation and emotional support. For example, Cristina shared:

My mom really encouraged me, since I was a child, to put a lot of effort into school because having an education is everything. If you want to be somebody, you need an education. She went to a university in Mexico, but she didn’t get to graduate because she got married with my dad. And they had to come over here, but she would always tell us that she didn’t make it, but she hopes we do. So she supported us. She didn’t know the steps, she just supported us, and she was like if you want to go I’ll help you, I’m behind you, as long as you want to do it.

Only two of the participants had older siblings who were attending universities, and provided them with additional advice in pursuing their college aspirations. Laura discussed how this helped her:

Well, my siblings influenced me to go to college. I’m the youngest sister from the girls; I have two older sisters and a brother. I saw two of them graduating, one from St. Mary’s, the other one from Berkeley, and my brother from Sac State. So I was the one slacking off and I didn’t really think I was going to go to a four-year, so I had to buckle down when I was a junior. I wanted to be like them, so I really got moving.

Only one of these two participants also had a few older friends who also provided practical advice. Figure 6 shows the overall social capital of these students, including their limitations in social capital and how that affected the information they received. The researcher conceptualized a new figure (see Figure 7), similar to Figure 1, which sums up the factors that affected these students’ college aspirations.
College Choice Process

Once these Chicanas were certain they were headed for college, they all preferred going straight to a four-year university. Somehow they got the impression that going to a university would be better than a community college. Although surprisingly enough, Elena, who met the requirements for
more prestigious universities, was the only one who originally assumed she would first go to a community college, then transfer to a four-year university. She explained:

I was 90% sure I would go to a community college. I just thought I’m just going to go there. But then one of my counselors was like, no, you’re not going to go to a community college, you’re going to Sacramento State, because that’s where you want to go and I know you do and you’re going. And one of my counselors also wanted me to go to Davis, but then I thought it would be a little harder living over there, just further away. I really didn’t know the difference between CSU and UC.

None of the participants considered going to a private or UC system university because they either did not know the difference, thought they were too expensive, or did not meet their admission requirements. Marisol discussed her college choice process:

This [California State University, Sacramento] was my first choice, I knew my GPA wasn’t high enough to go to a UC. I guess if I would have started doing better since freshman year, instead of messing up, I know I could have gone to a UC; but this was my first choice out of all the CSUs. It was convenient because where I’m from, I’m like 3 hrs away from here, and I was scared to come here because I’m on my own in a way. But it was convenient because the roommates that I’m living with, they’re older than me, they’re also from the same hometown. My dad knows their dad because they worked together in the fields. So he told me it would be more convenient to live with them.

As captured by Cristina’s statement, all five Chicanas chose the university selected for this study for similar reasons, namely to be near their families: “I decided to attend this university because it’s closer to my house. I don’t like being far away from my family, because we’re very family-oriented.”

A few of the participants, like Elena, also had previous living arrangements with someone they knew that lived where they attend college:

The reason I decided to attend Sacramento State was because it was only 45 minutes away from where I live. And if I came here I would get to see my parents every weekend. So that would be nice, so I thought Sacramento State is good. And then my living situation was already guaranteed because I already had a friend
who was here at Sacramento State. I pretty much knew where I
was going to live and with whom. So that encouraged me a little
bit more. Sacramento State was my first choice.

Others, like Laura, were also referred to Sacramento State by someone they
knew:

I didn’t want to go too far because I knew from my sisters’ friends
that went far, the first year they had to come back because it was
either too hard, too expensive, or too far. And so I thought about
this university, I have a brother who graduated from here that
told me it was really cool for him. So I came my junior year to see
the campus with my parents and they liked it.

Figure 8 sums up the factors that affected the participants’ decision to attend
the university.

**Figure 8: Participant College Choice Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Family Distance</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Referral</th>
<th>Didn’t want community college</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Lacked info. on UC or Private</th>
<th>Requirements for UC or Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marisol</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristina</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Race, Class, and Gender**
The participants did not see their social position (race, class, and gender) as
impacting their college aspirations, and most of them did not mention any
structural factors related to their social position. Instead, Marisol discussed
how the under-representation of minorities in certain professions impacted her:

I wanted to go to optometry school, so I looked at their websites.
The percentage of Hispanics was very low, like 2%. That made
me sad in a way; it discouraged me. And also financially, it’s a
lot of money. It’s also very competitive as well.
Most of the negative responses given by participants were in relation to their class, or low-income household. Some of the participants mentioned that their parents had to work long hours and had limited time for extra academic involvement. Another aspect of coming from a low-income family was the cost of paying for tuition and moving expenses, which worried some of the participants, like Elena:

*I did have some financial limitations when I was deciding to leave home, because my parents’ didn’t have a savings plan for me, like a lot of students did, to attend college. But they still supported me. They said if you want to go, we don’t know how we’re going to do it, but you’re going to go.*

When it came to race, the responses were usually neutral or positive. None of the five participants perceived any discrimination based on their race. For Elena, being an ethnic minority motivated her to make it because she knew that not many Chicano/as were going to universities.

*I feel that I have been very fortunate because I would say that only my race affected my college aspirations, but in a good way, because I knew not many Hispanics were going to universities, not a big percentage, so I wanted to be one of those Hispanics that actually keep on going and I knew I would because I was very dedicated to school, so I knew that I would go.*

All five Chicanas’ had parents who were born and raised in Mexico and were not fluent in English. However, only a few of the participants mentioned that parental assistance was limited by the language barrier and/or unfamiliarity with the US educational system. Elena stated:

*My parents didn’t really know much about universities and all that stuff, or how that really worked, the whole educational process, they didn’t really know. So they weren’t telling me you better go to college up until I was already a senior in high school. I just started telling them about it.*

All of the participants stated that their gender did not affect their college aspirations. They were not held back or pressured by any perceived gender roles. Again, Elena offers:
I know that's a big thing with Hispanics or Chicanos, the girl can't really keep going, it's more like get married with your husband. I knew it existed, but it didn't happen to me. I didn't feel pressured at all, and I'm very happy about that.

DISCUSSION

All five of the participants had some similarities in how their educational experience affected their college aspirations. Although having distinct 7th through 12th grade educational experiences, they all received assistance from an academic support program. Marisol's initial hardship in high school was a combination of attending an inadequate school and hanging out with peers who were not dedicated to academic achievement. Yet, once she started hanging out with a new group of peers who were more committed to school, she became motivated. The additional support and advice from the Migrant Education Program (MEP) also helped her overcome the obstacles of attending a bad school and trying to catch up academically. Cristina went to a similar school, but had signed up for AVID. She overcame having to go to an inadequate school by signing up in the AVID track, which is also an academic support program. Laura attended schools with conditions that were not as bad because they were in a small town. Yet having been placed in ESL, a lower-level tracking system, put her at a greater disadvantage compared to Marisol and Cristina. Even though Laura had the most social capital out of all five of the participants, she had to struggle the most as a result of being placed in lower-level classes with bad instructors. Laura also received poor assistance from the school counselor. Her social capital, especially from the academic support programs, helped her overcome these numerous obstacles. With the help of the academic support programs at her school, she was able to get into one Honors and one AP class. Yet at the end, she still was not able to attend the university she would have liked because of her low GPA and SAT scores. It is also important to note that Marisol, Cristina, and Laura all attended low-income schools that had a predominantly Latino population.

Veronica and Elena attended more ethnically diverse schools. Veronica had a fairly typical educational experience. Her only real hardship were some bad teachers. She overcame that with help from her older sibling and the Migrant Education Program in pursuing her college aspirations. These same positive sources of support were important in pursuit of her college aspirations. Elena is the exception in this study; she was the only one who attended more affluent schools. Even though her parents were also low-income, they both worked very hard and were able to move into slightly better neighborhoods. Elena had very little social capital outside of school, yet she had the most positive educational experience out of all five participants. Going to more
affluent schools and being placed in the regular track allowed her to take advanced classes. In these classes, the teachers were very good and offered her a lot of support. The high school had a lot of resources, such as the career center, in which Elena received plenty of information and counseling, aiding her college aspirations. She also mentioned being part of the Migrant Education Program, which offered very helpful counseling services as well.

In comparing the five participants experiences, the researcher recognized the significant impact the type of school they attended, the curriculum tracking system they were in, their peers, and their academic support program had on their academic achievement and college aspirations. The academic support programs were impressive. These were long-term programs that were very involved in most facets of the students’ academic achievement and college aspirations. AVID was the most involved, providing classes, teachers, and peers that replaced the schools inadequacy within their regular track. Cristina was very satisfied with the AVID program, which, according to her, saved her from being stuck in the regular track at her school.

Another important facet the researcher observed in the results were the cultural strengths present in all the participants’ college aspirations. “Familism”, the value of family and kinship, is a large part of Mexican culture and heritage. Even Mexican immigrant parents in the US tend to carry on this value to their children. Familism was apparent in this study, as parents were one of the most important sources of social capital for all five participants. The parents of the participants were not familiar with the educational system in the US and were not fluent in English. Yet, they were still a strong source of motivation and emotional support for all five Chicana students. It is interesting to note that all of the participants grew up in two-parent households. This may indicate that Chicanas with both parents in the household experience less financial and emotional struggles, and are therefore more likely to attend a four-year university straight out of high school. A few of them also had siblings in college who inspired and encouraged them to pursue a higher education. They served as positive role models both Laura and Veronica wished to emulate. Familism also affected all of the participants’ college choices; they deliberately chose a university that was close to their families.

Although there still exists a degree of racial segregation based on income, this was not apparent to the participants. The low-income schools that most of the participants attended had a high concentration of Latinos, while the more affluent schools were more racially diverse. Elena went to more affluent schools, which had facilities and faculty that were much better than the low-income schools the other participants attended. The only racial segregation
that was apparent to some of the participants were the differences between
tracking systems. One example would be Cristina’s school curriculum tracking
system, which placed most of the white students in the highest-level classes
(the International Baccalaureate program). Laura was placed in the lowest
level classes in the ESL track, which had predominantly Mexican students.
Class also affected some of the participants’ college choices. In choosing
which university to attend, coming from a low-income family became an
issue. Some of the participants did not want to go to an expensive university,
while others worried about how they would make it on their own, having to
pay for tuition and moving expenses. This limited some of their choices in
trying to decide which university to attend.

The fact that none of the participants brought up gender as an issue may
imply that Chicanas’ who are not tied down by traditional gender roles are
more likely to go straight to a four-year university upon graduating from high
school. In regards to human agency, the researcher noticed that most of the
participants actively sought out help and information. Cristina for example,
was dissatisfied with her school’s regular track. As a result, she went with her
mother to speak with the counselor, and that is when she found out about
AVID. Elena did not really have anyone to guide her in high school, so she
went on her own to the career center to gather information about going to
college. Veronica and Laura had to continually seek out their high school
counselors to obtain necessary information regarding their classes. Having
the will, courage, and confidence to seek out services proved to be beneficial
to these students.

LIMITATIONS

This exploratory qualitative study does not represent the entire Chicana
student population. Consistent with qualitative approaches, the researcher
used purposeful sampling in selecting the participants rather than random
sampling. Therefore, their background was very specific to that defined in
the methodology section. Demographically, the study is limited to a northern
California four-year teaching institution. Because students were recruited
from the College Assistance Migrant Program, their experiences may differ
from similar students who were not part of any retention programs. This
study does not take into account male perspectives, experiences of students
from other institutions, or from different upbringings.

CONCLUSION

This broad study can be taken in many directions when applied to future
research. In further expanding this study, future research can examine even
larger structural forces influencing Chicana college aspirations. Race and
class inequalities, for example, can be analyzed by studying the political and economic institutions that cause inequalities in relation to race, income, neighborhoods, and ultimately school districts.

Another aspect that contributes to social and educational inequalities related to a person’s race and/or class is their cultural capital. Cultural capital students are expected to acquire in order to be academically successful should be further examined in relation to cultural dominance, bias, and racism. The need for more diversity, acceptance, cultural sensitivity, and consideration in a multi-cultural society could also be examined in relation to cultural capital.

Future studies can also incorporate a more quantitative approach. A trend study viewing the progress of Chicana students would be of value. Quantitative surveys can also be administered using various figures from the present study to help identify social factors that may influence Chicana college aspirations. Combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches may also prove beneficial.

It is also important to study the reasons why many Chicana students do not make it to a university. It would also be interesting to see how Chicanas who were not part of any academic support program overcame various institutional obstacles. A study similar to the present study can be tested for reliability by replicating it with students who are not part of any college retention program. Comparing various generations of Chicana students would also be an interesting study in relation to acculturation theory.

Future research can also study the influence of two-parent versus one-parent households and its affect on Chicana college aspirations. Additional research can examine the influence of traditional gender roles on Chicana college aspirations. Lastly, the researcher further recommends continued research on academic support programs. In realizing how influential academic support programs are, evaluating and comparing various programs may help improve them.
REFERENCES


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Many animals make musical sounds, but the creation and appreciation of music itself is widely regarded as an essentially human capacity. A standard philosophical definition of music captures this intuition with the necessary condition that music is humanly organized sound. Using philosophical naturalism as the framework, this study examines this definition and argues that it does not facilitate scientific inquiry into music as a natural phenomenon. Drawing data from evolutionary musicology, this researcher proposes a fully naturalized definition of music, one that allows the logical possibility that musical creation and appreciation may be manifested to different degrees by animals other than human.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the question: Do nonhuman animals make music? This ostensibly trivial question may hold the key to unraveling many mysteries of human evolution. For example, what is the origin of human music? Evolutionary musicologists, who study music in the context of science, think that the musical behaviors of animals are likely to be “relevant to our attempts to understand the beginnings and foundations of music in the course of anthropogenesis” (Wallin, Merker, & Brown, 2000). That is, how animals use sound may shed light on the evolution of human music. In fact, one interesting hypothesis is that “our distant forebears might have been singing hominids before they became talking humans…” (Wallin, Merker, & Brown, 2000). Current interest in hypothesis like these validates the importance of our central question. In addition, deeper understanding of the origin of music may elucidate the origin of language. Prominent thinkers have theorized about the connection between music and language:

Spencer considered singing to be emotionally intensified speaking; for Darwin, it was the inherited and mellowed remnant of the courting periods of our animal ancestors, from which language derived at a later stage; Richard
Wagner believed that language and music issued from a common source, that of speech-music (Wallin, Merker, & Brown, 2000.)

As there still is no widely accepted theory concerning the origin of music, knowing whether nonhuman animals make music would certainly be illuminating.

All of the theories mentioned above are scientific in nature. This paper on the other hand, is a philosophical study. As such, this paper concerns itself with the basic concept in evolutionary musicology, particularly on the concept of music. As Wallin et al. (2000) points out, the concept of music plays a crucial role here because whether nonhuman animals make music ultimately depends on how music is defined. For example, if one defines music as sounds having structure that conforms to the western tonal system, then it is obvious that no animal other than humans can make music. The crux of the issue here is how precisely we should define music, especially in light of evolutionary musicology. Don’t We Already Know What Music Is?

Where can we begin if we are to investigate the concept of music? As most people are inclined to believe that they have a strong understanding of connotative and denotative meaning of the word “music” (Nettl, Music., 2008), an initial response may be that no philosophical investigation is needed. However, philosophical investigation is justified because the meaning of the word “music” is not only heterogeneous among different cultures, but polysemy within western culture as well. While it would be out of the scope of this paper to survey the conception of music in every culture, it is sufficient for our purpose to mention one culture that conceives music in ways that counter the western intuition.

Iranian music, which exemplifies the Islamic tradition, is a natural candidate for this role as it is different than its western counterpart in important ways (Nettl, Music., 2008). Ostensibly, the Iranian notion of music is similar to the west. For example, “musiqi,” an important term in their conceptual scheme of music, highly resembles the word “music.” Indeed, “musiqi” does refer to a broad spectrum of musical sounds just as “music” does. However, an important difference is that “musiqi” tends to designate music in instrumental, composed, and secular settings, while in the West, the term “music” covers sounds from free-jazz to Gregorian chant, which would be categorized as different entities in the Iranian system. More importantly, while vocal music in the West is seen as the predominate form of music, it is not considered “musiqi” according to the Iranian system; instead, vocal music is denoted by the term “khandan,” which generally refer to musical sounds in non-metric, improvised, and sacred forms. Further, while music in itself does not carry any moral implication in the West, “musiqi is often the object of
ambivalence and criticism” because of its secular association, and is avoided by devout Muslims (Nettl, Music., 2008).

Facing the distinct conceptions of music between the West and other cultures, one temptation is to simply stick with the western notion of music. Unfortunately, taking the face value of the western notion of music would not eschew all the difficulties, primarily because we can no longer assume that the western notion of music has a unified meaning and denotes a set of entities that are universally agreeable. This assumption is famously challenged by the notorious 4’33” by John Cage. The piece consists of four minutes and thirty seconds of, depending on one’s interpretation of the piece, silence or ambient sounds. Whether 4’33” can be considered music is an ongoing debate, and a discussion of 4’33” is usually accompanied by a dispute regarding what music is (Davis, 1997).

Indeed, many musicologists and philosophers of music consider Cage’s piece as the “central test-case for any definition of music” (Kania, 2007). That is, any proposed definition of music must provide a satisfactory answer for the status of 4’33”, raising another important question. Why should philosophers put such importance on the piece that they feel that the need to test their definitions of music against it instead of, for instance, the singing of a songbird? As we will see, this problem ultimately comes down to fundamental concerns regarding philosophical methodologies.

It appears then that the concept of music must be clarified before examining our central question. Without a clear definition of music, the inquiry into animal music could very well be condemned into absurdity before any investigation begins.

**Human Chauvinism?**

One important problem figuring into our discussion is the widely shared view that music is a uniquely human phenomenon. For instance, The New Encyclopedia Britannica suggests that the two extremes of the musical spectrum “are humanly engineered, both are conceptual and auditory, and these factors have been present in music of all styles and in all periods of history, Eastern and Western” (quoted in Nettl, 2008). The Great Soviet Encyclopedia is even more explicit on the humanness of music: “Music is a specific variant of the sound made by people” (Nettl, 2008). This view does not result simply from western bias, as it is also the predominant of ethnomusicologists who specialize in the study of nonwestern music: “Is music a characteristic of Homo sapiens alone? Most ethnomusicologist probably think so, I have to confess…” (Nettl, 2000). Even some scientists share this view. Isabelle Perez, a neurobiologist, writes “only humans have a natural, or innate, inclination to engage with music” (quoted in Kenneally,
2008). It is fair to say, then, that there is a persistent intuition against the notion of animal music.

If music is indeed a human phenomenon, then it would render the central question of this study as misguided or even insensible. If music inherently is sounds made by human beings, then asking whether animals make music is analogous to inquiring whether squares have radii. This again leads us back to the big question: What do we mean by “music”? Do we necessarily mean something made by humans, that music, by definition, is sounds made by a person? If so, is there a way in which we can reasonably ask whether the meaning of the term can be modified for scientific purposes?

More Questions about the Question

In light of what has been discussed so far, the following questions must be dealt with separately before inquiring into the musical abilities of nonhuman animals:

i. What is music? In order to adequately answer the original question, a clear definition of music must be established because the definition would become the conceptual basis for evaluating whether any animal action would satisfy the conditions of music making.

ii. How does a definition of music affect the empirical inquiry into the musicality of nonhuman animals? This question is important because a satisfactory answer to the question of whether nonhuman animals make music requires empirical investigation of animal behavior, and it is imperative that the chosen definition is fit for such a job.

iii. Can an existing definition of music be ameliorated for the facilitation of empirical studies of nonhuman musicality? If an existing definition of music does not warrant the central question to be reasonably and sensibly asked, it becomes a pseudo-question – one that is impossible to answer. However it must be investigated whether the absurdity arise from genuine impossibility or simply a flawed definition. If the definition is problematic, then it must be asked how improvement can be made.

This paper first examines a well-received definition of music in the analytic tradition as advocated by Levinson (1990), who asserts that something is music if and only if it satisfies these conditions: “sounds temporally organized by a person for the purpose of enriching or intensifying experience through active engagement (e.g., listening, dancing, performing) with the sounds regarded as primarily, or in significant measure, as sounds”.

Levinson’s definition is useful because he explicitly discusses the relationship between definition of music and its relation to nonhuman animal. He claims that any adequate definition of music should capture the intuition that only
a person is capable of making music, thus making nonhuman music a logical impossibility. An analysis of his position should reveal the underlying reasons for our intuitions against nonhuman music, and this study will benefit from examining whether those reasons are justified.

The second section of this paper investigates how a definition such as Levinson’s can affect scientific progress. Levinson's philosophical method is analytic; however, this study argues that the analytic method alone is no longer sufficient to investigate the nature of music. Instead, a naturalistic framework must be adopted in order to define music in a way that would facilitate scientific inquiry. Drawing lessons from the work of naturalistic epistemologists who argue against their analytic counterparts, this research argues that Levinson's definition, by rejecting the possibility of nonhuman music a priori, would hinder scientific progress.

Lastly, this study suggests that Levinson's definition can be ameliorated for scientific inquiry. The primary goal here, instead of arbitrarily accommodating nonhuman music into our conceptual scheme, is to provide a definition of music that allows scientists to sensibly discuss such possibility.

**Literature Review**

In order to understand Levinson’s position, we must conduct a brief overview of the analytic tradition in philosophy. There are two defining characteristics of the analytic tradition that are crucial to this discussion: (1) the emphasis on language and logic, and (2) the insistence on the autonomy of philosophy.

The analytic movement arose during the beginning of 20th century. Though the analytic tendency has been manifested in philosophy in various forms, the concrete formation of the analytic tradition usually traces back to work of the German logician and philosopher Gottlob Frege (Kitcher, 1992). Frege shifted the focus of philosophy to language and logic. Frege’s successors, the analytic philosophers, assert that conceptual analysis – the clarification of language and its logical relationship – is the way in which philosophical investigation should be carried out (Kitcher, 1992). That is, all philosophical problems can be solved by identifying their logical and linguistic errors. Because they see logic as an entirely conceptual discipline, analytic philosophers claim that their research methodology is a priori, that is, independent of any empirical questions.

Philosophy, as those who adopted Frege’s method maintained, is an autonomous discipline that requires no assistance from empirical science. This position is made explicitly in Ludwig Wittgenstein’s influential Tractatus:
Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences... [It] aims at the logical clarification of thoughts... Psychology is no more closely related to philosophy than any other natural science... Darwin's theory has no more to do with philosophy than any other hypothesis in natural science (Kitcher, 1992).

Philosophy, as conceived by analytic philosophers, transcends all other discipline because it focuses on the innermost core of human knowledge—concepts, language and logic.

**Analytical Philosophy of Music**
The relevance of the analytic tradition to this discussion of music can be shown by making a parallel to analytic epistemology – the philosophical discipline that aims to give a theory of knowledge. One of the goals of epistemology is to give an account of epistemic justification, which is traditionally regarded to be a necessary condition of knowledge. An important underlying assumption of analytic epistemology is the so-called “stasis requirement”, which holds that “the right account of justification leave our epistemic situation largely unchanged” (Bishop & Trout, 2005). That is, analytic epistemology is a conservative practice, because it requires any theory of epistemic justification mto show that the majority of beliefs that we intuitively regarded as justified are really justified. In other words, analytical epistemology clarifies our definition of knowledge without making changes that would require us to think of knowledge in a radically different way.

The stasis requirement is important because Levinson (1990) puts the same requirement to any account of music. He holds that a good definition of music should not force us to make radical revisions to our beliefs about what music is and what sorts of things can make and understand it. By now the methodology that Levinson sets out in “The Concept of Music” should sound quite familiar: The goal of defining music is to set out both necessary and sufficient conditions for music and these conditions are to be discovered a priori – independent of experience and by reason alone: “We will have succeeded [in defining music] if all and only those things that, on reflection and after consulting our intuitions we are willing to count as music…satisfy the proposed condition.” Again, Levinson is suggesting that a good definition of music should capture our intuitions – our existing preconception – of what music is. As analytic epistemology aims to preserve what we regard as knowledge, analytic musicology aims to perversive what we regard as music.

This view of the nature of philosophical understanding can be traced to Plato. The basic idea is that since we assume our competence in distinguishing things that are music from things that are not, we must already
know what music is. For example, most people intuitively understand that the song Happy Birthday to You is music and that wind rustling through leaves is not. According to Plato, however, the ordinary person still lacks an understanding of the nature of music until she can put into words the essential condition that all music has and all non-music lacks. Thus, for Levinson, as for Plato, our intuitions are the ultimate judge of what music is. As a result, if a proposed definition of music includes something we find counter-intuitive as music then this definition is inadequate; in addition, similarly, if the definition fails to include intuitive instances of music, it is also unsatisfactory.

To illuminate this point, consider a simpler case: most, if not all, human adults can recognize a triangle even without taking a formal course in mathematics. That is, they can intuitively tell triangles apart from other shapes without knowing mathematical facts such as that the sum of all angles in a triangle is 180 degrees, that some triangles are isosceles, etc. Thus, the job of mathematicians is to capture this intuition by conceptualizing it – to define triangles by various formulations. Whether a definition of “triangle” is adequate however, depends on our intuition: if the definition of “triangle” implies that any shape with two equal sides is not a triangle, for example, then it is inadequate because our intuitions holds that isosceles are a kind of triangle. On the other hand, the definition also fails if it is so broad that it yields a counter-intuitive result. For example, if a definition countenances a circle as a triangle, then it is obvious that something is wrong with the definition. Levinson thinks that defining music is like defining triangles. That is, a philosopher’s job is to formulate a concept of music that leaves our intuitions intact.

**Levinson’s Definition of Music**

Levinson’s starting point, naturally, is to reflect on what music is in general terms. To answer this question, he follows a widely shared intuition - music is organized sound, an influential term coined by American composer Edgard Varese (Griffiths, 2008). The process of introspection, however, is far from complete because such definition is too broad and would yield the following counter-intuitive result: “the output of a jackhammer, the ticking of a metronome, the shouts of a drill sergeant during a march, the chirping of a sparrow, the roar of a lion, the whine of a police siren, a presidential campaign speech – all are organized sounds but not instances of music” (Levinson, 1990, p. 269). This is not to say that being “organized sound” is an altogether incorrect criterion for music; rather, Levinson thinks it is only a necessary condition instead of a sufficient one. That is, for something to be music, it must necessarily be organized sound; but being organized sound
alone is insufficient. This is because while there are organized sounds that we do not consider music, everything that we consider as music is organized sounds. The logical distinction between the two can be easily understood by the familiar example of motherhood: a mother must necessarily be a woman, but being a woman alone is insufficient to make one a mother, because not all women are mothers – a woman is sufficiently a mother (in the biological sense) if and only if she has produced offspring.

As long as this distinction is understood, the way in which Levinson employs the method of conceptual analysis in the context of music becomes clear. That is, to solve the philosophical problem of what music is, the analytic philosopher begins by reflecting on the question in the broadest terms and by doing so, the basic logical condition for the definition of music is revealed. Further reflections can be made based on this condition with the purpose of improving the concept. This is done by testing the preliminary definition (organized sound) against our intuition, and to do so, Levinson reflects on whether such a definition counts certain phenomena as music that intuitively are not. In this case, Levinson concludes that sounds like the roar of a lion and the chirps of sparrows are organized but we do not find them intuitively musical. These counterexamples are important not only because they are used to test Levinson's preliminary definition against our intuitions, but also because they could provide clues regarding how the concept can be improved.

Here Levinson makes a conceptual move that is crucial to our discussion (1990, p. 270). He claims that the counterexamples of the roar and chirp reveal another necessary condition for music: only sounds made by a person can be considered as music. He writes, “for it seems that one would not strictly consider anything music which was not the outcome of intentional activity on the part of an intelligent being… this may just be indicative of a deeper reason for excluding roars and chirps – that they do not exhibit the appropriate aim or purpose for qualifying as music.” Conceptual analysis is clearly being employed in this instance. Levinson's claim that music can only be made by human beings is justified by appealing to the intuition that only sounds made for a certain purpose can be considered as music, and that we do not believe anything else besides humans can act intentionally. To preserve our intuitions, then, Levinson proposes that the definition of music must consist of these two criteria, music: (1) must be organized by a person, and (2) be produced for some sort of purpose. Now this is extremely important because this appeal to intuition automatically rules out the possibility of nonhuman music. First, music, so defined, automatically excludes any sound not generated by human beings. Secondly, this definition also denies the ability to make music to any creatures that cannot form intention.
This intuition, that the ability to make music is unique to human beings is extremely significant since it directly opposes the thesis of this paper. Much of the rest of the paper is devoted to discussing this point.

An important question left unanswered still, is for what purpose the sounds must be organized in order for it to be considered as music. Levinson suggests that music must be “aimed at the enrichment or intensification of experience” (1990, p. 272). Since the methodology through which Levinson offers these suggestions is the same as previously discussed, it will only be briefly explained here. The basic idea is that Levinson wants to pin down the essential characteristic of the myriad purposes for which music is made – ranging from purely aesthetic appreciation (classical music) to ritual (wedding music) to practical (military music). To capture this intuition, Levinson suggests the ultimate end that music exhibit is that it is made for enriching and intensifying experience. For instance, wedding music is made for enriching and intensifying the experience of those who attend the wedding, especially the bride and groom. Also, military music is made for increasing soldiers’ morale by intensifying their warlike spirit.

Two more philosophical wrinkles need to be ironed, however. First, Levinson asks, is something music if there is no one to listen to it? This question seems to have its root in an age-old philosophical problem: if a tree falls down in forest and no human is present to hear it, does it make a sound? Levinson again appeals to our intuitions: we would not consider anything as music unless at least one person is actively engaging with it, such as listening and performing. An adequate definition of music, then, must address the issue of active engagement. Second, what about poetry? Nothing from what has been said so far would prevent poetry from being music – poetries are organized, intentional and require active participation. However, since we do not consider poetry as music (thought it can certainly be combined with music to form an hybrid art form, such as the opera), there must be certain quality that distinguishes poetry from music. Levinson suggests that the distinction is that poetry is sounds regarded primarily as words, while music is regarded primarily as sounds.

Given what has been said so far, Levinson’s definition of music can be summarized as the following (1990, p. 273):

\[
\text{Music}_{df} = \text{sounds temporally organized by a person for the purpose of enriching or intensifying experience through active engagement (e.g., listening, dancing, performing) with the sounds regarded as primarily, or in significant measure, as sounds.}
\]

This definition can be broken down into four essential conditions for music:
1. It must be sounds that are temporally organized by a person.
2. It must be made for the purpose of enriching or intensifying experience.
3. It must be made through active engagement, such as listening, dancing, and performing.
4. It must be regarded primarily as sounds.

In other words, Levinson proposes that something is music if and only if it satisfies all four conditions. Now, two points about this concept of music must be kept in mind throughout the rest of this paper. First, the underlying methodology behind Levinson’s definition is entirely analytical. The concept was produced through a series of logical clarification achieved by a priori reflection on the meaning of the “music.” At no point does Levinson consult scientific data. This is because his definition is not proposed for the purpose of advancing scientific understanding of music, but for clarifying what the word “music” means to us at our current level of understanding.

Secondly, as Levinson himself points out, his “analysis is intentionalistic and human-centered; it is people (or the near like) who make music in a purposive way, and not unthinking Nature” (1990, p. 274). To see why this is the case, it is best to analyze Levinson’s definition line by line. The human-centeredness is obvious in the first condition, since it explicitly states that music must be sounds organized by a person, and so far only human beings are granted the status of person. The key word of the second condition is “purpose,” since strictly speaking we do not attribute to nonhuman animals the ability to act rationally toward a goal; therefore, the second condition would also bar nonhuman animals from making music. The third and forth conditions are more vague, in the sense that these conditions may or may not exclude nonhuman sounds depending on the interpretations of the terms. At this point, however, they are not important because the first two conditions would already deny any talk of nonhuman music.

**Methodology**

Nevertheless, this researcher disagrees with both Levinson’s definition of music, and his method used to bring it about. Specifically, this researcher does not accept the analytical assumption that philosophical questions can be solved simply by reflection and without making any reference to scientific findings. Instead, this paper endorses the naturalistic position that philosophy must follow the direction of scientific research (Maddy, 2000). Naturalized philosophers no longer accept the claim that scientific knowledge is irrelevant to philosophical inquiry, nor do they think that philosophy is an a priori discipline. Naturalists, taking their clues from scientists, “views member
of our species as highly fallible cognitive systems, products of a lengthy evolutionary process” (Kitcher, 1992). Thus, pure reason and intuitions do not act as an overriding agent in our quest for knowledge; rather, human rationalities are subject to empirical scrutiny as everything else. While there is a strong intuition that only human beings can make music, the naturalistic approach would suggest that we consult empirical data to make this determination.

**Discussion**

As previously shown, Levinson’s definition of music relies on appealing to intuitions and the stasis requirement: he appeals to our intuition that sounds made by a nonperson are not considered as music, and then justifies the condition of “organized by a person” in his definition of music by the implicit use of the stasis requirement. From a naturalistic perspective, however, Levinson’s approach is highly problematic. In fact, naturalized philosophers have made various arguments against intuitions and the stasis requirement in epistemology. Summary of two of these arguments is given in order to illuminate the problematic area in Levinson’s approach to philosophy of music.

Kornblith (2002) is one of many naturalized philosophers who have criticized appealing to intuition in philosophical argument. He argues that intuitions do not have overriding importance in philosophical arguments because intuitions are not known a priori as analytic philosophers hold; instead, they are malleable and subject to error like any of our beliefs. To show that our intuitions are not a source of a priori knowledge, Kornblith likens philosophical inquiry to rock collecting. Consider a rock collector in a time where geological knowledge has not yet developed: when she tries to distinguish the rocks she collected, she, lacking any background information, must make judgments based on her intuition. For example, she might make the judgment that the harder rock is of a different kind than the softer rock. Three points about her intuitive judgment are salient to our discussion: (1) her intuition is highly malleable and she is likely to change her mind in the matter as more rocks are gathered; (2) her judgment is highly unreliable; and (3) her judgment is influenced by her background beliefs, that is, her experience with hardness. Kornblith claims that appealing to intuition in philosophy is very much like the rock collector’s intuitive judgment. That is, our intuitions must be revisable because they are untrustworthy in the absence of well-formed theory and they do not, as analytical philosophers claims, have a priori significance because they are influenced by various empirical beliefs.
Regarding the conservative tendency of the stasis requirement, Bishop and Trout (2005) write:

> If physics had been burdened with such a conservative method, we wouldn’t have relativity, quantum mechanics (or perhaps even Copernicanism!). If biology had been taken over by such conservative method, we wouldn’t have Darwinism…

> The problem with the conservative method is not that they are conservative per se. Conservative methods work very well when applied to theories or propositions for which we have overwhelming evidence.

In other words, the problem with the stasis requirement is that it seeks to preserve our existing beliefs, without putting empirical evidence into consideration. However, as the history of science shows, new empirical evidence always forces us to modify our beliefs. The suggestion that we should always preserve what we antecedently regard as true, then, flies in the face of how new knowledge of the world is gained over the course of human history.

Drawing a parallel from primitive rock collecting and the history of science to music is hardly a stretch. Kornblith’s argument points out that intuitions about knowledge are not a reliable source of epistemic judgments because they are basically remnants of our previous gut feeling regarding what knowledge is. These intuitions are, by no means, known a priori as analytic philosophers hold, instead, they are conditioned by various empirical beliefs. Now, it appears that our intuitions about music are the same. We are not born with the knowledge of what music is: our conception of music is conditioned by, most significantly, cultural factors. The work of ethnomusicologists sufficiently illustrates this point. One example is already mentioned at the beginning of this paper: in traditional Iranian culture, the conception of music is highly influenced by religious belief and, as a result, some singing is not considered as music. The intuitions about music of traditional Iranians, then, would be quite different than those in the West due to different cultural conditioning. So, why should we put primary importance in our intuitions as opposed to the Iranians’ intuitions? Levinson attempts to forestall this criticism by arguing that one is essentially talking about an altogether different concept when considering intuitions about music from other cultures. This argument may perhaps satisfy those who are analytically minded, but it will not satisfy the naturalists because the crux of the problem here is why we should care about intuitions at all. Of course, the western intuition about music would be a reliable source of what westerners conceive music to be
and the same for the Iranian intuition. However, what we want is a definition that can contribute to an understanding of the phenomenon of music itself, not just how various cultures think of it.

On the other hand, Bishop and Trout (2005) point out the dubiousness of the stasis requirement in light of the history of science. It is at odds with the history of music as well, because music, much like science, progresses in a way that often forces us to modify our beliefs regarding what music is. Each new music era is marked by the groundbreaking innovations of composers and theorists who radically change what “should” be considered as music. This is perfectly illustrated by the works of Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). Schoenberg’s work marks the end of the Common Practice Period, which spanned roughly from 1600 – 1900 (Mayfield, 2003). Music of the Common Practice Period is characterized by the use of tonality. People living in the Common Practice Period would almost certainly tend to conceive music in tonal terms, and likely to regard tonality as part of the defining characteristic of music. However, music, much like science, progresses through revolutions: Schoenberg’s “emancipation of dissonance” in the beginning of the 20th century abolished the idea that tonality is a defining characteristic of music. Morgan (1991), a reputed musicologist, writes “for the first time in western music since the Renaissance, the triad was no longer accepted as the sole harmonic reference from which all other vertical sonorities were derived and to which they owe meaning.” Morgan’s quote about Schoenberg is important here not for its musical technicality, but for his assertion that, over the course of history, progress in music often forces us to abandon presuppositions and accept radical modifications about what music is. Indeed, as in the history of science, musical revolution also tends to invite resistance, as evidenced by Schoenberg’s work, which was faced with extreme hostility (Morgan, 1991). However, these radical changes would eventually be accepted. One current music textbook writes: “Serialism [that is, Schoenberg’s method] has become one of the most significant musical developments of the 20th century. To some degree, it has influenced almost every composer of western art music since Schoenberg” (Mayfield, 2003). This observation shows that our considered musical judgment has always been subject to change due to new discoveries, and to conceive music from a purely conservative viewpoint is at odds with the history of western music.

The Difficulties with Levinson’s Definition in Light of Evolutionary Musicology
The previous arguments target the underlying methodology of Levinson’s definition of music. Levinson makes a major conceptual move when he claims that music should, by definition, be made only by a person because it
seems obvious that people do not consider any nonhuman sound as music. The problematic assumptions behind this claim have been examined, and it is now suitable to examine its validity based on the current data in evolutionary musicology.

The fundamental question here is: Is it an obvious fact that nonhuman animals do not make music? The myriad studies being done on animal behaviors, including the following examples, suggest that it is far from clear that animals do not make music:

1. Pant-hooting of Chimpanzees (Marler, 2000): These sounds involve an extensive form a vocalization. Each pant-hoot generally consists of four distinctive components: introduction, build-up, climax, and let-down. Also, pant-hooting is “nonreferential”, meaning that it is not a symbol for any particular objective and situation; rather, it serves as an affective display. Most importantly, though with variation, each chimpanzee always sings its own signature pant-hoot based on a single modal form.

2. Songs of Humpback Whales (Payne, 2000): These whale songs are “long, highly structured sequence of sounds that repeat hour after hour…These vary in frequency between 30 and 4000Hz, and in length between 0.15 and 8 seconds… and they show much variety in contour…” Further, much like human music, the whales structure their song thematically: “All the phrases of one sort are grouped together and constitute a theme. A song contains ten or fewer themes that proceed in an invariant order and repeat…”

Now, to determine whether these animals make music, of course, requires attention beyond the scope of this paper; however, these scientific findings show that it is not at all obvious that only human beings make music. In other words, these empirical data suggest that whether nonhuman makes music is a legitimate question and one that may shed light on other important questions regarding the evolution of human beings.

As soon as we recognize the legitimacy and importance of the question, the problem of Levinson’s definition becomes apparent; because, according to his definition, we cannot even sensibly ask whether nonhuman animals can make music. By the power of logic and words alone, Levinson denies the possibility of nonhuman animal music, which flies in the face of the program of evolutionary musicology. Which side should be chosen, the philosopher’s or evolutionary musicologist’s?
From the naturalistic perspective, the answer seems clear, as Kornblith (2002) points out “a priori arguments against well-established scientific research programs have a history of failure.” This, of course, raises the question of what we can do to remedy this situation: should we completely abandon Levinson’s definition? Should we improve it, if so on what grounds? For a solution, see Quine’s description of the naturalized philosophical process:

The naturalistic philosopher begins his reasoning within the inherited world theory as a going concern. He tentatively believes all of it, but believes also that some unidentified portions are wrong. He tries to improve clarify, and understand the system from within (Maddy, 2000).

The basic idea here is that naturalistic philosophers must work within the conceptual framework by carefully investigating our existing beliefs and ameliorating them one by one. This study adopts this approach in the process of naturalizing Levinson’s definition. In light of this, this researcher proposes a naturalized version of Levinson’s definitions of music:

1. It must be sounds that are temporally organized by a creature.
2. It must result in the intensification of experience.
3. It must be made through active engagement, such as listening, dancing, and performing.
4. It must be experienced as sounds.

The definition of music may be further clarified as follows:

1. A creature is any living thing. The purpose of the modification is to do away with Levinson’s original term “person”, which arbitrarily bars nonhuman animals from making music. This does not necessarily warrant that nonhuman animals make music; rather, it allows us to sensibly to ask whether they do.
2. Levinson’s suggestion that music has a relationship with intensifying experience is insightful; however, his insistence that music must be intentional would hinder scientific progress, because nonhuman animals are not generally considered to act for a purpose or intentionally. Nevertheless, scientists can examine sounds of animals in functional terms “while remaining agnostic about the nature of the underlying mental and neural processes” (Marler, 2000). From a naturalistic perspective, it is more preferable to define music in reference to its functions.
3. “Regarded” is changed to “experienced” for the same reason. It would be difficult, if it is possible at all, to test whether an animal...
regards something as sounds or not. In fact, it is entirely possible that musical animals do not regard anything as anything at all.

4. [Verify if this sentence is part of # list or concluding sentencec.] However, the problem becomes much more tractable if music is seen as something that is experienced as sound.

**CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study was to show that the question of whether nonhuman animals make music is a scientific question that requires empirical investigation. Philosophy, on the other hand, should step in only where conceptual clarification is needed and should not dictate an a priori answer for an a posteriori question. Such tendency, as we have seen, arose from the analytic movement, which holds that philosophy is an autonomous discipline, one that is separated from natural science. Such attitudes toward philosophy would either render it irrelevant or hinder scientific progress, as manifested in Levinson’s definition of music, which holds music must necessarily be made by intentional human beings, thus unfairly condemning the whole field of evolutionary musicology to logical absurdity. Drawing arguments from naturalistic epistemology, Levinson’s methodology appears to be arbitrarily conservative. Further, empirical data from evolutionary musicology shows that Levinson’s assumption against nonhuman music is unwarranted. Lastly, based on Levinson’s definition, this researcher proposes a naturalized definition, one that preserves the merits of his accounts while allowing scientists to sensibly discuss whether nonhuman animals make music.
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EXAMINING THE CONCEPT OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS IN RELATION TO BLACK MALES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THEIR RETENTION RATES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine if a relationship exists between cultural double consciousness, stress and anxiety, and the low retention rates of African-American male college students. Using qualitative research tools, the researcher studied the experiences, racial barriers, stress level, culture, and double consciousness of four African-American males in a Northern California institution of higher education. It is hoped that this study contributes to the ability of administrators at institutions of higher learning to better understand and implement culturally relevant retention programs.

The theoretical framework under examination in this study is double consciousness. The concept of “double consciousness” is used to describe an individual whose self is separated into two dimensions. This term was coined in The Souls of Black Folk written in 1903 by W.E.B. Dubois. There are two viewpoints from which to analyze double consciousness; one being race and the other being culture. Being that culture is manifested in many aspects, cultural double consciousness is being examined for the purpose of this study.

One’s double consciousness allows him/her to code switch: “code switching” is to cross back and forth in both worlds by adopting a level of language to communicate with mainstream Euro-America and with the style of language one was raised with (Smitherman, 1998). Because experiences of perceived prejudice and discrimination cause stress (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000), stress is also examined for the purpose of this study.

Among the many factors linked to retention rates are: issues that precede college enrollment, issues related to the college, and issues relate to personal development (Newman & Newman, 1999).

Along with a review on other studies of the topic, the researcher will offer insight that suggests that, at some level, the culture of the university is difficult to cope with for some groups. This coping generates stress, which
can be responsible for low retention rates among African-American male students. This study examines the perceptions of self, society, institution, and language, as each relates to culture, because each accounts for one or more aspects of double consciousness. The findings of this research will allow university administration to focus on the problem at hand and renovate some of the policies and structures of the university to fit the needs of students from many cultural backgrounds, which should allow for higher retention rates. The possibility for change makes this research necessary to support the future generations of young minority adults entering an institution of higher education.

Previous research has shown a relationship among culture, stress and retention rates. The retention rates of students have recently been the focus of administrations in institutes of higher education. Universities have shifted their attention from recruitment to retention within the past few years (OIRbit, 2004). This researcher is confronting the issue of retention rates through the notion of stress, similar to other researchers. However, the present study looks at stress level through the cultural differences many students experience, due to perceptions of double consciousness.

For the purpose of this study African-Americans are referred to as “Negroes,” “African-Americans” and “Blacks”. In this context all three terms refer to the same group of individuals, United States-born descendents of Africa.

RATIONALE

The present research attempts to locate one of the causes of low retention rates for African-American males in institutes of higher education in particular. “High attrition rates have proven especially damaging to the population of “at risk” and minority students in institutions of higher education nationwide” (Hood, 1992). This researchers personal knowledge of and mission to examine double consciousness and the reality that universities are preparing their students from curriculum based on Eurocentric values, led to this study’s examination of factors that perpetuate a gap between the students’ school’s and culture. With these two cultures being distinct, the successful retention and graduation of the African-American/Black college students may be difficult.

At California State University, Sacramento, where this study was conducted, there has been a strategic plan to recruit and retain African-American students. President Alexander Gonzalez has been involved in the Super Sunday event since 2006, addressing members of various church congregations in Sacramento and highlighting five key steps prospective
college students need to take and setting up information booths at these churches (Wilson, 2008).

Of the 28,529 students attending California State University, Sacramento, 23,928 are undergraduate students. Twenty-four percent are part-time students, leaving 76% full-time students (those taking more than six units). Nearly 58% of the undergraduate students are female and nearly 43% are male. Forty-two percent are White, non-Hispanic, 7% Black, non-Hispanic, 14% Hispanic, 20% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 15% Unknown, and 1% Non-resident (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). As shown in Figure 1, approximately 54%, of students entering CSU, Sacramento disappear by the end of their eighth year (OIRbits, 2004).

Figure 1: Eight Year Persistence Rates for Sac State’s First-time Freshman

![Persistence Rates Graph]

LITERATURE REVIEW

*We wear the mask that grins and lies,*

*It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,*

*This debt we pay to human guile;*

*With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,*

*And mouth with myriad subtleties.*
Why should the world be overwise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask (Dunbar, 1896)

The above poem “We Wear the Mask” written by Paul Lawrence Dunbar (1872-1906) depicts what double consciousness is, and the fact that double consciousness has been around for centuries. “We wear the mask that grins and lies…” is representative of the many Blacks who experience the need to code-switch between the worlds of professionalism (i.e., education, career, politics, and the public sphere) and personal. “This debt we pay to human guile; with torn and bleeding hearts we smile.” When using the term “we” Dunbar is speaking to Blacks as a whole, owing the deceitful world a superficial act. Smiling with hearts that are torn and bleeding refers to Blacks who, conscious of the history and lives of their ancestors along with their present experience as African-Americans, know the iniquitous of having to code-switch in order to be seen as “on the road for success.” The continuation of the poem explains that the world (white America) only sees the mask we wear to hide our pain, which the world points out through the misfortunes of the Black community. This can be applied to the population of African American males who are often viewed with public disavowal due to the world’s hyperactive response within the media and society to highlight black so-called deviancy, when, in reality, Euro-Americans commit the same number of crimes if not more. Dunbar ends the poem with a prayer in hopes of letting the world dream otherwise. The lasting impression of the poem is a world unaware of the actual feelings and experiences of the Black community but only what is revealed from the mask that we wear.

“Double consciousness” coined by Du Bois (1903) in the Souls of Black Folk is the understanding and knowledge that there exists two worlds, and
that Blacks are fractioned into both. Double consciousness is the theoretical framework the researcher has applied to this study. Double consciousness can be better explained using a quote from Souls of Black Folk:

…”This double consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, the measuring one’s soul by the tape of the world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness – an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder,” (Du Bois, 1903).

This quote indicates that 3 manifestations to the concept of double consciousness exist. The first is the control of White typecast on Black ideas and ways of life, viewing oneself through the eyes of the dominant group. Second is the institutionalized racism through the use of media, laws, education, and politics, the portrayal of Blacks and the way in which society views them with contempt and pity that prevented Black representation in society. Third is the psychological conflict concerning being American and being Black (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3).

Du Bois also created the term “double consciousness” to explain the veil that Blacks are gifted to see, and yet must overcome. Dubois refers to the “veil” as the metaphor of “Black life in America.” According to Du Bois, the Negro is deemed to bear the gift of second sight in the American world, the White world. The White world does not allow the Black man self-consciousness, but allows him to observe himself through the revelation of the White world. This observation illustrates that the Black man is conscious of his identity and aware of what it means to be a Black man, yet he must also acculturate to the white world and see himself through the eyes of the oppressor, which creates a level of double consciousness (Du Bois, 1903).

Perceptions of self, society and language usage all contribute to the understanding of double consciousness. In order to change your one’s from one setting to the next one must see his or herself through one’s own eyes as well as through the eyes of society. Language is also a factor that is altered in order for double consciousness to occur. In the following sections, the researcher examines the perceptions of self, society, and language.

Perception of Self

Bell (1990), in her study, explores seventy-one Black women who are career-oriented and experience a bi-cultural life. Bell finds that her participants believe they live two separate lives, Black and White. The participants in
Bell’s study sorted parts of their lives in order to control their bi-cultural lives and adapt to both cultural environments. Although Bell’s study pertained to Black women, this researcher found relationship between Bell’s study and this present study pertaining to Black men in higher education. “Mainstreaming” is one aspect that Bell applied to career-oriented Black women, and that can be applied to a larger group, as a assimilative process involving Blacks being pressured to fit into Euro-American society professionally, economically, politically and educationally; and away from Black culture. One of two behaviors can occur due to mainstreaming: are assimilation or compartmentalization. According to Bell (1990), experiencing a bi-cultural life can cause an “identify conflict,” incompatibility between two aspects that one is emotionally and personally committed to. An individual can betray one of the components of one’s life: compartmentalization or assimilation. This identity conflict implies that one has to betray one of the components, not the behavior itself (Bell, 1990).

Perception of Society

“Apologizing for Being a Black Male,” an article in Essence magazine by Dawkins (1994), discusses a life experience that ultimately has him “apologizing for being Black.” Dawkins analyzes his experiences with White women in public. Dawkins expresses that he does not want to make “White women” feel uncomfortable. He relates his experiences as being dignity-bruising for him when he notices a White woman quicken her steps to her destination, and power locks being quickly activated in her car on account of her knowledge of his presence (Dawkins, 1994).

Public disavowal is the topic of “Black Men and Public Space” (Staples, 1992). “Public disavowal” is the rejection of one by the public, and Black men must prove their being in certain areas at certain hours. In this article, Staples uses his life experiences to legitimate his concept of public disavowal. He reports inconveniently going out of his way to make others feel at ease about his presence and to prove his innocence. Staples gives his accounts and those of his Black male associates to prove the notion that he is usually stereotyped as a criminal. Due to these stereotypical assumptions, Staples employs tension-reducing actions in public such as: whistling classical music, moving about with care, giving a wide space to those on the subway platform, allowing others more space before proceeding after them, and remaining calm and polite during police pullovers, and in general (Staples, 1992).

In the book Streetwise, author Elijah Anderson (1990, p. 163) discusses the “public disavowal” of the black man. Anderson explains that the Black man must convince others around him that he is committed to civility and abides by the law, and has a hard time doing so. In another chapter titled “Code
of the Streets,” Anderson explains that, in Black communities, Black men must demand respect in order to survive. Simple societal norms, which are Euro-American and middle class in origin and usually taken for granted by the larger society, can be mistaken for different and negative meaning in these settings (Anderson, 1990). Making eye contact is an example of such behavior that has different meanings in different ethnic groups. (Anderson, 1990).

“How a Black Man’s Wallet Becomes a Gun,” an article by Brent Staples (2000) documents that Gordon Allport, a psychologist, conducted an experiment over fifty years ago that looked at ethnic prejudice. Allport showed undergraduate students two pictures: one of an unarmed Black man and the other of a White man holding a knife. Allport asked the students to explain what they had seen an hour later. The majority of the respondents reported seeing the Black man with the knife. This experiment illustrates that, driven by stereotypes, most students connected race with criminality.

Staples made an association between the findings of Allport’s experiment and that of an incident in New York involving an unarmed African immigrant in 1999. Amadou Diallo was shot and killed by police officers after reaching for his wallet in order to identify himself. Police officers reported thinking that he was reaching for a weapon.

Perception of Language
In the book “Black Culture and Black Consciousness,” Levine (1977) discusses freedom, culture, and religion. “Cultural marginality” is a bi-cultural situation in which a group, poised to some extent between two worlds, finds its desire to absorb and emulate the culture of a dominant group. This absorption is the group’s attempt to attain and enjoy the latter’s privileges and status, in tension with its urge to continue to identify with many of its own cultural traditions. Levine (1977) discusses how Black culture sets itself apart from Euro-American culture, especially in language usage. Language dialect is studied by William Francis Allen on freedmen and he finds that pronunciation, words, expression and new rules of grammar were employed in this language he did not understand (Levine, 1977). This finding is important to our understanding since language is a dynamic of culture, and Black culture was different than White culture over one hundred years ago, proving that modern Black culture is still different than that of Whites.

Delpit (1992) views language as a discourse that the dominant group encompasses and uses to test those who are not in this group. Delpit describes language as a discourse that is difficult to learn; that the language must be accessible to the individual and if one is not already knowledgeable about this discourse, one has slim to no chances of being accepted. There
are circumstances when many individuals or groups acquire this discourse and become successful. Nearly all African-Americans become successful by adopting the discourse of the Euro-American society, which they were not born into (Delpit, 1992).

“The people of Africa created a myriad of languages, religions, customs, social, political, and economic institutions which differentiated them and gave them separate identities (Levine, 1977).” According to Ogbu (1994), many Blacks possess Black English vernacular. During slavery and post-slavery, Blacks created traditions in many spheres of their lives, language being one. During slavery, Blacks were forced to speak English so they would not plot to rebel. The enslaved Blacks learned to speak English, yet did so in a way in which slave-owners did not understand everything that was said. Blacks used words and phrases in opposition to their intended meaning and again confused slave-owners. This Black English vernacular was used post-slavery and is still used in contemporary society among many Blacks (Ogbu, 1994).

**Stress and Anxiety**

Smith, Allen and Danley’s (2007) study of 36 Black male students, using focus group interviews, was conducted at five institutions of higher learning (Harvard, Michigan State, University of California at Berkeley, University of Illinois, and University of Michigan) found that Black male students are often targeted by campus police and “Black misandric belief,” which is the hatred of black males. Their study also found that racial encounters generate psychological pain and stress for these students (Smith et al., 2007).

Franklin and Boyd-Franklin (2000) propose that adaptive mannerisms and the psychological welfare of African-American men can be influenced by individual experiences of apparent prejudice and discrimination. In other words, if a Black man believes he has been treated unfairly or prejudged, it can have an impact on his mental well-being. Psychological invisibility takes the shape of resistance with internal thoughts and attitudes that individual ability and talent are not accepted or valued neither by others nor the dominant society, because of racial prejudice (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000).

Abraham Harold Maslow (1943) created a diagram titled Hierarchy of Needs that lists the five basic needs of every human being. The five basic needs are: Physiological, Safety, Love and Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualization. He identified the physiological needs as the most primary. Figure 2 shows Maslow’s diagram.

Physiological needs include breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, and excretion. Safety needs include security of the body, employment,
resources, morality, family, health, and property. Love and Belonging needs include friendship, family, and sexual intimacy. Esteem needs include self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, and respect by others. Self-Actualization needs include morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts (Maslow, 1943).

Figure 2. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Diagram

Esteem needs are all identified as needs that are lacking if an individual experiences perceived actual racism or discrimination. If an African-American male attending a CSUS is experiences racism or discrimination, how will he achieve self-actualization academically? Without academic success, how will he remain in school, completing his education? The issues behind these question are part of the cause for low retention rates. As a standing point, Simmons, Irwin, and Drinnien (1987) identified the following 10 solutions for realizing self-actualization:

1. We should teach people to be authentic, to be aware of their inner selves and to hear their inner-feeling voices.
2. We should teach people to transcend their cultural conditioning and become world citizens.
3. We should help people discover their vocation in life, their calling, fate or destiny. This is especially focused on finding the right career and the right mate.
4. We should teach people that life is precious, that there is joy to be experienced in life, and if people are open to seeing the good and joyous in all kinds of situations, it makes life worth living.
5. We must accept the person as he or she is and help the person learn their inner nature. From real knowledge of aptitudes and limitations we can know what to build upon, what potentials are really there.

6. We must see that the person’s basic needs are satisfied. This includes safety, belongingness, and esteem needs.

7. We should refresh consciousness, teaching the person to appreciate beauty and the other good things in nature and in living.

8. We should teach people that controls are good, and complete abandon is bad. It takes control to improve the quality of life in all areas.

9. We should teach people to transcend the trifling problems and grapple with the serious problems in life. These include the problems of injustice, of pain, suffering, and death.

10. We must teach people to be good choosers. They must be given practice in making good choices” (Simmons et al., 1987, p. 2).

Pragmatic Models to Deal with Issues
Escobedo (2007) found ways to improve the retention rates of students such as using “intrusive advising.” This method involves contacting the student early, planning regular appointments, and engaging in discourse that locates the problem to allocate proper intervention. Student success classes, orientation sessions, learning communities, and classroom presentations are other suggestions identified for the successful retention of students (Escobedo, 2007). These documented ways to improve retention rates would help also curb the retention rates of African-American males attending CSUS.

According to Tatum (1999), interventions that affirm students’ identity, build a sense of community, and cultivate leadership within schools not only improve school climate, but also contribute to student academic success (Tatum, 1999). These intentions are another means to increase the retention rates of the African-American males attending the university being studied.

Problem Statement
This study examines the low retention rates of African-American men in institutions of higher education through the notion of double consciousness, and how it relates to or induces stress. Culture is a factor that is rarely considered when examining causes of low retention rates for minority students. For the purpose of this study, retention rates are examined through culture.
METHODOLOGY

A qualitative study method was used to investigate the double-consciousness of African-American males at a four-year university. This study used mixed methods: in-person interviews consisted of open-ended and contingency questions, and surveys. The researcher contacted various organizations on the CSUS campus and/or professors that assisted minority students. African-American male students were identified and recruited based on who fulfilled the requirements of the study. Participant requirements were: African-American males enrolled at CSU, Sacramento. Between the ages of 20 and 30; and did not commute from campus. Four participants were recruited to participate in interviews with the researcher. As a token of appreciation, the researcher awarded the participants with candy bars.

**Figure 3. Solution for Self-Actualization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Self-Identified Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jermaine</td>
<td>Business Marketing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Poor-Working Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Upper-Middle Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamar</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lower Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devonte</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Middle Class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Design**

In the preparation for designing this research, the researcher reviewed works from other scholars and the process, they underwent to compile a list of questions for their subjects. Along with this process the researcher compiled a list of questions in hopes of retrieving the most useful and reliable information pertaining to whether or not the participants experience stress, if the participants have contemplated “dropping out,” and if the participants experience double consciousness. The researcher believed the best means to capture all of these components was through the data collection methods of survey questions and interviews.

**Survey Questions (SQ)**

The purpose of using the following survey questions was to collect demographic data, and gain useful information about the participants that
were easily answered through the use of written responses. Another goal of the survey was to gain a similar perspective from a diverse group of referred participants according to age, major, year in school, and self-identified socio-economic status.

SQ1: Do identify yourself as African-American/Black?
SQ2: What is your age?
SQ3: What is your major? Any minor?
SQ4: How many years have you attended CSUS?
SQ5: Are you a transfer student?
SQ6: Where are you from?
SQ7: Where do you live?
SQ8: What class do you identify yourself with?
SQ9: Do you feel you have to work harder than others in order to prove yourself?
SQ10: Have you ever been racially profiled?

**Interview Questions (IQ)**
The purpose of using the following interview questions was to gain answers to questions asked by the researcher along with observation of participants while responding.

IQ1: Are you compelled to prove your Blackness in groups of Black people or in your own family? You’re not a sell out?
IQ2: Do you experience racism on campus?
IQ3: If so, do you think you have double consciousness? Explain
IQ4: Is the culture of this University different than that of being at home/where you were raised?
IQ5: If so, what aspects are different?
IQ6: If so, how do you cope with the cultural differences?
IQ7: Do you sometimes feel the need to make others feel at ease, due to your presence?
IQ8: Do you stress? Why?
IQ9: Have you considered “dropping out?”
IQ10: Do you think life will be easier if you “dropped out”? 
Because the participants were referred to the researcher, the existence of random sampling was absent. The population was African-American males who attended CSU, Sacramento. The target population was the participants referred.

**Data Analysis**

Following are the interview questions the researcher asked the participants and the responses from the participants in the same context they were said. After each of the 10 interview questions and answers from the entire participant group, the data is analyzed through code reading from other scholarly work.

**IQ1: Are you compelled to prove your Blackness in groups of Black people or in your own family? You’re not a sell out?**

Participant Devonte stated that at a younger age he learning to cope with an identity issue due to the change of scenery, he was compelled to prove his Blackness “I had to maybe like act blacker…,” and “…I had to act like them and be sort of Black.” Participant Lamar stated “…I mean I just had to act normal…” shows that he paid little significance to his racial identity similar to the description of first stage of Racial Identity Development in Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? (Tatum, 2003, p.95).

**IQ2: Do you experience racism on campus?**

One of the participants stated that he did not experience racism on campus; however, his responses proved otherwise. Lamar’s response was “…I wouldn’t say like racism, I would say like people would like clutch their bag… when I’m walking by maybe like step to the side a little bit…” Experiencing clear acts of racism and believing he did not experience racism was a paradox of knowing and experiencing for Lamar. This participant displayed his desensitization to racism, with the quote “I’ve seen it my whole life so it doesn’t really bother me as much as it should you know what I mean.” Lamar’s experience was echoed in Streetwise by Elijah Anderson. “When young Black men appear, women (especially White women) sometimes clutch their pocketbooks...On spotting Black males from a distance other pedestrians often cross the street or give them a wide berth as they pass.” Lamar’s experience was also echoed in the movie Crash (Haggis, 2005) when Sandra Bullock clutched her purse and husband on account of seeing two Black men approaching the couple.

**IQ3: If so, do you think you have double consciousness? Expalin.**

Participants stated that they did not believe themselves to have double consciousness. The researcher found this questionable, due to the participants’ responses to other questions. The participants did not believe
they had double consciousness likely because they could not name it. They have had experiences yet could not link the experiences with actual terms. Lamar agreed he had double consciousness by stating:

I couldn’t get my job if I act how I normally act. Normally, I act how I act, talk how I talk, slang or whatever, but I can’t get no job doin that...you almost have to dress like you have two different lives, and sort of you know. In one aspect you want to have and be successful and do these things and you can’t really have that if you live the other lifestyle ...

IQ4: Is the culture of this University different than that of being at home/where you were raised?

IQ5: If so, what aspects are different?

IQ6: If so, how do you cope with the cultural differences?
Devonte observes “…it’s not about race…the thing that has been blocking me…we all have the same heart… it’s about the inside…” Devonte has tried to compensate for racial barriers by reminding people and himself that he has a good heart.

IQ7: Do you sometimes feel the need to make others feel at ease, due to your presence?
A reoccurring theme reported by participants was misconceptions of Black men. Devonte referenced a friend in his response “come up to white women and he used to see that she was kinda scared and he used to laugh…”Another unexpected response was Devonte, stating “I’ve always been afraid something is going to happen to me…it’s like shoot, I’m scared too…I want to make sure nothing happens to me…” This response brought sensitivity and realness to the participant, who is usually viewed by many in society as the perpetrator. Lamar stated that “there’s misconceptions about the type of person I am...chill, I’m a Black dude, I crack jokes on myself …” Charles stated, “I will adjust my personality to other people’s personalities to put them at ease…” Jermaine gave an account of walking through a campus parking lot “there was this lady sitting in her car and she locked the doors when she saw me coming, like I heard the doors, like, and was like whatever, so I started walking faster.”

IQ8: Do you stress and why?
Devonte’s response reflected his attempt to minimize race as being a stress as one of his coping strategies. “I have stressed over you know, maybe not feeling like everyone else, even though I have like this outlook about how I want to look at the inside of a person…I don’t believe that my friends put it
on me, but I have sometimes stressed about, oh, him, the Black guy…we’re all under stress…it’s not about outward appearance…”

The researcher gained understanding of the data based on previous work by scholars who researched double consciousness, stress, and/or retention rates. Being that Black males who attend an institution of higher education have conformed and developed an understanding of the educational system, they also understand that being educated is a part of what gives them access to the White world.

**Research Results**

Although the research does prove environmental stressors, racial identity issues, and academic and social integration account for low retention rates, especially among minority students (Hood, 1992), double consciousness does not connect stress and low retention rates in this study. One of the four participants agreed he has double consciousness. One of the four participants contemplated “dropping out.” The information given from the participants does not link to the research; therefore the researcher’s hypothesis of cultural double consciousness causing stress that lowers retentions rates of African-American males in higher education at CSU, Sacramento is rejected. The researcher has reached these results by linking the responses of the participants to existing research, and finding a weak relationship due to the questions administered and the lack of depth and prodding in each interview.

**DISCUSSION**

The researcher dedicated a significant amount of time to this research study with the expectation of identifying a strong relationship between cultural double consciousness, stress and anxiety, and the low retention rates of African-American male college students, which can change the success and completion of a degree among this population. Having acquired the information from participants that racism is not experienced and double consciousness is not possessed, and hearing one racist encounter after the next, and one representation of double consciousness after the next, the researcher has become aware that one may not know it exists until they know what it is. Hopefully, leaving a lasting impression on the participants, they may understand and be able to see racism occurring and acts of double consciousness being displayed. The researcher will continues to explore the question; Why are the retention rates low among African-American male college students
LIMITATIONS

While much research and effort was committed to this study there were significant limitations. The six month time constraint was a limitation in itself for the researcher. Since a large proportion of the research was conducted using through participant interviews and surveys, this study lacked validity and the ability to generalize. Due to the time limitation, the numbers of participants were undersized, which illustrates that the findings are not reflective of all African-American male students. Lastly, the relationships of retention rates and stress through the theoretical framework of cultural double-consciousness has not been thoroughly researched as scholarly material was scarce, leaving the researcher to link different articles together that suggested certain meanings.

The selection process of the participants was also a limiting factor. The researcher had to gain access to the hours of availability from each participant to allow for appointment times that best fit the participant and the researcher’s schedules. An additional limitation was the location of where to conduct the interviews. Due to the lengthy Human Subjects Committee approval process the researcher was conducting interviews with the participants during the final week of the semester, which caused a loss of participants.

CONCLUSION

Future research would benefit this study by gathering a larger sample of African-American male college students at CSUS, as well as dividing the participants by their socioeconomic status, age, and transfer student status. Similar to Du Bois and Dunbar noting the existence of another world beyond that African-Americans, the participants in this study acknowledged this world but did not know they were conscious of it. The future studies will analyze the participant’s interviews in attempts to remove the veil that the participants can not seem to see beyond.
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Wielding the Pry Bar: Exploring the Politics of Power in Helena Maria Viarmontes’ Novel

Under the Feet of Jesus

Kimberly Galloway

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Abstract

At its best, literature creates meaning out of the reality that surrounds it. Helena Maria Viarmontes’ novel Under the Feet of Jesus (1995) provides fictional snapshots of the cultural barriers and difficult working conditions that seasonal farm workers face as immigrants in the United States. In giving us her interpretation of Mexican migrant farm workers and their experience of laboring in the fields, Viarmontes fills in the gap that personal narratives, scholarly journals, and historical records often neglect to bridge. Too often, these sources provide a one-dimensional perspective. In order to broaden the understanding of this important topic, this researcher suggests that fiction is an alternative lens with which to view the body of scholarly research being done in this field. This study provided a critical literary analysis of the novel Under the Feet of Jesus and explored the author’s use of a pry bar as a recurring metaphor throughout the novel. Using New Historical Theory and a Cultural Studies perspective, this researcher explored the historical, political, and sociological factors that led to Viarmontes’ interpretation of the tensions that exist between Mexican migrant farm workers and United States citizens.

We are raised to stick together, for the family unit is our only source of safety. Outside our home, there lies a dominant culture that is foreign to us, and labels us as illegal alien.

Helena Maria Viramontes

In Under the Feet of Jesus (1995), Helena Maria Viramontes explores the cultural barriers and poor working conditions that Mexican migrant farm workers experience in the United States. The novel traces the lives of a non-traditional family as they begin working at a new farm in California’s Central Valley. At the center of the story is a young teenage girl, Estrella, who is growing up while working among the fields. Viramontes uses shifting perspectives to provide insight into the experiences of each character as they work, love, and live in a world that sets them apart as alien because of
their “illegal” status. As Estrella observes at the beginning of the novel, “it was always a question of work, and work depended on the harvest, the car running, their health, the conditions of the road, how long the money held out, and the weather, which meant they could depend on nothing” (p. 4). With this passage, Viramontes illustrates how her characters have very little control over the direction that their lives take. In response to this lack of power, Estrella and her family develop an inter-dependency that helps to protect them against the ever-present dangers of illness, deportation, and money problems.

Throughout the novel, Viramontes uses a simple object, a pry bar, as a metaphor for power, protection, and the rift that exists between Mexican migrant farm workers and United States citizens. The pry bar makes its symbolic entrance into the novel when Viramontes introduces Perfecto Flores, a handy man, at the family home. Perfecto “was a man who came with his tool chest and stayed” (p. 25). This description serves to cement Perfecto’s place in the story, as well as introduce the toolbox and its contents. When Estrella finds the chest by the front door of their apartment, she recognizes the significance of its presence. A man has come to take her father’s place as the head of the family.

When the pry bar appears at the beginning of the novel, it serves as a metaphor for personal power. To illustrate that power, Viramontes uses Perfecto, a man who uses his skills to barter for goods and services and serves as a catalyst for change in Estrella’s life. He carries “tools to build, bury, tear down, rearrange and repair, a box of reasons his hands took pride in” (p. 26). This quotation demonstrates how the ability to tear down and rebuild barriers carries significant power for the person who knows how to accomplish such things. By performing odd jobs and carrying the tools of a handy man, Perfecto has a currency that the women in the novel do not possess.

Perfecto begins to teach Estrella about the function of the tools in his box as a way to barter for her acceptance of his role in her family. As he holds up the various objects, he provides meaning for each of the instruments by giving them names. When Estrella picked up the pry bar for the first time, she felt “the coolness of iron and power of function, weighed the significance it awarded her, and soon she came to understand how essential it was to know these things. That was when she began to read” (p. 26). In learning the name and function of the pry bar, Estrella transforms it from an inanimate object to a symbol for literacy and personal power. The pry bar comes to represent the education that has been withheld from her by the teachers in the schools for migrant children. When Estrella picks up the pry bar, she
begins to comprehend the scope of the knowledge that has been kept from her. She compares the tools in the tool chest to her school lessons. “The script A’s had the curlicue of a pry bar, a hammerhead split like a V. The small i’s resembled nails. So tell me. But some of the teachers were more concerned about the dirt under her fingernails” (p. 24). She learns to read, and knowledge becomes the currency that she can use to gain control over her family’s situation.

As author Anne Shea writes in her article, “Don’t Let Them Make You Feel You Did a Crime: Immigration Law, Labor Rights, and Farmworker Testimony” (2003), the pry bar comes to represent “the power and leverage that one has once one has the ability to read, to interpret, and to name” (p. 140). In other words, Estrella begins to equate the tool with the education she needs to obtain in order to gain personal power.

When the pry bar appears the second time in the novel, its meaning extends to represent protection for Estrella. When she runs from a little league baseball game, she fears that “La Migra”, the immigrant officials, is after her. She pushes past all of the things that her mother has taught her - the familiarity of cracked dishes in the washbasin, the laundry hanging on a line, all symbols of domestic security. She runs past her siblings and her mother to reach for the pry bar. She rejects the notions of survival and familial safety, turning instead, to a physical means of protection. She tells her mother that she is “gonna teach someone a lesson” (p. 61). Sitting on the porch with the hefty weight of the pry bar in her hand, she waits for La Migra to come for her. She plans to use the tool to physically protect herself and her family from violence and deportation when the authorities arrive.

By the end of the novel, the pry bar metaphor changes once again. Viramontes uses the tool in a way that more closely resembles its original purpose. It works to tear apart an artificially conjoined relationship between Mexican migrant workers and US citizens. In this incarnation, the pry bar serves not as a bridge of power and personal protection, but as a divisive device. In one of the last scenes in the novel, Estrella confronts a health clinic nurse who stands between Alejo and the medical care that he needs. Estrella picks up the pry bar one more time and uses it to intimidate the woman into giving them their money back so that they can drive to the hospital that lies another 20 miles away. The scene ends with Estrella destroying the nurse’s personal possessions with the woman cowering in front of her. Before her violent, desperate act, Estrella struggles to find the words that will get the money back. She reflects “it was their bones that kept the air conditioning in the cars humming, that kept them moving on the long dotted line on the map. Their bones, why couldn’t the nurse see that?” (p. 148) This
quotation emphasizes Estrella’s frustration not just with the nurse, but also with a world that refuses to recognize the contributions of Mexican migrant workers in the United States. Unable to articulate her turbulent thoughts, Estrella is left with the only option that she can think of. The pry bar symbolically serves to drive a deeper wedge between the two women, further widening the gap between their cultures.

At its core, *Under the Feet of Jesus* is a story about a nontraditional family of Mexican migrant farm workers in California’s Central Valley. Estrella, a young teenage girl growing up among the fields, learns the importance of literacy and knowledge as a means to gain important survival skills. She gains this insight with the help of Perfecto, a handy man who has taken the place of her father as head of her family’s household. She also learns about love and sacrifice through meeting Alejo, a teenage boy who she meets and falls in love with at the latest job site. When Alejo becomes deathly ill, the family must make the decision to either take him to get medical attention, or risk letting him die. They use the last of their gas to drive him to a health clinic, where a nurse takes the last of their money and tells them that she cannot do anything for him. The family must find a way to drive 20 miles further to the main hospital. The nurse rejects Perfecto’s offer to barter his handy man services in exchange for Alejo’s medical care, and refuses to give back the money that she charged for the examination. Estrella leaves the building with her family, but turns back after pulling the pry bar out of the back of the station wagon. She re-enters the building and demands the money be returned to her. The scene ends with Estrella destroying the nurse’s personal belongings as she cowers in front of her. The nurse gives the money to Estrella and they take Alejo to the main hospital, where they drop him off and leave. Perfecto fears that the police have been notified about the incident at the clinic, and the family is left to absorb what this final, violent act means for Estrella’s future.

To critically analyze *Under the Feet of Jesus* is to recognize the importance of historical context in forming Viramontes’ fiction. In her article “Que Se Pudieron Defender (So You Could Defend Yourselves)”: Chicanas, Regional History and National Discourses (2001), Antonia Castaneda points out that “The history of Mexican Americans in this country is a history of violent dispossession, dislocation, and forced internal migration” (p. 119). Castaneda argues that the internal migration of Mexican Americans must be examined with this past in mind if we are to understand how it has become an integral part of the historical narratives of the United States (p. 121). Tomás Almaguer documented these turbulent beginnings in his book *Racial Fault Lines* (1994). “The United States’ usurpation of Mexican territory laid the basis for rapidly transforming what would become the American
Southwest along new sociocultural, political, and economic lines” (p. 12). Almaguer purports that the existing racial tensions between the United States and the Mexican migrant population has its roots in the political ideology of colonization. Other significant events include The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, and the Bracero Guestworker Program of 1942, which helped create the substandard working conditions and racial tensions that Mexican migrant farm workers currently experience in the United States. It is this history that each of Viramontes’ characters must come to terms with in order to successfully negotiate terms of power and protection for themselves.

In the novel, the character Estrella struggles with the constant fear of being deported. Petra tells her daughter, “Don’t run scared. You stay there and look them in the eye. Don’t let them make you feel you did a crime for picking the vegetables they’ll be eating for dinner” (p. 63). This quotation serves to show the absurdity of labeling Mexican migrant farm workers as “illegal” while employing them to work in the fields. Politically, United States policy makers have been at a loss as to what laws need to be enacted in order to “legalize” and standardize the treatment of undocumented farm workers in this country. In his book Border Matters (1997) José Saldívar talks about Proposition 187, which passed in California in 1994. This piece of legislation denied undocumented immigrants public education and health services, as well as other benefits. He states, “I cannot help but see such unconstitutional measures as fundamentally colonialist discourses whereby US Latinos, Chicanos, Mexicanos, Central Americans and Asian Americans are cast as an illegal outside force, and alien nation “polluting” US culture” (p. x). This quotation serves to show how United States’ laws work to support alienation of immigrants living and working within the country’s borders.

United States’ policy makers have not been successful in accomplishing their intended goal of controlling the flow of migration across the border. In her article “Don’t Let Them Make You Feel You Did a Crime: Immigration Law, Labor Rights, and Farmworker Testimony,” Shea points out that the H-2A Visa Program "bars workers from the status of both “citizen” and “immigrant”, effectively insuring their continued alien status within the United States, and establishing formal barriers to naturalization” (p.125). Shea also argues that seasonal agricultural workers are denied many of the basic rights and social benefits that their host country provides its citizens.

Programs like the H-2A leave room for abuses to occur in the workplace, as migrant farm workers are less likely to report what is happening for fear of being deported. Their documented status affords them little protection, as their status is temporary, and can be revoked at any time. In Under the Feet of Jesus, the characters are always feeling the pressure that immigration laws put on them. As Petra point out in the novel, there is “No sense telling La Migra
you’ve lived here all your life” (p. 62). Through Petra, Viramontes’ reveals the frustration that Mexican migrant workers feel when dealing with immigration police. Viramontes suggests that feelings of hopelessness are pervasive in the face of criminalization by depicting Petra as feeling that there is no use arguing with the officials because it would not change the outcome.

Although Under the Feet of Jesus was written in 1995, it is clear that poor working conditions still exist. Mexican migrant workers are still encountering barriers of culture and discrimination. Thirteen years after the book was released, migrant farm workers still have very limited access to social services, adequate health care, and protection of the basic workers rights allowed to them. For example, Susan Ferriss (2008) of the Sacramento Bee reported that on May 16, 2008, 17-year old undocumented farm worker Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez died, two days after collapsing in a field located east of Stockton, California, where she had been working without adequate hydration. Merced Farm Labor, the company the pregnant girl worked for, is under investigation for violation of existing heat laws.\(^3\) Sacramento Bee wire services reported on July 4, 2008, that the company, which was allowed to send workers back into the fields on June 26th after proving to Cal-OSHA that they met all heat protection requirements, was shut down again after the agency found that it was not providing adequate heat training to its employees. Ferriss reported on June 5th that, if the company is found guilty of misconduct leading to the death of Jimenez, it could face fines of up to a maximum of $25,000.

As Vasquez Jimenez’s death captures the attention of California’s Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the United Farm Worker Union, the importance of evaluating novels like Under the Feet of Jesus becomes more relevant; for to examine Viramontes’ novel is to recognize the need for social change. At its best, literature creates meaning out of the reality that surrounds it. In giving us her interpretation of Mexican migrant farm workers and their experience of laboring in the fields, the author is able to fill in the gap that personal narratives, scholarly journals, and historical records can leave behind. Under the Feet of Jesus gives its audience another lens through which they can view the current climate that Mexican migrant farm workers face in the United States. Viramontes illuminates the lives of agricultural laborers by providing snap shots of the working conditions that they face, and providing us with a metaphor like the pry bar with which we can deepen our understanding of the way that the US has typically viewed its “illegal” immigrants.
For this review, the novel *Under the Feet of Jesus* (1995) was critically analyzed as a starting point in investigating the experiences of female Mexican migrant farm workers in the United States. Helena Maria Viramontes’ fiction explores the cultural barriers of language, literacy, and discrimination, as well as the poor working conditions that Mexican migrant farm workers experience in the United States.

In her personal essay “Nopalitos: The Making of Fiction” (1989), Helena Maria Viramontes gives an insight into her own view of the role that family plays in the lives of Mexican migrants. She states that families are raised to stick together as a source of safety and goes on to say that outside of the home, there is a dominant culture that isolates them and calls them “illegal alien”.

Anne Shea (2003) examines the criminalization of Mexican migrant farm workers in the United States and investigates the ways in which Mexican migrant laborers’ use narratives to tell their history. Shea discusses the novel *Under the Feet of Jesus*, and argues that Viramontes uses her fiction to criticize the Anti-Mexican sentiment and corresponding policies that currently exist in the United States. Shea’s analysis of the H-2A Visa program helped this researcher clarify the position that Mexican migrant farm workers are placed in when they enter the United States as temporary seasonal laborers. Shea states that the H-2A visa “classifies farm laborers as non-citizens and “non-immigrants”” (p. 125). Shea purports that this classification creates formal barriers to nationalization and ensures Mexican agricultural workers’ continuing status as aliens in the United States. Lastly, Shea’s analysis of the pry bar as a representation of “the power and leverage that one has once one has the ability to read, to interpret, and to name” (p. 140) helped to inform this researcher’s own interpretation of its relevance in the novel. In *Racial Fault Lines: the Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California*, Tomás Almaguer (1994) takes a critical look at the history between Euro-Americans and Mexicans, Asians, and Native Americans in the nineteenth century. Almaguer provides a comprehensive overview of the history behind the racial tensions that exist between these groups through the use of personal accounts, public records, and consensus data, as well as research done by historians in the field. Almaguer’s own research helps to shed light on how Viramontes addresses the barriers that her characters must overcome as a result of the Anti-Mexican sentiment that keeps them alienated from the very communities in which they work.

Another significant historical event impacting migrant workers still today, was the signing of The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. It called
for Mexico to cede 55% of its territory to the United States, and stipulated
the Texas border at the Rio Grande. While the treaty offered protection
for the property and civil rights of Mexican nationals living within the new
border, Article X, which guaranteed the protection of Mexican land grants
was deleted. The United States promised to police its side of the border
and called for compulsory arbitration of future disputes between the two
countries. After the signing of the treaty, Mexicans who had been living
as residents of Mexico for years, found themselves foreigners on their
own lands. The loss of identity, and oftentimes the loss of their lands, left
Mexicans struggling to find their place in the United States. Like their real-
life counterparts, Viramontes’ characters grapple with what it means to be a
Mexican citizen residing in the United States. Each of them struggles with
the fact that they are seen as “illegal” in a country they feel they have a right
to live in freely.

Providing another perspective on some of the real-life influences on
Viramontes’ interpretation, researcher Castaneda (2001) provides an in-
depth look at Chicanas, regional history, and national discourses. The author
investigates the migration of Chicanas within the United States and calls
for a “rethinking” of the regional history of the United States. This new
history would include the narratives and stories of Mexican migrant farm
laborers. Castaneda also states that “the history of Mexican Americans in
this country is a history of violent dispossession, dislocation, and forced
internal migration” (p. 119). In other words, the tensions between the United
States and Mexican migrants are not recent developments. There is a past
between the two groups that is riddled with violence and displacement. When
examining Under the Feet of Jesus, a reader can postulate that when Estrella
picks up the pry bar to threaten the nurse, she is acting out a much older
struggle for power between the United States and Mexican immigrants.

This struggle to define the relationship that Mexican immigrants have with
United States citizens can also be traced to the implementation of the
Bracero Guestworker program of 1942. It was initially a program created by
the United States government to bring in migrant guest workers from Mexico
to help with farm labor during World War II. These invited guest laborers
were supposed to provide a temporary solution to the absence of farm
workers who had gone to assist in the war efforts. However, the program
was so popular among the farmers that it lasted until 1964. Ramirez (2006)
examines the Bracero Guestworker Program and explores the response of
Braceros to a program that “proved to be at best dehumanizing” (p. 117),
and created an even larger gap between United States citizens and Mexican
migrant farm laborers. At the end of Under the feet of Jesus, Estrella’s pry bar
becomes a symbol of this same rift between the United States and Mexican
migrant workers when it is wielded as an instrument of violence rather than protection.

History is not the only lens that we can look through when evaluating migrant workers and their status in the United States. José David Saldívar’s book Border Matters: Remapping of American Cultural Studies (1997) is a critical examination of the art, music, and literature produced by Chicana/os residing along the border areas between Mexico and the United States. While taking an in-depth look at the art being produced in these regions, Saldívar calls for a revision of the way that educators approach American cultural studies. He uses a multidisciplinary approach that includes a broad selection of cultural literature, music, and art. In his preface, Saldívar discusses Proposition 187, a measure passed in California in 1994 that denies “undocumented immigrants public education, health services, and other benefits” (p. x). In doing so, US policy makers have made a clear statement that “illegal” immigration is not acceptable. In Under the Feet of Jesus, Alejo suffers immensely as a direct result of these types of propositions.

Likewise, lawmakers and policy writers provide scholars with insights into Mexico and United States relations. Gallegos (2004) conducted research on US-Mexico immigration and trade policies. The comprehensive study includes a look at macro- and microeconomic-based trade policies, nativistic racism, and border militarization, and provides recommendation for re-framing the conception of national interest. Gallegos discusses how nativism “encompasses a type of nationalism that defines American in contrast to un-American and foreign” (p. 1740). This concept of foreigner versus nationalist creates a cultural and racial barrier between United States citizens and Mexican migrant workers. This is the type of institutionalized racism that Estrella and her family experience when they encounter the nurse at the health clinic at the end of the novel. When she sees them coming, the nurse locks up her purse and refuses to deal with them on anything but the most perfunctory of levels.

Another contributor to the field of law and foreign policy, De Genova (2002) works to accomplish two things with his article. First, he provides a critical discussion of undocumented migration by focusing on ethnographical works that bring the daily experiences of undocumented workers to the foreground. Secondly, De Genova focuses on the “…tenuous distinction between “legal” and illegal migration, which has become increasingly salient throughout the world, was deployed to stigmatize and regulate mainly Mexican migrant workers in the United States for much of the twentieth century” (p. 433). It is this distinction of legal versus illegal that helps to determine the experience that Mexican migrant farm workers will have in the United States. The issue
of legality is constantly on the mind of migrant farm laborers, as it is on the characters’ minds in Under the Feet of Jesus.

In order to address what Ruhs and Chang (2004) saw as problems with the way that foreign policy surrounding immigration is created, the two researchers examined ethical questions in the design of labor immigration programs throughout the world. They took the information that they gathered and used it to advocate new types of foreign worker programs that would help ensure the rights of migrant workers in the country that hosts them. This researcher found their discussion of the Declaration of Human Rights to be particularly relevant to her study. As Ruhs and Chang point out in their article, the Declaration stipulates that human rights are universal, indivisible, and inalienable (p. 84). The idea that human rights belong to everyone, not just the citizens of a given country is not a new concept. However, it is not a perspective that is currently being used by US policy makers. By creating very human and relatable characters, Viramontes’ is providing an opportunity for people to view the Mexican migrant laborers from a human rights perspective, rather than a political or socio-economical one.

Another relevant question in regards to Mexican migrant workers in the US is: What happens when Mexican migrant workers try to fully assimilate into the culture of the United States? Johnson (1997) explores the problems that Mexican migrants face with assimilation, stating that, “some current anti-immigration advocates accuse today’s immigrants, particularly those from Latin America, of refusing to assimilate by maintaining their language and culture” (p. 1280). By taking this particular viewpoint, anti-immigration advocates shut down active discourse before it begins. Johnson argues that this narrow-minded stance fails to take into account the fact that assimilation can be a difficult and painful process. Estrella’s struggle to create a sense of personal power and protection reflects how difficult it can be to fit into a world that views someone as “illegal” and “alien”.

Problem Statement

This study investigated the author’s thematic focus on the experiences of female Mexican migrant farm workers in the United States. In order to analyze the text, the researcher explored the use of a recurring element, the pry bar, throughout Under the Feet of Jesus as a metaphor for personal power, protection and a representation of the rift that exists between the United States government and migrant farm workers. To place the novel in context, this researcher also examined the historical implications of the Treaty of
Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, as well as the Bracero Guestworker Program of 1942, the H-2A Visa Program, immigration laws and current events.

Given today’s political climate of tightening immigration laws, increased border patrols, and a growing dependence on migrant labor, the study of Under the Feet of Jesus becomes is not only relevant, but necessary in helping us to better understand the realities of female migrant farm workers. In writing this paper, it is the hope of this researcher that an in-depth analysis of this novel helps create a broader lens through which we can evaluate the working conditions and legal status of Mexican agricultural laborers in the United States.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study provided a critical literary analysis of the novel Under the Feet of Jesus and explored the author’s use of a pry bar as a recurring metaphor throughout the novel. Using New Historical Theory and a Cultural Studies perspective, this researcher explored the historical, political, and sociological factors that led to Viramontes’ interpretation of the tensions that exist between Mexican migrant farm workers and United States citizens.

The researcher limited the types of data to: the main text, scholarly journals, books of criticism by recognized scholars in the field, and governmental reports on policy related to her topic. The study did not include human subjects, personal narratives, or interviews.

**RESULTS/DISCUSSION**

The novel Under The Feet of Jesus provides a fictional interpretation of a non-traditional family of Mexican migrant farm workers. Viramontes traces their lives as they arrive at a new farm in California’s Central Valley, and uses shifting perspectives as well as flashbacks to tell her story. The resulting novel is a collection of snap shots detailing the lives of Mexican migrant laborers as they try to navigate the unfamiliar terrain of a new job site.

The barriers to education and better work opportunities that Viramontes’ characters face in Under the Feet of Jesus, present a large problem for Mexican migrant farm workers who cannot easily assimilate into the United States’ culture. Johnson points out in his article “Melting Pot or Ring of Fire?: Assimilation and the Mexican-American Experience”, (1997) that “some current anti-immigration advocates accuse today’s immigrants, particularly those from Latin America, of refusing to assimilate by maintaining their language and culture” (p. 1280). Johnson observes that immigrants often want to assimilate into the culture, but lack the necessary resources to do so. The problem is even more complex for migrant workers who move around
too much for them to properly absorb the language and culture. Migration for seasonal agricultural work also interrupts a migrant child’s chances to obtain a decent education. The problem is compounded by the fact that migrant workers are often unable to establish any long-term residence or create close friendships because they are constantly moving from one site to the next. As Estrella observes in chapter one, “last names were plentiful and easily forgotten because they changed with the crops and the seasons and state lines” (p. 28). This quotation demonstrates how the transitory nature of migrant farm work can leave someone without the ability to fully assimilate and make vital connections.

The pry bar is introduced in the novel a second time, at the mid-way point. Estrella stops at a little league baseball game on the way home and sits apart from the crowd on railroad ties overlooking the fields. She watches as the other farm workers drive past her on their way home. As night begins to descend, she finds herself alone. The loud, sudden noise of the bat hitting the ball, combined with the field’s lights switching on has her running in terror. “The border patrol, she thought, and she tried to remember which side of wire mesh she was safe in” (p. 60). In that moment, Viramontes reveals how deeply ingrained the fear of being deported is in Estrella’s mind. The threat of deportation is a fact that seasonal migrant farm workers, both documented and “illegal” must live with. Sarah Cleveland discusses the reality that Mexican agricultural laborers face in her article “Legal Status and Right of Undocumented Workers”. (Advisory Opinion OC-18/03, 2005). As she points out, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2003, “observed that employers may exploit migrant workers by offering them less favorable working conditions, offering them lower pay, dismissing them for joining unions, and threatening to deport them, and that irregular immigration status may frustrate workers’ ability to obtain judicial recourse” (p. 461). This quote points out the extremely tenuous position that Mexican migrant farm workers feel that they have while residing in the United States.

When Estrella hears the crack of the bat and sees the lights come on at dusk, it sends her running in terror from what she believes will be certain deportation and violence. This scene is important in that it represents a shift in the meaning of the metaphor of the pry bar. Once home, she grabs the pry bar to defend herself, and it changes from a symbol of empowerment to one of protection. Once a symbol of personal power, the tool has become an instrument of protection for Estrella. In essence, it functions like Dumbo’s magic feather. Estrella feels that without the pry bar, she does not possess the power to protect herself and her family from La Migra.

At the end of the novel, the pry bar makes an appearance one last time. Instead of a source of power and protection for Estrella, the tool becomes a
symbol for the large rift between the United States and Mexican migrant farm workers. Or, on a much smaller scale, the deep divide that separates Estrella and the health clinic nurse.

When Estrella’s violent outburst has the nurse cowering in front of her, Estrella does not see the ground that she has lost. She manages to get the money back, but at a big cost. When she returns to the car, Alejo points out the flaw in her actions. “Can’t you see, they want us to act like that? Nothing he said could undo what was already done” (p. 153). Alejo fears that Estrella has fed into the nurse’s worst expectations of her. Rather than earning respect and understanding, she has brought about only more fear and destruction. She has reinforced the low expectations of migrant workers held by the nurse. The situation was worsened due to Estrella’s misplaced dependence on the pry bar as a means to communicate her frustration and feelings of powerlessness. Her actions have played into what Gabriela Gallegos identifies as nativistic racism in her article “Border Matters: Redefining the National Interest in US-Mexico Immigration and Trade Policy” (2004). Gallegos discusses how nativism “encompasses a type of nationalism that defines American in contrast to un-American and foreign…Historically, nativists have believed “that some influence originating abroad threatened the very life of the nation from within’” (qtd. Hernández Truyol). When Estrella faces off against the nurse in that last confrontation, she feeds into the nurse’s nativistic racism. She has confirmed what was thought of her already. The education and careful protection Estrella has built up throughout the novel crumbles before the truth of how the nurse perceives her.

The novel Under the Feet of Jesus sheds light on the working conditions and racial tensions that Mexican migrant farm workers experience in the United States today. Viramontes’ interpretation relates the personal experience of a group of people that the United States has historically disregarded. While recent events have brought national attention to the working conditions of migrant farm workers, much still needs to be accomplished in regards to US policy and immigration laws.

In order for real change to occur, there needs to be a broadening of the lens through which the United States typically views Mexican migrant farm laborers. Rather than looking at the status of these temporary immigrants from an economic, political or historical perspective, we need to take a look at migrants in this country from a human rights point of view. Fiction is an accessible way that we can expand our understanding of the Mexican migrant experience, including their working conditions. Viramontes’ novel Under the Feet of Jesus offers an interpretation rather than a strict representation
of female migrant farm workers. In doing so, she is able to blend the experiences of many people in order to give a multi-layered account of one character. In adopting this broader lens, we can ensure basic human rights and decent working conditions for all of the people residing within the boundaries of the United States.

LIMITATIONS
The scope and depth of this research project was hampered by the strictures of time. As a result, this researcher was unable to do an in-depth critical literary analysis of the entire novel. Instead, she chose to focus on one recurring element, the metaphor of the pry bar, in order to explore some of the prevalent themes of the novel. The researcher also had to restrict her analysis to one novel, rather than doing a comparison of two or more works by the same author in order to fit the Journal’s page restraints and turn in a timely paper. Lastly, if time were not an issue, this researcher would draw from other Chicana authors to compare and contrast their interpretations of the Mexican migrant worker experience with that of Viramontes’.

CONCLUSION
During the course this study, this researcher encountered many topics related to migrant workers, immigrant experiences and international politics. Future researchers might also find inspiration from Chicana feminist discourse, or the United Farm Workers Union efforts to create a safe working environment for agricultural laborers. For a broader understanding of the international problems surrounding poor working conditions, a study could be conducted on garment workers in the fashion industry. Other areas of interest might include exiles, LGBT farm worker rights, International immigration policy, and human rights organizations. Further studies of the fiction and poetry produced by Chicana/os in the United States would greatly contribute to the field of English. Specifically, a multi-disciplinary approach would help to bridge the gaps between English literature and the areas of Social Sciences and History. The present study

How does the United States government begin to address such issues as poor working conditions, discrimination against, and exploitation of seasonal Mexican farm workers? In pointing out the humanity in her characters, Viramontes provides us with a different way of approaching the problem of “illegal” immigration and the consequences of using such labels to describe migrant laborers in the United States. The answer lies in the way we define migrant farm workers and their status in this country. It is clear that a political, economical, and historical interpretation has not resolved the tensions between Mexican migrant farm workers and United States citizens.
There is a lack of enforcement of labor protection laws, as well as a fear on the part of migrants to report problems to the proper authorities that leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and poor working conditions. The Civil Rights Movement and resulting laws have helped to define the need for reform, and has provided some basic rights for migrant workers, but still leaves large holes through which undocumented workers fall through the system.

To make long-lasting policy change, we must write stronger labor protection laws and enforce larger penalties for employers found to be in violation of them. Thus, an evaluation of the migrant farm worker’s status in this country might be viewed from the perspective of human rights as a means to safeguard against the exploitation and abuse of Mexican migrant workers in the United States. As authors Martin Ruhs and Ha-Joon Chang (2004) describe in their article The Ethics of Labor Immigration Policy, for those who believe in “a maximal (almost full) moral standing for non-citizens believe that there is a set of (very comprehensive) universal rights to which everyone is entitled, regardless of his or her citizenship status” (p. 84). If this conceptual framework is applied, an umbrella of basic human rights that protect them from abuse and exploitation would protect all people residing within a country’s border. In order to provide protection for all of the people residing in the US, we must broaden the relatively narrow lens through which we have traditionally viewed undocumented farm workers and their legal status in this country.

Ruhs and Chang (2004) quote from the Declaration of Human Rights, saying, “human rights are universal (that is, they apply everywhere), indivisible (that is political and civil rights cannot be separated from social and cultural rights), and inalienable (that is, they cannot be denied to any human beings and should not be transferable or saleable)” (p. 84). This idea presents an opportunity for the United States to shift its policies to better protect the people that reside within its borders. In order to ensure protection for all people living and working within the United States, we must broaden our government’s traditionally exclusionary views of Mexican immigration to extend rights to all people who reside within our boundaries.
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I use the word “illegal” to show what De Genova (2002) states is the “tenuous distinction between “legal” and illegal migration, which has become increasingly salient throughout the world, was deployed to stigmatize and regulate mainly Mexican migrant workers in the United States for much of the twentieth century” (p. 433). In using the word illegal, I emphasize the anti-Mexican immigration sentiment that currently exists in the United States. This distinction becomes important when exploring the effect that the United States lawmakers’ labeling of migrant farm workers as “illegal” has on the characters in Viramontes’ novel Under the Feet of Jesus.

2. The H-2A Visa is the program currently in effect, which gives temporary residency status to agricultural laborers entering the United States to work.

3. Miranda (2008) California heat laws stipulate that: “Employers must provide water at the site, breaks and shaded areas for those rest periods. All workers must also be trained on how to spot the symptoms of heat-related illnesses”. These heat laws, while in effect, are not always enforced. Recent media attention surrounding a girl who died in the fields in May of 2008 has brought more awareness at the state government level, yet it remains to be seen whether or not any real long-term changes will be made.

4. Dumbo, a 1941 Disney film that features an elephant with enormous ears who learns that he can fly with the help of a little friend and a magic feather. Like Estrella, who fears that without the pry bar, she cannot protect herself and her family, the elephant Dumbo fears that without his feather, he cannot fly. (Source: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0033563)

5. “On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights… Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.” Source: http://www.un.org/overview/right.html
Mexican American Parents: Implications for the Development of Early Intervention Parenting Programs

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Abstract

This study examines the research on parenting programs for Mexican-Americans to better understand the role of early intervention programs and how they address the needs of this population. This literature review was conducted to analyze the content of articles related to Latino parenting styles, acculturation, and enculturation between 1983 and 2008, using the PsychInfo database. The findings suggest that parents show more interest in parenting programs when they are recruited by key community members. Findings also suggest that Mexican-Americans attend parenting programs at a higher rate when extended family members are part of the program, and when a buddy system is implemented. Implications of the findings are discussed in terms of strengths and weaknesses of the existing literature and suggestions for future research.

Psychologists and social workers have long been interested in understanding immigrant families, especially Latino families, as children of this background make up the fastest growing population in the United States as a result of natural growth and immigration (US Census Bureau, 2000). Differences in parenting styles within these families are often based on religious, ethnic and cultural values. These differences have often been ignored by researchers and program administrators when developing parenting intervention programs—programs that when established about 30 years ago, focused their efforts on helping parents understand children’s behavior and improving their parenting approaches only. Administrators of parenting programs directed to Latino families and researchers in this area now recognize the need to examine Latino family values and the importance of offering culturally relevant intervention programs to assist parents in acquiring helpful parenting practices as they acculturate to the United States. Furthermore, parents of this ethnic minority group are found to need help dealing with the many changes that they and their families face as consequence of living in a country with different cultural expectations. Many of these families deal with at least one of the following stressors: acculturation, lack of understanding of child...
laws in the US, limited English knowledge, restrictive socio-economic status, isolation, unemployment, substandard housing and discrimination (Vega, 1990).

An examination of Latino groups shows that because of their shared Spanish colonization history, Catholic religious values tend to form the basis for their cultural values (Moore & Pachon, 1985; Tienda & Ortiz, 1986), however, researchers and media tend to assume that all Latino groups are homogeneous and generalizations are often made when designing mental health services. It has been noted by researchers that in order to develop culturally effective and competent programs, it is necessary to understand the internal group variations of this large and diverse population as well as the unique difficulties associated with immigration (Miranda, Azocar, Organista, Munoz & Liberman, 1996).

This study focuses on Mexican-Americans exclusively, as this group is by far the largest Latino group in the United States, accounting for 66% of the Latino-American population in US (US Census Bureau, 2001b). Specifically, this study examines the literature on parenting programs for Mexican-Americans to better understand the role of early intervention programs in addressing the needs of this population.

Emphasis was placed on investigating how to improve parenting programs aimed towards Mexican-American families. Much of the literature shows that Latinos underutilize mental health services; for the purpose of this study parenting programs are considered a part of the mental health services. An explanation for this phenomenon could be partially due to a lack of bicultural and bilingual staff. These deficiencies are emphasized in the research and some recommendations are given for selecting staff for programs or research teams. Other reasons for Latino underutilization of mental health services are low recruitment levels, lack of program participation by Latino families even after having expressed interest in participation and low retention levels due to high attrition levels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

 Attempts to explain Latino underutilization of mental health services have looked to traditional Latino family values. Bowman (1971) examined Latino families’ tendency to stay within their family environment and not engage with other social groups. Bowman suggested that due to cultural differences, Latinos did not feel comfortable attending group settings and suggests that groups setting are not appropriate for Latino families. Hardy-Fanta (1986) argued against this idea, stating that Latinos are in favor of joining “natural groups”; for example, preexisting groups at churches, extended
family groups, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes, information classes on immigration policies and many others. Hardy-Fanta asserts that the lack of engagement of Latino families in group-based mental health services is due to the lack of attention to, and understanding of, cultural factors by social work professionals when recruiting ethnic minorities. The researcher also emphasizes the importance of identifying natural groups as a successful recruitment strategy, where recruitment staff could be seen with less concern. Hardy-Fanta also explains that utilizing these existing groups motivates participation of Latino families to receive preventive mental health information.

Recruitment and retention issues have been studied in great detail for non-Latino families but as Catalano, Hawkins, Krenz, Gillmore, Morrison, Wells, & Abbot (1993) states, “standard recruitment techniques may be ineffective and not acceptable to different cultural groups”. A large body of studies have explained cultural factors that influence Latinos use of mental health services, (e.g., Marin & Marin, 1991; Barrera, 1978; Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991), including traditional family values such as familismo, which means involving extended family members beyond the nuclear family structure and sometimes even members of other social networks, such as neighbors and friends were families expect other members to be loyal and committed to the family machismo, were men see themselves as more masculine and protective of women and younger members of the family were the father is the most powerful member of the family and marianismo, in contrast with Machismo, were the qualities valued in a women are submissiveness, obedience, able to long-suffer and put her needs after her husband’s and family members. Another influencing factor is, personalismo, Latinos are people who value personal relationships. In regards to client-therapist relationships, personalismo includes the use of formal language and titles in this group’s relationship with mental health providers [e.g., Senor, Senora, Usted, etc.]. This crucial factor has been overlooked by many researchers and was found by Miranda et al. (1996) as one explanation for low recruitment and retention levels in Latino families.

Furthermore, studies have noted the need to research the differences within each subgroup such as taking in consideration factors like acculturation, Socio Economic Status (SES), nativity (place of birth), reasons for immigration and existence of close extended family members after immigration (Carpentier, Mauricio, Gonzales, Millsap, Meza, Dumka, German, & Genalo 2007).
METHODOLOGY

This study conducted a content analysis of articles pertaining to Mexican-American parenting programs that have been published in the past 25 years in order to understand the current status of recruitment, participation and retention issues and to look for additional themes in the current literature. Findings from the analysis were compiled and used to discuss directions for future research and mental health program development for Mexican American families.

A Mexican-American undergraduate student interested in better understanding parenting programs due to her experience working with a non-profit organization that delivers parenting programs to Latino families, conducted this research. A database search of PsychInfo was conducted using the following search terms: multicultural, Hispanic, Latino, Mexican-American, Mexican, intervention programs, parenting groups, and support group and parent education. Follow-up search strategies included database searches by author names (who were identified in the first round of searches) and examining the reference sections of articles that met inclusion criteria. The articles selected for inclusion in this study’s content analysis were identified using the following criteria: 1) articles were either empirical or theoretical studies that were published between 1986 and 2005; 2) the articles appeared in peer-reviewed journals; 3) The main focus of the article was parenting programs for Hispanics, Latinos, or Mexican-Americans; and 4) The articles contained information on retention, participation and/or completion of mental health services. The application of these inclusion criteria yielded 12 articles (which are marked with asterisks in the References section). Descriptive analysis of the group of articles showed that seven articles (58%) were empirical in nature and five (41%) were theoretical in nature. One article tested the effectiveness of a parenting program, whereas two articles only described the programs. Nine articles (75%) described parenting programs targeting Latino families in general, whereas three articles (25%) geared their programs to Mexican-Americans specifically. Of the studies discussed in the articles, four (57%) studied a single-group and three included two or more groups. Most of the studies focused on Latino groups and described the specific ethnicity of their samples. For example, Harachi, Catalano, and Hawkins (1997) described their sample as “mostly Hispanics and Central American families”. Only three out of the 12 studies focused specifically on Mexican-Americans.

Next, a content analysis of each article was performed by first reviewing each article for the pre-established coding categories of retention, participation and completion, and describing article content pertaining to these categories.
A second level of analysis involved identifying additional themes that may have been present in the articles.

RESULTS

This section describes the results of the content analysis using the pre-established coding categories, followed by the additional themes represented in the 12 articles.

Recruitment: All of the articles found mentioned that Latino families are more likely to enroll in a parenting program that was recommended by a key member of the community with whom they had had contact in the past or that is well known by the community. This finding suggests identifying key members of the community to help with the recruitment process. Recruitment by word-to-mouth was used by two of the studies and was shown to be effective, which suggests that families feel more comfortable attending a program that a friend recommended. Another important aspect found to affect recruitment levels in parenting programs is the location where programs are offered. Latino families approached by program staff and given the option of attending programs at accessible locations, such as schools, churches, community center, etc. (Harachi, Catalano, & Hawkins, 1997), show higher rates of enrollment in comparison to those approached by programs at places they do not feel welcome or safe such as clinical labs. This factor could be because of the familiarity with the place and also because of transportation means. Transportation is a big issue for Latino families who can not afford to buy a car or do not know their way around the city in which they live. Child care was found to be another issue that Latino families have to consider when deciding to attend programs; when child care was provided at the meeting locations recruitment rates improved. The language in which a parenting program is provided also affects recruitment rates. Three of the studies examined for this research mentioned that their programs were provided in both English and Spanish, which resulted in higher levels of acceptance than were programs that offered English session only. Furthermore, studies suggested that when having sessions in both English and Spanish is not possible, having bicultural and bilingual staff help to families feel more comfortable and understood by the service providers could help improve program recruitment rates.

Latino families work schedules have also been a barrier when considering a program as was mention by all of the studies analyzed for this literature review. Some researchers suggest home visitations as a viable option to engage hard-to-reach families but discourage its exclusive usage. Other
researchers have noted that families benefit from participating in groups that provide social support and reduce isolation.

Participation: After recruiting participants for each parenting program, researchers are faced with other difficulties, such as creating programs interesting enough to the participants to keep them attending as many sessions as possible. It was noted in three studies that depending on the acculturation level of the participant, the delivery mode preferred by families is different; Mexican-Americans preferred group settings only, whereas Mexicans (less acculturated, newcomers to the US) prefer a combination of Home Visits and group meetings. Some of the articles found that the delivery mode is important when families are deciding whether or not to attend a program. Powell et al. (1990) explained that there are many factors that affect participation such as, familismo, machismo, frequent family mobility and hectic work schedules. (Powell, Zambrana, & Silva-Palacios 1990). These factors have been mention by other studies but solutions have only been given for the familismo factor; many of the females interested in participating in the programs did not enroll or dropped out because their husbands did not agree with their participation. By having a professional from the parenting program speak with the husband and make him part of the decision making, usually solves this issue.

Content and curriculum was considered by four of these studies and it was suggested that Intake interviews should ask questions about participant interests and individual family stressors. Another important suggestion given by Dillman, Capentier, Mauricio, Gonzales, Millsap, Meza, Dumka, German, & Genalo (2007) was that curriculum needs to allow for content flexibility between and within cohorts, which has shown to help Latino families feels respected and in control.

All of the studies contained in this literature review claimed to have had improved participation levels or to have rates that were comparable to other studies.

Retention and completion: Even thought other research found that acculturation levels are predictors of participation levels (e.g., Marin & Marin, 1991; Barrera, 1978; Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991), only four studies took this factor into consideration. These studies reported that less acculturated families had a lower rate of completion of parenting programs than more acculturated families did. Some of the suggestions given in the studies to improve retention rates were: maximize cultural sensitivity efforts by integrating values such as confianza, personalismo (face-to-face-interaction), respeto, used to describe the importance of adherence to authority based on age or social position (Antshel, 2002), offering the programs in the language
that the families feel more comfortable with (Spanish or English in this case) and combining home visit and group settings as needed depending on each family’s needs. Another helpful tool identified for improving retention has been the implementation of a buddy system that would help families to not fall behind in the curriculum while helping them build group cohesion. The “buddy” would be another participant family that can be contacted in case a participant misses a session.

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to review what the current research has found useful when developing parenting programs aimed toward Mexican-American families. This study found a large body of research about parenting programs aimed toward Latino families in general but very limited research on Mexican-American families specifically.

This researcher noticed that many of the issues encountered in past studies continue unresolved; when families argued that work schedules did not allow them to join or continue program participation, none of the studies made any changes in order to recruit these families. Future research could benefit from having more flexible schedules and staff available weekdays and weekends. Another suggestion would be to group families by work schedule when starting a new program and to offer a combination of the buddy system, home visitation and group settings.

**LIMITATIONS**

This study was limited to a two month research period, which did not permit the inclusion of human subjects that would had added empirical information to the limited body of research on Mexican-Americans, and would have supported or countered other researchers findings. With more time, the researcher would have done a much more concentrated review of the literature. The researcher came across many journal articles that described recruitment and retention for non-Latinos in parenting programs that, with more time, would had been very interesting to study and to add to the limited body of literature that studies similarities between non-Latinos and Latinos.

Another limitation of this study was that there was only one researcher analyzing the journals. For future research, two or more researchers should agree upon the inclusion criteria and then complete the literature analysis independently, and then compare results and conclusions. This would reduce the possibility of research bias.
CONCLUSION

The major conclusion supports the findings of all of the studies analyzed in this study, that Mexican-Americans can be recruited and retained in parenting programs just as much as non-Latinos as long as cultural aspects are considered and the staff of mental health and parenting programs, and research team members are culturally sensitive and respectful. Training might be needed in various areas related to these factors in order to improve communication skills and overcome misunderstandings, generalizations and differences in regards of cultural clashes.
REFERENCES


Towards Improving the Nutritional Quality of Plants: Expressing Arabidopsis thaliana Pyruvate Kinase Isozymes in E. coli

Aurelia Leyva Castro

Dr. Thomas J. Savage, Faculty Mentor

Abstract

Pyruvate kinase is an essential enzyme that regulates glycolysis. This research focused on establishing whether pyruvate kinases in plants have different kinetic and regulatory properties by characterizing highly-purified plant pyruvate kinases generated in E. coli. The intent was to obtain catalytically-active pyruvate kinase through either refolding of inclusion bodies or through expressing soluble protein with or without the presence of protease inhibitor and the antioxidant tris (hydroxypropyl) phosphine. Active protein was found only in the presence of tris(hydroxypropyl)phosphine and protease inhibitor. The ability to obtain catalytically-active protein offers an understanding of the metabolic role of plant pyruvate kinase isozymes, and ultimately will permit the engineering of glycolysis to increase levels of essential nutrients such as carotenoids, protein, or oils in plants.

The purpose of this study is to better understand the specific role that different pyruvate kinase (PK) isozymes, found in the cytosol of Arabidopsis thaliana, play in regulating glycolysis, based on their different kinetic values. PK is a protein that catalyzes the conversion of phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP) to pyruvate in the presence of magnesium, potassium, and adenosine diphosphate (ADP) (Muñoz & Ponce, 2003). This is the terminal step of the consecutive sequence of reactions found in the glycolysis pathway. The purpose of the glycolysis pathway is to provide the energy source adenosine triphosphate (ATP) and metabolic starting materials (precursors) required for other essential pathways in cells (Voet, Voet, & Pratt, 2006).

Literature Review

In certain plants, such as the genetic model Arabidopsis thaliana, the glycolysis pathway is found in two different subcellular compartments: the cytosol and the plastid. The plastid PK provides precursors for carotenoid, starch, oil, and aromatic amino acid pathways. In the cytosol, the enzyme provides precursors required for the biosynthesis of the amino acids asparagine, alanine, leucine, and valine (Andre, Froehlich, & Benning, 2007).
In addition, PK exists in many forms (isozymes) in plants. For example, there are nine PK isozymes in Arabidopsis thaliana; six are found in the cytosol and three are targeted to the plastid (Savage, 2004).

To analyze the kinetics of each PK isozyme, first enough pure PK must be produced to measure the enzymatic activity and observe the kinetic behavior. For this research, the pET E.coli expression host system was used to produce PK protein more efficiently (Sorensen & Mortensen, 2004). The pET system consists of a circular DNA (plasmid) that contains the PK gene of interest fused to DNA encoding a histidine-tag, which allows the expressed protein to be purified by metal ion affinity chromatography. The pET plasmid is inserted into an E.coli bacteria expression host, which produces the protein of interest. The PK protein can be produced either as insoluble inactive protein (inclusion bodies) or soluble protein (active protein), which is folded and therefore is expected to have enzymatic activity (Novagen, 2003). To date, efforts to produce plant PK in E. coli have only produced inactive inclusion bodies. This present study attempts to obtain active plant PK from an E. coli expression system by refolding the insoluble inclusion bodies, or by producing soluble protein in large-scale cultures with or without a protease inhibitor and an antioxidant. The ability to obtain catalytically-active protein offers an understanding of the metabolic role of plant pyruvate kinase isozymes, and will lead ultimately to altering glycolysis and increasing levels of essential nutrients, such as carotenoids, tocopherol, protein or oils in plants.

**Methodology**

The following techniques were used to express cytosolic PK isozymes as refolded inclusion bodies or as soluble protein from large scale cultures, and to evaluate the enzymatic activity of the expressed protein.
Protein Expression in E.coli
Bacteria containing pET expression host system were plated and grown in the presence of antibiotic (kanamycin). Liquid cultures (2 mL) were inoculated from the plates then grown overnight and used to inoculate a 500mL culture. The larger culture was grown to late log phase, at which time 0.1 mM isopropyl β-D-1-thiogalactopyranoside (IPTG) was added to induce protein production. The culture was incubated overnight at 37° C, before harvesting the bacteria cells by centrifugation at 10,000 x g. Cells were lysed by incubation with nonionic detergent containing lysozyme. Insoluble inclusion bodies were isolated by centrifugation at 10,000 x g for 20 minutes, and were separated from cellular debris by several subsequent washings of the pellet with nonionic detergent, followed by centrifugation to recover the purified inclusion bodies. The soluble protein fraction was isolated by collecting the supernatant from the first centrifugation following cell lysis.

Figure 2. Pyruvate kinase catalyses the ADP-dependent conversion of PEP to pyruvate. Pyruvate kinase activity is assayed by spectrophotometrically monitoring the loss of NADH when coupled to lactate dehydrogenase.

Inclusion Body Resolubilization
Inclusion bodies containing three different pyruvate kinase isozymes were harvested by centrifugation after expression in E. coli and cell lysis. Inclusion bodies were solubilized with 0.3% N-lauroylsarcosine (detergent) in TRIS buffer (pH 8.0), followed by dialysis into TRIS buffer (pH 7.5), and MOPS buffer (pH 7.0) for detergent removal.

Purification of Soluble Protein
Soluble lysate was loaded onto a 5 mL Ni-agarose affinity column. After washing the column with buffer containing 50 mM imidazole, the soluble, his-tagged protein was eluted with 1 M imidazole (Figure 1). Soluble protein was assayed for activity after dialysis to remove the imidazole.

Production and Purification of Soluble Protein with THP and Protease Inhibitor
Cell pellets were lysed in the presence of the antioxidant tris(hydroxypropyl)phosphine (THP) and protease inhibitor. 100mM THP was added to the binding, wash, and elution buffer. The elution buffer containing 50mM imidazole, the soluble his-tagged protein was eluted with 100mM THP in addition to 1M imidazole. Soluble protein was assayed in the presence of 100mM THP for activity after dialysis to remove the imidazole.

SDS-PAGE Analysis
Purified soluble protein was visibly observed using sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE), where the PK was
visualized as a broad band at 60kDa, compared to the molecular weight marker (MW). The 8% gel (PIERCE biotechnology) at 100 volts and Coomassie blue staining was used for observing protein bands.

**Enzyme Assay**

PK activity was measured using a lactate dehydrogenase-coupled assay whereby the loss of NADH is spectrophotometrically monitored as pyruvate kinase-generated pyruvate is converted to lactate, recording the absorbance at 340nm (Figure 2). The enzyme assay consists of a cocktail made of 40mM phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP), 4mM nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NADH), 20mM adenosine diphosphate (ADP), 5 units of lactate dehydrogenase (LDH), assay buffer, and the refolded or purified PK. Positive and negative controls were used before testing the refolded and purified soluble PK. The negative control contained no enzyme, and the positive control contained commercially available rabbit muscle PK.

![Diagram of the enzymatic reaction](image)

**RESULTS**

To establish whether protein folded in vivo may have enzymatic activity, PK assays were performed on three different Arabidopsis PK isozymes that were expressed in E. coli and resolubilized from inclusion bodies. PK activity was not detected for any of the three resolubilized enzymes, whereas activity was observed when assaying commercially available rabbit muscle pyruvate kinase, indicating that assay conditions were capable of detecting activity, if any of the resolubilized proteins had been active (Figure 3). Because plastidial PK have been demonstrated to be heteromeric (multiple isozymes are required for enzymatic activity) (Andre et al., 2007), assays were also performed with mixtures of all three refolded isozymes and again, no activity was detected. Thus, the focus on this work was directed towards isolating soluble protein from the E. coli expression system.
Enzymatic Activity of Soluble Protein
To obtain sufficient amounts of soluble protein for measuring enzyme activity, induction experiments were performed with large scale (>500 mL) cultures, and highly-purified soluble protein was isolated by Ni-ion affinity chromatography (see Figure 1 on page X). However, assay of the purified soluble pyruvate kinase had no catalytic activity (activity with the rabbit muscle pyruvate kinase positive control was again positive). Each of the three isozymes, alone and in all possible combinations, were assayed and no combination demonstrated positive activity (Figure 4).
Figure 4. Enzyme assay testing refolded inclusion bodies for enzyme activity using different isozymes

The upper left panel in Figure 4 represents the change of absorbance due to the conversion of NADH to NAD+ when the assay was performed with commercially available rabbit muscle pyruvate kinase (positive control), the upper right panel represents the change of absorbance when the assay was performed without addition of enzyme (negative control), and the lower panel represents the change of absorbance when the assay was performed with the refolded inclusion bodies.

Because proteins can suffer oxidative or proteolytic damage during purification, the expression and purification of one of the three isozymes was repeated in the presence of the antioxidant THP and a protease inhibitor. In this case, assay of the purified protein revealed significant activity (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Enzyme assay testing purified soluble protein with THP and protease inhibitor for enzyme activity
DISCUSSION

Whether the protein is folded in vitro or in the presence of other isozymes does not seem to influence the lack of enzymatic activity of the expressed protein. However, the presence of the antioxidant and protease inhibitor did have an effect on enzymatic activity.

None of the pyruvate kinase isozymes resolubilized from inclusion bodies were catalytically active. Because some PKs have been demonstrated to be heteromeric, all possible combinations of the three isozymes also were assayed for catalytic activity, with negative results. It is now established with the experiments reported here that the soluble protein was undergoing oxidation or reducing reactions and protein degradation throughout the isolation, purification, or enzyme assay reactions. To establish whether the antioxidant or protease inhibitor had greater effect on enzymatic activity, further research needs to be done.

Efforts to obtain enzymatic activity are now focusing on repeating this experiment with and without the remaining active PK isozymes, to further analyze the inhibiting factors of soluble protein to remove other protein factors in the extract that may be inhibiting the activity.

LIMITATIONS

Although one cytosolic PK isozyme was found to be active, this experiment needs to be repeated with different isozymes that are all active. Additionally, other cytosolic isozymes need to be tested to further compare their difference in kinetic activity. Once kinetic variations are observed, it is possible to further analyze how each isozyme influences glycolysis differently to supply precursors in making nutritionally-important compounds, such as carotenoids, tocopherol, protein or oils in plants.

CONCLUSION

The current study tested for methods to obtain highly-purified, enzymatically active, Arabidopsis thaliana PK. The results indicate that soluble PK protein is only enzymatically active when purified from E. coli in the presence of the antioxidant THP and protease inhibitor. This protocol for expressing highly purified active PK isozymes can now be applied to analyze the differences in the kinetics of the cytosolic PK isozymes and understand the role each isozyme plays in regulating glycolysis. This understanding ultimately may allow the engineering of glycolysis to increase the levels of metabolic precursors to carotenoids, tocopherol, protein or oils to make nutritionally rich foods.
REFERENCES


Perceptions of Student Access and Success in the Field of Science: Exploring Educational Experiences of Mexican Descent College Students in Relation to Non-Mexican Descent Faculty in the Sciences

*Alma E. López Flores*

Dr. Julie Lopez Figueroa, Faculty Mentor

**Abstract**

The enrollment of Mexican descent students has significantly increased in higher education. Unfortunately, they continue to remain underrepresented, particularly in the area of science. The primary aim of this two-fold, qualitative study is to identify the possible social and academic factors that impact the representation of these students in the sciences. Through semi-structured interviews, this study examines the undergraduate experiences of current and former Mexican decent students and those of non-Mexican descent faculty, at a four-year institution in northern California. Ultimately, this paper proposes strategies and approaches that can increase the enrollment and completion rates of this particular ethnic-minority group of students in the field of science.

Research has demonstrated a direct correlation between understudied health issues specific to minority communities and the underrepresentation of ethnic minority professionals in these fields. Minority scientists are more likely to study minority issues than their majority counterparts (Nichols, 1997). They also have a general knowledge and understanding of their communities that facilitates the resolution of population-specific health problems (Committee for the Assessment of NIH Minority Research Training Programs, 2005). As a way to recruit minority students in science disciplines, Wilson (2007) suggests that top research universities hire more minority scientists to serve as role models to increase student persistence in pursuing a degree in the fields. More specifically, Lopatto (2007) believes the likelihood of minority students pursuing graduate school increases through participation in undergraduate research. Undergraduate research improves knowledge and understanding in science, students develop technical,
problem-solving, and presentation skills as well as the development of a professional self-confidence (Lopatto, 2004; Mabrouk & Peters, 2000).

Through role modeling and mentorship, Seymour and Hewitt (1997) conclude that minority students can better align, if not negotiate, important personal and cultural values of the family and community without disregarding them in order to succeed in science, math, and engineering careers. Research-related activities, positive faculty-student interaction and mentorship can increase students’ academic achievement, educational aspirations, student self-concept and persistence (Astin, 1997; Chickering, 1969; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Pascarella, 1985; Spady, 1970).

Consequently, if this minority force can play a significant role in this country’s competitiveness, especially for its increasing number in population, then we need to ask: What are factors limit and impede their advancement to keep pace with society’s demands? Nationally, the numbers of Latina/os obtaining degrees in higher education do not reflect their overall numbers in the population. Latina/os are expected to comprise one-fourth of all students in each educational level, by 2025 (White House Initiative, 2001). From the year 1990 to 2000, the Latina/o population increased 57.93% in the United States, making Mexican descent the largest sub-group, as it encompassed 52.94% of this increase (US Bureau of Census, 2001). Moreover, Ramirez and de la Cruz (2002) reported that in 2002 there was a total of 37.4 million Latina/os in the civilian, noninstitutional population of the United States, representing 13.3 percent of the total; among that Latina/o population 66.9 percent are of Mexican descent. The disproportionate gap of Latina/o student participation in higher education is evident when comparing the percentage of population increase and the percentage of higher education enrollment. The same degree of underrepresentation holds true in the area of science. Chapa and de la Rosa (2006) describe the higher education pipeline as a pipette. “Pipette” is a term used to characterize the decreasing rate of science degree attainment by Latina/o students, across the continuum of advanced degrees (e.g., bachelors, masters, and Ph.D.) in higher education.

The primary aim of this study is to identify possible social and academic factors accountable for today’s low number of Mexican descent college students graduating with biology and chemistry degrees at a northern California campus. More specifically, this study compares the academic experiences of current and former Mexican descent undergraduate biology majors to those of non-Mexican descent faculty in the sciences. For the purpose of this study “Mexican descent” is used as an inclusive term to refer to all people born in México or the United States, but whose parents or grandparents were born in México, [italics added] and are permanently living
in the United States (Allensworth, 1997), irrespective of their immigration generation. “Hispanic” and “Latina/o” are terms used interchangeably in this paper, as they are often used by other scholars in their work to refer to people from Latin-America are from of Spanish-speaking communities. Although these terms do not recognize the diverse ethnic groups within the American continent; the term “Latina/o” is meant to include all persons of Latin American origin or descent, irrespective of language, race or culture (Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987; Laden, (2004).

Undergraduate Student and Faculty Profile in CSUS
California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) is composed of African Americans, American Indians, Asians, Filipina/os, Pacific Islanders, Southeast Asians, Hispanics, Euro-Americans, international students, and those classified as other or unreported. To emphasize the purpose of this study, Table 1 provides figures on the undergraduate student profile of Hispanics, Euro-Americans, and students in the other or unreported category. It is important to note that many Latina/o students prefer to mark “other/unreported” because they refuse to identify themselves as Hispanic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Undergraduate Student – Profile</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Other/Unreported</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22582</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: California State University, Sacramento, FactBook

Figure 1 portrays the number of students graduating with a biology and chemistry degrees, from 2002 to 2005. Vividly, it illustrates the Latina/o student underrepresentation in this institution’s divisions of science, as these degree numbers are compared to the overall CSUS Latina/o student population.
Theoretical Framework Guiding the Study

Social capital plays a major role in the success of minority students because connections, networking, mentoring, and peer relationships provide greater access to academic information and opportunities within institutions of higher education. Yosso (2006) noted that there is an assumption that students of color lack such capital for success, placing them at a disadvantage. Institutional agents, academic advisors, faculty, and student affair administrators may facilitate or hinder a student’s access to opportunities because they are most likely to assess student’s potential and refer them to opportunities accordingly (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbush, 1995). Historically, social capital has been utilized by minorities to maneuver through the system and to turn around and give the information and resources gained through the navigation process to social networks of people and community resources (Yosso, 2006). Given this framework, previous research on the encounters Latina/os face in the sciences will be provided, followed by a brief discussion on the aspect of multicultural education and Hispanic-serving institutions, and the importance of having faculty of color as mentors and advisors. To understand the significance of Mexican descent student representation in the area of science, a set of case studies is provided with students’ and non-Mexican descent faculty’s narratives and encounters. Finally this study concludes by discussing strategies that can create equitable conditions for teaching and learning in higher education.

Literature Review

Institutional barriers mediate minorities’ quality of academic success; such constraints include inadequate financial aid, lack of institutional resources, and hostile campus climate (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 1999; Hurtado &
Carter, 1997; Loo & Rolinson, 1986). Smedley, Myers, and Harrell (1993) discuss the different levels of stress that minority students experience in higher education. Social climate stresses occur when there are few students and not enough professors of the students’ same ethnicity in classes, and when few courses involve issues relevant to student’s ethnic group. Poor academic performance expectations from students of an ethnic minority by white students and faculty, as well as the lack of concern and support for the needs of minority students by the university, also cause social climate stresses. Interracial stresses occur when minority students have negative relationships between different ethnic groups at the university, when the culture of their campus is white-oriented, when there is a lack of unity and support among members of the same race/ethnicity, and when they try to maintain their ethnic identity in their university. Another way to frame this issue is “acting-white,” meaning that students internalize behaviors corresponding to a majority group at the cost of losing their cultural identity (Gonzalez-Espada, 2004; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Racism and discrimination stresses are experienced when minority students are treated rudely, unfairly, or stereotypically because of their ethnicity. Minority students also have to prove their abilities to others by working twice as hard, which is the case for most minority students due to the lack of a strong math and science foundation from their high school (Loo & Rolinson, 1986).

Compared to second generation students, first generation and transfer students from community colleges to four-year institutions face a higher number of institutional obstacles. These obstacles include bureaucratic hurdles, confusing choices, student-initiated guidance, limited counselor availability, poor advice from staff, delayed detection of costly mistakes, and poor handling of conflicting demands (Laden, 2004). Loo and Rolison (1986) also noted that minority students rely on people of their own ethnicity for social support as a result of the distrust between Euro-American students and faculty and minority students. Such distrust further intensifies the student’s alienation. In some ways, the presence of stressors expose the lack of capacity institutions have to address diverse academic needs that are well beyond cultural congruency and more about cultural and academic responsiveness.

More often than not, colleges and universities fail to shift to a multicultural perspective from the monocultural framework and the Eurocentric cultural norm that frames its traditions and practices. A student of color may feel perceived as unworthy in a predominantly white classroom, marginalized, and even invisible, when faculty and student interactions remain unquestioned. Examining this relationship is fundamental in understanding minority students’ level of integration, thus their representation in the sciences. One
approach to examine this relationship comes from the critical multicultural theory through which class, race, gender characteristics, and power are analyzed (Kincheloe, 1996).

**Integrating a Multicultural Perspective in Higher Education**

Multicultural education calls for all aspects of education to be continuously examined, critiqued, reconsidered, and transformed, in order to teach all students, regardless of their background (Gorski, 2002). Bensimon and Tierney’s (1993) definition of multiculturalism is a way of understanding the commonalities and differences between diverse groups and using those characteristics to create alliances, within those groups. Rendon (1999) explains that this philosophy is humanistic and has faculty, administrators, and staff who themselves represent different cultures; hence, they would be able to give the students a safe and welcoming environment that also contributes to academic success. Multicultural education strives to provide all students with equity education, curriculum, and instrumental strategies so that each student’s background, learning style, experiences, skills, talents, and language proficiency are purposefully considered (Banks & McGee-Banks, 1997; Bennett, 2001).

Sadly, undergraduate science courses are popularly known for ineffective teaching styles and methods, oversized classes, grading on a curve, and for focusing more on memorization rather than developing critical thinking (Romer, 2002; Seymour & Hewitt, 1997). Seymour and Hewitt also point out that students are “filtered out” in introductory science courses, also known as “gatekeeper courses”. A study conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in 1991, suggested that the biggest problem for underrepresented groups was the lack of a nurturing environment, where the prevailing mentality is dog-eat-dog and faculty members worry more about grants than grading (Larsen, 1995). The reconstruction of an educational setting that reflects the democratic ideals of equality, justice, and freedom and along with nurturing educational inclusiveness is highly encouraged by critical multiculturalists. With this approach of critically teaching and learning, minority students overcome obstacles and barriers that aid them to succeed in the field of science.

**Hispanic-Serving Institutions**

Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs) play a major role in educating and increasing the numbers of Latina/o students in higher education (Laden, 2004). Generally, HSIs are two- and four-year colleges and universities that serve a large number of students who self-identify as Hispanic or Latina/o; these colleges provide access and degree attainment, particularly at the community college level. HSIs award larger percentages of associate,
bachelors, masters, first professional, and doctoral degrees to Latina/o students than non-HSIs; in 1999, 30.7% associate, 30.9% bachelors, 19.8% master’s, 16.8% first-professional, and 12.9% doctoral degrees, were awarded to Latina/os enrolled in HSIs than those enrolled in non-HSIs (Stearns, Watanabe, & Snyder, 2002). HSIs offer a variety of academic and student support programs and holistic approaches that are specifically designed to raise Latina/o students’ aspirations and increase their retention rates.

Table 2 illustrates that, despite higher numbers of enrollment and graduation rates in HSI than in non-HSI, particularly in biological sciences, the participation and completion rates of Latina/os continue to lag behind the dominant student group (Laden, 2004); thus, greater work must be done to exam the educational pathways of Mexican descent students in the sciences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic %</th>
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<td>Associate</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
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<td>932</td>
<td>848</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor’s</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stearns, Watanabe, and Snyder, 2002

Most of the students attending HSI were first-generation college students and from either low- or lower-middle class families. This factor implies that in order to provide access to these students, there needs to be a sense of inclusiveness and a responsive, comprehensive curriculum, as well as quality transfer programs and articulation agreement (Laden, 2004).

**Latina/o Faculty Representation**

Beyond HSI institutions Latina/o students receive little exposure to faculty members from their own cultural backgrounds. Statistics reported by the National Science Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation reveal a gap between the number of minority students earning undergraduate and doctoral degrees in science versus the number of minority professors holding faculty jobs in that area of study (Wilson, 2007). In 1996, Latina/os nationally represented 10.3% of all undergraduates, and Latina/o faculty constituted only 2.6% of all higher education faculty (National Center for Education Statistics, 1999). Recruiting Hispanic faculty trained in biomedical sciences and basic and clinical research as educators in medicine and other health professions is a key concern among a group of HSI presidents, chancellors, and CEOs according to De Los Santos (2003). This is a concern because Latina/o and other faculty of color are more likely to offer emotional support, encouragement, raise students’ aspirations, and are also more willing to serve as formal and informal advisors, mentors, and sponsors (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000; Turner & Myers, 2000). The difficulty
in recruiting credentialed minority faculty, particularly Latinas, to teach in the areas of mathematics, science, and engineering is due to limited resources and budget demands within higher education institutions, not excluding HSIs.

**Methodology**

A qualitative approach was utilized to conduct one-hour, in depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews that provided narratives of the experiences that Mexican descent students encounter as science majors in higher education. The participants were recruited using purposive sampling and nominations from a four-year institution in northern California. Faculty in the chemistry department were also recruited and interviewed in the same manner as the student participants with the intention of obtaining their perspective as undergraduate science students themselves, and as current professors teaching multi-ethnic student populations. The researcher’s objective is to use both the students’ and faculty’s perspectives to identify the possible social and academic factors that impact the representation of these students in the field of science with the ultimate goal of proposing possible solutions to better understand the needs of Mexican descent students and facilitate their road to a successful career in science.

**Participants**

There were a total of 12 participants in this study; eight female, Mexican descent, students and four male, Euro-American, chemistry professors. The student participants included two former and six current undergraduate biology majors. The former students switched their area of study to ethnic studies with a minor in sociology and to government with a minor in English. A total of 13 professors were contacted; five pertaining to biology and eight to chemistry. Nine professors replied; six chemistry and three biology professors. Out of the six chemistry professors only two agreed to participate in in-person interviews, two other agreed to answer a set of questions via email, and the remaining two chemistry professors were not available for either an interview or email questionnaire. The three biology professors stated their ability to participate in the future. All identities were kept confidential.

**Procedure**

At the beginning of the study, the purpose and importance of this study was explained to the participants; they were also informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they would be able to withdraw at any point during the study without penalty. There was no form of inducement or incentive offered for their participation. All participants were provided written informed consent forms outlining the ethical guidelines
and procedures of the study, and were told that signing the form signified that they agreed to be part of the study. To protect the participants’ right to privacy, their names were not disclosed in any written or verbal context; instead, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant. Direct quotes, from the participants who gave their written consent, were used from the written and audio-taped interviews, in which careful notes and observations were taken throughout the interview, including observed facial expressions and body movements.

Participants were encouraged to freely answer the questions and to skip any that they did not feel comfortable answering. The researcher agreed to return or destroy all participants’ audio tapes used in their interviews following the final submission of the paper or in the case that the participant decided to withdraw from the study. The place and the time of the interviews were left to the convenience of the participants.

**FINDINGS**

The lack of access to information in degree attainment in relation to careers in medicine directed the student participants to declare biology as their major. Some of the students began their undergraduate studies as nursing majors, later switching to biology, not knowing that they could major in a non-science field and still apply to medical school, as long as they met the pre-requisites. This information was exposed to them three or four semesters after being in the university, as it was in Melin’s case, who would have majored in English if she had known this information earlier in her academic career.

**Student-Professor Interaction**

For the most part, the students took chemistry courses with the same professors, but in different semesters. The student participants concurred that they felt intimidated by their chemistry professors, thus limiting their confidence in seeking help because they did not feel comfortable approaching them. The students believe that the professors were qualified in terms of being experts in their area of study, but were unable to teach the material to all students. They also found them inaccessible, even during their office hours. Some students, like Cuca, preferred to email her professor rather than ask him directly for help, but even emails became an issue because he would not respond to them. Melin recalls her organic chemistry professor favoring those students who knew the material very well, mainly Euro-American students, and those who had high grades in his class. Melin, who was a B/C average student, was belittled and felt “dumb,” due to the body language and facial expressions of her professor when she asked him for help. This experience was enough for Melin to look for help elsewhere.
Student participants rated the biology courses somewhat better; the professors were more approachable than those in chemistry, with the exception of a couple. In Angela’s cancer biology class, the professor made it clear to his students that if they had questions, those questions better be important. He demanded that the students have a good idea of what they wanted to talk about, especially if it was in regards to a question on an exam, and expected the students to research their arguments before seeing him. Although, the professor was supposed to be a resource for the students, his standpoint closed the doors for Angela; she could not approach him due to his intimidating persona. Alondra also encountered this same professor but as an ineffective advisor. He advised Alondra in taking the necessary and required courses to graduate, but never counseled her with relevant information for the potential career she wanted to pursue. Alondra also found her general biology professor to not be culturally sensitive, “she had a lot of prejudice against people of color,” states Alondra. A perfect example Alondra shared was when the professor advised the students to vote, one of the students commented that some students could not vote because they were not citizens of this country. The professor’s response was, “Well, that’s too bad, that is why you come to America, otherwise you shouldn’t be here.” Alondra took this unnecessary comment very personally because she was not a citizen of this country. Alondra’s perception of the professor was that if she knew her immigration status, it would put her at a disadvantage in the class.

True and Pseudo Help and Support
Several student participants took a pre-chemistry course and found the instructor to be extremely helpful. Pati mentions how he would sacrifice his weekends to help the students out in understanding the material. The general chemistry laboratories were taught by teaching assistants (TAs) and the adjunct classes were taught by other undergraduate students. This did not, in any way, better the situation for this minority sub-group. Erika, for instance, found the TA to be extremely unfair and, in a sense, discriminatory towards her. He failed to acknowledge her every time she would raise her hand to ask a question, but would quickly help other students who were for the most part were Euro-American and Asian. Erika was afraid to confront him because she believed he would do anything in his power to fail her from the class; she did not believe it would make a difference if she said or did something about it, except get her in more trouble. Erika decided to switch her major after her second year as a biology student, specifically after her experience in the laboratory class.
In terms of the adjuncts classes, Erika, Alondra, and Melin agreed about receiving little or no help because there was not much being taught by the facilitators. Euro-American students in the class would form small cliques, just as they did in the laboratory sections; they were very hesitant and gave limited and unclear responses when they were asked for help. Angela perceives this as a class issue, “Those in the upper class are more competitive and they see only for themselves; they have a mentality of being better than anyone else, versus the middle class, whom tend to be more ‘cool.””

Science Educational Equity (SEE) Program
The Science Educational Equity (SEE) Program was designed in 1986, to serve a population of minority students that face social, economic, and educational barriers in their science career pathways. SEE aims to create a learning community and improve the accessibility to resources and information to students as they share their knowledge and provide personal as well as moral support to each other. The program offers a study room with a couple of computers and free printing for SEE students only. Due to the limited space, the study room was always crowded and noisy, thus, Sandra Maria, Alondra, Cuca, and Pati only made use of the printing resources because their study skills required a quiet environment.

Even though the program offers great opportunities, such as conferences, adjunct classes, and major advising, it also has a couple of drawbacks. The first drawback is the ineffective outreach to students; students in this present study did not hear about the SEE program until they were in their third semester in college. In Angela’s case, she did not hear about the program until after her third year and a half. All of the student participants formed part of the program, except for Angela and Erika. Erika saw no point in applying because she had decided to switch to a different area of study. Although the staff in the SEE office was friendly, Angela and Sandra Maria felt unwelcome by other students in the SEE study room.

Student Challenges
Every study participant doubted their participation in this field of science. Many were discouraged by the lack of help and support, the amount of work load and extra effort they were putting in their studies without seeing any positive outcome. Advisors who were professors themselves discouraged some of these students by advising them to consider other majors. For instance, they recommended students to switch from pre-med to nursing because they believed medical school could be very intense and hard for the students.
Faculty Undergraduate Experiences
Whether it was an un-manipulated interest test, a high school teacher who made chemistry fun, or whether he lived in a chemistry-oriented environment because his father was a chemist, Drs. Wilson, Smith, and Hedger, respectively, decided to become chemists.

The institutions these three professors attended as undergraduate students were private universities, with the exception of Dr. Hedger who attended a community college and then transferred to the four-year public institution, California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo. Dr. Wilson attended the University of Redlands in Southern California and Dr. Smith did his undergraduate work in Carnegie Mellon University because, as he stated, “it had a superb reputation for computer science and mathematics, which was what I intended to major in, until finding my way back to chemistry in my sophomore year.” Lastly, Dr. Rhangel attended Holy Cross College in England because of its quality education and short distance from his home. The institutions these professors attended were not diverse in student population; Dr. Smith is the only one who recalls having a large number of Asian nationalities represented on campus, but not in the division of chemistry.

Academic, Mentoring, and Social Support
Dr. Wilson had a full scholarship and formed part of accelerated classes taught to essentially small classes of 20 students; making his classmates a great support group and allowing for a more personal student-professor relationship; he also worked as a teaching assistant, grading on the side. The relationships of the students with faculty and staff in the chemistry department were very close; Dr. Smith met the department chair and frequently discussed with him how to juggle his schedule to complete a double major in a four-year period. Dr. Hedger was lucky to have one of his chemistry instructors guide and advise him as to how to discipline and apply himself in order to succeed as an undergraduate chemistry major and in the course of his career. Dr. Hedger academically eased his studies by using his networks; although he preferred to work alone, he always had friends, classmates, and of course his own professors to help him whenever he needed help in solving a problem.

Professors’ Undergraduate Research Experience and Challenges
As undergraduate students, the professors in their classes stressed the importance of research and, thus, directed them into conducting research during the summer. They were provided with offices, their own desks, and keys to the science building, therefore, having year-round accessibility. Conducting research significantly impacted their career decisions. Overall,
the professors felt they did not have any challenges as undergraduate students. Dr. Smith and Dr. Hedger, on the other hand, found their biggest challenge to be adjusting to the level of work required in college versus the level of work expected in high school.

Faculty’s Perception of Students
One of the perceptions that Dr. Wilson has of today’s undergraduate students is that they are not as serious about their education as he believes they should be. His conclusion is based on the comparison of his undergraduate institution to the institution at which he is currently teaches, assuming that because education at CSU, Sacramento is not as high as it was at his institution, students do not find it as disastrous as they otherwise would to repeat courses. Dr. Wilson states, “There are some students in my class that are passing time, they shouldn’t be in there, they should be doing something else. I don’t think some of them are not quite ready…they should think about maybe not going to college for a while until they are ready to do it.” Dr. Wilson is aware that he has a reputation of being hard, but fair. In other words, he expects the students to perform at a certain level or they do not get an A or a B. He commented that he tells his students that grades are not a strict percentage, that instead they float based on the student who has a reasonably high grade in class. Professor Rhangel, on the other hand, recognizes the unfairness of comparing his experience with that of today’s students because of the apparent difference in institutions. He notices that students are less prepared than students 20 years ago, mainly with math and study skills.

Dr. Hedger finds that students’ main distractions are cell phones and video games, that they lack respect for the time of academic course work and for their professors. He believes that due to the quantity of work students have, they display their frustrations easily and become less civil. Dr. Hedger expresses that the level of expectations students have of their professors is out of line, “It seems as if they want a personal tutor, but they don’t consider that I have to serve 250 students.” He sees those students as too babied and lacking effort on their part and views himself as a learning facilitator and mediator who makes learning easier, but not someone that can do all of the work for the students.

Accessibility and Faculty’s Teaching Style/Philosophy
For students taking general chemistry, they can obtain help in the “Help Office” where they can always find a graduate student or professor assistant to help them out, between nine in the morning to two in the afternoon. Drs. Wilson, Hedger, and Rhangel believe students do not visit their professors during office hours as often as they should. These professors express that
they make themselves available through emails, when their office hours contradict the students’ school and work schedules.

In terms of their teaching philosophy, Dr. Wilson articulated, “I try to present every point in a clear and understandable way that allows students to ask questions. I am willing to help them as long as I see they are putting in sufficient effort on their own part, which implies them reading the notes and doing their homework.” This is what worked for him as an undergraduate student; therefore, he believes that using this method of teaching is the best way for most students to get a good grasp of the material. Dr. Smith’s philosophy has been influenced by his strongest student experiences, best and worst. He has adopted many of the practices from his professors whose courses he enjoyed and learned the most from. Although he is still in the process of developing his teaching philosophy because he has been teaching for only two years, his principal goal in teaching chemistry is to instill in his students a through knowledge that reaches beyond memorization to application, associated with problem solving skills as well as appreciation of the subject material. Dr. Smith gained additional ideas through a “Preparing Future Faculty” course he took prior to beginning his pedagogy at CSU, Sacramento, in which he became more aware of the diversity of students, their backgrounds and their different learning styles. Dr. Hedger prefers to have students approach learning as a whole and so that they begin to make connections among individual topics being taught. Through this standpoint he tries to develop critical thinking skills where students move beyond knowledge comprehension and instead learn about critical analysis, evaluations, and higher level thinking. Dr. Hedger mentioned that he approaches teaching in away that is natural to him.

Undergraduate Research Mentorship and the Culture of Science
Dr. Wilson sees research as a form of student retention, stating, “Most of the students that get into research really get into it, there are a few students that are having conflict between living and surviving and that might prevent them from sticking with it, but if they actually do research then that definitely helps them keeps them here.” Dr. Smith echoes Dr. Wilson in that through research students not only get a chance to know their faculty members more closely but also apply what they have learned in their courses. He encourages students to conduct research by talking to them when they demonstrate a potential interest; he displays research posters to heighten their interest and directs them to other faculty members if their research interest lies outside of his area of expertise. Dr. Smith, on the other hand, is interested in researching the best practices for teaching chemistry, especially as students demonstrate their difference in learning styles.
All of the professors had a very distinct viewpoint of what the culture of science meant for them. Dr. Wilson, sarcastically, responded, “I don’t think that there is a culture of science really, unless you are talking about nerds. What comes to my mind is that there is some cult of a little group of people in science, which is not the case. Well, it depends on the level as a professor, if you are a professor at Harvard or Berkeley, then you eat, drink, and breathe science. I don’t choose to do that, I prefer to do other things.” Dr. Wilson, though, agrees that science is a “survival of the fittest environment,” if a student goes to a high school that emphasizes science and mathematics, the student has a big advantage. In Dr. Hedger’s perspective, the culture of science belong to those who are very curious; curiosity is the common denominator to find out if a student can do science.

**Faculty’s Challenges and Advice**

Dr. Wilson recalls that 30 years ago class sizes were maxed out at 30 students, but today that figure has risen to 80 students per classroom. Due to this increase in students, professors have adjusted their exams. Dr. Wilson used to administer his exams in such a way that students could receive partial credit, using short-answer questions. With larger class sizes, he has implemented multiple choice exams to make grading easier and meeting deadlines to turn in grades, especially for finals exams, possible.

Professor Rhangel’s main advice to students is to work hard and not be afraid to ask for help; to identify their weaknesses and begin to strengthen them as soon as possible. Dr. Smith recommends always attending class and keeping up with assignments, to work hard and devote proper time to the course. He expects students to see him when they have questions, instead of just letting things go. In science overall, he believes students should develop the proper foundation (i.e., good coursework, good mathematical and communication skills to get involved with research be creative, and find the area that they are personally excited about).

Dr. Hedger’s advice to students is to “choose two.” He presents to them “The Triangle” as part of his class instruction, every semester. The triangle is divided into three parts: school, work, and social life/family. Students are then advised to pick two sides of the triangle. If the student chooses to go to school and work, then that student should not have much of a social life or family time. If the student decides to have a social life and work, then that student is not going to have enough time for school, lastly, if the student decides to go to school and have a social life, then that student had better not work, in order to be a successful science student. Choosing two and being able to negotiate time for sleep are the key components, in Dr. Hedger’s eyes.
DISCUSSION

Clearly there are differences in the professors’ and the students’ undergraduate experiences. The background and values of the professors, the type of institution they attended, and the quality of education they received is very distinct from that of the students’. The students did not have the social capital, the networks, faculty and peer support and resources that the professors had, thus, their experiences as science students were more demanding.

Mexican descent college students cannot neglect one of the sides of the triangle, Dr. Hedger had previously mentioned; education, family, and work are all interrelated and essential to each other. Therefore, students find themselves balancing out an agenda that demands triple the time and effort the professors had to consider as undergraduate students. Some of the professors seem to undervalue the academic achievement and progress of this particular ethnic-minority group of students and fail to execute their role as institutional agents of the university. Faculty has the capacity and ability to transmit or negotiate the transmission of institutional resources and opportunities in the university, such as research and academic information, programs, and opportunities (Stanton-Salazar & Dorribus, 1995).

There is a huge contradiction between the professors’ perceptions of their students and what the students perceive from their professors. Professors believe they are providing the students, as a whole, with the necessary instruction and resources for them to succeed in their courses. Mexican descent students, though, experience the opposite; they feel ignored, undervalued, and some confront a language barrier. Oftentimes professors give examples to students to make a point in regards to a concept being taught, using certain American expressions not familiar to Mexican descent students. As a result, the students do not grasp the concept(s) to the fullest. Consequently, the students who ask their professors for help report being discouraged in pursuing a science career because they are expected to know what was “taught” in class. In the end, no clarification is made to the student’s question and the students get discouraged in further seeking faculty for help. When professors perceive the students ambivalence in help seeking as a lack of effort on the students behalf, the students also began to internalize those viewpoints, therefore increasing their social stigma. It is then fair to say, that non-colored faculty do not and cannot understand the experiences of minority students. For this reason the presence of faculty of color is fundamental.

The way in which professors present themselves to students can also determine the level of confidence students have towards them. Sadly, the
intimidating personality students perceive from their professors can inhibit them from interacting with faculty. By applying the teaching style that best worked for the professors is a faulty pedagogical practice, however some professors acknowledge that such teaching styles my not be effective for all students. Notwithstanding, they have not devised a way to assure the needs of all the students they serve.

Moreover, students and professors perceive false cues presumed by both parties in terms of prioritizing education, through unspoken words and misinterpreted behavior. The professors were described as culturally insensitive and gave less than supportive advice to the students, but they can become more effective student advocates if they provided access to information in an approachable manner, as it is the role of a true mentor. To make grading easier, professors accommodated their exams, but one thing to consider is that test taking skills is a crucial means for success, especially if “success” is defined by high scores in exams. Students can be knowledgeable on the material being tested, but not knowing how to tackle the exams can be devastating.

Some of the implications higher education institutions can implement to better serve its student body include having student affairs administrators consider the multiple social experiences and implement mentoring and research programs, promote the retention of faculty of color, and diversity education. Tutoring, science exposure, role models and mentors that can provide a nurturing environment, especially for fist-generation college students, has a great impact on minority students. It is crucial for universities as a whole to be able to acknowledge that negative and culturally insensitive attitudes and behaviors affect all incumbents in the university, and affects the students’ academic performance, satisfaction, and retention. Therefore, faculty members in particular should assess their interactions in the classrooms and monitor their delivery and cultural sensitivity while not minimizing the role of presenting curriculum and learning experience, and be held accountable for their actions in the classroom. Faculty promotion guidelines should include evaluations based, not only on demonstrated knowledge of their area of expertise, but on cultural sensitivity and multicultural competency (Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002). University administrators, staff, faculty, and students need to collaborate and effectively communicate with each other for the institution as a whole to understand the needs and expectations of their students of color, and to meet their needs.
LIMITATIONS

There are a number of limitations to be noted. First, data collection was difficult to obtain because the researcher, herself an undergraduate biology student, had a great deal of difficulty outreaching to her former and prospective professors in her field of study, hence, the lack of professor participation did not allow for proper data analysis. Second, the purposeful sampling technique confines the generalization of this study’s results to Mexican descent science majors because of the limited representation of ethnic minority voices in this study, and its findings can apply only to this particular institution, CSU, Sacramento, where the study was conducted. Third, there was no statistical data available on undergraduate students conducting research at this university, which was intended to be used to analyze its impact on students’ academic achievements.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this research study was to identify and bring about an understanding of the experiences of Mexican descent undergraduate students in the sciences with the objective of identifying possible factors that affect their representation in this field. The researcher concludes accountability structures and leadership must move in the direction of centrally incorporating discussions of diversity. In other words, asking and supporting faculty to create more inclusive curriculum (Figueroa & Garcia, 2005). Furthermore, students should not conform to the current academic cultural system and infrastructure within the sciences. Instead the system should be reconstructed and adjusted by adopting strategies, conditions, and structures that meet the need of different cultural contexts among students, particularly in the area of science. Otherwise, Mexican descent students’ negative experiences in the field of science will continue to be dismissed or unrecognized by faculty, staff, administrators and other students who uphold the problem students of color face, thus, they will remain underrepresented in the sciences. It is, then, worth stating that, in higher education, degree granting is a measure of accountability.
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The Relationship between Television Crime Programs and Students’ Decisions to Pursue Criminal Justice Degrees

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the influences of television crime programs and college students’ decisions to pursue criminal justice degrees, while factoring in the degree to which gender, ethnicity, and class identification affects their decisions. This study examines these relationships in context of the CSI Effect. Forty-three students at a northern California university were surveyed, and four students participated in a follow-up interview. The research contributes to the limited body of studies examining the CSI Effect on students entering criminal justice programs.

A psychological phenomenon in the criminal justice field is the “CSI Effect,” a term used to describe mass media affects on jury behavior (Tyler, 2006). Researchers have studied juror behavior in order to determine if there is a relationship between jurors’ frequent exposure to television programming that includes forensic science and juror behavior in deciding court cases (Dowler, Fleming, & Muzzatti, 2006; Schweitzer & Saks, 2007; Stevens, 2008). Schweitzer and Saks (2007) report the CSI Effect affects the functionality of court trials in two ways: (a) by burdening the prosecution with greater expectations of forensic science information, and (b) by expecting the defense team to adhere to an exaggerated faith in the capability and reliability of the forensic sciences. The perception is that the CSI Effect is changing the way the court system is addressing criminal cases (Stevens, 2008).

For the purpose of this study, the CSI Effect is examined for its ability to influence college students’ decisions in the areas of forensic science and criminal justice studies overall (Podlas, 2006). An important question in this study is: How the CSI Effect affected the academic discipline of criminal justice overall?
Research indicates that people are affected by television crime programs regardless of demographic factors, such as age, race, education, or economic background (Dowler, Fleming, & Muzzatti, 2006). Educated professionals who are experts in the court system, such as judges and defense attorneys, are increasingly infatuated with the objective standard of utilizing forensic science evidence to argue court cases (Stevens, 2008). Forensic evidence is used primarily as convincing evidence to capture and sway a jury’s attention (Stevens, 2008). Jurors of various ages, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds are found to acquire higher expectations of the court system and are more understanding of the court processes when exposed to television crime programming in high dosages (Dowler, Fleming, & Muzzatti, 2006). In addition, jurors who take in a higher dosage of television crime programming (specifically forensic show programs) are found to be more savvy about scientific terminology, and better able to understand scientific concepts when presented in court by forensic experts (Dartnall & Good-Delahunty, 2006; Schweitzer & Saks, 2007). A study conducted by Schweitzer and Saks (2007) indicates that jurors who have consistent exposure to forensic science television programming were found to have a better understanding of the duties and tasks that forensic scientists completed to get the forensic results, and as a direct result were more critical of the evidence presented at trial (Schweitzer & Saks, 2007). Additionally, jurors expect to be presented with more forensic evidence in court cases before issuing a guilty or non-guilty verdict, according to a study conducted by Dartnall and Good-Delahunty (2006).

The Effect of Crime-related Programming on College Students
Tontodonato (2006) reports that exposure to crime-related television programming increases the interests of students wanting to pursue a criminal justice major, and as a result, criminal justice programs have increased at college campuses (Tontodonato, 2006). The rise in popularity and interest in criminal justice careers is consistent with the increased popularity of television crime programming, especially crime show dramas (Coigan, 2002; Creamer, 2008). Over the last 10 years, a rise in enrollment in forensic science college programs directly correlates with viewer popularity of forensic crime programs (Creamer, 2008). Twenty-five years ago, scholars noted a similar correlation between increased enrollment in criminal justice programs and crime-related programming (Tebbett et al., 2007). The popularity of the hit television show Law & Order in the late 1980s, and into the early 1990s contributed to an influx of applicants applying to law school (Podlas, 2006). Popular court shows such as Judge Wapner’s, The People’s
Court contributed to the increase of cases brought before small claims court during the same time period, and also accounted for an increase in the number of students aspiring to become judges (Podlas, 2006). Interests in forensic science college programs has increased since the premiere and rising popularity of the highly successful forensic crime show, Crime Scene Investigators; CSI (Podlas, 2006; Creamer, 2008).

This interest impacts applicants across ethnic and gender lines. The number of ethnically diverse applicants, as well as women applicants to criminal justice programs have steadily increased over the past 20 years (CSUS, 2007; Creamer, 2008; Gabbidon et al., 2003). Specifically, women are entering forensic science college programs at a faster rate than men (CSUS, 2007; Creamer, 2008). Ethnic minorities that were once portrayed only as villains in early crime programs have now become an integral part of crime fighting teams in modern crime programs (Monk-Turner, Martinez, Holbrook, & Harvey, 2007). Positive portrayals of ethnic minorities in crime programs positively contribute to the increase of minority student enrollment in criminal justice programs across the nation (Creamer, 2008). A study looking at motivational factors for African American students entering into criminal justice programs at traditionally black colleges found an impressive pattern of students enrolling in criminal justice programs due to the presentation of opportunities to affect social change from within law enforcement agencies (Gabbidon et al., 2003; Penn & Gabbidon, 2007).

**Devaluing the CSI Effect**

Arguments that devalue television crime programming effect on younger peoples’ interest in entering into criminal justice programs cannot be ignored. A study conducted by Moon and Hwang (2004) found that students overwhelmingly believe that a career in law enforcement is more stable and socially acceptable than other careers. A sizeable number of students entering criminal justice programs have some experience with the criminal justice system or are currently employed in the criminal justice field (Hall, Ventura, & Lambert, 2007). In addition, socialization through family and peers are significant variables in introducing prospective students to the discipline (Hall et al., 2007). These studies suggest that factors, such as career stability and social acceptance, may be significant enough to discount the CSI Effect’s relevance in students’ choosing to become criminal justice majors.

It can also be argued that the entire scope of the CSI Effect is over-exaggerated in the reporting of media influences on mainstream society, specifically its affect on jurors. Taylor (2006) equates the CSI Effect to being a myth rather than an actual reality. Podlas (2006) agrees by stating that the
findings of the CSI Effect were found to be “definitive” rather than a reality (p. 104). In addition, Goodman-Delahunty and Tait’s (2006) findings suggest other significant factors should be considered when looking at how people come to conclusions rather than relying on crime programming.

Although, not heavily documented in the television media, written accounts of the true nature of the inner-workings of the criminal justice system has indicated that television crime programs may misrepresent reality (Creamer, 2008). A news article appearing in the Sacramento Bee by Creamer (2008) notes the vast distance of misrepresentation in forensic programs presented on television, “From Scarpetta to ‘CSI,’ notes that forensics have gone glam, although the reality is anything but”. There is the assertion that, in real life, the criminal justice system works in a less exciting way. Crime investigation work is described as tedious and oftentimes the work leads to frustration, as there are sometimes no immediate conclusions as portrayed in television programs (Stevens, 2008). Television crime programs provide an image of forensic science as reliable while a quote from a USA Today article states, “(television) programs also foster…the mistaken notion that criminal science is fast and infallible and always gets its man” (Willing, 2004). However, forensic science in the real world faces skepticism because of its inability to standardize processes and provide the necessary results to convict criminals, which then affects the credibility of forensic scientists (Stevens, 2008). This limitation supports the ideal role of forensic science in solving court cases, something television programs usually do not address.

**Methodology**

The emphasis of this study is to analyze how the relationship of television crime programs relates to students becoming criminal justice majors. Specifically, the researcher wanted to look at the positive influence of television crime programs on students’ choices of academic majors. In addition, another goal is to look at how gender, ethnicity, and class backgrounds helped students arrive at their academic goals. The question of this research in context of the CSI Effect is to see whether television crime programming affects students’ overall decisions to become criminal justice majors rather than other variables such as gender, ethnicity, and class identification. This study utilized a 12-item survey and oral interviews to collect data.

**Human Subjects**

Upper division criminal justice students were the target for this study. Due to the structure of the criminal justice program on the campus of the selected university, junior and senior level students were selected for participation in
the study because they have progressed through four pre-major courses and an assessment to declare their major, which signifies a thorough thought process and commitment to the criminal justice program.

Sixty registered criminal justice program students were asked to participate in this study. Forty-three students agreed to participate in the survey portion of the study. Out of forty-three students who participated in the survey, four students decided to participate in the oral interview. No compensation was awarded for participation in the study.

Survey Instrument

A 12–item written survey instrument was administered to students in three upper division criminal justice research methodology courses. The survey consisted of questions asking about students’ television viewing habits, experience dealing with the criminal justice system, and overall influences in choosing a criminal justice major. The survey took approximately five minutes to complete.

The survey instrument consisted of the following statements, and used a Likert scale:

1. In my spare time I often watch television.
2. Whenever I get the chance to watch television, I like to watch television shows that have criminal justice themes.
3. Television programming with criminal justice themes made a positive impression on my decision to become a criminal justice major.
4. I feel that television programming presenting criminal justice themes accurately depicts the criminal justice system.
5. Other than my criminal justice classes, I have a lot of experience dealing with the criminal justice system.
6. My favorite television characters growing up were more likely to be the hero instead of the villain.

Students were provided the choice of responding to the statements using the following options: 1–Strongly Agree, 2–Somewhat Agree, 3–Somewhat Disagree, 4–Strongly Disagree.

The demographic questions consisted of the following, and included multiple choice answers:

7. Which ethnic category do you identify?
   A. African ancestry
   B. Asian ancestry
C. Caucasian ancestry  
D. Hispanic ancestry  
E. Middle Eastern ancestry  
F. Pacific Islander ancestry  
G. Mixed or multiple heritage ancestry  
H. Other unspecified ancestry  
8. When did you decide to become a criminal justice major?  
   A. Before entering college  
   B. Freshman year of college  
   C. Sophomore year of college  
9. In which category would you classify your family’s socio-economic status during the years of your upbringing?  
   A. Less wealth than middle class  
   B. Working class  
   C. Lower-middle class  
   D. Middle class  
   E. Upper-middle class  
   F. More wealth than upper-middle class  
10. What is your gender?  
   A. Male  
   B. Female

**Interview**
Optional follow-up interviews were also used to aide the researcher in understanding how television programs may have influenced the participants’ choice of academic discipline. The interviews were facilitated in a quiet environment in the University library and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. The interview questions were loosely based on the survey instrument, and did not follow a specific question-and-answer format. The interviews focused on retrieving background information that may have been missed due to limitations of survey responses.
RESULTS

Table 1 shows the survey findings for Statements 1 through 6. As discussed in the Methodology section, students were provided four options on the survey, using a Likert scale indicating their level of agreement with each statement. In the first statement (S1): *In my spare time I often watch television,* respondents strongly agree 20.9%, somewhat agree 41.8%, somewhat disagree 32.5%, and strongly disagree 4%. Results for (S2): *When I get the chance to watch television, I like to watch television shows that have criminal justice themes,* respondents strongly agree 27.9%, somewhat agree 55.8%, somewhat disagree 11.6%, and strongly disagree 4%. Results for (S3): *Television programming with criminal justice themes made a positive impression on my decision to become a criminal justice major,* respondents strongly agree 16%, somewhat agree 39.5%, somewhat disagree 20.9%, and strongly disagree 23%. Results for (S4): *I feel that television programming presenting criminal justice themes accurately depicts the criminal justice system,* respondents strongly agree 2%, somewhat agree 35.5%, somewhat disagree 39.5%, and strongly disagree 32.5%. Results for (S5): *Other than my criminal justice classes, I have a lot of experience dealing with the criminal justice system,* respondents strongly agree 11.6%, somewhat agree 23%, somewhat disagree 37%, and strongly disagree 27.9%. Results for (S6): *My favorite television characters growing up were more likely to be the hero instead of the villain,* respondents strongly agree 67%, somewhat agree 20.9%, somewhat disagree 11.62%, and strongly disagree 0%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=43

Gender Identification Trends

Table 2 shows survey finding breakdowns using gender identification.
Male Participant Trends
Trends among male participants suggest that males are influenced by crime programs in choosing criminal justice majors more than females are. Males accounted for all of the participants who identified television as their main influence for becoming a criminal justice major. Overall, 16.66% of all male respondents attributed television as having a significant influence on them making the decision to declare their academic field of study. Males also preferred “reality crime show” television programs as opposed to other varieties of crime shows in higher numbers than females. Males accounted for 62.5% of participants who identified reality crime programs as their preferred type of television crime programs.

Female Participant Trends
In analyzing trends among female participants in the study, females consumed less television than male participants. Twenty percent of the female respondents strongly agree that they watch television in their spare time as opposed to 25% of male participants. In addition, 26% of females somewhat agree that that they watched television in their spare time compared to males at 58%. Females were also attracted to a different variety of crime-related television shows than male participants. Seventy-one percent of the females selected “forensic crime show” television programs as their preferred choice of crime shows. Also, females accounted the 58% of study participants who identified, “crime show drama” as their preferred choice of television programming. Female participants also signified that family served as a strong influence in making their decision to pursue a criminal justice degree. Female participants in this study also were more likely to come from higher socio-economic backgrounds than their male counterparts, and statistically were less likely to identify with television heroes than their male counterparts during their upbringing.
Ethnic Identification Trends

Table 3 show the ethnic identification comparison of students enrolled in the criminal justice program and students who responded to the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race / Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage of Students in the Criminal Justice Department</th>
<th>Percentage of the number of survey respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro-American</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>53.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California State University; Sacramento; College of Health & Human Services; Criminal Justice department enrollment statistics for Fall 2006.

**African Ancestry Trends**

No data was collected for this ethnic group. Two reasons participants identifying with this group did not participate in this study are offered here. First, given the low presence of African-Americans or black-identified students in the criminal justice program at the university selected for this study, there was a possibility that those who identified as being African ancestry were not registered in the three courses used as a population sample. Another possibility is that African ancestry identifiers were available in the classrooms used as a population sample; however these students elected not to participate in the survey.

**Asian Ancestry Trends**

At 25.58%, identifiers of Asian ancestry were the second largest participant group represented in the study results, making them an overrepresented group in this study. However, given the non-existence of African ancestry identifiers as well those participants missing who identify as being “Mixed” or other ancestry, Asian ancestry identifiers in context of this study accurately convey the presence of ethnic minorities in the criminal justice program at the selected university. This group of students overall were positively influenced through television in deciding to pursue a criminal justice major. Fifty percent of participants who chose television as a significant factor for becoming a criminal justice major were Asian ancestry identifiers, specifically males.

**Caucasian Ancestry Trends**

Caucasian ancestry identifiers were the largest group of students (58.49%) to participate in this study, and closely reflect the student population for the university’s criminal justice program. This group was the most diverse
in terms of class identification. This group was represented in all class categories except, “less than working class.” Also, no specific trends or patterns emerged to show the influence of television crime programs on Caucasian ancestry identifiers decision to become criminal justice majors.

**Hispanic Ancestry Trends**

Hispanic ancestry identifiers, according to the survey results, were not positively influenced through television to become criminal justice majors. Hispanic ancestry identifiers reported less consumption of crime programming than all other ethnic group identifiers. In addition, 37.5% of Hispanics ancestry identifiers reported being influenced by family and professionals who work in the field equally as significant factors for pursuing criminal justice degrees. A Hispanic ancestry identifier was also one of two participants who contributed work experience to being a significant factor in making his/her decision. This ethnic group had the largest disparities in gender participation. Hispanic male identifiers accounted for 16% of the participants comparable to Hispanic female identifiers at 2%.

**Class Identification Trends**

Table 4 shows the survey participant breakdown of class identification against gender identification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Working Class</th>
<th>Working Class</th>
<th>Lower Middle Class</th>
<th>Middle Class</th>
<th>Upper Middle Class</th>
<th>&lt; Upper Middle Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding class identification trends, the most significant data were found in the agreement level of students identifying television as a positive influence in choosing their criminal justice major. Middle class and working class identifiers strongly disagree that television played a positive role in influencing their decision. Thirty-five percent of middle class and 33% percent of working class identifiers strongly disagree. Twenty-three percent of middle class identifiers somewhat disagreed along with 22% of working class identifiers. Upper middle class identifiers made up the largest group who strongly agree television played a positive role in influencing their decision; 30% strongly agree and 50% somewhat agree. Forty percent of lower middle class identifiers strongly agree with the statement and 40% somewhat disagreed with the statement. The only identifier of the “less than working” class category somewhat disagreed that television played a positive influence.
Also, the only identifier of the “wealth higher than middle class” category somewhat agreed with the same statement.

**DISCUSSION**

Overall, the survey results indicate the influence of television programs with criminal justice content was not significant enough to declare crime shows as having a significant affect on students’ decisions to pursue criminal justice degrees. However, when factoring students’ socio-economic, race, and gender backgrounds, survey results suggest that students are affected by television crime programs differently as their socialization paths through ethnic culture, gender, and class identification mitigates the role in which television plays in forming their academic goals.

First, when looking at how gender and class identification interrelate with one another, females were found to be less influenced through television crime programs in forming their academic goals and were found to be attracted to a different type of crime television program than males, such as crime show dramas and forensic programs as opposed to the crime show reality programs that males were attracted to. However, females in the criminal justice program were more likely to have higher class identification than males. Secondly, in examining the relationship of crime show programs and students’ decisions to choose criminal justice from a cultural aspect; Asian and Pacific Islander students (Asian ancestry identifiers) were more likely to be influenced through television and also had a greater desire to want to try something new as a reason for coming into the criminal justice program, as opposed to Hispanics who were strongly influenced by family and professionals who already work in the field. Euro-Americans (Caucasian identifiers), on the other hand, were extremely diverse in the associations with making their decisions and were possibly more affected by class identification than by their ethnic backgrounds in their decisions to pursue criminal justice major.

Further, when examining the influence of crime show on students’ decision-making process when factoring in ethnic, gender, and class, it is unclear which one of the demographic categories plays the larger role in students’ decisions. As demonstrated in this study, all identifying categories are relevant in examining the influence of crime shows. The results of this study suggest that all background categories combined are more significant than television itself in determining whether students’ decisions to pursue a criminal justice major are affected by television.
LIMITATIONS

A six month time constraint served as a limitation for this study; additional time is recommended in order to survey a larger student population. Also, the agreement negotiated between the instructors of the courses used for this study and the researcher limited the number of statements used for the survey instrument. The survey instrument was limited to 12 items, which greatly restricted the researcher’s ability to ask detailed questions that would potentially probe respondents for further information.

In addition, the survey was administered less than five days prior to final examinations. This issue hindered potential oral interview participants from contributing to the research citing the need to study for final examinations as a significant factor in being unable to participate beyond completing the survey instrument.

CONCLUSION

The survey instrument used to collect data in this study should be tested in various geographic areas to assess the reliability of the instrument in future research. In addition, more students should be encouraged to participate in the interview portion of the research study to get a wider perspective on the cultural and social factors that come into play when using television as an aide in structuring academic goals.

The population sample also should reflect ethnic backgrounds that were not present in this study. Specifically, African-American students and those who identify as having a “mixed” ethnic background or multiple ethnicities should also be surveyed and interviewed to add to the diverse ethnic perspectives provided in the study. Research conducted by Gabbidon, Penn, & Winston (2003) suggests that African-American student primary influence in pursuing criminal justice did not include the influence of family; students in the study were found to be significantly influenced by the idea of entering a captivating and exciting field of study. Future studies should integrate previous findings in context of the influence of crime television programs to get a further account on how television influences African-Americans to make their academic decision.

Only the positive influence of television is affects on students’ decisions to become criminal justice majors was covered in this study. Future studies should also examine the relationship of negative experiences of television crime programs’ affect on students’ decisions to choose criminal justice majors, as minority student populations may be more inclined to pursue criminal justice majors based on the influence of negative experiences associated with television crime programs.
REFERENCES


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THE OWN-PRICE, CROSS-PRICE, AND INCOME ELASTICITIES OF WINE: A STATE LEVEL ANALYSIS

Egle Michaliovaite

Dr. Craig Gallet, Faculty Mentor

ABSTRACT

Economists use many parameters to assess the relationship between the consumption of a good and its economic determinants. Studies commonly measure relationships by using elasticities. The purpose of this research is to improve our understanding of wine consumption by using regression analysis to estimate the elasticities of wine demand. Specifically, using data from 45 states in the United States, this study looks at the own-price, cross-price, and income elasticities of wine. Aggregating across states, the results show that own-price elasticity of wine falls in the inelastic range. However, when we allow the price elasticity to vary across states, we find substantial variation. In addition, cross-price elasticities suggest beer and wine are substitutes, whereas cigarettes and wine are complements. Finally, based on the income elasticity, wine is a normal good.

Although American wineries are relatively new in the world’s wine market, the U.S. wine industry has grown in importance over the past hundred years. Indeed, according to MacNeil, “every state in the United States produces wine except three-Alaska, North Dakota, and Wyoming” (2001). Furthermore, in regards to worldwide recognition, American wineries gained prominence in 1976, when U.S. wines won top honors at a Paris blind tasting event. Today, America is the fourth largest wine producer in the world behind Italy, France, and Spain. “Ranked fourth worldwide in wine production, it makes almost sixty times as much wine as Canada…” (MacNeil, 2001).

Wine consumption has been affected by many different government policies, such as taxes and regulations on product labels and advertising. Regulations on wine production “…are administrated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms…” (MacNeil, 2001). In order to formulate a sound public policy in regards to wine, it is necessary to understand the nature of wine demand. To help predict industry sales and profits, or to assess the impact of wine taxes, it is often useful to examine various elasticities of demand, such as the own-price, the cross-price, and the income elasticity. “Elasticity” is defined as the percentage change in one variable divided by the percentage change in another variable. The “own-price elasticity” is the ratio of the
percentage change in the quantity consumed to the percentage change in price. The “cross-price elasticity” is the ratio of the percentage change in the quantity consumed of one good to the percentage change in the price of another good. The “income elasticity” is the ratio of the percentage change in the quantity consumed to the percentage change in consumer income. This research contributes to the literature by establishing relationships between wine consumption and the prices of wine, beer, and cigarettes, as well as income. Briefly, a good is price elastic (inelastic) if the own-price elasticity is greater than (less than) one in absolute value. A “substitute (complement) relationship” between two goods occurs when an increase in the price of one good increases (decreases) the quantity consumed of the other, which corresponds to a positive (negative) cross-price elasticity. As for income, a normal (inferior) good is one that an increase in income increases (decreases) quantity consumed, which corresponds to a positive (negative) income elasticity. Not only does this study address the relationships across all states, but it also considers state-by-state results.

Literature Review

As discussed by Gallet (2007), several studies have estimated the demand for alcohol in the U. S. For example, Baltagi and Griffin (2002) present estimates of liquor consumption for over 42 states. However, they do not comment on the elasticities of demand for alcohol. Furthermore, by focusing on other types of alcohol, less research has been completed specifically on wine demand. This study attempts to address this limitation by increasing the body of knowledge on the demand for wine in the U. S.

Relationship Between Wine Consumption and the Price of Wine

Numerous studies have examined what determines wine consumption and the sensitivity of demand to its own-price. Gallet and Eastman (2007) find the consumption of wine to be inversely related to its own price (i.e. increasing the price reduces consumption of the good). To gauge price sensitivity, the literature estimates the own-price elasticity of wine. For example, Gallet (2007) finds the average own-price elasticity of wine across all studies is -.70, while Gallet and Eastman (2007) estimate the own-price elasticity of wine for U. S. states to be -.41, which is in the neighborhood of the -.502 estimate obtained by Johnson and Oksanen (1974). These negative elasticities are consistent with existing theory that the demand for wine is downward sloping. Also, estimates tend to fall in the range between zero and minus one, suggesting the demand for wine is inelastic.
Relationship Between Wine Consumption and the Price of Beer
Several studies addressed the relationship of wine consumption to the prices of other alcoholic beverages. With respect to the price of beer, some studies find wine and beer to be substitutes to each other, such that increasing the price of beer increases the demand for wine. For example, in support of a substitute relationship between wine and beer, Nelson (2003) reports a cross-price elasticity for wine per beer of .604. Although of smaller magnitude, Clements and Johnson (1983) and Johnson and Oksanen (1974) estimate positive cross-price elasticities for wine per beer of .03 and .231, respectively. Not only do such positive elasticities suggest that wine and beer are substitutes, but the small values of the estimates suggest the impact of the price of beer on wine consumption is modest.

Relationship Between Wine Consumption and the Price of Cigarettes
Some studies examined the relationship between wine and cigarettes by estimating the cross-price elasticity. For instance, by estimating a negative cross-price elasticity of alcohol per cigarettes, Cameron and Williams (2001) find that alcohol (wine included) and cigarettes are complements (i.e., an increase in the price of cigarettes decreases alcohol consumption). In addition, Nelson (2003) estimates the cross-price elasticity for wine per cigarettes to be -.319. Nonetheless, there is disagreement in the literature as some scholars report that wine and cigarettes are substitutes. For instance, Gallet and Eastman (2007) estimate the cross-price elasticity for wine per cigarettes to be .151 which is similar to the .332 estimate obtained by Goel and Morey (1995). However, Decker and Schwartz (2000) find the cross-price elasticity relating wine and cigarettes falls in the negative range.

Relationship Between Wine Consumption and Income
Several studies examined the relationship between alcohol consumption and income, with most finding wine to be a normal good. For example, Gallet and Eastman (2007) and Nelson (2003) estimate the income elasticity of wine falls in the 1.60-1.90 range. Hence, this finding not only suggests wine is normal but that it is consistent also with wine being income elastic. Nonetheless, Johnson and Oksanen (1974) provide quite different results, estimating the income elasticity of wine to be -.008, which is consistent with wine being an inferior good.

Methodology
This research was based on data used to estimate state-level demand equations for wine. The data was restricted to annual observations for 45 states over the 1982-1998 period, which provided a total of 765
observations. The model is based on the relationship shown in Equation 1.

\[ Q_w = \beta_0 + \beta_1 P_w + \beta_2 P_b + \beta_3 P_c + \beta_4 I + \epsilon. \]  

(1)

where \( Q_w \) is the quantity of wine consumed, \( P_w \) is the price of wine, \( P_b \) is the price of beer, \( P_c \) is the price of cigarettes, \( I \) is per-capita income, and \( \epsilon \) is the error term. Table 1A shows the definitions of all variables included in Equation 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable:</th>
<th>Definition:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wine Consumption (( Q_w ))</td>
<td>Per capita wine consumption (gallons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine Price (( P_w ))</td>
<td>Dollars per ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer Price (( P_b ))</td>
<td>Dollars per ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarette Price (( P_c ))</td>
<td>Dollars per pack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income (( I ))</td>
<td>Per capita disposable income (dollars)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data was collected from various sources. In particular, state-level wine consumption data came from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, whereas data on the prices of wine and beer (provided by Jon Nelson and Douglas Young) originated from the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association. Data on the price of cigarettes came from the Tobacco Institute, while per capita income figures were collected from the Economagic website at http://www.economagic.com.

**Economic Variables**

Several economic variables included in this study act as determinants of wine demand. State-level prices of wine, beer and cigarettes are included to account for the impact of own-price and cross-prices. This researcher expects wine consumption and its price to be negatively related. However, the effect of the prices of beer and cigarettes on the demand for wine is unclear, as they may be substitutes or complements to one another. Per capita disposable income is also considered a determinant of wine consumption. Similar to beer and cigarette prices, though, since wine may be a normal or inferior good, there is no expectation on the effect of income on wine consumption.

**Functional Form and Estimation Procedure**

The most common functional form used in studies to estimate alcohol demand is the log-linear form (Gallet, 2007). Therefore, to be consistent with the literature, all variables in this study are converted into natural logarithms. A key benefit of this procedure is that the estimated coefficients are interpreted as elasticities. In addition, regression analysis was used to analyze Equation 1. Specifically, the dependent variable (\( Q_w \)) in Equation
is modeled as a function of the independent variables (Pw, Pb, Pc, I) and the error term. Using ordinary least squares (OLS), the parameters (i.e., \( \beta_i \)'s) are estimated by minimizing the sum of the squared sample errors (i.e., residuals). However, the use of OLS is based on several key assumptions. Consequently, some of the more technical aspects of this study’s OLS results, in regards to these assumptions, are discussed in Appendix A.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This researcher began by aggregating all states over time into a panel data set. Table 2 provides the results for the own-price, cross-price, and income elasticities from this panel data regression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>-24.22991(^1)</td>
<td>-20.53246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPw</td>
<td>-0.536227(^1)</td>
<td>-3.535963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPb</td>
<td>0.379239(^2)</td>
<td>1.857162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPc</td>
<td>-1.131705(^1)</td>
<td>-9.456818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogI</td>
<td>2.412507(^1)</td>
<td>19.06224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Qw, Pw, Pb, Pc, and I are converted into natural logs.
\(^1\) Significant at the 1% level.
\(^2\) Significant at the 10% level.

Based on the results presented in Table 2, the OLS estimate of the log-linear version of Equation 1 becomes:

\[
\text{LogQw} = -24.22 - 0.54\text{LogPw} + 0.38\text{LogPb} - 1.13\text{LogPc} + 2.41\text{LogI} \tag{2}
\]

As explained earlier, the own-price elasticity of wine demand measures the responsiveness of consumers to changes in the price of wine, and is given by the estimated coefficient of logPw in Equation 2 shown above. When estimating the own-price elasticity, the critical value of comparison is -1, for an own-price elasticity less than (more than) -1 indicates that consumers are relatively sensitive (insensitive) to price changes. In this case, the own-price elasticity of -.54 falls in the inelastic range. Accordingly, not only will raising the price of wine cause little reaction in consumption, but it also increases overall industry revenue.

While the own-price elasticity of demand shows how sensitive consumers are to changes in the price of wine, it is also important to know how sensitive consumers are to changes in the prices of complement and substitute goods, such as beer and cigarettes. Table 2 above shows that the demand for wine
is most sensitive to changes in the price of cigarettes, since the cross-price elasticity with respect to cigarettes is -1.13, which is larger in absolute value compared to the cross-price elasticity with respect to beer (.38). Thus, a 1 percent increase in the price of cigarettes reduces wine demand by 1.13 percent, whereas a 1 percent increase in the price of beer increases wine demand by .38 percent. And so, wine appears to be a complement to cigarettes but a substitute to beer. In addition, the research considers income as a determinant of wine consumption by estimating the income elasticity of wine. In this case, the coefficient of LogI is 2.41, and so wine is not only a normal good, but it is also income elastic (i.e., a luxury).

All t-statistics are high in absolute value, which suggests that all coefficients are individually significant. In particular, since the null hypothesis corresponding to each of the four coefficients (i.e., Ho: βi = 0) was rejected, this finding supports the inclusion of each of the four variables as a determinant of wine consumption. This researcher also conducted an F-test and found that the coefficients are jointly significant.

**State-by-State Regression Analysis**

While aggregating all states yields interesting findings, examining the elasticity estimates for individual states provides further insights. And so, Table 3 shows wine consumption regression results at the state level (on next page), while Tables 4-6 present the states separated into various categories for each of the three elasticities.

Table 4 presents those states with a negative own-price elasticity of demand to show how sensitive consumers are to changes in the price of wine. The present study finds that only 13 states have the expected negative relationship between consumption and the price of wine. Among these 13 states, consumers in Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas react little to changes in the price of wine, as the own-price elasticity falls in the inelastic range for each of these states. Yet for Texas, the own-price elasticity of wine falls in the elastic range. Consequently, there appears to be differences in price responsiveness across states, which could be tied to a variety of factors, such as demographics and advertising, amongst others.
Turning to the prices of beer and cigarettes, Table 5 categorizes beer and cigarettes in regards to their relationship with wine as either substitute or complement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>LogPw</th>
<th>LogPc</th>
<th>LogPr</th>
<th>Log</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>-0.809</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>1.567</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>0.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>-1.6735</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>1.672</td>
<td>0.672</td>
<td>1.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>-1.277</td>
<td>0.656</td>
<td>-0.926</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>-0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>-23.473</td>
<td>0.754</td>
<td>0.686</td>
<td>-0.967</td>
<td>2.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>-3.318</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>2.398</td>
<td>-0.739</td>
<td>0.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>-2.794</td>
<td>-0.123</td>
<td>-0.317</td>
<td>-0.478</td>
<td>0.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>-5.441</td>
<td>-0.380</td>
<td>-0.312</td>
<td>-0.342</td>
<td>0.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>-14.200</td>
<td>0.615</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>-0.585</td>
<td>1.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>-23.833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
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<td>Oklahoma</td>
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<td>Oregon</td>
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<td>South Carolina</td>
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<td>South Dakota</td>
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<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.513</td>
<td>-0.691</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>4.835</td>
<td>-1.780</td>
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<td>-0.806</td>
<td>-0.726</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
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<td>0.894</td>
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<td>0.245</td>
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<td>Virginia</td>
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<td>-0.004</td>
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<td>Washington</td>
<td>19.854</td>
<td>1.506</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>1.382</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
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<td>1.341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>-1.765</td>
<td>0.649</td>
<td>-3.219</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>10.791</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>-0.421</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>-1.278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ¹ Significant at the 1% level. ² Significant at the 5% level. ³ Significant at the 10% level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beer Substitutes: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes Substitutes: Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes Complements: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. State Cross-Price Elasticities

141
Table 6 shows state income elasticities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal:</th>
<th>Superior:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**LIMITATIONS**

There are a number of problems associated with the calculation of the elasticities of wine based on this study’s model. First, by using a log-linear specification, this researcher assumes the elasticities are stable over time. But this may not be the case. For example, with respect to beer, Gallet and List (1998) find the elasticities of beer demand tend to fall over time. Hence, it may be better to adopt a more flexible specification that allows elasticities to change. Second, the sample size for the state-by-state analysis is rather small, causing higher standard errors and lower t-statistics. Third, although beyond the scope of this study, it may be that the quantity of wine consumed influences the price of wine, thus leading to potential endogeneity of the price of wine, which then leads to biased parameter estimates when using OLS. Fourth, since wine comes in all sorts of varieties, by using an aggregate measure of wine consumption, this study could not assess differences in estimates across varieties. Finally, other possible explanatory variables, such as race, age, education, and employment status, are not included in this model, which could further contribute to biased parameter estimates (see Appendix A).

**CONCLUSION**

This paper estimated the demand for wine across all states and for each individual state. While the panel data results suggest the demand for wine is downward sloping, wine is a substitute (complement) to beer (cigarettes), and wine is a luxury, the state-by-state results indicate there is substantial variation across states. Nonetheless, because of potential limitations with the regression procedure at this point, further analysis is warranted to address a variety of issues, such as the specification of demand, heteroskedasticity of the error term, and the endogeneity of the price of wine.
REFERENCES


In this appendix, the researcher considers several issues that address the adequacy of the OLS regression specification. Each sub-section addresses issues in reference to the panel data regression results.

**Correlation Matrix**

Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated with each other, making it difficult to come up with reliable inferences of how each independent variable affects wine consumption. Therefore, prior to estimating the panel regression equation, this researcher first constructed the following correlation matrix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LogQw</th>
<th>LogPw</th>
<th>LogPb</th>
<th>LogPc</th>
<th>Logl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LogQw</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPw</td>
<td>-0.18545</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPb</td>
<td>0.04875</td>
<td>0.450006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogPc</td>
<td>0.106048</td>
<td>-0.59869</td>
<td>-0.09699</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logl</td>
<td>0.534265</td>
<td>-0.42569</td>
<td>0.021725</td>
<td>0.589526</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation coefficient (given in the respective cells above) describes the nature of the (linear) relationship between two variables. Ranging between -1 and 1, a value of -1 means the two variables are perfectly negatively correlated, whereas a value of 1 means the variables are perfectly positively correlated. In this case, since most of the correlation coefficients are modest in magnitude, multicollinearity does not appear to be a major issue with this study’s regressions.

**Akaike and Schwarz**

The Akaike and Schwarz test is used to find a possible source of specification error within the regression estimate. LogPb was chosen as the variable to drop due to its low correlation coefficient (.05) with respect to LogQw. By removing LogPb, the explanatory nature of the remaining coefficients did not improve, as each t-statistic only went up slightly. A possible reason for this could be that the equation is not lacking a variable of vital nature (i.e. no omitted relevant variables) that must be present in describing the amount of wine consumed, which lends credibility to this study’s chosen specification.

**Ramsey RESET Test**

The Ramsey RESET test is used to detect omitted variables, specifically, it adds other polynomial terms to test whether there are additional variables that are being omitted from the estimation equation. The procedure uses an F-test to compare the original regression with its expanded form. This researcher obtained the following results:

Null Hypothesis \( H_0: \beta_2 = \beta_3 = \beta_4 \)
Alternative Hypothesis  \( H_a: \text{otherwise} \)

Decision Rule  \( F > F_c, \text{reject } H_0 \)

\( F \)-critical 2.37

\( F \)-score 71.7876

In this case, the \( F \)-test equals 71.79, which exceeds the critical value. Consequently, unlike the Akaike and Schwarz procedure, the Ramsey RESET test suggests there is some specification error in this study’s panel regression. Indeed, by suggesting the regressions may be omitting important variables, this is consistent with Nelson (2003) and Gallet and Eastman (2007), who find there are other important determinants of wine demand.

**Heteroskedasticity**

Heteroskedasticity occurs when the variance of the error term in Equation 1 is not constant. White’s test is a test which establishes whether the residual variance of a variable in a regression model is constant. The test was performed to assess whether or not heteroskedasticity is present. Obtaining a Chi-square statistic of 53.02, which exceeds the critical value of 15.51, we believe our panel regression may suffer from heteroskedasticity.
W.E.B. Du Bois’ Notion of the Color Line, in Relation to the Emergence of the Harlem Renaissance

Christopher Strickland

Dr. Ricky Green, Faculty Mentor

Abstract
This study explores the reasons why W.E.B. Du Bois’ notion of the color line was vital to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance. This emergence led to the agency that African-Americans sought to acquire: self-identity and self-determination. The work of Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, and Langston Hughes contribute to this understanding. The significance of this research shows how Du Bois’ (1968) notion of the color line, a problem of the twentieth century, became evident in future generations of non-whites, particularly in the 1960s.

In 1903 W.E.B. Du Bois (1968) wrote his influential book, “The Souls of Black Folk,” in which he stated that the “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line” (Du Bois & Grant, 1968, p. 147). This statement was made only three years into the twentieth century. What were the complexities of the problem? More evident, what was the problem? The researcher will convey how Du Bois’ statement, along with other African-American philosophies from prolific intellectuals of the early twentieth century, such as Alain Locke and Marcus Garvey, pertained to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance. This emergence essentially provided “agency” (will and power), self-identity and self-determination among African-Americans.

In “Souls of Black Folk” (1968), Du Bois comments, “How does it feel to be a problem?” (Du Bois & Chapman, 1968, p. 494). Souls of Black Folk personified black consciousness, expressed the sense of double consciousness among blacks, and was ultimately “intended to be used as a tool to end racist and prejudice ideologies among white people towards blacks” (Poussaint, 1969, p. xxxi). When Du Bois wrote the above question, he was referring basically to race relations between people of African blood with those of lighter races of men (Du Bois & Hine, p. 396), yet Du Bois outlines the types of institutions that should be shared amongst all that live together in a civilized community; these are the institutions of the home, economic relations, political relations, intellectual and educational
interchange, social contact with others and lastly religion (Du Bois, 1969, p. 189). However, the color line with the existence of racism and prejudice forced African-Americans to live within what Du Bois called “the veil”, as opposed to outside the veil in the world of whites where these institutions were readily accessible. The “veil” was essentially the color line, a divide that separated blacks from whites. Access to these institutions was important for African-Americans to obtain if they were to enjoy their lives as human beings. Du Bois stated that, in some cases, you can actually see the color line, “I know some towns where a straight line drawn through the middle of the main street separates nine-tenths of the whites from nine-tenths of the blacks” (Du Bois, 1969, p. 190).

The only way that W.E.B. Du Bois could have made such a claim that the color line was a problem of the twentieth century, was that in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, the color line had been a problem as well. Du Bois was a personal example; as a young, remarkable student living in the North in the late nineteenth century, he was surprised when he could not go to his beloved local Harvard University due to his race (Poussaint, 1969, p. xxix). Promised resolutions coming out of slavery and the Civil War, such as the Freedman’s Bureau, were not being fully brought into fruition. Although the Reconstruction Amendments were being instated, African-Americans in the South were still subject to slave-like conditions. As Clark Hine states in her contribution to the textbook, African American Odyssey, “white people clearly regarded black Americans as an inferior race not entitled to those rights that the Constitution so emphatically set forth,” (Hine & Harrold, p. 362). With this kind of prevailing thought against African-Americans, it was imperative for agency, self-identity, and self-determination to be sought in the early twentieth century.

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of this research is to explore what W.E.B. Du Bois called “the problem of the twentieth century”: the color line (Du Bois & Grant, 1968, p. 147). Additionally, the researcher will convey specifically how the existence of the color line was vital to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance.

During the Harlem Renaissance, African-Americans living in Harlem, New York in the 1920s were able to convey their agency to reach beyond what Du Bois called the veil or a double consciousness within the socio-economical divide separating blacks from whites. During the 1920s a “New Negro” (Locke & Chapman, 1968, p. 512) was born. This title given by Harlem Renaissance supporter Alain Locke, personified African-Americans by revealing their double consciousness and representing their heritage, culture,
and authentic selves, through art, literature, music and protest. Alain Locke produced his essay, “The New Negro” (Locke & Chapman, 1968, p. 512) in 1925, which explained how African-Americans were now prepared in the 1920s to rip through the veil.

Coinciding with this notion of the problem of the color line and “The New Negro” (Locke & Chapman, 1968, p. 512), Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) sought to overcome the problem of the color line by having complete separation from white people, while also implementing a “New Negro” (Locke & Chapman, 1968, p. 512) worldview (i.e. Pan-Africanism and black nationalism). Although Garvey contrasted with Du Bois and Locke by being a separatist, he, like them, believed that black people all over the world, including the United States, should not just undertake a physical “going back to Africa” (Garvey & Ottley, 1970 p. 189), but also a ideological and cultural “going back to Africa” (Garvey & Ottley, Bracey, 1970, p. 189).

These three intellectuals of the Harlem Renaissance coincided and differed in philosophies (more so Du Bois and Garvey), however similarities and differences in solutions of obliterating the color line helped shape the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance and influenced future generation movements. This was seen especially in the Black Power Movement of the 1960s with the Black Panther Party, and other non-white cultural and political organizations that sought agency, self-identity and self-determination within their generation of racism in America.

However, it was Du Bois’ notion of the color line that first gave credence to the socio-economical issues that black people faced daily. The Souls of Black Folk (Du Bois & Chapman, p. 494) articulated the problem of the color line, and the “New Negroes” of the Harlem Renaissance were more than prepared to reveal their perspectives on how African-Americans were ready to cross this line. This was seen in poetic work from Langston Hughes, for example, in which he wrote of the disparity of the color line. Even though he believed that self-identified literature and art alone could not obliterate the color line, Hughes still captured and articulated the African-American experience and struggle through his work.

Once again, the significance of such an endeavor in American history helped give birth to future social movements of non-whites who also had to deal with the color line, ultimately, giving more importance for the need of a new self-identity, as well as the need for self-determination among all oppressed peoples.
Included in this literature review are an array of different forms of literature ranging from journal articles, reviews, short stories, and poems. The diversity of sources provided a great opportunity to analyze and further this researcher’s understanding of how W.E.B. Du Bois’ notion of the color line related to the Harlem Renaissance. Beginning with Du Bois’ influential book, the Souls of Black Folk this research aims to show how the impetus of such a relationship began.

In 1905, two years after the first publication of the Souls of Black Folk (Du Bois & Chapman, p. 494), C.F.G. Masterman of the London Daily News, writing a review of the book, wrote in reference to the color line: “from this problem there is no means of escape” (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 34). Masterman makes a worldview distinction of this “inescapable” problem:

Sometimes it is the West ruling the East, as in India; sometimes it is the East in triumph driving back the Western Invasion, as to-day in Manchuria; it appears as the North invading the domains of the South, with disastrous to both, as in South Africa; or the South artificially imported in the United States of America. In each case there is present the veil (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 34).

Furthermore, Masterman believed that the problem of the color line was inescapable as white supremacy continued to “shrink the world” (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 34), observing.

And the world has so shrunken that there is now no escape. In the interior of the Congo, in the Phillipines, in Rhodesia, in every discovered able island of the sea the white man is taking up the white man’s burden, inoculating the aborigines with the white man’s vices, exploiting the coloured races for the White man’s benefit (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 34).

In both quotes, Masterman shows the links between white supremacy, imperialism and Du Bois’ notion of the color line. He then continues by implementing a quote by Du Bois into his review, which articulates these very premises:
Nothing has more effectually made this programme seem hopeless than the recent course of the United States toward weaker and darker peoples in the West Indies, Hawaii, and the Philippines—for where in the world may we go and be safe from lying and brute force (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 34)?

Masterman continues to outline Du Bois’ work, this time from a more political outlook on the “Negro” condition:

Without a voice or political influence, shunned by the decent white, and only coming in contact with the dregs of the white population, helplessly in debt, with the door barred to all but the crudest forms of occupation, unfathomably ignorant of the laws of this new world and all its harsh and inexorable ways, the Negro is staggering towards an Abyss (Masterman & Andrews, 1985, p. 35).

Garvey’s Back To Africa Movement
Masterman’s review of the Souls of Black Folk (p. 494), outlines in stark fashion the problem of the color line in a worldview in reference to Africans and other non-whites. Masterman also critiques Du Bois’ findings of the color line in America. Masterman’s review coincides well with the philosophy of Marcus Garvey, because Garvey sought to remedy the problem of the color line by implementing black pride, black self-determination, black organization, and black separation from the white oppressive atmosphere within the world (Garvey & Grant, 1968, p. 199).

However, Garvey does contrast Masterman in some ways because he sees the color line as escapable. Also in contrast to Du Bois, Garvey sees a place in the world where non-whites (especially black people) can be safe from “lying and brute force” (Du Bois & Mastermen, 1985, p. 34). This place was Africa, from Garvey’s perspective. Garvey believed that once black people throughout the world decided to go “forward, upward, and onward toward the great goal of human liberty (Garvey & Grant, 1968, p. 199),” then this place could be realized in Africa.

Du Bois was an integrationist, albeit radical, and Garvey was a separatist, which was a radical thought in regard to black mobilization to separate from white supremacy. Du Bois advocated strongly for full equality for black people in American society through his influential publication of The Crisis (Lewis, 2000, p. 3). Garvey advocated strongly for “going back to Africa” through his organization the UNIA (Garvey & Grant, 1968, p. 199).
The New Negro

Du Bois and Garvey represented what Alain Locke declared, “The New Negro” (p. 512). In the book, The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond (1989), editor Leonard Harris describes Locke’s meaning of this notion:

“The New Negro was part of a movement already in motion--E. Franklin Frazier, Booker T. Washington and others had written published articles and books proclaiming the existence of a ‘New Negro’. Locke’s version of the New Negro, contrary to Washington’s emphasized Afro-American cultural continuities with Africa, that is, affirming positively what was valued as inferior by white culture; affirming positively an African identity even though Americanized in many ways; and applauding the folkways, rhythms, symbols, and rituals of black life. In addition Locke applauded the inevitable urbanization of blacks while other philosophers romanticized small-town and rural living (Harris, 1989, p. 6).

Harris goes on to explain how Locke’s association with Du Bois and other African-Americans who he would deem “New Negros” developed:

Locke’s association with W.E.B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, and Claude McKay developed through the 1920s and 1930s. Du Bois’ became progressively radical and eventually rejected the idea of an educated elite leading blacks and functioning as a role model, so too did Locke. Langston Hughes was Locke’s ideal author: urbane, steeped in the traditions of black folk literature, and portraying its contours with a sense of their universal value (Harris, 1989, p. 6).

Renaissance writer Claude McKay, however, felt that it was overreaching on the part of Locke to include Langston Hughes in regard to literature that protested white supremacy:

...McKay was critical of Locke’s efforts to involve Hughes in the literature of advocacy, that is the literature of Blacks that self-consciously portrayed the struggles of blacks against racism, the universal human pathos of oppression, and the cares of an African people transplanted to America. Locke perceived the artist as a community representative (Harris, 1989, p. 6).
Locke’s outlook stood in contrast with Claude McKay’s of the artist as an individual conveying an overall unique vision. Harris states that “Locke exaggerated the spiritual and virtuous character of African culture” (Harris, 1989, p. 6). However, Harris also explains how his exaggerations were used in a defensive way to deter racist attitudes against black culture:

His [Locke’s] exaggerations were at times used as a pedagogical method to alter unfavorable attitudes against black culture...

Locke’s philosophical conceptions were not supportive of a nativistic or atavistic conception of cultural virtues. Rather the notion of the “New Negro” was constituted to re-envision African self-concepts across various social strata (Harris, 1989, p. 7).

For Locke, the black artist was a community representative (Harris, 1989, p. 6). Therefore, loyalty to the uplift of the race was identical to being loyal to the uplift of the culture. In Rutledge M. Dennis’ Relativism and Pluralism in the Social Thought of Alain Locke, Dennis articulates how Locke differed with Du Bois and Garvey in the quest for racial justice and cultural diversity and acceptance:

Alain Locke, unlike Du Bois and Garvey approached cultural pluralism and diversity with a special view toward the delineation and clarification of the concepts and issues germane to the particularisms of black sociocultural survival (Dennis & Linnemann, 1982, p. 30).

It was through African-American particularisms that Locke sought to demystify the idea of democracy as only specifying a majority role where minorities would not have a voice. It was one of Locke’s strategies against white supremacy, in battles for racial survival and progress to use culture as his ammunition (Belles & Linnemann, 1982, p. 54). In A. Gilbert Belles’ The Politics of Alain Locke, Belles articulates this premise:

If blacks could be recognized as legitimate contributors to American and world culture, it followed that social proscriptions would be removed and the mood and creed of white supremacy would be scrapped. New political and social thinking and attitudes, linked to food, clothing, housing, and employment, would replace old accommodationist ideas among blacks and oppressive behavior among whites. Locke believed that he was in the tradition of other articulate blacks in American history.
who displayed strong racial consciousness as one way of fighting oppression. ‘He showed that...it was the anti-slavery movement which developed the intellect of the Negroes and pushed him [sic] forward to articulate, disciplined expression.’ In the 1920s, the Harlem Renaissance transformed blacks into ‘the New Negro, militant, no longer obsequious’ (Belles & Linnemann, 1982, p. 54).

**Black Self-Identity**
Darwin T. Turner agrees with Belles’ observation in his book, W.E.B. Du Bois and the Theory of a Black Aesthetic, where he articulates the genesis of an aesthetic of any group of people, yet also shows how, in regard to African-American’s lack of social equality (i.e., the color line), self-identity could also have a unifying effect:

*The fact is that any group of people which feels its identity as a group shapes and defines its own aesthetic, which it is free to change in a subsequent generation or century. It should not be surprising, therefore, that black Americans should insist upon a need of a Black Aesthetic [that is, the work must be appropriated to black culture and people, and its excellence must be defined according to black people’s concepts of beauty]; for, if their African ancestry has not always bound them together, they have nevertheless found identity as a group in their exclusion from certain prerogatives of American citizenship* (Turner & Williams, 1985, p. 74).

Turner mentions how in Harold Cruse’s book, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (p. 73), Cruse criticized most black critics for what should of been their primary responsibility: to encourage and determine standards for original ideas, methods, materials and styles originated from the unique character of black American culture. This thought compares identically to the philosophies of Du Bois, Garvey and Locke.

Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism came to the forefront during the Harlem Renaissance. In Roi Ottley’s New World A-Coming, (Garvey & Ottley, Bracey, 1970, p. 189) Ottley conveys how Garvey established a weekly newspaper, the Negro World, in which he published his opinions as well as African history:
Usually the pages of the Negro World, some ten to sixteen, were crowded with *the philosophy and opinions* of its editor... His bombastic editorials referred to the ‘glorious’ history of the Negro, with particular emphasis on Africa’s past regal splendor; recalled the slave struggles for freedom, and recounting stirring tales of the heroism of such Southern leaders of slave revolts as Denmark Vesey, Gabriel (Prosser), and Nat Turner. The exploits of long dead Zulu and Hottentot warriors who had fought against British rule were not forgotten, nor the histories of the Moorish and Ethiopian empires. Toussaint L’Ouverture’s leadership of the Haitian Rebellion was stock copy (Garvey & Ottley, 1970, p. 189).

At the time when Garvey took prominence in Harlem in the early 1920s, African-Americans had witnessed the disillusionment of World War I, from which they thought that they would gain equality for their bravery in battle, only to be basically thwarted in this goal by the government. African-American soldiers suffered many forms of Jim Crow laws, humiliation, discrimination, slander, and violence at the hands of white citizens (Garvey & Ottley, 1970, p. 189). Du Bois, who was a staunch supporter of the War, believed that it would offer agency for African-Americans against racism and discrimination, offered these words:

*We return. We return from fighting. We return from fighting. Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why* (Hine & Harrold, 2006, p. 413).

### The Harlem Renaissance Emerges

After World War I, racial violence by the Ku Klux Klan and other terrorist groups who deemed themselves the Southern Redeemers, intensified their brutal attacks, resulting in more and more southern African-Americans becoming their victims. The Southern Redeemers wanted to take the South back to times when blacks were subordinate and living behind the veil. This resulted in some African-Americans fleeing from the South to avoid brutal attacks from the Ku Klux Klan and other racist mobs of white supremacists. The literature of the time reflected the violence against African-Americans, as seen in Jean Toomer’s short story, “Blood Burning Moon”, “Louisa was driven back. The mob pushed in...A stake was sunk into the ground...Kerosene poured on the rotting floor boards piled around it...Tom bound to the stake…” (Toomer & Chapman, 1968, p. 66). In Langston Hughes’ short
story, “Census”, an unnamed character states, “I have had so many hardships in this life, that it is a wonder I'll live until I die. I was born young, black, voteless, poor, and hungry, in a state where white folks did not even put Negroes on the census” (Hughes & Chapman, 1968, p. 105). Figure 1 shows the factors that preceded, and initiated the Harlem Renaissance.

**Figure 1. Emergence of Harlem Renaissance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Combined Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-1920</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>1,413</td>
<td>1,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-1931</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1941</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

World War I

World War I is important to this study because African-Americans sought to achieve agency through fighting and sacrificing their lives for their country in this war. Furthermore, African-Americans believed that their participation in the Great War would obliter ate racism (i.e., Jim Crow laws), thus bringing an end to the divide of the color line. When this hope was not realized, many African-Americans were emboldened and began to express and organize
themselves in more profound ways, thus bringing forth (The New Negro), that Alaine Locke wrote about.

The excerpt shown in Figure 3 comes from Emmett J. Scott’s, *Scott’s Official History of the American Negro in the World War, 1919*. Scott worked as the private secretary to Booker T. Washington, and was appointed as a Special Assistant to Secretary of War Newton Baker during World War I, in order to “oversee the recruitment, training, and morale of the African American soldiers.” In this excerpt, Scott identifies the bravery, the number of enlistments, and that, in contrast to white soldiers, “proportionately more Negroes were ‘drafted’ than was true of white men.”

**AUTHOR’S PREFACE**

The Negro, in the great World War for Freedom and Democracy, has proved to be a notable and inspiring figure. The record and achievements of this racial group, as brave soldiers and loyal citizens, furnish one of the brightest chapters in American history. The ready response of Negro draftees to the Selective Service calls—together with the numerous patriotic activities of Negroes generally, gave ample evidence of their whole-souled support and their 100 per cent Americanism. It is difficult to indicate which rendered the greater service to their Country—the 400,000 or more of them who entered active military service (many of whom fearlessly and victoriously fought upon the battlefields of France) or the millions of other loyal members of this race whose useful industry in fields, factories, forests, mines, together with many other indispensable civilian activities, so vitally helped the Federal authorities in carrying the war to a successful conclusion.

When war against Germany was declared April 6, 1917, Negro Americans quickly recognized the fact that it was not to be a white man’s war, nor a black man’s war, but a war of all the people living under the “Stars and Stripes” for the preservation of human liberty throughout the world. Despite efforts of pro-German propagandists to dampen their ardor or cool their patriotism by pointing out seeming inconsistencies between their treatment as American citizens and their expected loyalty as American soldiers, more than one million of them (1,078,331), according to the Second Official Report of the Provost Marshal General, promptly responded to, and registered under the three Selective Service calls. More than 400,000 Negro soldiers (367,710 draftees plus voluntary enlistments and those already in the Regular Army) were called to the colors and offered their lives in defense of the American flag during the recent war. Relative to their population, proportionately more Negroes were “drafted” than was true of white men.

The Negro was represented in practically every branch of military service during the Great World War,—including Infantry, Cavalry, Engineer Corps, Field Artillery, Coast Artillery, Signal Corps (radio or wireless telegraphers), Medical Corps, Hospital and Ambulance Corps, Aviation Corps (ground section), Veterinary

Figure 3. Emmett J. Scott’s Observation about Negro Soldiers in WWI Source: “Scott’s Official History of the American Negro in the World War, 1919”
Darlene Clark Hine, in the *African American Odyssey*, states how, in the South, African-American sharecroppers were cheated out of their labor. One Mississippian sharecropper reported, “I have been living in this Delta thirty years...If we ask any questions we are cussed, and if we raise up we are shot, and that ends it” (Hine & Harrold, 2006, p. 411). It is from this background that many African-Americans migrated to northern cities and states, such as Chicago, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York City, to earn higher economical status and respect. These African-Americans, as the prolific professor Dr. Shirley Moore said, “Voted with their feet” (Moore, 2007), despite the limitations that state laws concerning voting posed against them. African-Americans in this sense were walking toward their destiny on their own terms, and expressing their agency. Figure 3 shows, the migration pattern of African-Americans during the period.

**The Great Migration**

The Great Migration was an historical action that is important to this study because African-Americans migrated to the North where political and economic power could be realized. This migration was due mainly to racist terrorist attacks in the South by groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, and to their inability to make economic and political progress due to the presence of the color line. Similar to the aftermath of World War I, African-Americans sought to transform their conditions and define themselves, which was realized during the Harlem Renaissance.

Figure 4 conveys the movement of African-Americans out of the South and into the North, from 1910-1930, to escape the problems of racism. It is estimated that over one million African-Americans were involved in this mass movement. Between 1910 and 1930, African-Americans increased the populations of the North by twenty percent. Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and New York had some of the biggest increases.
Harlem Renaissance
African-American intellectuals moved to New York and gave prevalence to the rise of a creative movement, spanning from the 1920s to the 1940s. Philosopher Alain Locke supported “The New Negro”, and novelist, poets, painters, and scholars examined what it meant to be black. The Harlem Renaissance represented African-American agency and awareness of the color line in profound ways. Langston Hughes’ poem, “Harlem” says, “What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun, or fester like a sore—and then run? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load, or does it explode?” (Hughes & Chapman, 1968, p. 431). Hughes conveys and ponders at the same time what could be the result of African-Americans not achieving their dreams.

Claude McKay’s poem “If We Must Die” proclaims, “If we must die, let it not be like hogs...Like men we’ll face the murderous, cowardly pack, pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!” (McKay & Chapman, 1968, p. 372). Some may find this poem nihilistic given the title, yet given the nature of the poem, it is quite profound in its determination to be dignified even in the presence of death.

Frank Horne’s poem, “Nigger: A Chant for Children,” is definitely an African-American agency poem because it attempts to take the power of the racist word “Nigger” and redefine it by using it in reference to realistic and...
fictional figures of influence, such as Hannibal, Othello, Crispus Attucks, Toussant, and even Jesus. Yet at the end, Horne relates it back to the little black boy in the poem, “Little Black boy runs down the street--’Nigger, nigger never die Black face an’ shiney eye...” (Horne & Chapman, 1968, p. 402).

Richard Wright’s novel, “Native Son” personified the “bad negro” who was an outlaw who defied white people at a time when such defiance meant death. The main character, Bigger Thomas was this outlaw. Wright, in his essay “How Bigger Was Born”, writes, “The Bigger Thomases were the only Negroes I know of who consistently violated the Jim Crow Laws of the South and got away with it” (Wright & Chapman, 1968, p. 538). These were real men who revealed their agency by not respecting an authority that did not respect them.

These African-Americans demonstrated self-value and self-respect, much the same that Marcus Garvey believed in. “Up You Mighty Race” (Hine & Harrold, 2006, p. 436), was Garvey’s pronouncement to African-Americans. Garveyism was widespread, even within Malcolm X’s autobiography, “The Autobiography of Malcolm X”, in which he states, “my father, the Reverend Earl Little, was a Baptist minister, a dedicated organizer for Marcus Aurelius Garvey’s U.N.I.A. (Universal Negro Improvement Association) (X & Chapman, 1968, p. 333).” Malcolm X himself actually held very strong ideological ties to Garvey’s notion of Black self-determination. Fifty or so years after 1903, the color line was no longer a peripheral battle, but more so a direct battle fought by and for African-Americans in the form of the Civil Rights Movement.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design is centered on a critical historical perspective and narrative analysis. This approach is necessary because ignoring the two designs would not provide a complete understanding of the present study. With only a critical historical perspective, the reader would not necessarily realize the complexities of the color line in relation to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance. Likewise, with only a narrative analysis, the reader would likely find it difficult to understand the historical significance of such an emergence. A critical historical perspective helps give a comprehensive historical context, where the narrative analysis serves to provide analysis of literary work of the Harlem Renaissance and other literary work that helps support this study’s key points. Therefore, using both designs make it possible for the reader to have a full understanding of the relation and the agency found within such an important time for African-Americans.
The three primary goals of this research were to identify the ideologies of Du Bois, Locke and Garvey, who were among the most influential progenitors of the Harlem Renaissance, along with three factors that were essential to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance: the color line, World War I, and the Great Migration. No sampling of any objects or persons was utilized in this study, only analysis of literature and of quotes from relevant works were used to identify the key points and advance the topic.

**DISCUSSION**

This study makes it clear that the formation of the color line in American society, the efforts and aims of African-Americans during World War I, and the Great Migration were essential to the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance. Along with the ideologies of Du Bois, Locke, and Garvey, which helped to support this emergence, African-Americans participating in this renaissance sought to redefine what blackness meant, and to define for themselves what it meant to be black and living in America. Locke stated in his 1925 book, “The New Negro” that “by shedding the old chrysalis of the Negro problem we are achieving something like a spiritual emancipation… The decade that found us with a problem has left us with only a task.” (Locke & Chapman). Locke goes on to say, “…The Negro to-day wished to be known for what he is, even in his faults and shortcomings, and scorns a craven and precarious survival at the price of seeming to be what he is not.” This profound quote addresses the two major themes in African-American life: the problem of the color line and double-consciousness.

Locke, through his writing, used agency by viewing racism, discrimination, and prejudice as a task to be handled, as opposed to a problem that would by dissolved by whites. Second, Locke basically proclaims that this “New Negro” is not going to put up with false representations of himself, and is going to be his true self and not a caricature or assimilation. Locke’s stand was realized in the literary work of Malcolm X, Richard Wright, and the fiery speeches of Marcus Garvey.

In the mid-1960s, during the Civil Rights Movement, a new generation of African-Americans dealt with issues of the color line. Although legal segregation in the South was legally obliterated through the Supreme Court and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Overfield, 2002, p. 303), African-Americans were still faced with the reality of the disparity of the color line:

…Legal and legislative victories did not translate into jobs, higher standards of living, or the end of de facto segregation and prejudice. Millions of blacks, both those in the South and those who had migrated to northern cities, lived in poverty, a fact
highlighted by the efforts of the Johnson administration in 1964 and 1965 to eliminate poverty through its War on Poverty and Great Society programs (Overfield, 2002 p. 303).

Due to increasing prejudice and poverty, African-Americans in the mid-1960s became more radicalized, resulting in a new direction for the Civil Rights Movement and translating into riots in more than three hundred cities between 1964 and 1965 (Overfield, 2002, p. 303). Young African-Americans sought to find their agency within this radicalization just as much as young “New Negroes” in the early twentieth century sought out their agency. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a student-led organization started in the mid-1960s, was one of several organizations that became more radical in hopes of obliterating the injustices surrounding the color line in their era. This goal was supported by SNCC advocate, Stokely Carmichael (who later changed his name to Kwame Toure) in 1966, when he chanted “Black Power!” in a speech during a civil rights march from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi (Overfield, 2002, p. 303). This powerful rallying cry soon would replace previous slogans of the Civil Rights Movement, such as “We Shall Overcome” and “Freedom Now” (Overfield, 2002, p. 303).

IMPLICATIONS

The problem of the color line must be addressed in regard to matters of racism in American society. As American society becomes more diverse and multicultural, understanding the color line is imperative for understanding social conditions. Furthermore, analyzing the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance in relation to the color line may, show similar unequal conditions that may occur in future generations. Neglecting to understand the color line and its effects can lead to inequality in society and ultimately injustices, which have been seen in America for many generations. The consequences of such inequalities and injustices ultimately results in despair, lack of education, lack of resources, poverty, and hopelessness. Yet those who are affected the most from by color line, non-whites, which has been existed in American society from the early twentieth century to mid-1960s specifically, have sought to acquire agency to change their conditions. Still, racism, which causes the color line, must be addressed to obliterate the divide.

LIMITATIONS

Limited time made it difficult to further this study. The lack thereof made it difficult to further the research. If possible, more time would have allowed the opportunity to broaden the research, to include more literary works.
of the early twentieth century, and to examine gender issues within the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance.

CONCLUSION

The emergence and the duration of the Harlem Renaissance lies in the outgrowth of philosophies produced by early twentieth century intellectuals, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, and Marcus Garvey. James H. Overfield’s, Sources of Twentieth-Century Global History, offers:

*The Black Power Movement had antecedents in Marcus Garvey’s back-to-Africa crusade of the 1920s and organizations such as the Nation of Islam, founded in the 1930s, which called for a separate black nation. In the late 1960s Black Power became a rallying cry for black militancy and was embraced by the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE), the Black Panthers, and SNCC* (Overfield, 2002, p. 303).

Furthermore, this same foundation also made it easier for other groups to affirm their agency against the color line (i.e., white supremacy). In Rainbow Radicalism: The Rise of the Radical Ethnic Nationalism by Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, the author states that, “scholars have long credited the Civil Rights Movement with fomenting the emerging liberation movements of woman, gays and others in the late 1960s and early 1970s.” The author goes on to further explain how black liberation movements have inspired other oppressed peoples:

*While the black struggle for civil rights undoubtedly affected the growing efforts of other marginalized and oppressed groups in the United States, it was the Black Power movement that had some of the most visible influences on the radical activists struggles of Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans, giving rise to a visible movement of radical ethnic nationalism and new constructions of ethnic identity* (Ogbar & Joseph, 2006, p. 193).

This observation speaks to the continued legacy of the early twentieth century during which African-Americans sought to remove the color line, which brought about the emergence of the Harlem Renaissance.
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Moore, S.. Fall 2007 at CSU, Sacramento


A PERPETUATED STEREOTYPE: THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CURRENT POPULAR “HOOD” FILMS, THE BIRTH OF A NATION, AND THE PORTRAYALS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES AS CRIMINALS IN MAINSTREAM AMERICAN FILMS

Adam Clark Williams III

Dr. Ray Koegel, Faculty Mentor

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the relationships between current popular culture in the United States, and the racial mythology of African American males depicted in mainstream American cinema. Specifically, this research examines the old African American mythical character type of the “Brutal Black Buck” made extremely popular from the film The Birth of A Nation (1915), and compares it with the popular African American male character type of the “Gangsta” in contemporary films (1990 – 2005). These character types are based on the criminal stereotype of African American males, which have been perpetuated and popularized by the film industry. Ultimately, this study compares these two character types to determine, to what extent the criminal depictions of African American males in mainstream American films have changed.

The art of film has developed into a one-way communication medium that uses a combination of images and sounds, to transmit a variety of messages to massive audiences that now span the globe. Author James Baldwin observed that:

The country’s image of the Negro, which hasn’t very much to do with the Negro, has never failed to reflect with a kind of terrifying accuracy the state of mind of the country (Marlon Riggs, The Color Adjustment).

A man who calls himself the “Unknown Film Critic” summarizes the issue of how African American actors are stereotyped. In an article entitled Lowering The Bar, which he observes that:
By the time Denzel won his second Oscar for playing an evil, corrupt cop [his first was for playing a slave], I was reminded, great as Training Day was and great as his performance was, of the recurring theme in many Hollywood films in regards to black men that deep down they’re all criminals. A few years earlier Lawrence Fishburne had done a film called Deep Cover with a similar hidden theme. Was Denzel’s Glory performance that much better than his portrayal of Steven Biko in Cry Freedom or the lawyer in Philadelphia? [or his performance in Malcolm X!] Or did they not want to reward the brother for playing a positive image of a black man! (Unknown Film Critic, 2005).

These “hood” films are so common and popular that they have become a staple of the African American male portrayal in contemporary Hollywood, along with those of athletes, and entertainers. This research is conducted to determine and measure the extent of the relationship between the criminal depictions of the Brutal Black Buck character in D.W. Griffith’s film, The Birth of A Nation (1915), and current (1990 - 2005) popular depictions of African American males in several “Hood Films.”

This study asserts that the main messages that popular contemporary “Hood” films send out about African American males are very similar to the messages that were sent out in D.W. Griffith’s controversial blockbuster film The Birth of A Nation in 1915. The researcher suggests that the “Gangsta” image in several “Hood” films throughout the 1990’s and the new millennium are depicted in similar fashion to the image of the Brutal Black Buck in The Birth of a Nation. As a result of repeated exposure to criminal stereotypes of African American males in popular “Hood” films and a lack of personal exposure to African American males, help to cultivate a message within contemporary popular culture that the majority of African American males are criminals. Finally, this researcher believes that the producers and financiers of these “Hood” films have the ability to create popular and successful films that represent the African American male in a manner that is less criminally associated, yet they choose not to.

Media Cultivation of Racial Stereotypes
Many popular films of the past relegated their depictions of African American males in mainstream American cinema to shallow characters that reinforced inferiority of the African American male. For example, popular depictions of African American male characters including: Robert Long who played Gus in The Birth of A Nation, Lincoln Perry or his stage name
“Stepin Fetchit,” and Bill Robinson or his stage name “Bo Jangles,” have all portrayed characters in past mainstream American films which embodied racist stereotypes of African American males. Yet, these actors were prominent all the while embodying Euro-American beliefs and attitudes, which the popular culture consciously or subconsciously accepted.

However, popular images of African American males throughout popular films today are somewhat different from the earlier bluntly racist images. Mostly through the consistent efforts of united Africans amongst the Diaspora in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, audiences have been forced to view African Americans with more dignity and respect. However, one can question to what degree has the state of mind of mainline audiences really changed in its view of the African American male.

The impact that repeated dramatic imagery can have on audience’s perception of social reality is significant. Researchers have known for many years that stereotypes transmitted through mass media can have a strong impact on social perception. Mass media “cultivates” distinct views of society and culture. This concept of media cultivation is an accepted standard for understanding how media affects audiences (Littlejohn 1996). In an article by Ronald E. Hall in the Journal of Black Studies titled The Ball Curve: Calculated Racism and the Stereotype of African American Men, he shows how stereotypes of African American males are used to confirm the “truth” of derogatory stereotypes in the minds of its viewers, even though it is not factual. Hall states,

*In reality, European Americans have relied on stereotypes to call attention to racist beliefs that characterize African American men in a derogatory context. What is more, stereotypes cannot presume the accuracy of fact. Nonetheless, when influenced by racism, European Americans apply stereotypes to exaggerations or speculations about African American men that are untrue* (Hall, 2001, p. 106).

Many researchers say that the impact of electronic popular media (i.e.- film, television, and internet) as “Educators” (Gerbner) has allowed the film industry to repetitiously capitalize, exploit and mis-educate popular culture. Dr. Craig Watkins, author of Representing: Hip Hop Culture and the Production of Black Cinema, credits “hood” films and Hip Hop culture for the mass-popularization and continuation of the African American criminal stereotype throughout the 1990’s. He refers to what he termed as the “Ghetto Action Film Cycle” to explain how the media was able to capitalize and exploit youth subcultures and popular trends:
It is important to note, then, that commercial cultural formations are shaped by historical particularities that continually refigure youth subcultures and popular trends. As a result, the film industry must constantly modify its production strategies and product offerings in order to remain popular with successive generations of youth. The ghetto action film cycle was Hollywood’s attempt to exploit historically specific mood shifts in youth popular culture. In addition, the core symbolic attributes of the film cycle strategically incorporated expressive elements from hip hop’s predominantly youth constituency (Watkins; p. 178).

Dr. George Gerbner who developed “cultivation theory” notes that media outlets have become the great common experience of almost everyone, which in effect, provides a shared way of viewing the world. “The repetitive pattern of television’s mass-produced messages and images form the mainstream of a common symbolic environment” (Littlejohn; p. 340). Even though Dr. Gerbner applies this effect generally towards the constant mass production of images from television, it also applies well with the mass production of images from films because, a large portion of films today are transmitted to audiences using devices (e.g., DVDs, and VCRs) that display it’s images onto home television monitors. Essentially, the theory implies that heavy viewership of mass mediated images formulate and cultivate an attitude within the viewer that is constantly exposed to fabricated images that make up a version of reality, more so than exposing themselves to the actuality.

Portraying history through film, and especially Hollywood feature films, is difficult because of the tendency to fit historical stories into traditional generic film narratives, often leading to a compacted and simplified historical narrative. Hollywood films also tend to be made for a broad general audience, so the history of the majority of this audience, traditionally white and middle class, is emphasized, and dramatic liberty is taken with the story to make it more engaging and understandable for that audience. The end result is an audience that learns much of what they know about the past from viewing simplified, “whitewashed” historical narratives that generally exclude or minimize the roles of marginalized peoples in the national story (Watkins).

This created version of the world entices heavy viewers to make assumptions about violence, people, places, and other fictionalized or historical events which do not hold true to real life events. Cultivation theory asserts that the attitudes of viewers are cultivated primarily by what they watch on television.
Gerbner views this television world as “not a window on or reflection of the world, but a world in itself” (McQuail).

In a larger context, the cultivation theory is due in large part with technology heavily exposing this society to tools that quench our thirst for immediate gratification. It is hard, especially those from earlier decades and generations to ignore its impact on the ways we communicate with one another. Television, DVD’s, MP3’s, the World Wide Web, cell phones, etc. as the central modes of communication for popular culture, has altered society’s fundamental need to converse with one another face to face.

For the first time in human history, children are hearing most of the stories, most of the time, not from their parents or school or churches or neighbors, but from a handful of global conglomerates that have something to sell. It is impossible to overestimate the radical effect that this has on the way our children grow up, the way we live, and the way we conduct our affairs. (Gerbner, “The Ecology of Justice”; p. 40).

Diminishing practices in today’s popular culture such as: believing none of what you hear and half of what you see, earning for your keep, looking a person in their eyes, and even the need for kids, teenagers, and young adults to practice outdoor recreation and socialization skills. These practices have been replaced with those that enhance their abilities to resourcefully and creatively find easier ways to satisfy their appetite to entertain themselves. The diminishment of these values has greatly impacted the ways in which popular culture obtains information for personal development, understanding and growth. Nearly gone are the days of spending hours in the library or listening to those that have decades of knowledge and experience in a particular field. Many people today, especially youth, need only log into the internet and “Ask Jeeves” or turn on the television and view living examples of life. However, the researcher believes that these “electronic teachers” have continued the installation of “Afrophobia” (a phobic attitude toward people of indigenous West African or Sub-Saharan African origin, their culture or ideas; rooted in Negrophobia and Colorphobia”) into society (Greene, 76).

“The crime, as the tearful young mother reported it, was demonic: a carjacking in which a thief roared off with her two infants still inside. The mother’s wrenching pleas for the safe return of her sons were made to the national media, which had gathered in the small city of Union, South Carolina, to report the story’s outcome in all its pathos. Much of the nation was transfixed by the pictures of the angelic infants and by Susan Smith’s mask of grieving motherhood. Looming as a backdrop to these images of innocence was Smith’s description of the demonic figure: an African
American male in a skullcap—thus, the nation’s portrait of a criminal and a Black devil.

But the nation soon discovered that there were no Black devils. Smith, the young White mother with the tear-streaked face, possessed by demons of her own, later confessed to authorities that she had strapped her sons into the car and plunged them to their deaths in a nearby lake. But until the moment of truth when the local police officials finally bluffed a confession out of her, there was that image—loose again on the surface of the national consciousness—coming out of the warped mind of antebellum America out of Thomas Dixon’s 1905 novel The Clansmen and D.W. Griffith’s 1915 film the Birth of a Nation (Dennis Rome- Black Demons, p. 46).

Just as in past generations, the continuation of this stereotype is dependant on the ignorance and fear of popular culture’s knowledge of and real life exposure to African American males. Much of popular culture has become so distanced in their exposure and experiences with African American males that they inherit and/or believe pre-existing notions and conglomerate portrayals which tells them, African American males are predominately criminals. A critical part of this research and the cultivation theory is about understanding what is known as the “Mean World” syndrome. This effect implies that through heavy exposure to violent mass produced images, causes individuals to believe that the world is a nastier place than it really is. “Theorists attribute this to the fact that television depicts the world as a mean and violent place and therefore, heavy viewers are overly frightened and too cautious of the real world” (Phillips). Again, since a large part of television is through devices that transmit film images, and the most popular depiction of African American males have criminal attributes (i.e.- “Hood” films) (Donald Bogle), depictions of African American males as criminals in popular films also apply to the Mean World syndrome effect.

Richard Maynard in his book The Black Man on Film, analyzes the ways in which the African American male has been portrayed in mainstream American cinema, and the social implications from the stereotypes that have arisen from these portrayals. Mr. Maynard highlights Lawrence Reddick’s 19 Basic Stereotypes of Blacks in American Society. These 19 stereotypes are the: Savage African, Happy Slave, Devoted Servant, Corrupt politician, Irresponsible Citizen, Petty Thief, Social Delinquent, Vicious Criminal, Sexual Superman, Superior Athlete, Unhappy Non-White, Natural Born Cook, Natural Born Musician, Perfect Entertainer, Superstitious Church-goer, Chicken and Watermelon Eater, Razor and Knife “Toter”, Uninhibited Expressionist, Mental Inferior” (Maynard, p. vi). Donald Bogle further examined how the popularity of The Birth of a Nation reinforced the
Brutal Black Buck stereotype into the minds of its viewers in his book Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Film. He also takes an in-depth look at other African American stereotypes which are named in the title. Bogle examines how these stereotypes have been perpetuated in mainstream American films, and how these stereotypes have affected American society during the eras when they were popular.

Dennis Rome, author of Black Demons: The Media’s Depiction of the African American Male Criminal Stereotype analyzes the depiction of the African American male criminal stereotype and how this stereotype is perpetuated and popularized by Hollywood, to define the African American male experience in American society. Mr. Rome shows how the African American male has been depicted in mainstream American films as being brutal, violent, aggressive, and unruly in their countless roles as thugs, hustlers, drug dealers, pimps, thieves, and gang members.

The Evolution of the Brutal Black Buck

The Brutal Black Buck (Black Buck) (or) sometimes referred as his closely related cousin, The Black Brute, was a character that was mainly shown as barely human and a hideous creature, throughout several books, articles, comics, cartoons and small budgeted films.

“The brute character portrays Black men as innately savage, animalistic, destructive, and criminal -- deserving punishment, maybe death. This brute is a fiend, a sociopath, an anti-social menace. Black brutes are depicted as hideous, terrifying predators who target helpless victims, especially White women.” “Charles H. Smith, a writer at the end of the 1890s, claimed, “A bad negro is the most horrible creature upon the earth, the most brutal and merciless.”1 “Clifton R. Breckinridge, a contemporary of Smith’s, said of the Black race,” “when it produces a brute, he is the worst and most insatiate brute that exists in human form” (Pilgrim, 2000).

This character was formulated and used by many in this society, to depict African American men during the Reconstruction Era, as a villain. The Black Buck character would use violence, criminal and unruly behavior, and instincts instead of conscious thought as a way of behaving in society. As a way of invoking fear into the minds of its viewers, film directors and/or sketchers generally depicted the Black Buck in dark colored, night, or low lit settings and backgrounds to portray him as sneaky and/or evil. It was also common to use slow rhythm instrumentals or Opera music with base drums to emotionally keep the audience unstable. Much of the same film practices can be found in early popular horror films to enhance the scariness or evilness of monster like characters in films such as: Edison Frankenstein
(1910), Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1920), or even The Phantom of the Opera (1925). To further enhance the scariness and animalistic nature, the Brutal Black Buck character would usually wear worn down, stained and ripped clothing, had sharp canine teeth, and kinky non-groomed hair.

Criminally stereotyping African American males in early blockbuster films reached a high water mark in America’s most popular silent film. In 1915, D.W. Griffith produced The Birth of A Nation. This highly budgeted and popular silent film followed the lives of two brothers from the South during the Reconstruction era. In the film, their lives were affected by historical events such as the Civil War, Lincoln’s assassination, and the birth of the Klu Klux Klan (Bogle). During this film however, it used an array of stereotypical African American characters mostly played by Euro-American actors in Blackface, throughout several key scenes to depict African Americans. Amongst these characters were the: Coon, Buck, Uncle Remus, Uncle Tom, and Pickaninny characters. The most notable of these characters is Gus, who was an example of the Brutal Black Buck character type. The Black Buck was the films’ most prevalent Black character and portrayed African Americans as being a menace or disruptive force to the Euro-American society in the South, during and following the Civil War. According to Donald Bogle, he says that “with the Griffith spectacle,” (referring to Griffith’s The Birth of a Nation) “audiences saw the first of the guises.” “The brutes, the bucks, and the tragic mulatto all wore the guise of villains” (Bogle; 2001).

In Griffith’s film, it showed an array of African American male villains, mostly played by Euro-American male actors in “blackface”, in roles that show sex-craving and animal-like men who forage the city looking for Euro-American women to rape; crooked and mannerless politicians who illegally pass laws, eat chicken, fall asleep and take their smelly shoes off during a congressional meeting; and cruel savages who gang up, beat up, and terrorize fair, honest, and law abiding Euro-American men. Alone, this film widely instilled the Black Buck character into the motion picture industry and into the minds of popular culture as a realistic portrayal of most African American men. So popular, controversial, and influential was Griffith’s film that it is still among “one of the highest grossing films of all time” (Bogle, p. 16).

This film, highly saturated with racist depictions of African Americans, serves as the researcher’s main source for the depictions of the Brutal Black Buck. Griffith’s film was so popular and influential during this period in US history that it profoundly heightened the tensions between Afro-Americans and Euro-Americans. In fact, following its New York premiere:
race riots broke out in a number of cities. Newspaper editorials and speeches censured the film. Black critics such as Laurence Reddick said it glorified the Ku Klux Klan, and Reddick added that the film’s immense success was at least one factor contributing to the great and growing popularity the organization (The Ku Klux Klan) enjoyed during this period (Bogle, p.15).

“(Thomas Nelson) Page, who helped popularize the images of cheerful and devoted Mammies and Sambos in his early books, became one of the first writers to introduce a literary Black brute. In 1898, he published Red Rock, a Reconstruction novel, with the heinous figure of Moses, a loathsome and sinister Black politician. Moses tried to rape a White woman: “He gave a snarl of rage and sprang at her like a wild beast.” He was later lynched for “a terrible crime.” “The “terrible crime” most often mentioned in connection with the Black brute was rape, more specifically, the rape of a White woman. At the beginning of the twentieth century, much of the virulent, anti-Black propaganda that found its way into scientific journals, local newspapers, and best-selling novels focused on the stereotype of the Black rapist. The claim that Black brutes were, in epidemic numbers, raping White women became the public rationalization for the lynching of Blacks” (Dr. David Pilgrim, 2000).

By making this excuse, the Brutal Black Buck image gave cause to many Euro-Americans to accept no responsibility for their continued actions and the actions of their predecessors, for abuses against the African American male. This image also provided an outlet in which to describe the viciousness and primitive nature of the African American male to show his mental inferiority to the European American male.

The Gangsta Stereotype
In mainstream American films, the image of the “Gangsta” has been made very popular during the 1990’s and continuing into the new millennium, especially amongst younger crowds both Afro-American and Euro-American. The “gangsta” image which closely resembles a “thug”, is loosely representative of the Italian mafia stereotype depicted in such films as: The Untouchables, White Heat, The Godfather, and The Sopranos. The “Gangster” image, which represents the lifestyle of a “Gangsta”, are according to the US Department of Justice “an ongoing, organized association of three or more persons… collectively engage in or have engaged in criminal activity.” (National Survey Streetgang Report, 1998).

The “Gangsta” is an unofficial term that is most commonly associated with Afro-American males, and is almost always in reference to individuals that are
poor, live in urban settings, and participate in illegal activities such as: drugs, prostitution, theft, and violence. The “Gangsta” is usually depicted as a thug, a hustler, a drug dealer, a pimp, or any combination of these four depictions.

Similarly, Craig Samuel Watkins in his book Representing: Hop Culture and the Production of Black Cinema, looks at the influence that the emerging culture of Hip Hop, has had on the production of African American cinema. The stereotypical depiction of hip hop culture’s “gangsta image”, which represents the African American male as a gun-toting thug in generally rundown urban communities, is extensively examined in the last three chapters of his book, respectively titled: “Producing Ghetto Pictures,” “The Ghetto-centric Imagination,” and “The Culture Industry and the Hip Hop Generation.”

In his article, *He is a “Bad Mother ****”: Shaft and Contemporary Black Masculinity*, Matthew Henry explores the current constructions of popular African American masculinity within American popular culture. These constructions of masculinity include the: Pimp image, Hustler image, Baaadass-take no shit from nobody image, ultra-cool and sexy image. Mr. Henry uses director Gordon Park’s popular character of John Shaft from the movie Shaft, which was produced in 1976 and starred African American actor Richard Roundtree, and compares it with director John Singleton’s character of John Shaft, from the 2000 version of the film Shaft, which starred African American actor Samuel L. Jackson. Mr. Henry found that these two films revealed how shifting ideologies of race and gender have helped to define Black masculinity in American culture.

Along with the other characteristics, the behavior of the “Gangsta” is generally relegated to being: insensitive, angry, unruly, disobedient, and uncontrollable (except by death). The character type of the “Gangsta” is a very scary individual that usually represents the greatest threat towards the society or at least towards the protagonist of the film. The “Gangsta” attire in film is generally unmistakable as this character commonly wear the symbolic “Crip” (Blue) and/or “Blood” (Red) gang colors, wave-caps, hats worn at unique angles, gold chains, sagging jeans with large athletic shirts and professional team logos, or even sagging jeans without a shirt to show off his rippling muscles and scary tattoos throughout his upper body. Generally, the “Gangsta” character is remotely seen laughing or smiling, not too far from a liquor store, a joint (marijuana), a dice game, prostitute, police, or other “Gangstas.” Also, the Gangsta character is generally depicted with some form of weapon, with a hand gun as his favorite choice but can also be seen with a sawed off shotgun, knife, razor, ice-pic, or even a bat.
The “Gangsta’s” favorite activities usually involve some form of blue collar crimes such as: robbery, drug dealing, or assault, and generally occur after smoking a joint or drinking a forty (A forty-ounce bottle of liquor), all the while doing nothing constructive for the greater good of humanity or society. Furthermore, the “Gangsta” is usually a burly man, in his late teens, or early to late twenties, unemployed (or at least vaguely shown in the workplace), dark skinned, a non-stranger to the penitentiary, and is usually shown at night or in a low lit setting.

From the clothing of the character, to the articulation of the English language or even his level of civility and humanity, on the surface the Gangsta image can seem far removed from that of the Black Buck image. However, when analyzed the Gangsta image represents and sends out messages that are reminiscent of the Black Buck image.

“In the 1980s and 1990s the typical cinema and television brute was nameless -- sometimes faceless; he sprang from a hiding place, he robbed, raped, and murdered. He represented the cold brutality of urban life. Often he was a gangbanger. Sometimes he was a dope fiend” (Pilgrim 2000).

“Gangsta” films of the 1990’s and the new millennium (more commonly known as “Hood” films) are known for depicting African American men in a violent, or criminal manner.

Just as in popular Afro-American movies during the “Blaxploitation” period of film (1970’s) where audiences admired the cool, bad, “take no shit” attitudes of Melvin Van Peebles in Sweet Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song, Ron O’Neal in Super Fly, or Richard Roundtree in Shaft, audiences have also admired the Afro-American male actors of the 1990’s and new millennium with similar attributes such as; Wesley Snipes in New Jack City, Ice Cube in Boyz N’ the Hood, and Denzel Washington in Training Day.

The highly popular and financially successful film Boyz ‘N’ the Hood (which was created by African American film director John Singleton in 1991 and inspired several other directors to make similar Hood films), depicted numerous Afro-American men or Afro-American boys in gangs that shot at or threatened to shoot people, fighting or beating up individuals, selling dope, being arrested for theft, and rampanty using foul language. This “Gangsta” image, just like that of the Black Buck image, is geared towards depicting the African American male as a symbol towards the greatest threat posed to society.

For instance, in the film New Jack City that was directed by Mario Van Peebles in 1991, showed Wesley Snipes as a highly organized and successful gang leader named Nino Brown, who floods the urban Afro-American
neighborhoods of New York City with drugs in order to take control and build a multi-million dollar “business.” Brown is characterized as having split personalities. The first as a violent man who in the very first scene of the film, throws a man off of the Brooklyn Bridge, orders the execution of several individuals, and even stabs a member of his own gang in the hand with a sword. The other side is a man who has a good time dancing at the club, and sponsors weddings and Thanksgiving meals for people in the community. This unstable and uncontrollable Afro-American man is represented as the greatest threat towards the massive inner-city boroughs of New York City. The film even uses a tag team of two gangs (the NYPD along with the Italian Mob) to bring down this ruthless criminal. The character of Nino Brown sends out a message that when power is attached to African American males that come from poor, inner city backgrounds, that he can be the most destructive force to society if he isn’t controlled. Once this ‘homicidal maniac’ is out-of-control the only way to stop him is to kill him, as was the fate of the character of Nino Brown.

A major factor that contributes toward today’s perpetuation of the African American male criminal stereotype, is the media currently being the most popular tool for teaching and development of youth in the US popular culture. In fact:

*By the time a child enters school, he or she will have watched more hours of television than they ever will spend in a college classroom. With the average television on in American homes for over seven hours a day, one can see how the role of the television becomes “educator” to many viewers, despite the content.* (John Stossel; ABC News; 20/20).

The increasing popularity of “Hood” films amongst society and the media industry have brought about a high demand in popular culture for the film industry to create films that embrace the “Gangsta” image. While, the majority of popular culture in the US is made up by Euro-American middle class individuals (Shohatt and Stam; p. 179), “The adolescent and young adult market constitutes the core audience for Hollywood films” (Watkins; p. 176). With African Americans making up only 13.1% of the US population, they aren’t representative of the majority population compared to that of Whites, 60.7% (US Census Bureau; 2006). However, African American representations in “Hip Hop Culture”, which is the most popularly embraced culture amongst all adolescences (Kitwana; 72, Edison Media Research; 2004), are overwhelmingly represented in “Hood” films compared to other film genres (Kitwana, 16).
“Whereas the production of rap-inflected films in the mid-1980’s predominantly targeted young Black teens, the production of rap-inflected films in the 1990’s imagined a wider and potentially more lucrative market of Black, White, and international moviegoers. Black popular film, from this perspective, is packaged not only for Black consumption and pleasure but, more important, for White consumption and pleasure. This trend in popular cultural production distinguishes the ghetto action film cycle from the blaxploitation boom of the 1970’s” (Watkins; p. 194).

Because African American adolescences are a significantly smaller percentage of the total US population compared to its European American counterpart, and that Hip Hop is the most popular culture amongst this group, the researcher believes this shows that the directors of these “Hood” films and the film industry as a holistic entity, are creating films based on a systematic formula of what young European Americans want to see from African American males, in order to maximize their profits.

“Popular culture relies on formula and repetition. People need to be reminded of what they believe and popular culture does this by repeating certain beliefs and values and organizing them into genres. Through formula and repetition, popular culture evolves into standards that tell people what is approved and accepted among its participants” – (Angela M.S. Nelson, 2002).

Racial stereotypes in “Gangsta” films
As noted above this study compares the highly popular 1915 film Birth of a Nation by D.W. Griffith using the “Brutal Black Buck” characters in the film, to the “Gangsta” characters in contemporary popular “Hood” films. Seven films that fell under the researcher’s category of “Hood” films were selected based on their popularity. The film’s popularity was based on the film’s domestic total gross sale which is: “how much money the film has made in movie theaters, between its opening date and its closing date” (Film Box Office Database, 2006). It was determined by the researcher that in order for the film to be included, the film needed to gross at least twenty million dollars in domestic box office sales. The seven films along with each film’s domestic total gross are listed on Table 1a.
Using Lawrence Reddick’s list of 19 Basic Stereotypes of Blacks in American Society from Richard Maynard’s book The Black Man on Film (Table 1b), the researcher narrowed down his list of nineteen stereotypes, to those that were only criminally related. These six stereotypes were used as the researcher’s categories in order to recognize if/how many of the African American male criminal stereotypes were present in each of the films.

Under each of these categories is a crime, or a list of crimes, that represents the category (Table 2c). The crime/s under each of the categories were narrowed down from a list of forty-eight crimes (Crime-Software Encyclopedia; 2006) to twenty-six crimes that were relevant to this study (Tables 2a, 2b). Since “hood film” is an unofficial genre and films can be diagnosed as such based on a number of different attributes, the researcher put together a formula in order to show why these seven films were valid “hood films”. In order to qualify for the study, each of the seven films had to contain at least seventeen of the twenty-six crimes (65%; n = 17) listed in table 2b, as well as the film had to be set in a poor and/or urban neighborhood for at least half of the duration of the film.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 1a</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) New Jack City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Boyz N the Hood</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Menace to Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Dead Presidents</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Hoodlum</td>
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<tr>
<td>7) Hustle and Flow</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1b</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Savage African</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Happy Slave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Devoted Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Corrupt Politicain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Irresponsible Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chicken and watermelon eater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Uninhibited expressionist</td>
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Source: Lawrence Reddick, 19 Basic Stereotypes of Blacks in American Society
Next, the researcher examined how many of these stereotypes are present in the Birth of a Nation, and the seven contemporary films. The results of the findings in the Birth of a Nation were compared to the results of the findings in the seven contemporary films. This comparison will determine the extent that specific criminally related stereotypes remain present in mainstream American films.

**Defining the Scoring**

In order to determine the relationships that the criminal depictions of African American males in the film The Birth of a Nation had with “Hood” films, a scoring tool was developed to establish the degree to which “hood” films and The Birth of a Nation shared common features. Data was collected in six different areas to determine the similar and/or common features between the films. First, the racial identity of the directors of each film was figured, to determine if a certain race of film directors depicted the African American male criminal stereotype in “hood” films more frequently than others (Appendix A). Second, the frequency of the stereotypes that were present of the main African American male criminal character in each film was scored, to determine which African American male criminal
stereotypes were most commonly depicted in the “hood” films and The Birth of A Nation (Appendix B). Third, the criminal activity displayed by an African American male in each film was figured, to determine which crimes were most commonly depicted in the “hood” films and The Birth of A Nation (Appendix E). Fifth, the most popular type of setting that the main African American male “Gangsta” character was depicted in each “Hood” film was determined and compared with the most popular type of setting that the “Black Buck” character was set in The Birth of a Nation (Appendix D). Sixth, the skin tone of the main African American male criminal character in each film was figured, to determine which complexion was most commonly depicted in The Birth of A Nation and the “Hood” films (Appendix C).

**FINDINGS**

The first research observation denotes the appearance of a particular crime displayed by an African American male in each “hood” film. Assault (100%; n = 7), homicide (86%; n = 6), theft of some sort (81%; n = 5.67 - average of three specific theft crimes), being in possession of drugs (100%; n = 7), threatening violence (100%; n = 7), and being in possession of a deadly weapon (100%; n = 7), all had greater outcomes than the expected n = 5. Genocide, illegal gambling, blackmail, burglary, stalking, and racketeering were equivalent to the expected outcome (71%; n = 5). While rape (14%; n = 1), kidnapping (14%; n = 1) looting (43%; n = 3), trespassing (43%; n = 3), and embezzlement (43%; n = 3) all had outcomes less than that hypothesized by the researcher.

The second observation determined the most and least popular African American male criminal character types throughout these “hood” films. The Weapon Toter (100%; n = 7), the Petty Thief (81%; n = 17), and the Social Delinquent (71%; n = 30) being the most popular types. While the Vicious or Savage Criminal (50%; n = 21), the Corrupt Politician (45%; n = 19), and the Irresponsible Citizen (32%; n = 9) appears in half or less than half of the observed “hood” films.

The third observation determined the most popular crimes/character types committed/depicted by an African American male throughout the film The Birth of a Nation. Possession of a deadly weapon, threatening, stalking, trespassing, conspiracy, homicide, and assault were the most popular crimes throughout the film, (each committed five or more times by an African American male throughout the film). The Weapon Toter, the Social Delinquent, the Vicious or Savage Criminal, and the Corrupt Politician were the most popular African American criminal character types; (each
category was depicted at least twelve times throughout the film from a crime committed by an African American male).

The fourth observation denotes the environment that the main African American male criminal character is placed in for the majority of each “hood” film. The main African American male criminal characters in a majority of these “hood” films were set in urban and/or poor neighborhoods (86%; n = 6).

The fifth observation analyzes the racial make-up of the main African American male criminal character in these “hood” films, as well as the ethnicity and gender of its director/s. Criminal characters in these “hood” films are disproportionately dark in skin tone, and ranged between a 3 and 4 on the complexion scale (89%; n = 26). While the ethnicity and gender of the directors are overwhelmingly African American (71%; n = 5) and male (100%; n = 7).

CONCLUSION

The major finding of this study is that the overall depictions of African American males in mainstream films today (1990 – 2005) that are made in the United States hasn’t changed much in form and/or the messages that it sends out to its viewers compared to the Birth of a Nation. Study shows that darker skin toned African American main male characters in each hood film are depicted as scarier than his lighter toned counterpart. For instance, it is highly likely that he is involved in criminal activity compared to his lighter toned counterparts and he is overwhelmingly representative of violent criminal stereotypes such as: The Vicious or Savage Criminal, The Weapon Toter, and The Petty Thief. These findings are also prevalent in the Birth of a Nation, although, the main African American male criminal character “Gus” was played by a Euro-American actor in “Black face.” As in the Birth of a Nation, violent crimes such as homicide, assault, theft, threatening violence, and being in possession of a deadly weapon are rampanty associated with African American males in “hood” films. Similarly, the Birth of a Nation as well as the “hood” films, depicts the African American male living and conducting their lives in communities that are poor and/or urban in the majority of its films.

Major additions to the potency of the contemporary criminal image of the African American male in “hood” films is his abundant affiliation with drugs, which is only vaguely depicted in the Birth of a Nation. Each of the “hood” films in this study, depicted African American males either holding, smoking, or selling an illegal substance, with marijuana and cocaine being the most depicted drugs. A major addition to the criminal image of the
African American male in the Birth of a Nation, which is almost absent from the “hood” films, is the criminal character of the Corrupt Politician, which includes crimes such as: Embezzlement, blackmail, and racketeering.

This study notes that the mainstream film industry has the ability to make successful films that depict the African American male positively, yet they deliberately chose to continually make films that criminally theme the African American male. For instance, The Best Man (1999) grossed over thirty-four million dollars and depicted African American men as intelligent, goal oriented, hard working and successful. Furthermore, the film was refreshingly devoid of rampant criminally related stereotypes and activities, illegal drugs, and/or poor-urban environments. In fact, rare moments of threatening violence, assault, and robbery were the only crimes depicted throughout the film by an African American male. Yet, in the opinion of the researcher, even though these less Afro-stereotypical films are more common than in the prior two decades in mainstream films, criminal, comedic and athletic representations of African American males are still their overwhelmingly popular representation.

Surprisingly, 71% of the examined “hood” films were directed by African American males, while the remaining 29% came from European American directors. The researcher believes that the involvement of African American directors to perpetuate and continue the African American Criminal stereotype in mainstream films, occurs mainly as a result of a lack of support for similarly positive themed films as The Best Man and tremendous support for contemporary gangster themed films such as those examined in this research. In addition, the researcher believes that the relatively low African American representation in positions of authority in the media industry and society also contribute to their involvement. For example, the lack of African Americans and other non-Eurocentric ethnicities “behind the camera” (camera operators, video editors, graphic designers, floor managers, etc.) and a lack of “Greenlight” power (executives that hold the go ahead authority to formally approve production finance on a film), are according to the researcher to be significant factors in the continuation and perpetuation of this stereotype.

Furthermore, this study supports Gerbner’s Cultivation Theory, mainly through the use of its effect, the Mean World Syndrome. Repetitive exposure to depictions of African American males in sub-standard living conditions, violence, and involvement with criminal activity of many forms and a lack of positive depictions, cultivates and reinforces the fear of the Afro-American male to popular culture. The media industry is successful in doing this by instilling into its audiences the Afrophobic messages that, there are more
Afro-American males involved with violence and criminal activities than what actually exists.

With this particular study, it is important to understand James Baldwin's earlier analysis of the image of the negro (that it is a reflection of the mindset of the country), to revolutionize the mainstream film industry. The improvement of the mainstream African American male portrayal in film begins with improving and/or changing the beliefs, attitudes, understanding and respect of popular culture, towards African American males. True, film reinforces already embedded criminal stereotypes into the young minds of popular culture (particularly Euro-American Culture) which causes them to glorify, internalize and fantasize about fictitious characters they believe represent African American males. However, the researcher believes that by limiting the amount of mainstream media exposure to the youth (i.e.- film, television, internet), embracing and improving more non-electronic forms of communication, and increasing personal exposure to African American males and their culture, heritage, and experiences will reduce much of the ignorance about African American males. As a result, the increasingly high demand for these pseudo-portrayals of African American males will begin to lessen.

Also, in order for the depiction of Afro-American males to change and become positive in mainstream American cinema, the media industry needs to make a valiant effort to stop the perpetuated cycle of attaching a criminal attribute to Afro-American characters. There needs to be more positive depictions of African American males that get away from this “Hood” lifestyle. Positive, in terms of taking on responsibilities and partaking in actions that better and empower himself, his family and his community. We need fewer films that illustrate the African American male as a drug dealer, a pimp, a hustler, a thief, or as a delinquent. There needs to also be more films that are set in realistic middle class, suburban, or wealthy communities instead of poor or inner city environments, where all of the examined “Hood” films were set in. There needs to many more Afro-American producers, directors, writers, cinematographers, editors, etc.

Furthermore, Hollywood needs to limit the amount of celebrities and celebrity rappers that it uses to characterize the African American male, and replace them with students of the art form (i.e.- Established actors, Theater and Dance Performers, etc.). More African American male actors should be chosen by his talents and skills, and less by his celebrity status, street credibility, or physical appearance. In order to make all of these changes to the industry, there needs to be many more African American executives, especially those with “Green Light power” (In which the film industry currently has none). The researcher believes that if a number of Afrocentric
African Americans have power to control some of the films that make it into the movie theaters, then the likelihood of mainstream movies that reflect more of an accurate, truthful, and positive depiction of the African American male in society today will likely increase.

Finally, if the financers and administrative entities of the film industry as well as the mindset of society refuse to change, an alternative option is for Afro-Americans, like with many other aspects of society, will be for them to create their own industry. The researcher feels that this industry will be most successful by being independent from Hollywood and should be complete with Afro-American employees and Afro-American owned financial businesses and companies. The researcher believes this option will allow Afro-American individuals and communities to be in control of and transmit out the types of images and messages that they want to see, and others to see about African American males and other communal aspects of his culture. Given the nature and history of US society and the film industry, the researcher suspects that success through this avenue will be the most effective, immediate, and will also automatically cause the earlier mentioned changes by society and the film industry, to occur.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

The researcher used the following tool to record the ethnicity of the director(s) of each film listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film Title</th>
<th>Director Ethnicity (Circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Boyz ‘N’ the Hood   | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| Menace To Society   | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| New Jack City       | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| Hoodlum             | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| Dead Presidents     | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| Hustle & Flow       | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| Training Day        | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| The Birth of A Nation| 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |
| The Best Man        | 1. Black/African American  
                      | 2. White/European American  
                      | 3. Mixed (Black and White)  
                      | 4. Other                                                                 |

APPENDIX B

The researcher used the following tool to record the frequency with which stereotypes of the main African American male “criminal” character appear in The Birth of a Nation film.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stereotypical Character</th>
<th>Number of Times Character Appears in Film (Circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Vicious/Savage      | A. Absent in film  
                      | B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
                      | C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film                                                                 |
| The Corrupt Politician  | A. Absent in film  
                      | B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
                      | C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film                                                                 |
| The Irresponsible Citizen| A. Absent in film  
                      | B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
                      | C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film                                                                 |
| The Petty Thief          | A. Absent in film  
                      | B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
                      | C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film                                                                 |
| The Social Delinquent   | A. Absent in film  
                      | B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
                      | C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film                                                                 |
The Weapon “Toter”  
A. Absent in film  
B. Appears 1-2 times throughout film  
C. Appears 5 or more times throughout film

APPENDIX C
The researcher used the following tool to record the skin complexion/tone of the main African American male “criminal” character in each film listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film Title</th>
<th>Skin Complexion/Tone (Circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boyz ‘N’ the Hood</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menace To Society</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jack City</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoodlum</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead Presidents</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hustle &amp; Flow</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Day</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Birth of A Nation</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Best Man</td>
<td>Light Skinned 1 2 3 4 Dark Skinned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX D

The researcher used the following tool to record the main setting in which the main African American male “criminal” character is most commonly seen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film Title</th>
<th>Director Ethnicity (Circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Boyz ‘N’ the Hood   | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| Menace To Society   | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| New Jack City       | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| Hoodlum             | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| Dead Presidents     | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| Hustle & Flow       | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| Training Day        | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| The Birth of A Nation | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
| The Best Man        | 1. Poor and/or Urban Neighborhoods  
2. Middle Class and/or Suburban Neighborhoods  
3. Rich and/or Secluded Neighborhoods  
4. Other |
**APPENDIX E**

The researcher used the following tool to record whether criminal activity was displayed (present or absent) by an African American male character in each film listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal Activity</th>
<th>Circle one: Present (A) or Absent (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Vicious or Savage Criminal</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Corrupt Politician</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannibalism</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterfeiting</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embezzlement</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genocide</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conspiracy</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackmail</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racketeering</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Irresponsible Citizen</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social Delinquent</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Evasion</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Possession</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perjury</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Solicitation</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Gambling</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespassing</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looting</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Petty Thief</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Weapon “Totter”</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of a Deadly Weapon</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE POWER TO REMAIN UNMARRIED: YOUNG Hmong WOMEN DELAY MARRIAGE IN PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Chia Xiong

Dr. Manuel Barajas, Faculty Mentor

ABSTRACT

Traditional gender roles still exist in many Hmong homes and communities. As a result, Hmong women are challenged by their families’ expectation that they marry before the age of 18, and not delay marriage in pursuit of higher education. Hmong women who resist this practice are oftentimes stigmatized by their family and community members for not adhering to this traditional practice. This paper evaluates the work of previous scholars on early marriages within the Hmong community and offers recommendations to reduce the stigma that young Hmong women experience in their decision to remain unmarried and pursue a higher education. The documented themes reviewed include: Hmong parents’ fear that education will influence their daughters to assimilate to American society. Some young women marry to escape parental control and others to avoid being labeled “too old” to marry once they have completed their education. A small body of research suggests that some young Hmong females challenge the traditional concept of early marriage and seek college education and employment outside the traditional female role.

The Hmong are indigenous people of Laos. They generally live on the mountain tops of Laos in small villages and lead self-sufficient lives; raising their own livestock and growing their own crops. During the Vietnam War era, the lives of Hmong people drastically changed when they were recruited by the United States’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to help fight against communism (Vang & Flores, 1994). In exchange for their military service, the Hmong were promised protection regardless of the outcome of the war (Timm, 1994).

The United States (US) withdrew from Vietnam in 1975, which left the Hmong people vulnerable to retributions from the communist state. Many Hmong leaders, elites and their families left Laos for America, while a majority of the Hmong population was left behind (Vang & Flores, 1994). The Hmong were now seen as traitors and were persecuted by the Laos government. Many Hmongs fled in search of refuge in other countries,
particularly in the neighboring country of Thailand (Vang & Flores, 1994). During this journey a large number of Hmongs died from starvation, illness, and drowning in the Mekong River, a large river that divides Thailand and Laos (Vang & Flores, 1994). Once in Thailand, some Hmongs were offered refuge in the United States.

The dislocation in Laos and resettlement in the United States brought drastic shifts in the life of the Hmong population. The Hmongs were autonomous and self-reliant in making a living, and tight family and communal traditions were enforced for survival in Laos. Their immigration to the United States brought them to a modern nation interconnected and dependent on the world economy and ever-changing technology, and exposed them to an individualistic culture. As could be expected, the Hmong’s resettlement in the United States brought about many challenges to their values, culture, and belief system. This paper explores one specific conflict that Hmong people have encountered in their new home: the tension between traditional Hmong and US gender roles. More specifically, how a young Hmong woman’s decision to pursue personal and professional development and postpone early marriage can be regarded as a disgrace to her family.

Since the Hmong’s arrival, scholars have studied the Hmong people and their experiences in the United States. Many scholars have been unusually preoccupied with and critical of the Hmong culture (Lee, 1997). Scholars neglect the social, economic, and political inequalities that many minority students including Hmong students experience, and consequently shift all the blame for their low socio-economic status and mobility to their cultures. Therefore understanding the complex dialectical barrier of external and internal structural and cultural factors facing young Hmong women is essential for empowering them to create alternative ideologies and practices that advance their personal development and thus, their communities. However, this paper narrowly seeks to review and assess the salient themes that have been produced by existing scholarship on the subject. In this analysis of the extant literature, the researcher offers a critique of the cultural difference or cultural deficit model that has dominated the studies on the Hmong community. This researcher proposes a different perspective in which culture is ever-changing, and Hmong women who challenge the gender roles are serving as agents of cultural transformation (Lee, 2007).

Some Hmong female college students marry early and return at an older age (after high school) to pursue higher education (Lee, 1997), which suggests that higher education is attainable despite marrying at a young age. However, this researcher’s interest is to look at the small number of Hmong women who are challenging culture norms by delaying marriage to pursue higher
Lee (1997) found that there are Hmong women who choose to remain unmarried as they complete their college education. As a young unmarried Hmong woman, living in a close-knit Hmong community, this topic interests the researcher and inspires her to better understand how unmarried Hmong women can be empowered to cope with the pressures from the Hmong community during their pursuit of higher education. The guiding questions for this paper are:

- How does early marriage hinder a Hmong woman’s educational opportunities?
- How do cultural expectations and structural realities contribute to early marriage and thus low educational attainment among Hmong women?
- How can the stigma of not marrying at an early age in order to pursue higher education, be minimized for Hmong females?

This paper offers a review of existing scholarship on the expectation of early marriage among Hmong women, and offers recommendations to assist and reduce the stigma associated with young Hmong women’s decision to delay marriage in pursuit of higher education.

**Figure 2**

Early marriage in the Hmong community in the United States has been seen and assumed to be a major obstacle to educational attainment of Hmong women. For example, in 1980 many Hmong females dropped out of high school in order to marry and bear children (Timm, 1994). It is not surprising that the drop-out rates were partly affected by early marriage, but this significant association is removed from a more complex context. The historical experiences that formed the cultural trend of early marriage in
the Hmong homeland could not be erased in less than a generation of the settlement experience. By suggesting that low educational attainment is a direct result of early marriage, scholars neglect other contributing factors that lead to early marriage.

**Family and Parent Expectations**

Within the Hmong community, there are family and community expectations of daughters to marry early. Lee (1997) found that the women in her study felt a pressure to marry from their relatives. Their relatives advise them to get married while they are still young and warn them about the difficulties in finding a husband if they wait until they are older (Lee, 1997). One of the women, Joua, in Lee’s study remembers what her relatives said about her when she was attending college and not married: “God, why doesn’t she get married? What’s wrong with her” (p. 811)?

Another informant, Moua, was pressured into marriage by her parents when she was in high school (Lee, 2007). Moua’s marriage lasted only two and a half months. Vang and Flores (1994) also emphasize that Hmong parents expect their children to marry early: “Traditional Hmong parents want their children to marry and have a family during their lifetime. [There have been times when] Hmong children have been forced to get married young because [of the] Hmong culture[s] strict standards for behavior for their children, particularly young girls” (p. 10).

Some of these young Hmong girls have been forced to marry early due to family expectations, thus, it is essential to understand the reasons why their parents want their daughters to marry early. A couple of reoccurring reasons why parents force or expect their daughters to marry early are fear that their daughters will assimilate into the dominant culture and the need to protect the family’s reputation.

Ngo’s (2002) findings suggest that parents force their daughters to marry early in order to prevent them from assimilating into the dominant culture, which raises the question of why Hmong males are not expected or forced to marry early. In fact, other research indicate that the average Hmong male marries between the ages of 18 and 30 in comparison to ages 14 and 18 for Hmong females (Hutchison & McNall, 1994). Other researchers suggest that this difference may be explained by the difference in gender roles in the Hmong community (Vang & Flores, 1994). Keown-Bomar (2004) explains: Women in this study described how they were encouraged to learn the skills necessary to become successful mothers, wives, daughters-in-law, and to find an occupation. Parents want their sons to do well by staying out of trouble,
finishing school, and going on for educational or professional training (p. 116).

This difference may contribute to the difference in expectations of Hmong females and males. Nevertheless, the pressure and expectation of early marriages are realities for many Hmong girls.

Other times, parents expect and force their daughters to marry when they feel their daughters have brought shame upon their family. In the Hmong culture, girls are not allowed to date or go out with boys (Vang & Flores, 1994; Vang, 1992), though many of these girls grow up with American peers who are dating. Girls, who challenge their parents’ strict rules and come into contact with boys, may find themselves forced into marriage to save the family’s face (reputation). In another study by Ngo (2002), an informant shared her experiences of strict rules enforced by her parents. For girls who are going away to college, moving out to live on their own suggested that they are now free to do what they want. Ngo (2002) asserted: “Included in this concern was the possibility that unmarried Hmong girls may become inappropriately involved with young men. Further, there was also a worry about the perceptions of those in the Hmong community” (p. 173).

In contrast, Lee (1997) found in her study that some Hmong mothers are supporting the young women in their pursuit of higher education. These mothers understand the gender inequality within the Hmong community, and encourage their daughters in their pursuit of education because they believe their “…[daughters] could escape male domination by obtaining a college education” (Lee, 1997, p. 815).

Other scholars also have discussed the reasons why some young Hmong girls choose to marry early, including:

1. to gain freedom and escape from their parent’s strict rules,
2. to avoid being labeled “too old” to marry after completing higher education, and
3. to gain power, identity, and self worth.

In Faderman’s (1998) study, Shoua Xiong chose to marry early to eliminate the problems she was having with her parents. “Probably I got married because I felt too much pressure when I was still with my parents. They wouldn’t let me do anything….My parents wouldn’t let me go anywhere” (Faderman, p. 147). She explains about a time when she went out with a boy who is now her husband and lied to her parents about going out with him. Instead of telling her parents she went out with him, she told them she was going to a birthday party. When her parents found out, her father was
furious and blamed her mother for not being able to take care of her. As a result, she decided to marry.

However, Lee (1997) found that marriage is not always the key to the independence and freedom desired by some young Hmong females. Lia, a subject in Lee’s study (1997), shared that a friend of hers married in order to spend time with her boyfriend since her parents would not allow her to. This friend later warned Lia about not making the same mistake since marriage is not easy. Ultimately, Lia used her friend’s experience to guide her decision to postpone marriage and pursue higher education. Nevertheless, many Hmong girls believe that marriage is their escape route from their strict parents.

A few scholars discuss some Hmong women’s fears of being labeled “too old” if they postpone marriage until after college. Lee (1997) asserts:

Another factor that leads to early marriage among Hmong girls and women is the fear that if they postpone marriage until after they graduate from college, Hmong men will consider them to be too old and undesirable. These fears are based on their understanding that Hmong men prefer young wives, a preference that has been documented by several scholars (Donnelly, 1994; Goldstein, 1985; Lee, 1997, p. 819).

Hmong parents also have this same fear for their daughters. Vang (2005) asserts: “Some Hmong parents may not totally support their daughters’ college education for fear that the daughters may be ‘too old’ to marry after earning a college degree” (p. 29).

Some Hmong girls marry believing it will be their chance to gain power, identity and self-worth (Ngo, 2002). Keown-Bomar (2004) indicates that, within the Hmong community, marriage provide identity and status. Under this ideology, this Keown-Bomar presumes that girls see marriage as a way to be acknowledged by the community, respected as adults, and have their own sense of power. Ironically, it seems that they are giving up their power to be unmarried, to gain their own identity and self-worth by their own means. However, the respect gained from marrying is limited due to women’s marginalized position within the Hmong community. The Hmong cultural system is patriarchal and attributes negative consequences to young Hmong women in particular.

**Influence of Social Barriers and Socio-Economics**

Lee provides an alternative viewpoint on Hmong women and educational attainment. The researcher states that a concentration on cultural differences as the only explanation for low education attainment of Hmong American women deflects the responsibilities away from “economic, racial, and structural barriers [or inequalities]” (Lee, 1997, p. 804). For instance,
anthropological researchers often use culture in explaining the issues that arise as a result of culture differences, and thus label these issues as private matters (Lee, 1997). Labeling these issues as private matters implies that these issues are a result of the culture, rather than both culture and outside factors, such as economic, social, and structural barriers (public versus private) (Lee, 1997).

Hmong income per capita (Figure 1) and educational attainment percentages (Figure 2) are the lowest in comparison to all other minority groups in the United States. The income per capita for the Hmong population is the lowest at slightly over five thousand dollars a year. Only seven percent of the Hmong population has at least a bachelor’s degree, while more than half of the Hmong population does not have a high school education (Nguyen, 2008). The low income per capita and low educational attainment of the Hmong as a population may greatly affect Hmong parents. As they have already learned, education attainment can greatly increase their chances for economic stability; a lack of education means living in poverty, and may mean working longer hours. Ngo (2002) found that Hmong parents worked long hours, and as a result:

**Figure 1**

![Per Capita Income - CA](image)

Hmong students often must assist their parents in a variety of ways while pursuing and attending to the demands of education. Female students are often responsible—in high school as well as in college—for cooking family meals, cleaning the house, caring for younger siblings and doing chores such as laundry (p. 138).
Thus, many Hmong females choose to marry early to gain their freedom (Ngo, 2002), who suggests that Hmong girls’ participation in early marriage is not simply because of “tradition”, and that other factors such as their parents’ low social economic status, affects their lives negatively, and contributes to their decision to marry early.

Furthermore, the concentration on cultural differences infers that culture is static. Instead, Hmong culture is “dynamic, constantly in the process of being created and re-created” just as other cultures are (Lee, 1997, p. 804). The small number of young Hmong women who are challenging cultural norms by delaying marriage and pursuing higher education suggests that culture is not static. Lee views her research subjects as agents of cultural change—challenging culture norms (Lee, 1997).

**Married and Unmarried Hmong Womens Pursuit of Higher Education**

In her study of Hmong American women, Lee (1997):

...suggests that contact with outsiders (i.e., non-Hmong) forces the Hmong to re-evaluate their cultural practices and identities. As active makers of their culture, the Hmong do not passively accept imposed change, but evaluate their situations and respond according to what they believe is in their best interest. Thus, young Hmong American women are likely to respond to life in the United States differently from elderly Hmong men (p. 808).

Supportive of Lee’s statement, Hutchison and McNall’s (1994) research suggests that young American girls are reacting differently to life in the United States. In a longitudinal study on Hmong high school students, Hutchison and McNall (1994) found that nearly half of the Hmong students were married by the time they finished high school. Thus, some Hmong females remain unmarried, and a small percentage, (5%) pursue college (Vang, 2005). Although the percentage is small, the fact that there are a small number of women who are challenging the norm of marrying early, suggests that they evaluate their environment and understand the benefits of an education enough to decide to pursue it. The informants in Lee’s study indicated that they strongly believed that they were “pioneers who are leading the Hmong people into the next generation” (Lee, 1997, p. 809).

Worthy of discussion is young Hmong women’s reasons for pursuing higher education. Lee’s research concentrated on the pursuit of higher education of both married and unmarried Hmong females (1997). Her findings indicate that a vast majority of Hmong females pursue higher education because:
1. They understood education may lead to economic security and independence.
2. They were motivated by family experiences (saw their parents struggle economically due to lack of formal education, etc.).
3. They desired freedom from male domination.

First, many young Hmong women believe that education would lead to economic independence. Lee (1997) reported that all the Hmong women (21) in her study maintained that the “reasons they pursued higher education was to achieve social mobility and financial security” (p. 813). Lee also highlights that these Hmong women were motivated by “folk theories that link education to success” (p. 813).

Second, daughters are affected by their parents’ socio-economic status and struggles, therefore they desire to pursue higher education. As discussed earlier, the socio-economic status of Hmong parents influence their daughters into early marriage. On the one end of the spectrum, it also motivates some daughters to pursue higher education. One of Lee’s informants stated: “I think [I was motivated] by seeing my parents suffering and their lack of education. It was hard for my parents to make a living in the U.S. without an education and having to wait for the welfare check or getting minimum wage at $3.50 per hour and hardly make ends meet” (1997).

Third, young Hmong women understand the gender inequalities within the Hmong community and were convinced by their mothers and sisters that education was a way to free them from male domination (Lee, 1997). Faderman’s informant, Mee Vang states: “…They [her in-laws] always believe in this crazy thing about men being the superior ones—superior beings, and women must do everything they say” (1998, p. 144). Here, Mee Vang, a married Hmong woman in the Hmong community discusses the patriarchy in the Hmong community and the marginalization of women. Young Hmong women’s talk as Lee (1997) described in her study, “center[ed] around the idea that education leads to independence and self empowerment” (p. 814). Young Hmong women believed that, through education, they will become independent of males, and “empower them[elves] to speak up for their own interests”, and achieve gender equality that their mothers and grandmothers did not have (Lee, 1997).

In the study by Timm (1994), 23 Hmong males and females in Wisconsin and Minnesota, ranging from ages 15 to 60 were interviewed. Timm (1994) found a relationship between age and the respondent’s perception of Hmong and American values. The respondents were divided into three groups: 35 years old and older, 20-35 years old, and under 20 years old or under. Timm (1994) found that the youngest group of subjects respected their clan
leaders (elders), but made their own decisions about the course of their lives, reporting:

The youngest group viewed traditions as personally restrictive (p. 38). For instance, “A 15 year old girl said: ‘How can I know if I want to marry somebody if I cannot go out with him? You can’t talk to somebody with your parents there. I can go to parties but I’m not supposed to go out just with a guy. It’s dumb (p. 38).

Timm labels these problems as generational and inter-cultural problems. The 20-35 year-old group respected their clan leader and made their decisions based on the leader’s advice. Timm found that Hmong parents value their children’s education, “but did not want their children to lose their culture in the process” (1994, p. 38).

Although parents are afraid their children will lose their culture in the process of obtaining an education, Lee (2001) found in her ethnographic study at a high school that many Hmong girls “complained about parental expectations and certain aspects of Hmong culture, [but] most of the girls are proud of their heritage” (p. 35). Evidently, many Hmong females do not want to assimilate into the dominant culture, while ironically Hmong parents fear their daughters will or are assimilating into the dominant culture. One of Lee’s subjects provides insight to the emergent reality of young Hmong women: “Although Joua sees herself as an agent of Hmong cultural transformation, she is against cultural assimilation” (Lee, 1997, p. 810).

**DISCUSSION**

To understand the concerns with Hmong parents expecting their daughters to marry early and problems with reasons daughters choose to marry early, we must acknowledge the Hmong’s low socio-economic status and how that can influence early marriage within the Hmong community. There also should be an understanding that in order to resolve and reduce the struggles of these young Hmong women, it is necessary to address the larger institutions whose policies affect the lives of Hmong families.

Early marriage is also affected by class. Hutchison and McNall (1994) mention that previous research shows there is a strong relationship between social class and time of marriage. Those who belong to the middle class generally wait until they have completed college and have a career before they marry. However, those who belong to the working class marry right after high school. In the case of the Hmongs Hutchison and McNall (1994) found that half of their high school Hmong females were married before they graduate from high school. Because of the relationship between social class and time of marriage, it is necessary to address the fact that the
Hmong population has the lowest income per capita and lowest educational attainment in the nation. It should also be noted that parents’ low socio-economic status affects the lives of their children, which is perhaps a strong contributor to Hmong girls’ decision to marry early. They search for freedom from parental control and household burdens (e.g., childcare), stresses (financial), and scarcities (space/material); thus, acknowledging the socio-economic status of Hmong parents, along with other social inequalities that marginalizes them and reproduces poverty for their children, is necessary.

There are problems with Hmong parents expecting their daughters to marry early. By expecting their daughters to marry early, Hmong parents believe they will prevent their daughters from assimilating into the dominant culture and in some cases, save family reputation. However, this is an issue because first of all, early marriage may mean their daughters will live in poverty. Vang and Flores (1994) noted: “Young Hmong American girls are faced with the economic reality that if they are unable to complete their high school education due to early marriage and pregnancy, they may find themselves in poverty” (p. 11). Second, for Hmong daughters who are choosing to pursue higher education and delay marriage, it was documented that they do not want to assimilate into the dominant culture (Lee, 1997). In fact, their reasons for pursuing higher education are not related to their assimilation into the dominant culture, but are more relative to economic independence and security, and freedom from male domination (Lee, 1997). These reasons, specifically economic independence, suggest the daughters’ views of education as agents of economic stability are very much similar to their parents.

Addressing the first issue, the possible economic struggles of Hmong daughters who are forced into early marriage must be discussed and understood by Hmong parents. Implied are the complex struggles Hmong parents are experiencing in trying to save their family reputation and their fears that their daughters will assimilate into the dominant culture, and thus, loosing their ethnic identity. Although this struggle is obvious, it is essential for parents to not ignore the possible economic struggles that their daughters will face if forced to marry early. This researcher proposes that educating parents about the possibility that their daughters may be in poverty if forced into early marriage will encourage parents to evaluate their current expectation of their daughters in light of their current living situation in America.

Addressing the second issue, Hmong parents must understand their daughters’ reasons for pursuing higher education and delaying marriage because these reasons indicates, that their daughters do not want to assimilate
into the dominant culture. Apparently there is a gap between parents’ understanding of why their daughters are pursuing higher education and the parents’ perception of why their daughters are pursuing higher education. Narrowing this gap of misunderstanding and misconceptions between Hmong women and their parents may help reduce the amount of pressure Hmong parents put on their daughters to marry early. It is also essential to provide role models of Hmong women who have completed higher education, who remained unmarried through their college experience, and are still maintaining the Hmong culture. Since many parents fear their daughters will assimilate into the dominant culture; it is necessary to assure them that many Hmong females (daughters) are not trying to assimilate into the dominant culture. Through role models, an attempt to help parents understand their daughters and reduce the amount of stigma that Hmong women experience may be possible. Perhaps, parents need some assurance that they will not lose their daughters to another culture. However, this increased understanding alone cannot reduce the pressure Hmong women experience, when in fact it is not the only factor contributing to young Hmong girls’ choice in early marriage. There are also other factors, both structural and individual, that must also be addressed. Although a daughter’s reasons for marrying early makes sense in regards to her living circumstances, the reasons are not flawless, thus, they need to be addressed. First, in the past, Hmong females have married early in efforts to gain freedom and escape from their parental control only to find themselves almost in the same position with a husband. In fact, Hmong girls tend to move from their parental restrictions into that of their mother-in-laws (Donnelly, 1994; Lee, 2001; Ngo, 2002). Second, although the pressure from the Hmong community to marry is overwhelming, marrying early to avoid being labeled “too old” is not a valid reason to marry. Third, marrying early to gain power, identity, and self-worth may be a misconception, when in fact, a Hmong women may be under the control of her husband. Addressing the first issue, Hmong females believe they can gain freedom when they marry without considering what it will be like in their mother-in-laws home. Hmong daughters cannot be blamed for the strict rules their parents impose on them, nor can they be blamed for being expected to cook, clean, and take care of younger siblings. Their parents also can’t be blamed for imposing strict rules and expecting their daughters to assist them in every day chores because these actions may be affected by their low socio-economic status. Nevertheless, a young Hmong woman in Faderman’s study explains her lack of freedom after she married:
They expected me to wake up every morning earlier than them, cook for the children, clean up the house, and everything. If I go to school that’s okay, but then I got to come straight home from school, don’t talk to anyone, don’t have no friends, nothing. Just come straight home, do my homework, and then cook. After that, go finish my homework and just go to sleep. Same thing everyday. I didn’t like it at all. I didn’t like being ordered around. … once you get married, it likes they lock you up in prison(1998, p. 158).

Therefore, indicating a difference between the perceived freedom Hmong girls will gain through marriage and the actual freedom they will get. Hmong females must realize this difference and know that there are other alternatives to the freedom they seek. It is also essential for Hmong girls to understand the economic struggles they may face marrying early along with the everyday, normal marital problems people face. Hmong girls also need to understand that they will not achieve freedom when they are simply moving from their parents’ restrictions to their parent-in-law’s restrictions. Such understanding and realization may prevent Hmong girls from marrying early.

Addressing the second issue, it is obvious the pressure for Hmong girls to marry early can be overwhelming; however, daughters must understand that marrying to avoid being labeled “too old” is not the only solution and may not be the best solution. This may be obvious to even some of the Hmong females who choose to marry early to avoid being labeled “too old”, but they marry anyway because the pressure from the Hmong community is too overwhelming. Thus, we should also help parents understand how these pressures can push their daughters into marriage, which can result into many things such as poverty, marrying the wrong person, low education attainment, and other hardships. Parents’ understanding of the possible problems with marrying early may help them re-evaluate their expectations of their daughters to marry early and reduce the stigma their daughters may face being over 18 and not married.

Addressing the third issue, although Hmong children do gain respect and are viewed as adults after marriage, Hmong girls must understand that the Hmong community is patriarchal as is the mainstream community and that gendered double standards will persist. Hmong girls will not only find themselves respected by their community as adults, but also under the control of their husbands. For instance, an integrated framework proposes that patriarchy like other systems of oppressions (racism and capitalism) are social constructs with specific historical origins, and recommends an analysis that looks at the intersections or overlaps of these systems. They all have a common logic that affirms socially constructed hierarchies as natural, and they create unusually painful burdens to those disadvantaged by them, in this
case, young Hmong women. Focusing on the patriarchy within the Hmong community is a start, but recognizing that patriarchy is the norm in the dominant society expands the understanding of the nature of the problem faced by young Hmong women. The race and class systems intensify domination of young women in the sense that the Hmong culture is depicted as unusually backward and primitive. Therefore, insights of young Hmong women are crucial for guiding and informing projects of empowerment.

Figure 3 shows this researcher’s reflections and recommendations for future research.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reflections and Recommendations for Future Research</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reasons Young Hmong Women Marry Early</td>
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<tr>
<td>To gain freedom and escape from their parent’s strict rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>To avoid being labeled “too old” to marry after completing higher education</td>
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<tr>
<td>To gain power, identity, and self-worth</td>
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**Methodology**

This study provides a review of literature published in the past 15 years on the topic of Hmong and early marriage. Effort was made to find qualitative and quantitative studies on Hmong students and early marriage. The researcher analyzed content of articles pertaining to early marriage among Hmong females and its implications on education attainment; emphasis was put on Hmong women, who are challenging the cultural norms of marrying early to pursue higher education. Important themes from each article were charted, and later viewed for relating themes, and eventually analyzed.

**Conclusion**

Early marriage within the Hmong community occurs as a result of many factors, both cultural and in opposition to the structures they belong to. Thus, Hmong girls are not solely marrying because it is tradition. In fact, findings of reasons why Hmong girls marry early are often more relative to their opposition of their parents whom are enforcing such strict rules in their efforts to control their children (in this case daughters) from the dominant culture. However, both parents and daughters have similarities in their understanding that education is essential for economic success. Nevertheless, there seems to be pressure from the Hmong communities to marry early and women who are choosing not to marry early face tremendous pressures. However, there are indications that Hmong and their attitudes towards early marriage are changing. Parents are encouraging their daughters to pursue
a higher education. Further research privileging the voices of these young women in between worlds is essential to informing programs and strategies that may greatly reduce the stigma unmarried female college students experience.
REFERENCES


