

'Talking Dirty After Dark': Themes of Sexuality In Black Ideology

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"If one wants to understand the racial situation psychoanalytically, not from a universal viewpoint but as it is experienced by individual consciousness, considerable importance must be given to sexual phenomena. . . . We can now stake out our marker. For the majority of white men the Negro represents the sexual instinct."

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*

"It's time Black women stopped dancing around and avoiding speaking out on issues of rape and sexual violence, on incest, on femicide, on the misogyny that pervades our community. We need to make it clear once and for all that Black men are not the only ones endangered in the United States." Marcia Ann Gillespie, Ms. (Jan. 1992)

"When the loveless come to power, or when sexual despair comes to power, the sexuality of the object is either a threat or a fantasy."

James Baldwin, *No Name in the Street*

"We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful and ugly too. If coloured people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn't matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how, and we stand on top of the mountain, free within ourselves."

Langston Hughes, *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain*

Introduction:

We cannot talk about sex, gender, class or sexuality within the African-American community without first discussing the topic of race.¹ The centrality of race in the everyday experience and the subjective worldview of African-Americans makes it near impossible to consider most issues without properly understanding their connection to race. While categories of class, gender and sexual orientation are central and salient, each intersects with race, which plays the role of 'master narrative' within African-American discourse. "Race "serves as a 'global sign,' a 'metalanguage,' since it speaks about and lends meaning to a host of terms and expressions, to myriad aspects of life that would otherwise fall outside the referential domain of race. Race not only tends to subsume other sets of social relations, namely gender and class, but it blurs and disguises, suppresses and negates its own complex interplay with the very social relations it envelops" (Higginbotham 1992). However, it is equally incorrect to take categories of class, gender, or sexual orientation and view them as reducible to race or merely secondary identities. Thus, we must discuss them

in the context of race and the understanding of how the role race plays as a master narrative effects our understanding of their salience. In African-American discourse, race often 'stands in' for gender or class and shapes the way the community understands identities like gender or sexual orientation. Therefore, we must approach these questions "After Dark," after discussing the role of darkness and Blackness, addressing their intersections and interrelations with race. The goal of this paper is to test how Black ideology and identity constructs create and influence opinions about sexuality.

Despite generally liberal views on a variety of issues, many African-Americans have often been reactionary when it comes to recognizing gender violence and the presence of gays and lesbians within the African-American community. Renowned African-American leaders and institutions have, in very prominent situations, been either silent on these issues or have supported the cause of silencing gays and lesbians and women who have been victimized. The Thomas-Hill hearings, the gay and lesbian attempt to march in the Black-run Bud Billiken parade in Chicago, the Tyson-Washington rape trial and current controversies over misogyny and homophobia within rap music have generated shock waves of controversy within the African-American community (Muwaikkil 1994, Morrison 1992, Ransby 1995, Dawson 1994, James 1995). These incidents and issues have pitted groups against one another within the Black community, while profoundly illustrating the powerful role race plays when looking at homophobia or sexual violence in the African-American community. The connection between race, class, gender and sexual orientation is funneled through the lens of Black ideology.

Black ideology is a cognitive instrument utilized by African-Americans in order to make sense of the world in which they live (Dawson 1994). Black ideology represents a systematic set of beliefs that define the nature of racial identities, strategies for racial uplift, definitions of friends and enemies and scripts of how the race ought to represent itself (Dawson 1994). Thus, ideology functions to form ideal images of gender roles, and sexual

mores within the Black community. These ideal types serve the function of answering negative stereotypes about Black sexuality. Thus, Black agency is constrained in the area of sexuality by hegemonic terms of debate created by negative discourse and determined by racist representations of Black sexuality.

Sexual deviance among African-Americans has been constructed through the dialogue on race. "African-American women inhabit a sex/gender hierarchy in which inequalities of race and social class have been sexualized" (Collins 1991). A similar point could be made for Black men as well, excluding the category of gender but understanding the expectations of masculinity as a potential frame. The powerful role of sexuality in US society makes it possible for sexuality to be co-opted by racists. The white middle class nuclear family as the norm is used to marginalize African-Americans. "Maintaining the mythical norm of the financially independent, white middle-class family organization around a monogamous heterosexual couple requires stigmatizing African-American families as being deviant, and a primary source of this assumed deviancy stems from allegations about Black sexuality" (Collins 1991). These myths raise the stakes of sexuality, making myths of Black sexual deviance part of a race, class and gender hierarchy. "Each individual becomes a powerful conduit for social relations of domination whereby individual anxieties, fears and doubts about sexuality can be annexed by larger systems of oppression" (Collins 1991).

As a result of racist myths about Black sexuality, the baseline dialogue consists of patriarchy, compulsory heterosexuality, and an emphasis on the nuclear family. This is true because of the repressive nature of sexuality in America, which is connected to the hierarchy of race, gender and class. "Like all Americans, black Americans live in a sexually repressive culture. And we have made all manner of compromise regarding our sexuality in order to live here. We have expended much energy trying to debunk the racist mythology which says our sexuality is depraved. Unfortunately many of us have over compensated" (Collins 1991). Many Black ideologies, like Nationalism and Conservatism, have indeed assimilated these norms in order to create a concept of Black 'respectability' and healthy sexuality

(White 1995). African-Americans utilize their ideology to present what they consider 'positive' images of themselves. Both Nationalists and Conservatives developed what Evelyn Higginbotham calls a "politics of respectability" (Higginbotham 1992). Nationalists and Conservatives have attempted to develop a system of respectability that seeks to challenge the representation of African-Americans as deviant and to discipline particularly lower classes within the Black community. However, while the Conservative ethos would remain primarily assimilationist, Nationalists would seek to develop respectability as a means of producing the necessary moral fortitude for developing a modern nation connected to a mythical African past.

The consequences of respectability constructions in the African-American community are that they have reaffirmed the norm of the patriarchal, nuclear family. They have reproduced a need for compulsory heterosexuality and challenged the myth of Black sexual deviance. A powerful myth of Black sexual deviance is the Black male as rapist or as the perpetrator of sexual violence. This myth was affirmed by the act of Black male lynching, which further invoked the idea of the Black male as sexual criminal. The attempt to reaffirm the Black nuclear family is also framed in the rehabilitation of Black men as worthy patriarchs. Representations of Black men as violent rapists have been attacked as fueling the types of racist myths that led to the horrible crime of lynching (Collins 1991). Thus, on top of compulsory heterosexuality and the need to reinvigorate Black male patriarchy, Black women have been denied the right to speak out on their victimization at the hands of Black men because of its potential to fuel myths about Black sexuality. While Conservatives have clung to these ideals on both moral terms and in privileging individual agency over and 'group' identity, Nationalists have stressed racial identity. Many Nationalists have suggested that calling attention to identities of gender and sexual orientation only divides the Black community and diverts attention away from race, which is the primary identity and site of oppression within Black Nationalist ideology. (White 1995). Thus, gender and sexual orientation are often understood as 'white' identities. The negative

sentiments of many African-Americans toward the expression of difference, in terms of gender and sexual orientation, can be connected to expressions of Black separatism, autonomy, and Black Nationalist leanings. Thus, opinions regarding gays and lesbians or women who speak out against violence often equate them with 'outsiders,' and, in particular, whites.

Black Womanists and Feminists have consistently challenged the constraints of 'respectability' in the Black community. They have argued for an increase in the recognition of Black women's leadership roles and for greater sensitivity for gender and sexuality issues within the Black community. Women like Ida B. Wells, Sojourner Truth, Zora Neale Hurston, Angela Davis, Alice Walker, Audre Lourde and Patricia Hill Collins have all argued for a greater voice for Black women within the struggle for both racial and gender equality (Collins 1991). This argument has expanded to include the demand for greater sexual freedom and for a platform on which to speak out against sexual violence in the African-American community. Black Feminists have also challenged white Feminists for not recognizing the importance of viewing race and class along with gender. This perspective has produced a significant amount of antagonism over these issues within both the Black community and white Feminist circles (Collins 1991). Theoretically, Black Feminism posits multiple systems of oppression--race, class, gender and sexual orientation--in contrast to Nationalism, which only regards race, and Conservatism, which rejects group identities. Black Feminists have argued that gender, class and sexual orientation are not 'white' identities or outside threats but are expressions of experiences within the African-American community that must form a part of any movement for racial equality.

The aim of this paper is to operationalize some core concepts of Black Nationalism, Conservatism, Feminism and identity by reviewing the literature on the connections between ideology, identity and sexuality. The literature will be used to develop some hypotheses about the effects of ideology and identity on attitudes about sexual violence and

homosexuality. I will then use community-based qualitative data from the Chicago Health and Social Life Study (CHSL) to help in pinpointing constructs and language, in order to develop tests of the effects of ideology and identity. Finally, I will take the concepts and meanings developed from the literature and the CHSL data to test the effects of ideology and identity using the National Black Politics Survey of 1993-1994, which is unique because it has sophisticated models for Black ideological trends and a large enough number of respondents to produce significant results.

Review of Literature/Theory:

There are two major groups of literature that I will focus on. The first is the literature on race and sexuality and the second is the literature on Black ideology. The literature on race and sexuality attempts to analyze how the position of racial subordination interacts with dominant norms within society to produce attitudes about sexuality. The primary focus is that of analyzing the extent to which negative stereotypes about Black sexuality and dominant norms within American society have shaped African-American attitudes about sexuality. The literature on ideology follows a similar course by analyzing the ways in which conflicts and cooperation have arisen from competing ideological forms. A major trend in the literature is to ascertain whether Black ideologies assimilate norms from Judeo-Christian American values, or whether they contradict, or loosely reinterpret them as they attempt to make sense of the gaps in "American" mainstream sexual norms and practice in the Black community. Both attempt to order the importance of race, gender and class in understanding both ideology and sexual norms within the African-American community.

Ideology is a systematic set of beliefs held by individuals and groups within the mass public (Dawson 1994).² Thus, ideology resides in both the mass public and in elite discourse circles. This paper will use elite ideology and debates as a means of understanding how these trends might express themselves in the mass public.

Black ideologies form the lenses through which African-Americans view the world and various problems that present themselves. Black ideologies have also been the lenses

through which Black responses to problems have been filtered. There are six major Black ideological trends: Black Nationalism, Black Marxism, Black Feminism, Black Conservatism, Radical Liberalism, and Disillusioned Liberalism (Dawson 1994). I will limit my analysis to Feminism, Nationalism and Conservatism because these three have engaged in particularly contentious debates about sexuality in the recent past. Each ideology has been historically present in the mass public and also communicated by elites. Major questions posed by Black ideology have been: To what degree should Blacks integrate with or separate from others, who are the friends and enemies of the community and how should the race should represent itself? (Dawson 1994, Pinderhughes 1987) Ideas and attitudes about the family, sexual mores, masculinity and femininity have been fundamental components of Black ideology. The power of racial ideology, in terms of attitudes about homosexuality and the victimization of women, is well delineated in the literature.

Before employing the data, I will evaluate the literature on the dependent variables: violence against women, and homophobia. I will also evaluate the literature on the connection between Black ideology (my independent variables) and the dependent variables. These evaluations will frame the data in the context of the current discourse on the subject and generate some hypotheses about the effects of Black ideologies and identity.

Homophobia:

"Since no one has bothered to study the Black community's attitudes on homosexuals, homosexuality, or homosexual lifestyles, it is not accurate to attribute homophobia to the mass of black people." Cheryl Clarke, *The Failure to Transform Homophobia in The Black Community*.

The literature on homophobia in the African-American community has focused on the connection between racism and attitudes about sexual orientation. The construction of Black authenticity has been revealed to have homophobic content, in that there is a perceived conflict between being gay and being Black. The literature also targets reactionary elements against Black homosexuals within both the Black community and the white gay and lesbian rights movements. The literature emphasizes the historical construction of masculinity and femininity in the Black community and focuses on the development of gender identity and

the ways in which an open discussion on sexual orientation conflicts with Black ideologies that privilege race or 'respectability.'

Black gays and lesbians are continually disappointed with the discrimination they have faced within the Black community. The work has revealed the bitter irony that a community, which has been discriminated against for so long, would practice discrimination within (Muwaikkil 1994, Lourde 1995, Mercer 1995, Staples 1983). Many also lament that institutions such as the Black church consistently, when pressed, take an anti-gay and lesbian stance. The attack of gay and lesbian rights movements from the Black community often involves a 'ranking of oppressions.' Because many perceive gay or lesbian identity as potentially invisible, gay identity is then seen as fundamentally different from being Black. As June Jordan notes, many people ask: "Why don't you keep your deviant sexuality in the closet and let the rest of us--we who suffer oppression for reasons of our ineradicable and always visible components of our personhood such as race or gender--get on with our more necessary, our more beleaguered struggle to survive?" (Jordan 1995). Because homosexuality is often associated only with whites, the prospect of poor Blacks from ghetto communities struggling for and defending the rights of potentially wealthy, gay white men poses a significant conflict in terms of race and class. This perception of gay as white interacts with attitudes within the Black community about masculinity and femininity that simply do not include the option of homosexuality.

The notion of 'race' is often, within the African-American community, conflated with macho expressions that increase antagonism between Blacks and gay and lesbian movements (Mercer 1995). A perfect example of such antagonism is the development of hyper-masculine rap music. Many rap lyrics have regularly contained anti-gay and lesbian slogans (Muwaikkil 1994).³ The attitudes of many rappers are just a reflection of those within the larger community, where often the racial authenticity of homosexuals is questioned (Lourde 1995, Smith 1983, hooks 1992). Gays and lesbians have been seen as fundamentally 'white' and upper class within the African-American community. Barbara

Smith chronicles, stating: "'Gay' means gay white men with large discretionary incomes. Perceiving gay people in this way allows one to ignore that some of us are women and people of color and working class and poor and disabled and old" (Smith 1995). Smith argues that the definition of gay as wealthy white male is perpetuated by the media and many mainstream gay organizations. However, Blacks have expanded the definition by often viewing homosexuality as "a white problem or even a 'white disease'" (Smith 1995). This point of view brands gays and lesbians in terms of both class and race. Gay and lesbian identities are understood as 'white' and 'upper-class' or as 'outsiders' to the Black community. This process of dislocation does not provide much space within Black identity for a gay or lesbian identity. The two then become mutually exclusive and gays and lesbians are conflated with 'outsiders.' Furthermore, Black gays and lesbians are potentially seen as traitors to the race, utilized by liberal white organizations to prove their insincere racial egalitarianism that never extends to 'real' Blacks (Asante 1987).

Despite these problems, Black gays and lesbians have fought to overcome the silence into which the Black community has cornered them. Kobena Mercer and Salim Muwaikkil both argue that homosexuality is accepted among heterosexual members of the Black community in silence, meaning that even when the mere existence of gays and lesbians is accepted or tolerated in the community, there is still little acceptance of politicized, uncloseted gay and lesbian identities. Undoubtedly, this does not mean the Black community is less homophobic, though it certainly problematizes challenges to the idea that because of racial ideology, Blacks are more homophobic.

Black gays and lesbians have grown particularly impatient with this charge of Black homophobia from their white counterparts. Cheryl Clarke states that "in spite of the undeniably homophobic pronouncements of black intellectuals, I sometimes become impatient with the accusations of homophobia hurled at the black community by many gay men and lesbians, as if the whole black community were more homophobic than the Heterosexist culture we live in" (Clarke, 1983). Thus, Black gays and lesbians assert the

need to attack homophobia, but question any attempt to specifically target the Black community as more homophobic than the larger society. The fact is that because African-Americans exist in a marked category it is easier to 'study' problems and identify causes. Whiteness, being an unmarked signifier, makes it difficult to trace extensive causes in the same way. Therefore, like reactionary forces within the Black community that seek to prevent its members from being branded with the tag of sexual deviance, African-American gays and lesbians are also reticent of the Black community being targeted in a racist fashion by white gay and lesbian groups. This involves an explicit recognition that homophobia is part of the larger society and does not merely reside in Black ghettos (Clarke, 1983).

The literature on Black homosexuality has, in recent years, specifically addressed the topic of AIDS. While the prevalence of the disease has declined amongst gay white men, the rate of infection for Black men and women has increased. Many have argued that the inability of the Black community to take gay and lesbian identity seriously has left Black institutions incapable of responding to the epidemic (Mercer 1994). There is also the misconception that, like homosexuality, AIDS is a 'white thing'; "Above all, there is a parallel defense mechanism operating in the black psyche which says that homosexuality is a 'white man's disease'--paradoxically, this merely mirrors the racist stigmatization of blacks by substituting whites as the origin of everything undesirable" (Mercer, 1994).⁴ Thus, the literature argues that we cannot consider AIDS without looking at the problem of racism and homophobia within the Black community, and that AIDS itself is, to a degree, a proxy for homosexuality and serves as a flash point for open discussion of the issue.

Victimization of Black Women: Speaking Out

The literature on the victimization of Black women centers on how the myth of the emasculation of Black men and the tendency to see the race in masculine terms create a conspiracy of silence against Black women. The literature purports that the sexual violence Black women experience is a product of the intersection of race, class, and gender.

According to Collins, "black feminists have investigated how rape as a specific form of

sexual violence is embedded in a system of interlocking race, gender and class oppression" (Collins 1991). This nexus makes Black women both frequent victims and also poses substantial barriers to their speaking out. Thus, Black women have suffered a double jeopardy: Perceived as sexually available to men (white and Black) and left unprotected from sexual violence, Black women have been prevented from speaking out about their victimization because of its potential to portray Black men in a negative light. The dilemma expresses itself powerfully, in that "[f]ar too many African-American women live with the untenable position of putting up with abusive Black men in defense of an elusive Black unity" (Collins 1991).

The major thrust of the literature on Black women and sexual violence has been about finding a voice for the current and historical experiences of rape and sexual violence. The effects of rape and sexual violence on the lives of Black women have been a prominent theme from slave narratives to recent writings by Black feminist authors. Authors, scholars and activists like Patricia Hill Collins, Angela Davis and Alice Walker have asserted that Black women can and must express their experiences of violence and that the whole community must struggle openly to prevent rape and sexual violence. Ntozake Shange states this clearly, writing, "I refuse to be a part of this conspiracy of silence. I will not do it. So that's why I wrote about Beau Willie Brown. I'm tired of living lies" (Collins 1991). The 'conspiracy' of silence frames the controversy around this literature.

Many Black men have attacked these writers and activists for potentially contributing to racist myths about Black men. This controversy demonstrates the difficult problem of negotiating categories of race, gender and class in the face of oppression. Black males like Ishmael Reed have charged that Black feminists are pawns of white feminists and whites on the right, both of whom are comfortable with racist images of Black men (Reed 1993). The split between Black men and women on this issue has been profoundly expressed through the Tyson/Washington rape trial and the Hill/Thomas hearings. Black and white feminists strongly supported Hill and Washington, while many prominent Black

males were skeptical of their claims and concerned with the charges' potential to provide 'evidence' of Black male sexual deviance (Staples 1983, Lemell 1995, Awkward 1995). A major controversy has developed over the role of white feminists, who are seen as questionable in terms of their commitment to racial equality by both Black men and Black women. This controversy stems from the fact that sexual violence and rape have been seen or understood as 'race' crimes (Collins 1991, Staples 1982, Awkward 1995).

The connection between race and rape has been accurately understood by Angela Davis who argues that "[t]he myth of the black man as rapist has strengthened its inseparable companion: the image of the black woman as chronically promiscuous. And with good reason, for once the notion is accepted that black men harbor irresistible, animal-like sexual urges, the entire race is invested with bestiality" (Collins 1991). Thus, both Black women and men are victimized. This representation is extended to violent forms of repression against Black men. "Depicting African-American men as sexually charged beasts who desired white women created the myth of the black rapist. Lynching emerged as the specific form of sexual violence visited on black men, with the myth of the black rapist as its ideological justification" (Collins 1991). Thus, Black men see the potential for the re-emergence of damaging sexual stereotypes and have re-acted strongly to this. Angela Davis, who has suggested that many Black women may in fact feel similarly, argues that "if black women are conspicuously absent from the ranks of the anti-rape movement today, it is, in large part, their way of protesting the movement's posture of indifference toward the frame-up rape charge as an incitement to racist aggression" (Collins 1991). And thus, the ambivalence of the mainstream feminist movement toward race has distanced it from both Black men and women. However, the response to Black women who speak out about sexual violence has gone beyond concern. Many Black men have suggested that Black women who speak out about violence are "traitors to the race" who seek to emasculate men. Others, such as Orlando Patterson and Louis Farrakhan, have suggested that women like Anita Hill and Desiree Washington were dumped by 'white, middle class, feminist norms' and failed to

understand the dating rituals within the African-American community (Awkward 1995). Black feminists have reacted strongly against this ethos. Alice Walker attacks it strongly writing,

At the root of the denial of easily observable and heavily sexist brutality in the black community is the assertion that black men don't act like Mister, and if they do, they're justified by the pressure they're under as black men in a white society. Just as we have had to rid ourselves of slavish behaviors we must ruthlessly eradicate any desire to be mistress or 'master' (Collins 1991).

Thus, Walker argues against the view that women who speak out are traitors to the race. The conflict is phrased in terms of "what the race can afford." Fundamentally, the conflict also rests on the perceived need to sacrifice 'truth' for Black unity that ignores problems of gender, class and sexual orientation. The concept of universal Black unity, beyond gender, class and sexual orientation, is central to the idea of Black Nationalism, and, in essence, it is Black Nationalism. The theme of Black unity as a necessity would most prominently play itself out in the ideology of Black Nationalism.

Black Nationalism:

Black Nationalism⁵ is one of the oldest trends in Black political thought. Its origins extend back to the classic exchange between Henry Highland Garnett and Frederick Douglass. Individuals like Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Louis Farrakhan and Sistah' Souljah also articulate Black Nationalist beliefs. Nationalism is not only an elite ideology, but is present in various forms within the Black mass public. Black Nationalism remains a separate and distinct ideological construction, organizationally and in terms of beliefs.⁶ Recent research demonstrates that Black Nationalism is particularly prevalent amongst younger people and in areas of concentrated poverty (Dawson 1994).

Nationalism posits that the fundamental problem within the United States is the problem of race. All other categories such as class, gender, and sexual orientation are secondary to the category of race. Nationalists see 'unity' within the race as the only means of improving the conditions of the Black community. Within most forms of Nationalism

there is a reticence to recognize divisions of class and gender within the Africa-American community (Dawson 1994). Revolutionary Nationalists included considerations of class and gender in their rhetoric. However, groups like the Black Panthers also still saw homosexuality as "white and upper class" (Mercer 1994). In the view of Black Nationalism, the effects of racism are the primary cause of Black pathology. Also, the problem of race in America, and sometimes the entire world, is permanent, and whites are too tied to either the psychological or material benefits of racism to make suitable coalition partners (Dawson 1994). The solution proposed is some form of separation, which would allow for the community to grow and flourish. While the option of leaving the country has been explored at several junctures, the major focus has been on building autonomous institutions that are free from white interference and that foster the growth of Black culture and political agency⁷.

Social norms within Black Nationalism have been explicitly patriarchal. Eldridge Cleaver and others all posited that the central problem with Black men was the denial of their manhood by the system of racism (Mercer 1994, Staples 1983). Thus, the fundamental way to begin to build a nation is by installing men as heads of households and the of movement (hooks 1992, Mercer 1994, White 1995). Men are to work to build the nation and women are to support them. Stokely Carmichael once commented that "the only place for women in the movement is prone" (Evans 1980).⁸ Further, a central problem is the fact that Black women too often assert themselves and do not obey proper gender norms and roles that are traditionally African (White 1995). Karenga, the cultural Nationalist architect of Kwanzaa, asserts that "equality is false; it's the devil's concept." (White 1995) What follows is the idea that the extent to which women articulate a feminist standpoint or critique sexism and Black men is the extent to which they have assimilated European norms and are participating in bringing down the Black community.

Black Nationalists have been quick to accuse the mainstream feminist movement of racism or 'targeting Black men' because they make easy targets, given the enormous weight

of stereotypes and oppression (Reed 1993). Ishmael Reed clearly expresses this idea, writing: "My problem with the gender-first faction on the feminist movement, compounded with the demonization of Clarence Thomas, is that it singles out black misogyny as if it were the only misogyny that exists." Both the Hill/Thomas hearings and the Washington/Tyson rape trial are evidence of this fact for Black Nationalists. Nationalists like Reed and Louis Farrakhan all attacked 'white feminists' for their attack on prominent Black men.

Nationalists feel that white feminists cleverly manipulate negative Black male images for their own purposes and are not as quick to attack prominent white men. Ishmael Reed chronicles this point of view in his discussion of Susan Brownmiller.

Susan Brownmiller, in her book on rape, *Against Our Will*, writes that "the mythified specter of the black man as rapist, to which the black man in the name of his manhood now contributes" poses a threat to all women, black or white. Brownmiller doesn't say "some black men"; she says "the black man," meaning me, Clarence Thomas and a whole lot of other people. Brownmiller, for example, supported the verdict that acquitted William Kennedy Smith of rape charges. But the morning after Mike Tyson was convicted on rape charges last March, she was interviewed on Pacific Radio and sounded gleeful. (Reed 1993).

Thus, Black Nationalists feel that discussions of sexual violence divide the Black community and contribute to harmful racist myths about Black men. Ishmael Reed, Louis Farrakhan and the Reverend Al Sharpton were all supportive of Mike Tyson and called the attempt to prosecute him a racist conspiracy against Black men (Awkward 1994). Therefore, because the critique of Black men is viewed as oppositional to the interests of the race, 'white' and harmful, I hypothesize that Nationalists will not support women speaking out about their victimization at the hands of Black men and will see the problem of race in masculinist terms. Further, women who speak out against sexual violence will be seen as 'white' or equated with 'outsiders.'

In addition to being perceived as non-respectable and intolerable, homosexuality has been deemed unmanly and as a European perversion (Asante 1987). The same masculinist view of Black identity and the centrality of race preclude sexual orientation as a salient identity. Men are to be heterosexual, and thus, manly. Mercer's reflection on the Black

Power movement demonstrates the connection between masculinist, patriarchal norms of Black Nationalism and homophobia.

Revolutionary nationalism implied a very macho-oriented notion of black struggle, and this also pertains to Britain, as the term "black youth" really means black male youth (their sisters are invisible in debates on race and crime in the seventies), and this has been taken, rather romantically by some black male activists and intellectuals, to embody the "heroic" essence of black people's resistance. (Mercer 1994)

Again, race is seen as the primary confrontation and sexual orientation is an identity that is explicitly seen as white and competes with the most important identity, race. Many Nationalists have criticized Black homosexuals, charging that they are used by white movements to justify their liberalism and that they work counter to the process of nation building (White 1995). Because homosexuality is seen as a white man's disease, so too is AIDS. Therefore, Black nationalists are likely to be anti-gay and lesbian. Further, gay and lesbian identity is also likely to be conflated with 'whiteness' or outsiders.

Black Feminism:

Though the specific codification of Black Feminism has been relatively recent, Black Feminism or Womanism is part of a long tradition of Black women fighting for the rights of women and to advance the race. Ida B. Wells, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth are all women who have embodied this ideal (Dawson 1994, Collins 1991). The statement written by the Combahee River Collective, the work of Patricia Hill Collins, Alice Walker and the organization, African American Women in Defense of Ourselves (AAWDO), represents two distinct attempts to capture the essence of what Black feminism is about. These documents capture the spirit invoked by activists like Angela Davis and Audre Lourde, whose activism has sparked much of what we today know as Black Feminism.

Alice Walker coined the term 'Womanism' to describe the Black Feminist perspective. The term seeks to help define the standpoint of Black women at the intersection of race, class and gender oppressions (Collins 1991). Womanism critiques both the sexism within the African-American community and the racism of white feminists, though it

considers both potential allies. Collins notes that an important experience for Walker occurred when she shared an office with "a prominent white feminist who expressed superficial interest in Black women's ideas, yet compiled an anthology of women writers from which women of color were noticeably absent" (Collins 1991). Womanism or Black Feminism also embodies a humanist vision that includes coalitions with others and a universal vision of liberation (Collins 1991). However, both Collins and Walker suggest that despite the humanist vision of Womanism, there still remains the necessary space and respect for autonomy and self-determination. The autonomous space of Black Womanism helps to define what Collins calls a Black feminist standpoint or epistemology. Collins' notion of a Black Feminist standpoint or epistemology hangs on a unique set of experiences of Black women, based on the intersection of race, gender and class, that allows Black women to recognize the role that all three play in their lives. (Collins 1991) However, 'separatism' is explicitly rejected; that is, separatism from Black men, white women, or struggles against homophobia. As noted above, the connection with white feminists would be the source of much of the criticism from Black men. However, the need to take seriously race, gender, class and sexual orientation would be formed early on in the codification of Black Feminism.

The Combahee River Collective statement in 1977 took a step toward defining Black Feminism and also distinguishing it from mainstream 'white' feminism. The statement lays the groundwork for a specifically African-American form of feminism that critiques male-centered Black activism and classist, racist white feminism. The women of the Combahee River Collective specifically argued that progressive movements and they themselves must address the issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation. However, they do not at all see these various categories in conflict and argue that they must be addressed at the same time: "We believe that sexual politics under patriarchy is as pervasive in Black women's lives as are the politics of class and race. We also often find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are most often experienced

simultaneously" (Combahee River Collective Statement, 1983). Within this context, Black feminists, as articulated within the statement, see themselves as separate from white feminism because of their struggle with and for Black men.

Although we are feminists and Lesbians, we feel solidarity with progressive Black men and do not advocate the fractionalization that white women who are separatists demand. Our situation as Black people necessitates that we have solidarity around the fact of race, which white women do not need to have with white men, unless it is their solidarity as racial oppressors. (Combahee River Collective Statement, 1983)

However, they specifically critique the sexism of Black men. As a consequence Black men are called to struggle with them on the subject (Combahee River Collective Statement, 1983).

The struggle against heterosexism is a fundamental part of Black feminism, as sexual freedom is a means through which women can come to empower themselves. While conscious about confirming stereotypes about Black men, Black feminists see a specific need to speak out against sexism and the victimization of women. Heterosexist patriarchal norms are also seen as reactionary and as an assimilation of European values (White 1995). Thus, Black feminists criticize Nationalism for its masculinist, patriarchal point of view and label it as an assimilation of a negative aspect of white society (White 1995, Collins 1991). Beyond the masculinist bent of Black Nationalism, Black Feminists like Pauli Murray suggest that ethnocentrism cannot achieve true liberation:

A built-in hazard of an aggressive ethnocentric movement which disregards the interests of other disadvantaged groups is that it will become parochial and ultimately self-defeating in the face of hostile reactions, dwindling allies, and mounting frustrations Only a broad movement for human rights can prevent the Black Revolution from becoming isolated and can insure ultimate success. (Collins 1991)

This point of view was operationalized in AAWDO, which came together nationally as a result of the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill hearings.

In the wake of the Thomas-Hill hearings, AAWDO took out a one page ad in newspapers around the country. The ad articulated their opposition to Thomas and their view of the problems that Black women face. They contended that Black women have been oppressed as a result of their race and gender. They also argued that the intersection of these two identities had forced them into silence, particularly on their suffering at the hands of Black men. Barbara Ransby, an architect of the project, writes: "We wanted specifically to speak out in opposition to the sexual abuse and degradation of black women, including that of Hill, to condemn what we felt certain were misogynist and reactionary policies by Thomas, and to dispel any erroneous myth that he enjoyed ubiquitous support amongst Black women" (Ransby 1995). Thus, the organization and Black women declared war against silence. The organization gathered more national attention toward the often grassroots tenets of Black Feminism and formed a recognizable movement associated directly with Black Feminist ideals. And thus, the mass public was introduced to Black Feminism in its entirety and as a coherent. With that was the message of fighting oppression based on race, class, gender and sexual orientation. Therefore, I hypothesize that Black feminist ideology will increase support for gays and lesbians and will support women speaking out about sexual violence.

Black Conservatism:

Black Conservatism has a long history. The most prominent and powerful Black Conservative was Booker T. Washington. While Black Conservatism has remained relatively marginal in the Black mass public, it consistently held strong institutional support from whites (Dawson 1994). I am using a somewhat limited definition of Conservatism in this paper. By Conservatism, I am only referring to a negative orientation toward the state's promotion of racial progress, affirmative action and welfare programs (Williams 1995). Some Nationalists share these orientations, but the main difference lies in how each defines the salience of race and the necessity of group identity. Despite the fact that the work of Washington influenced the early work of Marcus Garvey, Conservatism and Nationalism

have remained distinct trends with little overlap in leaders and organizations (Dawson 1994). While Black Nationalists take a 'race first' and group identity approach to solving the problems of the community, Black Conservatives prefer to focus on the need for individual achievement and agency in order to overcome racism and oppose approaches that continually push for African-Americans to identify themselves as a group first and foremost (Sowell 1975, Loury 1995). Further, they argue that Blacks must strive for economic success within the free market system in order to overcome discrimination (Sowell 1975, Loury 1995). However, Black Conservatives demonstrate the pervasiveness of 'race,' its role as master narrative, by frequently invoking it. Talk show host Armstrong Williams often selectively quotes Nationalists like Eldridge Cleaver and Malcolm X. In particular, he uses quotes in which they realize and reveal the harm their criminal lives have done to themselves and others. However, the Black Conservatives' relationship with Nationalists does not end here, in that Conservatives often frame policy prescriptions and attitudes about sexuality within what is good for the 'race.' Despite similar views on many issues, group identity and an emphasis on race are what separate Black Conservatives from their counterparts.

Black Conservatives assert that many of the current and past problems within the Black community are specifically related to Black culture or at least negative behavior by individuals within the Black community (Williams 1995). Thus, white racism can no longer be the central focus and explanation for shortcomings in the African-American community. Williams and Presidential candidate Alan Keyes both agree that illegitimacy and a lack of traditional values are to blame for problems in the Black community. For Black Conservatives, liberal state-centered solutions to racism and welfare have increased the problem of illegitimacy and irresponsibility. Conservatives like Armstrong Williams, Thomas Sowell, Clarence Thomas, Ward Connerly and Shelby Steele have all taken positions explicitly against affirmative action. Black Conservatives have argued that programs like affirmative action encourage both Black mediocrity and white resentment. Some argue that discrimination is no longer a significant barrier, while others argue that

state intervention will never be sufficient. Thus, there is an explicit call for Blacks to act as individual agents in improving their situation. Black Conservatives assert that policies like welfare and affirmative action rest on the assumption that Blacks can never achieve the same level of responsibility as whites, which is reinforced by discussions of Black homosexuality and sexual violence which Conservatives feel emphasize Black pathology. Thus, there is a call for African-Americans to reject these influences and adhere to strict traditional values and moral ethics (specially the Protestant work ethic) that include sexual mores and standards (Williams 1995). Many Black Conservatives like Keyes and Williams reject homosexuality on strict and religious terms, while others suggest that Blacks have been confused by white liberals who use homosexuality and talk about sexual violence to cripple Black agency (Crouch 1990). Several even attacked the NAACP, claiming that because of its affirmative stance on gay rights, it does not represent of 'mainstream of Black values and opinions' (Williams 1995). Thus, for Conservatives, many Black organizations are distanced from mainstream Black values by virtue of their relationships with white liberals, such as feminists and gays and lesbians. Implicitly, within this way of thinking, there is no space for the recognition of feminist and gay or lesbian movements indigenous to the Black community.

Stanley Crouch, in several essays, frames Conservative responses to homosexuality and feminism that are strikingly similar to the responses phrased by Black Nationalists. Crouch charges that racist white liberals utilize Black homosexuals and Black women who speak out about sexual violence to perpetuate harmful and negative stereotypes about Black men in particular. Crouch, arguing that Black homosexuals are favored by whites, argues that "[r]ace complicates such dynamics because, in friendship with white women, black homosexuals can easily take on the roles of male mammies, confidants, and exotics with both ethnic and sexual twists" (Crouch 1990).⁹ Crouch goes on to focus on the inequities of race and class in the gay community, and how those inequities play themselves out in gay and lesbian organizations, as well as within the practice of male prostitution, which often

victimizes young men of color. Crouch also spends an inordinate amount of time in an unfocused discussion of gay S&M and suggests that this practice alone should exclude Black gay men and others from the polity. In Crouch's view, gay Black men fulfill and reinforce negative stereotypes by playing degrading roles for liberal whites.

Stanley Crouch displays similar sentiments for white feminists, who, in his view, are disaffected with Black Nationalists (who Crouch also believes to be misguided) and who have turned to Black feminists to tear down the image of Black men. Crouch states this explicitly, arguing that "[t]hose whites within the media who felt betrayed or affronted by the anti-white, anti-Semitic and violent tendencies of black nationalism during the '60's are promoting a gaggle of black female writers who pay lip service to the women's movement while supplying us with new stereotypes of black men and women" (Crouch 1990). Crouch sees Black women writers such as Michele Wallace and Ntozake Shange as central to this problem. He asserts that their negative images of Black men provide fuel for racists on both the left and the right:

Pimps, woman-beaters, dope fiends and dealers, ludicrous and pretentious buffoons and sentimental mamas dominating the images of black people seem to be the intellectual mint juleps that cool out summers on the culture plantations. The ease with which such new stereotypes are accepted by both conservatives and liberals indicates their usefulness to both camps: they allow for the continued rationalization of the terrible conditions under which far too many black people now live and symbolize the resentment many whites feel toward what black advances have taken place over the last 25 years, beginning with the monumental Supreme court desegregation decision of 1954. (Crouch 1990)

Crouch also argues that Black feminist writers are lauded for what they write and say about Black men. "Now the focus is on black women--if those women maintain ideas about being brutalized by black men." While Crouch wrote the essay before the Hill/Thomas hearings, it is clear that the same theory would apply. Black Conservatives consistently defended Thomas, and Thomas referred to the hearings as a "high tech lynching," invoking the specter of an attack on Black men in general (Morrison 1992).

Crouch also utilizes the politics of race and class when he suggests that Black male pathology represented by Black women writers excuses those who see the ghetto as a place of deviant sexual behavior and moral turpitude (Crouch 1990). Crouch argues that this absolves middle class Blacks and whites from truly understanding the problems of the ghetto. Thus, theoretically it is logical to hypothesize that Black Conservatives will, like Black Nationalists, feel negatively toward gays, lesbians and women speaking out about sexual violence.

Other Variables:

There are several competing or alternative explanations for Black homophobia and the impulse to silence discussion about the victimization of women. In this section, I will trace some possible choices that will appear in the quantitative test of attitudes about women speaking out about sexual violence and homosexuality.

Many writers have argued that the patriarchal structure of the Black church and its theology have reinforced masculinist views of the race, patriarchy and homophobia (White 1995, Staples 1982, Dawson 1994). The church as a male dominated hierarchical structure seeks to encourage patriarchy as the 'natural family' and condemn homosexuality as against scripture. However, others, such as Higginbotham, have suggested that the large number of women in the church has caused the church to serve as a site of women's organization that may be very different from the ideas and ideology of the minister (Higginbotham 1992). Thus, church attendance can either be a site of feminist organization or reinforce patriarchal structures. Both views are supported by the literature.

Gender represents yet another alternative. Women have generally tended to be more socially liberal than men and arguably would have greater empathy towards women who have been victimized. Men in general tend to be less tolerant. Thus, we can regard women as more supportive of women speaking out and gay and lesbian issues. The alternative to this is that, in the particular the case of women speaking out, women in general could also

impose an even tougher sanction against their cohorts who speak out against violence against Black men as upsetting their notion of gender conventions.

Age cohort effects are similar. Younger people have grown up in a post sexual revolution society and have been exposed to liberal views about gay rights and women speaking out for themselves. Thus, younger people should be more supportive of gays and lesbians and women speaking out about their victimization. The alternative to this may be that young people, as a result of misogynistic and homophobic information within Black music and their peculiar position of constructing their own sexual identity, could be more homophobic.

Education generally has a liberalizing effect on public opinion. Education can often be utilized as an indicator of class position and often defines class consciousness. Thus, we can hypothesize that more education should make individuals more sensitive to women speaking out and less homophobic. The measure for this construct is educational attainment.

A basic measure of liberalism and conservatism might also determine opinions. African-Americans who self identify as 'liberal,' aside from race, are more likely to hold liberal points of view on those issues. This is specifically a social liberalism distinguished from issues of race. However, issues like the victimization of women, homosexuality and abortion would probably fit into this issue space for African-Americans.

Results:

The test of my hypotheses involves the use of two data sets: the 1993-1994 National Black Politics Survey (NBPS) and the ethnographic component of the 1995 Chicago Health and Social Life Study (CHSLS). NBPS is a national sample that includes specific questions in order to model scales of Black Conservatism, Nationalism autonomy and Feminism (see appendix A for the questions that form the scales). It is essentially the first study of its kind and provides a unique opportunity to explore these interesting variables (n=1206).

The data for the NBPS was obtained from a probability sample of all black households. 1206 telephone interviews were completed. Each interview was approximately 45 minutes in length. To be eligible, respondents had to be both black and 18 years or older. The survey was conducted between November 20, 1993 and February 20, 1994. The response was 60 percent. The main focus of the study was to provide instrumentation of the analysis of the relationship between black ideologies and their determinants and consequences. (Dawson 1997)¹⁰

The instrumentation I will use for this paper are the measures for Black Ideology (see Appendix A) and the rating scales of opinions about Anita Hill, gays and lesbians, which are coded 0-100. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings towards Hill, gays and lesbians between 0 and 100. I have taken a similar scale for opinions about whites and coded it from 0 to 1 in order to use it as an independent variable. Other measures used are: church attendance, coded 0 for never and 1 for once a week; gender, with 0 for men and 1 for women; age from 0 to 100, coded from 0 to 1; education, beginning at 0 for no high school diploma and 1 for post graduate education; and a self identification, with strong Conservative as 0 and strong Liberal as 1. These measures were compared with quotes from individuals representing various points of view from a Black community in Chicago.

CHSLS is an ethnographic study conducted in the Chicago area during the summer of 1995 through the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago.¹¹ Leaders, activists and service providers within the Chicago area were interviewed in order to provide context for survey work about attitudes regarding sexuality. The twenty-seven Black respondents included ministers, activists, journalists, and service providers. The focus of the interviews was to inquire about sexual norms, mores and problems within the African-American, gay and lesbian, Mexican-American and Puerto Rican communities in Chicago. The interviews were open ended and involved generally two interviewers who sought to maximize conversation and understand the ways in which issues were linked together. The

study also included ethnographic participant observation at community events, churches, health clinics and organizational meetings. However, I will focus solely on the statements of various individuals within the African-American community.

I will use NBPS to study mass opinion and CHSLS to map the discourse on the issues at the community level. This approach provides at least a limited take on the ways in which community level elites interact with mass opinion structures. While we cannot sort out what causes what because we are comparing a local sample and a national sample, we can at least identify some cleavages for possible further exploration.

(Table 1 a,b,c about here)

Feelings about whites produced almost a whole standard deviation shift in the positive direction for the gay feeling thermometer and somewhat less for lesbians. The qualitative data supported the idea that in the Black community gay and lesbian identities are often conflated with attitudes about whites. One lesbian activist spoke specifically about her being 'out'; "When people say you are doing this because white people make you gay, you see the kind of wildness that Chicago's community has. They say things like 'there are no gay people in Africa.'" A journalist speaking from personal experience commented: "When I met my first out Black gay man, I responded 'you can't be gay, you're black.' For me there was no room for the two identities and one was specifically 'white.'" Identity is a difficult issue with the Black community and gay and lesbian identity is seen as foreign. It seems that empathy towards whites is a strong predictor of empathy towards outsiders.

Black Nationalism was statistically insignificant on gays and lesbians. However, the ethnographic evidence suggests that there is a gap between elite opinion and mass opinion. The head of a major Black Nationalist organization argued that "there is no place for homosexuality. It is a European deviation and one cannot, by any means, build a nation on deviance." Another Black Nationalist minister responded, "Churches with gays and lesbians within them are a result of the ministers not projecting a 'warrior' image." The importance of the warrior image and building a nation are seen as inherently excluding homosexuality.

Feminism predicted increased positive effects towards Gays and Lesbians, and they are reinforced by the literature and the ethnographic component. One respondent involved in feminist politics stated, "We as women must support sexual freedom and alternative forms of sexual identity." Further, the other feminist respondents were lesbians and one activist commented, "We have to work to make space for gays and lesbians in the mainstream of the Black community despite the general feeling of sexual conservatism." Conservatism did not predict attitudes about gays and lesbians. Also, opinions amongst conservatives interviewed were split. A talk show host stated that "homosexuality is none of anyone's business. If that's the lifestyle they choose, so be it." The director of a youth group took a different stance: "We must steer kids away from homosexuality. It is that type of erosion of values that is destroying the community."

Church attendance was the measure utilized. It had a significant effect on negative feelings toward both gays and lesbians. Church response in the ethnographic component was very complicated. Silence being the prevailing theme, one minister commented, "There have always been gays and lesbians in the church, even ministers. However, it is just never talked about; we are willing to accept but only if you are quiet about it." Another minister stated that "homosexuality is a major secret of the Black church. It is obvious but never talked about." One lesbian activist commented: "We target churches where the ministers go on anti-gay and lesbian tirades. It happens often and we are alerted by gay and lesbian members within the church who sometimes take the minister aside themselves and inform them of their presence. Often, after that, ministers say nothing, but it is often understood that homosexuality is against scripture." Thus, while homosexuality is a part of the Black church it is largely silenced and there is an understanding that it violates the scripture in terms of Black theological orthodoxy.

Education also predicted a positive orientation towards gays, though its effects were small and failed to predict for lesbians. This contributes to the idea that to some degree

lesbians are invisible. Few respondents outside of the gay or lesbian community used the term lesbian. The term "gay" meant both, or meant gay men, without much thought or conversation about lesbians.

A general scaled measure of social Liberalism from strong Conservative to strong Liberal saw Liberals having significantly greater affect towards gays and lesbians. The increase in Liberalism produced a large increase in support for gays and lesbians. The ethnographic data does not cover this well, but there is a suggestion that there is at least a tendency towards a Liberal, Conservative dimension purely on sexual issues in the Black community. This was framed indirectly by a respondent who commented: "Being gay and lesbian is seen by some as negative because it means airing our dirty laundry. They feel Blacks should present a conservative sexual image." These dimensions might be defined particularly on non-racial issues and have to do explicitly with Black responses to racism. Women and more educated people also had greater affect towards gays, but not lesbians. This may be because of the information gap about exactly what the term lesbian means; in short, when individuals think of homosexuality they visualize gay men.

Age operated opposite to expectations with older people being significantly more tolerant of gays. Age was insignificant on the lesbian scale, possibly because older people are not quite clear about lesbians, since gay is a much more widely used term. In fact, it was difficult within the ethnographic component for people to even talk about lesbians. It was clear that when individuals think of homosexuality, they mean gay men. Further, this might be explained by one of the respondents comments: "When you're young, part of constructing our identity means creating an other. Many young people are very homophobic because they do not know who they are. When you combine this with race it becomes very powerful." The negative messages in rap music could also be producing an effect on the younger generation.

(Table #2 a, b,c about here)

The first measure for the victimization of women is a feeling thermometer for Anita Hill. The incident in this context can be characterized as a Black woman speaking out on her victimization by a prominent but unpopular Black man. Nationalism and Conservatism produced a dramatic negative affect toward Anita Hill. This is confirmed by the ethnographic component. The thermometer on whites again had an explosive effect. We can see that there is racial content to gender identity or at least speaking out about sexual harassment. Further, in the case of Anita Hill, it is not difficult to imagine that a Black Nationalist Activist commented, "Feminism and women speaking out about rape and harassment and stuff is a result of manipulation by white feminists. Its only product will be to further bring down the black man." On the subject of sexual abuse he commented, "We have our deviants but we shouldn't put that out into the public. It should be handled behind closed doors." A Black Nationalist minister did, however comment, "The Black community is in denial about domestic violence and needs to wake up."

The Conservative radio host who named Hill by name commented, "Hill's manipulation by white feminist is exactly the type of thing that white liberals do to destroy black families by encouraging women to attack men." Feminism produced a small positive shift, in support for Anita Hill, that ran contrary to what most Black feminists articulated, which was that women can and must speak out about, rape, harassment, and abuse, and that attitudes must be changed amongst African-Americans. Church attendance predicted a positive orientation toward Hill, counter to comments by a minister who said, "A premium is placed in the Black community on handling problems of abuse in private and not getting the public involved." This confirms Higginbotham's assertion that churches are potential spaces for organization around women's issues despite the patriarchal organizational structure and theological content. Gender, age and education were all insignificant in this model.

Conclusion:

The power of race in shaping attitudes about sexuality demonstrates that race does indeed play the role of 'master narrative' within the African American community. The suggestion by the data that gays, lesbians and women who speak about sexual violence are strongly connected to 'whiteness' demonstrates the powerful role that race plays in limiting the ability of feminists and gay rights organizations within the Black community. Women who advance a gender identity and men and women who seek to find a place for sexual orientation experience multiple layers of marginalization. They are not only potentially dislocated by their race, but also by their gender and/or sexual orientation. The implicit invisibility of lesbians further demonstrates how multiple categories like race, gender, class and sexual orientation produce groups that are seemingly on no one's agenda.

Black feminist ideology shaped positive feelings towards gays, lesbians and women who speak about sexual violence. However, the negative attitudes expressed by Conservatives and Nationalists towards Anita Hill represent significant cleavages that might impede any mass mobilization of the entire Black community. The Million Man March is a prime example of a masculinist focus that left behind more than half of the Black community and consistently some of its most committed activists. The fact remains that as Black feminists become more organized and have more access to information networks it will be impossible for Conservatives and Nationalists to continue to fight their perspective. Like Nationalism and Conservatism, rap music's uncritical and reactionary attitudes towards gender render many rap artists and their supporters anti-political, in that they cannot communicate a vision that liberates a majority of the African-American community. A community unable to transcend or incorporate new perspectives on gender and sexuality will be incapable of responding to right wing attacks on the welfare state and affirmative action. An increasingly open presence among gays and lesbians in the Black community, along with the growing problem of AIDS, also makes it imperative that the Black community have a more open and honest discussion on sexuality that does not ignore these issues because they might cause the community to be viewed negatively or destroy 'unity' in

the African-American community. Finally, white feminists and gay rights organizations must do better to include Blacks and the issue of race in their movements. The racial insensitivity that occasionally pervades their discussions of race, gender and class makes them easy targets and inhibits the development of progressive coalitions.

In terms of future research, this paper has shown that Black ideology affects opinions about gender. Also, this paper chronicles the connection between gender identity, sexual orientation and perceived 'whiteness.' However, in order to prove these connections definitively, surveys that include more specific measures of sexual violence and homosexuality will be necessary. Also, this paper shows that future research on Black public opinion must use racial identity and Black ideology as variables in order to accurately capture the centrality of these issues in shaping Black public opinion.

Table #1a: Gay and Lesbian Feeling Thermometers (0-100)12

Variable	Gays (SE)	Lesbians (SE)
Autonomy (Nationalism)	-4.695 (5.199)	.335 (5.334)
Feelings about Whites	28.282 (3.851)	25.674 (3.942)
Church attendance	-10.443 (4.012)	-10.002 (4.143)
Age	10.852 (4.680)	.301 (4.794)
Gender (woman)	7.819 (2.113)	.899 (2.183)
Education	8.201 (3.113)	9.353 (3.198)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	16.037 (2.847)	12.880 (2.919)
n	797	790
adjusted r squared	.14208	.09754
SE of estimate	26.33259	26.98318

Table #1b: Gay and Lesbian Feeling Thermometers (0-100)

Variable	Gays (SE)	Lesbians (SE)
Black Feminism	8.167 (3.779)	10.669 (3.812)
Feelings about Whites	29.300 (4.078)	25.626 (4.111)
Church attendance	-13.470 (4.299)	-11.842 (4.376)
Age	13.156 (4.931)	2.308 (4.983)
Gender	7.683 (2.205)	.380 (2.229)
Education	5.836 (3.344)	5.236 (3.391)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	14.100 (2.991)	12.460 (3.003)
n	723	718
adjusted r squared	.15302	.11094
SE of estimate	26.34251	26.50112

Table #1c: Gay and Lesbian Feeling Thermometers (0-100)

Variable	Gays (SE)	Lesbians (SE)
Black Conservatism	1.048 (3.645)	1.099 (3.701)
Feelings about Whites	26.884 (4.068)	23.570 (4.095)
Church attendance	-12.446 (4.230)	-12.469 (4.271)
Age	11.177 (4.931)	.696 (4.988)
Gender	7.414 (2.205)	-.551 (2.230)
Education	6.347 (3.241)	6.981 (3.291)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	15.722 (2.988)	13.498 (3.010)
n	741	737
adjusted r squared	.12860	.08965
SE of estimate	26.64002	26.91335

Table # 3a Anita Hill Feeling Thermometer

Variable	(SE)
Black Feminism	11.817 (3.877)
Feelings about Whites	23.515 (4.169)
Church attendance	11.29 (4.70)
Gender	-5.236 (2.268)
Age	.819 (5.081)
Education	3.640 (3.433)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	1.428 (3.054)
n	726
adjusted r square	.07231
SE of estimate	27.07675

Table # 3b Anita Hill Feeling Thermometer

Variable	(SE)
Autonomy (Nationalism)	-17.332 (5.400)
Feelings about Whites	25.329 (4.000)
Church attendance	8.304 (4.209)
Gender	-4.419 (2.211)
Age	3.826 (4.859)
Education	4.301 (3.242)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	1.405 (2.958)
n	800
adjusted r square	.07317
SE of estimate	27.47256

Table # 3c Anita Hill Feeling Thermometer

Variable	(SE)
Black Conservatism	-15.899 (3.254)
Feelings about Whites	24.445 (4.076)
Church attendance	10.011 (4.280)
Gender	-4.489 (2.222)
Age	-3.148 (4.978)
Education	5.568 (3.254)
Liberal/Conservative self ID	.450 (2.993)
n	741
adjusted r square	.07954
SE of estimate	26.79456

Appendix A: Questions for Scales of Black Ideology

Black Nationalism (Autonomy):

Black people should shop in Black stores whenever possible.
(strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree)¹³

Blacks should support the creation of all male public schools for black youth.

Blacks should have control over the economy in mostly black communities.

Blacks should have control over the government in mostly black communities.

Black people should rely on themselves and not others.

Black Feminism (Womanism)

The problems of racism, poverty and sexual discrimination are all linked together and must be addressed by the black community.

or

Blacks should emphasize the struggle around race.

Black feminist groups help the Black community by working to advance the position of black women.

or

Black feminist groups just divide the black community.

Black women should share equally in the political leadership of the black community.

or

Black women should not undermine black male political leadership.

Black Conservatism

Blacks depend too much on government programs.

or

Government owes more aid to blacks.

Some people feel that the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living.

or

Others think the government should let each person get ahead on their own.

Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such programs such preference in hiring and promotion is wrong because it gives blacks advantages they haven't earned. What about

your opinion -- do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with preferential hiring and promotion of blacks ?

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End Notes

1 Sexuality in this paper will be defined as the expression of categories of sex/gender primarily through identity and sexual practices. According to Patricia Hill Collins, sexuality is attached to particular sex/gender systems. In Collins' view, sexuality represents a powerful connection, an ideology of recognizing identity and practice that lies at the intersection of the biological category of sex, and the socially constructed categories of gender. "The sex/gender system consists of marking categories of biological sex with socially constructed gender meanings of masculinity and femininity." Thus, sexuality is inextricably connected to notions of masculinity and femininity that contain both biological and social content. As a consequence, sexuality cannot be understood without the dialogue of masculinity, femininity, gender and, in this paper, race. This view of sexuality borrows heavily from the work of Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction Volume I*.

2 This working definition of ideology is drawn heavily from the work of Michael Dawson. Dawson asserts that it is "consistent with how historians such as Bailyn, Foner and Oakes have used the concept" (Dawson 1994). This approach also borrows liberally from the work of Robert Smith, who looks at ideological diversity within the African-American community. (Smith 1993 and Smith and Seitzer 1992) Traditional public opinion scholars (Zaller 1992) utilize ideology as a means through which individuals make contact with elites. The definition I use allows for the examination of historical trends and changes in Black ideology not only at the elite level but within the larger community. Thus, Black ideology has been connected most directly to ideas and strategies of mass mobilization that have been focused through elites but have significantly arisen from discourse within the Black mass public.

3 I do not intend to make a sweeping indictment of rappers. However, the work of Snoop Doggy Dog, Brand Nubian, Ice Cube and a host of others all explicitly reject homosexuality or use anti-gay slogans in their lyrics. One Brand Nubian lyric states, "I ain't down with gays I don't understand their ways." This is just an example of a more tame expression of homophobia, within Black music, that on occasion advocates violence against gays and lesbians.

4 However, it also bears noting that the original origins of AIDS have often been placed by white scientists in Africa. The initial story of Africans contracting the disease through possible sexual contact with the Green monkey has never been proven but exists as the most credible transmission scenario. It is perfectly understandable that Blacks would question this hypothesis because of the flimsy evidence. Further, many like Frances Cress Welsing have developed conspiracy theories that call AIDS a form of biological warfare.

5 I recognize a split between Cultural and Revolutionary Nationalists. However, for the purpose of this paper, I will handle them as one and the same. Revolutionary Nationalists have at times been just as conservative as cultural Nationalists. Further, Revolutionary Nationalists also emphasize the need for autonomous Black institutions and encouraged whites to organize 'white communities.' Finally, the survey instrumentation used to measure Nationalism is not capable of distinguishing between the two types (Dawson 1997).

6 I argue that the primacy of 'race' and racism within Black Nationalism distinguish it from Black Conservatism. It will be demonstrated that they are similar when it comes to sexuality but that they are significantly different in many other aspects. This is both true of elites, who are often antagonistic, and of the mass public. Michael Dawson's research has demonstrated that Nationalism and Conservatism predict very different orientations on a myriad of different issues and are shaped by different demographics. Nationalists tend to be young and come from areas of concentrated poverty while this is not true for Conservatives (Dawson 1994).

7 An often forgotten past is the centrality of the Black church and activists like Bishop Turner in formulating Black Nationalist ideals.

8 Evans suggests that this comment was born out of the presence and activity of particular white women during the summer, but it still reflects a certain insensitivity that cannot be denied, even if it was tongue in cheek.

9 When Crouch uses the term gay or homosexual, he implicitly only refers to men. This convention is one that is all too familiar throughout society where lesbians are often 'invisible.'

10 The principal investigators were Ronald Brown of Wayne State University and Michael Dawson of the University of Chicago. The study was administered through the University of Chicago. The Russell Sage Foundation provided a grant for the collection of the data.

11 The principal investigator for CHSLS was Ed Laumann of the University of Chicago. The Ford Foundation provided the funding for the study that was conducted by the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago.

12 All independent variables coded 0-1.

13 All others use this response format unless noted to be "or."