Experiences of Bullying Among African American Male Adolescents and Their

Parents/Guardians

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploratory phenomenological study regarding experiences of

bullying among African American male adolescents (AAMAs) and their

parents/guardians. Given the population of interest, a critical framework was used. The

critical framework included critical race theory (CRT), Black feminist thought (BFT),

and altruism born of suffering (ABS). According to the 2015 data from the Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention, AAMAs in high school reported lower levels of bullying

victimization at school and online compared to all other student groups in their data. This

study was designed as a mixed-methods study with a strong qualitative component and a

supplementary quantitative portion. The sample included 16 AAMAs and one

parent/guardian per youth ($N = 32$).

The findings were organized into themes for the three areas of study: perceptions

of bullying (i.e., emotion, entertainment, fighting, structure, and home life), responses to

bullying (i.e., self-preservation, suffering, passivity, and standing up for other people),

and barriers/supports of prosocial active bystandership of bullying (i.e., barriers,

education, and taking action). The quantitative results indicated that all of the

participants observed bullying ($N = 32$), almost all of the participants had been bullied ($n = 29$) and a strong majority ($n = 25$) experienced racialized suffering. The results of a

matched pairs t-test of factor one of the Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) and

factor five the Bystander Intervention of Bullying and Racial Harassment Scale (BIBRS)

indicated these measures may not be a good fit for this population.

Keywords: adolescent, African American, bullying, experience, male, parent

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I thank God for the opportunities and privileges that led me to, and through, this study. I have never done anything alone, and I do not suppose I ever will.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

African American male adolescent: A person who identified as African American or Black, identified as male, and was between the ages of 13 and 19 years old at the time of contact with the researcher

Altruism born of suffering: A period of suffering followed by selfless acts

Black feminist thought: A set of ideas that draw attention to the prosocial contributions of women from the African Diaspora

Bully: A person, group, or institution that occupies the role of oppressor (throughout this study pains were taken to describe the role of bullying rather than affixing the label of bully)

Bullying: The abuse of interpersonal or structural power differential applied over time onto people or groups with less ability to respond within the context of the abuse

Bully-victim: A person who has been in the role of bully and has also been victimized by bullying

Bystander: A person who observes bullying from the outside (i.e., they are not the target, nor the aggressor)

Critical framework: The combination of critical race theory, black feminist thought, and altruism born of suffering that was used to explore the experiences of bullying among African American male adolescents and their parents/guardians

Critical race theory: A set of ideas that draw attention to institutional racism

Diffusion of responsibility: The idea that people are less likely to help in a situation where other people are passive bystanders

European American: This term was used interchangeably with the racial category White to create a parallel designation with the term African American

Facebook®: A social media website where people can post pictures, videos, and messages on the Internet

Home: A primary place of learning

Microaggressions: Insulting messages based upon group membership

Parents: This term was inclusive of guardians unless otherwise noted

Passive bystander: A person who witnesses a person being targeted by bullying, and did not intervene in any way

Phenomenological analysis: A qualitative methodology that focuses on perceptions

Pluralistic ignorance: When one person pretends not to notice something other people tend to follow this example

Prosocial active bystander: A person who witnesses a person being targeted by bullying and responds by attempting to provide assistance to the target/victim

Roasting: A form of aggressive verbal insults that may include rebuttals by the person who was the target of the insults

Structure: This term was used interchangeably with institutions and social systems

Target: A person or group who is/are identified as an object to be oppressed (this term was added to clarify the possibility that a person could be targeted but not experience negative symptoms as a result)

Victim: A person or group who is identified as an object to be oppressed and they also experience undesirable consequences as a result

Vine®: A website that allowed a person to post a short video on the Internet that

    continuously replays itself

White supremacy: A system of institutionalized discrimination that maintains

    racial/ethnic hierarchy

Youths: This term was used as a proxy for AAMAs

Youtube®: A website that allowed people to post videos onto the Internet

Chapter 1

Staub (2003) asserted that all human beings have seven basic needs: personal

security, positive identity, a sense of effectiveness, positive connections to other people,

autonomy from other people, comprehension of reality, and transcendence or spirituality

(p. 531). Unlike Maslow's (1971) hierarchy of needs, Staub's needs are not hierarchal.

Staub conceded that personal security may be a primary need and the need for self-

actualization may develop only with maturity. However, Staub asserted that most of the

basic human needs are manifested in infancy. Bullying as an act of aggression may

threaten several basic human needs at once. This study examined bullying from the

perspective of African American male adolescents (AAMAs) primarily and their

parents/guardians secondarily. The focus on AAMAs is primarily justified upon the

premise that little is known about their experiences of bullying. Understanding how

AAMAs experience bullying may be helpful to understanding their experiences as

victims/targets of bullying. Parents/guardians of AAMAs were selected as a secondary

sample to understand convergence with and divergence from the primary sample.

Norwegian community psychologist Dan Olweus (1978) established the scientific

basis for investigating bullying behaviors as a sub-type of aggression with high

prevalence, and real life consequences. Olweus (2012; 2013) has been instrumental in

defining bullying as a subset of aggressive behavior wherein a person in the role of bully

intentionally and repeatedly abuses another person who has less power. Prevalence rates

for bullying in the U.S. vary due to arguments about definitional differences (i.e., there is

disagreement regarding the definition of bullying) and frequency concerns (e.g., within

the last two weeks, within the last two months, within the last year, during secondary school). However, according to a U.S. sample of approximately 440,000 youths, 17.6% experienced verbal bullying in a school in a two-month time frame prior to the survey being administered (Olweus, 2013).

With one in every six children in the U.S. reporting being the recipient of verbal bullying in school (Olweus, 2013), it stands to reason that a much higher ratio of children observe bullying. Oh and Hazler (2009) surveyed 298 college students at a Midwest university in the U.S. and asked the participants to estimate the frequency they observed bullying during their middle school and high school years. Less than half of the participants in this study reported being a bully or a victim during secondary school, but 73% reported witnessing bullying at least twice a month and 10% reported witnessing bullying daily.

Jordan and Austin (2012) did a literature review on bullying and identified five types of bullying in the peer-reviewed literature. The types of bullying included: (a) physical (e.g. pushing), (b) verbal (e.g., name calling), (c) relational (e.g., excluding), (d) social aggression (e.g., gossip), and (e) cyberbullying (e.g., posting private information on the Internet without consent). These authors also identified four roles within bullying (a) bully—oppressor, (b) passive victim—oppressed, (c) bully victim—both oppressor and oppressed, and (d) bystander—witness. The available literature on bullying is focused on peer-to-peer interactions within the specific context of schools.

A number of studies have established that being a victim of bullying during childhood has a variety of short- and long-term negative consequences ranging from

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headaches to suicidal ideation; these studies also articulate negative health outcomes for people who occupied the role of bully during childhood (Copeland, Wolke, Angold, & Costello, 2013; Due et al., 2005; Klomeck et al., 2013). An emerging literature has started to articulate that there are also potential short and long term negative consequences to being a bystander of bullying (Rivers, 2012). For example, Casey, Storer, and Herrenkohl (2017) conducted an exploratory study focused on adolescent helping and bystander behavior in bullying and dating violence situations. The authors were concerned that male bystanders who endorsed physical confrontation and fighting as a helping strategy may escalate the consequences of bullying and dating violence.

Adolescents have received far less attention than their younger peers in regard to bullying interventions, despite the fact that Farrington and Ttofi's (2009) international systemic review revealed school-based bully interventions tend to be more effective with older children (i.e., interventions in secondary schools were more effective compared to interventions in elementary schools). However, high school students have received far less attention than their middle school counterparts who in turn have received less attention than their elementary school counterparts. In addition, anti-bullying interventions focused on peer mentoring and peer mediation have tended to show an increase in bullying rather than a decrease (Ttofi & Farrington, 2012). Interventions focused specifically on promoting prosocial active bystandership (PAB) have been shown to be effective (Gubin, 2007; Habib; 2007; Polanin, Espelage & Pigott, 2012). A PAB is a person observes distress and responds by providing assistance to the target/victim (Staub, 2003). PAB interventions have been primarily normed on European American

children, and there are no identified PAB studies with experimental or quasi-experimental designs.

Many of the assumptions that drove bullying inquiries neglected the ecological environments of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bullying inquiries often ignored or set aside the historical context and contemporary environments where bullying was investigated. Therefore, the focus on peer-to-peer aggression indicats a gap in the bullying literature with regard to bullying perpetrated by authority figures, institutions, and governments. There has been increased attention to bullying outside of the school context (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012) but this literature is focused on cyberbullying. Research on adolescent bullying in physical spaces outside of the school (e.g. homes, religious organizations, neighborhoods) is a key gap in the literature.

The rationale for a focus on AAMAs in particular is justified through the absence of specific study into the experiences of bullying among AAMAs and their parents. The academic literature regarding bullying experiences, abuse of power with African American victims, prosocial behavior, and the implications for the profession of social work was called upon as the empirical background for this study.

Bullying

Academic interest in bullying has increased substantially in recent history. A search for "bully," "bullying," or "bullied" in the PsychInfo database for the calendar year of 1976 yielded one peer-reviewed article. The same search in the PsychInfo database for the calendar year 2016 yielded 647 peer-reviewed articles. Bullying inquiry is becoming increasingly worldwide with recent samples being drawn from Asia (e.g.,

China, Pakistan, India), Europe (e.g. Norway, Sweden, Croatia), South America (e.g., Chile), Africa (e.g., South Africa), North America (e.g., United States, Canada), and Australia.

Due to the fact that a great deal of the research on bullying is investigated outside of the U.S., some of the literature below described non-U.S. samples. Some of the studies included below omitted racial information and analysis. Of the studies that included racial categories, most studies investigated bullying with multiple racial groups within a single study. The inter-racial approach allowed for comparison between racial groups, but this approach generally prohibited investigation into intra-racial diversity. These trends lead to superficial analysis in regard to the racial implications of the findings.

Prevalence and Consequences

Rates for bullying victimization among U.S. adolescents are not clear for multiple reasons. The first difficulty in understanding prevalence lies in how bullying is defined and measured. Some attempts at measuring bullying lack a definition, and were measured by one or two questions. An example of a two-question approach can be found in the nationally representative data collected by the Centers for Disease Control (2015) within the Prevention in the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System data set (YRBSS). The YRBSS questionnaire definition lacks language about a person who will not or cannot defend themselves. The YRBSS began with a single question on school bullying in 2009 (i.e., During the past 12 months, have you ever been bullied on school property?) and added a second question about online bullying in 2011 (During the past 12 months,

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have you ever been electronically bullied?–Include being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, Web sites, or texting). This reflects the relatively recent interest in bullying issues in the U.S. context, and the data should be interpreted with caution due to the issues outlined above. The 2015 YRBSS data set on the in-person bullying question for males in high school yielded a result of 15.8% reporting victimization within the past year with African American males reporting only 11.2% (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015).

Lower reporting on bullying victimization among African American males may be related to a particular resilience in this population. Patton, Miller, Garbarino, Gale, and Kornfeld (2016) conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 high-achieving AAMAs who were exposed to community violence and they found evidence of resilience in these participants (i.e., commitment to their education, emotional control, viewing difficulties as a challenge, and positive identity). On the other hand, when AAMAs experience bullying they may interpret it as something else (e.g., racism) which may superficially deflate the data (Smokowski, Cotter, Robertson, & Guo, 2013).

Evans, Smokowski, and Cotter (2014) collected data from a racially diverse sample of 2,246 middle school and high school students in North Carolina (29.1% American Indian, 26.5% European American, 23.78% African American, and 30.7% other). In this sample, Evans et al. found 59.44% reported no bullying involvement during a 3-year time period, 18.5% reported a single incident of being bullied, 11.87% reported being bullied twice in this period, 5.28% reported 3 victimizations, 3.17% reported 4 bullying victimizations, 1.03% reported 5 victimizations, and 17.7% reported

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6 or more bully victimizations. These findings indicated that certain students (17.7%) are bullied relatively frequently or that some students perceived bullying differently from their peers.

Smokowski et al. (2013) collected data from a racially diverse sample of 3,610 middle school students in the Southeastern U.S. to understand their experience with school hassles including bullying. Smokowski et al. discovered wide variability in reports from schools ranging from victimization rates of 11% to 38%. Smokowski et al. found that being male was positively correlated with higher rates of bully victimization and being African American was negatively correlated with bully victimization. This finding of lower victimization for African American students further validates the YRBSS (CDC, 2016) data. These authors discussed cultural resilience and failure to interpret racism as a bullying behavior as possible explanations.

Bullying among adolescent males had serious short-term and long-term consequences for both victims and perpetrators. Male adolescent bullying victims in the U.S. reported the second highest levels of short-term physical and psychological symptoms in comparison with 27 nationally representative samples throughout Europe and the Middle East (Due et al., 2005). Copeland, Wolke, Angold, and Costello (2013) documented the psychiatric outcomes for U.S. adults who were bullied between the ages of 9 and 16. They found that childhood victims and perpetrators of bullying had elevated mental health challenges (e.g., significant mood dysregulation); those who occupied both roles during childhood reported the most difficulty. Klomek et al. (2013) collected data from high school students in the U.S. and compared bullying-involved youths with

suicidal ideation to youths with suicidal ideation only. The youths who reported bullying

others and suicidal ideation had higher levels of suicidal ideation at baseline and were

more functionally impaired at 2-year follow-up when compared to those youths who

reported suicidal ideation without bullying involvement.

Evans et al. (2014) found a dose relationship between bully victimization and

three psychosocial variables of anxiety symptoms, depressive symptoms, and aggressive

behavior. For each increasing report of bully victimization from zero incidents in three

years to six incidents in three years, Evans et al. found a linear upward trend for all three

psychosocial variables. The more students were bullied, the higher the probability that

they experienced anxiety, depression, aggression, or all three. When students and

teachers failed to interrupt bullying encounters the victim tended to associate this as a

lack of teacher and peer support. Although there were high percentages of European

American and African American students in the sample, both groups were significantly

underrepresented in the data based upon the sampling frame. This study provided some

clarification regarding the cumulative impact bullying incidents can have in the lives of

adolescents.

In a large sample from 52 Maryland high schools ($N = 16,302$: European

American 62.2%; African American 37.8%) participants reported their experiences with

bullying encounters, gangs, and drugs (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, Goldweber, & Johnson,

2013). In this sample males were significantly more likely than females to be gang

affiliated, to carry weapons, have academic problems, and have substance abuse

problems. Participants in this study who regularly occupied both bully and victim roles

were found to be particularly vulnerable to gang involvement (i.e., 12 times as likely) and weapon carrying (i.e., 13 times as likely) compared to students who reported low bully involvement across roles. European American students in this sample were significantly more likely to be truant, to use alcohol, and to smoke cigarettes compared to the African American students. African American students were more likely than the European American students to have been in a gang, to have poor grades, and to have smoked marijuana compared to their European American counterparts. Older students (17-21 years old) in this sample were more likely to have gang experience, carry a weapon, receive poor grades, and smoke cigarettes compared to the younger students (12-16 years old). In summary, a 17-year-old European American male who has been in a gang and who has been in the role of bully and victim may require different supports than a 13-year-old African American male who has not been in a gang and who has been victimized by bullying. These authors did not discuss racism as a factor in gang affiliation or weapon carrying.

The specific consequences and dynamics of bullying for AAMAs are often challenging to sort out due to comparative designs that do not allow for analysis of diversity among AAMAs. Fitzpatrick, Dulin, and Piko (2010) sampled adolescents only (5th-12th grade), African American youths exclusively, and provided an analysis by gender. These authors came to the conclusion that race comparative designs are problematic for populations that are typically underrepresented in the data such as AAMAs. This sample of 1,542 low-income African American youths was used to isolate how perpetrating and victimization bully roles interact with depressive symptomatology.

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The authors found bully involvement in both perpetrator and victim roles correlated with heightened depressive symptomatology compared to students who reported no bully involvement. Fitzpatrick et al. found near clinical levels of depression across bully-involvement roles. These authors also reported self-esteem as a protective factor for AAMAs who are not directly involved in bullying encounters. Fitzpatrick et al. call for race-specific research in regard to discovering risk and protective factors.

Williams and Peguero (2013) examined nationally representative data from a U.S. sample of 9,590 high school students in an attempt to answer a question about the impact of race/ethnicity on academic achievement. The findings indicated that bully victimization was correlated with lowered grade point average by the 12th grade when family background and school resources were controlled for. This sample found AAMAs were significantly less likely than Asian, Latino/a, and European American students to report bullying victimization. However, high achievement served as a protective factor for other racial groups but this was a risk factor for AAMAs. High academic achievement for AAMAs suggests a threat to the stereotype of racial inferiority of AAMAs (Sue, 2010) and indicated there may be risks for an AAMA seeking to fight this stereotype.

The specific impact of race-focused bullying is an emerging area within bullying research. Based upon a survey of 3, 305 U.S. secondary students who had been victimized by bullying at least twice a month Mendez, Bauman, Sulkowski, Davis, and Nixon (2016) reported that victims of race-focused bullying were 1.4 times more likely to experience a severe emotional impact from bullying compared to bullying that was not

focused on race. These authors found that race-focused bullying was manifested through name calling, threats, and being hurt physically. Social exclusion and rumor spreading were not significant for race focused bullying.

In a study of primarily European American adolescents ($N = 256$) the authors (Mulvey, Palmer, & Abrams, 2016) found that older adolescents (i.e., 10th grade students) endorsed race-based humor as more acceptable compared to the younger students (i.e., 8th grade students). These older students also expected less intervention during race-focused humor compared to the younger students. This study did not explore race-focused humor as an element of bullying, but it did find that one of the key difficulties of challenging race-focused humor is the fear of being excluded from the group as a result of challenging the humor.

Another study (Garnett et al., 2014) of high school students ($N = 965$) used a latent class analysis and found attributes of discrimination and bullying co-occurring. This sample was predominately non-Hispanic Black (45%) and Hispanic (29%). More than half of these students had been discriminated against in the past year, and 11% had been bullied or physically assaulted during that period. Among those who had been discriminated against 33% experienced race-focused discrimination. Race-focused bullying and race-focused discrimination may be difficult to untangle. The current study was focused on bullying generally, because race-focused bullying is one aspect of bullying. The hope for this study was based upon the premise that little is known about how AAMAs experience bullying, and a focus on race-based bullying may have unnecessarily limited the findings. Therefore, the emerging literature on race-focused

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bullying is helpful for understanding the experiences of AAMAs, but a broader focus was justified because of gaps in the literature about how this specific group of youths experience bullying.

In summary, rates of bullying victimization of adolescent males have a wide range (Smokowski et al., 2013), and AAMAs tend to report lower levels of bully victimization compared to other youths (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Bullying has been associated with mental health disorders, suicide, substance use, and aggressive behavior (Bradshaw et al., 2013; Evans et al., 2014). AAMAs who are involved in bullying in the victim or perpetrator role appear to experience higher levels of depressive symptoms comparative to AAMAs who do not report being in one of these roles (Fitzpatrick et al., 2010). High academic performance appeared to be a risk factor of bullying for AAMAs (Williams & Peguero, 2013), and this may have been related to a stereotype violation (Sue, 2010). Race-focused bullying may increase the emotional consequences of bullying experiences among AAMAs (Mendez et al., 2016). The prevalence and consequences for AAMAs in a bullying role are understudied, but the available evidence suggested specific attention to this group may be warranted.

Interventions

Both the Olweus (2013) and the YRBSS data (Centers for Disease Control, 2015) are focused solely on bullying in the school context. School-based intervention evaluations focus on the school environment, parent involvement, peer interaction, and teacher training (Jordan & Austin, 2012; Olweus, 2013; Ttofi & Farrington, 2012). The study of adolescent bully involvement has internationally been hyper-focused on the

school context, leaving room for inquiries into other contexts (e.g., religious organizations, sports, commerce, leisure). This study is not focused on the specific context of schools.

Olweus (2013) indicated that power differential is the most important criterion in differentiating bullying from other forms of violence. Peer-to-peer bullying is the framework bullying literature has been developed under (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Olweus, 2013) but this study is designed to investigate how AAMAs and their parents/guardians experience bullying beyond the dominant peer-to-peer paradigm. The discerning power differential in peer-to-peer bullying is more challenging than identifying bullying where there is clear positional power. For example, a teacher has more positional power than a student. Bullying interventions have typically neglected positional power and this seemed to be a key gap in the current intervention literature.

The YRBSS (Centers for Disease Control, 2015) now includes a question in regard to cyberbullying. Despite an emerging literature in this area, this study devotes little attention to this particular manifestation. In the YRBSS data only 6.9% of AAMAs reported being cyberbullied. Furthermore, Olweus (2013) uses data he has collected in Norway and in the U.S. ($N = 450,490$) to argue that cyberbullying victims are not unique victims. Olweus demonstrated that 88-93% of cyberbullying victims are also victimized in traditional ways. One of the reasons the construct of cyberbullying is problematic is the foundational idea of power differential. In Olweus's treatment of this issue, he emphasizes that bullying is a particular form of aggression where the victims are unable to defend themselves due to a power differential of some kind (i.e., dual aggression is not

bullying). Olweus was concerned that the type of aggression often put forward as cyberbullying failed to meet the criteria for bullying encounters, and he warned against diverting funding from traditional bullying to cyberbullying. Olweus fears that diverting funding to address cyberbullying will hinder the ability of schools to provide evidence-informed interventions for traditional bullying. Cyberbullying has its own set of negative consequences, but the emphasis of this study will primarily center on bullying definitions provided by the participants.

A recent international review of controlled trials on bullying interventions found U.S. samples were less likely to reduce bullying compared to samples collected outside of the U.S. (Evans et al., 2014). Evans et al. identified 32 peer-reviewed articles on recent controlled trials (15 U.S. samples compared to 17 non-U.S. samples) that examined 24 bullying interventions. They reported that of the 27 studies that examined reductions in bullying victimization, 18 studies reported a significant reduction in bullying victimization for children in the treatment group with one study reporting mixed results. However, six of the eight controlled trials that reported non-significant results were samples collected in the United States. The study with mixed results was also a U.S. sample. These findings are consistent with Farrington and Ttofi's (2009) review of controlled trials of anti-bullying interventions. Evans et al.'s (2014) review revealed that attempting to reduce bullying victimization tended to be more effective than an attempt to reduce bullying perpetration (e.g., approaches that focused on adult supervision to reduce victimization were more effective than approaches focused on sanctions or rehabilitation for the person in the role of bully). The authors of the review cite low social welfare

spending in the U.S. and recommend a culturally-targeted and culturally-focused approach for addressing bullying in the U.S. context. Culturally-targeted and culturally-focused approaches require cultural understanding. This study is a beginning step to address this gap for AAMAs specifically.

A two-year controlled study of an anti-bullying intervention with 417 African American middle school students in a southern U.S. state found no statistical difference between the treatment and the control groups (Estell, Farmer, & Cairns, 2007). In this African American specific sample, AAMAs were 2.3 times as likely to fill the role of bully compared to their female counterparts. This sample yielded bully victimization rates among AAMAs that were nearly double that of the YRBSS (Centers for Disease Control, 2015) data with 19.9% reporting bully victimization. These findings give rise to another possibility about the significantly lower rates of bully victimization of AAMAs in the YRBSS data. Many AAMAs in the U.S. attend schools where the majority of the student body is European American. It may be that AAMAs in predominantly White schools are less often victims of bullying because of social segregation, and AAMAs become resilient to bullying due to racial solidarity (Tatum, 1997/2003). There is no indication that the intervention used in the Estell et al. (2007) study was designed to be culturally-responsive to the participants. The intervention group may not have better outcomes because care may not have been taken in the first place to learn how bullying manifests itself in the lives of African American youths and what they would like to see done about it. This study may help to partially address this gap in the literature by investigating how AAMAs understand and experience bullying.

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Gubin (2007) reported on a controlled study of an intervention called Training Active Bystanders (TAB) that took place during the 2006-2007 school years. The intervention was delivered in 30 classrooms spread across four school districts in the Northeastern U.S. Habib (2007) provided information about the qualitative findings in a separate report. The intervention consisted of 12 hours of training and was co-facilitated by students, volunteers, and police officers (Habib, 2007). Simply stated, the results reported by Habib and Gubin on TAB are promising in terms of decreasing bully victimization, decreasing witnessing of bullying, and lower levels of bullying. These studies included descriptive information about race and gender but did not report differences across these variables in terms of the effectiveness with one group compared to another. While this intervention took place there was a decrease of prosocial active bystandership (PAB) in both the control and treatment groups suggesting the model was ineffective in achieving its primary objective (Gubin, 2007). Reported levels of PAB could be related to an initial social desirability bias followed by a more honest assessment of their behaviors after the intervention, but this explanation fails to explain why PAB decreased in the control schools.

Bystandership

For the purpose of this study a bystander is defined as a person who is in proximity of bullying and recognizes the need for intervention. Bystanding is presented here as one aspect of bullying experience. The study of bystandership behavior is strongly associated with the 1964 stabbing death of Kitty Genovese; 37 witnesses reportedly failed to come to her aid despite a prolonged opportunity to intervene

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(Nickerson, Aloe, Livingston, & Feeley, 2014). Genovese's death sparked a line of scientific inquiry about bystander apathy in the face of other peoples' suffering. The literature on bystandership is generally focused on measuring passivity in sexual assault situations where adults are present but do not obviously take action to interrupt the assault (Banyard, 2008; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; Gidycz, Orchowski, & Berkowitz, 2011). Bystandership is often understood as a person who is not directly involved in a situation and generally stays outside of the interaction (i.e., passive bystandership).

In the Genovese case, the passivity of witnesses has been explained through pluralistic ignorance and diffusion of responsibility, and has been referred to as the bystander effect (Nickerson et al., 2014). Latané and Darley (1970) describe pluralistic ignorance as a situation where a group of bystanders pretend not to notice suffering. Diffusion of responsibility adds to pluralistic ignorance by diluting the perceived accountability of a bystander so as to allow a person not to feel responsible because of the presence of other potential actors who are also passive in the situation (Latané & Darley, 1970). This passivity of witnesses was documented through a series of observational experiments in scientific laboratories (Staub, 2003).

The bystander effect has come to be understood as increased passivity in a situation involving other passive observers accompanied by a decrease in personal responsibility due to the inaction of other people (Nickerson et al., 2014). A subset of bystandership literature has identified the role of bystanding in bullying situations. Other people often observe bullying episodes; therefore, the bystander effect may hinder a

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prosocial response. On the other hand, Staub (2003, 2015) and others (Latané & Darley, 1970) have put forth evidence that supports the bystander effect working in reverse (i.e., PABs can promote the prosocial behavior of others around them). In either case, bystandership behavior has been shown to influence bullying experiences (Rivers, 2012; Staub, 2003; Staub, 2015). This study assumed that a bystander who joins in the bullying role has left bystanding behind. Two types of bystanding were explored in this study: passive bystanding and PAB.

Passive Bystandership

Rivers (2012) reported that students who occupy the roles of witness and bully perpetrator (i.e., bully confederates) are significantly more likely to use alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs when compared to youths who report no role in bullying experiences. Rivers pointed to higher levels of suicidal ideation among isolates who witness but stay away from the bullying experience. Rivers also reported a variety of problems for co-victims including early exit from school. These findings pointed to morbidity for passive bystanders.

Rivers (2012) includes a table that outlines seven types of bystander behavior described in bullying literature. Bystander types include: assistant (vacillates between observer and bully roles), abdicator (reinforces bully role without taking the direct bully role), defender (PAB), co-victims (vacillates between victim and observer roles), isolates (avoidant), sham (i.e., political reasons for engaging in bully role or passive observation role), and bully-victim-witness (confederates). The focus on passivity as the primary bystander mechanism in bullying literature mirrors the focus on passivity found in the

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sexual assault literature.

Of these passive bystanding types, Rivers (2012) primarily focuses on the literature regarding co-victims, isolates, and confederates. His focus on these sub-types of passive bystanding is based upon the evidence that these roles are particularly problematic in terms of the negative impact these roles have been shown to have on the bystanding actors. Co-victims tend to demonstrate higher levels of post-traumatic acting out, revenge, negative life attitudes, and early exits from school (Twemlow, Fonagy, & Sacco, 2004). Isolates tend to demonstrate higher levels of suicidality and internalized hostility (Samivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996; Twemlow et al., 2004). Confederates tend to embrace violence against others and have higher rates of substance use compared to their peers in other passive bystandership roles (Samivalli et al., 1996; Twemlow et al., 2004). The consequences articulated in this bystander literature reinforce the findings from studies regarding the harms of direct bully involvement for those in the bully and victim roles.

In a study conducted with Belchertown schools in Massachusetts, Staub and Spielman (2003) found levels of passive bystanding (24%) to be very similar to prosocial active bystanding (PAB) (26%) within bullying experiences. The study was conducted with a non-probability sample of third through 12th graders. Self-reports of PAB may be inflated due to social desirability bias. Increasing PAB behavior was associated with increasing positive attitudes and behaviors about school and life. Information about the size of the sample is not available and therefore these findings should be held tentatively.

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Staub, Fellner, Berry, and Morange (2003) found 51% of middle school students and 71% of high school students reported being a witness of at least one bullying experience in the two weeks previous to the study. Staub et al. (2003) found PAB to be reciprocal (i.e., as students received PAB from others they were significantly more likely to be an active bystander for someone else). Passive bystandership is also reciprocal. Students who are not receiving this type of support may also lack the skills to effectively interrupt a bullying experience. Fifty-five percent of bully victims reported that an adult passively observed the last time they were bullied. Sixty-eight percent of bully-victims reported that a peer passively observed the last time they were bullied. Adolescents were significantly more likely than adults to passively observe bullying experiences (Staub et al., 2003). With each passing year in school, teachers and peers are more likely to passively observe bullying with a more precipitous increase in passivity for teachers (Staub et al., 2003). Teachers and students alike may be less inclined to support a senior who is victimized by bullying than a freshman similarly victimized because of the assumption that seniors are more equipped than freshmen to fend for themselves. Another possibility is that teachers may fear a senior more than a freshman based upon size, strength, or influence.

Bullying can also take place across species, and humans can be bystanders of this type of bullying as well. Arluke (2012) conducted ethnographic interviews with 25 late adolescents to learn about their experiences in witnessing animal abuse. These interviews predominantly documented passive bystandership where the interviewee was troubled by the experience but seldom acted in favor of the animal being abused. The

participants articulated two main concerns that kept them from intervening. The first

concern was the fear of being teased or labeled by their peers. This first concern is

highlighted in Latané and Darley's (1970) explanation of social norms and the desire to

avoid the attention of an aggressive person. Becoming a victim of an aggressive person

has been articulated in bullying literature as a concern for bystanders with less physical

strength than the person in the role of bully (Olweus, 1978). The second concern for

Arluke's participants was the value of staying out of other people's business. This value

seemed to trump their own discomfort with the events they were witnessing. The passive

bystandership of these adolescents provided a concrete example of youths who

interpreted a situation as problematic, but they either lacked the skill or the will power to

challenge the situation. Twenty-four of the 25 participants in Arluke's study were

European American and the race of the final participant was not provided, so the

application to AAMAs may be substantially limited based upon the potential for cultural

differences in behavior. One of the primary lessons of Arluke's study was to

problematize inaction in the face of obvious suffering.

Prosocial Active Bystandership (PAB)

In contrast to the paradigm of bystandership as a passive or perpetrating activity,

PAB is an emancipatory possibility. The act of defending, upholding, or fostering the

fundamental human needs of another person was described in this study as PAB. PAB is

a primary behavior for the deconstruction, de-escalation, and prevention of impending

violence (Staub, 2011). In a controlled study of 389 undergraduates, Banyard (2008)

found that increased knowledge of sexual assault and perceived personal efficacy were

both positively correlated with higher rates of prosocial intervention. The importance of personal efficacy in interrupting bullying experiences was an important predictor of PAB in bullying in Nickerson et al.'s (2014) investigation of the bystander model. Banyard et al., (2004) found rates of prosocial bystandership to be positively correlated with being female and posited that males may need different skills and bystander safety plans. Additionally, males may show a difference in values than their female counterparts, and males may need more support than females in order to engage in PAB. Banyard et al. (2004) assert that attempts to promote prosocial bystandership in sexual assault prevention should be informed by an attempt to promote health, increase awareness of the problem, and provoke bystanders to take responsibility for the problem. These principles are consistent with anti-bullying interventions (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Olweus, 2013).

Through personal correspondence with Staub, he directed the researcher to his substantive chapters on PAB as it applies to bullying experiences (Staub et al., 2003; Staub & Spielman, 2003). These chapters outline the trend for how PAB decreases over time (80% in third-graders compared to less than 30% for 12th-graders). This reported reduction in prosocial behavior was accompanied by a trend for older students to increase in anti-social behavior such as joining the bully or laughing at the person being bullied (Staub et al., 2003). Mores (particular to adolescence) that discourage helping behavior and reward violent behavior may partially explain this increase in anti-social behavior. Staub et al. (2003) claim that training students to become active bystanders in bullying experiences is a strategy that can counter anti-social norms and thus "improve the lives of

all students" as they come to "feel better about themselves" and "become more caring people through their actions as active bystanders" (p. 243).

In Estonia, 682 seventh graders whose mean age was 13.02 were shown a video of two boys throwing a backpack while a smaller boy ran back and forth trying to retrieve the backpack—a woman was in the background speaking on the telephone (Pozzoli & Gini, 2013). Ninety percent of this Estonian sample of seventh graders expressed they would do something to interrupt this situation if they saw something similar although many of the students did not have a specific plan. These students may not be able to interrupt a bullying situation because they lack the knowledge about what they should do. Even if the students know what to say or do and desire to help they may lack the confidence and skill to take action in favor of the victimized. These students may be substantially different from AAMAs in the U.S. but the lesson here is that the intention to intervene did not always translate into the capacity to carry out a plan.

Gini, Albiero, Beneiil, and Alto (2008) surveyed 294 early adolescents in Italy who were identified by their peers as either passive bystanders or PABs in bullying experiences. Gini et al. hypothesized that the PABs would have higher empathetic responses and have higher self-efficacy. These authors found that both active and passive bystanders had elevated empathy scores but only the PABs had high self-efficacy scores. It is unclear if self-efficacy precedes PAB or if self-efficacy is one outcome of PAB.

As introduced earlier in this chapter, Oh and Hazler (2009) collected data from a sample of 298 undergraduates in the Midwestern U.S. to gather retrospective accounts about bullying experiences in middle school and high school. Oh and Hazler found 31%

of their sample took on the role of PAB at some point during their secondary school experience. While half of this sample denied direct bully involvement (i.e., bully or bullied roles) a strong majority of the sample (73%) reported witnessing bullying at least twice a month. Ten percent of this sample reported seeing bullying on a daily basis. In this sample, females were significantly more likely than males to serve in the role of defender or PAB. These authors also found that both frequency of noticing bullying and closeness to the person in the bully role were negatively correlated with PAB. Oh and Hazler recommend gender-specific studies to learn how males and females experience PAB differently. This sample was disproportionately female (89%) and European American (93%). The findings of this study may not generalize to AAMAs.

Cappadocia, Pepler, Cummings, and Craig (2012) conducted a study with adolescent residential summer camp participants in Canada. The sample was relatively small $(N = 108)$ with 64 boys in the sample. The camp had explicit anti-bullying policies, a comprehensive bullying prevention curriculum, and camp staffers were educated in bully intervention. Among the participants 68% agreed with the statement, "no one deserves to be bullied." Cappadocia et al. did not report pre-test scores and their article did not clearly articulate if a pretest was administered regarding bystander interventions. However, at post-test 80% of the campers reported intervening in the last bully encounter they observed. Empathy and attitudes about bullying predicted PAB intervention in bullying experiences for adolescent boys in this sample. These results may be specific to residential camp settings in Canada but the results are encouraging in regard to understanding the conditions that may increase PAB among adolescent males.

The conditions that enhance PAB may include social settings that explicitly discourage bullying, implicitly model defending bully victims, and framing bullying as a community problem rather than interpersonal violence.

Abbot and Cameron (2014) surveyed 855 early adolescents in regard to a scenario involving immigrant-based name-calling. These authors aimed to learn about the role of contact theory, empathy, cultural openness, and in-group bias in regard to intention to intervene in bullying experiences. They found an indirect effect on PAB in bullying encounters through their variables of empathy, cultural openness, and in-group bias. The strongest predictor of an intention to intervene in this specific bullying scenario was cultural openness as measured by an item about the participant's interest in immigrants along a four-point Likert scale. Any construct measured by a single question must be held tentatively. Nevertheless, AAMAs who demonstrate cultural openness may be more likely to engage in PAB for those outside their social in-group.

Experiences of Bullying Among AAMAs

There is a lack of academic literature available to inform social work practitioners, administrators, and policymakers about bullying among adolescents. There is an especially large gap in regard to the unique experiences of bullying among AAMAs. In fact, the only literature that can reasonably be used to highlight this experience is drawn from studies with predominantly non-African American samples. There was no identified literature about AAMA parental experiences of bullying or bystandership. This is particularly problematic for social work because it undermines the ability of social workers to utilize a strengths-based, research-informed, and racially-responsive approach

in working with AAMAs and their parents to address issues of bullying.

The AAMA and parental experience is underrepresented or unreported in almost every study of bullying in the United States. The studies on bullying and bystandership are predominately samples with multiple genders and races. There are a small handful of studies on bullying or bystandership disaggregated by race (Fitzpatrick et al., 2010; Gibson & Haight, 2013; Patton, Hong, Williams, & Allen-Mears, 2013) or gender (Miller et al., 2012; Miller et al., 2013) but there are no identified studies on these topics with a focus solely on the experiences of AAMAs. A mono-racial and mono-gender approach was utilized in this study as a strategy to employ a phenomenological approach to understanding the experiences of bullying among AAMAs and their parents/guardians.

The study of passive bystanders and PABs has likewise been studied in race- and gender-comparative designs. There are no identified studies strictly looking to understand bystander behaviors of AAMAs. There was some information about bystanding of African American males in their second year of college or higher in regard sexual violence encounters. In a cross sectional study of 232 African American and European American college students, Brown, Banyard, and Moynihan (2014) found that African American males valued the potential reactions of their peers more than other groups of comparison (i.e., European American males, European American females, African American females). This finding was evidenced by their report of passive bystandership when they perceived their peers would not support them. This finding was reversed when African American males perceived that their peers would be supportive of speaking against violence towards women, reporting a significantly lower amount of

missed opportunities compared to the other groups when they perceived they would be supported by their peers. Given that this finding was not found in first year African American male college students, this finding may not generalize to middle school and high school students. This finding may be specific to gender-based violence. On the other hand, if this finding did have applicability for AAMAs it will be interesting to learn if peer support is an important component for AAMAs who participate in passive observation or PAB in bullying experiences.

Current context. This study was conducted at a time when awareness of violence against AAMAs was particularly high. The police killings of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, OH in 2014, and 18-year-old Michael Brown in Fergusson, MO in 2014 (Juzwiak & Chan, 2014, December 8) took place two years before the data for this study were collected. Several other high profile police killings of African American men and women fueled public awareness of the violence against AAMAs. As this study concluded mass media outlets were beginning to refer to this awareness as the global Black Lives Matter Movement (Tharoor, 2016, July 12). Additionally, the most recent U.S. data indicated that homicide was the leading cause of death for AAMAs between the ages of 14 and 19 (CDC, 2015). This study sought to expand the ecological lens of bullying to include historical oppression, contemporary structural racism, and to explore the experiences of AAMAs and their parents within this context.

Research Questions

The literature above led to three research questions. The first question focused on perceptions of bullying. How do AAMAs and their parents/guardians perceive bullying?

This question was raised because of the lack of literature available to understand the experiences of this population. The second question related to responses to bullying. How do AAMAs and their parents/guardians respond to bullying? This question was raised in attempt to understand if participant responses may be related to lower rates of bully victimization and possible experiences of PAB. The third question was related to reflections related to experiences with bullying. What reflections have AAMAs and their parents gleaned from their experiences with bullying? This question was used to solicit solutions to the problem of bullying from the perspective of participants.

Implications for Social Work

The NASW *Code of Ethics* states that "social workers challenge social injustice" (2008, p. 5). This study of AAMA and parental experiences of bullying may: (a) inform social workers how a population disproportionately served in social work experiences and responds to bullying, (b) challenge the negative socially unjust narrative of AAMAs, and (c) build a research agenda about how bullying is perceived by AAMAs and their parents. African American families have a disproportionate interface with social workers and social service agencies due to institutional racism, higher rates of poverty, and historical trauma (Dominelli, 2008). Although males are not typically oppressed on the basis of their gender, African American males in particular have been targeted and stereotyped as dangerous (Sue, 2010). African American males have been systematically detained, labeled felons, and stripped of their voting rights (Alexander, 2012). Researching AAMA's experiences of bullying may help to counteract social workers' negative biases against AAMAs and promote what Gilbert, Harvey, and Belgrave (2009)

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call evidenced-based Afrocentric interventions in social work practice. This study has implications for exploring the intersection of bullying and institutional racism.

This study was founded on the desire to enhance the well-being of AAMAs and their parents through crafting a more responsible and realistic narrative about the lives of AAMAs. This study may help social workers to understand how AAMAs meet their basic human needs through PAB, and this may in turn inform social workers in regard to the resilience within this population. In addition, this study may assist helping professionals and social scientists to understand strategies to empower vulnerable and oppressed people, including AAMAs who experience bullying. This study was designed to simultaneously document the experiences of bullying among AAMAs and their parents, while also seeking to inform social workers to be more effective in responding to the human needs that are brought to their professional attention. As the scientific community better understands how bullying is experienced in specific cultural spaces by specific individuals and groups, social workers may be able to design interventions crafted to respond to specific community contexts.

This study was designed to investigate the experiences of AAMAs who are vulnerable to becoming victims of violence, institutional discrimination, and interpersonal racism (Allen, 2010; Gibson & Haight, 2013). Despite these risks—and potentially because of these risks—the AAMAs in this study may provide insight into how social workers can improve their interactions with AAMAs. The preamble of the NASW *Code of Ethics* (2008) states:

> The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-
> being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention

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to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. (p. 1)

The goal of this study was to learn how AAMAs and their parents experience and respond to bullying.

Scholars within psychology (e.g., Olweus, Staub) and psychiatry (e.g., Copeland, Klomek) led the way towards a scientific understanding of bullying. Educators (e.g., Farmer, Estell) and criminologists (e.g., Farrington, Ttofi) have also published extensive work on bullying among adolescents. There are only a handful of researchers who study adolescent bullying problems in social work (e.g., Evans, Smokowski). The lack of attention to adolescent bullying in social work literature may be due to a dearth of social workers in secondary schools, the general lack of focus regarding adolescent bullying, and a relative lack of success in applying anti-bullying interventions with adolescents in the U.S. context. This study may help to inform social workers who practice in school settings. There is potential that this study may bring broader attention to the need for race-specific approaches to bullying.

Policy

As of April 6, 2017, there was no federal law in the U.S. to provide specific protection from bullying. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects Americans against certain types of harassment but bullying was not specifically included. In the U.S., bullying was dealt with at a state level with some states having more comprehensive protection from bullying in schools than others. Forty-one of the 50 U.S. states have both model policies and laws in place to address bullying, although the definition of bullying vastly varies from state to state (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). The major

shortfall of many state policies is that these policies tend to be one-dimensional (i.e.,

punishment for the perpetrator). Many state policies ignore prevention, fail to provide

treatment for perpetrators, and fail to fund the provisions outlined in the law.

This study calls attention to two major policy issues, and both issues are aimed at

bullying prevention. The first issue was the need to address anti-bullying policy as a

human rights issue, specifically to assure that those labeled bullies or criminals are not

actually PABs whose actions are misperceived and misrepresented due to cultural norms.

People might be deterred from intervention when they perceive their actions could be

misconstrued, or if their intervention may present a risk to themselves (Staub, 2003). The

laws and policy of any government should encourage its citizens, as a matter of human

rights, to combat bullying behavior wherever it occurs even if this means challenging

those with positional power.

With AAMAs in particular, we see high levels of school discipline and

incarceration, but it is possible that some of these AAMAs get into trouble because they

are involving themselves in a fight for social justice and their behaviors are not yet

protected under the law (Alexander, 2012). This study serves as a first step to explore the

experiences of AAMAs who become aware of bullying.

The second policy issue is the need for culturally grounded and gender informed

anti-bullying policy. It is important that anti-bullying policy is culturally responsive

because of the heterogeneity of the U.S. population. Investigations of bullying

interventions have widely assumed that bullying is a universal concept that is understood

similarly across cultures. One of the inherent flaws to this reasoning relates to the unique

history, beliefs, conventions, and languages of Americans. Additionally, bullying is experienced differently across the gender continuum and anti-bullying policy should privilege the deconstruction of power differential. If Olweus (2013) is correct, the abusive application of power differential is the key construct of bullying. Therefore, specific care should be taken to privilege the perspectives of marginalized and oppressed people when crafting anti-bullying policies.

Practice

A practice brief on bullying (NASW Practice Update, 2010) stated that social workers should do the following: (a) work to reduce labeling students as bullies or victims, (b) work with students individually to offer support and redirection, (c) provide training to teachers about the warning signs of bullying, and (d) work toward staff-student connectedness. As long as perpetrators of bullying behavior are made out to be villains and victims are portrayed as helpless, we will fail in providing the interventions and services necessary to support all the involved parties including bystanders.

The second recommendation was supported by subsequent research that documented that peer mediation is associated with increased levels of bullying (Ttofi & Farrington, 2012). This recommendation should be viewed narrowly as to the types of interventions that were found to be problematic. As documented above, training active bystanders (TAB) has been linked to a decrease in bullying victimization (Gubin, 2007; Habib, 2007).

The third recommendation was important but incomplete. Training teachers about warning signs may help. However, teacher job performance should be linked with

intervention skills in bullying situations (Olweus, 2013). Students must learn that their teachers are willing to participate in PAB and that bullying of any sort will be interrupted and challenged by the adults around them.

The final recommendation to support and enhance staff-student connectedness is most likely to be achieved in an environment where students can expect the adults to set appropriate and firm boundaries and carry out discipline that addresses the issue at hand without excess (Vincent, Tobin, Hawken, & Frank, 2012). Adolescence is a period of development defined by differentiation from both childhood and adulthood. Adolescents learn to transition from childhood into adulthood through observing the adults in their environments. If adolescents observe faculty and staff setting firm but fair boundaries, they may be more likely to feel connected to the faculty.

The above recommendations for social workers excluded a call for social workers to learn from the unique strengths of students. The premise of this study is rooted in the belief that AAMAs and their parents can teach social workers important lessons about how they experience bullying. Understanding the unique resilience among AAMAs may assist social workers to engage in culturally responsive ways.

By extending the focus of this study beyond the walls of the school, this study honors the ecological focus of social work in regard to bullying-involved adolescents. Bullying problems are not limited to the school context (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Power differentials in bullying are not limited to peer-to-peer interactions (e.g., teacher to adolescent, police to adolescent). PAB applies to a variety of helping situations (Staub, 2003). The helping behaviors of AAMAs are not limited to bullying experiences in a

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school context, so limiting this study to that setting was not desirable.

Social Work Education

Social work educators and researchers are the gatekeepers of the profession, and as such have tremendous responsibility to assure new social workers have the knowledge and skills they need to be effective helpers to people who are poor and oppressed. Evidenced-based interventions and theories are often based largely upon European American samples. The mantra of evidence-based practice required social workers to use the best information available when making referrals, doing assessments, or providing treatment (Gambrill, 1999). The challenge for social work educators is to assure that students are educated about the extent that particular interventions were designed and tested with particular populations. This study adds to the existing knowledge base by providing social workers with information about how AAMAs and their parents/guardians perceive and respond to bullying.

Gilbert et al. (2009) summarized Afrocentric interventions in social work that are evidenced-based or promising in terms of working with African American youths. The Afrocentric interventions explored by Gilbert et al. took an African concept or practice as the foundation and built the intervention for a specific problem around this foundation. This is a fundamentally different approach compared to interventions that are designed through an understanding of a particular problem. One intervention used the concept Nguzo Saba promoting the resiliency and self-determination of African-descended people. The seven principles of Nguzo Saba (in English then *Swahili*) are unity (*umoja*), self-determination (*kujicihagulia*), collective work and responsibility (*ujima*), cooperative

economics (*ujamaa*), purpose (*nia*), creativity (*kuumba*), and faith (*imani*) (Washington, Johnson, Jones, & Langs, 2006). The intervention highlighted by Gilbert et al. that used Nguzo Saba is discussed below.

Washington et al. (2006) designed a mentoring intervention for African American males 9-17 years old near Memphis, Tennessee who were in out-of-home foster care kinship placements. The purpose of the intervention was to support relative caregivers and to decrease the risk of placement of the young men in a non-relative placement. The intervention consisted of 20 weeks of group mentorship guided by Nguzo Saba principles. A pilot study of this approach ($N = 12$) revealed enhanced spirituality on the part of the participants and better behavior at home and school from the perspective of the relative caregivers. While this was a small, uncontrolled pre-post design, this intervention is a good example of strategies that may be enhanced in future application to AAMA bystandership in bullying experiences. Social work educators and researchers must assist emerging social work practitioners to understand the importance of exploring and supporting pre-existing strengths through culturally-grounded and culturally-responsive social work.

Conclusion

This study investigated the bullying experiences of AAMAs and their parents/guardians. This was relevant to the profession of social work because of an emphasis on service to vulnerable and oppressed populations (NASW, 2008). AAMAs are particularly vulnerable to discrimination as evidenced by institutional racism in the U.S. (Alexander, 2012). There was no identified research to inform social workers about

the particular strengths AAMAs and their parents have in navigating bullying experiences despite evidence that suggested they experienced lower levels of bully victimhood (CDC, 2016).

As described above, this study was guided by the following research questions: 1) How do AAMAs and their parents/guardians perceive bullying? 2) How do AAMAs and their parents/guardians perceive bullying? 3) What reflections have AAMAs and their parents/guardians gleaned from their experiences with bullying? This study was approved as an expedited review by the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board on January 15, 2016 and it was approved for continuation on January 13, 2017 (*Appendix A*).

Chapter 2

This chapter will describe the critical theory framework that was used to guide this study. A visual model of this framework illustrates how the theoretical framework informed the study of the topic and population of interest (*Appendix B*). This theoretical framework blends critical race theory (CRT) with Black feminist thought (BFT) and is designed to explain how African American male adolescents (AAMAs) suffer from institutional and interpersonal oppression. CRT was selected due to its emphasis on the creation and maintenance of an institutionalized racial hierarchy that benefits European American people and simultaneously oppresses African American people. BFT is useful because of its strengths in intersectional analysis and its ability to highlight the ways sexism and racism interact between AAMAs, female caregivers, and structural oppression.

Given that this framework was applied to AAMAs and their parents/guardians, the theory of altruism born of suffering (ABS) was also included as a way to explain how AAMAs and their parents may use their own suffering as a catalyst to help other people. A description and critique of CRT will be followed by a description and critique of BFT. Additionally, a description and critique of ABS will be offered in the context of both CRT and BFT. Finally, this chapter will provide a rationale regarding how this integrated framework was best suited for this study.

A Critical Framework

The following is a short summary of the visual model of the critical framework to help depict the influence of race, gender, and life stage on experiences of bullying among

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AAMAs (*Appendix B*). Two large overlapping ovals represent two theories that

explained how oppressive experiences in the lives of AAMAs led to suffering. The upper

African American oval represents CRT which emphasizes the detrimental effects that

institutional and interpersonal racism and White supremacy can have on people of color.

The lower golden oval represents BFT which emphasizes the intersectional nature of

oppression with a specific focus on racism and sexism. Two smaller overlapping ovals

represent the phenomena of focus. The innermost oval represents the population of focus

for this study (i.e., AAMAs). The blue dashed oval of the model symbolizes the theory

of altruism born of suffering (*Appendix C*). This theory posits that suffering may

facilitate PAB when certain conditions of healing and support are met, although this

framework also allowed for the possibility of passive bystanding. The overlap and

dashed nature of this oval similarly symbolizes that ABS operates within, throughout, and

independent of the other theories described. This oval partially overlaps bullying

experiences but fully overlaps bullying bystandership to communicate the emphasis of

the critical model on bystandership as a focus for AAMA experiences of bullying.

The phenomenon of focus is represented by a yellow oval to represent AAMA

participation and witnessing of bullying within their social environment (*Appendix B*).

Yellow is sometimes used to symbolize wealth but in a U.S. context, yellow was also

associated with cowardice. The double entendre of color symbolism here nicely

summarizes how the rich are engaged in wielding irresponsible power and the use of

irresponsible power is cowardly. The second oval of the same size is green to represent

bystandership. Green is often used as a symbol of life and growth but in a U.S. context it

too is the symbol of wealth. This double entendre of color symbolism was also

purposeful here. Wealth and prosperity are not inherently immoral so green here

represents the power and influence a bystander may have. The green oval was

overlapping and on top of the yellow oval to suggest a recognition that the two

phenomena occur simultaneously and influence one another. The green oval was on top

of the yellow oval for the practical purpose of demonstrating that the focus of this study

is primarily on AAMA experiences of bullying with an emphasis on the position of being

the outsider who witnessed the bullying (i.e., bystander role). The final oval was located

within the overlapping section of the yellow and green ovals. This final red oval was the

population of focus (AAMAs). Red is the symbol of blood and boldness. PAB can be

dangerous (doing the right thing could get you hurt or killed) and it was not bound by

self-interest, so those who occupy this space must be bold, brave, and self-sacrificing.

Parents of AAMAs were not explicitly represented in the critical model because their

contribution to this study was dependent upon their relationship with their AAMA sons.

The colors used in this model to represent the phenomena of interest are also the colors of

the Ethiopian flag. Some of the color symbolism was influenced by the use of these

colors in the pan-African movement for African American liberation from colonization

and oppression.

A solid line was chosen for the boundary of the innermost ovals of the model to

symbolize that AAMA experiences of bullying were the focus of this study. This model

underscored the role race, gender, and life-stage play in the phenomenon of interest. This

model took for granted that males experience bullying in unique ways from females and

that adolescence was a primary time bullying occurred. This model does not explicitly

depict the intersectional oppression brought on by ablest, heterosexist, or adultist

oppression. These mechanisms have been explored in the description and critique of

BFT. This model was used as the basic framework to establish a theoretical basis for this

study.

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

CRT was described as a set of explanations that portrayed a racial hierarchy

where individuals with stereotypical European phenotypic features such as light skin,

blue eyes, and straight blonde hair were given rights and privileges denied to individuals

with stereotypical African phenotypic features such as dark skin, brown eyes, and tightly

curled African American hair (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Many people in the U.S. are

not described by either of these stereotypical sets of features. For individuals who

occupy some middle space of the phenotypes described above, CRT predicted higher

levels of oppression for individuals and groups whose phenotypes differ from the

European stereotype. This set of explanations and predictions are predominantly applied

to macro policy analyses rather than a micro focus of the impact on individuals.

Furthermore, CRT has generally focused on group liberation as opposed to individual

liberation.

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) assert that critical race theorists can be divided into

two camps. The first camp can be described as cultural constructivists or idealists. This

camp focuses on race as a biologically false concept. Idealists emphasize that race does

not predict higher order differences such as intelligence or morality (i.e., social

construction of race). The second camp can be described as material determinists or realists. This camp concentrates on the economic and social interests of the elite as the primary mechanism of oppression. The realists seek to identify where the interests of the oppressor and the oppressed align to the benefit of the oppressed. Realists use this alignment to explain and predict how civil rights are obtained by the oppressed (i.e., interest convergence).

Idealists and realists tend to agree that racism is normal science (Kuhn, 2012/1962). Put another way, racial power deferential predict inequality and discrimination. Both camps have attacked liberalism and incrementalism. CRT has critiqued liberalism as ineffective with its accompanying equality and enlightenment theories (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Appealing to altruism and empathy have been identified by critical race theorists as false hope due to the fact that many people at the top of the racialized hierarchy have limited meaningful interactions with people otherwise positioned. Incrementalism has been identified as incomplete as articulated by Bell's (1980) analysis of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. In his analysis, he not only discussed how the foreign policy interests converged with African American rights in terms of education; Bell also described that landmark civil rights actions are often incrementally weakened over time rather than strengthened.

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) outlined six themes within CRT. This section will examine these themes as they relate to the topic of bullying experiences among AAMAs. The themes are: power differential, race as a social construction, interest convergence, differential racialization, intersectionality, and positionality of voices of color. These

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ideas are not mutually exclusive. The researcher attempted to untangle the interweaving of these CRT themes. These themes were used to organize the forthcoming exploration of BFT as it related to the critical framework for this study. These themes were also used to examine ABS within the critical framework.

   Power differential. The abuse of power differential is the primary precondition of both bullying and racism. Bullying and racism are often most visible on the interpersonal level, but the most insidious aspects of these abuses are at the institutional and policy levels (Morgaine & Capous-Desyllas, 2015). The core concepts of power differential within CRT include the following: (a) Racialized elitism systematically permits and rewards members of the racialized majority who exercise their power irresponsibly. (b) The experience of the racialized majority is regarded as ideal and normative. (c) The racialized majority is free to ignore the suffering of people of color as evidenced by color-evasive liberalism. (d) The racial majority dehumanize people of color as a strategy of justifying their behavior. (e) The racialized majority discriminates against the racialized other and is systemically rewarded with unearned privileges (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The components of power differential were explored briefly as they related to CRT. These principles were used to explore diverse forms of oppression, but the application of these principles in CRT required a race specific analysis. Mills (2009) has argued that race is the primary oppressive force in the U.S. context. The use of CRT in this study did not attempt to support Mills's assertion, but his assertion reflects the bias of the researcher. This study was designed to position race as the oppressive construct of interest. It is not always so clean to explore one oppressive

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force at a time, but an attempt is made to clarify the importance of race in each example provided in this section.

Racialized elitism. Without institutional power, racialized elitism and the social construction of race do not create unique privileges and rights for a racialized majority. Slavery is a prime example of how racialized elitism operated. Racialization of European Americans and their legalized superiority served as a backdrop for the categorization and oppression of racialized others (Jones, 1997/1972). The creation of a racialized elite class begot a racialized oppressed class. The racialized oppressed are then subjected to abuses of power that have gone beyond the withholding of material goods.

Fredrick Douglass (Douglass & Garrison, 1846) described the power differential within slavery as "irresponsible power." Douglass's framework of irresponsible power was situated in his experience of being introduced to literacy by the wife of the man who enslaved him. The husband chastised her for this behavior. The husband explained to his wife that literacy would cause Douglass to be discontented with his lot as a slave and this would lead to rebellion. This woman who had previously shown Douglass great kindness ardently kept him from developing further literacy. The master's behavior towards his wife and her secondary behavior toward Douglass are examples of both power differential and irresponsible power. This example helps to illustrate that power differential between the husband and the wife (sexism) interacted with the power differential between Douglass and the wife (racism). Douglass explained irresponsible power to be the fuel for oppressors whose objective was the oppression of others.

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The centrality of irresponsible power to Douglass's analysis of slavery was congruent with the power analysis of Olweus (1978) and Staub (2003) in bullying experiences. Power differential on an individual basis must be reconciled with the broader environment (i.e., U.S. law). Therefore, CRT required an investigation of laws and social structures in order to make sense of the behaviors of this husband and wife who enslaved Douglass. U.S. laws and customs in the 1840s openly rewarded whites who abused the people they enslaved (Jones, 1997/1972). Therefore, the behavior of this husband and wife are reconciled with a society that supported the denial of literacy to Douglass, and racialized elitism of those who enslaved him.

When power differential exists, there always will be the possibility that the power holder will abuse this power (Douglass & Garrison, 1846). Eliminating power differentials seemed like a logical step towards eliminating the abuse of that power.

> It's not that White people are more unjust than others. Rather it seems that an aspect of human nature is the tendency to cling tightly to one's advantages and privileges and to rationalize the suffering of others. This tendency is what led Fredrick Douglass to declare that "power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and it never will." (Alexander, 2012, pp. 257-258)

This clinging tightly onto unearned privileges by European Americans and the rationalization of the suffering of others (specifically African Americans) has perpetuated the continuation of power differentials.

Paulo Freire (2011/1970) indicated that oppressors were oppressed themselves because they oppress others. In Freire's view, oppressors were incapable of leading the struggle against oppression. In an eloquent demonstration of Freire's notion, Berry

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(1989) described how the oppression of African Americans by European Americans has led to disorder among European American men in particular.

> If European American people have suffered less obviously from racism than African American people, they have nevertheless suffered greatly; the cost has been greater perhaps than we can yet know. If the European American man has inflicted the wound of racism upon African American men, the cost has been that he would receive the mirror image of that wound into himself. As the master, or as a member of the dominant race, he has felt little compulsion to acknowledge it or speak of it; the more painful it has grown the more deeply he has hidden it within himself. But the wound is there, and it is a profound disorder, as great a damage in his mind as it is in his society. (Berry, 1989, pp. 3–4)

The combination of power differential and its misuse, with what Berry described as an attempt to hide the wound, has hindered European Americans from taking action against a system that injures them as well. The accountability for the ugliness in any society must rest firmly on the shoulders of those who design and uphold the laws of that society. In the U.S., European American men have disproportionately written the rules and assured these rules would be followed. Therefore, the ills that have come as a result of these rules reflect the mirror image of that wound. However, this profound wound—and the denial of this wound—has created an environment where few European American men have used their resources to undermine the legal foundation of race- and sex-based elitism.

   Racialized majority. The term racialized majority is used here as a power term rather than a numerical reference. This concept builds upon racialized elitism by emphasizing the ability to hide the advantages gained through establishing a hierarchy and subsequently pretending the hierarchy did not exist. One of the least obvious benefits to belonging to the most privileged racial group is the ability to be seen as the

standard by which all things ought to be compared (Wise, 2008). This standardization is then minimized, denied, and ignored by the majority race. People of color are simultaneously marginalized, demonized, and exploited by the racialized majority. The racialized majority then has the power to deny accountability. This was described in the context of colorblind liberalism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Colorblind liberalism has unique problematic features so it is discussed in detail below as color-evasiveness. The concept of a racialized majority is independently important because power is a precondition for establishing social constructions with authority.

Color-evasive liberalism. Some authors have suggested that racism has been eliminated from the social landscape in the U.S., and that specific protections for people of color constitute reverse racism (Tatum, 2003/1997). This ideology has been termed colorblindness within CRT literature because of its idealistic attempt to ignore past wrongs (e.g., slavery, massacres, church burnings), and current realities of racial inequity such as the mass incarceration of men of color (Alexander, 2012). The term colorblindness in this context is problematic because it is ableist, derogatory, and insulting to people who have visual disabilities. Therefore, the term color-evasiveness is a better term to describe the wrongs perpetrated by the racialized majority. However, one of the scales utilized for this study used the term colorblind in the title of their scale. In order to avoid confusion, the term colorblind is used when referring to that scale and the term color-evasiveness will be used in references that are not specific to that scale.

Gathering data about discrimination in educational settings has been one strategy to challenge the color-evasive rhetoric. AAMAs are disproportionately punished at

school while simultaneously receiving less support from the school (Gibson & Haight, 2013; Shirley & Cornell, 2012; Vincent et al., 2012). This disproportionality is evident in several other real world institutions, such as child welfare, where African American children are more likely than European American children to be reported, removed from their families, and remain away from their families for longer periods of time (James, Green, Rodriquez, & Fong, 2008). In the tradition of realist CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012)—articulating real world application—it should also be pointed out here, and throughout this work, that AAMAs are more likely than European American male adolescents to be arrested and convicted of drug crimes despite similar levels of drug use (Alexander, 2012). These facts are hidden in common U.S. parlance in part due to a commitment not to notice and speak openly about race-related topics (Tatum, 1997/2003). This insidious form of racism has real world implications including the continued disparities for AAMAs in education, child welfare, prison, and early death by homicide. Color-evasive liberalism allows European Americans to ignore race despite overwhelming evidence that race matters.

Dehumanization. For an argument to be made in favor of humanization, the condition of dehumanization must first be established (Freire, 1970/2011). Slavery, racial segregation, institutional White supremacy, and police brutality/murder of African American men are a few examples of the oppression AAMAs face. In a particularly horrific manifestation of White supremacy during the late 19th century and into the first half of the 20th century, African American adults — and children — were publicly lynched and killed by mobs of European American men for arbitrary crimes such as

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allegedly casting a threatening glance at a European American (Jones, 1997/1972). This seemed to be a basic framework of AAMA dehumanization. AAMAs are humanized when they forsake the oppressive tools of violence that have led to their own victimization and instead pursue praxis of liberation (Freire, 2011/1970). Praxis refers to the practice and development of a behavior. Praxis is distinguished from theories of behavior. Therefore, the praxis of liberation refers to practices that free a person from the bondage of oppression.

Discrimination. Legalistic approaches have been used to demonstrate how the structure of society creates and maintains racial hierarchy in the U.S. system of governance (Alexander, 2012; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Legalistic forms of CRT focus on the passage of racialized laws to document the institutional nature of racism throughout time. Delgado and Stefancic (2012) outlined case law through the judgments and opinions offered through the Supreme Court. A legalistic view of racism in the U.S. must begin with the three-fifths compromise in the U.S. Constitution that relegated African Americans to property to be taxed (Feagin, 2001). *Plessy v. Fergusson* (1896) helped to establish the separate but equal doctrine that served as the backbone for legalized segregation until its reversal in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954 (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Just as slavery did not come to an abrupt end, segregation did not die easily with *Brown* (Alexander, 2012). The civil rights movement was a response to the backlash African American families felt as a result of institutional resistance to the *Brown* decision (Bell, 1980).

Poverty in the U.S. was more intractable for African Americans in comparison to European Americans due to a variety of practices supported by the rule of law including higher arrest rates, unjust trial procedures, and disproportional sentencing practices for African American men (Alexander, 2012). Additionally, economic status is more fluid for African Americans as evidenced by the precipitous social and economic decline for African American families since the most recent economic downturn (Kochhar & Fry, December 12, 2014). Marx and others have held up class struggle and capitalism as the primary modes of oppression (Cole, 2013). However, the specific context of racial oppression in the U.S. must be taken into consideration as another possible mechanism as a primary form of oppression (Mills, 2009). The theoretical model utilized in this study (*Appendix B*) establishes race as the organizing critique rather than class struggle. This is not to say that class struggles are not an important variable, rather it was focused on racial oppression.

Race as a social construction. The social construction of racial hierarchy was not mutually exclusive from the above analysis of racial power differential. However, power was a necessary antecedent in order for a social construction to have oppressive consequences in the real world. In the U.S. context, elite European Americans established a racial hierarchy with European Americans at the top and African Americans at the bottom (Jones, 1997/1972). This hierarchy was then used to justify race-based policies. Jones asserted that the most glaring example of legalized racial oppression in the U.S. was the set of laws that allowed European Americans to enslave African Americans on the premise of their dark skin and their African heritage. The amount of

melanin in a person's skin can be visually compared from one person to another, but the amount of melanin in a person's skin is not predictive of genetic similarity (Bamshad & Olson, 2003). The idea that a person's race can be accurately assessed visually is a social construction that varies from society to society. The empirical evidence does not support the hypothesis that phenotypic features associated with race have any link to higher order human functions such as intelligence or morality (Marsiglia & Kulis, 2009).

Jones (1997/1972) highlighted racial prejudice as problematic when there was sufficient power differential to inflict real-world consequences. The social construction of race was underscored by the power to institutionalize false stereotypical traits of inferiority onto particular groups. The economic consequences of the Renaissance, with its emphasis on individualism combined with Calvinistic notions of worthiness linked to wealth, provided the real-world conditions required for the establishment of race-based and sex-based hierarchies (Jones, 1997/1972). Power differential then created the precondition for the creation and maintenance of a racial hierarchy.

Jones (1997/1972) documented an anti-Black bias as early as the 1500s. The anti-Black bias had not been applied to human beings but within the English literature of that day, black represented evil and white represented good. This symbolism served as a precursor to the forthcoming slave codes that gave rise to the real-world consequences of institutional racism (Jones, 1997/1972). Because this study is focuses on experiences of bullying among AAMAs, and power differential was the primary component for bullying experiences (Olweus, 2013), a short discussion of slavery is foundational to a CRT-orientated analysis of this study. Racist power differential in favor of Whites over people

of African descent can be traced back to the mid-1600s (Jones, 1997/1972).

Jones (1997/1972) documented that prior to the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, English colonies in North America began to describe a set of legal rights exclusive to those of the European American race. These racialized policies served as the beginning framework for the systematic enslavement of people of African heritage. This economic system of slavery along racial lines was codified in the U.S. Constitution with the three-fifths compromise. Feagin (2001) asserted that because the Constitution relegates African American to partially human status that the entire system of laws stemming from this document are inherently racist. The historical context of a racialized hierarchy provided a basic empirical foundation for CRT within the European American-African American racial binary.

In contemporary U.S. society this hierarchy is maintained through a variety of practices including the mass incarceration of African American and Brown men through the War on Drugs (Alexander, 2012). CRT accounts also for other phenotypic racialized features that expand on the Black-White binary. In fact, one of the strongest critiques of CRT is the focus on European American-African American conflict to the detriment of articulating other groups who have been oppressed by European Americans (Perea, 2013). This failing was not particularly poignant given that this study is focused on AAMAs. However, the social construction of race in the U.S. has been particularly oppressive to AAMAs as evidenced by the unique history of enslavement, Jim Crow laws, and high levels of disproportionately harsh legal penalties compared to their European American male counterparts.

Interest convergence. In 1971, Derrick Bell Jr. became the first African

American to obtain tenure on the faculty of Harvard's law school (Bell, 2014). In his

academic career he was prolifically published on law-supported racism in the U.S. and he

is often credited as having a central role in the development of CRT. In 1980, Bell

published a paper on the Supreme Court's decision on *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Bell asserted that the decision to rule in favor of racial integration in schools came as a

result of converging interests between African American families and U.S. elites.

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) pointed out that in 1953 many African American men had

just returned from service in the Korean War and felt emboldened to seek civil rights for

their families. Bell (1980) asserted that the goal of integration had come at the cost of the

original goal of a better education for African American children.

According to Bell (1980), the desire of the U.S. to form anti-Russian alliances

with countries around the world was a stronger motivation for the Supreme Court than

the educational conditions set forth in *Brown*. Bell's analysis of the *Brown* decision was

one impetus behind the CRT principle that racial elites (i.e., European Americans in the

U.S.) will abandon racial discrimination when it suits their interests. In this instance, the

Supreme Court came to believe that separate was inherently unequal because it

recognized that the persistence of segregation in the U.S. was hurting the U.S. foreign

policy agenda in terms of challenging the global spread of communism. Bell articulated

that this included African Americans in the U.S. who saw evidence that communist

authors elevated African Americans to full equality with European Americans. Dudziak

(2011) has since substantiated many of Bell's suppositions about foreign policy concerns

as a legitimate theory. While Dudziak acknowledged that there was no direct evidence that the Supreme Court justices discussed foreign policy as a prelude to their decision, she provided substantial evidence that the Supreme Court was well aware of how this decision could have implications for the Cold War.

Interest convergence was uniquely suited here to unpack the supposed civil rights gains that CRT authors often challenged. Interest convergence—as articulated by Bell (1980)—provided an analytic strategy to explore how the interests of the power structure was implicated in civil rights legislation such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act and court decisions such as *Brown*. European American leaders who used their power to support the legal dismantling of institutional racial discrimination often did so due to converging interests. For example White leaders in the U.S. were motivated to pass The 1964 Civil Rights Act because they needed support from countries populated by people of color, and they believed that passing this legislation might help them to dissuade countries from aligning with the Soviet Union (Dudziak, 2011).

Differential racialization. The racialized majority has the capacity to change the stereotypes of people to suit their interests—this prerogative is referred to as differential racialization (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). For example, elite European Americans own a disproportionate number of U.S. companies with the purpose of writing, publishing, and producing influential media. These elites then distribute messages to further their interests including racialized stereotypes. After the legalized enslavement of African Americans had ended but the need for their labor persisted, a stereotype of African Americans who were content to do menial labor for European Americans with minimal

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compensation emerged. As African Americans transitioned from slavery to segregation,

European American elites produced various anti-African American stereotypes such as

intellectual inferiority (Du Bois, 1999/1903). In fact, African Americans began to form

institutions of learning (e.g., Tuskegee) to combat the false stereotype of intellectual

ineffectiveness and to address various needs in their communities (Washington, 1906).

As the civil rights movement began to take shape the stereotypes of African American

men shifted to menacing criminals who were not interested in working for European

Americans (Feagin, 2001).

As it became clear that explicit anti-African American stereotypes were

problematic for U.S. foreign policy, the U.S. responded with its War on Drugs with its

accompanying increase in incarceration rates. In contemporary U.S. culture, the

stereotype of the drug-addicted African American has served several purposes. As

documented in other sections of this study, African Americans are not more likely than

European Americans to engage in substance use (Alexander, 2012). Yet, African

Americans are nearly six times as likely as European Americans to be incarcerated, and

this is driven by the fact that African Americans are incarcerated for drug-related

offences at 10 times the rate of European Americans (National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People, 2015). At the same time this disproportionality and

disparity persists, European Americans have disproportionately benefited from the

revenue of a rapidly growing prison population (Alexander, 2012). Differential

racialization helped to demonstrate that anti-African American stereotypes shift with the

interests of elite European Americans.

Intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity is a concept articulated within anthropological research. The concept of intersubjectivity was described as "the ways the relationship between the one and the many arises in practical contexts of everyday life [rather] than to the ways it has been treated philosophically" (Jackson, 1998, p. 5). Intersubjectivity was described by Jackson to be the struggle to understand the dialectics of individual and universal experience. Jackson put forward that intersubjectivity relates to interpersonal cooperation and competition of experience in attempt to navigate the collective life world rather than the individual-based worldview.

The concept of intersubjectivity has assisted CRT researchers to explain and predict oppression partially by exploring ways this oppression manifests itself practically in particular contexts. This practicality was demonstrated by Tatum's (2003/1997) book *Why are all the Black children sitting together in the cafeteria?* Tatum used her book to explain how race predicted the social behavior of African American children but took particular care to provide practical examples of how this was manifested in particular contexts.

CRT fit within the critical model. As indicated in the previous chapter, the abuse of a power differential is a primary attribute of bullying. Olweus (2012) highlighted power differential as the most important criteria in bullying experiences. CRT analysis similarly focuses on power differentials. In fact, CRT is rooted in legal analysis of institutionalized racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). However, CRT is insufficient to explain the intersectional oppression and privileges of sexism as it relates to AAMAs who were raised by African American mothers. Therefore, BFT is used to

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explain how the interaction of institutionalized racism and sexism intersects for AAMAs. BFT provides a feminist explanation for how African American mothers support their children despite institutional oppression. CRT and BFT are used to understand a context of suffering and support for AAMAs and ABS was added to explain the conditions for AAMAs to engage in PAB despite institutional oppression. Furthermore, AAMAs benefit from male privilege even though they do not benefit as much as their European American peers. Simultaneously, this model is used to explain passive bystandership because PAB requires power and positionality in order to be effective. AAMAs who have been oppressed by institutional racism may perceive that they do not have the social capital required to engage in effective PAB and fall back on passive observation as a survival mechanism. However, AAMAs may engage in PAB because of the privilege their maleness affords to them. As articulated by Alexander (2012), AAMAs face unique discrimination based upon their maleness. This did not negate the privilege articulated by Katz (2006) in regard to the abuses perpetrated by male bodies onto female bodies.

Black Feminist Thought (BFT)

The primary contribution of BFT to the critical model is its intersectional analysis of how sexism intersects with racism. Based upon a nationally representative sample, approximately 67% of the 6.4 million African American children in the U.S. are being raised in single-parent households (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2015). Single African American women make up almost half (47%) of all African American households (Whitaker, Whitaker, & Jackson, 2014). Whitaker et al. pointed to unemployment, incarceration, and health disparity as potential reasons that African American men were

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less likely than their women counterparts to be single parent heads of homes. These factors were important but Abramowitz (2000) added that women were more likely than men to be single heads of household because men have been able to avoid this responsibility through sexist policies that permeate the U.S. welfare state. As AAMAs observe their mothers navigate racism and sexism, some AAMAs may become incensed. Consequently, AAMAs may pursue responsible bystandership (PAB) in response to the injustices they suffer as sons of women who are forced to navigate racist and sexist environments. Conversely, AAMAs may engage in passive bystandership due to a lack of self-efficacy that rises in part from observing the victimization of their mothers through sexist and racist practices.

Power differential. Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (2000) asserted that the reality of subordinated groups differed not only in reality but also in interpretation. Collins pointed to the unique contributions of African American women in terms of their everyday efforts to promote the well-being of the people around them. From a general perspective, men had substantially more institutional power than women. This differential was demonstrated in part by the historical fight for women's suffrage, the disparity of women who are victims of sex crimes, and the disproportion of men in positions of institutional power (Katz, 2006). This gender-based power is compounded for African American women who face institutional racism in addition to institutional sexism. The intersectionality of two oppressions (i.e., racism and sexism) has been referred to as double jeopardy (Marsiglia & Kullis, 2009). However, the concept of double jeopardy is often insufficient because it lacks the sophistication to consider the

infinite number of oppressions that may intersect with one another.

As African American women promote the well-being of their AAMA sons they have done so within an institutional structure that oppresses them on at least two fronts (i.e., as women and as African Americans). Many of these women have contended with other structural oppressions (e.g., classism, ableism, ageism). Additionally, these compounding oppressions have led to power differentials between women. BFT arose in part from a feminist movement that failed to recognize that in its attempt to pull down irresponsible patriarchal power it perpetuated racism against African American men and women (Davis, 1981). Additionally, CRT and other anti-racist movements failed to address sexism (Collins, 2000). One example of this failure was evidenced by the myth of the African American rapist.

The idea of hyper-sexed African Americans was rooted in the desire to reproduce the enslavement of African American bodies (Davis, 1981). European American masters actively encouraged African American males to impregnate the women who were enslaved and many European American enslavers raped the enslaved women themselves (Douglass & Garrison, 1846). This power differential demonstrated racism and sexism simultaneously as intersectional oppressive atrocities. West (1994) articulated the paradox of contemporary African American sexuality as something very provocative for European Americans while also being a sense of threat to European Americans who do not have power over the private sexual behavior of African Americans. This insidious form of White supremacy has led to a social taboo about African American sexuality. However, private interest in African American bodies has created an environment where

HIV has been spread to epidemic proportions within and outside of the African American community (West, 1994). The African American man's sexuality in particular has been used as a strategy to emasculate him due to his perceived threat to a European American supremacist social order. This emasculation is demonstrated through the myth of the African American rapist and the mass incarceration of African American male bodies. Therefore, sexism directly oppressed African American men who may otherwise be judged to be recipients of male privilege. This is not to say African American men do not have male privilege, but it is to say their African Americanness was used to reduce the power sexism normally afforded to European American men.

As slavery came to an end in the U.S., a new strategy was employed to adapt the false hyper-sexed myth to become the myth of the African American rapist. Davis (1981) articulates how this new myth was used to justify and explain the lynching of African American men. As African American men were disproportionality accused, tried, and convicted of rape charges, European American men were legally excused for abuses committed against African American men. This myth was also a strategy to create distance between African Americans and their European American allies. The myth of the African American male rapist was reproduced in feminist writing particularly in the treatment of Emmitt Till in a well-respected feminist book written in 1975 by Brownmiller (Davis, 1981). The myth was reproduced through Brownmiller's analysis that Emmitt Till—a 14-year-old who was tortured and killed for allegedly whistling at a European American woman—was "going to show his Black buddies that he, and by inference, *they* could get a European American woman" and that his alleged whistling at

Caroline Bryant was "a deliberate insult just short of physical assault" (pp. 178-179).

Brownmiller further asserted to know that Till's alleged whistling was a threat to "all

European American women" and that Till "had in mind to "possess her" (p. 179).

Brownmiller reproduced the myth of the African American male rapist by taking a

situation where an AAMA was brutally murdered for supposedly whistling at a European

American woman and suggesting that Till was to blame for his demise through his

supposed misogyny.

This myth of the African American male rapist attempted to justify the abuse of

African American male bodies from reproducing the slave trade to the contemporary

mass incarceration of African American men (Alexander, 2012). AAMAs and their

families have been impacted by this myth through false accusations, convictions, and

incarceration. When AAMA fathers are incarcerated, their families (i.e., African

American women and children) are left without the support offered by the father (e.g.,

financial, caregiving). This combination of oppressive forces is articulated to present

some examples of how AAMAs are hurt by the intersectional power differentials within

sexism and racism (e.g., the myth of the African American rapist). A recent study of

police reports in Dallas, Texas ($N = 4,470$) revealed European American men to be

significantly more likely than African American men to perpetrate severe sexual crimes

within intimate partner relationships (Lipsky, Cristofalow, Reed, Caetano, & Roy-Byene,

2012). A gross majority of the crimes in this study were intra-racial. The hyper-sexed

narrative of the African American male rapist was reflective of the power differential

European American men had to falsely turn women against African American men.

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Gender as a social construction. Gender has been socially constructed to subordinate women and provide men with additional resources (Katz, 2006). For example, many cosmetic companies (predominately founded by men) have constructed the notion that females should wear make-up such as eyeliner, mascara, and foundation. There was nothing about women that biologically called for women and girls to use these products, and there was nothing biological about men that should keep a company from trying to sell these products to men. However, women who choose not to wear make-up may be discriminated against because they do not use these products (Franzoi, 2001). Conversely, men may be discriminated against for wearing these same products. The cosmetic industry in the U.S. has increased its revenues dramatically since 2002 when it generated 44.64 billion dollars (Statistica, 2015). Statistica reported that in 2011 the cosmetic industry generated 53.7 billion dollars in revenue and they projected that by the year 2016 the cosmetic industry would surpass 60 billion dollars of revenue in the U.S. alone. This industry serves as one example of how women are pressured to spend capital on a product because of their gender and at the same time provide these companies (founded by men) with additional resources.

On the other hand, some products are designed for the biological difference between the sexes. For instance, when the researcher's daughter was learning to toilet train, he purchased her a box of pull-up diapers designed for boys with the rationale that the gendered character on the diaper did not matter. The first time his daughter urinated in the pull-up designed for boys he realized his folly. Apparently pull-up diapers were designed to absorb liquid in a different location for boys compared to girls. Therefore,

some products are actually designed to address biological difference but this is an exception rather than a rule.

Warnke (2005) argued in favor of partial acceptance of gender as a social construction to capitalize on a strategic feminism that embraced womanhood and femininity as recognition of shared oppression with other women. This approach was similar to the anti-racist approach wherein race was recognized as an important part of cultural and personal identity politics but simultaneously as a biologically false predictor of higher order humanity. Similarly, the social construction of girls and women has been used to reject the real limitations of institutionalized sexism. Warnke went on to argue that this strategic feminism must be also anti-essentialist in nature.

A specific application of BFT in terms of the social construction of gender was found in Lorde's (1984) account of raising her son. Lorde—an African American lesbian—described her involvement in the African American feminist movement and the strategies she used to raise her son with her female partner. In Lorde's account, racism was a clearer point of discrimination for her son than heterosexism. The racial slurs her son experienced during school evidenced this to her. This perspective did not reduce her awareness of the intersectional oppression of racism and heterosexism, but it reflected her perspective of the primary role racism played in her son's childhood. Additionally, Lorde described a situation where she and her partner were planning to attend a conference when they learned that no boys over the age of 10 were allowed at the conference. Lorde responded to the conference in a letter explaining her loyalty to her son and asking for critical dialogue in the lesbian feminist community about family

obligations to their sons as well as their daughters. Lorde's account illustrated the importance of context in the navigation of multiple social identities within a society with multiple oppressive forces.

Interest convergence. The concept of interest convergence in BFT was best articulated by the concept of invisibility or in the rejection of intersectional oppression. Crenshaw (2000) deconstructed how the failure of the courts to recognize African American women as a protected class has perpetuated their invisibility. This invisibility was demonstrated through court cases where the experiences of European American women and African American men were used to obscure the oppression experienced by African American women. This invisibility has been perpetrated by rejecting the premise that one form of discrimination can be explored simultaneously with another (i.e., being discriminated against because one was an African American woman). Courts in the U.S. have reasoned that women are a class, African Americans are a class, but African American women are not a class. This reasoning has led to the loss of multiple court cases where the courts have rejected arguments attempting to demonstrate the intersectional oppression faced by African American women. This invisibility correlated with interest convergence by demonstrating that African American women were dependent upon European American women and African American men for protection under the law.

Maleness affords protections to African American males that are not extended to African American females (Collins, 2000). This has not negated the additional barriers designed to condemn African American men specifically (Alexander, 2012). Rather, this

differential position of African American males compared to African American females provided a space whereby AAMAs were uniquely situated with some degree of privilege. So long as European American women and African American men are oppressed, African American women will suffer the oppression of both with the liberation of neither. When an analysis of oppression fails to consider the possible synergistic impact of multiple oppressions at once, those who experience this synergistic oppression will be rendered invisible. Therefore, if African American women are to experience relief from institutional oppression they must work for the liberation of both European American women and African American men.

Differential genderization. As articulated in the social construction of gender, gendering is constructed through institutionalized patriarchal power. The problem with this arrangement is that women are burdened by impossible versions of idealized gender. One example of this impossible burden was in the portrayal of women's bodies in images. Magazines, advertisements, and Internet images of women's bodies are manipulated with software to the point of rendering crafted bodies that cannot be duplicated by exercise and diet (Katz, 2006). For African American women specifically, the paradox of womanhood included the condemnation of single mothering (Crenshaw, 2000). As African American women became responsible for the sole provision of care for their children, they also faced a shrinking welfare state with accompanying limits to eligibility (Whitiker et al., 2014). A counterpoint to the unique difficulties of single African American mothers, single African American fathers benefited from the patriarchal structure that praises men for being involved in the lives of their children.

These gendered double standards have a compounding intersectional impact upon African American women, and this was particularly true as the welfare state declined.

Intersectionality. The interplay between race, gender, and life stage for AAMAs was described by Tatum's (2003/1997) account of her 10-year-old son, David. Tatum explained that our salient identity is linked to messages from other people. David was often told that he was tall for his age. Tatum joked that people do not say to her son "Gee, your son is Black for his age!" (Tatum, 1997/2003, p. 54). Tatum then went on to explain and predict that as her son gets taller, enters adolescence, and begins to wear certain types of clothing, he will then begin to experience the negative social experiences AAMAs become accustomed to. She described the AAMA experience thusly:

> Imagine David at fifteen, six-foot-two, wearing the adolescent attire of the day, passing adults he doesn't know on the sidewalk. Do the women hold their purses a little tighter, maybe even cross the street to avoid him? Does he hear the sound of the automatic door locks on cars as he passes by? Is he being followed around by the security guards at the local mall? As he stops in town with his new bicycle, does a police officer hassle him, asking him where he got it, implying that it might be stolen? Do strangers assume he plays basketball? Each of these experiences conveys a racial message. At 10 race is not yet salient for David, because it is not yet salient for society. But it will be. (pp. 53-54)

Tatum (1997/2003) explained that environmental cues prompt African American adolescents to notice and anticipate racialized differences. One example of such a cue is the academic tracking that goes on in middle and high schools where honor students are identified and placed in different classes. Academic success for an African American adolescent is a risk factor for being bullied (Williams & Peguero, 2013), therefore, some African American students have not felt safe being tracked in this way.

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Understanding intersectionality helped to de-emphasize social categories and re-emphasize the socio-political and cultural histories of groups (Cole, 2013). In the context of intersectionality we have begun to understand how a young African American man can be discriminated against in unique ways. For example, being African American compared to being European American, being male compared to being female, and being between the ages of 15–24 places a person at a heightened risk for arrest, incarceration, and imprisonment (Alexander, 2012). Reverse the races, genders, or select any other 10-year cohort across the age spectrum, and the risk of criminal justice involvement is substantially reduced. The concept of intersectionality also helps in exploring diversity within groups. In regard to AAMAs in particular, socio-economic status is of interest to the study due to the class diversity among participants. BFT is more adept in articulating the unique features of oppression and privilege across various intersections.

Hudson-Weems (1997) articulated the need for a specific discourse on women of African heritage through Africana theory and thought. She holds that the dominant strategy of outsiders analyzing the work of Africana scholars is bereft of cultural context and therefore of limited value. This literary theory of Africana womanism has been applied to teaching (Ramsey, 2012), mothering (Cooper, 2009), and song writing (Mena & Saucier, 2014).

Africana womanism emphasizes the intersectional oppression of womanhood and being African American. Cooper (2009) collected 60 hours of data by interviewing 14 working-class African American mothers. The African American working-class mothers in her sample perceived that education was critically important for their children. These

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mothers often faced devaluation, dismissiveness, and disposability from the educators

who underestimated the value these mothers placed on the education of their children.

In the context of this study, Africana womanism facilitated an emphasis on the

perspective and influence of mothers on their sons in terms of prosocial behavior. The

unique context of African American mothering requires specific analysis as AAMAs

navigated the world partially through the care of their mothers, and an Africana womanist

analysis was used when the AAMA's mother was African American. Given that the

researcher was a European American male, it was essential that he included a robust

cultural context for any and all descriptions of the data.

In addition to the oppressions highlighted by Africana womanism, racial and

gender microaggressions complicate the lives of AAMAs and their mothers.

> Simply stated microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send
> denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership
> (people of color, women, or LGBTs). The term was first coined by Pierce in 1970
> in his work with Black Americans where he defined it as "subtle, stunning, often
> automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are 'put-downs'" (Pierce-Gonzalez,
> & Willis, 1978, p. 66). They have also been described as "subtle insults (verbal,
> nonverbal, and/or visual) directed toward people of color, often automatically or
> unconsciously" (Solrzano, Ceja, & Yoso, 2000). (Sue, 2010, p. 24)

Sue's treatment of racial and gender microaggressions against AAMAs has focused on an

assumption of criminality, intellectual inferiority, cultural inferiority, moral inferiority,

hyper-sexualization, and a variety of entertainment based interests. Sue suggested that

microaggressions tended to be unconscious and therefore unintentional.

Microaggressions were introduced as an aspect of BFT rather than CRT because this

concept has been applied to multiple forms of oppression including race and gender.

Allen (2010) documented the microaggressions experienced at school by AAMAs in Arizona in a qualitative study of five middle-class AAMAs and their parents/guardians. The AAMA was interviewed separately from his parent/guardian and vice versa. The themes indicated that these young men had been marginalized through a variety of mechanisms such as invisibility, differential treatment, negative treatment from authority figures, and prompting to attend technical schools rather than universities. Each of these identified themes can be constructed as a misuse of power with repetitiveness. The missing criteria for these experiences to fit Olweus's (1978; 1993; 2013) definition of bullying was the idea of intentionality. Olweus (2013) indicated that repetitiveness was used as a marker for intentionality. In this case intentionality may not be relevant because if a person was the recipient of misused power on a repetitive basis—even by different people—the cumulative impact may be the same. This study was described here rather than in Chapter 1 because of its contribution to the critical model. This study was particularly relevant because the sample was collected in the same region as the sample drawn for this study (i.e., Southwest).

BFT fit within the critical model. The perspectives of African American women who provide everyday support to their AAMA sons are essential to this critical model. Many have pointed to the growing trend of female single-headed households in the African American community as a problem to be solved through marriage initiatives (Whitaker et al., 2014). Others have condemned approaches that focus on employment for African American men as a solution to the difficulties of African American families because this type of strategy excludes African American single mothers (Crenshaw,

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2000). BFT strengthened the critical model by providing a context of mothers who supported the well-being of those around them. African American women provided this service in spite of the intersectional oppression of racism and sexism they faced in their own lives. The unique oppression of African American women, and the support they offered to their sons, is central to the context of bullying experiences of AAMAs. In addition, BFT is instrumental in highlighting the male privilege AAMAs experience and this privilege may impact how AAMAs view and respond to bullying.

Altruism Born of Suffering (ABS)

The key concepts of CRT and BFT may facilitate what Staub (2005) calls "altruism born of suffering (ABS)". Staub's concept of ABS (*Appendix C*) suggested that harmful events can become motivators for future altruism. Staub cited Holocaust survivors who went into helping professions as evidence for ABS. ABS is most likely to occur when basic human needs were met previous to the harm (e.g., a child who was raised in a supportive environment went to school and was severely bullied). Additionally, a person whose suffering was assuaged by receiving help at the time of victimization is more likely to engage in ABS (Staub, 2011). AAMAs who had their basic human needs met during early childhood and experience oppression through racism and sexism as they enter school may use these oppressive experiences as motivation for altruistic acts as they enter adolescence. Conversely, AAMAs who have not had their basic human needs met may be hindered in their ability to engage in ABS.

Power differential. Fredrick Douglass (1846) was the preeminent PAB in bullying experiences among AAMAs. Douglass provided evidence in his writing that his

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basic human needs were met by his mother during his childhood. The concept of ABS facilitates a structure to understand his PAB in spite of his enslavement. Although Douglass was never issued a birth certificate, he estimated that he was about 16 years old when he fought his European American enslaver and won. Shortly after this fight, he began to teach other slaves how to read and write in his "Sabbath School." Additionally, Douglass strategized with others who were enslaved to escape from their bondage (Douglass & Garrison, 1846). Douglass could have been killed for teaching literacy to other people who were enslaved and he certainly could have been killed for plotting a mass escape from slavery. This was an extreme example of PAB. Douglass's willingness to write about his experience and publish a book with the names of his former European American enslavers was evidence of a continued commitment to PAB through adulthood. Douglass's ABS was clear and his narrative provided some evidence that his basic human needs were met prior to, during, and after his enslavement. The uniqueness of Douglass's narrative may be related to a number of other people who were similarly situated but were more inclined toward passivity because of the frequency that their basic human needs were thwarted.

Suffering born of achievement. AAMAs were commonly confronted by the notion that they lack intelligence (Sue, 2010). As documented above, academic achievement is positively correlated with an increase in bully victimization for African American students compared to European American and Latino/a students (Williams & Peguero, 2013). African American students who demonstrate academic prowess were at higher risk for being bullied while academic achievement was a protective factor for

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other racialized groups. The data was not clear about who is most likely to perpetrate this academic form of bullying. This paradox may lead an AAMA to pretend academic incompetence as a survival mechanism.

Interest convergence. ABS and interest convergence are strange bedfellows. Altruism is said to be a selfless concern for others. Interest convergence may operate within ABS. When people identify the convergence of their own needs with the needs of a suffering person ABS may manifest in unique ways. By identifying how helping another person will serve one's self-interest the PAB becomes empowered to help other people. Through this empowerment an AAMA may become willing to put himself in harm's way to promote the basic needs of another person. In this way, altruism was less about selflessness and more about making a connection between one's own well-being and the well-being of those around you. Collins (2000) has articulated this principle of supporting the well-being of those around you within a BFT framework.

Differential suffering. Suffering is universal. One example of universal suffering is the case of bullying. Bullies, victims, and passive bystanders suffer a variety of negative symptoms as a result of bullying (see Chapter 1). However, the person perpetrating the bullying does not suffer as extensively as the victim. The long-term suffering of people who occupy the bully role appears to be less severe compared to victims of bullying as evidenced by lower psychiatric symptoms in adulthood (Copeland et al., 2013). Another example of universal suffering is institutional racism and sexism. Oppressors suffer as a result of oppressing others as evidenced by their violence towards others (Berry, 1989; Freire, 1970/2011). However, those who suffer as victims of racist

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and sexist oppression suffer from the serious deprivation of basic human needs (Alexander, 2012; Davis, 1981). Furthermore, oppression is perpetrated through power. Therefore, oppressors by definition misuse their power to exploit and marginalize others with less power (Freire, 1970/2011). Based upon this differentiation it can be reasoned that groups who have been oppressed (e.g., African Americans, women) have the greatest potential to experience the catharsis of suffering through ABS.

Intersectionality. In addition to being victimized on racial lines, an AAMA may be victimized for being gay, bisexual, transgender, having a disability, or related to other subordinated social group memberships. Each of these social constructions has carried its own power and is constructed similarly to the social constructions of race, gender, and age. An AAMA's suffering intersects with the suffering of his family. Consider for a minute that each family member may independently be victimized across several domains including race, gender, and age. Now contemplate how this suffering may multiply when these people interact with one another. If Staub (2011) is right, this logic also works in reverse. Family members may be independently supported before, during, and after their victimization. From this frame of reference, support among family members may multiply as they interact with each other. The concept of intersectional suffering and intersectional support are not mutually exclusive. Staub's notion of ABS promoted the idea that the various forms of victimization are mitigated through various forms of supports.

ABS fit within the critical model. The concept of ABS helps to provide a context regarding how suffering and helping may interact. CRT and BFT provide critical

analysis regarding how racism and sexism lead to the oppression of African Americans, women, and specifically African American women. ABS and BFT are logically connected through the use of caring as a coping mechanism. BFT promotes the idea of responding to racism and sexism through caring (Collins, 2000). Meanwhile, ABS promotes supportive relationships as a primary factor leading to PAB (Staub, 2011). Both BFT and ABS promote Freire's (1970/2011) notion that oppression cannot be overcome through oppressive strategies. The only true escape from oppression is to use fundamentally different tactics including care and support. BFT and ABS strengthen CRT by providing a mechanism of alleviating the negative effects of structural oppression. The tactics of promoting PAB is a fundamental tool to address the oppressive forces of White supremacy articulated within CRT and BFT. Conversely, passive bystandership and the absence of ABS may be the result of denial of basic human needs.

Rationale for an Integrated Critical Theory Framework

Given the racial oppression of African Americans over the past 300 years (Jones, 1997/1972), a CRT and BFT approach seems indicated in the analysis of AAMA experience. From slavery, to lynching, to mass incarceration, to high rates of death by homicide (Centers for Disease Control, 2014, Minino, 2010), AAMAs have been among the most highly oppressed groups in the U.S. for hundreds of years (Alexander, 2012). Understanding the oppression and resiliency of AAMAs is rooted in understanding both the historical and the contemporary context of their lived experience. CRT provides the framework of racialized oppression while BFT adds a feminist perspective regarding

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oppression specifically as it applied to the caregiving of AAMAs and to the male privilege AAMAs experience. Adding ABS strengthens BFT explanations regarding care and support in the face of adversity. CFT and BFT explain that institutionalized oppression lead to suffering. BFT and ABS explain and predict that given ample support, suffering can lead to caring.

Examining social work practice from the position of an integrated critical model is a fundamental shift away from cultural competence. Abrams and Moio (2009) used CRT tenets to challenge the use of cultural competence in social work as largely ineffective. Their primary concerns were that social work education on diversity minimizes the importance of a specific race-based critique, leads social workers to color-evasive liberalism, and focuses on evidence-based practice. A CRT approach in social work was inhibited due to the individual-centered model put forward by managed care. Cultural competence was a chimera, so it can be pursued but never fully captured. The guiding principles of CRT as outlined by Delgado and Stefancic (2012) offer a clearer set of principles to guide social workers. When CRT is informed by intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2000) and BFT (Collins, 2000) the model for educating social workers is stronger still. This study was designed to partially answer the call of Abrams and Moio (2009) in terms of departing from cultural competence in favor of CRT. Cultural competence was social work's "normal science" (Kuhn,1962/2012) on diversity and oppression, but there are potential pitfalls in normal science (Popper, 1970). By favoring CRT and BFT over the dominant social work paradigm of cultural competence, and embracing the strengths perspective inherent in ABS, this critical model is designed to

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enhance the cultural responsiveness of this study.

Study Assumptions and Questions

AAMA suffering has typically been studied as an explanation and prediction for anti-social behavior (Bradshaw et al., 2013; Estell et al., 2007). This study provided a contrast to former studies by utilizing oppression as a potential explanation of both passive and active bystandership among AAMAs.

One hypothesis about the experience of AAMAs is related to the liberation of African American mothers. AAMAs may be more equipped to confront and challenge injustice compared to their European American male counterparts when they had relationships with empowered African American women. Conversely, AAMAs may be inclined toward passive bystandership due to relationships with dis-empowered adults.

An analogous proposition is that institutionalized sexism similarly oppressed women and their children. When an AAMA is raised in part or in whole by his African American mother, BFT provides a helpful set of assumptions to explain the suffering he is likely to endure because of the oppressive forces of racism and sexism (i.e., the intersection of oppressive forces experienced by African American mothers and their children). Therefore, this study aimed to learn how mothers, fathers, and other caregivers—who have been oppressed—experience bullying. BFT was further supported through the articulation of the conditions of healing as articulated by ABS. It was assumed that an AAMA who engages in any form of PAB has been partially protected or partially healed from institutional racism and sexism. This assumption is supported by Staub's (2003) theory that posits that support and healing are preconditions of ABS. The

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intersectional suffering of African American mothers may inform the experiences of their

AAMA sons. Additionally, AAMAs may observe ABS on the part of fathers, peers, and

other role models in their community. This study explored this assumption.

      The critical framework that informed this study's assumptions also informed the

study's main research questions. This exploration was pursued through in-depth

interviews with AAMAs and their parents or guardians. The questions in these

interviews were primarily qualitative, but some quantitative data were collected.

Chapter 3

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of African American male

adolescents (AAMAs) with an age range of 13 to 19 years of age at the time of the

interview. Each AAMA entered the study accompanied by a parent or guardian. For the

ease of the reader the word parents will represent parents and guardians unless the word

guardian is referenced specifically. This study was particularly focused on how the

participants viewed and responded to bullying. It sought to understand the lessons

AAMAs and their parents have learned through their experiences of bullying. This

chapter will outline the exploratory phenomenological mixed-method design of this

study, describe how the sample was recruited, and explain the data collection strategies.

This chapter includes a description of the ethics of the study, the data analysis strategies,

the rigor/trustworthiness strategies, and the integration of the methods with the integrated

critical model.

Design

This study used one in-depth semi-structured interview per participant. AAMAs

and their parents were interviewed individually. Whenever possible the AAMA and his

parent were interviewed on the same day to reduce the risk of contamination that may

happen if the AAMA and his parent discussed his interview prior to her/his own

interview. Fourteen AAMAs were interviewed on the same day as their parents, and the

remaining two happened within two days of each other. These interviews were carried

out and analyzed from the epistemological foundation of phenomenological analysis

(PA). PA is philosophically concerned with transcending categories and its primary

focus is related to learning about perceptions of experience (Moustakas, 1994). The philosophy of PA was instrumental in selecting semi-structured individual interviews as the primary data for this study. Perceptions of experience are best captured during interviews where the participant is asked open-ended questions that allow exploration of the meanings a participant has assigned to the experience of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

In addition, this study included a quantitative survey. The in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys were administered within the same meeting. Participants in this study were limited to AAMAs and one of their parents or guardians. The sample included 16 matched dyads for a total of 32 participants. Once the interviews were completed they were transcribed and analyzed using a PA strategy to compare the interviews across cases.

Mixed methods. This study involved a mixed-method concurrent QUAL+quan strategy (Padgett, 2008). The term QUAL+quan is a standardized way to describe a study with a dominant qualitative component and a subordinate quantitative piece. The qualitative portion of this study relied upon semi-structured interviews with AAMAs and their parents. Semi-structured individual interviews included a mildly formal setting with the purpose of a focused conversation (Fife, 2005). Observations (e.g., notes made during/after the interview) were used to supplement the interview data (Padgett, 2008). The surveys were included in the study as a strategy to describe the sample (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status) and provide additional context for the phenomena. The quantitative portion of the design helped to measure self-perceived

behaviors and attitudes related to the phenomena of interest (i.e., bystander behavior, racial attitudes).

Sequencing. Both the qualitative and quantitative data were collected within a single interview. The qualitative questions were administered at the beginning of the interview, and the quantitative survey was administered at the end of the interview (i.e., sequentially). Waiting until the qualitative data have been collected before administering quantitative measures has been shown to enhance the quality of both types of data due to the relationship built during the interview (Padget, 2008).

The interpretation between the data types must be done carefully (Feilzer, 2010). Mixed-methods results are generally reported in a side-by-side strategy as opposed to integration (Creswell, 2013). In order to maintain consistency with the interview design, the interpretation of findings was performed on each data type separately. A brief discussion of interpretation between data types is included in the findings, but the focus for this study is on the findings from the qualitative in-depth interviews.

Asking the qualitative questions first may have primed participants in terms of their responses to the quantitative measures (Padgett, 2008). For example, during the qualitative interview the participants were asked if they have seen someone try to stop bullying from happening. During the quantitative portion they were asked to quantify the frequency where they challenged bullying. Asking the participant to reflect about other people may have primed them to remember times when they challenged bullying themselves. In the quantitative measures the participants were asked a number of intrusive questions regarding their income, gender, and sexuality. Beginning with the

qualitative questions was a strategy to develop sufficient rapport so as to facilitate candid answers to the quantitative survey.

   Phenomenological analysis (PA). PA is rooted in psychological concerns about people's lived experience, constructed meanings, and descriptions of phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). PA is achieved through suspended judgment, reflection, and prolonged exposure with the phenomena of interest (Padgett, 2008). PA informed the epistemology of the qualitative portion of this mixed-method study. In pursuit of the qualitative portion of this study, Padgett (2008) and Creswell (2013) served as the main guides, and Moustakas (1994) provided the substantive support for specific strategies of PA. PA is an inductive approach that involves in-depth interviewing, careful observations, and meticulous reflexivity (Moustakas, 1994). Reflexivity is a process whereby the researcher's biases are presented as relevant to the phenomenon being studied because the researcher's biases are woven into the research (Padgett, 2008). The critical framework (*Appendix B*) described in Chapter 2 was the starting point for this inductive study. The critical framework was used to compare and contrast the data throughout the PA process.

   PA was selected due to its highly structured orientation, high focus on analysis across cases, and low focus on ethnographic observation (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Padgett, 2008). PA described what all participants have in common in regard to a specific phenomenon of interest (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007). A PA design aims to describe the essence of each phenomenon; it is exploratory/descriptive but not explanatory in nature. PA includes a strong philosophical epistemology rooted in

understanding the psychological processes of humans across cases. PA is congruent with social work as evidenced by the importance of privileging human relationships, and requirements of integrity. In addition, PA is consistent with the critical framework (*Appendix B*) and the researcher's worldview.

The basic premise of PA is to purposely resist the impulse to organize an observation or interview into pre-built notions of how to make sense of it (Moustakas, 1994). This way of researching requirs one to allow each occurrence to exist singularly (within its context) and only after thoughtful meditation with each occurrence/context can meanings and essences emerge. Moustakas explained that if we were to study a tree, we would not focus on the tree itself, but we would focus on the appearance of the tree and the perceived meanings the tree has for us and for other people. This way of researching creates a world full of phenomena rather than a world full of objects. A PA approach allowed one to explore meanings of an experience through induction (i.e., from the ground up). As the participants describe their experiences and the meanings those experiences have for them, a PA design uses induction to describe how the phenomenon of interest has been socially constructed across cases. The process of PA requires reflection, judgment, and understanding of the experience being studied.

Sampling and Recruitment

This study employed a purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 1990). Patton explained that purposive samples are used to select "information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (p. 169). This approach is desirable for this study because it involves a search for participants who have experienced the phenomenon

of interest (Padgett, 2008). A purposeful sampling strategy seeks to include people who have had particular experiences and excludes those who have not. Qualitative research is fundamentally concerned with quality over quantity (Padget, 2008). By seeking a homogeneous set of AAMAs and their parents, this study sought to understand the typical experience of AAMAs and their parents rather than searching for participants who heterogeneously stood apart from one another.

This study used what Patton (1990) referred to as a typical case sample. Typical case refers to purposely seeking participants whose experience falls within the normative range. Given the lack of literature on AAMA and parent experiences of bullying, it is not possible to articulate what an unusual case looked like. However, given the lack of literature, a typical case allowed the inclusion of intensive cases while focusing on the more typical manifestations of the phenomena of interest. Padgett (2008) recommended setting criteria to establish the boundaries for inclusion in the study. The inclusion strategy is discussed in the following section.

Participants. The sample for this study was gathered with the specific intent to identify AAMAs and their parents who had both observed bullying. Participants were limited to AAMA and parent dyads. Therefore, each parent was interviewed about one of her/his sons even when they had multiple sons eligible for the study. Some of the parents spoke about their experiences with other sons and daughters, but the researcher attempted to elicit specific data relevant to the AAMA enrolled in the study.

An AAMA was defined as a male from 13-19 years old who identified as African American. Other acceptable identities included Black, Caribbean-American, and mixed

ethnicity/race. Individuals who identified as mixed-race or multiethnic identified one of

their parents as African American or Black. Parents in this study either lived with, or

reported spending at least two hours a month with their AAMA sons. The racial identity

of the parent was not an eligibility criterion, but most of the parents identified as people

of color.

Sample size. Phenomenological studies typically involve 6–15 participants

(Groenwald, 2004). However, PA studies typically include multiple interviews (Padgett,

2008). Including 32 participants was justified because the researcher conducted only one

interview per participant.

Data saturation refers to redundancy in the information provided through the

analysis of additional cases (Padgett, 2008). Guest, Bunce, & Johnson (2006) analyzed

the data they collected from 60 in-depth interviews in batches of six respondents. The

results showed a high level of theoretical saturation (92%) by 12 interviews or two

batches. This means that the research team identified most of the novel themes early in

their analysis. This experiment demonstrated that the most useful information from a

qualitative homogeneous sample may be obtained within 12 interviews. The number of

interviews for the AAMA (16) and parents (16) slightly exceeded 12 to assure strong

examples and to account for the reality that certain participants yielded clearer data than

others.

There is a risk associated with adding more participants to a study. In reference to

qualitative studies Morse (2000) indicated, "There was an inverse relationship between

the amount of usable data obtained from each participant and the number of participants"

(p. 4). This study gathered enough usable data for saturation by seeking a slightly larger

sample of 16 AAMAs with an equal number of parents. Thus, a sample of 16 per group

sought a balance between too many and not enough participants (Padgett, 2008). Padgett

encouraged flexibility in sample sizes for qualitative studies because the quantity and

quality of participants are hard to anticipate. The researcher was satisfied with the 16

dyads who participated in the study in terms of the richness of the data.

   Eligibility. Screeners are a set of questions to help establish eligibility for a study.

This study utilized two screeners (*Appendix D*). The first screener was a series of three

questions for parents and the second was a series of three questions for the AAMAs.

Parents included in this study answered all three questions affirmatively (i.e.,

parentage/guardianship of an AAMA son, multiple bullying observations, and spending

at least two hours a month with the AAMA son). AAMA participants answered their

three questions affirmatively (i.e., they identified as African American males, they

confirmed that they were between 13 and 19 years old, and they reported observing

multiple acts of bullying within the past few years). Participants enrolled in dyads, so an

AAMA was not enrolled without a parent, and a parent was not enrolled without an

AAMA son.

   Recruitment. Participants were selected for this study by following the protocol

approved by the Arizona State University (ASU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) as

outlined in *Appendix E*. A recruitment script was used to inform potential participants

about the study (*Appendix F*). In addition, when a parent and an AAMA son were

determined to qualify for the study, the parent signed a consent form and the AAMA

signed the assent if the AAMA was under the age of 18 (*Appendix G*). In consultation with ASU's IRB it was determined that adults in this study should verbally consent to the study after reviewing the informed consent form for adults.

The basic recruitment protocol included unstructured interviews in person and over the phone (*Appendix E*). Organizations and individuals who worked closely with AAMAs were the primary entry points for recruiting respondents for this study. A mentoring program for young men of color provided the most robust opportunities for recruiting study participants. Partnership with this organization accounted for eight of the 16 dyads in this study. Recruitment efforts included partnering with a racial justice organization. This partnership yielded four dyads. Additional participants came from partnerships with other community organizations with a focus of serving AAMAs. An advertisement was placed in a local newspaper with a focus on African American issues to recruit participants, but no direct referrals came from this effort. A Jumpstart Grant from the Graduate Professional Student Association at ASU was used to pay for the advertisement.

Once the participant was determined to meet the eligibility requirements the interviews were scheduled pending the interest of the potential participant. The first order of business during the interview was to obtain parental consent and AAMA assent/consent (*Appendix G*). Once the sample reached 32 participants, no further participants were enrolled in the study.

Data Collection

An interview guide directed the interviews for AAMAs (*Appendix H*) and for parents (*Appendix I*). Additionally, observations made during the interview were used to supplement the qualitative component. Parents were given the option to observe the interviews of their sons (if they were under 18 years of age). Parental observation helped to facilitate transparency for parents who were unsure about enrolling in the study, but observation was discouraged because of the risk that the youths might have held back on unpleasant realities (Padgett, 2008). Only two of the 16 parents attended the full interviews of their sons, but another five were within hearing distance for at least part of the interview. Some of this hearing distance was informed by the fact that many of the interviews took place in the participants' homes, and some of the spaces did not allow for complete privacy during the interviews. The focus of these interviews was to learn how the participants thought about bullying and how they responded to it. Additionally, these interviews focused on what they had seen other people do to stop bullying from happening.

Observations during interviews may be important sources of data (Padgett, 2008). Notes were taken regarding body language, the tone and pitch of participant voices, and any emotions perceived during the interview. These notes were taken during the interviews, immediately after the interviews, or while the researcher listened to the interviews afterwards.

The quantitative measure (*Appendix J*) included descriptive questions (e.g., age, socioeconomic status), frequency questions specific to this study (e.g. bullying, passive

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bystandership, PAB), a validated measure on racial attitudes (*Appendix K*), and an adapted bystander measure on racism and bullying bystandership (*Appendix L*). These data were used to enrich the qualitative data, and to compare youth's responses to their parents' responses.

  Qualitative interviews. Each dyad was interviewed on a separate day. Creswell (2013) documented that holding multiple interviews one after another compromised both the quantity and quality of the data. With the permission of the parents and the AAMAs, the researcher audiotaped the interviews. During the interview the researcher took detailed field notes in order to probe for "thick descriptions" without leading the participant (Geertz, 1973, p. 3). Audio-recordings and detailed notes made during the interview helped to facilitate a reliable record of the interviews. Once the interview was over the researcher wrote down any feelings, impressions, or new perspectives as a strategy to "bracket" the researcher's experience (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher looked at the interviewees when questions were asked and looked up frequently during the answer to assure the interviewees that the researcher was interested in them in addition to the information that they were sharing. When the notetaking appeared to be interfering with the quality of the data, the researcher reduced or eliminated the note taking. In these cases, additional notes were made following the interview. Two of the interviews took place while walking so taking notes during those interviews was not possible.

  The in-depth interviews focused on understanding the lived experience of AAMAs and their parents in regard to bullying and their responses to bullying. Rapley

(2001) indicated that qualitative interviewing requires the skill to avoid asking questions

that the participant has already provided an answer for. However, the researcher found

that asking a question that had been answered most often resulted in additional data,

clarification, and more engagement from the participant. The semi-structured interviews

followed a set of open-ended questions that are asked sequentially to each participant

(Padgett, 2008), but participant answers were privileged over the sequence of the

questions.

The interview with each AAMA and parent was conducted at the location of the

participant's choice given a reasonable assurance of recording quality, privacy, and safety

(Creswell, 2013). It was important that the interview took place in a location that

facilitated the comfort and openness of the interviewee. Most participants invited the

researcher into their homes, a few opted for the public library closest to their homes, one

dyad selected a bowling alley, one dyad opted to walk around their neighborhood, and

one dyad opted to come to the researcher's home. As participants selected the locations

for their interviews the importance of their comfort level and convenience was

emphasized.

Guides. The guides for these in-depth individual interviews were designed

iteratively with the primary assistance of the methodologist on the researcher's

committee during the design phase of this study (Dr. Luis Zayas). Attention was given to

three areas in the final guides. The areas developed for these instruments regard the

participants' definition of bullying (e.g., What does bullying mean to you? What do you

think leads to bullying?), their experiences of bullying (e.g., Have you seen other people

get bullied? If so… What happened? What did you do?), and the lessons they had learned from these experiences (e.g., What have you learned from your experiences watching bullying happen? What advice do you have for Black young men who see bullying happening?). These areas corresponded with this study's conceptual framework (Padgett, 2008). The questions were designed to encourage lengthy replies on the part of the participant. Research on bullying (Olweus, 1978), bystandership (Latané & Darley, 1970), race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), gender (Collins, 2000), and adolescence (Tatum, 1997/2003) provided the academic guidance for the formulation of the interview guides and quantitative items.

The guide developed for the AAMA interviews (*Appendix H*) was almost identical to the guide developed for the parents (*Appendix I*). The only difference in *Appendix I* was an added question about the parents' perceptions of how common bullying was in their sons' lives. In the AAMA guide there was a question about being a victim of bullying, in the parent guide the question was about the son being a victim of bullying. These guides were substantively similar because this study was designed to learn how AAMAs and their parents experienced bullying. Additionally, it was important to point out that it was likely that the AAMA and his parent would describe events the other did not see, so a certain amount of discrepancy was expected between the AAMA and his parent.

Observations. Before the researcher arrived at each interview he checked the recording equipment, reviewed what he knew about the participant, and recorded his reflexivity about the location where the interview was taking place. These pre-interview

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observations of place allowed the researcher to have time to get acquainted with the environment (Padgett, 2008). The post-interview observations included taking down notes and recording further information that was provided during subsequent communication with the dyads.

Quantitative measures. The AAMAs and their parents were asked eight questions about race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, income, and educational level (*Appendix J*). The participants were asked to share their perceptions of suffering on a six-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) (e.g., At least some of the suffering I have experienced in my life is related to my race). On the same Likert scale they were asked about their perception of bullying (e.g., Bullying is a major problem in my life). They were asked dichotomous questions about whether they have been bullied, and if so if this serves as a motivator to support other people who are being bullied. During this quantitative portion the interviewees were asked to quantify the frequency of various experiences (e.g., their own bullying victimization, their attempts to stop bullying). These descriptive items were used alongside two validated measures discussed in detail below.

The colorblind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAS) was administered to both the AAMA and his parent (*Appendix K*). This validated measure was included to enhance the PA in regard to racial attitudes. This scale has three factors (i.e., unawareness of racial privilege, unawareness of institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues). Higher scores on each factor have been associated with belief in a just world, sociopolitical dimensions of belief in a just world, racial/gender intolerance, and racial

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prejudice (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000). This measure was normed on

college students over five studies with 1,188 total observations. The samples of these

five studies included 465 (39.1%) males and 150 (12.6%) African Americans. Therefore,

this scale was not normed on AAMAs (i.e., middle school and high school students) and

was not normed on parents of AAMAs.

The norms for the initial reliability and validity for the CoBRAS yielded

acceptable alpha scores in four of the five studies in the three sub-scales of the measure

(Neville et al., 2000). The subscale of racial privilege yielded an alpha range of .71 to

.83. The subscale of institutional racism yielded an alpha range of .73 to .81. The

subscale of blatant racial issues yielded an alpha range of .70 to .76. The total CoBRAS

alpha range was from .84 to .91. This measure was selected top assist the author in

assessing the racial attitudes of the AAMAs and their parents, and served as a point of

comparison with the other data during analysis.

Finally, 16 questions on bystander attitudes were adapted from a validated

measure called the Bystander Intervention in Bullying and Sexual harassment Scale

(BIBSS). The adapted scale used for this study will be referred to as the Bystander

Intervention in Bullying and Racial harassment Scale (BIBRS) (*Appendix L*). This

bystander measure was designed to model the stages of Latané and Darley's (1970)

bystander intervention mode (i.e., notice the event, interpret the event as an emergency,

accept responsibility to help, know how to help, and implement intervention decision).

The adaptations to the BIBSS include changing the word sexual to racial and adapting the

Likert scale to match the Likert scale on the CoBRAS. By changing this word and by

changing the Likert scale for this measure (BIBRS) the researcher effectively invalidated

this scale. This original scale was normed with 562 secondary students. No racial and

ethnic demographics were collected due to a high number of European American students

in the study (95%) (Nickerson et al., 2014). The measure was tested by a path analysis

due to the theoretical model calling for a sequence of events and all paths were found to

be statistically significant. The internal consistency was problematic in the awareness

sub-scale (α = .58), but the sub-scales regarding bullying and sexual harassment attitudes

(α = .87) and empathetic responsiveness (α = .92) demonstrated stronger internal

consistency (Nickerson et al., 2014).

Protocol. The researcher designed a visual protocol (*Appendix E*). This protocol

visually depicts that the unstructured interviews (i.e., recruitment) were followed by the

semi-structured interviews (i.e., data collection). The unstructured interviews included

the networking stage of this study where the researcher met with prospective participants

to administer the appropriate screeners (*Appendix D*), reviewed the recruitment script

(*Appendix F*), and answered any questions they had about the study. All of the

consent/assent processes occurred in-person prior to data collection (*Appendix G*). These

unstructured interviews were followed by a semi-structured interview for both the

AAMA and parent participants. The researcher attempted to contact every participant

after the interview data had been transcribed and analyzed. Multiple attempts were made

to re-contact the participants and the researcher was able reach 26 of the 32 participants

(81%). Twenty-five of the 26 who were contacted agreed to receive a copy of the audio

recording and interview transcript. The purpose of this contact was to debrief the

researcher's conclusions and to gain participants' perspectives in regard to these conclusions (i.e., member checking).

After this study has been defended a public community meeting will be held to disseminate the findings. All of the participants will be invited to attend. The researcher will assure that participants are aware that he will not confirm or deny their participation in this study at any time.

Analysis

The data were analyzed using a PA approach. As a QUAL+quan study the emphasis of the analysis was on the qualitative data. All of the qualitative data were collected by the sole researcher for this study, and he performed the analysis under the supervision of his doctoral dissertation committee. This PA was guided primarily by Moustakas's (1994) principles of suspending judgement (i.e., read the transcripts the first time without taking notes or creating codes), coding (i.e., staying close to the data), identifying themes (i.e., grouping the codes in many different arrangements), and synthesis (i.e., summarizing the findings for dissemination).

The quantitative data were analyzed primarily for descriptive value and comparison within the sample. Mean scores were calculated for the validated measures, and through the PA the researcher compared the quantitative results with the qualitative findings. Additionally, the researcher compared the mean scores of each AAMA to his parent and the mean scores of the adolescent sample to the adult sample.

Data management. Participants selected pseudonyms (Padgett, 2008). These pseudonyms were applied to recordings, transcriptions, observations, and quantitative

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surveys. This process facilitated the separation of identifying information from the data

and it assisted in organizing the data. All names of non-participants were omitted from

the exemplars even if the name was clearly fictional. Exemplars are quotes from the data

that describe an aspect of the theme (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher used Microsoft Word in the beginning stages of analysis as a

strategy to keep the cost of the study to a minimum. These transcripts were printed, read,

re-read, underlined, and notes were taken in the margins. These notes facilitated searches

in Word for particular phrases or key words. For example, the highlighting and track

changes tools were used to select exemplars within the interviews. The researcher used a

notebook to take notes throughout the process including specific decisions he made

throughout the process (i.e., audit trail). Additionally, the researcher organized the data

by themes in a separate Excel document kept within a set of electronic files on a private

password protected drive. La Pelle (2004) has provided ample support to provide

guidance to researchers who want to use Microsoft Word as qualitative data analysis

software. La Pelle indicated that Microsoft Word was useful because of its word

processing capacity, its low cost, and the tools available (e.g., track changes). In the

advanced stages of analysis the researcher purchased a month-by-month subscription to

Dedoose because this software allowed the researcher to conduct higher power searches

for words and phrases throughout the data. Dedoose is cloud-based software designed for

mixed-methods analysis and includes sophisticated search functions that are beyond the

capacity of Microsoft Word. Dedoose has the capacity to import quantitative databases

such as data analyzed in SPSS.

All electronic forms of data were stored on a password-protected computer. The researcher was the only person with access to the electronic data (i.e., interview recordings, typed transcripts, quantitative data files). The recordings of the interviews were deleted after they were transcribed, and no recording was maintained for longer than six months. All printed data were kept in a locked drawer (i.e., quantitative surveys, printed transcripts). Signed informed consent forms were kept in a separate locked drawer. The researcher will maintain the transcripts and informed consents for five years after the end of this study.

All of the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researcher transcribed 11.5 of the 22.5 hours of audio recordings. The remaining 11 hours of audio transcription were completed by a team of three transcriptionists. The researcher checked the work of each transcriptionist by listening to the audio and correcting any mistakes.

Phenomenological Analysis (PA). The steps of PA were summarized through epoche, transcendental phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis (Moustakas, 1994). This process culminated in the discovery of the essences of the data (i.e., life experience from the perspective of the AAMAs and their parents). PA was achieved through immersion with the data (Padgett, 2008). Some of the strategies to achieve immersion included the following: listening during the interview, notetaking (during the interview, immediately following the interview, and at each listening of the interview), listening to each interview multiple times, transcribing the interviews, and reading of each transcription multiple times (Creswell, 2013).

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The transcripts of the interviews were coded by highlighting sections of the transcript that have obvious importance, highlighting repetitions of the obvious patterns, highlighting unfamiliar terms/phrases, and highlighting metaphors/analogies (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These patterns were then developed into themes (i.e. essences). Codes were developed (i.e., small categories and labels) as a strategy to articulate what the researcher observed in the data through immersion (Creswell, 2013). Epoche was used as codes were created and themes identified.

    Suspending judgment (epoche). Epoche requires the researcher to focus her or his whole attention on bullying experiences among AAMAs and their parents while refraining from everyday ways of perceiving. The researcher's view of bullying experiences has been impacted by his scholarship in these areas. The researcher's view of these phenomena differed somewhat from AAMAs and their parents because of his attention to the scholarly ways of perceiving, and due to the fact that he is a European American who has never fathered an AAMA. Additionally, the AAMAs and their parents experienced these phenomena in ways that were fundamentally different from his own, so he utilized epoche to suspend the way he viewed these phenomena. He focused on how the participants viewed these phenomena. The researcher engaged in reflective meditation where he allowed preconceptions to come in and out of focus as he re-listened, re-read, and reconsidered (i.e., reflexivity) what he had found through his immersion in the data (Moustakas, 1994). The challenge that arose at this stage was his ability to be transparent with himself in terms of his experience throughout the study. As the researcher experienced the data (e.g., see/look, think/notice, imagine/create,

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feel/touch), he challenged his everyday ways of intuition and replaced them with new possibilities. The researcher often did not understand the interview while he was participating in it. As the researcher familiarized himself with the way the participants experienced bullying, the researcher reflected upon his own experiences of bullying.

Coding (transcendental phenomenological reduction). This analytic strategy follows epoche (non-judgment) and intentionality (reflexivity) by undertaking the following four elements: (a) bracketing (memos): notation of personal reactions and responses while the researcher collected and analyzed data as a strategy to focus the researcher's entire attention on the perception of the participants, (b) unlimited horizonalizations (coding): every statement was originally treated with equal value, but as time passed the researcher reflected on how some aspects of the data stood out like a horizon, and as one horizon in the data faded another became evident, (c) clustering horizons into themes (and organized by area): each horizon taught a unique lesson, but each horizon shared differentially with every other horizon, and (d) organizing horizons/themes into a coherent textural description: after sufficient meditation and time with the data (Moustakas, 1994). After four dyads of interviews were transcribed, a codebook was developed and the codes were adapted throughout the remaining transcriptions. The researcher then began to write about the ways the data came together, and the ways it did not. As the researcher collected, transcribed, and compared interviews, he looked for evidence that his initial responses (memos) were incomplete or wrong altogether. Creswell (2013) encourages the inclusion of the expected, the

unexpected, and the conceptually interesting. The researcher used this guidance

throughout the analysis.

Parallel to Moustakas's (1994) treatment of bracketing (i.e., reflexivity), and

horizonal coding (i.e., reconciling reflexivity with the participant's experience), the

researcher watched for the frequency of themes, pervasiveness of certain variables across

themes, and he explored ideas about what happens when certain themes are violated

(Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The researcher did not begin to identify themes until he had

some level of immersion with the data as suggested by Crabtree and Miller (1999). Once

the themes began to emerge he looked for contextual issues such as the number of times a

participant mentioned a theme, the force of the narrative, and the variety of ways the

theme was manifested within and across narratives (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These

strategies are not explicit in Moustakas (1994) but these strategies seem consistent with

PA generally.

As the researcher read the underlined matter within the transcripts, he wrote

memos in the margins with regard to his own reflections (bracketing). The researcher

wrote thematic type notes (codes) that seemed to summarize the thought of the

interviewee. This initial process resulted in 767 different codes. Upon closer review 52

codes were similar enough to other codes that they were combined into a single code

leaving 715 distinct codes. The researcher then clustered these codes into three areas

with 12 horizons (themes).

After several attempts to organize the codes into categories it became clear that

several codes belonged in multiple clusters. In other words, certain codes were used

different ways. In attempt to reduce this overlap the 12 themes were organized into the

three areas of study (i.e., perceptions, responses, and barriers/solutions to prosocial active

bystandership). With this organization approximately one third of the codes (231) fit in

more than one area.

       Themes and paradoxes (imaginative variation). The third stage of PA is

imaginative variation. Imaginative variation is designed to capture the structural essence

of the phenomena, or contextualization. Moustakas (1994) states this stage can provoke

paradoxical meanings and stir anxiety within the researcher. One way paradoxes created

anxiety was the case of participants who had dichotomous experiences (e.g., fighting as

both an effective and ineffective strategy to reduce bullying, jokes as a way to decrease

bullying and as a mechanism of bullying). Moustakas indicated that this anxiety and

paradox ought to be embraced with curiosity as this may indicate the structure of the

phenomena.

       Imaginative variation was carried out through the following four steps: (a)

systemic varying of possible structure underlying the textural description (e.g., search for

patterns), (b) recognizing themes or contexts that account for the emergence of the

phenomena, (c) considering universal structures (i.e., time, space, bodily concerns,

materiality, causality) in relation to the researcher, the interviewee, and other

interviewees, and (d) searching for exemplars in the data—vivid descriptions of an aspect

of the theme. As the researcher identified the themes/paradoxes he engaged in

deconstructing the interviews (Creswell, 2013). Deconstruction included giving honor to

paradoxes, noting what was left out of the interviews, paying attention to places where

the data did not make sense, paying attention to the data that seemed strange, identifying any metaphors within the data, searching for double entendres, and looking for group differences between dyads and generations. This process guided the researcher's search for themes and accounted for how themes and paradoxes were identified.

As the researcher identified patterns across cases it became clearer that each of the three research questions had a continuum of responses, and that the patterns were revealed through multiple accounts and diverse applications. For example, the researcher organized the 12 themes into each of the three research areas. The question about AAMA and parental perceptions of bullying was explored with five themes (i.e., emotion, entertainment, fighting, structure, and home life). The question about AAMAs and their parental responses to bullying were explored by four themes (i.e., being targeted, suffering, passivity, and standing up for others). The question about AAMAs and their parental reflections on bullying was explored by three themes (i.e., barriers, education, and taking action). In each theme, multiple AAMA responses were coupled with the responses of multiple parents. Each participant was highlighted with regard to illustrating at least two themes.

Selecting multiple exemplars for each theme allowed the researcher to explore, report, and deconstruct paradoxes within the data. Finally, choosing to balance AAMA responses with parent responses created an opportunity for the researcher to explore how the AAMA responses converged and diverged from the parent responses. The AAMA responses were decoupled from their parent's response in order to provide anonymity for each participant.

Synthesis (communicating the findings). The fourth and final stage of PA is to synthesize the data into a clear narrative to disseminate the findings to others. During synthesis the researcher documented clear examples of how each theme was manifested in the data. Synthesis in PA connected the data with the literature on bullying. This process included a discussion about how the critical framework was used to inform our understanding of the findings and any ways the findings were paradoxical to it. This will be reported in Chapter 5.

Quantitative analysis. The identity information derived from the social construction items were organized into tables and separated by AAMA and parent samples. The dyad relationships were not reported in order to preserve the confidentiality between family members. Race and ethnic identities were separated from the participants to preserve anonymity. Reporting the specific age for each AAMA was reported to promote understanding of the developmental stage of the youth as their exemplars appeared in the text. Class identity and qualification for free/reduced lunch was organized into a single table per sample to describe how class identity and eligibility for the free/reduced lunch program differed in each sample. The education, gender, and sexual identities were also separated by AAMA and parent samples. The suffering and bully victimization items were analyzed in aggregate due to the similarities between AAMA and parent experiences. These data were used to describe the sample and to provide potential insight into the ways the participants experienced bullying. The items related to bully victimization, perceptions of suffering, and frequencies of bullying were also used to describe the participants' experiences. The sample was not large enough to

run correlations or other statistical tests on the identity and experiential items.

The quantitative analysis strategies as pertaining to the two scales (CoBRAS, BIBBS) focused on running matched samples *t*-tests (Howell, 2010) in SPSS. These tests were performed to discover if there were meaningful differences between the AAMA and parent samples for these two measures. This quantitative portion of the study was ideal to strengthen the findings from the qualitative data and to provoke additional questions to be followed up with in future studies. Cronbach's alpha was utilized to explore the internal consistency of the measures.

The CoBRAS was used to assess the similarity or difference of racial attitudes between each AAMA and his parent. This scale was used to explore if there are reliable generational differences between the racial attitudes of the parents compared to the AAMAs in the study. In addition, a matched samples *t*-test was utilized in order to compare the mean scores of AAMAs to the parents to determine if family relationship was a better marker than a generational approach in terms of attitudes on race and bystandership.

The BIBRS was an imperfect match for the study at hand because AAMAs were not included in the validation. However, this measure was tested with adolescents. This survey claimed to provide a model to understand Latané and Darley's theory of bystandership, but the items for implementing a decision lack a report of actual behavior. The BIBRS was analyzed in the same fashion as the CoBRAS in regard to comparing means between generations (correlational analysis) and dyads (matched samples *t*-test).

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Rigor

Creswell (2013) outlined the following strategies for validation in qualitative research: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer review/debriefing, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher bias from the outset, member checking, thick description, and external audits. Creswell (2013) suggested researchers utilize at least two of these strategies in a given study. Several other authors provided similar strategies for rigor in qualitative research (Lietz, Langer, & Furman, 2006; Lietz & Zayas, 2010; Padgett, 2008). To enhance the rigor of this study the researcher engaged in three practices. The first process was described throughout this chapter as reflexivity (i.e., systemic attention to subjectivity).

Reflexivity was congruent with PA's attention to suspending judgment. The researcher was raised in the Northwest, and had lived in the Southwest for only three years prior to data collection. Additionally, the author's biological parents are light skinned European Americans (i.e., White). These facts about the researcher are relevant to this study because "Reflexivity, the ability to examine one's self, was a central preoccupation in qualitative research" (Padgett, 2008, p. 18). For this study, the researcher was simultaneously an insider (i.e., shared gender identity with youths and fathers, shared life stage with the parents) and outsider (i.e., White, different life stage from the youths, different gender identity from mothers), compared to the African American male adolescents (AAMAs) and their parents who participated in this study. As such, the conclusions drawn by the researcher are limited by positionality and life

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experiences (i.e., European American, male, adult, and adolescence in the Northwest).

The researcher's biggest concern during the design phase of this study was if it was reasonable for a person of his Whiteness to succeed in the recruitment of participants. At the outset of the design the researcher did not know any AAMAs who lived in the Southwest. Therefore, he met with several African American community leaders in the Southwest. These leaders were all encouraging of this study and the researcher.

The second strategy was an audit trial. Padget (2008) described an audit trail as a strategy to document the choices at every point throughout the study so as to enhance the integrity of the study. An audit trail is congruent with PA's emphasis on imaginative variation and adds to it the importance of clear documentation at each decision point. The researcher recorded each decision he made. As he wrote up the findings he reported what led him to make a particular decision. He reported his reasons not to take another route.

The third strategy for this study was negative case analysis. This strategy was congruent with PA's emphasis on searching for paradox. Padgett (2008) emphasized the value of negative case as fairness to all voices within the data. As the researcher discovered particular themes he searched for counter examples through what Moustakas (1994) referred to as paradox. When conflicts arose the researcher reported these conflicts. For example, when jokes were used to bully another person, the researcher wanted to discover if jokes were also used to defend others from bullying.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (2000) provided the following three guidelines to a trustworthy phenomenological study: fairness, ontological and educative authenticity, and catalytic and tactical authenticity. Fairness dealt with the assertion that various stakeholders' voices should be apparent in the text. Ontological and educative authenticity refers to the idea that a phenomenological study should raise the awareness of the participants and those around them. This awareness may have impacted the way the participants responded to the quantitative scales. Given this potential for raised awareness the researcher reported instances where this became evident. The concepts of catalytic and tactical authenticity suggested that a phenomenological researcher creates the capacity in participants to engage in positive social change. Therefore, this researcher strove for trustworthy status through promotion of participants' voices. These goals were most likely to be achieved through the application of reflexivity, an audit trail, negative case analysis, and the inclusion of excerpts from each participant interview.

The researcher followed the recommendation of Oeye, Bjelland, and Skorpen (2007) by establishing a team of consultants to help assess what is at stake for the participants and the community. This strategy took place with the researcher's committee, the IRB, community partners, gatekeepers, and most importantly the participants themselves. Multiple African American men and women in leadership positions in a Southwestern state served in the capacity of community guides and mentors to the researcher. The contacts included leaders of racial justice organizations, social service directors at African American-led churches, a retired principal, a professor with

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shared interests, and a retired government official who remains active in the community through volunteer work. The consultants endorsed this study in principle, but also provided consultation throughout the process because of their commitment to the overall health of the African American community. These consultants were instrumental in assisting the researcher to achieve systemic attention to his subjectivity (reflexivity).

Geertz (1973) described his interpretive theory of culture through the phrase "thick description" which he attributes to Gilbert Ryle. Geertz described his thick description as an interpretive effort towards meaning as opposed to an "experimental science in search of law" (p. 5). This effort toward meaning was accomplished through focused thinking and reflecting about human constructions of lived experience. According to Geertz, this submersion into the symbols, rituals, and existential dilemmas of a given culture facilitated an authentic record for others to read. Geertz urged deep investigation and extensively detailed descriptions as a strategy to uncover meanings of symbols (e.g., space and time related to intentionality) not readily apparent to others who come from outside of the culture. As the researcher observed body language, speech, and objects that appeared to have a unique meaning to an AAMA, the researcher followed up with prompts. The researcher sought the lived experience of the AAMA in relationship to these symbolic representations. By seeking out and providing thick descriptions, the researcher strengthened this manuscript as a trustworthy account of AAMA and parent experience of bullying. The researcher highlighted "thick descriptions" of cases that supported the themes (imaginative variation) and the cases that seemed to contradict the theme (negative case analysis).

A commitment to trustworthiness transcends professional ethics and extends to general morality as Christians (2000) described. This general morality was marked by keeping promises, honoring multiple perspectives in the data, deciding what and how to report the findings through discernment, consultation, and remaining active with participants through every stage of the study. Throughout the design, data collection, and data analysis the researcher assessed how power differentials may have impacted the researcher's relationships with the participants. By keeping an audit trail the researcher documented the promises he made. This documentation helped him keep commitments.

Member checking. As indicated in the data collection, the researcher contacted each participant after the data were collected. Member checking can include gaining participant perspectives across cases (Padgett, 2008). However, the researcher's debriefing process was limited to the participants' perspectives only on the data they provided and the conclusions the researcher came to.

Ethics

The potential risks of this study begin with the fact that most of the AAMAs ($n = 11$) were minors. Specific care was made to provide the parents and their sons with informed consent. The parent was fully educated about the study prior to signing consent to participate in the study. There were no instances that required mandated reporting. The researcher provided informed consent by bringing the risk of mandated reporting to the explicit attention of the parent and the AAMA prior to enrollment in the study. The only situation that approached a concern about mandated reporting was the report about suicide attempts from two years before the study. The participant was a minor and

clarified that the attempts happened more than two years before the interview. This same participant had death threats against him during that same period of time. The researcher met with the participant and his parent after the interview to review what had been disclosed. The researcher also offered to provide support through a referral in the case that the suicidal thoughts returned.

This study may support efforts to implement a national anti-bullying policy that extends beyond punishing perpetrators. This study may help to create policies where bully-free environments are seen as a human right. This study may also help inform policies regarding anti-bullying interventions that are culturally relevant to the environment where the intervention is to take place and for AAMAs specifically. For example, selecting anti-bullying curriculums designed in environments that are relatively mono-cultural (e.g., Norway) may not be appropriate for environments that are multi-cultural (U.S.).

Social work practitioners and educators need better information about the specific actions that should be taken to reduce or eliminate bullying in adolescent serving roles. This study may help the social work profession to break free from a discussion limited to perpetrators and victims and expand the conversation about the positive impact a bystander can have when they notice that bullying is taking place.

The researcher provided incentives for the AAMA and parent participants of this study. Padgett (2008) indicated that it was ethical to provide incentives for qualitative research due to the amount of time required on the part of the participant. The researcher funded these incentives. Each participant (adolescent and parent) received a 15-dollar

gift certificate to the vendor of his/her choice. The parent who approved her/his son's

enrollment verbally approved the receipt of this incentive by her/his son.

Chapter 4

Following a description of the sample, this chapter presents the qualitative

findings and quantitative results related to the research questions: 1) How do African

American male adolescents (AAMAs) and their parents perceive bullying? 2) How do

AAMAs and their parents respond to bullying? and 3) What reflections have AAMAs

and their parents gleaned from their experiences of bullying? The term parent(s) includes

the guardian, mother is used for all women to protect the confidentiality of the

grandmother in the study, and the term youth(s) or young men is used for AAMA(s).

This chapter will include a description of the participants, exemplars from the qualitative

data that demonstrate themes relevant to each research question, results of the

quantitative analyses, and a summary of how the results provide exploratory insight into

the answers to the research questions.

Sample Description

AAMA Participants

Gender and sexuality. All youths identified as male and straight. Lack of

anonymity may have hindered identification of other gender and sexual identities.

Specifically, each AAMA identified as male and did not indicate gender fluidity.

Pseudonyms and ages. All of the AAMAs selected a pseudonym for this study.

The participants can read this chapter and identify how their perspectives were framed in

the context of other data. This strategy helped to establish the rigor and trustworthiness

of the study. Many participants smiled as they selected their names, and the researcher

perceived that this strategy was helpful in the rapport building prior to data collection.

The AAMA pseudonyms and ages are presented in Table 1. The only restriction the

researcher placed on the pseudonyms was a prohibition against using their given name.

Table 1

AAMA pseudonyms and ages

Pseudonym	Age	Pseudonym	Age
Jumpman	13	Trevor	16
Z	13	Markell	17
Ralph	13	Darvis	17
Cash	14	Maurice	18
Oliver Queen	14	Red	18
Bill	14	Gibby	18
Riourdan	15	Cinco	18
K-Dizz	15	Jax	19
Median Age			15.5

Racial and ethnic identity. Table 2 summarizes the racial and ethnic identities

of the AAMAs in this sample. The youths identified as African American more

frequently than as Black. All but one of the AAMAs identified with the term African

American as a racial or ethnic identity. The remaining participant identified as ethnically

Black. One of the four youths identified his mixed racial identity as Black/White/Italian.

The other three youths who identified as mixed race did not specify their racial identity.

The two AAMAs who identified as multiethnic did not specify their ethnicities.

Table 2

AAMA racial and ethnic identities

	Race	Ethnicity
African American	9	10
Black	2	4
Mixed Race	4	
Multiethnic		2
Caribbean American	1	
Total	16	16

Class identity. AAMA class identity (i.e., I would describe my family as financially . . .) and qualification for free or reduced lunch (i.e., Based upon my family's income I qualify for . . .) are presented in Table 3. The free or reduced lunch question was introduced to triangulate program eligibility with class identity. Class identity was sometimes incongruent with preconceptions of qualifying for the free or reduced lunch program. For example, seven of the ten young men who identified as middle class also reported that they are eligible for free lunch. This may reflect that these youths either internalized classism (i.e., that they did not want to claim a less-valued identity), or they believed that middle class families were eligible for the free lunch program. In addition, the class identity and perceptions of qualifying for free or reduced lunch did not always match between the AAMAs and their parents. Some of the participants had parents with split custody, so it is possible that the AAMA may have answered according to their time

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with the non-interviewed parent. The survey did not ask about split custody. Information about custody was elicited through disclosures during the consent process. Also, one participant did not answer the free lunch item because he had graduated from high school at the time he took the survey, but he identified as middle class.

Table 3

AAMA class identity and perceptions of qualifying for free/reduced cost lunch

	Free Lunch	Reduced Lunch	Neither	Don't know	Total
Working Class				1	1
Lower Middle Class	1		1		2
Middle Class	7	1	1	1	10
Upper Middle Class	1		1		2
Total	9	1	3	2	15

Education. All of the AAMAs were either currently enrolled in middle school (n = 5), high school (n = 8), or had graduated from high school (n = 3). One of the three high school graduates was enrolled in college courses at the time of the interview.

Parent Participants

Pseudonyms, ages, and family roles. The parent/guardian pseudonyms are presented in Table 4. This table includes their relationships to the AAMAs described above. Although each parent was related to an AAMA, the dyad relationships were excluded to provide anonymity between family members. The median age of the parents

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was 42 years of age. The specific ages of the parents were excluded because the value to analysis was minimal, and it hindered familial confidentiality.

Table 4

Parent/guardian pseudonyms and roles

Pseudonym	Family Role	Pseudonym	Family Role
Nicole	Mother	Mizz. L8ee	Mother
Bree	Mother	Morpheus	Father
Abe	Father	Supple	Mother
Tara	Mother	John Paul	Father
Nikki	Mother	Simba	Mother
J	Mother	Sarah	Mother
Mom	Mother	Louise	Mother
Dumbledore	Mother	Smarter Than the Average Bear	Mother

Gender and sexuality. The parents predominantly identified as female ($n = 13$) and all identified as straight. Lack of anonymity may have hindered identification of other gender and sexual identities.

Race and ethnic identity. As seen in Table 5 below, all but four parents identified racially or ethnically as African American. Three of the four parents who did not identify as African American indicated an African, Caribbean African, or Black identity. The remaining parent identified as other and multiethnic. The three parents who identified as mixed race identified as Caribbean/African, Black/White, and human. The participant who identified as multiethnic or other did not specify her/his ethnicity.

Table 5

Parent/guardian racial and ethnic identities

	Race	Ethnicity
African American	7	7
Black	3	5
Mixed Race	3	
Caribbean African	1	
Multiethnic		3
Other	2	1
Total	16	16

Class identity. Parental answers about class identity and qualification for the free or reduced cost program demonstrate a balanced distribution of class identity and a seven-to-seven split between qualifying and not qualifying. Given that the parents are often responsible for applying to these programs, on average, their class perceptions may be more aligned with eligibility requirements for the free or reduced lunch program when compared to their sons. One of the parents did not respond to the free or reduced cost lunch item because her son had graduated from high school, but she identified as lower middle class. The parents who selected "other" did not specify class identity, but they noted that their sons qualified for free or reduced lunch.

Table 6

Parental class identity and perceptions of qualifying for free/reduced cost lunch

	Free Lunch	Reduced Lunch	Neither	Don't know	Total
Working Class	2	1			3
Lower Middle Class	1		1		2
Middle Class			4	1	5
Upper Middle Class			2		2
Other	1	2			3
Total	4	3	7	1	15

Education. All parents ($N = 16$) were high school graduates and 14 had completed one or more years of college. Seven of the parents had a bachelor's degree or higher. Of the seven parents with a bachelor's degree, two had credits towards a master's, three had completed a master's degree, and one had completed a PhD. On average, these parents were highly educated.

Qualitative Findings

The findings are organized by (a) perceptions of bullying, (b) responses to bullying, and (c) reflections on how bystanders should respond to bullying. Themes were identified within each of these areas, and multiple exemplars were selected for each. Exemplars are quotes from the interviews that exemplify a key aspect of the theme. Theme status was assigned if at least half of the participants ($n = 16$) mentioned the subject. Every theme included youth's and parent's exemplars; parent exemplars are

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differentiated from AAMA exemplars below with a primer after the quote (i.e., mother, father). The description of each theme includes how the finding overlapped with the other themes. Each participant is quoted in two themes, and no participant is quoted in more than three themes. This strategy was used to give voice to all participants and to limit over-reliance on specific participants.

Perceptions of Bullying

Themes in this area included: (a) emotion, (b) entertainment, (c) fighting, (d) structure, and (e) home.

Emotion. All 32 participants mentioned emotions as an aspect of their experience of bullying. The AAMAs and their parents indicated that a main motivation to bully, and to challenge bullying, came from an emotive space. For example, when asked about bullying, the participants described sadness and anger. Maurice brought these emotions together when he recalled moments during his childhood where someone had insulted one of his family members, "I was so angry, like I started to cry, and then I would get sad about it." The AAMAs and their parents were unified in their frustration about bullying. Abe (father) described his feelings about bullying in this way, "I get very, very upset. I don't tolerate it! I'll say something, or I'll do something about it. It's not necessary for you to do it to anybody." These types of negative emotional descriptions of bullying were laced throughout the interviews.

Many of the participants demonstrated awareness of the emotional impact bullying can have on a person. Gibby provided the following perspective regarding the role emotional vulnerability can have on a victim of bullying.

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If you just keep saying the same stuff, putting people down. That can mess with someone too. . . . They're doing it because they know that he's not gonna do nothing. Or she's not gonna do nothing, and it puts that person at a different mind state to where they could kill themselves.

One of the most common ways the participants perceived the emotions of bullying was through the intentions of the person in the bully role. Bill's description of emotional bullying included references to power differential (i.e., make someone), intent (i.e., meant to upset), and repetition (i.e., you keep doing it).

When you . . . make someone feel unhappy or uncomfortable against their will, and they don't like it. It's usually meant to upset someone. You can repeatedly call someone a name to make them feel sad or unhappy. Like, you do it, you keep doing it, and they don't want you to do it.

Bill's description of bullying was supported by other participants. J (mother) included her perception that some people in the bully role may be enticed to bully because it helped them to feel better (i.e., I want to feel better about myself).

So if I don't like person "A" over there, and I want to feel a little better about myself. . . . Making fun of them, calling them names, taking something from them, [and] preventing them from doing something that they want to do. So a person is using their influence to get others to keep you from what you need to do. . . . A person decides, "Hey I'm going to make fun of you; I'm going to make you feel bad about yourself."

The phases "make fun" or "making fun of" were mentioned by more than half of the participants, but these phrases were not assigned a theme because of the high degree of overlap between this concept and emotion and entertainment. J's quote above could have been used as an exemplar of entertainment because of her use of this phrase. The emotion of "fun" and the process of "making" could reasonably be construed as entertainment. However, the participants unanimously agreed that bullying was neither

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fun nor entertaining. Louise (mother) indicated that the person in the bully role may not

be having fun.

> What do I think of it? I think it's not fun. To be the recipient of it, I honestly think it's probably not even fun for the person that's doing it. I think that it's largely because people weren't taught how to communicate well and build relationships and those kinds of things, and how to honor each other's humanity.

Emotion was a valuable theme because of the strong agreement across cases that bullying

provoked a negative set of emotions within the participants.

Entertainment. Laughter (as an expression of emotion) may also be associated

with the emotion of fun, and was described frequently across the AAMA and parent

participants. Jokes were mentioned often, roasting as an aggressive type of joking, and

the phrase "just playing" was mentioned as a way to minimize the impact aggressive

personalized jokes can have. Riourdan provided another example of "making fun" where

a person was pointing out a person's disability. Riourdan explained that this situation

was limited to an exchange between two people and he was the only observer.

> This one kid, he has this skin disease, it's like rashes and all that, and it's on his lips, and on his arms and everything, and so someone was making fun of him, and I said "Honestly, just chill. I mean he can't help it, so just chill about it!"

Although this passage did not make direct mention of laughing or jokes, Riourdan uses

the phrase "making fun" and this seemed to suggest that he perceived that the person in

the bully role was motivated by entertainment. This exemplar also indicated Riourdan's

empathy with the target and his PAB through his rejection of bullying as entertainment.

A more direct example is exemplified by roasting. Darvis (17) described the

following when asked about unique considerations for AAMAs who see bullying.

> It's just that we don't take it as serious. People would think it was fun to roast each other. For example, sometimes people be like "dang you ugly" and they just go back and forth like it's a game. They'll have people crowded around just talking about each other, just laughing and stuff.

While this example did not demonstrate bullying, it did help to explain why it may be particularly challenging to understand if bullying is occurring. Darvis's notion of not taking bullying seriously may be a reason AAMAs report lower levels of bully victimization than their peers. When roasting was mentioned it was perceived as bullying if the "roasting" was not mutually consented to, or if it got out of hand. Jumpman described his perspective about roasting, and how it can lead to bullying (i.e., "take it out of hand").

> [I have been] told that my hairline is fronted by Skittles cause it's a rainbow. . . . He said that multiple times, and he got a bunch of laughs about that. Most of the time it's meant to be funny, but sometimes people can take it out of hand. When you're trying to be funny. . . both sides, are laughing usually. But when it gets to a point where one side just stops completely, because you've gone too far.

When the researcher began designing this study, several African American community leaders mentioned playing the dozens. This game is generally played in front of an audience where at least two people engage in an escalating series of insults. None of the participants mentioned this phrase in connection with this study about bullying. However, "roasting" came up in three separate youth's interviews. For this sample "roasting" may represent the new "dozens." The two other AAMAs who mentioned roasting supported Jumpman's belief that roasting (or jokes) crossed the line into bullying when one of the people stops participating (e.g., laughing). Other AAMAs indicated that they knew that a joke went too far when the person doing the roasting mentioned certain things (e.g., family members, intimate personal details). Jumpman's perspective

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demonstrates why roasting is one of the biggest challenges for bystanders who want to challenge bullying. Roasting is not always hurtful, but it can be. The participants perceived that jokes were potentially hurtful, but the intent was primarily to entertain rather than to inflict harm. This led participants to be hesitant about using intentionality as a criteria for bullying.

Jokes and laughing were also used for self-defense and to defend other people. For example, Cash recalled an experience as a child where he was called "fat" and had his hair pulled. When asked how he responded he replied, "I just laughed." He explained that this name calling was persistent enough that he wanted it to stop, but he laughed because he did not want the person in the bully role to know that.

Other young men explained that they would use jokes to defuse situations that were becoming contentious. Ralph, for example, described the role of laughter in bullying through the metaphor of a coat.

> Bullying . . . is a way for other people to fit in. It's a defense mechanism for them to make sure they are safe from bullying themselves. I'd say it's like a coat to assure they won't be messed with. . . . I use this coat to protect myself, of laughter. I try to make everybody happy so that they don't dislike me. The bully's coat might be to seem tough to make sure that nobody messes with them.

Ralph described his use of humor as a strategy for getting people to like him (i.e., prevent bullying). Another method of defusing in the midst of "making fun" or jokes was described by Mom (mother) as she described her son's father.

> There's a statement like they say, "What are those?" like towards their shoes or something like that, and he's like, "Hey! Hey! You all leave him alone!" And his sons, of course, the kids will see that like, "Oh, okay. So you should say something." And it's just that quick!

This is another example of rejecting humor (PAB) when it was used to bully someone. Mom brings up "What are those?" This came up in three different interviews with AAMAs. This question apparently became popularized from a 15-second Vine that had 293 million loops as of January 2, 2017 and has more than 5 million views on YouTube. The person taking the video approaches an African American police officer and says, "Officer, I have one question for you." The video pans down from the officer's face to his shoes and the person taking the video yells, "What are thoooose?" Mom identified this as bullying, and each of the AAMAs who brought it up saw this as bullying as well. The video demonstrates a form of classist bullying, and steps to intervene demonstrate challenging classism. Mom's concept of making a decision quickly speaks to an agility born of practice. One implication of this perspective is that youths need support and practice to navigate humor and jokes that are normative.

Several of the parents who mentioned bullying were concerned that their sons relied on jokes too often. They were concerned that their sons may inadvertently begin to bully. Nicole (mother) described her concerns about how racial stereotypes are problematic for her son who attends school with predominantly White peers.

> If it's a joke then everyone needs to be in on the joke, everyone must think it's funny. . . . If someone's saying something that's stereotypical, that's not really nice. That is something that has really bothered me since I moved [here]. My son goes to schools that are predominantly White, a lot of his White friends will make comments about "Oh. Look at [her] hair" or "Look at her, she's so Black."

Other parents described their angst about the role audiences play when jokes are told. As described in Darvis's exemplar above, people may "crowd around" while the jokes are being told. This crowding around may not be welcomed, particularly if the jokes are not

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being reciprocated as indicated by Jumpman (i.e., "when it goes too far"). Some of the AAMAs and parents described experiences where they were the target of persistent uninvited jokes. Physical confrontation was supported as an effective response to this form of bullying (see Fighting, below).

Fighting. Fighting was one of the strongest themes across the three areas of this study. The word fight was mentioned more than 200 times, and it was discussed at least once by 28 of the participants. The concept of fighting was not always perceived negatively, but it was generally viewed as something to avoid if possible. The positive usages included instances where the participants fought to protect themselves from bullying, saw others fighting to protect themselves against someone with an unfair advantage, or they were fighting to protect other people from bullying.

Overall, fighting was described among a list of bullying types and was used to include confrontations that did not include physical fighting. For example, Z described bullying as, "Verbally attacking somebody, physically punching, fighting, calling somebody names, or cussing at someone." Many of the participants indicated that starting fights was a form of bullying. K-Dizz stated multiple times throughout his interview, "I am not a fighter," and disapproved of peer pressure to get into fights. Here is what K-Dizz shared about his experience.

> I know that with fights, like I said people try to fuel the fights, try to keep them happening. And then, this is kind of like bullying too because, people look at it like if you don't fight, "Oh, you're a wimp! You don't want to fight." So that's peer pressure and that peer pressure actually causes them to fight.

Fighting descriptions were generally described as physical fights, but confrontation was a key element within this theme. Sarah (mother) described bullying as something that must be confronted.

> I need to confront the problem whatever it is. And like I said, I confronted the problem differently. When I was younger it was to fight, and now it's to confront the bullier, or the bullier's family, or whatever, whoever.

Several other parents and youths perceived the willingness to confront the person in the bullying role as a key strategy to prevent bullying.

Fighting seemed to flow from a willingness to fight to avoid becoming a victim of bullying. Therefore, some participants described being targeted for bullying, but not becoming a victim of bullying because of their willingness to confront the person in the bullying role. Some parents were victimized despite their willingness to confront the person in the bully role. This victimization often happened after the confrontation. Multiple parents reported that they lost jobs or were demoted because of a confrontation where they stood up for themselves. Simba (mother) described a bullying situation with a male co-worker with less tenure and lower rank who demanded that she break a protocol when she was assigned to a desirable assignment (i.e., key control). Simba refused and the co-worker blocked her exit when she attempted to leave.

> So shortly after that, maybe about three and a half weeks after that, the [supervisor] called me to his office and said that he's gonna switch me to swing shift. I had seniority. . . . I'm like, "Why am I being moved? I've been here longest." . . . I went to the [upper management] about it. . . . I end up going to the mail room. And so shortly, that [co-worker] was in key control.

Simba explained that she was demoted to a position she did not want and the same man who had bullied her was promoted into her former position. She described this as a

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hidden form of bullying where no one would admit what happened to her, but she had extreme consequences for standing up to her lower ranked male co-worker with less tenure. Confrontations for the parents often overlapped with concerns about institutional or structural power that worked against them as women and men of color.

Structure. Structure emerged from the data as a bullying element where the abuse of power or protection from the abuse of power had been institutionalized. Therefore, the structure theme included references to the ways institutions, and those who work for an institution, use societal structure to bully a person or protect someone from bullying. More than half of the participants mentioned structure as a component to bullying. Although bullying and passive bystanding generally were ascribed to actors of the structure (e.g., police, teachers), there was also a strong recognition of the institutions themselves (e.g., jail/prison, church, schools). Schools and churches were often mentioned as part of the solution, and jails/prisons tended to be described as part of the problem. However, some participants saw churches and schools as part of the problem, and a few described jails as one aspect of accountability for severe bullying.

Although 10 AAMAs mentioned structures/institutions, the 14 parents who mentioned structural aspects were more descriptive than their sons. The sons often mentioned structure in passing, while the parents tended to have clear examples of how institutions play a role within bullying.

Racism commonly is described as prejudice of or discrimination by an individual, but scholars also discuss racism as a function of institutions. One way racism has been explored is through the notion of discrimination. Markell linked bullying and

discrimination when he was asked what bullying means.

> When. . . I think about bullying, I think about discrimination. . . . If I'm Black then I'm bullied, I'm discriminated against. I'm going to be messed with my entire life because that is just the color of my skin.

Although this quote did not clearly demonstrate his awareness of the institutional aspects of discrimination, he was the only AAMA to draw a parallel between bullying and slavery: "When I see bullying . . . I think about back in slavery." Markell also provided examples of how he had been involved in efforts to educate local law enforcement about the way AAMAs perceive the police. During the debriefing Markell proudly reported that his participation in this study led him to participate in canvasing his neighborhood to promote a candidate he believed would help to decrease irresponsible law enforcement practices. Markell's engagement in community activism was evidence of structural PAB.

> Red and his nephew were stopped outside of a store by a security guard.

> We paid for our things and she's like, "Can I see your receipt?" I gave her the receipt, and in my head I was like "Why did she just ask for the receipt? She just seen us pay for this." And then when we got out, I told my nephew, I was like, "Why do you think she asked for our receipt, she seen us pay for this?" And then he was like, "Probably because we're Black."

Red agreed with his nephew, and he felt bullied. He was on the receiving end of the security guard's structural power.

> On the positive end of structural influence, Oliver Queen gave the example of how his church serves people who are homeless. This quote was given as a response regarding what institutions might do to counteract bullying.

> My church, they do this thing, every first Thursday of the month, they go get a table, they go get a whole bunch of food, they go to a place where they feed a lot of homeless people, and they set everything up.

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In this case, the church used institutional power to challenge the effects of classism through community service. This was evidence of structural community empathy. Other youths indicated that institutions can counteract the negative impact of bullying by providing opportunities for community service. Schools and police departments were also referenced as key partners in the community who have the power and resources to encourage prosocial activities.

The parents' hopes and concerns about bullying were often centered on the education system, but they also discussed the criminal justice system. Dumbledore (mother) said, "I would say [my son's experience] has been absolute hell educationally. And it started with a teacher that he had when he was 4 years old." The genesis of her son's school difficulties began when her son was perceived as hypersexual because he was holding hands with a girl in his class and putting his hand on the small of her back.

> And the teacher pulled me and her mom aside, with our children there, and said, "You know, I really think it would be a good idea if your children branched out and made other friends, because they're always hanging together. I don't know if that's healthy and that's good. . . . When he gets to high school some of the things that he's doing . . . the physical contact, could really get him into trouble." Now, it took me a minute to process what had gone down. . . . Wait a minute! So it's okay for her to be touching him, but it's not okay for him to be touching her?

Dumbledore went on to describe how this close friend would not talk to her son from that point on and she called him a crybaby. The other children picked up on this and began to call him a crybaby as well. Dumbledore went on to relate how this situation continued to create difficulties for her son because he continued to attend the same school. Other parents told similar stories about how their sons got into fighst to defend other people and this led to the school profiling their children as troublemakers. Mom (mother) provided

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an example of her son's experience being bullied by the school administration and she

indicated this began early in his education when he punched a boy for bullying a girl.

> He was due to graduate [from middle school] and they just kept attempting to suspend him, and suspend him for little… minute issues. He wasn't bringing drugs or guns. He wasn't fighting. None of these.

More than half of the parents described systemic problems with teachers or schools in the

bully role.

Bree (mother) expressed concerns about AAMAs being profiled within school,

but her concerns transcended the behavior of the school actors (e.g., teachers,

administrators), and highlighted the potential positive impact an adaption to the

curriculum may have. "I think it goes to education, if kids in schools learned about

different cultures and ethnicities, then it wouldn't be a joke. It would be a respect." Bree

indicated that she viewed educational systems as perpetrators of bullying because they

systemically leave out certain aspects of history, they fail to run effective anti-bullying

programs, and they are ineffective in addressing the disproportionate suspensions of

AAMAs.

Nikki (mother) described how she applied her education to challenge structural

bullying.

> There was another situation where a relative was on probation. They had a probation officer that wanted to make things as hard as possible. Well, again back to my [legal experience]. I had also started my bachelors [degree]. So I now had more knowledge. The P.O. was doing things that I knew, you can't do this.

Nikki described restriction after restriction being placed on her relative. For example, her

relative was told s/he must find a place to live, but each time her relative put in a request

it was denied on the premise that the probation officer did not think it was a good place.

From Nikki's perspective, this probation officer was bullying her relative by placing restrictions that went beyond the terms of probation. The distinctive aspect of systemic bullying was institutional power. Structural bullying overlapped with perceptions of systemic trauma. More than half of the sample perceived that authority figures (e.g., teachers, officers) played a role in bullying that was problematic in the lives of AAMAs and their parents. The overlap between the systemic and the home themes (see below) were manifested through the unique history of African Americans.

Home. Just over half ($n = 9$) of the AAMAs mentioned home, and most of the parents ($n = 14$) mentioned home as a factor in their perception of bullying. The older AAMAs were more likely than the younger youths to mention home as a factor.

Cinco described his concern about the role home life can have in bullying, "I think it starts at home. That's a key part. It starts at home. Maybe you don't get the attention you want at home. You wanna go get attention, so you bully people." Other participants shared Cinco's perception that bullying is a way to get attention. This attention-seeking is consistent with the entertainment theme. By taking on the bully role, some youths may be entertained or entertain others.

Jax provided his perspective about the role the home can have in bullying situations: "Different home environments. An abusive home environment, or a nice home environment." This dichotomy was important because many participants saw supportive home environments as a key preventative measure with regard to bullying. Additionally, supportive family life was a key component for participants who engaged in prosocial active bystandership (PAB).

Morpheus (father) correlated the structure theme with the home theme by discussing how slavery induced physical abuse onto African Americans. "Our whole culture has been bullied from the time we got here. We have internalized that bullying in the discipline that we accept, and the discipline that we mete out in our families." Morpheus condemned corporal punishment and drew attention to the ways White enslavers used violence to oppress African Americans. Morpheus added, "We whip our kids because we were whipped, we were beaten! We did not do that in Africa." Morpheus's concern for physicality in parenting among African American families was shared by other parents.

Jon Paul (father) condemned authoritarian parenting and specifically corporal punishment. His exemplar was taken from a portion of the interview where Jon Paul was referencing baby boomers as a group who were the recipients of corporal punishment.

> You remember the butt whoppin', so what did you learn? The butt whoppin' hurt. That is a form of bullying. Within that parenting style we love our kids. But until you start correcting that, and opening up yourself to more creative parenting you are a product of your environment.

During the debriefing Jon Paul underscored that authoritative parenting is bullying.

Another aspect of the home theme was the role parents had in mentoring their sons about how to navigate bullying. Smarter Than the Average Bear (mother) described an experience where her son showed her a video of a fight that was recorded at school:

> My son was at school and one of his homies, and they were recording it because he brought it home, and showed it to me. . . . His friend was, you know, walloping on this one kid . . . and someone else was recording, because I seen my son step in and say "Hey dude, that's enough! Stop!"

This situation provided Smarter Than the Average Bear with the opportunity to question her son about why he had not stopped the fight earlier, and to praise her son for his intervention. This example also set the stage for the next area about how AAMAs and their parents respond to bullying as PABs.

Responses to Bullying

This area had four themes including: (a) self-preservation, (b) suffering, (c) passivity, and (d) defending others.

Self-preservation (AAMAs) and protecting sons. A majority of the participants ($n = 29$) shared accounts of times when they were bullied and needed to stand up for themselves (AAMAs) or their son (parents). All 32 participants had observed other people being targeted within bullying situations.

Jax expressed that bullying has not been a major concern in his life. However, he shared an experience where he was playing an interactive video game over the Internet. The game experience included an audio exchange between players.

> I was in a game and I forget what I did, and my teammate just started cursing at me . . . name calling towards me. . . . repetitive cursing. When I would tell him to calm down he would just get madder.

Jax indicated that most of the bullying he had experienced within the last few years was within an online gaming environment. Most of the other AAMAs described online bullying ($n = 12$), but Jax was the only AAMA to describe being targeted within an interactive gaming venue. Jax responded to this situation by blocking the person after the game was over. One of Jax's friends had a similar experience and Jax encouraged his friend to block the person. The other AAMAs described social media in general ($n = 5$),

YouTube ($n = 3$), and Facebook ($n = 5$) as specific venues for online/cyber bullying.

Jumpman gave an example of how he and his peers were made fun of because their clothing did not match.

> Like I've seen kids at my school and even it's happened to me too. If you're not matching or like if you're wearing like two really distinct colors that don't go together, people will start teasing you about that. Like, "Oh, you look like a rainbow. What are you doing with yourself?"

He demonstrated class awareness by indicating that some people cannot afford clothing items that match. Jumpman also described students who were picked on because they did not have certain types of name brand shoes. He described that he is able to stand up for himself and other people, and that if this did not work he will go get a teacher. Jumpman's willingness to get a teacher demonstrates some level of trust with his teachers. The younger AAMAs were more likely than older youths to utilize telling a teacher as a strategy.

Trevor indicated that saying something and being willing to fight were better strategies than telling a teacher.

> If someone is talking about skin color, I'm going to find something to say back to you. I am not going to sit there and let you say anything to me. Or bullying, some kids might get pushed around. I'm the kind of person that would actually fight back, because if you don't fight back they will never learn their lesson. . . . Most of the time telling a parent or a teacher is not going to be the best bet for certain kids.

Trevor described multiple occasions when he was insulted because of his dark complexion. His reference to "certain kids" may be his way of implying AAMAs may get less support at school, but the context of this comment did not provide any further clarity on this point. Trevor indicated that he did not fight often, but he is willing to fight

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to avoid being victimized. This finding correlates with the fighting theme in the perception area, and adds an example of fighting as a strategy for self-preservation.

Tara (mother) witnessed bullying on her son's Facebook page: "I had to intervene because they were saying some things about him, and about his father." Direct parental intervention was endorsed by half of the parents as a way to preserve the integrity/safety of their sons. The remaining half indicated that they either had not needed to intervene, or they were concerned that their involvement would make things worse for their son. Nicole (mother) described her attempt to preserve her son's reputation by avoiding a direct confrontation, "I was trying to figure out how should I deal with this, because sometimes when the parent gets too involved and marches up there, that just embarrasses your child and makes it worse." Nicole provided other examples where she did directly intervene. Parents tended to solve the dilemma of direct intervention by considering the severity of the situation. Direct action by a parent was generally endorsed when the parent perceived the situation would not resolve itself.

Several of the parents had lived in other areas of the U.S. and generally endorsed the Southwest as a safer place to live compared to other western and Midwestern cities that they had lived in. These parents viewed their current surroundings to be a strategy toward preserving the safety of their sons. Jon Paul (father) described his journey to the Southwest as a strategy to promote the safety of his son, "Let's just say that I am grateful for 738 miles, because if not [several second pause] I'm really afraid." Nicole (mother) said,

> Even in the past couple of years my fears have increased because [my son] is a
> Black male. I said this to my friend a couple of months ago, "I can't live in

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Chicago because I have to worry about him being killed by other Black boys. I can't move to the South because I have to worry about him being killed by a White man."

The parents tended to be concerned that their sons' race placed them at risk for homicide or other serious bodily harm. This concern persisted despite the perception of the Southwest as safer than other places in the United States. The need for self-preservation among AAMAs and the protective behavior among their parents were grouped in a single theme to demonstrate that AAMA behavior (i.e., self-preservation) and parental behavior (i.e., protecting) may be part of the reason AAMAs report lower incidence of bully victimization.

Suffering. The participants occasionally mentioned the distress they had experienced as targets/victims of bullying, and they frequently discussed the suffering of other people who were bullied. The suffering reported by participants ranged from mild discomfort to one young man who reported making suicide attempts as the result of bullying. Most participants reported the suffering of other people. This suffering was observed through body language (i.e., crying, self-harm, suicidal planning, head down, shoulders slumped, social withdrawal), and conversation (e.g., speaking to the person after the bullying).

As Cinco described the suffering that victims of bullying endure he expressed that he can speak against bullying, but he cannot physically intervene because from his perspective he would be entering the bully role.

> I can't do anything physical about it, because then that makes me the bully. I don't wanna be a bully. . . . That's all I could do, is be here. I could say something but I can't do nothing else.

K-Dizz also perceived a relationship between protecting those who suffer and entering

the bully role. "Some people. . . might help, but in the wrong way. Like if someone is

bullying their friend, then they might start bullying the person who is bullying their

friend, instead of stopping it from happening." Both of these young men felt limited in

their response to suffering because of their desire to avoid entering the bully role

themselves. This finding intersected with the passivity theme (see below), but is included

here to demonstrate the relationship between suffering and the concern that certain

interventions may lead to additional suffering.

Darvis experienced direct suffering from bullying. He had been the recipient of

extreme bullying including death threats. Darvis attempted suicide as a response to this

suffering, and was bullied when people became aware of his attempts. He described

being made fun of because of the size of his nose, "Back then I'd Google how to make

your nose smaller, like all the methods, and actually perform them. And it just wouldn't

work." Darvis's suffering compelled him as a bystander of bullying, "I had to fight

someone." When he was prompted to describe the situation where he "had to fight"

Darvis shared the following account of his PAB experience when his classmate was

suffering.

> They'd talk about her teeth, and I'd be like "Hey, don't be talking about her
> teeth." And then they'd say, "Oh, so you're her boyfriend or something?" "No.
> Just don't talk about her teeth." And then people wanna get bad boy and push
> me. That's when I had to retaliate with my hands.

Darvis indicated that his experience being bullied increased his willingness to get

involved when other people were bullied.

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The parents also suffered directly and indirectly from bullying. Sarah's (mother) accounts of suffering from bullying were centered on her relationship with her older sister. Sarah's sister would constantly coerce her to do things she did not want to do, "My bullier was my older sister, and she would. . . blackmail me, 'If you don't do this, I'm going to tell Mom that you did that.'" Conversely, whenever Sarah had trouble with other children in the neighborhood her sister would vigorously defend her: "Now my sister picked on me in the house, but she did not *allow* anyone to bother me outside." Sarah explained that she and her sister fought "like cats and dogs" and that she was troubled for many years about the negative impact her sister's bullying had on their relationship. Sarah's experience led her to be proactive when her son was bullied, "It angered me and I knew immediately I was going to nip it in the bud." When Sarah learned that her son was bullied at school she drove around until she found the boy who had bullied her son. She went to the door and spoke to the boy's mother. Sarah reported that her intervention put an end to the bullying her son experienced.

Abe (father) shared an experience of a White girl who was victimized by bullying.

This particular girl was, she was like, she was white but she was like really, her skin was one of those really clear white. And everybody was like, "Why don't you go sit in the sun?" . . . and she'll cry about that. She'll sit there and just cry. All you can do is just hug the person. Just give her a hug, you know.

Abe's response to his classmate's suffering was to hug her (PAB). He explained that he could not intervene directly with the people in the bully role because they were girls.

The parents also described the suffering they experienced from workplace bullying. Four parents reported losing a job for standing up to a person or group in the

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bully role. J (mother) described her experience of taking bullying concerns to the human resource department of her former employer.

> And so again, bullying kept us from professional opportunities. Not allowing us to do our jobs. She was allowed to yell, scream. I have documentation from the CEO, "I'm sorry that she acts this way. We're going to work on this." But those promises that were made, never happened. Then our whole team ended up getting laid off except for one person. So again, taking that action, "What can we do about this?" Even to the point that I am no longer there.

Parental perceptions of suffering colored their responses to the bullying their sons experienced or witnessed. Parents who suffered the direct impact of bullying were more likely to promote the importance of direct intervention at the time of the bullying event.

Passivity. Some of the participants described their own passivity in bullying situations, and several participants described the passivity of other people. In fact, 31 of the participants indicated that passivity was a common observation during bullying experiences. When Cash described a time when he saw a person being bullied he said, "I just left it alone, when I should have done something." Each participant who described his or her own passivity described some level of remorse (e.g., "I should have done something"). These missed opportunities were described by youths and parents. Every participant who mentioned their own passivity also provided examples of times when they did act to defend a target or victim of bullying (PAB).

The participants were asked how common it was for someone to stop bullying from happening. All but one participant indicated that it was rare to see bullying challenged. Maurice provided this hypothesis about one reason passivity may be normative in bullying situations, "Honestly, I don't think it's that common at all because [bystanders] think that—other people might think that they're wusses." The participants

described that violating social norms may carry undesirable consequences such as being perceived as weak (i.e., wusses). However, Maurice saw a young man break up a fight and his perception was that the young man did the right thing. The paradox between the interviewees' values (i.e., intervention is good) and the perception of passive bystander behavior in bullying (i.e., intervention is not good) permeated a majority of the interviews.

Cinco described a situation where his friend was bullying someone and he told him to stop. However, Cinco felt limited in his capacity to influence his friend's behavior, and he was unwilling to do more because of his relationship with his friend.

> So my reaction— I told him to stop. There was a limit. I would tell him to stop, but I wasn't gonna get physical with my friend. Just, "If you don't stop, you're gonna get in trouble, not me." So that's what I did.

This exemplar underscores how action (i.e., telling his friend to stop) can give way to passivity, particularly when the only other option Cinco could see was to "get physical."

Three parents spoke specifically about their concerns that their sons might not challenge their AAMA friends who bully because of their desire to maintain solidarity with other AAMAs. Mom (mother) described her concern about her son's experience in a predominantly White school.

> Because we are the smaller culture, we have to stick together. So if sticking together means that you're bullying and it's not right and I see it, I still have to stick with you instead of saying, "Hey, this isn't. . . . I don't wanna do this."

Morpheus (father) described his concern for passivity as rooted in the ways AAMAs are neglected in communities where they are not the largest group of color.

> When I have done college and career readiness with schools in this area. . . . every group I get is maybe a smattering of young Black males and they're always in the

back of the line, or they are in the back of the room. They just seem like lost
sheep even in something that is designed for Title I schools, and for boys of color
they are still a minority. They are still out there, and there's not much designed
for them. But we expect them to advance without any intervention that is
designed for them. We really need to deal with that. This whole toughness thing,
that's a problem, man.

This finding suggested that the need for group solidarity among AAMAs, combined with

a society that neglects their safety needs, may produce specific manifestations of

passivity during interventions. Morpheus's quote equated passivity (i.e. 'always in the

back') with toughness, and later he clarified that this lack of engagement is a response to

marginalization.

If White leaders could [hear what] Black people say when [White people] are out
of the room . . . their ears would burn up and fall off, because [Black people] are
not really communicating what they are really thinking.

Lack of engagement by AAMAs during classroom instruction or interventions may relate

to Morpheus's exemplar because AAMAs do not think their honest contribution would be

valued.

Defending others. Many of the participants provided long detailed stories about

their experiences standing up for other people when they were bystanders of bullying.

For example, Gibby shared an experience where he intervened in a situation where a girl

was planning her suicide because of bullying, "She wrote on her arm how she was going

to hang herself, how many pills she might take and all that." Gibby reported the bullying

to the school administration despite the fact that the two people who were doing the

bullying had a lot of social status. The girl did not attempt suicide, and the family

thanked Gibby (PAB).

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Red described a dramatic example of his PAB when his friend with a disability was cornered by a crowd of people.

> All you see is a bunch of people running, running, running, and then everybody out of my classroom started to run. I ran and followed everybody, and it was in the bathroom, and then he was cornered by two people, two dudes, and I don't know what was gonna happen, but I grabbed [him] and like, "Come on, we've gotta go! We're not even going to do this!" I just grabbed him, and "Come on!" [I] like took him outside, and I took him to the office. So I don't think that he could defend himself if nobody was there to help him.

Several AAMAs ($n = 9$) spoke about their concerns for their peers with disabilities as targets/victims of bullying. The youths perceived that bullying a person with a disability was worse than bullying a person without a disability. In fact, Red developed a friendship with the person he defended because he noticed the young man's disability.

Smarter Than the Average Bear (mother) described her strategy to promote the prosocial behavior of her son.

> People would say I'm, very, very assertive. And then some would even say I'm aggressive. But I look at myself as being assertive, I think that's cultural. And some of the dynamics going on in my life, being a single parent um, raising boys you know it's just, "Dear can you do this?" That's not going to get them. I have to put some bass in my voice. . . . Bullying does not give a choice.

Mizz. L8ee gave an example of how a bystander's PAB helped to de-escalate a dangerous situation.

> I'm not certain of the words that were said between the two. However. . . it seemed as though someone just would not shut up, and the other person had enough, and stood up. It became a ballad of, "I'm not a punk," and. . . "I'm not a punk either." So what then? What then? It was very artillery present, and somebody was like "Look, look, look!" The two parties actually did listen. . . . Like it makes me wanna sweat right now . . . 'cause I mean bullets don't have names on them, and they don't have eyes either.

Mizz. L8ee described her gratitude for the bystander who intervened and described him as, "I just always known this person to be a thinker. All the time. Thinking like it's a sport." Mizz. L8ee understood that his action may have saved lives that day. Mizz. L8ee indicated that the bystander also took the time to meet with all of the parties after the event to de-escalate any violence that may have followed the confrontation.

Barriers and Supports for Prosocial Active Bystanding

This area had three themes: (a) interpersonal and structural barriers, (b) education, and (c) taking action.

Interpersonal and structural barriers. The participants noted two interpersonal barriers to PAB in bullying experiences: the value of staying out of other people's business and the concern for personal safety. Two structural barriers were also identified: authority figures who engage in bullying AAMAs and American individualism.

The perceived value of staying out of other people's business was described by Louise (mother) when she was asked about her thoughts on bullying. She said, "I think there's an element in the public population. . . . of complacency about it." Z described staying out of people's business as the result of kids wanting to stay out of drama, "They would just stand there, and not do anything, because they don't want to get into drama." This barrier was described as a lack of empathy or self-preservation.

The concern for personal safety was summarized best by Trevor.

> Most of the time, I will stick up for my friends or family. If I see certain things, yeah, but if I see some guy is a bigger opponent, most of the time I would be like, "Dang." Not to be mean or selfish, but that's your loss. I don't know because sometimes there will be those big built guys. I mean, I'm skinny; they'll hurt me too. So why would I go into that situation? Like, I see what he did to him. I don't want that same outcome.

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This concern for personal or familial preservation was supported by many participants. Mizz. L8ee indicated that her responsibility to her own children was a barrier to taking action in certain bullying situations.

> I've got to go home – that's one of my favorite statements. Anything I leave my house to do, I have to go home to my kids. I have to. So I mean I cannot actually do certain things because I might not go home to my kids. It's not necessarily for death reason, but anything to impede me from being where I need to be.

She understood that getting involved as a bystander of bullying interfered with her responsibilities to her children.

Authority figures who engaged in bullying AAMAs were described by parents more often than by youths. Mom (mother) indicated that her son was nearly suspended from school because his shirt was not tucked in all the way.

> And at the time I'm sitting there in tears because I said, "This has been constant. It's almost like you want [my son] to quit." The constant suspensions or in-school suspensions. . . and if you look at each one of them, it's always been over something that could have just been said, "Don't do that again. Go back to class." He has no suspensions for drugs, for fighting, for inciting fights. None of that.

This finding demonstrates the concern many parents had regarding the unjust treatment of their sons. This injustice was also a concern with regard to community safety in general. J (mother) related a situation where her son asked if it was safe to wear a hooded sweatshirt to take out the garbage, "When my kid goes, 'Hey mom, can I wear this hoodie outside to take out the trash?' That's a real eye opener, but he's aware." This finding was further supported by Sarah (mother).

> And now I am going to get emotional. The way that society looks at young Black males needs to change. My son could be the sweetest, most calm, most docile person in the world but if he walks out of here with a hoodie on he's seen totally different. So it's kind of out of my hands. I have raised him to be the man that he

is but, I have no control over how he is looked at when he walks down the street with his hoodie on. People of power, you have to look at the police. I don't know if that is where it starts, but that is a good place to start.

As demonstrated by the standing up for other people theme the youths are actively supporting the wellbeing of those around them. However, these barriers may create substantial dilemmas for AAMAs who want to help, but may not feel safe enough.

Supple (mother) was the participant who expressed the most concern about the design of this study during the informed consent period. She was concerned that a race/ethnicity-focused study may exacerbate difficulties in understanding bullying, rather than clarify them. Supple saw American culture (i.e., capitalism, individualism) as the key barrier to bystander intervention in bullying. Her critique of race-oriented study was somewhat rooted in concerns that a developmental perspective would be more fitting for a study on bullying.

They need to stop basing it so much on – everything is based on race. You know, everything is categorized by race. If situations are happening within age groups then they should focus on age groups because as a teenager, black, white, green, yellow, purple, you have the same feelings.

She gave an example of a Black male janitor who was locked in a closet by White men of a higher pay grade. The janitor claimed that this was only happening to the Black janitors. Supple was doubtful that racism could be divorced from classism and a culture of survival of the fittest, "So it's kinda intertwined with intimidation and bullying and just trying to see who's a weaker one, survival of the fittest." Supple's reservations about a race-oriented inquiry on bullying stood in contrast to other parents who were concerned that their sons' race introduced safety concerns (e.g., homicide) and the loss of opportunities (e.g., school suspensions).

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Education. Every participant mentioned education as an important aspect of

decreasing bullying. Most participants supported the development of an explicit

curriculum to enhance the PAB of AAMAs. Ralph described a curriculum to educate law

enforcement.

> I know that my [relative] was working for a short amount of time for the police.
> He had classes for them on how to handle situations with African Americans and
> how they should answer to it, due to things that have happened between cops and
> African Americans. With African Americans being shot in the street when they
> don't have weapons or concealed weapons. So he was teaching them stuff like
> that. So I would say officers could have classes on that. So schools and
> governments should [too].

This exemplar was representative of other participants who called for an explicit

education for people with institutional powers. Law enforcement and schools were the

most frequent examples of institutions that should be educating their workforce.

Bree (mother) reflected on the importance of accountability. She suggested that

groups who lack representation during the design of interventions lack accountability to

the community. Bree described her call for proportional representation.

> We need accountability. We need more than a check mark to say, "I'm being
> diverse." Or, "Bree can you help our group, because it's just a whole bunch of
> White people." I sit on the board of the [political] Party and I tell them every
> damn month, "Look around the room. This is not reflective of [our city], this is
> not reflective of our county. Why are we not being intentional?"

The call for educational efforts and accountability was also echoed on an individual level.

Nine participants recommended counseling as an educational treatment for those who

take on the bully role. This strategy was endorsed as a way to hold people in the bully

role accountable, while also educating them about the consequences of bullying. Abe

(father) saw counseling as something that should be compulsory for people who take on

the bully role, "I think they should send you automatically with no choice. You have to go do this much of counseling session[s] for certain amount of time. Then maybe he'll learn something out of it." The participants widely supported the notion of structural and personal accountability as important aspects when designing educational strategies.

Participants were asked for their recommendations for supporting AAMAs who see bullying. This set of questions included a question about what society can do to support AAMAs who see bullying. The AAMAs overwhelmingly supported the idea of an explicit curriculum designed to teach them the skills to intervene without putting themselves into danger. Nikki (mother) was among the participants who described the most experiences intervening in bullying situations. She had helped strangers in public who were being bullied and she had helped multiple friends to leave abusive partners. Nikki was acutely aware of the potential dangers that can come from direct intervention.

> For me, it's about judging the situation because I have to understand that while I believe that everyone should intervene, it can be dangerous. How I intervene, I have to think about that. I have to make sure that I am intervening correctly. So that one, it does not negatively impact me. And two, so it does not negatively impact the other person who is already being bullied.

Designing an explicit curriculum to teach AAMAs how to effectively intervene must also give strict attention to Nikki's warning about the dangers that may come as a result of the intervention. Nikki indicated that she assesses the situation to assure that she is "intervening correctly." She went on to define "correctly" as an intervention that did no harm to herself or to the person she is attempting to assist.

The participants also provided several recommendations about how a curriculum should be designed for AAMAs. Markell suggested that an effective approach might be

modeled after the efforts to educate high school youths about the dangers of drinking and driving.

> My school had an underage drinking and driving presentation and it was very interesting. They had helicopters come in, they had ambulances, they had fire trucks, et cetera. So they caught my attention with their presentation. They had two cars that looked like they had been in an accident. . . . What caught my attention is that they used students from our theater club, and they put them in real-life scenarios.

This approach required the coordination of multiple agencies (i.e., schools, law enforcement, fire departments, hospitals), and significant resources (i.e., emergency vehicles, helicopters, wrecked cars, staff). However, Markell indicated that the most powerful aspect of this intervention was the participation of students from the theater club at his school. This seemed to suggest that a partnership with local acting troupes might be an important strategy to engage AAMAs in skill building as PABs.

Half of the parents mentioned a concern that AAMAs do not know enough about their history because it is not taught in school. Morpheus (father) provided a succinct exemplar of this concern when he was asked about the advice he would give to AAMAs.

> I think they need to educate themselves about who they are as Black people and who they are as boys and men. . . . None of this can be done in a vacuum. We have to address young Black people in particular. They really don't know who they are. They are getting it through popular culture. The more history they get, the more knowledge they get, the more constructive their lives will be. They will develop constructive ways of dealing with problems.

Several of the parents who were concerned about the absence of African history in school curricula indicated they had to educate their sons that their ancestors were kings, scientists, and inventors. This finding suggested that curriculum designed for AAMAs should include education about Africa, the roles AAMAs have played in America, and

African Americans who may serve as important role models.

The participants were prompted to comment on the attributes of a person who would facilitate an explicit curriculum with AAMAs. Tara (mother) suggested that the facilitator(s) should be relatable and believable.

> I don't think they necessarily have to be African American themselves, because that's not true. You have to be relatable, you have to be believable, because a lot of people, especially Black boys, they'll be like, "Ah he ain't talking about nothing. That's just bull." But you have to be relatable, you have to be believable, you have to pretty much get on their level saying, "Hey I was bullied. There was nothing wrong with it, it happens, it's life. However, it's not right."

Tara and several other participants suggested that having been a target/victim might be an important attribute. Oliver Queen suggested that a person who is successful could be influential with youths.

> It could be like successful people, like people that like are in college, graduated in college or own businesses. . . . (or) people that lived that life, and they can tell you what they went through, and that it's not cool. It might seem cool but it's not.

The messaging "it's not right," "it's not cool," and "it's wrong" were woven into the messaging that would be part of a curriculum about bullying.

Something that was mentioned by several mothers was the importance of having male role models for AAMAs. Nicole (mother) described her perspective regarding the role men may play as facilitators of an explicit curriculum.

> Having that dialogue and that conversation, but from a male leader. . . . Boys do not like to take direction from women, that is, that is just the truth. . . . They accept it and receive it better when it comes from a man.

The AAMAs did not mention gender or race in their descriptions of facilitators, but half of the parents did. When race was mentioned it was generally a message of inclusivity.

When gender was mentioned it was discussed in terms of the role males should play in a facilitation role.

Taking action. The participants were asked what advice they had for AAMAs and their parents. The advice was to avoid entering the bully role, and to take action to challenge/interrupt the bullying. Taking action was supported in two major forms: doing something and saying something. For example, Bill had this advice for parents of AAMAs, "They should teach [their sons] lessons of right and wrong, and how to help people that are getting bullied." Riourdan had this to say, "Step in! Say, 'Lay off, there's no point!' . . . Like if there's a fight. Someone might step in and break up the fight, or if there's someone pushing another kid." Like many participants, Riourdan endorsed doing something and saying something.

Although the parents encouraged their sons to speak up and to step up when they noticed bullying, they also wanted their sons to be safe. Simba (mother) wanted her son to choose his battles: "I always say when you're going somewhere, be aware of your surroundings. I tell them that all the time. Be aware of your surroundings, assess the situation, pick and choose your battles." This messaging was consistent with other parents who were concerned for the general safety of their sons. Simba added that she did not want her son to die trying to protect his property.

> Because it's happening all over. I'm getting tired of looking at the news and seeing kids dead. You know, "Here man, you can have your shoes. Take them, my life is not worth those shoes." . . . I tell my children, "You should not be arguing over that. When you go, somebody else is gonna be playing that game, or maybe collecting up dust somewhere. So really think about what you're doing, and what you're saying when you're doing it. . . . Just think about that."

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The parents were keenly aware of the dangers that may come as a result of challenging a person in the bully role. Simba's concern for her son's safety was the single most important limitation to teaching AAMAs to engage in PAB. However, the person in Mizz. L8ee's example may have preserved his own life because of his willingness to step in and speak up. As Simba pointed out, it is important for these AAMAs to "assess the situation" before deciding upon the action they will take.

Dumbledore (mother) gave an example of how she took action to address the behavior of a child who was chronically in the bully role. She explained how adults should address situations directly when they are aware of bullying.

> I always bring humor into it but . . . "I'm not scared of you [and] more importantly I don't want you to be this person when you're 25." So I'm going to intervene, I'm gonna say things to you because I need you to think, and I need change to happen.

Dumbledore's motivation to take action came from her commitment towards the girl in the bully role. Specifically, she expressed an understanding that addressing bullying often required proximity, "My toes can touch your toes. It's not a problem."

More than half of the participants indicated an incident where they directly confronted a person in the bully role (i.e., verbally, in writing, or physically) and they indicated that other people should use these strategies. Other recommended interventions included strategies that were less direct (e.g., telling an adult, supporting the target after the bullying event had ended, befriending a person because they were being bullied). Every participant indicated that they had either directly intervened as a bystander during a bullying incident (e.g., verbally challenged the person in the bully role, physically confronted/fought the person in the bully role, made jokes to deflect attention from the

target, physically removed the targeted person), or they intervened less directly or after

the bullying incident had ended (e.g., brought the situation to the attention of an authority

figure, told the person in the bully role they did not approve of their behavior, comforted

the person who was targeted). The advice provided by these participants was generally

congruent with interventions they had carried out themselves.

Quantitative Results

The quantitative measures were implemented to supplement the first research

question only (i.e., How do AAMAs and their parents perceive bullying?). The aim of

adding the quantitative measures was to describe the sample's perceptions of suffering,

bullying victimization, color evasiveness, and bystander experiences. The AAMA

responses to the colorblind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAS) and the bystander

interventions in bullying and racial harassment scale (BIBRS) were compared to parental

responses using a matched pairs t-test with the level of statistical significance set at $p <$

.05. The hypothesis was that the AAMAs would report higher color-evasive racial

attitudes and lower bystander interventions of bullying and racial harassment compared

to their parents. The results were in the expected direction for both scales, but several of

the subscales failed to demonstrate statistical significance. Two of the three CoBRAS

and four of the five BIBRS subscales had unacceptable reliability (i.e., low Cronbach's

alpha scores). Additionally, it is questionable to make statistical comparisons between 16

matched pairs and these results must be interpreted with extreme caution.

All 32 participants responded to at least 50 of the 56 items in the quantitative

instruments. The presentation of results follows the order of the quantitative survey

(*Appendix J*). The descriptions of the first several items (i.e., suffering, bullying

victimization) are reported for the whole sample (*N* = 32).

Suffering

The participants were asked how their suffering compares to White Americans

through a single item asking for their perceptions on a three-point Likert scale (i.e.,

suffered less, suffered the same, suffered more, don't know). A majority of the

participants (*n* = 21) reported that they do not know how their suffering compares to

White Americans, some perceived that they suffer more than White Americans (n = 7),

two identified that they suffer the same amount as White Americans, and two reported

that they suffer less than White Americans. On a six-point Likert scale ranging from

strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6), most of the participants agreed (*n* = 9) or

strongly agreed (*n* = 20) that "The difficulties I have experienced have motivated me to

help other people." Two parents strongly disagreed, and one youth somewhat disagreed.

The participants were asked (two six-point Likert scales) the role race plays in

their suffering (Table 7). Twenty-five participants agreed with the statement, "At least

some of the suffering I have experienced in my life is related to my race." Additionally,

19 participants agreed with the statement "A majority of the suffering I have experienced

in my life is related to my race." These questions are two levels of the same question and

were not designed to be mutually exclusive. The class identity of those who disagreed

was similar to those who agreed.

Table 7

Perceptions of the role race has in participant suffering

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Some of my suffering is related to my race	1	2	3	8	11	6	31
A majority of my suffering is related to my race		5	6	10	5	4	30

Bullying Victimization (Target Role)

Most of the participants had been bullied ($n = 29$). Twenty-eight of these 29 indicated that being bullied motivated them to assist other people who were bullied. However, only 21 participants received help during or after a bullying experience. Twenty-four participants did not view bullying as a major problem in their lives.

Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS)

The CoBRAS consisted of 20 items scored on a six-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Factor one had seven items, and was designed as the Unawareness of Racial Privilege subscale. One item from this scale was, "Race plays an important role in who goes to prison." The participants who agreed with this statement scored higher in unawareness of racial privilege. On average, the AAMAs had significantly higher scores on factor one ($M = 2.50$, $SE = 0.571$) than their parents ($M = 1.866$, $SE = 1.108$; $t[15] = 2.31$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the parents were more likely to demonstrate awareness of racial privilege. Chronbach's alpha is a measure of internal

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consistency with acceptable alphas over .7 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Cronbach's

alpha was acceptable for this scale within this sample ($\alpha = 0.709$) suggesting that this

scale represented reasonable similarity among items.

Factor two of the CoBRAS had seven items and was designed to measure

unawareness of institutional discrimination. For example, participants responded to the

statement, "English should be the only official language in the U.S." The participants

who agreed with this statement scored higher on the subscale Unawareness of

Institutional Discrimination. Cronbach's alpha was not acceptable for this scale ($\alpha =$

0.577). Given the lack of internal consistency for this subscale, the results were not

analyzed.

Finally, factor three of the CoBRAS has six items, and it was designed to measure

Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues. For example, the participants responded to the

statement, "Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated problems." The participants

who agreed with this statement scored higher on this subscale. Cronbach's alpha was not

acceptable for this scale ($\alpha = 0.625$). Given the lack of internal consistency for this

subscale, the results were not analyzed.

These findings cannot reasonably support the hypothesis that the parents and

AAMAs hold differential color-evasive racial attitudes. This result was somewhat

expected due to the small sample size.

Bystander Intervention in Bullying and Racial Harassment Scale (BIBRS)

Factor one consisted of three items and was designed to measure the participant's

ability to notice bullying and racial harassment. For example, participants responded to

the statement, "Bullying is a problem in my community." The participants who agree

with this statement scored higher on noticing the event. AAMA responses were

compared to the answers their parents provided. Cronbach's alpha was not acceptable for

this scale ($\alpha = 0.451$). Given the lack of internal consistency for this subscale, the results

were not analyzed. The unacceptable alpha indicated that this sub-scale was not a reliable

way to assess awareness of bullying/racial harassment for this sample.

Factor two consisted of three items and was designed to measure participants'

ability to interpret an event as an emergency. For example, the participants responded to

the statement, "It is evident to me that someone who is being bullied needs help." The

participants who agreed with this statement scored higher on interpreting the event as an

emergency. Cronbach's alpha was not acceptable for this scale ($\alpha = 0.109$). Given the

lack of internal consistency for this subscale, the results were not analyzed.

Factor three consisted of three items, and was designed to measure the

participant's ability to accept responsibility to help. For example, the participants

responded to the statement, "I feel personally responsible to intervene and assist in

resolving bullying or racial harassment incidents." The participants who agreed with this

statement scored higher on accepting responsibility to help. Cronbach's alpha was not

acceptable for this scale ($\alpha = 0.646$). Given the lack of internal consistency for this

subscale, the results were not analyzed.

Factor four, consisting of three items, was designed to measure the participant's

knowledge of how to help. For example, the participants responded to this statement, "I

have the skills to support a person who is being treated disrespectfully." The participants

who agreed with this statement scored higher on knowing how to help. The Cronbach's

alpha was acceptable for this scale within this sample $\alpha = 0.734$ (Tavakol & Dennick,

2011) suggesting that the items in this scale represented similar constructs for the

participants. The matched pairs t-test revealed that there was no significant difference

between the AAMA and parent samples.

Factor five consisted of four items and was designed to measure the participant's

ability to implement his or her intervention decision. For example, participants

responded to this statement, "I would say something to a student who was acting mean or

disrespectful to a more vulnerable student." The participants who agreed with this

statement scored higher on implementing their intervention decision. The Cronbach's

alpha was acceptable for this scale within this sample ($\alpha = 0.867$) (Tavakol & Dennick,

2011) suggesting that the items in this scale represented reasonable similarity among

items. The matched pairs t-test revealed a significant difference between the parents (M

$= 4.672$, $SE = 0.463$) and their sons ($M = 3.969$, $SE = 0.94$; $t[15] = -2.63$, $p < 0.05$). The

parents reported higher levels of competency with regard to implementing an intervention

decision. This finding suggested that these parents are committed to PAB and they may

feel more confident to intervene comparative to their sons.

Overall, the BIBRS was not a good measure for assessing differences between

AAMAs and their parents with regard to bystander interventions. The null hypothesis

was retained due to low internal consistency (i.e., factor one, factor two, factor three) and

a non-significant result for factor four. These results were not able to support the

hypothesis that parents perceive bystander interventions differently from their sons. With

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the exception of the fifth factor, this set of results suggested that this measure may not be a good fit with this population, but the small sample was likely a factor as well.

Summary

AAMAs and their parents held similar perceptions of bullying. Overall, experiencing bullying provoked feelings of anger and sadness. Anger was generally viewed positively because it assisted participants to take action in support of people who were targeted by someone in the bully role. Paradoxically, bullying had an element of entertainment. Jokes, laughter, and audience were explored as key components that either escalated bullying or challenged it. The youths were more likely than their parents to describe humor as an important aspect of their social lives. Their parents tended to be concerned that certain forms of entertainment were never intended to be reciprocal. Homes were discussed as a concern with particular attention to corporal punishment, and homes were also a key place to receive instruction on PAB. American society was described as a structural bully, and participants discussed how institutions and institutional actors can assume the bully role. Shifting societal values through education and PAB were key solutions for the problem of bullying.

The quantitative measures helped to isolate participant perceptions of bullying, suffering, race, and bystandership. Overall, the participants had been bullied and used their experiences as motivation to help others who were bullied. The parents were more aware of racial privileges compared to their sons. The quantitative results from the BIBRS and the qualitative findings about standing up for other people demonstrated that

the parents were more confident to implement an intervention decision compared to their sons.

Parents were more prepared to respond to bullying in a prosocial manner compared to their sons. The younger AAMAs supported the idea of telling a teacher, and the older AAMAs were more supportive of immediate and direct intervention. Based upon this sample, it appears that during early adolescence (i.e., 13 – 15) AAMAs still tend to trust institutions compared to older adolescents and parents. However, by late adolescence (16 – 19) this sample seemed to be gravitating towards the parental distrust of institutions. Distrust of institutions within the qualitative findings was generally congruent with notions of taking direct action.

The participants in this sample were reflective about the barriers and supports for AAMAs who experienced bullying. Given that most participants had been bullied and they viewed bullying as something that could cause irreversible harm to others (i.e., suicide), the participants often desired to defend others who were targeted by bullying. This defending behavior was often described through standing up for other people and included fighting. Overall, the participants described a robust desire to take action in defense of others. The parents tended to have more capacity to defend others than did their sons.

Defending a person who was the target of bullying was described as challenging. The participants were concerned about the possible social and physical consequences that may arise if the intervention is not done with care. Education was supported as the key intervention. The participants widely supported the idea that a skill-building curriculum

would be an ideal intervention to reduce bullying. These findings were not limited to the skill building of AAMAs. In fact, these findings indicate the need for a wider net. Schools have generally been identified as the intervention center for challenging bullying, but the findings of this study indicated a community-based approach that includes parents and law enforcement is indicated.

Chapter 5

Phenomenological analysis (PA) is a helpful approach to learning how African American male adolescents (AAMAs) and their parents socially construct, respond to, and reflect upon experiences of bullying. PA asserts that the world consists of phenomena rather than objects (Moustakas, 1994). Participants' perspectives can be synthesized into the following essence of bullying phenomena: Bullying is the abuse of interpersonal or structural power differential applied over time onto people or groups with less ability to respond within the context of the abuse. This essence aligned with Olweus's (1978) assertion that the abusive application of power differential was the defining element of bullying. The participants also agreed with Olweus's repetition standard, however participants described the "over time" criteria within a single encounter (e.g., he kept calling him names) in addition to situations that occurred across several experiences (e.g., he would call him names all the time). Olweus's intentionality criteria was somewhat supported, but the intentions of a person in the bully role was less of a consideration than the other standards.

The main findings of this study supported specific study of AAMAs due to their unique experience of oppression in a U.S. context (Jones, 1997/1972) and the lack of literature about their experiences of bullying. The participants widely applied the concept of bullying to structures and institutions (Alexander, 2012). Applying the concept of bullying to institutions did not appear to be present in the peer-reviewed literature on bullying. The participants had been targets of bullying, and they had seen other people targeted. They were concerned about the mental health of people who were

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targeted and those who were in the bully role. These concerns were validated by the

literature reviewed in Chapter 1 (Copeland et al., 2013; Due et al., 2005; Fitzpatrick et

al., 2010). This sample provided applications for the use of "making fun" as a catch

phrase for bullying from African American perspectives. The data from this study

indicated support for further inquiries into the ways humor may lead to bullying (Mulvey

et al., 2016). This sample also provided evidence of the anti-bullying strategies

employed by AAMAs and their parents. The findings are synthesized below to articulate

their contributions to the literature on bullying.

<div align="center">**Synthesis**</div>

Systems

The participants tended to describe institutional abuses as a form of bullying. One

mother (Bree) described school curriculum as a bully because it systemically excluded

African and African American history. Other parents described their difficulties with

school systems that escalated from minor infractions (e.g., Mom's account of her son

getting in trouble for not having his shirt tucked in). School systems and school actors

(i.e., teachers, administrators) were generally described in the role of bully, but this

system was also mentioned in the role of bystander as well (e.g., responsible for

responding to trauma caused in the community). Several youths indicated that they had

seen teachers intervene as bystanders of bullying. Also, it must be noted that educational

interventions and education reform were widely viewed as the primary mechanism for

anti-bullying efforts.

The literature review in Chapter 1 covered Alexander's (2012) documentation of

mass incarceration of African American men as an abuse perpetrated by the United States government. The criminal justice system was also viewed as a mechanism of bullying. As indicated in the findings parents and youths described the criminal justice system as a bullier. Bell (1980) used the *Brown v. Board of Education* case to demonstrate how legal gains are followed by systemic backlash including the criminal justice system. Critical race theory (CRT) holds power differential as a key component to structural racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The participants in this study on average agreed with CRT principles particularly as they were applied to the criminal justice systems. Several participants discussed their perception that law enforcement should receive additional training to reduce racial profiling. Some participants thought that community-oriented policing models may reduce officer-perpetuated bullying.

Another key finding was a concern about the home life of the person in the bully role. Several participants indicated that victimization, conflicts, and disappointments at home may lead a person to take on the bully role. In the bullying literature a person who occupies the role of both bully and victim was referred to as the bully-victim (Jordan & Austin, 2012). Christie-Mizell, Kiel, Laske, and Stewart (2010) analyzed two-parent homes and found an association between youth's perceptions of not spending enough time with their fathers and increased bullying. When corporal punishment was mentioned it was described as a form of bullying.

On the other hand, the participants also described supportive home life as a key factor for their own prosocial active bystandership (PAB). This perception was consistent with the Black feminist thought (BFT) notion of everyday caregiving as

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normative for African American women (Collins, 2000). Mothers, fathers, and other family members were identified as key mentors for AAMAs. Anti-bullying interventions designed specifically for these youths should address public (e.g. schools, police departments) and private (e.g., families) systems. This inclusion should incorporate the existing strengths within these systems to support AAMAs as they experience bullying.

Targeting

Most of the participants had been targeted or victimized by someone in the bully role. Many of these participants suffered, but their suffering varied from temporary discomfort to suicide attempts. Some of this victimization led participants to help other people who were targeted. Other victimization led participants to become passive in certain situations. The concern for bystander passivity in bullying may be more complex for AAMAs. Based upon the findings, it appears that Latané and Darley's (1970) notions of pluralistic ignorance and diffusion of responsibility were validated by the participants' concerns about passive bystandership. Staub's (2003) theory of altruism born of suffering (ABS) was operationalized by the participants' accounts of defending others through their experiences of prosocial active bystandership (PAB). AAMAs face an elevated risk for suspension, arrest, removal by child protection, and homicide (Alexander, 2012; CDC, 2014; James et al., 2008). These risks to their safety and autonomy may provoke a passive response in situations that are not fully explained through pluralistic ignorance and diffusion of responsibility. The peer group of an AAMA may also hinder him from an intervention (Brown et al., 2014). However, the findings also included evidence that the participants experienced altruism born of

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suffering (ABS) and participated in prosocial active bystandership (PAB) in bullying experiences when the situation reminded them of their own experiences being objectified or oppressed.

Making Fun

The phrase "making fun" was regularly referenced throughout the findings. This phrase intersected with the perception that emotional coercion served as a key motivator for people in the bully role. Participants reported feeling angry and sad when they witnessed this coercion, and often found themselves paying close attention to the bullying. The participants also perceived that bullying intersected with entertainment through jokes that crossed the line, and people laughing while someone was picked on. This form of bullying as entertainment intersected with participant conflation of fighting and bullying. This subset of findings created a robust description about how AAMAs and their parents perceive bullying.

Olweus (1978) indicated that investigations of bullying in Europe before 1970 tended to focus on the problem of mobbing (i.e., group bullying of an outsider). Current investigations of bullying seem to have followed Olweus's lead away from mobbing. This sub-set of findings seemed to anecdotally suggest that mobbing may be more relevant to AAMAs and their parents compared to the current attempt to isolate the interpersonal factors that give rise to bullying. The concept of "making fun" for these youths and their parents appear linked to notions of jokes that lead to fights. Given the unique safety threats AAMAs face, it is possible that they are more likely to notice events where their safety is at risk (i.e., mobbing, fighting) and more dismissive of mean spirited

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jokes (i.e., bullying). Therefore, AAMAs may underreport bullying victimization because they have been de-sensitized by other threats to their safety (i.e., fights, or other violence).

Intervention

Some bystander interventions have shown promise for additional study (Staub, 2011). However, these studies do not appear to include AAMAs. The findings of this study suggest that on average these young men were motivated to intervene in bullying situations. The parents in this study reported higher levels of self-efficacy as PABs in bullying compared to their sons. In fact, it appears that the parents have often modeled PAB for their sons. The participants overwhelmingly supported the idea that a bystander should speak up, or stand up, for the person being targeted by the person in the bully role. Social workers who work with AAMAs and their parents should ask about their experiences of bullying. This line of questioning may help the social worker to assess the youth's strengths and concerns for safety.

Explicit curriculum. The participants in this study provided many ideas about an explicit curriculum that could be developed to assist AAMAs who experience bullying. These recommendations included the characteristics of the facilitators/educators (i.e., accessible, believable, entertaining, genuine). These recommendations included the content of the explicit curriculum (i.e., skill building, vision oriented), the possible audiences (i.e., AAMAs, law enforcement, parents, school staff), and the potential sponsors (i.e., churches, government, schools).

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Societal and Cultural Concerns

The participants expressed a diverse set of concerns about the societal and cultural factors that create a dangerous environment for AAMAs. These concerns are exacerbated in the context of bullying. Interventions designed to focus solely on AAMAs and their families will fall short of the bar set by these participants. Instead, the overall context of the social environment must be considered. The participants raised concerns specifically about the passive bystandership of Whites, males, institutions, and governments.

Other Considerations

The disproportionate punishment of AAMAs in schools documented by Vincent et al. (2012) was evidenced by the systems section above. Some of the participants were punished at school for defending others, but the data were not pronounced enough for its own theme. Instead this challenge was captured as one aspect of their experiences of bullying.

Racial microaggressions (Sue, 2010) were found among the findings, but they were not strong enough to carry their own theme. The participants who mentioned concepts similar to microaggressions indicated that they existed within their experience of bullying. The difference between racial microaggressions and race-focused bullying hinged on Olweus's (2013) concept of intentionality and Sue's assertion that microaggression can include unintentional insults. Race-focused bullying was found in Trevor's description of how he responds to people talking about his skin color. He did not mention his perception of intentionality within these experiences. Therefore, the

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same experience can be described as a racial microaggression. Based upon the findings of this study, AAMAs and their parents may not differentiate race-focused bullying (Mendez et al., 2016) from racial microaggressions. Bullying, race-focused bullying, and racial microaggressions may not be distinct from one another for AAMAs and their parents. This study indicates the need to explore these phenomena in tandem when exploring the experiences of AAMAs.

The concept of interest convergence (Bell, 1980) within critical race theory (CRT) was not evident in the findings of this study.

A few of the parents in this study indicated that they perceive group solidarity to be an important factor for AAMAs as bystanders of bullying. These parents perceived that their sons highly valued the opinions of their peers. Brown et al. (2014) found that perception of peer perspectives was an important factor for African American males in college as bystanders of sexual assault. In Brown's study the participants may have demonstrated what happens in the confluence of racial discrimination and male privilege. The parents in this study seem to be pointing towards a similar concern within the context of bullying. Daniel-Tatum (1997) gave book length attention to this issue, and is a critical read for social workers working with AAMAs. The parents in this study validated Daniel-Tatum's assertion that these phenomena seemed to be especially prevalent in settings where the predominant population is White. There are not enough data in this study to make any conclusions about the role of group solidarity for AAMAs, but there is anecdotal evidence that further studies on this area warranted.

Limitations

The Researcher

Within qualitative research the researcher is considered a key strength and limitation to the study (Padgett, 2008). Interviews can be conducted very differently depending upon the skills of the interviewer (Creswell, 2013). Prior to this study the researcher conducted hundreds of interviews with adolescents and parents throughout his five years of experience in the public child welfare system. Despite his interviewing experience in the social services, this researcher was new to conducting qualitative interviews in the role of researcher. As he transcribed the interviews he became aware of multiple mistakes. There were moments where his prompt was leading, when he did not word a question clearly, and where he interrupted the participant.

The researcher is a White male in his late 30s. He had experienced maleness, adolescence, and he was a parent. On the other hand, the researcher had not experienced life as an African American, he lacked experience as a mother, and he had not raised an AAMA. The findings of this study may have been different if the researcher had been an African American mother in her late 60s who had raised multiple AAMAs. Furthermore, a great deal of the literature reviewed for this study was written by White men and women who may have had low exposure to AAMAs at the time of their writing. The researcher's possitionality was an important limitation of this study.

In attempt to reduce the impact of the researcher's limitations he included member checking after the interviews were completed. The researcher spoke with 26 participants (81%) after the interview was over, the interview had been transcribed, and

the researcher had reviewed the transcript multiple times. The researcher shared

impressions of the overall data and of their contribution to the data specifically. These

debriefings took place prior to the researcher writing the first draft of Chapter 4. A few

of these debriefings were particularly poignant. One parent (Supple) emphasized her

position that a race-focused study is problematic, and in her view future studies should

not include a focus on race/ethnicity. This view stood in contrast with several other

parents and AAMAs who reported that the race focus led them to participate in the study.

One parent (Jon Paul) listened to the researcher's description of the findings and

indicated that he felt the researcher had neglected his perspective about the role of

parenting in bullying. The researcher used this critique as he selected Jon Paul's

exemplars. Three AAMAs asked during the debriefings if there was anything else they

could do to help the researcher. Several participants indicated that participating in this

process led to increased reflections about bullying.

The researcher will contact the participants to distribute the full text of this study,

and to invite them to a community event where the results will be presented after this

work has been defended.

Design

This is an exploratory study with a small purposeful sample of a specific

population (i.e., AAMAs and their parents/guardians) on a particular experience (i.e.,

bullying). The data for this study were collected in a large county in the Southwest.

Therefore, further exploratory work is required to learn if these findings can be replicated

with a different sample of AAMAs. This study was very broad in its approach to

learning about the perceptions, responses, and reflections of the participants. Additionally, this study consisted of a single interview. Cross-sectional studies are limited to information at a single point in time. This study would have been strengthened by conducting multiple interviews over time (i.e., longitudinal design). Any citations of this study should keep in mind the broad nature of the inquiry, small non-probability sample, and the limitations of cross-sectional designs.

The low Cronbach's alpha scores for the quantitative measures (i.e., CoBRAS, BIBRS) may be related to the small sample size. Additionally, the measures that were used were not created with AAMAs in mind, and not with a focus on parents of AAMAs. Neither measure was normed with groups of AAMAs. The quantitative portion was administered after the qualitative interview, and some participants may have been fatigued after the in-depth interview. The quantitative results should not be used to generalize outside of this study.

Sample. Most of the AAMAs and their parents were recruited from organizations that promoted college attendance as a key strategy towards upward mobility. This sample may not generalize to AAMAs and their parents who do not participate in organizations that promote post-secondary education. If this sample had been drawn from AAMAs in foster care, the findings may have been quite different. AAMA samples drawn from other counties, other states, or other countries may likewise diverge from the current findings. The participants were somewhat economically diverse, but a majority identified as middle class. This study was not large enough to discern if perceptions, responses, and reflections on bullying may be different across class identities. None of

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the participants identified as sexual minorities (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, asexual) or gender minorities (e.g., transgender, queer). Therefore this sample may not generalize to AAMAs and parents in the LGBTQIA community. Despite the fact that many participants had lived in other places, this sample may not generalize to AAMAs and parents in other regions.

Implications

The concern for challenging bullying is shared by many disciplines, but social work is uniquely situated to make a contribution to the existing body of research on this topic. This study relied heavily on the contributions of psychologists (e.g., Daniel-Tatum, Staub, Olweus), attorneys (e.g., Bell, Alexander), and disciplines other than social work (e.g., criminology, education, epidemiology). The study of bullying has been, and should be interdisciplinary. This study's focus on AAMAs and their parents experiences of bullying draws attention to social work's commitment to supporting diversity and challenging oppression. Understanding AAMA's experiences can help us to expand the ecological lens of the people who are impacted by bullying, and empower people to intervene in these situations.

Social Welfare Policy

The lack of a federal law on bullying, and the focus of state laws on punishment are problematic for AAMAs. These participants repeatedly indicated a concern for the health and welfare for people across bullying roles. The participants regularly shared their perspectives that many people occupy the bully role without recognizing the potential consequences of their actions. These participants want people in the bully role

to be held accountable, but their reflections focused on educating and providing support for adolescents in all roles (bully role, bystanders, target/victim role). Social welfare policies on bullying should include provisions to discipline (e.g., restorative justice) and support (e.g., counseling) those who occupy the bullying role. The data in this study support Olweus's (1993) focus on educating school staff/administration on the importance of using their influence to reduce bullying. There seemed to be support for expanding this approach to the community (e.g., homes, law enforcement, churches).

Bystanders and people in the role of target/victim also needed support. The participants in this study indicated the use of supportive community leaders, access to counseling, and provision of explicit curriculum may be important mechanisms of support for AAMAs. Social policies at the state level should provide funding for low cost and free access to the counseling and education mentioned above. Any law proposed at the federal level should focus on providing support to people who experience and witness bullying at school and in their communities. Legislation at all levels should support the funding of curriculum designed to teach adults how to effectively intervene in bullying without creating undue risk for future violence against persons in the bystander and target/victim roles. Furthermore, bullying policies should include provisions to support bystanders (i.e., children, adolescents, and adults) who attempt to intervene in anti-bullying PAB in good faith.

Policies focused on anti-bullying must also address confrontations including physical fights. Policy at every level should discourage physical fighting, but these policies should also require thorough investigation into the root of the situation that led to

the fight. A bystander who fights to end bullying victimization must not be disciplined to the same degree as the person who fights as a strategy to oppress a victim. In both cases the fighting must be challenged, and the fighters supported into non-violence. However, suspending a child from school who fights to protect themselves or others is counter-productive if we are truly interested in reducing the incidence of bullying. AAMAs report lowest levels of bullying victimization in high school, but the highest levels of fighting in high school (CDC, 2013). Fighting may be a strategy AAMAs use to reduce bullying victimization. Policies that seek to punish fighting without investigating the antecedents may simply push violence from one setting (e.g., schools) to other settings (e.g., neighborhoods).

Social Work Practice

AAMAs are disproportionately removed from their homes compared to other youths and placed into institutions (i.e., residential group homes, juvenile detention centers) where they are served by institutional staff (James et al., 2008). AAMAs were also the recipients of harsher penalties at school including suspension from school (Shirley & Cornell, 2012). Social workers who work in child welfare systems, probation offices, group homes, detention centers, and schools will likely have more interaction with AAMAs than would be suggested by the population of their service area. Therefore, it is imperative for social workers to develop the knowledge and skills to work with AAMAs. This study can provide a beginning point for social workers to understand how AAMAs and their parents understand and respond to bullying.

Social workers hoping to build rapport with AAMAs may need to develop some

skill in the use of humor. This humor should not include methods disparaging other people or groups. Social workers are not immune to biases against AAMAs and should attend trainings designed to challenge these biases (Sue, 2010). Two examples of this type of training include Undoing Racism and Knowing Who You Are (James et al., 2008). Any humor used to build rapport with AAMAs should avoid methods that could be perceived as bullying (e.g., ableism, classism, racism, sexism). Instead, clever use of language (e.g., double entendres, puns) may be fodder for modeling humor without targets/victims.

Other strategies for rapport building with AAMAs may include the arts. When youths are interested in art (e.g., music, drama, dance, paint) a social worker may become familiar with the messages of the art as a way to assess the AAMA's strengths and concerns. Discovering the interests of the AAMA may help social workers to answer the call of the participants in this study for mentors who promote the safety and well-being of these youths.

For social workers to develop cultural responsivity as they work with AAMAs and their families, it is critical that social workers understand how the social environment is different for them based on their race/ethnicity, gender, and age. This competence may begin by studying the work of Beverly Daniel-Tatum (1997), Derrick Bell (1980), and Michelle Alexander (2012). Cultural responsivity with any community will be enhanced by understanding the importance of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2000), and through the cultural humility articulated by the concept that people are the experts on their own experience. Cultural humility should be coupled with cultural responsiveness. Based

upon the findings of this study, cultural responsiveness with AAMAs may include the practitioner's capacity to demonstrate sincerity (e.g., clear interest in their lives and well-being), presence (e.g., full engagement during interactions), engagement in professional self-disclosure (e.g., what brought you to this line of work), and active engagement in challenging structural oppression including institutional racism.

As peer groups value PAB, AAMAs may become empowered PABs. Bystander interventions designed to empower peer intervention such as Mentors in Violence Prevention (Katz, 2006), may be particularly effective with AAMAs.

Social workers should be aware of the ways AAMAs experience the three bullying roles discussed throughout this study (i.e., bully role, bystander, target/victim). Social workers should assess AAMA bullying experiences in concert with racial microaggressions (Allen, 2010) and race-focused bullying (Mendez et al., 2016). This could be accomplished by observing AAMA social interactions and by asking the youths about any mistreatment they are experiencing. Careful assessment in these areas may help social workers to identify how AAMAs are bullied, and it may lead to interventions designed specifically for AAMAs.

Some of the AAMAs and their parents and guardians articulated their concerns for AAMAs who take on the bullying role. The participants who expressed this concern generally indicated that these young men had been mistreated themselves. Based on this perception, the participants suggested education, counseling, and home interventions for those in the bully role. Interestingly, the solutions for supporting bystanders and those in the target/victim role were not dissimilar. Therefore, one solution would be to roll out

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universal preventative interventions (e.g., explicit curriculum), and reactive interventions (e.g., counseling, home interventions) for AAMAs regardless of the roles they occupied. The main difference for the participants was the idea that these interventions should be compulsory for those in the bully role, and voluntary for those in the bystander and target/victim roles. One parent suggested that teaching social behavior should be as common as the teaching of math and science.

Social Work Education

Schools of social work should give particular attention to educating future practitioners regarding the needs and realities of African Americans and people of the African Diaspora. The historical oppression (e.g., slavery, Jim Crow laws) and current realities (e.g., disparity of justice) of African Americans in the U.S. create a context that should compel schools of social work to dedicate substantial attention to preparing social work practitioners to serve individuals and families in the African American community.

The U.S. continues to become the home for a diverse set of Americans who are perceived to be African American (e.g., Africans, Pacific Islanders) who are likely to be mistreated based upon their phenotypes. Africans and people of African lineage (e.g., those from Caribbean Islands) who come to reside in the U.S. may also be targeted by bullying. Some of the young men in this study made reference to cultural/religious clothing (e.g., slippers, turban) and verbal accents that place a person at risk to be targeted/victimized by someone in the bully role (i.e., nativism).

Schools of social work should consider offering courses such as the course offered at Syracuse University (2017) entitled Principles and Methods of Social Work

Practice with Black Families. A course like this could dedicate a class session or more to the needs of AAMAs. Another course that could be offered would be the course taught at Boston University entitled Ferguson is Everywhere: Lessons for Racial Justice (2017). The professor that designed the Fergusson (i.e., Dr. Phillipe Copeland) leads a closed Facebook page (#SocialWorkers4BlackLives) where social workers can mobilize and share events related to the pursuit of racial justice for African Americans.

In addition to course work, schools of social work should be cognizant of the implicit and explicit biases within the schools. Dean Salome Raheim with the University of Connecticut established the Cultural Competence Action Committee (CCAC) in 2010 and they set out to understand and dismantle social injustices within the school (University of Connecticut, 2017). This effort led the school to establish what they call a Just Community, and this is designed to create and sustain dialogue about social injustices within the school itself. The findings from this study indicate clear concerns from the AAMAs and their parents regarding institutional and structural discrimination against AAMAs. Schools of social work who demonstrate the capacity to examine injustices within their own organizations seem to be more likely to produce practitioners who are willing to do the same.

Future Research

This study was designed as an exploratory mixed-methods inquiry. The findings from the qualitative portion make a substantive contribution towards understanding the experiences of AAMAs and their parents. Future studies on AAMA bullying experiences should focus on qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews. The quantitative

portion led the researcher to conclude that the measures in this study were not a particularly strong fit for this study. As such, the quantitative results from this study should be held tentatively. Future studies on AAMA experiences of bullying should focus on exploratory qualitative designs. Mixed methods designs would be useful in developing a measure of bullying designed specifically for AAMAs and specifically for their parents.

Most evaluations of anti-bullying interventions take place in a school setting (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009). Future research should explore interventions designed for and carried out in other settings such as churches, neighborhoods, and police departments. Based upon the finding of structural (i.e., institutional) bullying, future studies should explore the systemic features that may reduce the likelihood of the intervention achieving the desired ends. Some consideration should be given to the ways policies may encourage bullying and discourage PAB. AAMAs and their parents may be less receptive to interventions that do not address institutionalized bullying. Furthermore, anti-bullying interventions that attempt to change adolescent behaviors without addressing systemic issues may contribute to further victimization of AAMAs.

Future studies should explore also the particular role of race-focused bullying, the role of racial microaggressions, and how these contribute to AAMAs experiences of bullying. The findings of this study indicate the need for anti-bullying interventions that are specific to AAMAs. Race and gender identity appear to play a role in how bullying is experienced. For this reason, future studies should seek to understand how anti-bullying interventions should be designed for early adolescents (i.e., 13-15) compared to late

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adolescents (i.e., 16-19). These interventions should be designed for specific contexts.

For example, school interventions may differ from interventions in religious

organizations. Interventions located in neighborhoods should draw upon the cultural

expertise of people who live in that neighborhood. Overall, anti-bullying interventions

designed for AAMAs and their families should focus on multi-level ecological systems

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979) particular to the person-in-environment model.

Future research should evaluate the effectiveness of interventions with families.

The participants in this study often hypothesized that bullying was the result of distress at

home. Future studies should explore strategies to reduce distress in home environments.

Given that schools have been the primary location for anti-bullying interventions, and

social workers are trained in home visitation, schools and social workers should work

collaboratively with community leaders to explore the possibility of home interventions.

These interventions should be culturally responsive, and should be designed to alleviate

distress at home. These interventions should be evaluated to examine if they are reducing

distress at home, and if the interventions help to prevent bullying.

The researcher for this particular study was a White male social worker who

attended a primarily White university in his late-thirties. The findings of this study were

influenced by the biases and education of the author. Furthermore, the work referenced

for this study called heavily from White male authors (e.g., Staub, Olweus). By way of

contrast, an African American female educator who attended a historically Black

university in her early sixties may have provoked findings that were inaccessible to the

current researcher. Future research on the bullying experiences of AAMAs should

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include a larger team of diverse researchers in order to assess how the findings may be influenced by the researcher.

Opening

This study opened the doors for further studies on bullying experiences among AAMAs and their parents. The questions raised in this study have partially answered how AAMAs and their parents perceive, respond to, and reflect upon bullying. The operative word is partially. Even within the partial answer put forward by the author, there are new questions that have been raised, but they have not yet been studied. Magee (1994) credited Karl Popper with developing the concept that "complex structures. . . are only to be created and changed by stages, through a critical feedback process of successive adjustments" (p. 68). This study attempted to understand the complex structure of bullying experiences. The focus on AAMA experiences raised new questions about how bullying is experienced.

This study raised new questions about the unique challenges of bullying supported by systemic and institutional power: What policies use power differential to abuse AAMAs? How should institutions apply anti-bullying interventions? What can systems do to assure they are not abusing AAMAs? Is there a relationship between corporal punishment and bullying? What can systems do to support families who are raising AAMAs?

This study raised new questions about the ways being targeted is problematic for a population of AAMAs who face unique risks to their lives because of skin tone: What can be done to change the way AAMAs are perceived? How can families protect their

AAMA sons? What can be done to ameliorate the suffering of AAMAs who are targeted? How can AAMAs intervene as bystanders when they face high safety risks compared to their peers? What support does an AAMA need when he experiences a racial microaggression? What support does an AAMA need when he is targeted by race-focused bullying? What are the differences and similarities between racial microaggressions and race-focused bullying?

This study led to new questions about the ways force and entertainment collided to coin the phrase "making fun": What is entertaining about the coercion of emotion? How can bullying attract a crowd? How does bullying intersect with fighting? Do certain emotional or physical responses to bullying increase a person's risk for further abuse? Are certain emotional or physical responses protective against further abuse by bullying?

This study gave rise to new questions about bystander behavior and strategies that might enhance their ability to safely intervene on behalf of the targeted person: What policies might support a bystander to support someone who is targeted by bullying? How can bystanders discern if bullying is occurring? What bystander approaches are safe and effective for challenging bullying? How can a bystander assess if an intervention will make the situation worse? What role does race, gender, and life stage play for bystanders who observe bullying?

Specifically this study focused on AAMAs and their parents as the audience of bullying. The findings and results of this study changed the focus of bullying inquiry by asking the bystanders about their experience. This study contributes to the existing body

of literature on bystandership of bullying by interviewing a group who is underrepresented in the bullying literature. The participants applied the concept of bullying to structures, described how being targeted was problematic for them as bystanders, gave new life to the phrase "making fun," and gave examples of their own interventions despite risks to their own safety. This researcher calls for studies to bridge the gaps among bullying, race-focused bullying, and racial microaggressions. The findings of this study are presented as a bridge between these concepts that have been studied in isolation from one another. Any bullying intervention that calls upon the findings from this study should place the safety of AAMAs as the centerpiece of that intervention. Study findings indicate the need to include structural approaches across institutions to create a context of safety and pride for AAMAs as a precursor to skill development.

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APPENDIX A

ASU IRB STUDY APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

The IRB approved the protocol from 1/15/2016 to 1/14/2017 inclusive. Three weeks before 1/13/2017 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 1/13/2017 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB. In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Travis Cronin
     Travis Cronin

ASU APPROVAL: CONTINUATION

The IRB approved the protocol from 1/3/2017 to 1/13/2018 inclusive. Three weeks before 1/13/2018 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 1/13/2018 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB. In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Travis Cronin
     Travis Cronin
     Lynn Holley

APPENDIX B

Critical Race Theory

Bullying
Bystandership

African
American
Male
Adolescents

Bullying
Experiences

Black Feminist Thought

Altruism Born
of Suffering
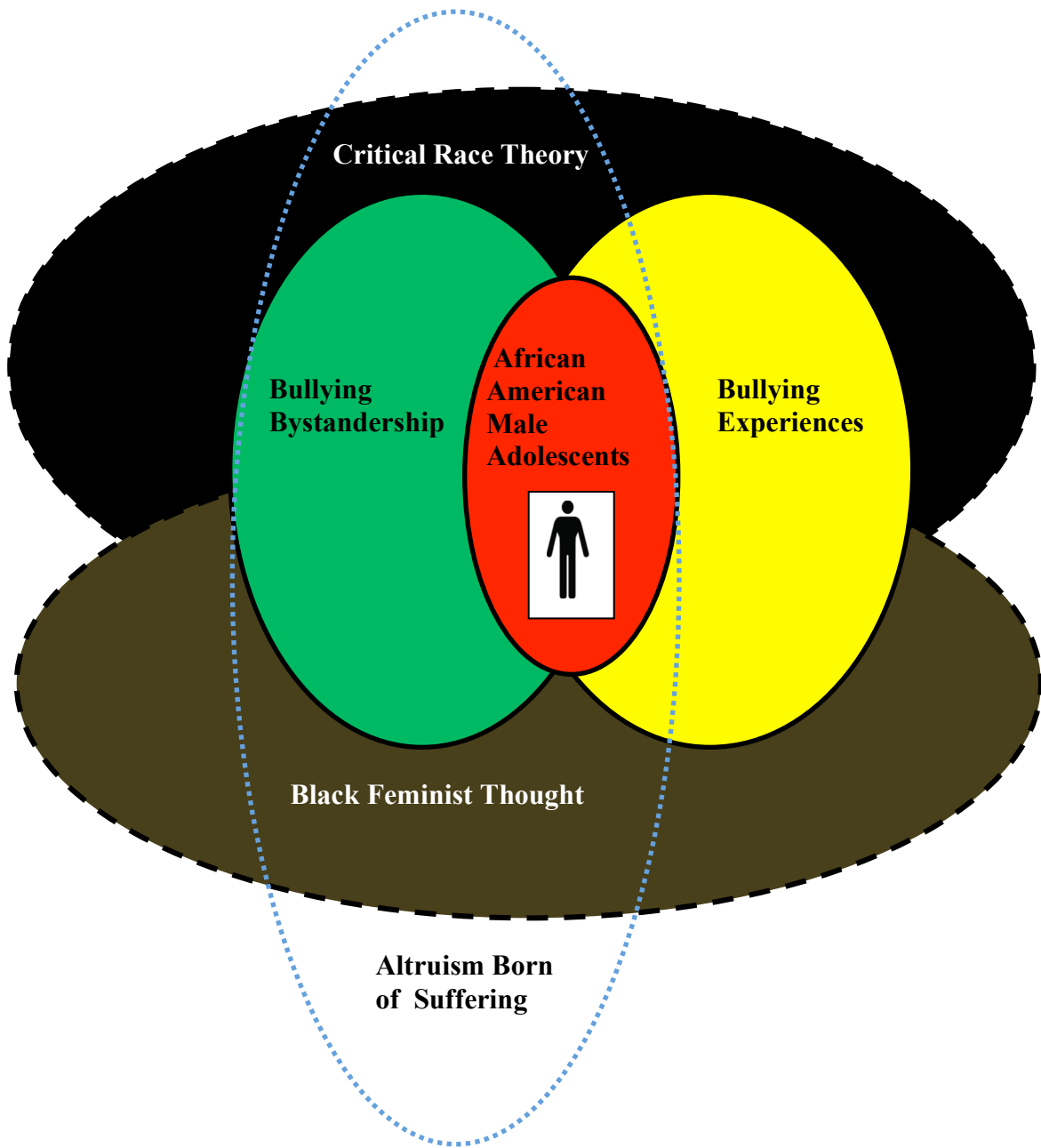
APPENDIX C

ALTRUISM BORN OF SUFFERING

Suffering + experiences promoting psychological change → psychological processes

↓

altruism born of suffering

Victimization (intentional harm)
- Interpersonal
- Group based
OR
"Natural" suffering (non-intentional harm)
- Bereavement
- Natural disasters

+

Healing
- Therapy (including writing, groups)
- Truth and justice
- Understanding the roots of violence

Support by others
- Caring connections in the aftermath of victimization
- Help received at the time of suffering

Actions by self
- Having taken action (in one's own or others behalf) at the time of suffering
- Helping others in the aftermath of victimization
- Learning by doing

The guiding role of others
- Altruistic role models
- Altruistic guides, verbal guidance

→

Psychological Changes
- Stronger sense of self
- More positive view of the world and of other people

Psychological changes— processes that facilitate helping
- Greater awareness of others' suffering
- Enhanced perspective taking
- Empathy/sympathy
- Perceived similarity and identification with other victims
- Greater sense of responsibility to prevent others' suffering

↓

Altruism Born of Suffering (ABS)

(Staub & Vollhardt, 2008, p. 273)

200

APPENDIX D

SCREENERS

Screener for parents/guardians

1) Are you the parent or guardian of an African American male between the ages of 13 –

19 years old?

2) Have you seen multiple examples of bullying within the past few years?

3) Do you spend at least two hours a month with your son/dependent?

Screener for AAMAs

1) Do you identify as an African American male?

2) Are you between the ages of 13 and 19 years old?

3) Have you seen multiple examples of bullying within the past few years?

APPENDIX E

DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL

PRE-DATA

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Unstructured                │
│ Screening and Recruitment   │
│ Interviews/Enrollment with  │
│ Parent and AAMA             │
│ (20-30 minutes)             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

```
┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Semi-Structured         │        │ Structured              │
│ Interview with AAMA     │ ─────► │ Quantitative            │
│ (50 – 70 minutes)       │        │ Interview               │
└─────────────────────────┘        │ (10 – 20 minutes)       │
                                   │                         │
DATA                               │                         │
                                   │                         │
┌─────────────────────────┐        │                         │
│ Semi-Structured         │        │                         │
│ Interview with          │ ─────► │                         │
│ Parent/Guardian         │        │                         │
│ (50 – 70 minutes)       │        │                         │
└─────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
```

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Debriefing/Member Check (20-30 minutes)      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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POST-DATA

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Community Meeting        │
│ (60 Minutes)            │
└─────────────────────────┘
```
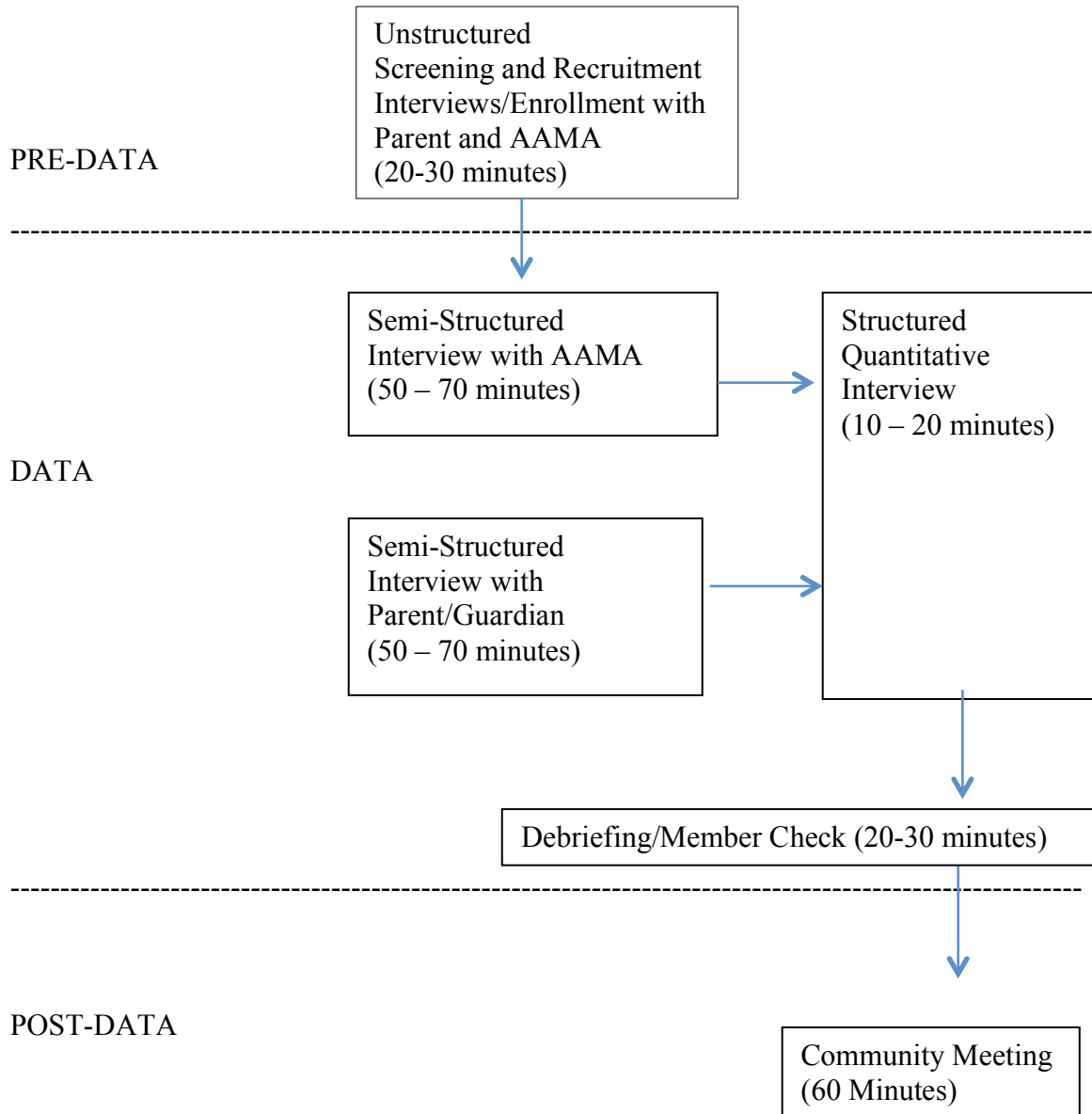
APPENDIX F

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Christina Risley-Curtiss in the School of Social Work at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study regarding responses to bullying. The study is focused exclusively on African American male adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19 and their parents/guardians or guardians.

I am recruiting African American male adolescents and their parents/guardians as dyads. African American male adolescents will not be enrolled in the study without a parent/guardian to accompany them even if they are 18 – 19 years old. No parent/guardian will be enrolled in the study without the participation of an African American male adolescent son/dependent. Parents/guardians and their African American male adolescent son must confirm that they have witnessed multiple bullying encounters within the past few years., Parents/guardians are not required to live with their son/dependent but they must confirm that they spend at least 2 hours with their son each month. Adolescent participants must confirm that they identify as African American and male. Parents/guardians must consent to their son's participation in this study, and each son must provide assent prior to being enrolled in this study.

Each African American male adolescent will participate in an in-depth interview which will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes. AAMAs will receive a $15 gift card incentive for their participation in this interview. Parents/guardians will participate in a separate in-depth interview which will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes. Parents/guardians will receive a $15 gift card incentive for their participation in this interview. During the interview participants will be asked to select a fictional name. This is important because it will help me to facilitate your confidentiality. To protect participant confidentiality you will also be asked not to use the names of real people and if this happens accidentally we will cut this out. This is to avoid sharing information about people who may not want information shared about them.

These interviews will be audiotaped. The recordings will be maintained for up to six months after the interviews are completed. During the six months of storage the recordings will be maintained in a locked file drawer at Arizona State University in UCENT 822B. A master list of the participants and their contact information will be kept in a separate locked drawer in the same office. At the end of the six months the recordings and the master list will be deleted.

The interviews will take place in a location likely to provide reasonable recording quality. The location of the interviews will be selected based upon participant preference and participant access. All African American male adolescent interviews will take place with their parents/guardians in close proximity. It is preferred for the parents/guardians to be in another room during the African American male adolescent interview. However, a parent/guardian may choose to be in the room while the African American male adolescent is being interviewed.

After the interviews have taken place I will contact each participant to debrief the findings and to gain any additional perspectives about my conclusions based on our interview. These debriefings will take approximately 15 – 20 minutes.

Each AAMA and his parent/guardian will be invited to a voluntary community meeting with other people in the community, which will take approximately 60 minutes. The community meeting will give me an opportunity to provide a summary of the findings and give the community an opportunity to ask questions or make statements about the findings. An audio recording will be made during this meeting. The audio recording of this meeting will likewise be kept in the locked drawer with the other audio recordings and will be deleted after six months of storage.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at (208) 697-6994.

APPENDIX G

PARENTAL CONSENT AND YOUTH ASSENT

Title of research study: African American Male Adolescents and Their

Parents/guardians as Bystanders of Bullying

Investigator: Travis Cronin (Graduate Student) under the direction of Christina Risley-

Curtiss (Associate Professor)

Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?

I invite you to take part in a research study because you and your son/dependent who is between 13 and 19 years old have both seen multiple bullying situations within the past few years. You have indicated that you spend at least two hours a month with your son/dependent and your son indicated that he identifies as an African American male.

Why is this research being done?

For the past 40 years researchers have documented a variety of harms related to bullying including suicide, mental disorders, and physical symptoms. Very little of this research has documented the perspectives of African American male adolescents. Additionally, very little of this research has included the perspectives of the parents/guardians of African American male adolescents.

How long will the research last?

Overall, I expect that you and your son will spend approximately two to three hours participating in the proposed activities. From the interview to the debriefings the range of time may be as short as a month or as long as a year (this depends on the collection of other interviews).

How many people will be studied?

I expect about 30 - 40 people will participate in this research study**.**

What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?

I expect that your son will spend 60 – 90 minutes in an in-depth interview. This will include answering open and closed ended questions. I expect that you will also spend 60 to 90 minutes in a separate in-depth interview. This interview will also include open and closed ended questions. Additionally, you will be contacted to debrief the conclusions I come to about your interview and this will take approximately 15 – 20 minutes for you and 15 – 20 minutes for your son. You will also be invited to attend a 60 minute community meeting where I will present the findings from the entire study. The

community meeting will be open to the public and you will not be identified as a participant. During the interview you will be asked to select a fictional name and to avoid using the real names of other people. These measures will be taken to protect your confidentiality. You are free to decide whether you wish to participate in this study.

What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

You can leave the research at any time and it will not be held against you.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

This study is confidential but it is not anonymous. I am obligated to protect your information and I will do this by storing your information in a locked drawer or a password protected computer

There is one exception to your right for confidentiality: If you disclose that you have the intention to harm yourself or others, or that you have harmed a child, I am required by law to disclose this to law enforcement authorities.

Additionally, bullying can be an uncomfortable topic and it is possible you may have some discomfort with some of the questions you will be asked. However, you will not be compelled to answer any of the questions asked during the study.

Will being in this study help me in any way?

You and your son will be offered a $15 gift card as an incentive to participate in this study.

Possible benefits include an opportunity to participate in research designed to challenge the anti-African American male bias found in other research. The findings from this study may help students, helping professionals, and researchers develop a better knowledge of African American male adolescent experience regarding bullying. Participation in the community meeting may facilitate a connection with other participants, students, or researchers.

What happens to the information collected for the research?

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study records, to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

Recordings of the interviews will be maintained along with your contact information for six months after the interview has taken place. This data will be kept in a locked drawer within the School of Social Work at Arizona State University. Access to this data will be limited to those approved by the Institutional Review Board at Arizona State University.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, talk to research team; Travis Cronin (602) 496 – 0081 or Christina Risley Curtiss (602) 496 – 0083.

This research has been reviewed and approved by ASU's IRB. You may talk to them at (480) 965-6788 or by email at research.integrity@asu.edu if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Signature Block for Parental Permission for Children

Your signature documents your permission for the named child to take part in this research.

_____
Printed name of child

_____   _____
Signature of parent or individual legally authorized to   Date

consent to the child's general medical care

_____   ❑ Parent
Printed name of parent or individual legally authorized   ❑ Individual legally
                                                                  authorized to consent to
to consent to the child's general medical care   the child's general medical
                                                                  care (See note below)

Note: Investigators are to ensure that individuals who are not parents can demonstrate their legal authority to consent to the child's general medical care. Contact legal counsel if any questions arise.

_____   _____
Signature of parent   Date

_____
Printed name of parent

If signature of second parent not obtained, indicate why: (select one)

❑ The IRB determined that the permission   ❑ Second parent is incompetent
   of one parent is sufficient.   ❑ Second parent is not reasonably
❑ Second parent is deceased   available
❑ Second parent is unknown   ❑ Only one parent has legal
                                                 responsibility for the care and
                                                 custody of the child

Assen

❑ Obtained
❑ Not obtained because the capability of the child is so limited that the child
cannot reasonably be consulted.

_____

_____
Signature of person obtaining consent and assent

_____
Date

_____

_____
Printed name of person obtaining consent

_____

YOUTH ASSENT

African American Male Adolescents and Their Parents/Guardians as Bystanders of

Bullying

I have been informed that my parent/guardian(s) have given permission for me to

participate in a study concerning my responses to bullying.

I will be asked to participate in an in-depth interview that will take approximately

60 – 90 minutes. I will be invited to a 60 minute community meeting where I will hear

about the findings from this study. I will have the opportunity to speak to the researcher

after my interview to hear his perspective about my interview and to ask any questions I

have about this study.

My participation in this project is voluntary and I have been told that I may stop

my participation in this study at any time. If I choose not to participate, my relationship

with Arizona State University will not be impacted in any way.

_____   _____

Signature   Printed Name

_____

Date

APPENDIX H

QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENT FOR INTERVIEW WITH AAMA

Theme 1: Definition of Bullying

Q1: What does bullying mean to you?

Q2: What do you think leads to bullying? (e.g., triggered by victim, aggressor)

Q3: How common is bullying in your life? (e.g., community, school)

Q4: What do you think about bullying?

Q5: How do you feel about bullying?

Theme 2: Experiences of Bullying and Bystanding

Q6: Have you been bullied? If so… How did it make you feel?

    a. What happened to you? (e.g., who, when, where)

    b. What did you do?

    c. Why do you think you reacted this way?

    d. How did other people react? (i.e. bystanders)

    e. Why do you think they reacted this way?

Q7: Have you seen other people get bullied? If so… How did it make you feel? (2 – 3

stories)

    a. What happened to the person being bullied? (e.g., who, when, where)

    b. What did you do?

    c. Why do you think you reacted this way?

Q8: Have you seen other people try to stop bullying from happening? If so…tell me

about it.

    a. What happened to the person being bullied? (e.g., who, when, where)

b. What did the person do to try and stop the bullying from happening?

c. What do you think about this person's attempt to the stop the bullying?

Q9: How common do you think it is for people to attempt to stop bullying from

happening to someone? (e.g., who, when, where)

Theme 3: Lessons Learned from Bullying and Bystanding

Q10: What have you learned from your experiences watching bullying happen?

Q11: What advice do you have for Black young men who see bullying happening?

Q12: Would your advice change for young men of other races? How?

Q13: Would your advice change for Black young women? How?

Q14: Would your advice change for adults? How?

Theme 4: Concluding Thoughts

Q15: What else can you tell me about bullying or trying to stop bullying that we have not

yet discussed?

APPENDIX I

QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENT FOR INTERVIEW WITH PARENT OF AAMA

Theme 1: Definition of Bullying

Q1: What does bullying mean to you?

Q2: What do you think leads to bullying? (e.g., triggered by victim, aggressor)

Q3: How common is bullying in your life? (e.g., community, school)

Q4: How common do you think bullying is in your son's life?

Q5: What do you think about bullying?

Q6: How do you feel about bullying?

Theme 2: Experiences of Bullying and Bystanding

Q7: Do you know if your son has been bullied? If so… How did it make you feel?.

      a. What happened to him? (e.g., who, when, where)

      b. What did you do?

      c. Why do you think you reacted this way?

      d. How did your son react to this bullying?

      e. Why do you think he reacted this way?

Q8: Have you seen other people get bullied? If so… How did it make you feel? (2 – 3 stories)

      a. What happened to the person being bullied? (e.g., who, when, where)

      b. What did you do?

      c. Why do you think you reacted this way?

Q9: Have you seen other people try to stop bullying from happening? If so…tell me about it.

      a. What happened to the person being bullied? (e.g., who, when, where)

b. What did the person do to try and stop the bullying from happening?

c. What do you think about this person's attempt to the stop the bullying?

Q10: How common do you think it is for people to attempt to stop bullying from happening to someone? (e.g., who, when, where)

Theme 3: Context of Bullying and Bystanding

Q11: What have you learned from your experiences watching bullying happen?

Q12: What advice do you have for Black young men who see bullying happening? Is this the same advice you give to your son?

Q13: Would your advice change for young men of other races? How?

Q14: Would your advice change for Black young women? How?

Q15: Would your advice change for adults? How?

Theme 4: Concluding Thoughts

Q16: What else can you tell me about bullying or trying to stop bullying that we have not yet discussed?

APPENDIX J

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY FOR AAMA AND PARENT/GUARDIAN

1) How to you racially identify?

(a) African American   (d) Mixed Race _____
(b) Black   (e) Other _____
(c) Caribbean American

2) How do you identify your ethnicity?

(a) African American   (d) Multiethnic
(b) Black   (e) Other _____
(c) Caribbean American

3) How would you describe your gender identity?

(a) male   (c) transgender:
(b) female   please indicate: (M to F) OR (F to M)
                                        (d) non-binary

4) What is your sexual orientation?

(a) straight   (c) bisexual
(b) gay   (d) Other _____

5) What is your age _____

6) What is the last year in school you have completed? _____

7) I would describe my family as financially:

(a) upper class   (d) lower middle class   (g) Other
(b) upper middle class   (e) working class
(c) middle class   _____

8) Based upon my family's income I qualify for:

(a) free lunch   (c) I do not qualify for free or reduced-
(b) reduced-cost lunch   cost lunch
                                        (d) I do not know if I qualify

9) Throughout my life I have:

(a) suffered less than White Americans
(b) suffered about the same as White
    Americans

(c) suffered more than White Americans
(d) I do not know how much White
    Americans suffer

10) At least some of the suffering I have experienced in my life is related to my race.

(a) strongly disagree
(b) disagree
(c) somewhat disagree

(d) somewhat agree
(e) agree
(f) strongly agree

11) A majority of the suffering I have experienced in my life is related to my race.

(a) strongly disagree
(b) disagree
(c) somewhat disagree

(d) somewhat agree
(e) agree
(f) strongly agree

12) The difficulties I have experienced have motivated me to help other people.

(a) strongly disagree
(b) disagree
(c) somewhat disagree

(d) somewhat agree
(e) agree
(f) strongly agree

13) I have been bullied.

(a) yes

(b) no (skip to # 14)

13a) My experience being bullied motivates me to support other people who are victims of bullying.

(a) yes

(b) no

13b) I have received support from other people either during or after an encounter where I was bullied.

(a) yes

(b) no

14) Bullying is a major problem in my life.

(a) strongly disagree
(b) disagree
(c) somewhat disagree

(d) somewhat agree
(e) agree
(f) strongly agree

15) How many times have you seen a person being bullied? (Please estimate a number for each line.)

Today _____ This Week _____ This Month _____ This Year _____

16) How many times have you tried to stop bullying from happening?

Today _____ This Week _____ This Month _____ This Year _____

17) How many of these interventions went well?

Today _____ This Week _____ This Month _____ This Year _____

18) How many times have you watched someone else try to stop bullying from happening?

Today _____ This Week _____ This Month _____ This Year _____

19) How many of these interventions went well?

Today _____ This Week _____ This Month _____ This Year _____

20) In your experience, what are the most effective strategies to intervening in a bullying situation? (select all that apply)

(a) Physically confront the person doing the bullying
(b) Physically attack the person doing the bullying
(c) Verbally confront the person doing the bullying
(d) Verbally attack the person doing the bullying
(e) Tell the person doing the bullying that the authorities are coming
(f) Bring the situation to the attention of teachers or other authorities
(g) Let the person doing the bullying know that you disapprove of their actions
(h) Take pictures or video of the bullying and use the photo or footage to hold the person doing the bullying responsible for their actions
(i) Approach the target of the bullying and ask if they are okay
(j) Approach the target of the bullying and ask if they want you to intervene
(k) Approach the target of the bullying and physically remove them from the situation
(l) Find a way to support the target of the bullying after the encounter is over
(m) Other_____

APPENDIX K

COLORBLIND RACIAL ATTITUDES SCALE SCORING INFORMATION

Directions. Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues <u>in the U.S.</u> Using the 6-point scale below, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you <u>personally</u> agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers. Record your response to the left of each item.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree

1.____Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.

2.____**Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.**

3.____It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American, or Italian American.

4.____**Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.**

5.____**Racism is a major problem in the U.S.**

6.____**Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.**

7.____Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.

8.____**Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.**

9.____White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin.

10.____Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.

11.____**It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.**

12.____**White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.**

13.____Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.

14.____English should be the only official language in the U.S.

15.____**White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.**
16.____Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.

17.____**It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.**

18.____Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

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20.____**Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison**

19.____Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.

Bolded items are reversed scored. Bolding will be removed when this measure is administered.

Neville, H. A., Lilly, R. L, Duran, G., Lee, R. M., & Browne, L. (2000). Construction and initial validation of the color-blind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAS). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *47*, 59-70.

The following items (which are bolded above) are reversed scored (such that 6 = 1, 5 = 2, 4 = 3, 3 = 4, 2 = 5, 1 = 6): item #2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20. Higher scores should greater levels of "blindness", denial, or unawareness.

Factor 1: Unawareness of Racial Privilege items: 1, **2**, **6**, **8**, **12**, **15**, **20**
Factor 2: Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination items: 3, **4**, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18
Factor 3: Unawareness to Blatant Racial Issues items: **5**, 7, 10, **11**, **17**, 19

Results from Neville et al. (2000) suggest that higher scores on each of the CoBRAS factors and the total score are related to greater: (a) global belief in a just world; (b) sociopolitical dimensions of a belief in a just world, (c) racial and gender intolerance, and (d) racial prejudice. For information on the scale, please contact Helen Neville (hneville@uiuc.edu).

APPENDIX L

Bystander intervention in bullying and racial harassment*

1.____ Bullying is a problem in my community.

2. ____ I am aware that students in my community experience racial discrimination.

3. ____ I have seen other people being bullied or harassed in my community this year.

4. ____ It is evident to me that someone who is being bullied needs help.

5. ____ If someone makes racially inappropriate comments, the student on the receiving end should realize it is just a joke.

6. ____ I think bullying and racial harassment are hurtful and damaging to others.

7. ____ I feel personally responsible to intervene and assist in resolving bullying or racial harassment incidents.

8. ____ If I am not the one bullying or harassing others, it is still my responsibility to try to stop it.

9. ____ I believe that my actions can help to reduce bullying and racial harassment.

10. ____ I have the skills to support a person who is being treated disrespectfully.

11. ____ I know what to say to get someone to stop bullying or harassing someone else.

12.____ I can help get someone out of a situation where he or she is being bullied or harassed.

13. ____ I would tell a group of my friends to stop using racist language or behaviors if I see or hear them.

14. ____ I would say something to a student who is acting mean or disrespectful to a more vulnerable student.

15. ____ I would tell my friend to stop using put-downs when talking about the person he or she is going with.

16. ____ If I saw a person I did not know very well-being harassed or bullied at school, I would help get him or her out of the situation.

The same 6 point scale from the CoBRAS will be utilized for this measure, rather than the five point scale used during validation.

* Multiple items were altered from the original validation of this measure to shift the focus from sexual harassment to racial harassment. Also, school based language was broadened to the community based language.

Item 5 is reverse scored.

Factor 1: Noticing the event: 1, 2, 3
Factor 2: Interpret event as emergency: 4, **5**, 6
Factor 3: Accept responsibility to help: 7, 8, 9
Factor 5: Know how to help: 10, 11, 12
Factor 6: Implement intervention decision: 13, 14, 15, 16

Higher scores on this measure are associated with self-efficacy in each factored stage of Latané & Darley's bystander intervention model.