

Visible But Out of Place:
Black Women and Gender in Assessments of African American Inequality

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THESIS

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This is dedicated to my “babies”: David, Daniel, Kaylin, Lekeya, Anthony Jr., Jamar, Anesa, Johan, and Josiah. Hopefully my skies have been gray so that yours might be blue.

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SUMMARY

I analyze the visibility of women's issues within African American social justice organizations. Previous research has featured pop culture examples and controversial cases-in-point to argue that African American political discourse reflects a male bias that erases the social, economic, and political interests of women of color. In a departure from this approach, my methodology features textual analysis of the mission statements, program descriptions, and press releases of 34 national African American organizations, as well as surveys and semi-structured interviews with 45 leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations.

Key findings indicate: 1) Intraracial sexism and African American women's intersectional experiences are recognized by organization leaders, but are used by them as evidence of African American women's gender role non-conformity; 2) In case studies of two recent controversies where women and gender issues were central, I find that national African American organizations used race and African American men's experiences of racism as the mobilizing frames for interpreting these cases; 3) Male bias is prevalent among the leaders of these organizations and it is associated with the types of issues that leaders report their organizations are active on and perceive their constituents to be concerned about.

I conclude that African American women are visible but out of place within contemporary discourses on African American inequality. African American women's intersectional experiences with gender and race are visible to and clearly articulated by these leaders. They also overwhelmingly report that African American women experience sexism in their own communities. However, when pressed to provide explanations for these experiences, they blame gender role non-conformity vis a vis African American women's socioeconomic status. Therefore, African American women's issues are seen – but mostly because their heightened level of socioeconomic advancement relative to African American men's and the resulting gender "imbalance" causes them

SUMMARY (continued)

to be seen. Given this, African American male empowerment and eradicating gender role non-conformity are put forth as keys to improving black communities.

My work contributes to our broader sociological understanding of intragroup inequality. Experiences of privilege and disadvantage are not homogenous, but can vary significantly within marginalized groups due to the array of intersectional social locations. The empirical investigation of intersectionality has been an important topic among feminist social scientists during much of the early 21st century. My dissertation draws on sociological, social psychological, and political science theories to produce an intersectional framework for measuring intragroup inequality in the context of social justice advocacy. It helps to uncover the ways that social movement narratives, in their efforts to eradicate one type of inequality, might actually reproduce other types by highlighting certain issues and in-group members' experiences while ignoring others. Although I use this framework to study gender inequality in the context of African American anti-racist politics, it can be applied to other groups and movements.

I. INTRODUCTION

Several cases have been causes for criticism within the African American social movement industry. The anti-racist marches in support of the Jena 6, Troy Davis, and Trayvon Martin were widespread, highly visible, and deemed modern day civil rights causes. However, similar cases where African American women were also unjustifiably attacked, beaten, and murdered by whites struggle for the same public outrage and sorrow. In August 2007, 20 year-old Megan Williams was invited to a “party” at a trailer home in rural West Virginia by a friend. Attending the “party” was her boyfriend, Bobby Ray Brewster, his mother Karen, and four other people. This group, comprised of six white women and men aged 20-49, proceeded to torture, sexually assault, and hold Williams against her will for more than a week. Brewster, his mother, and Williams' other attackers were all prosecuted and convicted in 2009 on charges of kidnapping and sexual assault. Only one of Williams' attackers was charged with a hate crime. Consequently, national media commentator Roland Martin and several African American feminist bloggers believed the case should have been viewed as a hate crime by African American social justice organizations and lamented their lack of attention to it.

In November 2008 in suburban Seattle, 15 year-old Malika Calhoun and her friend borrowed the friend's parents' car without permission. Not knowing their daughter had it, the parents reported their vehicle stolen. Calhoun and her friend were eventually pulled over by police during their joyride and arrested for automobile theft. The circumstances surrounding Calhoun's initial interaction with Sheriff's Deputy Paul Schene are unclear. Calhoun either purposefully or mistakenly kicked Schene in the leg while in a holding cell. Due to the release of a video of the incident, what happened next is exceptionally clear. Schene and another deputy slammed Calhoun's head into the wall, wrestled her to the floor, and proceeded to kick and punch her as she was

handcuffed. Schene was tried on charges of assault twice and both cases resulted in a mistrial. Representatives from the local NAACP chapter expressed their disappointment in the mistrials, but it is unclear the extent to which they came to Calhoun's defense. Nationally, mainstream media outlets debated Calhoun's culpability in the incident. Schene's partner pegged Calhoun as being "lippy" or having a "smart mouth". Julie Chen's CBS interview with Calhoun and her father was flecked with similar sentiments as Chen repeatedly tried to fathom what Calhoun did to make the officers beat her so viciously.

In June 2011 in Minneapolis, transgender woman Chishaun "CeCe" McDonald and four of her friends made a midnight run to a local grocery store. En route to the store, McDonald and her friends were confronted by racist and transphobic slurs from a small group of white men and women congregated in front of a tavern. McDonald and her friends tried to walk away, but she was hit in the face with a beer glass by one of the women and then subsequently punched. The fight between the groups escalated until Dean Schmitz charged at McDonald, who stabbed him in his chest with a switch blade. Schmitz died at the scene and McDonald was convicted for second degree manslaughter. A Minneapolis-based legal rights non-profit organization advocated on McDonald's behalf. However, the title of Marc Lamont Hill's recent *Ebony* Magazine article asked this question of African American organizations, "Why Aren't We Fighting for CeCe McDonald?".

Similar questions can be asked of all of these cases and the hundreds that never make it to feminist blogs or mainstream media outlets: Why did we march so loudly and proudly for the young men in Jena, for Troy Davis and Trayvon Martin, but not for Megan, Malika, or CeCe? Are women's experiences invisible in contemporary African American social justice organizing? Furthermore, is this invisibility the result of male bias? This dissertation explores these questions empirically, along with theoretical and methodological approaches to studying the existence of male

bias in social justice organizing, as well as the ways that social justice organizations allocate their time across the intersectional subgroups of their constituencies.

Furthermore, this dissertation also contributes to a broader sociological understanding of intragroup inequality or “secondary marginalization” (Cohen 1999). In these processes, oppression is not only exercised by dominant groups over subordinate ones but also by privileged subordinate group members over their lesser privileged counterparts. For African Americans, intragroup inequality can occur along multiple axes and, paradoxically, often exists for the purpose of lifting the race. Historically, African Americans have maintained that conformity to dominant group norms was necessary in order to prove that they deserved equality with whites. Given this, African Americans and their communities are policed by powerful individuals and organizations in an effort to tamp down deviations from these norms. Gender and sexuality are common sites of this boundary-setting, with particular attention paid to the behavior of African American women (Cohen 1999; Carby 1992; Higginbotham 1993). Therefore, asking questions about the visibility of women's issues in African American social justice organizing is not only about getting particular issues addressed, but also understanding the motivation for the exclusion. Given this, my dissertation draws on sociological, social psychological, and political science theories to produce an intersectional framework for measuring intragroup inequality in the context of social justice advocacy. It helps to uncover the ways that social movement narratives, in their efforts to eradicate one type of inequality, might actually reproduce other types by ignoring the experiences of particular in-group members or deeming them deviant.

In the chapters that follow, I investigate the visibility of women's issues in contemporary African American social justice organizations in several ways. Because each chapter asks interrelated but unique questions, the organization of the dissertation is non-traditional in that they contain their own theory, literature review, and methodology sections. In chapter 2, I address the visibility of

women's issues within African American politics by conducting a content analysis of the missions and program descriptions of 34 national African American organizations. I also examined the responses of 45 leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations to questions about the types of issues their communities are concerned about and their organizations active on. They also answered open-ended questions about the existence and nature of sexism within African American communities. Key findings indicate that, among national African American organizations, women's organizations are the primary advocates for African American women and/or gender issues. Next, that leaders of local, regional, and national organizations do not believe their communities are concerned about nor report that they are active on gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights. Finally, although the vast majority of these leaders report that they believe African American women experience sexism in African American communities, they attribute this to African American women's gender role non-conformity and state that this non-conformity is due to manipulative white influence on African American communities.

In Chapter 3, I use the case study method and flip the gender lens to look at two recent cases where African American women and gender issues were actually central to the public outcry. In both the Don Imus/Rutgers Women's Basketball and Dunbar Village rape controversies, the verbal and physical assaults endured by African American women were addressed by prominent African American social justice organizations. Using textual analysis of public organizational documents and social movement theory, I find that, despite the centrality of women's experiences of sexism and sexual violence, African American organization leaders framed both cases as evidence of the suffering of African American men.

In Chapter 4, I present one of the first sociological applications of the intersectional invisibility model. This model states that prototypical in-group members are privileged relative to

other in-group members because their specific interests are put forward as overall group interests. Returning to the semi-structured interview and survey responses of 45 leaders of African American organizations, I specifically look at the extent to which men are viewed by organization leaders as prototypical African Americans and if their prototypicality is associated with the types of issues organization leaders report they are active on and believe their communities are concerned about. Leaders were also asked open-ended questions about the social status of African American men and whether this should influence the amount of advocacy attention they believe organizations should devote to them. Findings indicate that African American men are viewed as prototypical and their prototypicality is moderately associated with the types of issues organizations are active on and perceive their communities to be concerned about. Whereas in Chapter 2 leaders stated that women's gender non-conformity is detrimental to their communities; in this case, leaders believe that restoring patriarchal leadership in families and communities is the key to decreasing many of the negative social conditions that affect African Americans.

In the final chapter, I conclude the dissertation by returning to the concept of intragroup inequality by considering the centrality of gender conformity to the historical development of African American anti-racist organizing in the United States. Those who police the "boundaries of blackness" have shunned discussions of gender and women's issues in the context of African American inequality by deeming it a separate or "crosscutting" issue that dilutes focus from our "true" problem of race (Cohen 1999). Specifically, I will look at the works of African American feminist thinkers and writers who describe the ways that conformity to gender norms was not only a prerequisite to racial equality, but also the result of it.

II. BLACK WOMEN'S ISSUES AND ASSESSMENTS OF SEXISM IN BLACK COMMUNITIES

“On the one hand, Black women experience tremendous pressure associated with bearing a disproportionate burden for caring for "the community". When they cannot (or choose not to) perform the roles that responsibility demands, the consequences are considerable...Despite limited resources, opportunities, and support, Black women are still blamed for problems in the Black community, including those that result from their lack of power and subsequent victimization”.

- Beth Richie, *Arrested Justice*

Are African American women's intersectional experiences of racism and sexism visible in African American social justice organizations? Specifically, do the missions and programmatic initiatives of national African American organizations reflect advocacy on behalf of African American women and/or gender issues? Do leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations perceive their constituents to be concerned about or report that their organizations are active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues? Do these same leaders believe that African American women experience sexism in African American communities and in what forms? In what follows, I elaborate on key findings related to African American women's visibility. Namely, that very few national African American organizations focus on women and/or gender issues in their missions and program descriptions, and of the ones that do, African American women's organizations predominate; very few leaders of local, regional, and national organizations perceive their communities to be concerned about or report that they are active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues; but these same leaders overwhelmingly report that they believe African American women experience sexism in African American communities, and often cite African American women's gender role non-conformity as the cause of it.

Feminism and African American Public Opinion

Previous empirical studies examining how African American feminist perspectives have or have not been incorporated into the work of post-civil rights African American social justice organizations are limited (though I will discuss a few relevant exceptions below) . Far more common is the use of public opinion surveys by political scientists who examine the prevalence of feminist ideologies among individual African Americans. Kane's (2000) systematic review of the literature on racial variations in gender attitudes suggests that African Americans have stronger criticisms of gender inequality than Whites. African Americans are more likely to cite structural origins as the basis of gender equality and are also more supportive of gender-related social action than Whites (Kane 2000). Similarly, Hunter and Sellers (1998) found that support for feminist ideology (measured as recognition and critique of gender equality, support for egalitarian gender roles, and political activism for women's rights) was common among African Americans, although degree of support varied by education, income, and gender.

These trends remain when it comes to the particular endorsement of Black feminist ideals. Dawson (2001) argues that Black feminism makes a significant contribution to African American public opinion and that it, along with Black nationalism, characterize the majority of African Americans' ideological orientations. Despite its contribution to contemporary African American political thought, Dawson (2001) found that 20 percent of the National Black Politics Study participants expressed opposition to Black feminism. However, he also found that access to significant educational and economic resources as well as ties to black information networks, such as black organizations and their leaders, were linked to endorsements of Black feminist ideology. Women and younger African Americans were also more likely to express favorable opinions about feminism. Simien and Clawson (2004) also argue that Black feminist consciousness enjoys high support among African American men and women and that it has a positive effect on gender-related

policy attitudes, such as abortion rights. In an empirical test of a gender variant of Dawson's "linked fate" concept, Simien (2004) finds that 78% of respondents reported to have a sense of linked fate to (or a sense of common destiny with the social, political, and economic conditions of) African American women.

Intersectional Issues and Advocacy Attention

Strolovitch's (2007) policy typologies provide an intersectional theoretical framework that allowed me to assess the amount of attention paid to issues that affect African American women and how much of a priority these issues are to African American organizations. More generally, the policy typologies provide a nuanced method for determining how organizations allocate attention across the subgroups of their constituencies. These typologies combine the use of a "majority rules" approach to studying how well organizations represent their constituencies with an intersectional approach which focuses on the multiple ways that people experience disadvantage (Strolovitch 2007). Time can be spent on four different types of policy issues: universal issues, which affect all Americans regardless of their various social locations; majority issues, which affect all in-group members regardless of their social locations; disadvantaged subgroup issues, which affect in-group members who are disadvantaged along multiple axes relative to other in-group members; and advantaged subgroup issues, which affect in-group members who are privileged along multiple axes relative to other in-group members.

Using this framework, Strolovitch (2007), finds that social and economic justice organizations do not expend their advocacy efforts on issues that affect intersectionally disadvantaged subgroups of their constituencies. In fact, the opposite is true: issues affecting the most advantaged group members garner the most advocacy attention at all times, regardless of breadth of impact. It is these issues that are framed by the organizations as ones that affect the

entire group that they represent. Similarly, Cohen (1999) argues that African American organizations were reluctant to respond to the AIDS crisis because of its initial victims: lesbians and gay men. She finds that issues such as AIDS and gay and lesbian rights were framed as falling outside of the realm of “respectable” blackness. As a result, they were not initially placed on the agendas of these organizations, lest the fight for equality be undermined by highlighting deviance (1999). More recently, Richie (2012) found that both anti-violence and civil rights organizations have rendered African American women's experiences of intimate partner and community violence invisible due to the ways that both types of organizations frame their victims. She argues that the “it could happen to anyone” or “everywoman” race-neutral approach of the anti-violence movement has, in practice, privileged a very narrow set of domestic violence victims. Additionally, underlying the gender-neutral rhetoric of African American anti-racist politics, are the expectations that African American women will sacrifice their well-being in order to avoid discrediting or furthering the disadvantage of African American men. As a result of this “trap of loyalty”, African American women shoulder the blame for men's disadvantage and the depressed condition of their communities overall. Richie argues that the lack of a Black feminist standpoint in these arenas leaves African American women's experiences unvoiced and their lives vulnerable to emotional, intimate partner, and state-sanctioned attacks.

Perhaps the most well-known argument in this area is advanced by Crenshaw (1989), who critiques the use of a “single-axis” framework in anti-discrimination law, feminist theory, and anti-racist politics. Citing several cases in which the courts were challenged to decide whether African American women were filing suit as blacks or women as well as the race and gender struggles that African American women endured in the feminist and civil rights movements, Crenshaw argues that single-axis frameworks erase the interests of African American women because they assume that discrimination exists in mutually exclusive categories. Therefore, the subsequent implementation of

law, theory, and social justice movements centers on race or gender, but neither at the same time. Furthermore, it is the experiences of privileged members of these single categories that serve as reference points. Racial discrimination tends to be viewed through the lens of those who are gender and class privileged, while gender discrimination tends to be viewed through the experiences of those who are race and class privileged.

Both Strolovitch's (2007) and Cohen's (1999) work begin the task of empirically examining how contemporary, post-civil rights social justice organizations frame issues that affect intersectionally disadvantaged segments of their constituencies. Cohen's study provides the necessary focus on indigenous African American institutions and political ideologies with its rich description of African American newspapers and media outlets, local organizations, and black church politics. However, her use of AIDS as the point of entry into the discussion on intersectional representation does not fully contribute to our understanding of the extent to which gender and African American women's issues are addressed within African American organizations. In contrast, Strolovitch's study of 286 social and economic justice organizations is broad enough to gauge large scale patterns across marginalized groups, but is too broad to capture how issues of erasure might occur and function differently for groups representing African Americans. Given these limitations, I combined and extended the approaches of Cohen and Strolovitch by employing qualitative methods that captured narratives of race and gender that might be unique to African Americans while also using quantitative methods to gauge the importance of various social issues across a variety of African American organizations.

Methodology

I took two methodological approaches to examining the question of women's visibility within African American organizations. In this section, I will revisit key methodological points for

both the content analysis and semi-structured interview approaches. Specifically, I am asking: 1) do the missions and programmatic initiatives of national African American organizations reflect advocacy on behalf of African American women and/or gender issues? 2) Do leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations perceive their constituents to be concerned about or report that their organizations are active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues? 3) Do these same leaders believe that African American women experience sexism in African American communities and in what forms?

Content Analysis

In order to answer the first question, I conducted a content analysis of the missions and program descriptions of 34 national African American organizations. These are organizations which claim to provide community service to and/or work on behalf of the civil rights and public policy interests of African Americans. They are national in their membership or outreach and have Africans Americans as their sole or primary constituency. Given the qualitative aspects of this study, organizations were selected using purposive sampling; a non-probability sampling method. The goal of purposive sampling is to select cases that are relevant to the research questions posed by the qualitative researcher (Bryman 2009, Lofland et al. 2006). The strategic nature of purposive sampling causes it to differ from other more well known non-probability sampling methods such as convenience and snowballing. Given this goal, I have purposively sampled 34 organizations from the following sources: the Black Leadership Forum's listing of member organizations, the Ford Foundations' report on National Women of Color Organizations, the Leadership Council on Civil Rights' list of coalition members, the National Council of Women's Organizations' list of coalition members, and the Washington Information Directory. A complete list of organizations is provided in Table 1. Additionally, Figure 1 shows the percentage distribution of organizations by type. Civil

rights organizations and African American women's organizations were both approximately 32 percent of the sample, while African American men's organizations and advocacy/thinktank organizations were both approximately 18 percent.

In this portion of the study, I used the websites of each organization listed in Table 1 to construct two text files each corresponding to the missions and program descriptions of the organizations. For each text file, I coded for key words such as “woman”, “women”, “girls”, “mother”, “gender”, “feminist”, “feminism”, “sexist”, “sexism”, “misogynist”, “misogyny”, “pregnant”, “pregnancy”, and “welfare”. These codes allowed me to create four variables, which I then used to summarize the data: *orgtype*, which identifies the four types of organizations shown in Figure 1; *femission*, which captures whether or not an organization states that service to African American women and girls and/or that fighting against gender inequality and discrimination are integral to their mission; *femgoal*, which captures whether or not an organization has goals and programs specifically for African American girls and women or issues that affect them; and *femcombo*, which is a variable that combines the data from *femission* and *femgoal*. Given the categorical nature of these variables and the small sample size, these data were analyzed using Goodman and Kruskal's tau and Phi. These are non-parametric measures of association which are appropriate for nominal and dichotomous variables, respectively, and also relax assumptions about sample size. Interpretations of Goodman and Kruskal's tau and Phi are similar to those of the Pearson correlation coefficient in that the closer the coefficient gets to ± 1.00 , the stronger the relationship between the variables in question. Due to the non-random nature of the sample, the p-value is unreliable. Therefore, I discuss these results in terms of their effect size within the sample rather than their statistical significance.

Table I

Civil Rights Organizations

1. A. Philip Randolph Institute
2. ColorofChange.org
3. Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
4. Hip Hop Caucus
5. NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund
6. National Action Network (NAN)
7. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
8. National Black Justice Coalition
9. National Urban League (NUL)
10. Rainbow PUSH Coalition
11. Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

African American Men's Organizations

12. 100 Black Men of America
13. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
14. Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc.
15. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
16. Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
17. Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

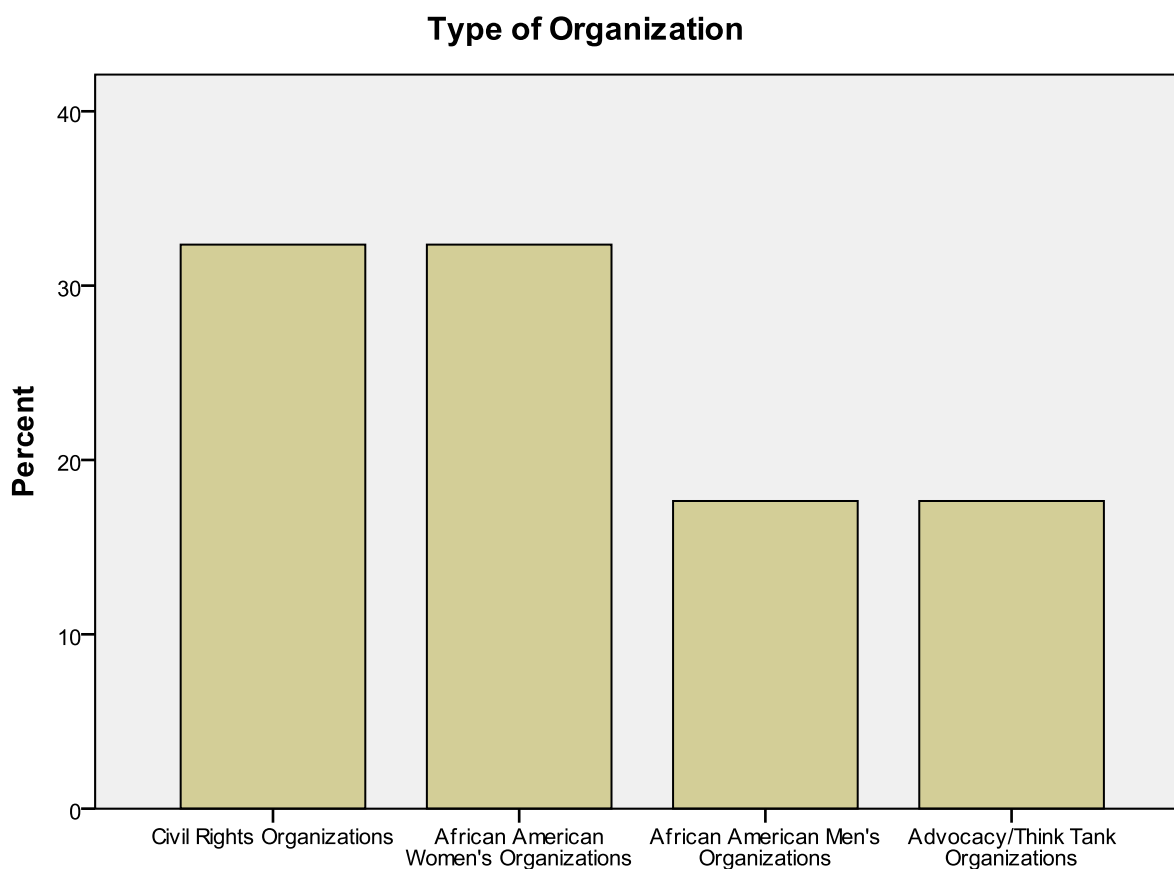
African American Women's Organizations

18. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
19. Black Women's Agenda, Inc
20. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
21. Links, Inc.
22. National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.
23. National Coalition of 100 Black Women
24. National Congress of Black Women
25. National Council of Negro Women
26. National Hook-Up of Black Women
27. Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
28. Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Advocacy Organizations/Think Tanks

29. African American Policy Forum
30. Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
31. Equal Justice Society
32. Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
33. Lincoln Institute for Research and Education
34. Project 21

Figure 1



Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to answer the second and third research questions, I conducted 35 semi-structured in-person and telephone interviews with leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations between June 2011 and May 2013. The organizations for this portion of the study were also sampled from the sources listed above. During recruitment, I specifically sought out participants that currently or within the last ten years set and/or oversaw the formulation and implementation of the goals, programs, and advocacy initiatives for their organizations. This included organization founders, presidents, chief executive officers, vice presidents, chairmen and members of the board of directors, chairmen of program committees, public relations

representatives, and executive board members. Individual participants were originally selected based on the listings of executive board members made publically available on the organizations' websites. Participants were also recruited through snowball and convenience sampling methods based on the participants' professional networks as well as my own. All participants were mailed and e-mailed an invitation to participate in a research study about “African American Social Justice Organizations and the Contemporary Civil Rights Agenda”. Those who responded to these mailings and agreed to participate were interviewed in person or over the telephone. Interviews contained 22 questions and ranged from one to four hours, but averaged approximately one and a half hours. Participants were also offered an online survey alternative to the interview based on their comfort level, availability, or time constraints. Ten participants selected this option, bringing the full sample for this portion of the study to 45.

Due to participant confidentiality, I will not list the names of the organizations that these 45 participants belong to. However, Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate the percentage distribution for organization type, as reported by participants. Figure 2 shows that leaders of civil rights organizations were the most widely represented in the sample at approximately 42 percent, while organizations providing direct social services were the next highest at approximately 13 percent. Figure 3 demonstrates the percentage distribution for organization type by level, with those organizations that classified themselves as local chapters of national organizations being the most widely represented (58 percent).

Figure 4 demonstrates the percentage distribution for organization location, with approximately 75 percent of the sample located in the midwestern United States. Participants were also majority female (53 percent) and, based on organizational and personal anecdotes told during the interview, perceived to be overwhelmingly young (69 percent between 30-60 years of age).

Figure 2

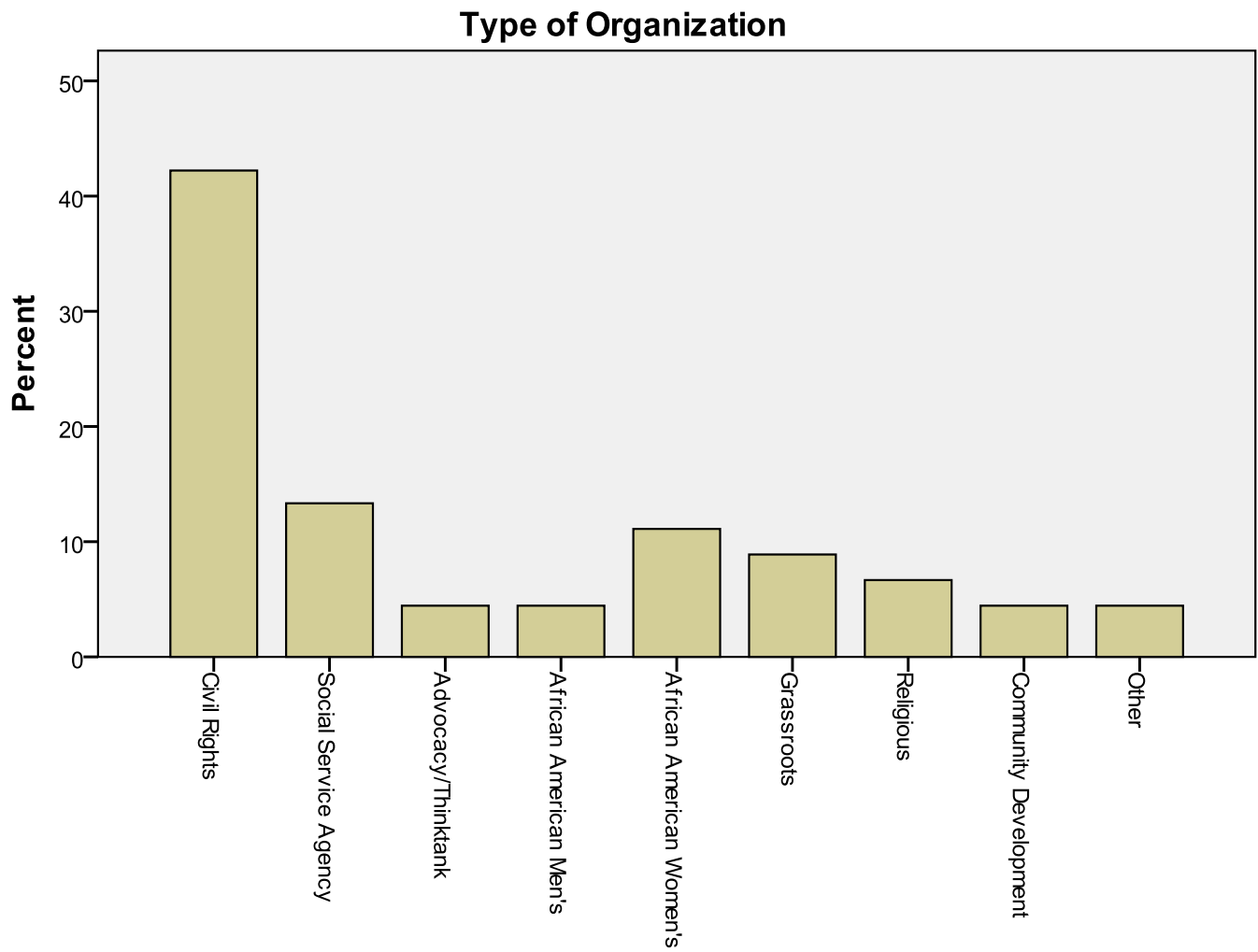


Figure 3

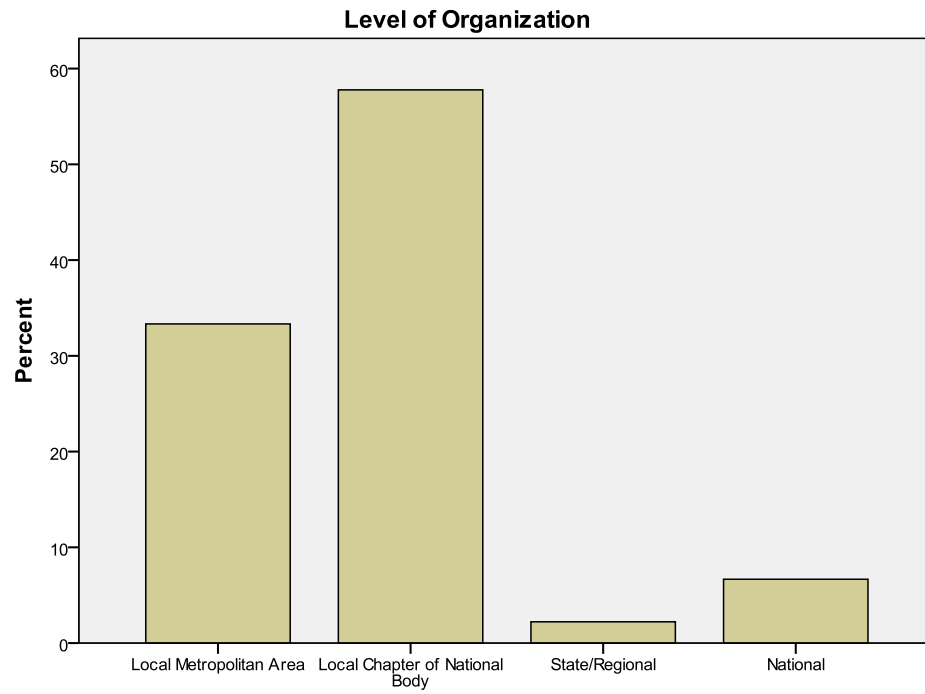
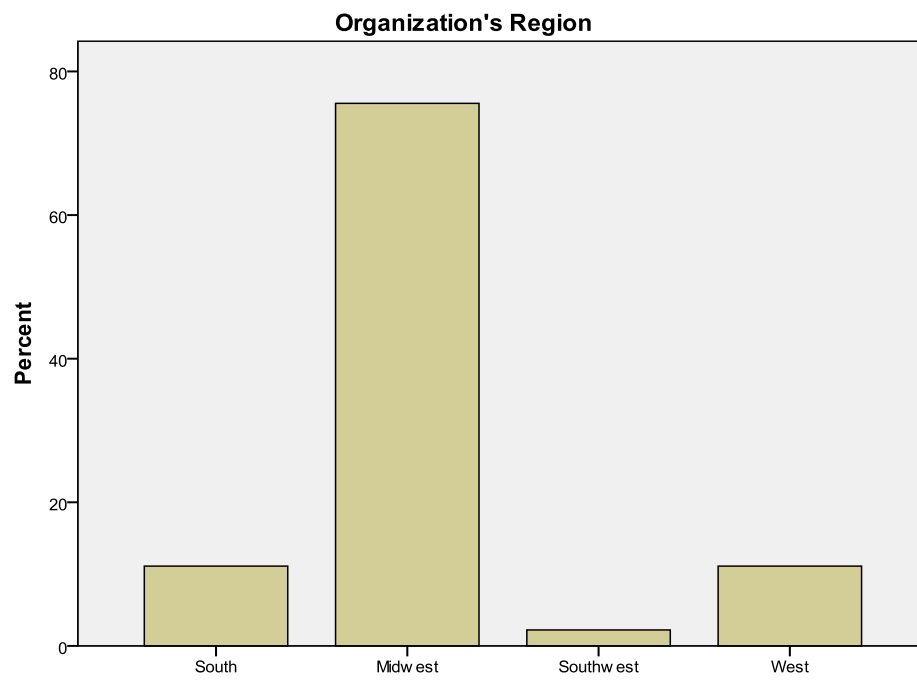


Figure 4



In a departure from Strolovitch's approach and in order to capture the complexity of addressing social justice issues in African American communities, I selected multiple issues for each of the policy typologies introduced above (universal, majority, advantaged subgroup, disadvantaged subgroup). Issues that have come up for debate on the national political stage over the past 5 years were selected as universal issues. These include the economy/unemployment rate, health care reform, and environmental safety/energy consumption. Majority issues were selected from "The Covenant With Black America" (2006), a national policy action plan pioneered by African American journalist and activist Tavis Smiley. The Covenant is particularly useful because it was compiled based on six years of African American policy symposiums hosted by Smiley and featuring a wide array of African American community leaders and public intellectuals. Therefore, majority issues were identified as racial profiling and civic participation/voter turnout. Advantaged subgroup issues were also selected from "The Covenant With Black America" and they include affirmative action in higher education and racial bias in the criminal justice system. Racism in the criminal justice system was selected as a gender-based advantaged subgroup issue because African American feminists argue that the amount of attention paid to it often privileges African American men's experiences at the expense of erasing African American women's troubles with domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive issues within their communities (Carbado 1998; Richie 2012). Therefore, these issues were selected as gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues.

In order to assess leaders' perceptions of the types of issues their constituents were concerned about, participants were presented with a list of the issues introduced above and were asked to select the one that was of highest concern to the people they serve. Similarly, in assessing the amount of attention paid to issues that affect African American women, participants were presented with the same list of issues and asked to select the one their organizations had spent the most time on in the past 10 years. Participants were then asked open-ended follow-up questions

that allowed them to further explain their selection or to offer alternatives to the list of issues. Finally, participants were asked to express their opinion regarding the extent to which African American women experience sexism in African American communities.

Closed-ended questions were analyzed using IBM-SPSS and the variables regarding gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues were coded as: *concern 2*, where "1" indicates that leaders believed their communities were concerned about disadvantaged subgroup issues (domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights), and "2" indicates they were not concerned; *active2*, where "1" indicates that leaders reported their organizations to be active on disadvantaged subgroup issues, and "2" indicates they were not. Open-ended questions were transcribed verbatim, categorized by question (issues concerned about, issues active on, and opinions about sexism), and coded for their common themes. Results from both the closed-ended and open-ended questions are presented below.

Results

In this chapter I have posed several questions regarding the visibility of African American women's intersectional experiences of racism and sexism within African American social justice organizations. Specifically, do the missions and programmatic initiatives of national African American organizations reflect advocacy on behalf of African American women and/or gender issues? Do leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations perceive their constituents to be concerned about or report that their organizations are active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues? Do these same leaders believe that African American women experience sexism in African American communities and in what forms?

Black Women, Gender, and National African American Organizations

Do the missions and program descriptions of national African American organizations reflect advocacy on behalf of African American women and/or gender issues? Descriptive statistics show that 16 of the 34 (47.1 percent) organizations in the first sample have a mission, program, or a combination of the two that focus on African American women, eradicating gender discrimination, or supporting the development of gender-sensitive social policy. The following excerpt from the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) provides an example of a gender-specific mission statement,

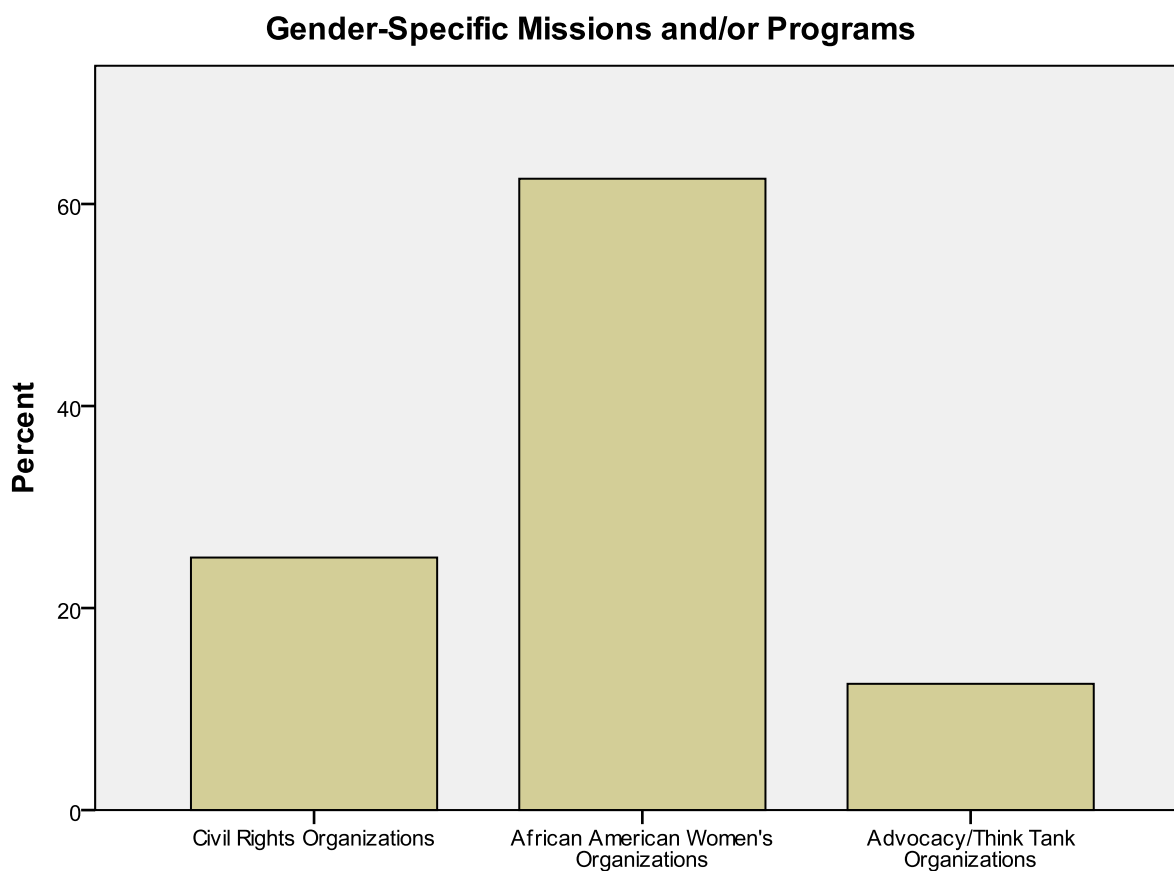
“Developed as part of an ongoing effort to promote women’s rights and gender rights in the context of struggles for racial justice, the AAPF strives to promote the interests of all communities who suffer from intersecting forms of discrimination (e.g., class-based, race-based, and gender-based), and unrecognized patterns of institutional discrimination”.

Similarly, the Equal Justice Society has stated that the goals of one of its principle programs is to work on gender-sensitive public policy,

“In partnership with the Fulfilling the Dream Fund, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Center for Social Inclusion, EJS facilitates a national “Race Conscious Framing Group” working to advance a national, proactive agenda around equal opportunity...The Race Conscious Framing Group hopes to identify options not just to preserve, but also to expand equal opportunity, and to support local and national efforts to implement race and gender conscious laws and policies”.

African American women’s organizations were 62.5 percent (N=10) of the sixteen organizations with a gender-specific mission or program. Figure 5 demonstrates the percentage distribution of

Figure 5



gender-specific missions and/or programs by organization type. The following excerpts demonstrate gender-specific mission statements from African American women's organizations,

" The National Congress of Black Women, Inc. (NCBW) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the educational, political, economic and cultural development of African American Women and their families. NCBW also serves as a nonpartisan voice and instrument on issues pertaining to the appointment of African American Women at all levels of government, and to increase African American women's participation in the educational, political, economic and social arenas.

Currently, NCBW provides opportunities for women for leadership and decision-making positions in government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector".

Similarly, the National Council of Negro Women states that their mission is to,

"...lead, develop, and advocate for women of African descent as they support their families and communities. NCNW fulfills this purpose through research, advocacy, and national and community-based services and programs on issues of health, education, and economic empowerment in the United States and Africa".

Further analyses indicate that, within this sample, having a gender-specific mission and/or program is moderately associated with organization type ($\tau = .435$, $p = .002$). Therefore, although 47 percent of national African American organizations in sample 1 have missions or programs focused on women or gender issues, those are primarily women's organizations.

African American Organizations and Gender-based Disadvantaged Subgroup Issues

Do leaders of the local, regional, and national African American organizations in sample 2 perceive their constituents to be concerned about domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues? Overwhelmingly, they do not. Eighty-seven percent (39 of 45) of leaders report that the communities they serve do not view these issues as primary concerns. In fact, 57 percent of the sample (26 of 45) report that they perceive the economy/unemployment to be the most concerning issue. Similarly, 91 percent (41 of 45) of leaders also report that their organizations are not active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues. Again, 40 percent of them stated that the economy/unemployment was either the primary or one of multiple core issues that their organizations were active on.

When speaking of the types of issues their communities were not concerned about nor their organizations active on, a female executive board member of a religious organization said the

following, "Reproductive rights? That would be the least important [on this list]. These people not worried about the rights to have babies. I don't think they worry. I think that's one of the least".

Similarly, a female executive board member from a civil rights organization said, "Black folks make a baby if they want to...Reproductive rights, we don't even discuss that". Finally, when the president of a civil rights organization was asked about the importance of domestic violence and sexual assault and whether his organization addressed them, he stated, "Obviously, that's important to everyone, but we don't talk about it...We're civil rights. I guess that could be a civil rights issue too, but it hasn't been a topic of conversation on our agenda. And I'm not even so sure that it's on the national level. Our mission is about eliminating the effects of racial discrimination and racial hatred, so that doesn't necessarily fall into that". In all of these excerpts, leaders have made it clear that addressing gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights are not central to their agendas nor their communities.

Although the vast majority of leaders report that their communities are not concerned with nor are their organizations active on gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues, there are a few that are. Five of the 45 organization leaders reported that their communities are concerned about gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues, while 4 of 45 reported that they are active on such issues. The female founder of a grassroots organization serving inmates and parolees stated the following regarding their programming for women,

"Two of our funded programs are for females. We have a program where we actually go behind the prison walls and work with women before they get released.

And work with them once they come out and it's called [program name], and it's all women. And we got funded to do a program called [program name] for women that have significant others incarcerated. I breathed life into that piece. I actually, years ago, was on the national level was talking about the wives, the significant others...No

one talks about that. It's like people don't wanna acknowledge these women. People have husbands and partners in prison, and it's women, mostly women that still have a relationship with these men in prison. So no one understood these women...So that's our program now. We work with women that have partners incarcerated, HIV awareness, and health awareness, domestic violence, how to negotiate condom use when your loved one come out. Because they're coming out and they're re-engaging with their partner and you need to know protection. You need to know how to protect yourself".

Also, the president of a civil rights organization spoke about the importance of addressing a recent spike in domestic violence cases in his community,

"Domestic violence is the higher priority. Our concern is that the system changed and you see things happen in a wave. Okay? You might see burglaries popular for a while and then you'll see in the court record cases of domestic violence. There are people calling us saying "I had a fight, my husband's hurt me", so that is where the thing, at certain times, is worse than others. So that's something that is a major concern in our community".

Similarly, another president of a civil rights organization was asked how he would rate the importance of addressing domestic violence in his community and then spoke about the experiences of young women who attend events at his organization's community center,

"Domestic battery, that's a 25. We have young women that have expressed issues and personally you can hear it but I try to remove myself, but I can hear sometime. They're talking amongst themselves or the women that I have assigned to deal with them. We have women that are here that are retired teachers and things and good counselors. So that's really important. Because if we want our young mothers to raise

some healthy children, they have to have a healthy mind and it's hard to have a healthy mind if that has been beaten down".

Overwhelmingly, the leaders in sample 2 report that the people in the communities they are serve are not primarily concerned about domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues nor are their organizations active on them. In fact, they state that the economy/unemployment is the primary issue of concern in the community and in their organizations. Despite this, there are a few leaders who see these issues as ones of primary concern and programming.

African American Women and Sexism in African American Communities

Although very few leaders of local, regional, and national organizations perceive their communities to be concerned about or report that they are active on domestic violence, sexual assault, or reproductive rights issues, 85 percent of those interviewed report that they believe African American women experience sexism in African American communities. However, their descriptions of this sexism revealed a complicated picture of organization leaders' ideas about the roots of African American women's disadvantage and their roles in African American families, communities, and politics. Specifically, some recognize the difficulty associated with African American women's intersectional experiences of gender and race while others argue that African American women will always be "black first". Many report that African American women experience sexism but some argue that these experiences are due to African American women's gender role non-conformity.

The Intersectionality and Primacy of Race

When leaders were asked whether African American women experienced sexism in African American communities, many gave responses highlighting African American women's intersectional experiences. A female member of the board of directors of a youth organization stated,

"This idea that black women don't feel the effects of sexism or this idea that sexism is not real, that's like the biggest crock of shit that I've ever heard. Um, yeah, and I just feel like, it's one of those things like, how could you not think this affects us given what we see everyday. But then I thought that there are things that people don't see everyday or choose not to see. Um, so, I think we experience it all the time in different ways, and in different forms because we live different lives. But yes, yes, yes. We experience it, yes".

Likewise, when speaking on the ways that gender and sexuality intersect with race, a male member of the executive board of a grassroots organization working on criminal justice issues stated,

"African American women are a classic example. They are oppressed as women and they are oppressed as African Americans. So they catch double hell. If women are being paid wages that are less than what a man is being paid, then that means that African American women are being paid less than African American men. And African American men are being paid less wages than white men. That means you get hit twice before it get to you. That means that African American women are being doubly oppressed, you know. Because of their race and their sex".

When asked if race or gender could trump each other in terms of African American women and the challenges they choose to fight against, a male executive board member of a civil rights organization said,

" As an African-American person, I was born with racism against me but African-American women were born with racism and sexism. I think that they are both wrong and I think that both are equally important and if you're going to use racism to keep me down in one instance, if that don't work, you're going to use sexism. What's the difference? I'm still down".

In all of these examples, organization leaders demonstrate awareness of the ways in which gender and race intersect in the lives of African American women and speak on the difficulty of ignoring this reality. Meanwhile, other leaders argue that race is always the principle means of oppression for African Americans, regardless of gender. Commenting on the relationship between race and gender for African American women, this male leader of a grassroots organization very succinctly stated, "The African American community, as a community, is primarily concerned with ending its oppression. And that oppression exists by virtue of racism". Equally as concise, a female civil rights organization executive board member stated, "Well, race comes first because if you are a woman you are not seen as just a woman, you are seen as black before you're seen as a female". Similarly, the male president of a college retention organization stated,

"Gender will never trump race. Because the first way that people interact with you is that you're black. It's really weird. Like the white guy walks up to you and says, "hey, what up dude". Sorry, I enunciate. "Hi, how are you?" It's something. It's real. Why do you [the white guy] talk like that? Don't try to "talk black" to me".

Overall, when asked about African American women and sexism, these excerpts demonstrate that some leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations understand race as intersecting with gender to produce a compounded effect of inequality for African American women while others view race as the primary factor in determining the experiences of all African Americans regardless of gender.

Sexism in African American Communities: Examples and Explanations

When probed about the existence of sexism within African American communities specifically and its causes, leaders surprisingly and overwhelmingly cited interpersonal examples and explanations. This male leader of a grassroots organization summarized this well,

"It's mainly on an interpersonal level and the reason why I say that is because, blacks by and large are not employers. We're not in control of any major social institutions, so there is no institutionalized discrimination against African American women on the part of African Americans. Simply because we are an oppressed community and we don't control no institutions. But there is attitudes and behaviors that need to be changed. And that will come about as a result of political education. We can address that through political education. There's not an institution of male supremacy in the African American community. There's male supremacist attitudes and dispositions in the African American community... With the Committee to Free Angela Davis and [other program names], we proved that these attitudes can be fought and that people can be educated to the point where they overcome them. But it's mainly about changing the attitudes and male chauvinist behavior".

This excerpt demonstrates a common theme among these responses: that African American men are the sources of sexism. However, what is not reflected in this quote are the explanations that these leaders offer regarding the causes of African American men's sexism. Some leaders argue that African American men are sexist because they resent African American women's socioeconomic and educational advancement. This male chief executive officer of a local health services organization stated,

"It happens all the time you know. I think the rates of educated black women is like 3 to 1 over black men. I think it makes a lot of men afraid. It makes them afraid. These young women, you see great promise even before they get into their early 20s. It's teenagers, 18, 19, 20, you can see the promise they have on them and it scares people. If you're an insecure male, you know, I think it scares people. In their insecurity, in their masculinity, um, sometimes there are feelings of inadequacy, like

"man, she been to school". Like they're happy for you, but sometimes some of them are not happy. But at the same time, they start to self-reflect, "I had a chance to go to school". But you're fooling around, you playing Sony video games, you in prison. So don't fault her because she's more impressive. That should be an incentive for all these young black [men], probably some of the older ones too. You see more women that are older in their 40s and 50s going back and getting their degrees, getting masters and doctorates. That should be more of an incentive than a deterrent. So I don't think, it's so much that "strong head-snapping", I don't think it's so much of that. I think it's inadequacies and inferiority complexes that a lot of men have and maybe the way the way they were raised, this macho-ism, "she think she know everything". Well, they don't know everything, but they might know quite a bit".

Similarly, a female minister stated, "Men still, I believe, are intimidated by women, especially women that have a higher position, a higher role. Definitely at work, even in general. In homes, even if they're married. In homes, a lot of men are intimidated by that. You know I think men still look at women as down on the bottom of the totem pole". A female executive board member of a grassroots organization echoed similar sentiments,

"You know we live in a male dominated society, and women are like second class citizens, even in our own communities, you know. And I can't tell you what form it takes, except that the economics are concerned. I just think women are treated differently than men...Men are always considered superior to women, and that we should be submissive to men. I think it's, you know, the women's lib did not go far enough. I think that, even in black communities, women are treated differently from men. There are too many households headed by black women, you know. And it creates a problem because, especially between male and female relationships, he feels

that he should be the head of the house and the woman should have an inferior role to him. But he's not able to do so because of her income versus his. And that's a real problem".

The leaders of these African American organizations are arguing that African American women's advancement leads to gender role non-conformity in their intimate relationships and families, thereby causing tension. These leaders conceptualize this tension as sexism.

Some leaders of the organizations in this sample view African American women's gender non-conformity and the resultant breakdown in African American relationships as the result of white ideological or strategic intrusion into African American communities. Namely, some of these leaders saw African American women's participation in the second wave feminist movement and feminist ideals in general as being "white" concepts that lead to the fracturing of African American communities and families. This male chief executive officer of a regional health organization explained,

"This is some black revolutionary talk now. They [white men] didn't really love they women. They just used them to pro-create to keep they race going. They were so foul, that's where that "seen and not heard" stuff came from. We've always listened to our women, because our mothers raised us, so we respect women. They want their women to be seen and not heard. They had a different life outside of the house. They didn't talk about things when they came home to their wives. So white women started saying, "we wanna be equal", so they started this feminist movement. Then you started having educated sisters in the 60s and 70s saying, "you right, I am a woman, I want power, I wanna be equal too". They started leaving the Civil Rights Movement... So black women started joining this feminist white movement and started supporting that and pushing that to the forefront. You know? It went from

Black Power to women's power. And I think, with their skills, their organizational skills and knowledge, they had to do something else. A whole bunch of Negroes in the room, not knowing what to do with our better halves not helping us out, and that [civil rights/black power] started getting pushed down you know. We just did stupid things, whether it's getting on narcotics, walking the street with guns, and in fact, they killed us".

Similarly, a male executive board member of a civil rights organization argues that African American families and traditional gender norms were sacrificed when African American women participated in the second wave feminist movement,

"I don't believe I'm a chauvinist by any stretch of imagination but historically white women sat back and let the husbands do whatever. That didn't necessarily equate to what was going on in the Black household. But when they made that move and they stepped up, it was really white women trying to get a power base. I'm not saying that they don't have the right to...But at the same time, you've put yourself in a different situation where, okay, you got this [women's rights], this [Black community] suffers. And it suffers more in the Black family because there are still roles that needed to be played historically, which is why men are men and women are women...I don't think it should be about a man dictating anything but if this is the situation we're going to deal with then, even if I'm making three times less than what you are, your status and your money should not belittle my place in the relationship... Going to civil rights movement, you saw the husband and the wife out there or you saw the kids out there. There was some type of structure. Or if the man had to go out on the frontline [of the movement], then the wife was with the kids. So, I mean, there was a place for everybody and good, bad, or indifferent, it worked. So the point is we got

what we got, but other things got involved and we're still dealing with the repercussions of that".

In both of these excerpts, leaders speak in detail about the ways that feminist ideals were both foreign and detrimental to African American families and communities. In both cases, African American women's personal or socioeconomic empowerment, by way of feminism, is framed as the source of the demise of Black social movements and the breakdown of nuclear family structure.

Other leaders speak of more intentional or strategic white influence in the downfall of African American communities. The president of a civil rights organization stated,

"I believe that our sisters go through a lot of things in our community – because let me say this, because of the upside down economics, sisters are allowed, and are more privileged, to go to school and get degrees and become the head of households. Which is fine, but the man is there in the household... So now you got sisters now who are going through it not only with whites but they're going through it with us [Black men]... Let me say this, it's by design okay? That was by design that our sisters are able to get jobs over black men. And I'm not saying that this is an excuse for Black men to do subpar, but conditions and situations might make the brother take the fall in the life that he's trying to rebuild... if you had unequal treatment, that's where you will see it at. Because of the imbalance, and that's what fuels the discrimination against black women among black people... It's all by design".

A male executive board member of a civil rights organization makes a similar contention; that African American women's advancement is a pawn used by whites to cause tension in African American communities,

"A woman is black first before she's a woman in this country. So even though she needs to fight for her own gender equality, racial equality has to really be projected

so that within the overall effort for equality, men and women have to work together. And in fighting for gender equality, sometimes these women are fighting against other Black men as well as the white society. So if you're going – I can always work with teams, the white team or black team – so who's going to be on our team? ...You will hear women say that they have that double discrimination, which they have, but they get the jobs. They have the education. They have the degrees in all areas... Now, in the Black community, they are discriminated against because the man is trying to withstand the white folks elevating the Black women. The man is trying to hold his own with them and so he has these fights back and forth. And you'll find men, particularly those who are insecure who really are down on Black women. Now I don't know where this is going to be published, but I kind of think of it like that".

In contrast to the leaders cited above, the following female member of the board of directors for a grassroots youth campaign contends that African American women struggle with the extent to which they might be complicit in African American men's disadvantage,

" I've been around black women who've been around and know previous movements and want to support black men, but for real? I need us to figure out something different because that's just gonna have us all messed up. Like toeing the line on this puts us in a place of danger. Again, black women have fallen into this place of taking care of black men and not holding them accountable. Because we want to take care of them, we want to support to them, and that's all well and good to an extent. But as history has shown us, you can't constantly let someone whoop your ass and just take it. I think it is so complex for all of those real issues, right? Look, I can't tell you how many times I thought about like, "I don't want to

criminalize these folks, so I can't do X". But then here are some real issues we're suffering , so what then becomes the resolution? Because it's like, "no I don't wanna send anymore brown folks to jail than there already are", but at the other end of that, can you just accept injustices in your physical space and just be like, "that's cool"? And so I think that's one way when we see, like, you know stuff is really entrenched because you can't see your way out of, because you're like damned if you do, damned if you don't. To be black and to be a woman is to occupy a bunch of different spaces at one time, none of which are privileged, right? So you got some relative privilege [heterosexual black women], but then nobody wants you anyway. So even in the spaces where we're supposed to have privilege, we're still not enough. Or not worthy of whatever it is we need, so I think we're always trying to teeter totter this line. There's always somebody that we're trying to protect and somebody that we need to speak up on. Some part of our identity that we need to speak up on and yet some part of our identity that we're trying to protect so, it's messy!".

These excerpts demonstrate the ways that leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations grapple with the idea that sexism against African American women is the result of interpersonal and intimate relationship tensions between them and African American men.

However, they go on to further explain that this tension was created by offering African American women, in lieu of men, intentional and strategic opportunities at educational and socioeconomic advancement. That is, African American women experience sexism from African American men because they allowed themselves to be used by whites to keep men down. This point is countered in the last excerpt, where the female board member is actively thinking her way through the many contradictions that African American women experience as they wrestle with commitments to their own personal well-being and that of African American men.

Discussion

In this chapter, I addressed the visibility of women's issues within African American politics by looking at the missions and program descriptions of 34 national African American organizations as well as the responses of 45 leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations to questions about the types of issues their communities are concerned about and their organizations are active on. They also responded to open-ended questions regarding the existence and nature of sexism within African American communities. The findings reported above both support and contradict several key arguments about the visibility of women's issues within African American organizations, and speak to the complexity of gender within post-civil rights African American politics.

Kane (2000) and Hunter and Sellers (1998) argue that identifying structural origins for gender equality, espousing egalitarian gender roles, and supporting political activism for women's issues were common among African Americans. The mission and program description data for the national organizations in sample 1 confirm these findings to a degree. A little less than half of the organizations in that sample have a mission, program, or a combination of the two that focus on African American women, eradicating gender discrimination, or supporting the development of gender-sensitive social policy. However, the majority of these are women's organizations, with a focus on women and/or gender in organization missions and programs being statistically associated with organization type. This confirms Dawson's (2001) finding that African American women are the most likely to endorse feminist ideals.

If we move to broader questions about sexism and gender norms in sample 2, contradictions between my findings and those of Kane (2000) and Hunter and Sellers (1998) begin to emerge. The data presented above reveal that leaders of African American organizations (who all racially identify as African American) do not point primarily to structural causes for gender inequality in African

American communities, but rather to interpersonal and intimate relationship tensions triggered by African American women's gender role non-conformity. Furthermore, not only do the organization leaders in this sample eschew egalitarian gender roles, they lament the "upside-down economics" brought on by African American women's educational and socioeconomic advancement. Additionally, when leaders were asked about the level of concern for women's issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights and their level of activity on such issues, they overwhelmingly reported low levels of concern and activity. There were only a few, but notable, exceptions to this trend.

Work by Strolovitch (2007), Cohen (1999), and Crenshaw (1989) all demonstrate that social justice organizations and anti-racist political discourse tend to reject addressing issues that fall at the intersections of race and gender, or sexuality in Cohen's case. Crenshaw argues that African American women's unique intersectional issues are rendered invisible due to the primacy of race in African American political discourse. My data reveal mixed results with regard to Crenshaw's claim. The leaders of the local, regional, and national organizations in sample 2 overwhelmingly think that African American women experience sexism in African American communities. Though some organizational leaders still view race as the primary category of oppression for African Americans, others speak very clearly about sexism and even use phrases such as "double discrimination" to describe African American women's experiences. Therefore, my data suggest that current mainstream African American political discourse (some 15-20 years after the work of Cohen and Crenshaw, respectively) is at least acknowledging that African American women experience disadvantage that is not entirely due to race.

Strolovitch (2007) finds that social and economic justice organizations do not expend their advocacy efforts on issues that affect intersectionally disadvantaged subgroups of their constituencies, but rather on the most advantaged group members. This study modifies

Strolovitch's intersectional approach to studying social justice organizations by selecting and asking organization leaders in sample 2 about multiple universal, majority, advantaged, and disadvantaged group issues informed by trends within African American politics. Strolovitch's original framework studied a wide range of social justice organizations and provided findings that were almost too broad to apply to African American communities, making this modified approach necessary. Given this focus, my findings both confirm and contradict different aspects of Strolovitch's argument. Similar to Strolovitch, the leaders in my sample are not active on nor perceive their communities to be concerned about gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights. However, in a departure from her findings, they are instead active on universal issues such as the economy and unemployment.

Although deemed a universal issue that affects all Americans, the economic downturn of the early 21st century and the resultant spike in unemployment have been particularly adverse in African American communities. Overall, poverty in African American communities declined in the twenty years spanning 1986-2006 (Dawson 2011). However, in 2013, the African American poverty rate (27.2 percent) was three times that of whites (9.7 percent). This poverty is worsened by the intensely high rates of unemployment in African American communities. Since the mid-1980s African Americans have consistently suffered double digit unemployment rates, and over the past half century these rates have been almost double those of whites. By November 2010, unemployment among African Americans had reached a whopping 16 percent. Even through the first seven months of 2013, the African American unemployment rate sat at 13.4 percent while the rate for whites was 6.7 percent (Desilver 2013). Therefore, although African American organizations tend to be non-responsive to gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues, they are not doing this in order to favor advantaged subgroup issues as Strolovitch would argue. Instead,

they are focusing on the particular ways that universal issues such as the state of the economy and unemployment are affecting their communities.

My findings are, however, consistent with Richie's (2012) thoughts on the "trap of loyalty". In fact, many of the leaders in sample 2 clearly support this trap. Richie defines it as, "...the obligation that Black women feel to buffer their families from the impact of racism in the public sphere...and an acceptance of community rhetoric that argues that Black women are in a more privileged position than are African American men... In this problematic formulation, Black women are expected to sacrifice their claims to resources and power because of the disadvantages and risks that Black men face" (p.36-37, 45). In this trap, African American women are framed as the cause of their own personal and their communities' disadvantage. These ideas, of traitorous African American women who function as doorways through which white ideologies and interests can infiltrate African American communities and gender role non-conformity as detrimental to African American communities, are hallmarks of a stalwart approach to indigenous analyses of African American inequality: Black nationalism.

In his study of contemporary Black political ideologies, Dawson (2001) finds that nationalism is the most widely represented in African American public opinion and that its only statistically significant predictor is membership in an African American organization. Black nationalism has several features that have been mainstays in African American political discourse and action: African American autonomy as evidenced by the cultural, social, economic, and political separation from whites; the rejection of "alien" ideologies such as feminism and cross-racial coalition building; the envisioning of America as inherently racist; and the use of race as the central and single most important lens for the analysis and critique of society. Black nationalist ideology also relies heavily on the inward building of the African American community through political and economic self-sufficiency, broad acceptance of an intra-racial unity that frames African Americans as a "nation

within a nation”, the designation of African American men as community leaders, and the eradication of women from public life. Black nationalism dominates contemporary African American politics, public discourse, and information networks (Dawson 2001).

Nationalist attitudes become particularly concentrated during times of economic hardship, as African Americans become increasingly disillusioned with shrinking opportunities for economic, social, and political advancement (Dawson 2001). As outlined above, African American communities are suffering under the burdens of historic inequities in poverty and unemployment. Simultaneously, African American women are advancing educationally and socioeconomically into the middle classes at a rate that outpaces African American men (Cose and Samuels 2003; Journal of Blacks in Higher Education 2009; Marsh et al 2007). In the context of pervasive nationalist attitudes, my findings suggest that leaders of African American organizations view both of these trends as threats to the stability of African American communities. That is, African American women are visible but out of place according to contemporary discourse on African American inequality. African American women's intersectional experiences with gender and race are visible to and articulated by these leaders. They also overwhelmingly report that African American women experience sexism in their own communities. However, when pressed to provide explanations for this sexism, they blame gender role non-conformity vis a vis African American women's socioeconomic status. Therefore, African American women's issues are seen – but mostly because their socioeconomic advancement relative to African American men's and the resulting gender "imbalance" causes them to be seen.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I address the question of African American women's visibility by examining the missions and program descriptions of 34 national African American organizations along with the

interview and survey responses of 45 leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations to questions about the types of issues their communities are concerned about and their organizations are active on, as well as their thoughts the existence and nature of sexism within African American communities. I have found that African American women are visible to national African American organizations, but primarily the female ones. There also appears to be a consensus that African American women experience sexism in African American communities, but it is not due to patriarchal attitudes which dictate that all women must be subject to men. No, African American women are visible to the extent that they are being blamed for their own intraracial subjugation. Identifying these hallmarks of pervasive Black nationalism in current post-civil rights African American organizations underscore the methodological importance of a black feminist epistemological standpoint, which makes questions about African American women's visibility central; and an intersectional analytic framework provided by Strolovitch (2007) and designed to tap into the complex ways that social justice organizations conceptualize community concerns.

In the chapters that follow, I will explore the question of African American women's visibility in two additional ways. First, I will flip the gender lens and look at two recent cases where Black women and gender issues were actually central to the public outcry. I will discuss how, despite the fact that the actual victims were black women who experienced sexual assault from members of their Dunbar Village community or were nationally humiliated through Don Imus' sexist and racist comments, national African American organizations used race and black men's experiences of racism as the mobilizing frames for interpreting these cases. The final empirical chapter will examine Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach's (2008) intersectional invisibility model in the context of African American women's visibility. Feminist scholars of color have specifically argued that African American women are rendered invisible because of a male bias in black politics

(Carbado 1998; Collins 2004; Hill 2005; Lewis-McCoy 2010; Woods 2008). The intersectional invisibility model will methodologically allow me to assess the extent to which the presence of male bias is specifically associated with the lack of attention paid to the gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues (domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights) discussed above.

III. GENDER AND THE FRAMING OF VICTIMHOOD IN TWO NATIONAL CONTROVERSIES

In this chapter, I continue to examine the visibility of women's issues within African American politics through the use of frame theory. Previous scholars have used resource mobilization and political process theories of social movements to explain black activism. However, studying gender in the context of social movements requires a different theoretical framework. The framing perspective within social movement theory specifically focuses on the centrality of meaning construction in the interpretation of social problems and the identification of affected parties. Given this, I explore the collective action frames of African American organizations by analyzing their responses to two public controversies that provide unique opportunities to study the “race or gender” tension within African American struggles for equality: the Don Imus and Rutgers women's basketball "nappy headed ho's" incident and the Dunbar Village gang rape case. Given that both cases involved women's experiences of sexism and/or sexual violence, did African American organizations interpret and respond to them through a gender lens?

In chapter 2, I found that a little less than half of national African American organizations make mention of women and girls and/or fighting against sexism and gender discrimination in their missions and program initiatives. However, of those organizations that do, the overwhelming majority of them were African American women's organizations. Using textual analysis of public organizational documents, I found that this is also true of those organizations that had public responses to the Imus/Rutgers controversy. Additionally, of the organizations that interpreted the issue as sexist and/or put forth a gender-specific list of protest goals and demands, African American women's organizations also appeared most frequently. Overall, African American organizations responded to the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases in the following ways: First,

African American organizations made use of recently publicized racial tensions as interpretive reference points. Second organizations framed African American men as the primary victims of the social problems that informed both cases. Next, in the Imus case specifically, African American organizations cited racism, sexism, and African American cultural deficiencies as causal agents and targets for protest. In the Dunbar Village case, white villains and racially unjust institutions were common targets for blame. I conclude that, despite the centrality of women's experiences of sexism and sexual violence, African American organization leaders framed both cases as evidence of the suffering of African American men.

Studying African American Social Movements

The works of McAdam (1982) and Morris (1984) stand as two of the most influential writings that theorize African American social movements. Both seek to explain the mobilization and protest activities of the African American collective action movements of the mid-twentieth century. Relying heavily on resource mobilization theory and Weberian theories of charisma, Morris (1984) argues that indigenous African American institutions, charismatic leaders, and resources were the primary impetus for the formulation and longevity of the Civil Rights Movement. Morris carefully highlights several internal movement factors in order to draw distinctions between his perspective and that of classic collective behavior theory; which argues that social movements are irrational, unorganized, and emotional bursts of mass action. He details movement development and the resultant tensions in leadership between the NAACP, SCLC, SNCC, and CORE; the usefulness of the Black Church and "movement centers" as ancillary movement institutions where leaders were developed and a host of resources such workshops, education about previous movements, and media contacts were available; and the highly strategic planning that was necessary in order to execute the types of mass protests that were emblematic of the Civil Rights Movement.

Overall, Morris (1984) directly refutes the classical theory assertion that movements were spontaneous and without structure.

In contrast, McAdam (1982) argues that neither classic collective behavior theory or resource mobilization adequately explain the emergence and development of the Civil Rights Movement. He states that classical theory fails because it posits that psychological strain and individual discontent, rather than rational political action, form the bases of protest; while resource mobilization theory falls short because it overemphasizes the resources and organizational power of community elites while denying the agency of the disadvantaged. McAdam (1982) advances a three-point political process model as an alternative to these theories. It includes the extent to which the insurgent community has the organizational infrastructure, the insurgent consciousness, as well as access to a political environment ripe for protest activities (p. 40). McAdam (1982) argues that a host of changes in the political environment in the early twentieth century provided the opportunities for African American protests; among them are the decline of the cotton industry, the Great Migration of southern African Americans to northern industrial cities, and several reversals of racially discriminatory laws by the Supreme Court. These opportunities, in addition to the founding and development of several civil rights organizations, strengthened African Americans' confidence in the possibility of successful insurgency while also providing its organizational base. McAdam's (1982) work demonstrates that the Civil Rights Movement depended as much, if not more, on favorable political conditions as it did on the organizational infrastructure of African American communities.

Both Morris (1984) and McAdam (1982) highlight the importance of the internal organizational infrastructure of African American communities, and in different ways, both emphasize the importance of agency in the conception and execution of movement activities. Despite the significance of Morris' (1984) and McAdam's (1982) work, my inquiry into the

mobilization of African American organizations on behalf of the gender interests of African American women requires a third theoretical approach within the study of African American social movements: the framing perspective. This perspective, which focuses on the meaningful interpretation of experience in the context of movement activities, is particularly necessary when asking questions about the subjective nature of movement focus: whose interests are served, how victims are identified, and how their suffering is publicized. Furthermore, though African Americans are often treated as a homogenous political entity, this has never been the case. In fact, post-civil rights African American politics has continually been marked by visible heterogeneity in African American counterpublics (Dawson 2001). Given this diversity in the analysis of and approaches to solving African American social problems, there is much to be gained by investigating how organizations interpret and craft responses to them. Unlike resource mobilization and political process theories employed by Morris (1984) and McAdam (1982), the framing perspective provides a theoretical lens that allows us to uncover the ideological bases for African American social movements in the post-civil right era.

Methodology

I explore the collective action frames of African American organizations by analyzing their responses to two public controversies that highlight the "race or gender" tension within African American social movements: the Don Imus and Rutgers women's basketball incident and the Dunbar Village gang rape case. Within social movement theory, framing refers to the dynamic and deliberate meaning construction processes involved in interpreting social problems, identifying causal agents, and crafting collective responses to such problems (Benford and Snow 2000). If African American women's social, political, and economic interests are overlooked, the mechanisms that allow this to occur are located in these processes. That is, if we are seeking to understand the

collective action responses to the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases in particular, or the lack of attention paid to issues that affect African American women more generally, we have to get into the culturally embedded “mind” of social movements and their organizations. Framing processes are this “mind”.

Case Descriptions

In April 2007, radio personality Don Imus captured the attention of the nation as he and his executive producer Bernard McGuirk made racist and sexist jokes about the predominantly African American Rutgers University women’s basketball team. The jest began when McGuirk and Imus labeled the Rutgers team “hardcore” and “nappy headed hos”. McGuirk invoked imagery from Spike Lee’s popular film “School Daze” by declaring the women’s NCAA basketball championship game a match that pitted the dark-skinned “Jiggaboos” of Rutgers against the light-skinned “Wannabes” of the University of Tennessee. The ensuing controversy went in two directions: civil rights organizations calling for the firing of Imus and a strongly renewed, “unprecedented” attack on rappers by everyone from Illinois Congressman Bobby Rush to Oprah for their sexualized depictions of African American women, as embodied in the word “ho” (Sanneh 2007).

In June 2007, a 35 year old Haitian woman and her 12 year old son were the victims of a brutal home invasion where they were beaten, gang raped, and forced to perform incestuous acts with one another. The attack occurred between 10pm and midnight in the densely populated Dunbar Village public housing development in West Palm Beach, Florida; yet the family’s screams went unanswered. With the attackers having stolen their vehicle, the family was forced to walk several miles to the nearest hospital. As many as 10 young African American men were reported to have been involved in the attack. However, as of October 2009, only four young men have been tried and convicted of these crimes (Skoloff 2009; Spencer-Wendel 2009).

In March 2008, Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network and Maude Ford Lee, president of the West Palm Beach chapter of the NAACP held a press conference with the relatives of the four defendants, claiming that the criminal justice system had treated the teens unfairly by denying them bail. Sharpton and Lee compared the Dunbar Village defendants with five white male teens who had been recently released on bail after being accused of the date rape of two white girls in Boca Raton, FL (Witt 2008). Critics of Sharpton observed that one of the more than 13 charges entered against the Dunbar Village defendants included the sexual assault of a child; an element absent from the Boca Raton case. Furthermore, in an interview with a black feminist blogger about the NAACP's role in the case, an executive board member said that advocacy on behalf of the family was not undertaken because the attack was "an individualized case", and that black-on-black crime more generally was "outside the scope of our mission" (Black Women's Roundtable 2008; McCauley 2007).

The media scrutiny surrounding these cases provide a unique opportunity to examine how African American organizations responded to public controversies where sexism and sexual violence were central. Additionally, the perjorative "nappy headed ho" is both racist and sexist, thereby firmly situating the intersection of race and gender in the center of the Imus/Rutgers controversy. In the Dunbar Village case, African American feminist bloggers Gina McAuley and Rev. Renita Weems, began what would end up being a "viral" series of e-mails, videos, podcasts, and blog posts decrying the NAACP and National Action Network's support for the release of the Dunbar Village rapists. Their arguments were very similar to those advanced by feminist scholars of color: that the actual victims of the gang rape were rendered invisible because the mobilization of civil rights organizations was focused on "endangered black men" (Collins 2004). Since African American organizations had to provide justifications for their advocacy on behalf of accused rapists, the Dunbar Village case allows us to examine how gender and victimhood are framed.

Sample and Method

In this section, I will revisit key components of the content analysis methodology introduced in Chapter 2. I purposively sampled 34 organizations from the Black Leadership Forum's listing of member organizations, the Ford Foundations' report on National Women of Color Organizations, the Leadership Council on Civil Rights' list of coalition members, the National Council of Women's Organizations' list of coalition members, and the Washington Information Directory. A complete list of organizations is provided in Table 1 in Chapter 2. Civil rights organizations and African American women's organizations were both approximately 32 percent of the sample, while African American men's organizations and advocacy/thinktank organizations were both approximately 18 percent.

Both content and textual analyses were conducted on publicly available information released by these organizations regarding the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases. Specifically, data was gathered from press releases about the cases available on the organizations' websites, the Way Back Machine internet archive for access to press releases no longer available on currently updated websites, news reports of interviews with organization leaders, transcriptions of press conferences, and transcriptions of the "Black Women's Roundtable" (2008) podcast which featured interviews with NAACP officials in the wake of the Dunbar Village case.

Using this information, I constructed two text files corresponding to African American organization's responses to each case. In order to specifically focus on the framing processes in the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases, I examined all of the organizations' responses based on three of Benford and Snow's diagnostic framing tasks (2000): interpretation of social problems, defining causal agents, and defining the goals of protest. I coded the data with the following guiding questions:

1) Interpreting an issue and defining it as a problem

- a. What specifically was problematic about Imus' statement "nappy head hos", according to these organizations?
- b. What was the wrong committed against the alleged Dunbar Village attackers according to the NAACP and the National Action Network?

2) Definition of causal agents

- a. What was the cause of Imus' statement, according to these organizations?
- b. Who or what caused the alleged Dunbar Village attackers to be arrested and denied bail?

3) Defining the goals of protest

- a. What were the official organizational responses to each case?
- b. What types of demands or suggestions for remedies were put forth by each organization?

Given the wide response among African American organizations to the Imus/Rutgers controversy, I went beyond the textual analysis and created four summary variables. They are: IMUSRESP, whether an organization had any type of public response; IMUSFEM, whether an organization interpreted the issue as solely or partially sexist; IMUSPRO, whether an organization had protest goals or lists of demands that were gender-specific; HYBRID, whether an organization cited a combination of African American cultural deficits, sexism, and/or racism as the cause of the controversy. Only two organizations, the NAACP and the National Action Network had public responses to the Dunbar Village gang rape case. Therefore, I did not create summary variables for that text file.

Results

When African American organizations were confronted with the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases, several important themes emerged from their frames. First, African American organizations used examples of recent racial tensions as interpretive reference points. Next, the underlying social problems were framed as ones where African American men were the primary victims. In the Imus case specifically, African American organizations cited racism, sexism, and African American cultural deficiencies as causal agents and targets for protest. While in the Dunbar Village case, white villains and racially unjust institutions were common targets for blame.

Racial Tensions as Interpretive Reference Points

In their efforts to interpret the Imus/Rutgers controversy and the Dunbar Village case, African American organizations crafted their responses by referring to recent points of racial tension. For example, when describing their response to the Imus/Rutgers controversy, the NAACP stated,

“Due to the overwhelming number of racially disrespectful incidents that have occurred...the STOP Campaign is not only needed but urgent. Some of these recent incidents include: Michael Richards goes on a tirade using the n-word at a comedy club in Los Angeles...Many incidents on college campuses throughout the country displayed images of white students dressed in stereotypical African American images and wearing black face makeup”.

The president of the NAACP Florida State Conference made a similar interpretive reference point when explaining the West Palm Beach chapter's advocacy for the accused Dunbar Village rapists,

“There was no intent on the branch's part to ignore what happened to the victims. There was no intent to not be concerned about the victims...We've been working

very hard in the state of Florida, through the Florida State Conference, in getting our units to look at the disparity gap that exists between African American children and white and Hispanic children in our school districts, as it relates to arrests, expulsions, and suspensions. And that rate is very, very high”.

Interpreting issues and defining them as social problems is an important first task in an organization's framing process. In both of these examples, the NAACP's interpretations of the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases exclusively refer to recent examples of racist behavior and racially discriminatory practices. By taking whites' use of "the n-word" and blackface and multiple sites of racial inequality in Florida as reference points, the NAACP is framing both Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village as cases of racial injustice.

The Florida State NAACP president's comments are a clear example of the deliberate nature of framing processes. The local NAACP chapter was confronted with multiple problematic conditions in Dunbar Village: the actual gang rape and heightened level of sexual violence in that neighborhood, excessively rundown public housing conditions, and slow police and emergency response, among many others. However, problematic conditions only get elevated to the level of social problem through the process of issue selection and definition (Loseke 2003). Problems are problems because we define them as such. Suffering does not automatically produce a movement. Suffering must be seen, interpreted, and amplified. None of the aforementioned problematic conditions were selected and interpreted publicly by the West Palm Beach NAACP as requiring mobilization. However, when they saw that four young African American men were arrested and held without bond for a sex crime while five white young men were released on bond for what they incorrectly thought was a similar sex crime, the NAACP moved into action.

African American Men as Primary Victims

Another feature of diagnostic framing processes involves the identification of victims, or the people who are perceived to principally suffer from the social problem being addressed. In fliers circulated at the March 8, 2008 joint NAACP/Reverend Al Sharpton press conference (Figure 1), the Dunbar Village case was framed as one involving racially victimized young African American men. Here, the words “voiceless, vulnerable, victims...Young African American Males...AN ENDANGERED SPECIES!! Tender enough to be treasured! Precious enough to be preserved!”, as well as the repeated references to “these children” and “these young boys” indicate that this case was framed as an attack on innocent young African American men.

Similarly, the National Congress of Black Women argues that music and other types of media produced by young disenfranchised African American men provided the fodder for Imus’ “nappy headed ho” comments. Here, the organization specifically cites young African American men’s lack of economic opportunity as the underlying injustice in the Imus/Rutgers controversy,

“Too many corporate leaders in the entertainment business have captured the rawness of the feelings of many Black males...Some rap music which began with a positive purpose, now taps into the psyche of Black teens who have a sense that no one cares that young Black males are routinely getting the short end of the stick in America. Too many of us have criticized young people for denigrating disrespecting women and Black people in order to make a living, when they are offered no decent options”.

Figure 6

VOICELESS, VULNERABLE, VICTIMS!!

★ **Avion, Jakaris and Nathan** ★

**Young African American Males...
AN ENDANGERED SPECIES!!**

★ **Tender enough to be Teasured!** ★
★ **Precious enough to be Preserved!** ★

This is why you should have an interest in their well-being and just treatment throughout the legal system... We have too much in common to be complacent and not to care. These young boys have been tried and convicted by the media and the so called justice system prior to being afforded quality representation or a fair trial. These children are being unjustly persecuted because of corrupt politics, racism and economics. The State Attorney's Office has grossly overcharged these children. Compare these children's charges to the charges of the children in suburban Boca Raton. And all GOD's people say Amen! Palm Beach County is notorious for charging children as adults, especially children of color. Justice was supposed to be a right, not a privilege.

The flyer includes three photographs of young Black men: one in a white tank top, one in a brown shirt, and one in a blue and white football jersey.

In both the Dunbar Village and Imus/Rutgers case, the plight of young African American men have been framed as the chief concern. The latter quote is particularly demonstrative of the interpretive work of victim identification in that the responses hardly seem to match the problem. The National Congress of Black Women is essentially arguing that Imus called a group of African American female basketball players "nappy-headed hos" because young African American men lack access to economic opportunity. Much like the Dunbar Village case, the young women who were the focus of the actual verbal assault were not framed as the real victims. The disenfranchised and disillusioned African American men who produce rap music are framed as the victims.

Racism, Sexism, and Gender-Specific Protest Demands

Another critical task in framing processes involves assigning blame or causality. In the Imus case specifically, African American organizations cited racism, sexism, and African American cultural deficiencies as causal agents and targets for protest. Overall, approximately 67 percent of the organizations in the sample had a public response to the Imus/Rutgers controversy. Textual analyses of these responses reveal that African American organizations rarely cited sexism or racism as the sole source of blame for Imus' comments, but often used them together. For example, in a statement released by African American women's organization The Links, Inc., they stated,

“The Links, Inc., is calling for politicians, pundits and advertisers to refrain from appearing and advertising on “The Imus in the Morning Show.” The organization of more than 12,000 women finds the remarks made on the nationally syndicated radio show both racist and sexist”.

The National Urban League also released a similar statement,

“His [Imus] racist and sexist comments do nothing more than reinforce racial and gender stereotypes in this nation across public airwaves, which are owned by us all”.

I also examined the extent to which responding organizations put forth gender-specific lists of protest goals and demands. Among the 23 organizations that responded to Imus, 48 percent of them put forth these types of demands. For example, in the wake of this controversy, the Black Women's Agenda organization offered,

“Our Call to Action for individuals and organizations...Gather people together for structured dialogues about issues of race, diversity, and gender with help from organizations such as Study Circles or America Speaks... Develop relationships with corporate executives that go beyond just their financial support of your programs but also to collaborative efforts to address racism and sexism”.

Further analyses indicated that interpreting this issue as sexist was moderately associated with organization type ($\tau = .310, p=.017$), while putting forth gender-specific protest goals or list of demands were statistically dependent on the presence of a gender-specific mission or program ($\varphi = .482, p=.005$). On the surface, it seems like African American organizations might have some type of intersectional analysis of the Imus controversy. However, women's organizations are the majority of those that cited sexism as one of the causes of the controversy and/or put forth gender-specific protest goals and demands. These results regarding gender and responses to Imus are not unlike those in Chapter 2, where women's organizations outnumbered all other organization types in having missions and program initiatives inclusive of women's issues.

White Villains and Racially Unjust Institutions

Thus far, the data reveal that African American organizations have used reference points which allow them to interpret the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases as race-related social problems. Next, the organizations have also framed young African American men as the primary victims of these social problems; while women's organizations primarily put forth gender-specific protest goals and cited sexism as a causal agent. Meanwhile, in the Dunbar Village case the NAACP and Reverend Al Sharpton viewed white villains and racially unjust institutions as typical sources of blame. For example, feminist blogger Gina McCauley (2007) notes this exchange during her interview with the then NAACP national communications director,

“...when asked point blank whether they would have become involved if the West Palm Beach victim had been attacked by white teenagers, Mr. McIntyre said the NAACP would probably become involved at the National level”.

Here, McCauley reports that the NAACP executive is explicitly stating that the race of the villain matters when making decisions about the mobilization of the national organization. However, the

same violent act committed by African American teenagers against a woman in a predominantly African American public housing development was characterized as being “outside the scope of our mission” (McCauley 2007). Therefore, having a white person to lay blame against is a critical aspect of the diagnostic frames used by the NAACP.

The organizations that responded to the Dunbar Village case also identified a racist criminal justice system as a causal agent. Reverend Al Sharpton noted the following in his March 8, 2008 joint press conference with the NAACP,

“In this situation, it is the imbalance that we are protesting...While we admonish young men in every community to not engage in crime and to respect women, we also admonish the system that you can't have one level of justice for whites and those with money and another level for blacks that live in Dunbar Village”.

Similarly, in the flyers that were distributed during the March 8th press conference (Figure 1), the caption below the photo states,

“This is why you should have an interest in their well-being and just treatment throughout the legal system...We have too much in common to be complacent not to care. These young boys have been tried and convicted by the media and the so called justice system prior to being afforded quality representation or a fair trial. These children are being unjustly persecuted because of corrupt politics, racism, and economics. The state's attorney's office has grossly overcharged these children. Compare these children's charges to the charges of the children in suburban Boca Raton. And all GOD'S people say Amen! Palm Beach County is notorious for charging children as adults, especially children of color. Justice was supposed to be a right, not a privilege”.

Here, both Sharpton and the flyer make reference to the five white male teens that were released on bail after date rape charges in nearby Boca Raton, FL and incorrectly juxtaposes their release with the refusal of bail for the Dunbar Village defendants. In a case where the actual victims were a sexually and physically assaulted family, the causal agent is framed as a racist criminal justice system which frees white men and victimizes African American men. Both the NAACP's explanation of when they *would* have responded and the flier's admonition of how African Americans *should* respond are indicative of the mobilizing power of white villains and racist institutions in African American social movements.

Discussion

In both the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases we see the utility of the framing perspective in understanding the mobilization of contemporary African American organizations in response to cases where African American women's experiences of sexist hate speech and sexual violence were central. One key task in framing social problems is diagnosis. That is, troublesome conditions must be interpreted and labeled as social problems, sufferers are identified, and then people or entities are blamed. By examining these key aspects of diagnostic frames we see that even in cases that are comprised of women's experiences, African American organizations interpreted them as evidence of ongoing racial inequality where African American men primarily suffer at the hands of a racist criminal justice system and/or a racially unequal society that has robbed them of economic opportunity. How does this happen? Where are frames drawn from?

While Morris' (1984) and McAdam's (1982) work are seminal in detailing the resources and conditions that were necessary for African American mobilization during the Civil Rights Movement, they do little to help us understand the types of ideological forces that shape African American mobilization today: a post-civil rights era that is marked by increasingly visible African

American heterogeneity. As gender, sexual, ethnic, and economic divisions among those living in black bodies in the United States become more salient, questions about who counts as worthy of the mobilization of national black political power grow louder. In studying the frames of organizations that wield this power, we can begin to answer this question. In fact Oliver and Johnston (2000) state, "Framing processes are the ways actors invoke one...set of meanings rather than another when they communicate a message, thereby indicating how the message is to be understood".

Answers to the "who counts in black politics" question are possible because of the way that frames are linked to group ideologies. Ideologies are systems of ideas; cohesive theories of society that link values, norms, and explanations of how the world works and changes (Oliver and Johnston 2000). Ideologies provide the toolkit from which frames are drawn. Therefore, if we have situations where a gender analysis is not evident in the frames that organizations use to respond to issues where women were central, the ideologies which fuel the frames are why. While scholars who examine the impact of ideology on social movements caution us about assuming too much coherence between frames and ideology (Snow 2004), the diagnostic frames used by leaders in both the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village case do suggest the presence of the same pervasive black nationalist ideology defined at the end of Chapter 2. Black nationalists value African American equality, present theories of society where race is the single greatest impediment to that equality, and support androcentric gender norms. If these are the primary elements of black nationalist ideology, and this ideology is the most common in African American counterpublics especially among African American organizations (Dawson 2001), then it follows that the diagnostic frames of African American organizations would define social problems as primarily racial, sufferers as male, and villains as racist institutions which imprison and deny resources to men.

Conclusion

This chapter examines the extent to which African American organizations used gendered collective action frames in their responses to cases where women's experiences were central. Using the concept of "diagnostic framing" in social movement theory, I found that in both the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases organizations framed racial inequality as the primary social problem, African American men were the symbolic victims of this problem, and racist institutions which disproportionately target or exclude African American men were to blame. Highlighting the link between black nationalist ideology and collective action frames devoid of gender analysis advances our understanding of the socially constructed nature of contemporary African American social justice mobilization in a way that previous scholars of African American social movements do not. Given the primacy of maleness in responses to cases where sexism and sexual violence were the actual injustices, the next task in understanding the limited visibility of women's issues in African American politics is to determine if this trend exists outside of these two specific cases. In the next chapter, I discuss whether men are viewed by leaders of various organizations as the group that would benefit most from African American social justice work and if this view is associated with the types of issues the leaders think are important to their communities.

IV. MALE PROTOTYPICALITY, GENDER CONFORMITY, AND IMPROVING BLACK COMMUNITIES

“The endangered Black man narrative speaks to very real assaults on the material well-being of black men. But it is a part of a larger myth of racial authenticity that has been so successfully cultivated in ghetto-centric culture, a myth that renders invisible the specific contours of living in female, working class, gay and lesbian black bodies”.

- Kristal Brent Zook, *A Manifesto of Sorts for a Black Feminist Movement*

Twitter is an online social networking site where users can set up accounts to microblog information to the world. These microblogs are limited to 140 characters and are known as "tweets", while Twitter users are called "tweeters". Perhaps one of the most well-known aspects of Twitter are its "hashtags"; the small tic-tac-toe symbols (#) that tweeters use to highlight key words or topics. Once a hashtag is "retweeted" (copied, pasted, and shared by users other than the original tweeter) or multiple tweeters compose their own tweets using it, it can become so popular that Twitter highlights it on its homepage. When this happens, a hashtag is said to be "trending". Late summer 2013, Ebony Magazine associate editor Jamilah Lemieux created the hashtag #blackpowerisforblackmen to express her frustration with the lack of attention paid to women's issues in African American communities. The hashtag caught fire and trended throughout much of August as African American women and men, scholars and every day people, began tweeting their frustrations as well. Hundreds of #blackpowerisforblackmen tweets lamented issues such as sexual assault and domestic violence at the hands of African American men, street harassment, the lack of knowledge about African American women's history, and the absence of women on panels and townhall discussions about the state of the African American community. Tweeters also commented on popular culture called out music industry mogul and hip hop legend Russell Simmons for his strong opposition to CNN anchor Don Lemon's recent criticism of African American men's sagging pants while also defending his online antebellum rape satire, the "Harriet Tubman Sex Tape". Figures 7-10 are examples of #blackpowerisforblackmen tweets.

Figure 7



"BW" is shorthand for Black women.

Figure 8



"SMH" is shorthand for "shaking my head".

Figure 9

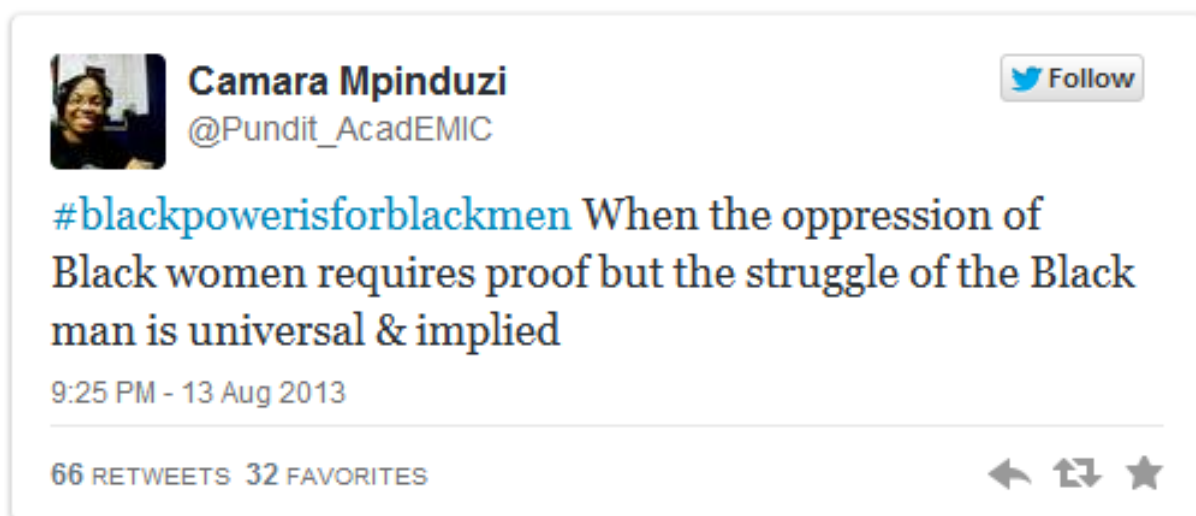


Figure 10



These tweets are contemporary versions of an enduring question: Are men the primary focus of strategies for African American advancement? I explore this question empirically in this chapter. Specifically, I use Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach's (2008) intersectional invisibility model to determine if the leaders of African American organizations view men as the prototypical people who could benefit from their work; if this prototypicality is associated with the types of issues organization leaders perceive their constituents to be concerned about and report that their organizations are active on; and if leaders invoke gender to diagnose and suggest remedies for African American social problems. In what follows, I will define the intersectional invisibility model and review the one empirical study that has been published using the model. Next, I will review the small but insightful literature on black male gender privilege. I will also revisit relevant methodological components from previous chapters and then elaborate on key findings related to the centrality of men in strategies for African American advancement. Briefly, these findings indicate that leaders overwhelmingly view men as prototypical African Americans and this view is associated with the types of issues they believe their communities are concerned about as well as the issues they report their organizations are active on. These leaders believe that restoring patriarchal leadership in families and communities is the key to decreasing many of the negative social conditions that affect African Americans.

Intersectional Invisibility and Group Prototypicality

The intersectional invisibility model, advanced by Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008), is drawn from social psychological theories of prototypical group membership. They argue that members of social categories who are privileged by systems of androcentrism, ethnocentrism, and/or heterocentrism can be defined as “prototypical” group members. Much like Bem (1993), Miller, et al. (1991) and Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) define androcentrism as a system of

privilege that features the norming and neutrality of male experience. Therefore, men and male experience are the center of group experience while women and their experiences represent deviations from the male norm. The centering of the experiences of prototypical group members allows intersectional invisibility to function in the following ways: 1) people who occupy two or more subordinate identities will not be defined as typical members of any of the identity groups to which they belong; 2) their characteristics, and by extension their experiences, will be forced to conform to frameworks defined for and by prototypical group members; 3) their lack of prototypicality will allow them to elude certain types of targeted oppression, such as racial profiling or “driving while Black”; 4) their lack of prototypicality will also result in extreme underrepresentation on their behalf, causing them to be less likely to become leaders of any of their constituent groups and/or to have considerably less influence over the members of their constituent groups if they do obtain leadership positions; 5) their non-prototypicality will also cause them to be historically, culturally, politically, and legally invisible. This means that their stories, viewpoints, and legal claims are often extremely misrepresented or all together ignored due to the dissonance between the intersectional nature of their experiences and hegemonic prototypes that govern their identity groups.

In one of the first published applications of the intersectional invisibility model, Sekso and Biernat (2010) focused on literal cognitive visibility by conducting two experiments where white participants' visual perception and memory of African American women was tested. In the first experiment, white participants were shown photo arrays of African American and white women and men twice. In the second showing they were asked if they have seen those photos before. Participants were least likely to report having seen an African American woman's photo previously. In the second experiment, participants listened to taped conversations of African American and white women and men while viewing photos of each speaker. Participants either did not recall

African American women's contributions to the conversation or they misattributed their statements to other conversation participants. Sesko and Biernat conclude that African American women are cognitively invisible and that this leads to a unique form of discrimination where they are literally unrecognizable, interchangeable, and unheard. Although this approach grounds the invisibility of African American women in actual cognitive processes, it does little to advance our understanding of how this invisibility manifests in African American politics and social justice movements. It also does not answer the inverse question: if African American women are not seen, who is?

My application of the intersectional invisibility model allowed me to assess the extent to which African American men are framed as the primary victims of racial inequality. I incorporated intersectional invisibility and prototypical group membership into my study in two ways. The first approach draws from social psychological inquiry into how social groups and their typical members are envisioned (Miller, Taylor, and Buck 1991). Within this approach, participants are asked to imagine a social category and then answer follow-up questions about a typical person who belongs to that social category. When applied to my study, if asked to describe the typical person that their organization advocates for or serves, organizational officials might be more apt to describe that person as male. The second approach draws from studies on judgment-making (Eibach and Ehrlinger 2006; Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach 2008). Within this approach, judgments about the overall advancement or progress of a social group will be more strongly influenced by the change in conditions of the prototypical members of that group. When applied to my study, African American social justice organizations might be more likely to use the well-being of African American men as the primary indicator of the progress of all African Americans.

Black Male Privilege

Coston and Kimmel (2012) explore the intersectionality of privilege by looking at gay, disabled, and poor men's experiences of masculinity. They argue that these men do not enjoy the typical benefits of hegemonic manhood such as assumptions of strength, bravery, and leadership because their masculinity is compromised by its intersections. Their work highlights a larger point that is key for understanding the very idea that African American men can have privilege: advantages are not zero-sum, universal, or dichotomous. It is overly simplistic to view social groups as either having privilege or not. Rather, Coston and Kimmel argue that it is possible to have "sites of inequality within an overall structure of privilege" (2012:98). For African American men however, the arrow flows in the other direction: they experience sites of gender privilege within structures of racial inequality.

Since African American political discourse typically posits racial inequality as the central social problem affecting the race, the idea that African American men have privilege has rarely been studied empirically; though there is a small body of literature that addresses it. In his blog *Uptown Notes*, sociologist Lewis-McCoy (2010) defines black male privilege as, "a system of built in and often overlooked systematic advantages that center the experience and concerns of Black men while minimizing the power that Black males hold". During his speech on black male privilege at Morehouse College, Lewis-McCoy was accused by some of the African American men in attendance of inventing a condition that did not exist in an effort to denigrate them. Others responded angrily and challenged Lewis-McCoy to demonstrate how black male privilege has benefited them. To this challenge Lewis-McCoy argues that one of the hallmarks of privilege is being able to deny its existence. For African American men specifically, this denial manifests by citing examples of ways that they are oppressed and then reasoning that this negates any ability they might have to then oppress others. Lewis-McCoy concludes by suggesting practical tips for African American men to

identify and dismantle privilege such as male study circles, challenging other men to not exploit the African American dating pool (where women outnumber men), and breaking up male-centered networks that contribute to the oppression of women.

Woods (2008) developed the “Black Male Privileges” checklist as a tool to inspire men of color to have discussions about gender privilege. Though all men have this privilege, men of color do not benefit materially from it as much white men. Despite this, African American men have been unable to see their gender privilege due to a focus racial inequality and white domination. According to the list, African American men have the privilege of knowing that the most influential African American religious, intellectual, activist, and entertainment figures will be male; men have the ability to define beauty standards and gender norms for African American women without being subject to similar definitions from them; African American men can consume sexual media products that denigrate women and use sexually abusive language to describe their domination over women and rarely be challenged; and African American men are able to lay the blame of familial and community dysfunction at the feet of African American women without having to be accountable themselves. Overall, Woods presents over 75 privileges in areas such as politics, sexuality, religion, education, and popular culture. Since African American communities suffer from a myriad of social problems, Woods argues that black male privilege and its power to oppress women is detrimental to African American progress.

Carbado (1998) also argues that African American men occupy a privileged racial victim status among African Americans and within anti-racist movements. This privilege manifests by defining men's experiences with the criminal justice system as the primary focus of contemporary anti-racist African American politics without paying equal attention to women's experiences. Carbado contends that this imbalanced approach presents African American men as being more vulnerable to racism than women and makes them the face of racial victimization in the United

States. He illustrates this claim by recounting his attendance at a domestic violence panel during an African American Women in the Law conference. After several women told personal stories of abuse, Carbado notes that the discussion did not feature many solutions for women's justice, healing, or safety. Rather, the women focused on whether they should compound the African American male imprisonment problem by having their abusers arrested and prosecuted. This concern is indicative of the larger problem that Carbado finds with African American anti-racist discourse and political action: it hinges on a black male innocence narrative. He concludes that addressing African American women's issues, particularly domestic violence, must not suffer at the hands of legitimate concerns about the vilification of African American men.

Overall, the literature on black male privilege underscores the ways that racial inequality intersects with gender privilege to produce a narrative where African American men are unable to oppress because they themselves are oppressed; should not be held accountable for domestic and sexual abuse lest the innocence assumption that drives African American anti-racist politics is threatened; and suffer more than any other subgroup of African Americans. This literature is insightful but not extensive. My inquiry into black male privilege is designed to build upon this base of knowledge by using the intersectional invisibility model to develop an empirical framework for studying black male privilege in contemporary African American politics.

Methodology

In this section, I will revisit key components of my semi-structured interview methodology in order to answer the following questions about the prevalence of male bias in strategies for African American advancement: For leaders of African American organizations, are men prototypical? Is this prototypicality associated with the types of issues organization leaders perceive their

constituents to be concerned about and report that their organizations are active on? In what ways do leaders invoke gender to diagnose and suggest remedies for African American social problems?

Sample and Method

In order to answer these questions, I conducted 35 semi-structured in-person and telephone interviews and ten online surveys with leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations between June 2011 and May 2013 (N=45). Participant recruitment and sample details were described in chapter 4. Leaders of civil rights organizations were the most widely represented in the sample at approximately 42 percent, while organizations providing direct social services were the next highest at approximately 13 percent. Organizations that classified themselves as local chapters of national organizations were the most widely represented, with the majority of these organizations being located in the midwestern United States. Participants were also majority female and, based on organizational and personal anecdotes shared during the interview, perceived to be overwhelmingly young (69 percent between 30-60 years of age).

In order to answer my research questions about the prevalence of male bias in African American organizations, I designed three ways to measure male prototypicality. In my first application of Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach's (2008) intersectional invisibility model, participants were asked to imagine and then describe the typical person who could benefit from the work of their organizations. They were also asked to describe the types of discrimination this person might experience as well as the most important social policies that affect this person. Finally, participants were asked to describe this person demographically and assign them a name. All responses were coded with "yes" or "no" to indicate the presence of male descriptions and names. In the second application of the intersectional invisibility model, participants were asked to think about the ways that organizations might evaluate the progress of Black America. Then they were read a list of social

groups and issues that might be used as indicators of African American progress. These included the presidency of Barack Obama, wealth equity between the African American and white middle classes, high school graduation rates of African American youth, the educational advancement and earnings of African American men, and the educational advancement and earnings of African American women. Participants were again asked open-ended follow-up questions to further explain their answers. All responses were coded with "yes" or "no" to indicate those which selected men's education and earnings as the primary indicator of African American progress. In my third approach to measuring prototypicality, participants were asked to discuss their opinions about the extent to which African American men are more socially, politically, or economically vulnerable than other African American subgroups. Again, all responses were coded with "yes" or "no" to indicate if participants believed men were more vulnerable.

I also examined the extent to which male prototypicality is associated with the types of issues that organization leaders perceive their constituents to be concerned about and report their organizations are active. The theory and methods for these policy typologies are described in detail in chapter 4. Strolovitch's (2007) policy typologies provide an intersectional framework for determining the ways that social justice organizations allocate their advocacy attention across subgroups of their constituencies. Participants were asked about universal issues such as economy/unemployment rate, health care reform, and environmental safety/energy consumption; majority issues were identified as racial profiling and civic participation/voter turnout; advantaged subgroup issues were affirmative action in higher education and racial bias in the criminal justice system; and gender-based disadvantaged subgroup issues were domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights. In order to assess organization leaders' perceptions of the types of issues their constituents were concerned about, they were presented with a list of the issues introduced above and were asked to select the one that was of highest concern to the people they serve. Similarly, in

assessing the amount of attention paid to these issues, participants were asked to select the one their organizations had spent the most time on in the past 10 years. Participants were then asked open-ended follow-up questions that allowed them to further explain their selection or to offer alternatives to the list of issues.

Open-ended responses were transcribed verbatim and categorized based on their common themes with regard to gender-based responses while closed-ended responses were analyzed using IBM-SPSS. Given the categorical nature of the closed-ended questions and the small sample size, these data were analyzed using Cramer's V: a non-parametric chi-square application appropriate for nominal variables which also relaxes assumptions about sample size. Interpretations of Cramer's V is similar to that of the Pearson correlation coefficient in that the closer the coefficient gets to ± 1.00 , the stronger the relationship between the variables in question. Due to the non-random nature of the sample, the p-value is unreliable. Therefore, I only briefly discuss these results in terms of their effect size within the sample rather than their statistical significance. Results from both sets of responses are presented below.

Results

In this chapter I have posed questions about the prevalence of male bias in strategies for African American advancement. Specifically, I asked do leaders of African American organizations view men as prototypical African Americans? Is this prototypicality associated with the types of issues organization leaders perceive their constituents to be concerned about and report that their organizations are active on? In what ways do leaders invoke gender to diagnose and suggest remedies for African American social problems?

Male Prototypicality in Community Work

Approximately 83% of organization leaders viewed men as prototypical African Americans. Organization leaders either viewed men as the typical people that would benefit from the work of their organizations; men's socioeconomic status as a primary indicator of overall black progress; or men as the primary victims of social problems affecting African Americans and, therefore, in need of more help from organizations than other subgroups of black people (women, youth, elderly, poor). Male prototypicality is also strongly associated with the types of issues that organization leaders believe their communities are concerned about ($V=.406$, $p=.203$) as well as those they report their organizations are active on ($V=.541$, $p=.041$).

When asked about how much the state of African American men influences his organization's programming, the male president of a midwestern civil rights organization stated,

"It's the greatest portion of our work...because they are the most endangered... We don't have to go to Florida. We can go [to predominately black neighborhood in participant's city] and we will see how many African-American folks, young males are being shot down, but we can also see how many are being shot down by the police as well. So, yes, I think that young African-Americans are an endangered species, which means that "African-American" is an endangered species because if the young men are not going to be around, if they're going to be either in the grave or in the prisons, then there's no way to continue our race".

Here, an organization leader indirectly references Trayvon Martin's death and then goes on to state that the level of violence in local communities endangers young men. He reasons that this endangerment demands that African American men's issues be the primary focus of his organization's work. In contrast, the following president of a southeastern civil rights organization was not as adamant about primarily focusing on men. He openly discussed his thoughts,

"I think that it's important to have work going towards black men. Let me just say this, we know that in [participant's city] there are young black men who are dropping out. We know that in [participant's city] it is disproportionately young black men who are murdering one another. We know that it is disproportionately young black men who are unemployed. The data is clear. But at the same time, we know that the largest unemployment, the largest dropouts, the largest challenges from a criminal justice standpoint are in the same communities, not just black men, but in black communities. So the question becomes, do you focus specifically on the black male, or do you focus on the community and provide opportunities for the black male at the same time? So I think that, there are things that we do that focus directly on the black male and then there are other things that we do that focus on the community... I fundamentally think that there are some organizations whose mission is to focus solely on one thing. I think that our organization is one that takes that one thing and works on it, but it works on the community at the same time. You know the challenge is, you can work on that one black male all day, but if you send that one black male back into a family situation that is the same as it was when it created him, you are doing nothing but putting him right back into a depressed position. So our position is we gotta work on the family, we gotta work on the community. There's no need to send a highly motivated, highly educated child that has great enthusiasm about the world back into a house that's burning".

Though this president recognizes the disproportionate levels of imprisonment and unemployment for black men, he and his organization also value a holistic approach that seeks to address community-wide problems. He also speaks of the detriment of empowering black men to go back

into families and communities that have not had equal levels of empowerment. As he states, "there's no need to send a child back into a house that's burning".

Gender Conformity and Improving Black Communities

In the previous section organizational leaders spoke of male prototypicality in terms of solving community problems. In what follows, I focus specifically on the centrality of gendered messages in leaders' descriptions of the state of African American families and communities. Often organizations leaders implied that the goal of community work is gender complementarity. A female manager of a midwestern medical social service agency stated,

"I would say, at least half [of organizational programming] should be focused on African American males. Whether people realize it or not, we do look to black men as examples. You know, youth look to black men, even women. Even though African American women have degrees and are very independent, we still look for that African American male that is pretty much about his business, that has his things together. We look for an example as far as, you know what we even expect as far as if it's time for us to get married and things like that. So I think that a lot of programs should be geared toward empowering them and helping them to overcome barriers and struggles".

The following president of a southwestern civil rights organization also linked the centrality of black male empowerment to the plight of black women,

"I think what happens to the black man is a black women's issue. That is a priority. You can't have a community where half the black men are locked up and think you're going to be ok. I don't care who you are. I'm not saying that you can't be a super mother and do it all. I mean in terms of our overall struggle for our families

and our communities, we've got to look at these issues. To me, the plight of the black male is a black woman's issue. It is central to the black woman's issue. You need to have progressive black men. Black men who are trained up well and understand politics. You need to have that...But, at the end of the day, if we look at the rates of black males going to college, the rates of black males going to prison we're gonna be in trouble... Black males, for black women, that's the number one issue. It is. Look at the numbers, look at the rates. It doesn't exclude you from the racial issues we're addressing, but the reality is, you can't fight this alone for the next 20, 30, 50, 100 years. If you think you can do that, then go for it. So either we fight together or we die separately. Bottom line".

In both cases, the leaders of these organizations state that empowering African American men is key for African American women's happiness and survival. In the latter excerpt, the organization leader goes so far as to say that male empowerment should be the most important social justice issue for African American women. If not, they will die alone. In both cases, organization leaders have gone beyond speaking about African American men's vulnerability to structural inequality to declaring that men are needed to serve as symbols of strength, power, and stability for African American women. Therefore, men should be central not only in anti-racist political action but also in interpersonal relationships.

Perhaps the most common theme across responses to questions about male prototypicality lamented the lack of traditional gender norms, particularly the absence of black men and the gender non-conformity of black women. Organization leaders often linked the restoration of patriarchal leadership to the improvement of black communities. In the following two excerpts leaders blame black community problems on the absence of fathers and the non-conformity of mothers. This founder of a grassroots organization stated,

"I love "60 Minutes". My family used to force me to watch it when I was little. They do this thing on elephants in Africa. Elephant tusks are worth a lot of money, so they will kill a male. Male elephant tusks are worth more than female elephant tusks. I don't know why. So they were killing off the male elephants and the younger elephants were just going buckwild because they didn't have that leader, that role model around to teach them how to be an elephant. But hell, that's what they do to black men. If you're taking my father away from cancer or high blood pressure, or just dying from working hard. My uncle's on crack. My other uncle is a criminal. Who's teaching me how to be a man? Where are my images?"

In this example, absent males result in lost children. Next, a CEO of a health organization argues that present but non-conforming mothers result in lost children as well. When comparing his wife with his night school attending grandmother and blue collar single mother he states,

"Now my wife is more – I'm being careful, I don't want to offend you too much – is more domestic than my mother or my grandmother. I used to get in a lot of trouble in high school, college, my adolescence. And I used to crack jokes and say, if you all cooked more or cooked at all, I probably wouldn't be out on the street as much. You know, the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. You ain't cooking for us, we gon' stay out on the street. That's just point blank. One of the things that messes up our generation is the fact that women stopped cooking. Now, don't get me wrong, it's deeper than that. Because I know women work and can't be at home. But when you don't have women doing those Claire Huxtable type things, all those motherly duties; then all these knuckleheads, including myself, are going to stay out on the street and look for that elsewhere."

In both cases, organization leaders link gender non-conformity to waywardness in African American children. In the first example, fatherless black children might go "buckwild" like fatherless elephants. In the second, African American mothers who do not cook meals cause their teenage sons to hang out in the streets. Likewise, the following two leaders also link male empowerment to changes in African American communities and the world at large. An executive board member of a civil rights organization stated,

"Black men will be the focus of the destruction of the black family. Because the man in this day is the head of the family in every household. If more men are standing up and being fathers, our women need to know their place, okay?...That's our first priority. Because if you start to heal the black man and he starts being confident in himself again in the black community, you will stop seeing a lot of the killing. Because our men will stand up and they are not going to allow for some other people to be in our community saying that there are so-called security guards killing our children. So those things are important, that we start to heal our brothers so that they can come back and take their rightful place in their family".

Similarly, the director of a policy institute said,

"I have four P's as to how men operate in the world and relationships. Their role is to provide, to protect, to please and to pamper... To be the person upfront, when things come to the family, the face of the family. I am not discounting the role of a woman in the family, but the whole dynamic about African American men in their role in the family is important...and when you have a black man that is grounded in who he is and understands his culture and his connection to his community, his responsibility to his children, and sets the tone for developing the economic

foundation for his family and community...I mean, it would change this whole world order".

In both of these excerpts, organization leaders link the restoration of patriarchal leadership to improved communities. In the latter case, the policy institute director states that empowered African American men will change the "world order". Overall, these organization leaders believe that strengthening African American men will improve the plights of African American women, children, communities, and even the whole world. These types of gender expectations in the context of a group that is suffering from multiple systems of inequality is a tall order.

The following young man served as the president of an African American collegiate retention organization. In contrast to the above excerpts, he personally laments the gender pressure that young African American men experience,

"I feel like in the black community, there is a lot put on a black male, for one. And all of that pressure that is put on the black male in the African American community sort of switches and makes him go one way or the other. So they have this pressure to be the provider, be the one that's holding you up and that leaves the woman in the house. That's mostly the theme that's there. And then they either go one way or another. That's how I envision in it in my mind being raised as a black male in different neighborhoods in [participant's city]. I definitely think they're more vulnerable because of all the expectations and all the pressure, and when those two are mixed together it puts them in an awkward position in terms of how they're going to move forward. Because I feel that, like as a black male, all eyes are put on you... So when you have all of that pressure and all of that expectation, it like leads you down two paths. And it's sad, but a lot of them are going down the wrong path. And a lot of expectations, and lot of them want to succeed in life, but they don't

know which way to go to succeed. It's sort of like two ideals. And they think this is the right road to go down to succeed, like drug dealing, or rapping, or basketball playing. [There's also] going through the path that Barack Obama went through, going to school, being successful, marrying your girlfriend and going down that path...With the black male you definitely have a set of expectations, in terms of what you see in the media, what you read, what you perceive a black male to be, and then you have expectations in your own community, in your own home and you have a bunch of other stuff. It's basically like having a bunch of people in your ear at the same time and you're really figuring out who you are, or what you want to be. I think people just want a bunch of diverse roads you don't even have to pick through. There's not only two roads. You can just go through life normally".

This young man spoke at length about the pressures he and his African American male friends face in trying to understand and live up to community expectations. He even goes so far as to say that attempts to live up to this gender pressure might drive young African American men into risky behavior. He states that the expectations are not only constricted to "two ideals" of success (rapper/sports/drugs vs. Barack Obama), but that both are unrealistic. Instead, he just wants to "go through life normally". This young man's experience provides a sobering contrast to previous organization leaders, as he decries the weight of racial progress expectations.

Discussion

In this chapter, I returned to the semi-structured interview and survey responses of 45 leaders of African American organizations in order to examine the prevalence of male prototypicality in African American politics as well as the use of gender to diagnose and suggest remedies for African American social problems. My findings indicate that African American men

are indeed viewed as prototypical and their prototypicality is moderately associated with the types of issues organizations are active on and perceive their communities to be concerned about. Whereas in Chapter 2 leaders stated that women's gender non-conformity is detrimental to their communities, in this case, leaders believe that restoring patriarchal leadership in families and communities is the key to decreasing many of the negative social conditions that affect African Americans.

These findings add another layer to the manifestation of male privilege among African Americans. The literature on black male privilege discusses the ways that racial inequality intersects with gender privilege to produce a narrative where African American men are unable to oppress because they are oppressed; should not be held accountable for domestic and sexual abuse lest their accusers add credence to those seeking to vilify African American men; and suffer more than any other subgroup of African Americans because of their experiences of racism in the criminal system (Carbado 1998; Lewis-McCoy 2010). In contrast, my findings demonstrate that black male privilege can also be manifested through the devaluing of women's places in African American families and the hypervaluation of men's effect on families and communities. Also, through the voice of the young president of a collegiate retention organization, my findings reveal a unique characteristic about the nature of gender privilege for marginalized groups. Whereas white men's privilege might allow them to accumulate personal advantages without group-based claims to those advantages, African American men's gender privilege automatically carries with it a "save the race" message. For leaders of African American organizations, empowered manhood is the panacea for African American social problems. For the young man quoted above, this privilege feels more like a burden. More generally, my findings provide support for Coston and Kimmel's (2012) contention that privilege is not a zero-sum game. Rather it is conflicted and dynamic due to the numerous ways that systems of inequality intersect.

Empirically, my use of prototypical group membership theories and policy typologies combined to produce a framework for studying black male privilege specifically, and intragroup inequality more generally. Qualitatively, this framework allowed me to link group ideology and group values to strategies for advancement. Ultimately, it helped to uncover the ways that efforts to eradicate one type of inequality might actually work to reinforce others. Often we assume that the need for equality and the valuing of democracy drives social justice work. However in my findings, women are devalued and men are hypervalued such that the reasoning for anti-racist work is not only to remedy inequalities but to allow African American men to take their hegemonically masculine places as leaders of families and communities. Indeed, the intragroup inequality framework reveals that, for these leaders, patriarchy is salvation. According to them, African American women, children, communities, and the entire world wait for the day when African American men will be able to lead them. At the heart of these leaders' quest for racial equity is the desire to see men in their rightful place; and when this happens, women should fall in line. Or as one leader said to me, "If men are standing up, women need to know their place, okay?"

Conclusion

In this chapter, I continued to examine gender issues within contemporary African American politics by presenting one of the first sociological applications of the intersectional invisibility model. This model states that prototypical in-group members are privileged relative to other in-group members because their specific interests are put forward as overall group interests. Returning to the semi-structured interview and survey responses of 45 leaders of African American organizations, I specifically looked at the extent to which men were viewed by organization leaders as prototypical African Americans and if their prototypicality was associated with the types of issues organization leaders report they are active on and believe their communities are concerned about. Leaders were

also asked open-ended questions about the social status of African American men and whether this should influence the amount of advocacy attention they believe organizations should devote to them.

Ultimately, for the organization leaders quoted above, patriarchy is salvation. According to them, African American men are the quintessential victims of racial inequality and their empowerment would not only be a victory for racial justice, but would correct a dysfunctional gender order that has been detrimental to African American families and communities. Due to the intersectional nature of black male privilege, such expectations come with exceptionally high stakes. African American men do not get to personally benefit from their privilege as white men might. Rather, their empowerment carries with it the weight of an entire race. These findings underscore the importance of intersectional approaches to studying privilege. Additionally, the use of the intersectional invisibility model and policy typologies show the need for a framework that facilitates the empirical examination of intragroup inequality.

V. RACE-ING TO EQUALITY ACROSS GENDERED TERRAIN

This dissertation began with asking whether women's issues are visible in contemporary African American social justice organizations and what role, if any, male bias plays in this visibility or lack thereof. In chapter 2, I began to answer this question by conducting content and textual analyses of the missions and program descriptions of 34 national African American organizations. I found that, by and large, women's issues are addressed primarily by women's organizations. Furthermore, based on interviews and surveys conducted with 45 leaders of local, regional, and national African American organizations, women's issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and reproductive rights and services are not viewed by these leaders as important to their communities or organizations. When I asked these leaders broader questions about the nature of gender relations in African American communities, particularly the extent to which African American women experience intraracial sexism, I found that women tended to be blamed for their own mistreatment. Specifically, these leaders perceive that African American women are better off than African American men and that their advanced levels of education and socioeconomic status evoke feelings of resentment and inadequacy from African American men. The interpersonal tension that arises from these situations are what leaders viewed as sexism. Leaders also reported that they believe African American women experience intraracial sexism because they have allowed themselves to be used as pawns by whites in order to destabilize African American communities. This resistance to African American female advancement and the casting of African American women as traitors are indicative of the anti-feminist leanings of black nationalist ideology.

Black nationalism is also evident in the collective action frames that I analyzed in chapter 3. Specifically, the diagnostic frames employed by African American organizations in both the Imus/Rutgers and Dunbar Village cases defined the underlying social problems as explicitly racial, identified African American men as the primary sufferers of these problems, and cited racially unjust

institutions which imprison and disenfranchise men as sources of blame. While the impact of racism, particularly through the criminal justice system, on African American men cannot and should not be denied; the utility of the framing perspective for analyzing the mobilization of contemporary African American social justice organizations is evident when you notice that the actual victims in these cases were African American women who had suffered through sexual violence and sexist hate speech. Collective action frames draw their content from the ideological orientations of the protesting group. Therefore, even in cases where women's experiences were central, the black nationalist ideological influence on African American politics continues to produce organizations that advance theories of society that support androcentric gender norms and where racism is the single greatest impediment to African American equality.

Given the primacy of maleness even in cases where women were victims, the final empirical task of this dissertation was to determine the extent to which male bias existed in African American organizations and whether it was associated with the types of issues they decided to address. Drawing on social psychological theories of prototypical group membership and returning to the interviews and surveys used in chapter 2, I found that male bias overwhelmingly exists in African American organizations in at least one of three ways: leaders of African American organizations viewed African American men as the typical group that their organization sought to serve, African American men's socioeconomic advancement was viewed as the most telling indicator in assessing African American progress, or men were viewed as the most socially vulnerable subgroup of African Americans. Furthermore, this bias was also statistically associated with the types of issues that organization were active on and perceived their communities to be concerned about. Androcentric ideals were not only present in leaders' descriptions of their organizations' work, but also in their assessment of the overall state of African American communities. For them, both restoring African

American male leadership while putting women back in their "place" would cure the ills that plague the communities they serve.

The Intragroup Inequality Framework as Empirical Intersectionality

This dissertation has drawn on sociological, social psychological, and political science theories to produce an intersectional framework for measuring intragroup inequality in the context of social justice advocacy. Specifically, the work that I presented here represents a systematic way to study the impact of gender, or other axes of privilege and disadvantage, on social movement mobilization. Though the typologies that they produce have been useful, scholars who study the role of gender in social movements have yet to go beyond descriptive analyses that catalog where gender shows up in movement processes or taking movements other than those by, about, or for women and gender change as their subject (Einwohner 2000; Taylor 1999; Zemlinskaya 2010). Asking questions about gender bias in the context of a movement about racial change takes us into new analytical territory. Here, I have combined three measures of male bias and used them loosely as an independent variable to determine how much they impact perceptions of community concerns and activity level on various issues. Given the qualitative sampling method and insufficiently large sample size, I was not able to examine this as a true predictive statistical model. However, by using measures of associations that do not feature assumptions about normality or sample size, I was able to determine that male bias is associated with perceptions of community concerns and issue activity within my sample.

Although I use this framework to study gender inequality in the context of African American anti-racist politics, it can also be applied to other groups and movements where concerns about relative privilege and disadvantage exist in the following ways. First, Strolovitch's (2007) policy typologies themselves are an intersectional framework for measuring how organization allocate their

attention and resources across multiple subgroups of their constituencies. In this typology, universal issues are those that affect everyone in the nation-state, region, or whatever geographical entity should be used to define the macro-level context of the issue of interest. Majority issues are those that affect the entire in-group of interest and should be defined based on knowledge of the particular social problems that impact that group. For my study, majority group issues were those that stemmed from African Americans' experiences with racial inequality. Both advantaged subgroup issues and disadvantaged subgroup issues are those affect relatively privileged and disadvantaged subgroups of the in-group of interest and should be defined based on the research subject. In the work presented here, I defined these issues based on black feminist critiques of African American politics and the topics they tended to find most important.

In chapter 4, I took "issue type" both in community concerns and activity level as dependent variables. The independent variable was black male bias, or more specifically "male prototypicality" (Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach 2008). In a more general sense, "group prototypicality" is the tendency to treat the experiences and interests of privileged in-group members as representative of the total group. It is drawn from social psychological inquiry into how social groups and their typical members are imagined (Miller, Taylor, and Buck 1991). There are two ways to employ group prototypicality empirically. First, participants should be asked to imagine a social category and then answer follow-up questions about a typical person who belongs to that social category. Qualitatively, these follow-up questions can take the form of, "Describe to me the typical person who can benefit from this work of your organization? What is their gender, race, age, location, etc? What kinds of policies and laws affect them the most? When they experience disadvantage or discrimination, what might it look like and where might it take place?". Quantitatively, participants could be provided with a list of subgroups that comprise the in-group of interest and asked to select the most typical group. The second approach to measuring group prototypicality draws from

studies on judgment-making (Eibach and Ehrlinger 2006; Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach 2008).

Within this approach, judgments about the overall advancement or progress of a social group will be more strongly influenced by the change in conditions of the prototypical members of that group.

Participants should be asked, "If you had to evaluate the progress of the in-group as a whole, which indicator might be most helpful in making this assessment?", after which they will be provided with a list of issues related to the subgroups that comprise the in-group. If group prototypicality is present, the responses to both sets of questions should point to one particular subgroup as typical and their conditions will be used as the indicator to assess total group progress.

Overall, this framework can produce knowledge that contributes to our broader sociological understanding of intragroup inequality. Experiences of privilege and disadvantage are not homogenous, but can vary significantly within marginalized groups due to their array of intersectional social locations. The intragroup inequality framework, based on the association between group prototypicality and issue activity level, helps to uncover the ways that social movement narratives might actually work to reproduce particular types of inequality in their efforts to eradicate others.

Gender Conformity as Prerequisite and Prize

The findings presented here also illuminate what dominant voices in African American anti-racist discourse have long denied: that gender is central to our analyses of and remedies for racial inequality. Cohen (1999) argues that gender and sexuality are viewed in black politics as "crosscutting", marginal issues that disproportionately affect small segments of in-group members. However, gender is larger than specific sets of women's issues that "should" be dealt with in the privacy of homes and families. Gender is an institution, and as such, it structures attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. As Lorber (1994) states, it is an organizing principle of human social life. While

there is no central theory explaining how gender structures social movements specifically, it is clear through the findings presented here that gender ideologies impact assessments of the social problems that affect African American communities, identification of the primary victims of those social problems, as well as remedies for those problems. Given this, I will examine the use of gender, specifically conformity to dominant gender norms, as a political response to African American inequality in the United States. In a nutshell, gender conformity is both prerequisite to and a prize for racial equality.

In a November 2013 *Politico* article, Michelle Cottle thoroughly outlined her case for calling Michelle Obama a "feminist nightmare". Through her own observations of the First Lady's public appearances and the opinions of other, mostly white, feminists who contribute to online political magazines, she argues that Obama's ivy league education, legal career, and "general aura as an ass-kicking, do-it-all superwoman" obligate her to break the first lady mold and speak out on a variety of feminist issues in lieu of the "mom-in-chief" public identity Obama has chosen for herself. Repeatedly throughout the article, white feminists lament that the First Lady is not using her platform to do more politically progressive work. What Cottle and her colleagues fail to realize is the long and intricate history between freedom, power, and gender conformity that has marked African American lives. In several of Michelle Obama's broadcast interviews, she rejoices over the fact that her husband's presidency has made it possible for him to make it home for dinner every night. This is in stark contrast to the many years that Barack Obama spent in Springfield, IL or Washington D.C. as a state and then a U.S. Senator, respectively. Implicit in this is the idea that reaching the height of global political power has allowed the First Family to function more traditionally. The reasoning is not unlike that cited by Jacqueline Jones (1985) in her extensive study of African American women's labor history.

In order to resist the undifferentiated ways that male and female slaves were treated, African American women enforced a strict gendered division of labor in slave quarters so that they could protect the "second shift" that white women had to come to protest. About slavery and the post-emancipation sharecropping system, Jones states, "...the sharecropping system enabled mothers to divide their time between field and housework in a way that reflected a family's needs...the family played a key role in their struggle to combat oppression, for black women's attention to the duties of motherhood deprived whites of full control over them". Interestingly, this relationship between freedom, control, the division of labor, and gender conformity was used by whites (both southern racists and northern liberals) to criticize African Americans after they were freed. While white women who worked were encouraged to stay home like "proper ladies" should, African American women's decisions to work in their own homes were viewed as "lazy". African American men who "allowed" their women to not work were viewed as cowards who buckled under feminine authority. Cottle and her colleagues' critique of Michelle Obama's unwillingness to "lean in" is also not unlike that levied against African American women by white landowners, "Employers made little effort to hide their contempt for freedwomen who 'played the lady' and refused to join workers in the fields" (Jones 1985). Indeed the disdain with which Cottle writes of Michelle Obama's "warm and fuzzy" public persona is evident. Again, Cottle has failed to understand that, for African American women and families, access to freedom, power, and resources have historically meant that gender conformity functions as a prize of sorts. Once African American women were free and could choose for themselves, they chose to take care of their families. In this respect, conformity to traditional family structure and gendered divisions of labor were the result of newly gained racial freedom.

Gender conformity has also served a more political function in the fight for African American equality. Throughout the history of African American anti-racist work, gender conformity

has been the terrain across which racial equality is to be gained. In this respect, gender conformity was and still is viewed by African American leaders as a prerequisite for racial equality and advancement. One of the first instances in which conformity to dominant group norms was employed this way occurred during the uplift movement of the early 20th century. With the emancipation of black slaves and the advent of Jim Crow, African American anti-racist discourse shifted from calls for equality on the basis of Christian morality to a rhetoric of black civility and culture. This rhetoric, known as uplift ideology and intended to be a progressive political platform, actually deployed white supremacists' notions of black savagery where both men and women were prone to uncontrollable and sexually immoral behavior. Its remedy to this natural state of black degradation was to demonstrate that elite African Americans, who were similar in culture, behavior, and taste to whites, represented a sort of evolutionary racial progress that made social, political, and economic equality a viable option (Gaines 1996). Speaking of early 20th century uplift ideology, Gaines states,

"Character, self-control, reason, and strength were traits that yielded success in the masculine domains politics and the market...Anglo-Saxonism necessitated control of women's reproductive sexuality, [and] so it was for black nationalists, then and now, that a controlling patriarchal authority was indispensable to racial chauvinism. But among black nationalists, manhood and patriarchal control tended to be symbolic, and compensatory entities, more indicative of the aspiration for power than the actual possession of it. If racial ideologies of whiteness were crucial to the bourgeois aspirations of nonblacks, then gender ideologies of manhood informed African Americans' middle-class ideology of racial uplift".

Here, Gaines makes it clear that an African American manhood that was civilized, cultured, and dominant over women was a necessary component of uplift ideology and the racial advancement it sought to create.

The idea that African Americans must present themselves as adhering to some kind of respectable standard with regards morality and sexuality in order to be "fit" for equality also took center stage in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement. Recent feminist analyses show that movement activities were often carefully negotiated such that they would not perpetuate stereotypes about African Americans or offend white news outlets and movement allies. McGuire (2010) describes in thick detail the efforts of the Citizens Coordinating Committee in planning the "right" circumstances for future bus boycotts in Montgomery, Alabama. Focusing on committee leaders E.D. Nixon and Rosa Parks, McGuire captures their ruminations over the prudence of using 15 year old Claudette Colvin as a movement standard bearer,

"Nixon hesitated to endorse a general boycott before meeting with Colvin and her parents...he worried about using Colvin as a symbol for the fight. A visit to Colvin's home made his decision easy...When Colvin answered the door, Nixon saw that she was pregnant...Despite her support for Colvin, who was a straight-A student and a member of the NAACP Youth Council, Rosa Parks believed that Nixon was right. Parks knew that Colvin had stepped outside the bounds of respectable behavior for a young woman in the 1950s...In this environment, political respectability required middle-class decorum. Shining a spotlight on a pregnant black teenager would only fuel white stereotypes of black women's uninhibited sexuality. Colvin's swollen stomach could have become a stark reminder that desegregation would lead to sexual debauchery".

McGuire underscores how conformity to gender and sexual norms which disavow premarital sex, teenage pregnancy, and the perception of sexual insatiability were explicitly used to determine who would be the face of the Montgomery bus boycott movement.

The use of gender conformity as a political response to white domination continued as the non-violent resistance of the 1950s and 1960s gave way to the more radical and separatist ideologies of black nationalism and Afrocentricity in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, African Americans in the U.S. sought to build Pan-African connections by linking the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and the independence struggles of several African nations to their own Civil Rights struggles. This increased sense of connection to the continent resulted in black nationalists using romanticized and inaccurate political narratives of Africa as an ideological basis for their resistance against white supremacy (White 1990). Using these embellished narratives, black nationalists distorted African gender relations by arguing that women should play complementary, and therefore, unequal roles in African American families and communities. Though these Afrocentric ideologies provided a powerful and robust critique of American racism in favor of racial solidarity, is built upon a conservative gender ideology in which women are not equal players in racial advancement. This is not unlike Alexander-Floyd's (2007) critical analysis of the similarities between white and black nationalisms, which accomplish opposing political goals through shared assumptions about gender power.

Masculinist assumptions about gender power are not only consequential for intraracial gender relations, but are increasingly becoming linked to state interventions into African American communities. Interestingly, state interventions in African American communities reflect the same simultaneous patterns of devaluing women while seeking to empower men. Public images of black welfare queens who refused to work and sapped government resources provided the ideological justification for the rollback of government assistance programs in the 1980s and 1990s. During the

same time period, as Butler (2013) traces, "endangered black man" narratives began to pick up steam on the national stage. On the federal level, the image of endangered black men and morally decaying African American communities implicitly justified George W. Bush's Fatherhood Initiatives (Alexander-Floyd 2007). The goal of this program and its many spin-offs put forth by non-profit organizations was to create conditions where men would marry the mothers of their children and find employment that would allow them to be breadwinners and fulfill their destiny as responsible fathers. More than a decade later, Barack Obama launched his own "My Brother's Keeper" initiative designed to make inroads against the disadvantages that young African American men face. In announcing the program, President Obama stated,

" And I believe the continuing struggles of so many boys and young men, the fact that too many of them are falling by the wayside, dropping out, unemployed, involved in negative behavior, going to jail, being profiled, this is a moral issue for our country. It's also an economic issue for our country. After all, these boys are a growing segment of our population. They are our future workforce. When generation after generation they lag behind, our economy suffers. Our family structure suffers. Our civic life suffers. Cycles of hopelessness breeds violence and mistrust, and our country's a little less than what we know it can be. So, we need to change the statistics, not just for the sake of the young men and boys but for the sake of America's future".

Much like the leaders quoted in chapter 4, Obama links the advancement of young African American men to the fate of the nation. In her critique of the program on *Salon.com*, black feminist Brittany Cooper (2014) observes,

"The thing is: This 'we' is mostly African-American women – doing the fighting, the organizing, the praying, the rearing, the fussing, the protecting, the loving. And

the losing. Black women have been their brothers' biggest and best keepers. But when black men occupy space at the center of the discourse, black women lose critical ground. I wish these struggles did not feel like zero sum struggles. I wish that black men — Barack Obama included — had the kind of social analysis that saw our struggles as deeply intertwined".

Not only should the struggles of African American men and women be viewed as intertwined, they should not be viewed as dissimilar; or more specifically, the idea that African American men are worse off than women is not supported by the very statistics that proponents of programs such the Fatherhood Initiative and My Brother's Keeper cite. In thorough detail, Butler (2013) demonstrates that on almost every measure of social and economic equality, African American men are not exceptionally burdened. In fact, African American women tend to lag behind their white counterparts in patterns that are similar to deficits experienced by African American men in relation to white men. In fact, in various measures of health and disease such as breast cancer rates, African American women are far more exceptional than men. Yet, rarely is such lag or this issue treated an instance of racial inequality in the way disproportionate imprisonment for African American men is. That being said, the goal is not to create an Olympics of suffering whereby we determine how much more women suffer. Rather, the problem with gender conformity and androcentric ideology driving black politics and federal intervention is that stifles and distorts the fact that all members of African American communities suffer from various forms of disadvantage relative to their white counterparts. Indeed as Butler warns, " contemporary anti-racist politics that trade on notions of empowered manhood through the saving of "endangered black men" without paying equal attention to empowering women run the risk of supporting an intraracial patriarchal gender order". In the final analysis, African American women and their issues are not entirely invisible in contemporary black politics. While some leaders acknowledge intersectionality and intraracial sexism, the

obscuring of the nature and severity of African American women's disadvantage is due to a disproportionate focus on African American men.

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APPENDIX

***An Invitation to Participate in the Research Study,
“African American Social Justice Organizations and the Contemporary Civil Rights Agenda”***

Many argue that the election and Presidency of Barack Obama is evidence that racial equality for African Americans has been achieved and that further activism and advocacy designed to eradicate racism are unnecessary at best and “playing the race card” at worst.

Kiana Cox is conducting a research study to gather information about the perspectives of African American community organizations in an effort to understand how you view your social justice work at this time of enormous racial progress and peril. She is specifically interested in hearing from at least 50 people who currently hold or recently (within the last 10 years) held leadership positions in an African American community organization and who are equipped to discuss detailed aspects of their organization’s history, its mission and community work, and its assessment of the current state of Black America.

You are being asked to take part in this study, and your participation will consist of answering open-ended questions about the types of issues your organization addresses, the people your organization serves, and your opinion about the current state of Black America. Interview appointments can be conducted via telephone or in person (if within 50 miles of Chicago). The interviews will be audio recorded and will last no more than one and a half hours. Please rest assured knowing that this research will be carried out in the strictest confidentiality. Audio recordings are transcribed with all identifying information removed, and then recordings are destroyed. You may also decline to be audio taped and still participate in the interview. Kiana will not identify anyone who has participated in the research, and any published material will not identify any study participants unless requested by them in writing.

If you are an organizational leader who is interested in participating in this research, please contact Kiana by email or phone using the information provided below. Please remember that your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may discontinue participation at any time, for any reason, without penalty. For questions, comments, or further information about this study please contact:

Kiana Cox, Ph.D Candidate
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If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the UIC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects toll free at 866.789.6215 or uicirb@uic.edu and reference Research Protocol # 2011-0443.

***Consent for Participation in the Research Study,
“African American Social Justice Organizations and the Contemporary Civil Rights Agenda”***

Kiana Cox is conducting research to gather information about the perspectives and practices of African American community organizations in an effort to understand how you view your missions and community work at this time of enormous racial progress and peril. She is specifically interested in hearing from at least 50 organizational officials who are equipped to discuss detailed aspects of their organizations.

You are being asked to take part in this study, and your participation will consist of answering open-ended questions about the types of issues your organization addresses, the people your organization serves, and its assessment of the current state of Black America. Interviews will be audio recorded and your participation will last no more than one and a half hours. Audio recordings are transcribed with all identifying information removed, and then recordings are destroyed. There is a risk that a breach of privacy and/or confidentiality can occur. However, all interviews will be carried out by Kiana in the strictest confidentiality. You may decline to be audio taped and still participate in the interview. Kiana will not identify anyone who has participated in the research, and any published material will not identify any study participants unless requested by them in writing.

Your participation in this study may involve slight feelings of discomfort when asked about the details of your organization. However, you might also find your participation in this study to be purposeful since you will be discussing the agenda and activities of an organization that is working to improve the lives of the people you serve. Your participation in this interview is voluntary, and you may discontinue participation at any time, for any reason, without penalty.

I acknowledge that Kiana has explained to me the details of my involvement in this research, the need for research, and has offered to answer any questions that I may have concerning the procedures to be followed. I freely and voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I understand that I may keep a copy of this consent form for my own records.

(Respondent)

(Date)

(Investigator)

(Date)

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VITA

Kiana Cox
University of Illinois at Chicago
Department of Sociology

AREAS OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Gender; Intersectionality; Race/Ethnicity; African American History and Social Movements; Popular Culture and Media Representations; Research Methods; Applied Statistics

EDUCATION

- Ph.D **University of Illinois at Chicago**
Sociology, Concentration in Race, Ethnicity, and Gender, 2014
- M.A. **Southern Illinois University Edwardsville**
Sociology, 2006
- B.S. **Southern Illinois University Edwardsville**
Psychology, 2002

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2011 – 2012 JoAnn Gibson Robinson Dissertation Writing Award. Association for the Study of Black Women in Politics
- 2011 – 2012 Rue Bucher Memorial Award for Qualitative Studies in Social Process. University of Illinois at Chicago.
- 2010 – 2011 Provost's Award for Graduate Research. University of Illinois at Chicago.
- 2010 – 2011 Graduate Student Award for Excellence in Teaching. University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Sociology.
- 2006 - 2007 Abraham Lincoln Fellowship. University of Illinois at Chicago, Graduate College.

PUBLICATIONS AND WORKS IN PROGRESS

- Cox, Kiana. 2014. "We Need More Than Pink Cleats". The Feminist Wire, April 25.
<http://thefeministwire.com/2014/04/pink-cleats/>.
- Cox, Kiana. 2013. "Gender and Race as Meaning Systems: Understanding Theoretical, Historical, and Institutional Implications of Sexualized Imagery in Rap Music". In *Race/Gender/Class/Media: Considering Diversity Across Audiences, Content, and Producers Third Edition*, ed. Rebecca Ann Lind. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Allyn and Bacon.

- Cox, Kiana. "Visible But Out of Place: Black Women's Issues and Assessments of Sexism in Black Communities". *Under Review*
- Cox, Kiana. "New Ways of Knowing: Unpacking Feminist Assumptions in Floyd's *Gender, Race, and Nationalism in Contemporary Black Politics*". *National Political Science Review*. *In progress*

COURSES TAUGHT

Introduction to Sociological Statistics

Introduction to Sociological Research Methods

Topics in Race, Ethnicity, and Gender: Gendering African American History and Politics

SELECTED PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- 2013 *Presenter*. "Marginalized Privilege: The Reproduction of Gender Inequality in African American Empowerment Politics.". Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), New York, NY.
- 2012 *Presenter*. "Gender, Framing, and African American Social Justice Organizations: Early Findings from the Field". Presented at the Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2011 *Presenter*. "Gender, Suffering Hierarchies, and Victim Framing: Social Justice Lessons From the Dunbar Village Gang Rape Case". Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS), St. Louis, MO.
- 2010 *Presenter*. "Black America's Favorite Victims? Gender and the Framing of Victimhood in the Dunbar Village Gang Rape Case". Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS), Atlanta, GA.
- 2010 *Presenter*. "Race Trumps Gender? Understanding the Use of the Race-Only Framework in Contemporary African American Civil Rights and Service Organizations". Presented at the Winter Meeting of Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS), Santa Barbara, CA.
- 2009 *Presenter*. "Malika or the Monkey? Anti-Racist Organizations and Their Responses to Black Women's Experiences of Gendered Racism". Colloquium Series, Department of Sociology, University of Illinois at Chicago.
- 2008 *Presenter*. "Booty Rockin' Everywhere": Hegemonic Femininity and the Patterns of African American Women's Sexualization in Rap Music". Presented at the Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA) Research Forum, Chicago, IL.

SERVICE

- 2013 Presider, "Contested Boundaries Between and Within Racial Groups". Section on Race, Gender, and Class Roundtables. Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), New York, NY.
- 2012 - 2013 Graduate Research Mentor, Summer Research Opportunities Program. University of Illinois at Chicago.
- 2006 - 2007 Steering Committee, 9th Annual Chicago Ethnography Conference. Loyola University Chicago. Chicago, IL.
- 2006 – 2007 President, Sociology Graduate Student Association. University of Illinois at Chicago.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Sociological Association
 Association of Black Sociologists
 National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity
 Sociologists for Women in Society