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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACIAL FACTORS AND CRITICAL SOCIAL ANALYSIS AMONG A GROUP OF AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH

by

BRANDEIS H. GREEN

Under the direction of Roderick J. Watts

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the contributions of racial identity and racial socialization beyond peer and parental influence, to the development of critical social analysis in African American youth. Young people perceive injustice and inequality in their world in varying ways. The recognition of societal inequalities, or the development of critical social analysis may be a contributing factor to activism for youth. Factors such as sense of agency, parental and peer influence and intellectual curiosity have previously been explored as contributors to activism for African American youth (Watts, 1999). Study results indicated support for the link between racial identity, racial socialization and a specific factor of critical social analysis. Implications of the findings as well as future directions are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: African American, Activism, Sociopolitical development, Critical consciousness, Social analysis, Youth

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by

BRANDEIS H. GREEN

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Degree of Master of Arts

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Georgia State University

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INTRODUCTION

African American youth have often been at the forefront of social movements in the United States. From protesting unjust wars and laws, to the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s and 1970s, these youth have often acted in ways to move the country's consciousness and social climate forward. Student protests led to the creation of African American Studies departments across the country (Franklin, 2003). Students, synthesizing their knowledge of liberation struggles all over the world, created newspapers, study groups, conferences, art and cultural movements to elevate the social, political and racial consciousness of their peers. This socio-political activism was one way that youths chose to confront a society whose policies harmed and restricted them.

Although times have changed, the need for youth to be socially active remains as important now as it was then. However, more and more youth of all races have become disillusioned and less involved in activism and civic affairs in recent years. According to Zukin (1997), only 19% of young people between the ages of 18 and 29 follow politics and government affairs "most of the time." Thirty six percent of young adults report following the news daily as compared to 52% of those between the ages of 30 and 50. As for actual involvement, Schlozman et al. (1998) found that only 30% of individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 hold an affiliation with an organization designed to address public problems through collective action or the formal policy process. This percentage compares to 55% of individuals between the ages of 30 and 69 who hold such affiliations. When race and ethnicity is considered, participation falls even further. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (2003) recorded voter turnout in presidential election years from 1972 to 2000 and found that Latino youth consistently comprised a smaller percentage of the voting population than youth of other

ethnic backgrounds. This gap was at times as much as 20% lower than that of White youth. Although 1984 and 2000, were exceptions, voting rates for African Americans also fell far behind that of young, white voters (Lopez, 2003).

Carpini (2000) has posited several reasons for youth disengagement such as lack of experience with responsibility, which he relates to a *sense* of responsibility. He also suggests that youth lack experience with identifying a problem which affects the self or one's group coupled with disbelief that their actions can make a difference. Carpini also considers the discrepancy between youths' lack of opportunities for meaningful engagement in public life, and their actual ability to take part in the few available opportunities as additional reasons for youth disengagement. Carpini does not; however consider the presence or absence of social analysis in youth as a possible factor in their participation in public life. Carpini's work is in line with the majority of the literature examining youth political participation and social political development. Generally speaking, few studies have explored critical consciousness or social analysis in young people. However, this study suggests that social analysis may serve as one of many steps towards social action, and that for African American youth; racial factors may influence the development of social analysis.

The decline in activism occurs simultaneously with substantial increases in obstacles that youth face. An understanding of these obstacles through a socially analytic eye, i.e., social analysis may be one way that young people can challenge the barriers that face them collectively. Contemporary African American youth, in particular face challenges that are both similar to and different from those of their predecessors of the 1960s, 70s and 80s. In addition to lingering artifacts and experiences of racial intolerance, discrimination and exclusion, youths currently face a plethora of other social ills, such as violence, growing unemployment rates, erosions of

civil liberties and “a dismantling of the social safety net,” (Lang, 2001, p.20). Yet as young people are given less chances for redemption and exploration, such as with zero tolerance policies, on the one hand, after school programs, art and recreation programs, are losing funding and closing their doors. Young people in the United States continue to have fewer rights than any other group and fewer institutions to protect those rights (Giroux, 2003). Given such obstacles, African American youth, now as much as ever need to grow more socially and politically aware and more active. Although socio-political awareness is only one facet of youth activism, and does not necessarily lead immediately to action, it nevertheless forms part of the action-reflection cycle. Activism is informed by reflection on and awareness of social ills and the awareness of social ills are in turn influenced by one’s activism, in a cyclical relationship. Exploring how this awareness or social analysis intersects with racial aspects may broaden our understanding of how to foster political development in youth of color. A component of political development is critical consciousness/social analysis and for African American youth, this social analysis may be influenced by particular racial factors. Ultimately, a critical understanding of social systems and their influences on individual lives could serve to aid young people in counteracting social obstacles and aid in reversing their growing disengagement in the public arena.

While gross injustices and overt human rights violations can serve as clear catalysts for action, more subtle factors may also prompt young people from a historically oppressed group to become socio-politically aware. A complex combination of developmental and societal level factors, such as social identity and awareness can impact one’s understanding of society. As part of sociopolitical development, these factors can enable young people to discern the impact of systemic forces on their lives.

Few studies in U.S. psychology have examined this kind of awareness among youth. As such, the field lacks the theory and research needed to create politically, historically and culturally aware young people. The current study assumes that for youth of color, social analysis may begin with a racial perspective. This perspective includes racial dimensions of identity such as the esteem with which one holds his/her race as well as racial ideology, which refers to one's thoughts about one's race.

Additionally, a racial perspective is inclusive of an awareness racial oppression and a cultural perspective. The next section reviews the literature on social analysis, its development as well as related individual and societal factors. The research questions explore relationships between racial-cultural factors and social analysis among African American youth.

Literature Review

Social Analysis

To this point in the introduction, only the term "social analysis" has been used to describe the political thinking and concept formation that is fundamental to sociopolitical development. In reality, researchers and activists use several other interrelated terms. The concept of social analysis changes depending on the political, economic and cultural context. Originally, ideas about social analysis occurred outside of the domain of psychology, which may be a reason for the varied terminologies. According to Martin (2003), early social analysis had its roots in the Enlightenment's effort to reform classical European views of society. At that time, philosophers and social critics used principles of social analysis to distinguish between societies that remained stagnant and those that underwent change. Marx, who focused heavily on class, incorporated issues of power, economics and struggle into social analysis and used it to analyze the apparatuses that contribute to social productivity (Martin, 2003). In *The Division of Labor in*

Society, social scientist Emile Durkheim, although initially agreeing with Marx's assessment of class divisions, argued that such distinctions would fall into oblivion as societies moved towards democratization. Weber (1920) analyzed social stratification along political party and economic lines and concluded that culture and politics were in fact social constructions and not necessarily determined by the economic lives of citizens. Thus, Weber believed that the existent inequalities and discrepancies within society had roots that transcended the economic sphere. Parsons (1937) also critiqued Marxist social analysis, adding that societies, beyond engaging in struggles for economic power, are also centers of shared meaning that provide an opportunity for groups to build solidarity. He concluded that people exist in communities for survival, for connection and to bring meaning to their lives. Generally, the early European sense of social analysis introduced the idea of class struggle, social stratification, and social change based on economic interests. A sense of solidarity among the poor and working class also emerged as a possible rallying point for confronting economic oppression in this context.

Social analysis in the Americas. In contrast to the focus on class struggle found in early European thinking, North American African American historians and social movement figures such as David Walker instituted a more racialized approach to social analysis. However, like their European counterparts, they emphasized social power and solidarity based on shared experiences of oppression. Speaking from bondage as an enslaved African, Walker (1829) used his *Appeal* to expound on Whites' use of brutality and unimaginable cruelty to satisfy, what he saw as an urgent and persistent thirst for power, profit and glory. In his writing, he implored his brethren of color to raise their consciousness about their condition and to raise arms against their enslavers. Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican born immigrant, began his social movement in the United States in the 1920s, shortly after the end of chattel slavery. His brand of social analysis was an

attempt to rally black people in the United States and the world to a more global understanding of their connections to one another across continents. His analysis of power relations extended beyond country borders into the circumstances of Africans throughout the Diaspora. For Garvey, a critical understanding of the social climate for Black people in particular meant the recognition that Blacks would have to create alternative economies and settings for themselves. These economies and settings would allow for the nurturing and preservation of the then emerging African American culture, as well as provide an economically viable base from which Blacks could support themselves and compete in the global market.

Carter G. Woodson's (1933) classic analysis of the segregated public education system and its role in maintaining racial oppression offers one of the best examples of social analysis in the United States from a historical, racially oriented perspective in his remarkable work, *The Miseducation of the Negro*. Social analysis, in the sphere of education or academia has often taken on a slightly different connotation than that of becoming aware of social ills. In the context of education, social analysis has been termed critical social analysis and refers to understanding education as a vehicle for enlightenment or oppression. According to Smith & Wexler (1995, p. 25),

> Critical social analysis attacked methodologicalist pretenses to antiseptic, certain, ritually secured knowledge… [Critical social analysis] pulled the rug from what had been swept under it—not simply inequality and exploitation, but commodification of all social spheres and its most general human effect in stultification of human potential.

Although the particulars of his 1930's analysis are somewhat dated, the majority of Woodson's critiques regarding the dominant power's social and political agendas for African Americans remain relevant today. His deconstruction of various areas of Black life, i.e., public education, religion, the so-called Black intelligentsia, the Black labor force, Black unity or lack thereof and an overall visioning of the African American past, present and future, gives way to certain

themes. The common themes of marginalization, oppression and identity ambiguity emerge and remain throughout the work. The work of Woodson informs the expanded notion of social analysis that will be used for this study, which will be called critical social analysis.

Notably, for the aforementioned thinkers and activists, a socially analytical and critically conscious African American has a comprehensive approach to social analysis that includes an examination of power, racial identity and oppression. Therefore it is likely that social analysis is intertwined with an identification and solidarity with one's racial and/or ethnic group.

Thus, approaches to social analysis in the early European context and the New World environment, exhibited similar themes of solidarity, group identity and rallying against oppression. Whether the solidarity was formed around economic status, an inferior political position, and/or racial or ethnic identification, some form of solidarity informed not only how people were able to interpret their social experiences, but also how they were able to act on that understanding. Thus, in a clearly economically stratified society where the gaps between the haves and the have-nots are obvious and continually perpetuated, a social analysis, that has a heavy emphasis on economic factors will likely result. Likewise in a racially stratified society, a social analysis with a heavy emphasis on racial or cultural factors will likely emerge.

More recent movements of the 1960s and 1970s put various social identities at the forefront. Solidarity and momentum for those movements were largely centered on issues of social identity (women's movement, gay rights, black power, etc.), thus prompting social theorists to move beyond more depersonalized notions of social analysis/critical consciousness and consider alternative or expanded definitions of the concept. Habermas (1960) crafted the idea of "critical theory." Critical theory is a more interdisciplinary, encompassing approach to social analysis that includes, subjectivity of experience, psychological aspects and issues of

power that extend beyond the economic sphere. The birth of critical theory discourse also signals the gradual introduction of social analysis into the field of psychology. In addition to outward, social deconstructions, social analysis, under the guise of critical theory requires critical self-examination in order to identify internalized aspects of the prevailing social milieu that may be harmful and/or contradictory to the self, (i.e., internalized oppression). The result of this examination leads to the realization of a need for transformation of the pervading social order, and a need for the transformation of, or at least an increased awareness of the self (Martin, 2003). Critical theory foreshadows a later conceptualization called critical consciousness introduced by Paulo Friere. Ultimately, critical theory methodologies focus on systemic factors as causal factors.

Contemporary definitions of this concept have ranged across disciplines, often emphasizing varying aspects. Social analysis has been defined as a vehicle by which people begin to understand and grapple with the particularities of power and oppression. Genwright (2003, p.56) describes social analysis as "…exploring the origins and systemic causes of social and political problems. Analysis can encompass issues of personal identity- gender and sexual orientation, for example- as well as broader community issues of poverty and racism" (p.45). Others such as Sanchez-Jankowski (2002) have recognized analytical lenses based on racial awareness, including historical legacies of racial inclusion/exclusion, and racial privilege. The array of theories and approaches to this concept represent a diversity of perspectives as well as an illustration of a possibility outlined by Martin (2003). According to him "there is no unified theory or social science that can be used as a paradigm for social analysis," (p.54). This lack of a unified theory is accompanied by a lack of standardized measures and studies that evaluate this phenomenon.

Freire's Notion of Critical Consciousness. Educator and activist, Paulo Freire's critical consciousness encompasses both an outwardly analytic and critical theory approach to social analysis. For him, critical consciousness, which begins in the self, serves as both an umbrella term and a starting point for social analysis. According to Martin (2003),

> ..For Friere, the most significant act of intellection is to focus on one's self-consciousness upon an examination of societal and individual contradictions, so that the act of cognition itself becomes a 'critical consciousness,' questioning fundamental assumptions and constantly reconstructing ever new interpretations of the world." (p.101)

Critical consciousness serves as an internal awakening from an illusory world, where various complexities are unseen, to a world, where the particularities of power and oppression become revealed.

For Friere, critical consciousness occurs as the last step in a three stage model of conscientization and is the only step which can lead to second order change of a system and of a person's perception of reality. The first stage is termed the "magical conforming stage" in which problems are viewed, as inevitable, unchangeable aspects of life, and analysis of these facts appear to extend beyond logical explanation. Oppressed people in this stage act to passively maintain status quo. The second stage "naïve reforming" reflects an orientation where people problematize nonconformists within society to either blame them for their problems or encourage them to improve themselves. This approach centers on individual level factors with societal conformity as the ultimate goal, not societal reform. Friere points out that it is naïve to assume that once individuals operate perfectly within an imperfect system that oppression or conflict will disappear. Critical consciousness occurs in the final phase of the model, the "critical transforming" stage. In this stage, "people exercise their critical intellectual skills in naming the crucial rules and roles of the system that create unequal power, place people in conflict and exploit, oppress, or hinder their responsible human development" (Alschuler, 1986, p.86). In this

stage, people acknowledge their own internalized oppression, the ways that they have acted in collusion with the governing system and act to transform the system. Similar to historical and contemporary ideas of social analysis, the social, economic and political systems are the focus of this process. A primary difference between critical consciousness and social analysis is that critical consciousness often calls on the person to examine his/her self and the ways that the "self" has been influenced by being either the oppressor or the oppressed. Traditionally, social analysis gives less emphasis to introspection. However, as an umbrella term, critical consciousness encompassed all aspects of a more historical notion of social analysis, although not necessarily vice versa.

More recent researchers have begun to emphasize both introspective and social aspects of social analysis and have often used the terms social analysis and critical consciousness interchangeably. Other researchers across disciplines have expanded the concept of critical consciousness. Building on Friere's original model detailing three levels of consciousness, Wallerstein and Sanchez-Merki (1994) developed a three-stage model of change. The model begins with an action orientation that leads to "caring" in which individuals actively dismantle their own denial and recognize their role in systemic forces. The second level involves critical analysis leading to a personal sense of responsibility although most continue to attribute personal blame to themselves and others. The final stage involves the development of a social responsibility to act. Watts, Griffith, and Abdul-Adil (1999) proposed a five stage model of change in which individuals move from a critical stage of non-realization, through a second stage of acknowledging inequity but not their personal role in the system. The third and fourth stages include the precritical stage where critical awareness develops, including concerns about inequity and posing critical questions. In the fourth stage rapid awareness occurs and some conclude that

they must act. The final step, the liberation stage includes a salient awareness of oppression and subsequent behavior change.

Carlson, Engebretsen and Chamberlain (2005) have proposed the most recent model of development in which "photo voice" is used as a catalyst for critical social analysis. Photo voice entails a process by which photos are used as a narrative. Four steps comprise this model in which individuals move from "passive adaptation," where helplessness is internalized and personal blame is attributed through the second stage where individuals have a "raw" emotional reaction. The third and fourth stages involve "cognitive awakening" where individuals become sad and feel responsible for their complicity in the oppressive system and the final stage where participants intend to act in accordance with their new consciousness and display hope at their re-envisioning of life circumstances. Diemer and Blustein (2006) have incorporated elements such as community, family and peer support for challenging injustice into their model of critical consciousness. In this model, critical consciousness has been divided into a *reflection* component and an *action* component. Either component can be facilitated by the level of familial or peer support one receives for challenging injustice.

The aforementioned evolutions and modifications of the original critical consciousness concept have sought to integrate internal and external social analysis. All of the models utilize a stage-oriented approach to social analysis to account for the developmental aspects of this phenomenon. They also note that changes in political thinking occur as a function of growth in critical consciousness. Thus, individuals move from an internal state that is blind to social inequity and the role of systemic forces, to an active, inquiry and action-oriented stage through their own growing awareness. The more action oriented or extra-psychic aspects of social analysis coupled with the more introspective and psychological or intra-psychic aspects can

create a unity of social analytic theory and critical theory. Thus, a more inclusive term, encompassing both internal and external aspects of social analysis, would be critical social analysis, (Martin, 2003)

Social Analysis Research

The research literature offers few ways to assess social analysis. Because critical social analysis encompasses both critical consciousness and social analysis, measures that claim to evaluate critical consciousness, can also be conceptualized as evaluating levels of social analysis and vice versa. Researchers have operationalized and measured this phenomenon in a myriad of ways, often in accordance to their own models, such as those outlined above. For example, Beveridge (1984) attempted to capture the level of critical consciousness of church members in a Midwestern church, who were involved in a weekly adult education class. A politicized minister who utilized a radical Christian perspective taught the class. Using their definition of critical social analysis, the researchers determined an individual's or group's stage of consciousness development. These measures of belief and political activity level also correlated with other measures of stage development in the model.

Others have utilized measures and methods that followed more closely the Frierian model of critical consciousness. Alschuler (1975) developed early measures to capture the level of critical consciousness in a sample of Ecuadorian villagers similar to the population with which Friere conducted his original work using a projective measure in which villagers were asked to analyze four ambiguous pictures of village situations depicting a particular problem. Villagers analyzed the situations based on attribution of blame, recognition of problems and solution generation to the problems. Both Bailey (1976) and Beveridge (1984) examined levels of conscientization among groups of women and church members, respectively, after each group

had been exposed to consciousness raising interventions. Watts (1999) using an operational definition of critical consciousness, synthesized from educational research, critical thinking theory and particular work by Ennis (1993), Hudgins & Edelman (1988), Pierce, Lemke & Smith (1988) and Smith & Alschuler (1976), has developed a comprehensive measure to asses levels of conscientization. In the Watts study, target audiences answered open-ended questions pertaining to their communities, which asked them to recognize, think about and interpret community problems.

The role of peers, parents, and the social environment in social analysis research. More contemporary explorations of critical consciousness/social analysis have incorporated factors beyond the individual as possible contributors to the development of social analysis. O'Connor's (1997) qualitative study of African American adolescents found that those who had observed a family member actively resisting racism were more likely to become invested in a struggle and more likely to demonstrate critical consciousness. Zubrow (1993) found that peers of urban adolescents often provide support for challenging injustice and therefore facilitate the reflection component of critical consciousness, even if they do not necessarily facilitate action. Balcazar et. al. (2001) found that incorporating family support for challenging injustice through conversations between members on issues of fairness, equity and injustice facilitated the reflection and action component of critical consciousness in a sample of urban African American families. Diemer, et. al. (2006), utilized mixed methods to explore the relationship between adolescents' perceived level of support for challenging racism, sexism and social injustice, and their development of critical consciousness. Studies conducted by Fine (1991), Houser and Overton (2001) and Lynn, Hassan & Johnson (1999) have explored the influence of school setting on critical consciousness development in urban adolescents.

In the United States, researchers have also conducted studies with women of varying backgrounds (e.g., African Americans, Hispanics, Caucasians, youth and adults) to measure their levels of social analysis in relationship to various other factors. For example, Schmader, Major & Gramzow (2001) found evidence that African American and Hispanic youth perceive ethnic injustice against their in-group as related to academic test bias. However, this relationship was not found for Caucasian youth. As such, while evidence suggests that the process of critical consciousness may occur in and lend itself to measurement with historically disenfranchised groups, this phenomenon may occur differently, if at all, in the power majority group. Consistent comparison between groups of this phenomenon has not been clearly seen in much of the literature.

Watts & Guessous (2005) have utilized several measures to explore levels of social analysis in an adolescent population including The Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJWS) created by Lipkus (1991). The GBJWS is a 7-item scale designed to assess a person's general belief about whether or not the world is a just place and whether people receive what they deserve. What's Going on in Your City (WGIYC) is a second measure used and developed by Watts & Guessous (2004) that assesses respondents' attributions of system-and-individual level factors to ten common problems in their city.

Critical Thinking and Critical Consciousness

Critical thinking skills have also been tied to critical consciousness and measured as such, often offering a more quantitative approach to the measurement of this concept. Hopper (1999) offered a description of critical consciousness that incorporates critical thinking, which may lend some credibility to using critical thinking measures to examine the construct of critical consciousness. More specifically, across studies utilizing critical thinking measures, critical

consciousness has been seen as a way of seriously examining socially accepted ways of thinking and feeling, uncovering underlying assumptions, and “framing notions.”

Typically, education researchers have tied critical thinking skills to critical social analysis and to scales such as the California Critical Thinking skills tests (Facione & Facione, 1992; and Piro & Lorio, 1991). These scales measure aspects of intellectual development that are relevant to schooling, such as, truth-seeking, open-mindedness, analytical skills and ability to make mature judgments. Bloom (1971) created a taxonomy that categorizes levels of analytic thought from lower level skills, including knowledge and comprehension, to higher-level skills of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

In summary, various disciplines have provided a myriad of ways of studying, measuring and operationalizing the phenomenon of social analysis. Theories and models have ranged from exclusively focusing on outward social processes to more introspective analyses of how societal factors have impacted the individual and how individuals have perpetuated social norms. More contemporary models of social analysis encompass inward and outward foci with an emphasis on societal influences on the individual, particularly dealing with issues of oppression and its many expressions. Measurement of this phenomenon does not pull on a generally agreed upon theoretical base, but takes a myriad of qualitative and quantitative formats. Operationalization of social analysis has generally encompassed critical thinking abilities, an emphasis on understanding the intersection of social and individual factors, movement through stages of un-enlightenment to personal reflection and action, and a recognition of the causes of social ills that reaches beyond the individual level.

Specifically, for African Americans, social analysis has exhibited a particular racially influenced perspective. Given the socio-historical context of this group as marginalized,

disenfranchised and as active opponents against their oppression, a racially influenced social analysis has appeared integral to the development of their socio-political awareness.

Oppression- Definitions, Effects, Struggles

Including oppression in a discussion of critical social analysis can provide a context for understanding the importance of critical social analysis generally and more specifically for oppressed groups. African Americans have largely experienced oppression in the United States based on racial factors. That is to say that the "powers that be" have used race as a means to separate, disenfranchise and marginalize African American people. In response to varying oppressions, African Americans have often rallied around their social identity as a racial group. Thus, race as a focal point for oppression and activism, may have influenced how African Americans have been able to understand the social factors which have historically and presently affect them.

Inevitably, the deconstructive analysis of social and political problems, especially for historically marginalized groups, leads to an analysis of power, powerlessness and oppression. Delpit (1995) has emphasized the importance of African Americans in particular recognizing this "culture of power." Although not explicitly stated, housed within that culture of power, is also a culture of oppression.

In the context of oppression, the ability of oppressed peoples to engage in critical social analysis becomes essential to understanding and surviving contemporary social and political problems. This type of analysis can serve an emancipatory function, where the oppressed can gain an understanding of systemic forces contributing to their experiences of inequality, which may or may not lead them to political action. As concepts of critical social analysis have developed, expanded and transformed, definitions of oppression have also evolved.

The Freireian ideology suggests that oppression is the condition that makes the development of critical consciousness a necessity for the oppressed, so that they can liberate themselves and in turn liberate their oppressors, the same holds true for critical social analysis. Only through the deconstruction process can one even begin to challenge inequality in a way that moves beyond individual factors but has a more systemic perspective. Alschuler (1986) provides two definitions of oppression from Friere. The first definition states that, “an act is oppressive when it prevents individuals from becoming more fully human,” (p. 120). A second definition was somewhat less abstract, “Any situation, in which A objectively exploits B or hinders the pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person, is one of oppression” (Alschuler, 1986, p.121). In both of these definitions the oppressor threatens the personhood of the oppressed and critical consciousness provides one way of retrieving that personhood.

In community psychology, Watts, Griffith, & Abdul-Adil (1999), incorporating critical consciousness into their contemporary research on sociopolitical development and social analysis, employ the definition of oppression posed by Moss (1996), Blauner (1972) and Serrano-Garcia, Lopez Sanchez (1992). This definition includes the concept of the unequal or unfair allocation of desired resources to politically defined populations. Oppression is defined as both a state and a process. As a state, or outcome, oppression manifests as the resulting life circumstances of long-term, consistent “resource asymmetry,” (p.121) Oppressed people may also exhibit internalized oppression, which influences them to act in tandem with their oppressors in ways that serve to maintain and perpetuate their subjugation. This collusion speaks to the heart of the introspective piece of critical social analysis. As one moves through his/her transformation, one recognizes within the self, the ways that he/she has participated in his/her own oppression. As a process, oppression is defined as “the unjust exercise of powers and the

control of ideas and coveted resources in a way that produces and sustains social inequality" (Watts, Abdul-Adil, Griffith and Wilson, 1996, p.121). Subsequently, oppression has both political and psychological effects on the oppressed and the oppressors. Bartky (1990), Prilleltensky and Gonick (1994) have been at the forefront of exploring these effects.

Watts (1999) recognized that the ability of people to define themselves and therefore to act creatively in their lives despite their oppression and the unequal distribution of desirable resources, is an act against oppression and domination. In this sense, one's claiming of a particular identity could be seen as a potentially social and political act.

Black Racial Identity and Social Analysis

In the vein of the aforementioned African American scholars, activists, and social scientists, critical social analysis for the young Black person includes an awareness of oppression, broader societal systems' impact on individuals, and a racialized understanding of his/her present and historical context in this country. This context has explicitly paired Black racial identity with political and civil rights, which in turn implicates a political dimension to Black identity. Race as a social construction, can also be categorized as a social identity. Theorists on social identity have offered explanations as to the power and functions of particular identities. Both Sellers (1997), and Cross (1971), two prominent African American psychologists have further explored links between African American identity and socio-political thought. They have developed two of the leading theories of Black racial identity which take into account the African American history of chattel slavery and oppression in the United States. Both theories address the struggle to replace an imposed, negative social identity with a positive one. They have also explored the complexities of the personal and political Black self.

In the present study, race is seen as a category of interest. It is understood as a particular social identity and as a social/political location or lens through which a politicized critical social analysis can occur. Tajfel and Turner (1979) first introduced social identity theory, which involves three central ideas: categorization, identification, and comparison. Identification holds the most relevance for this study. Identification suggests that people identify with groups with whom they perceive themselves to belong. There are two primary ideas here. The first suggests that our identities are a compilation of the particular groups to which we belong. This is labeled social identity. Personal identity forms the second component of identification and refers to one's perception of one's self as a unique individual. According to social identity theory, group membership is salient and important to the person and is not experienced as an outside imposition on the individual. What makes Black racial identity distinctive is that it was an imposed identity and a mark of oppression that defined African people as a racial group and as slaves. It preempted the African ethnic and cultural identities they had prior to slavery.

Sellers (1997) began to explore the link between racial identity and political ideologies with his incorporation of ideology into his scale measuring racial identity. Particularly the nationalist and oppressed minority ideologies speak to a relationship between racial identity and political analysis. The nationalist philosophy emphasizes political and economic self-reliance for African Americans while the oppressed minority philosophy recognizes the common experiences of oppression between African Americans and other marginalized groups in this country. As Sanchez-Jankowski (2002) has pointed out, for African Americans, as well as Mexican Americans, and Native Americans, race has remained the dominant feature of their historical experience. European Americans used race not only to exclude these groups from the privileges of "Whiteness," but also to keep them socially and politically excluded. Thus, racial

identification and racial perspectives continue to influence these groups' thinking about and analysis of the social/political order and their participation therein.

For African Americans in the United States, the extent to which racial identity is salient to the individual may influence his/her understanding of him/herself as a public or political agent. Additionally, this identity salience may influence the extent to which one sees his/her social circumstance through a critically conscious or analytical eye. In this context, "Blackness" moves beyond an individual's sense of self or sense of group solidarity, but also traverses the terrain of public discourse and political power. Very few studies have explored the relationship between these racial factors and this kind of social understanding.

Black Racial Identity Models. Traditional psychological models of African American identity have often acknowledged both a public and private aspect of the Black self. According to Vandiver et al., (2002), Cross' Nigresence model of Black identity development, a seminal work in the exploration of Black identity, conceptualizes two components of identity which are similar to social identity theorists: Personal identity (PI) and reference group orientation (RGO). Personal identity refers to features such as personality traits, which are, represented in general personality expressions. Reference group orientation refers to one's social group memberships. In Cross' original 1971 model, Black Racial Identity Development (BRID) theory recognizes a stage-oriented process of development. Five stages comprise this model: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, internalization and internalization-commitment. Cross' stage model can be seen as a social or political model of identity in that it constantly links racial identity to one's understanding of the social position of the Black race. In addition to the personality characteristics of the Black person, this person also chooses a particular social

identity. This choice is somewhat based in the individual's knowledge of and thoughts about the sociopolitical position of their group.

Robert Sellers, et al. (1997) has provided an alternative understanding of Black identity to the Cross model, which may be more explicitly political. Whereas Cross focuses on the process of becoming Black, Sellers has defined racial identity as the extent to which Blackness is central to the self. He has described his model, the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity as an attempt to resolve the inconsistencies within the racial identity literature. His model recognizes a hierarchical organization to identity attributes as well as an understanding that race is one of a myriad of identities for Black people. His four dimensions of identification: identity salience, identity centrality, ideology associated with the identity and regard with which the person holds his/her race form components of the larger themes of identity that include how one defines one's self (salience & centrality) and the meanings one ascribes to that identity (ideology & regard). According to Sellers, et al. (1997, p.46), "Salience and centrality refer to the significance of race, whereas ideology and regard refer to the qualitative meaning that individuals ascribe to their membership in the Black community." This qualitative meaning is also grounded in the extent to which one has a socially critical or analytic eye. Thus, a person without such an eye may not consider their racial identity as central nor hold their race in high regard because he may believe that the current, negative trends within the Black community stem from an inherent deficiency in the people. Conversely, someone with more of a critically socially analytic eye may consider these trends in light of socio-historical, political and economic factors. This may affect the public and private esteem in which they hold themselves and their race.

Sellers (1997) has outlined the four dimensions of his model: salience, centrality, ideology and regard. Salience represents a fluid, dynamic aspect of identity, while centrality

represents the extent to which race forms a core aspect of a person's identity, regardless of context and circumstance. The third and fourth dimensions seem the most political, as they move beyond one's preferences for self- recognition to the realm of attributions of meaning to identity. The Ideology dimension refers to the meanings that one ascribes to one's group membership. Sellers has described four ideologies, which closely resemble the Cross model: Nationalist, Oppressed Minority, Assimilationist and Humanist. Individuals with a Nationalist ideology recognize the distinctiveness of those of African descent. The Oppressed Minority ideology refers to those who recognize commonalities of experiences of oppression between African Americans and other marginalized groups in the United States. Assimilationists emphasize broader commonalities between African Americans and other members of American society, while Humanists emphasize commonalities between all of humanity, (Cokley & Helms, 2001). Again, Sellers recognizes the importance of including the Black person's social and political relationship to oppression, the powerful majority and others as a piece of his identity. The final dimension, Regard, refers to one's assessment or judgment of his/her race. Public and Private Regard comprise the two components of this dimension. Public Regard refers to the extent to which one views African Americans positively or negatively, while Private Regard refers to how positively or negatively one views his/her own race and his/her membership therein.

Subsequent to the Multi Dimensional Model of Racial Identity, (MMRI), Sellers et al. (1997) developed the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) to measure and explore the validity of his theory. The measure concentrates on the most stable dimensions of identity: centrality, ideology and regard. Salience was not included as it was considered too dependent on contextual factors. This model and scale form part of the focus of the present study.

Summary

All of the above models recognize the necessity of including a social or sociopolitical frame as a component of Black racial identity. White oppression of Black people in the United States primarily on the basis of race explicitly linked Blackness and the political. Thus, as Black people developed their understandings of themselves, they could not do so without incorporating some recognition of their relationship to Whiteness, power and authority. Therefore, "Blackness" became known as a political identity above and beyond a personal one, which would allow for racially influenced critical social analysis. Black resistance, including cultural pride and preservation, has also been viewed as a political act. Thompson and Akbar (2003) have considered this particular understanding of racial identity as a sociopolitical strategy, "involv[ing] recognition of the groups' shared background, history and struggle against oppression and domination (p.84)." This idea suggests that *claiming* blackness is a political stance that requires a certain level of political analysis because the claim of being black in the United States encompasses the group's history of dehumanization and resistance as well as present victories and inequalities.

Despite the clear importance of this facet of Black life, few theorists or studies have explored connections between racial factors, such as identity and social analysis. However, many studies abound that focus on individual level psychological outcomes such as depression, anxiety and other psychopathologies and their relationship to race. Psychology's preoccupation with individually focused deficiency models and studies, particularly in the case of ethnic minorities may have contributed to the lack of research linking social awareness, a positive trait, and racial factors.

Measuring Relationships between Social Analysis and Black Racial Identity

Few studies exist relating racial identity to social analysis. A 2001 study conducted by Schmerund, et al., has explored the predictive ability of the MIBI in relation to views of affirmative action and found that centrality, private regard and the oppressed minority subscales were most influential. Other studies have examined racial identity and activism/political participation (Chong & Rogers, 2005; Marschall, 2001; Leighley et al., 1999; Dawson, 1994; Tate, 1993; Verba et al., 1993; Bobo et al., 1990; Shingles, 1981; Greeley, 1974; Olsen, 1970; Orum, 1966;)

Over the past few decades, a substantial amount of racial identity research has been amassed and significant measures developed. As such, social science has created a precedent for examining racial dimensions and factors in relationship to other variables ranging from psychological health to social outcomes such as academic performance. However, a gap remains in the racial identity literature in the examination of racial dimensions and critical social analysis factors.

Black Racial Socialization

This research study includes racial socialization as part of its exploration of a racialized perspective on social analysis. Peters (1985) defines racial socialization, as the "tasks Black parents share with all parents—providing for and raising children--… but include the responsibility of raising physically and emotionally healthy children who are Black in a society in which being Black has negative connotations (p. 54)." Racial socialization can affect one's social identity (Demo & Hughes, 1990). Demo & Hughes found in their study that Black participants who had received messages about racism from parents were more likely to feel closer to other Blacks and have stronger support for separatism. Stevenson's (1995) measure is

used in this study; he defines racial socialization as " a concept that describes the process of communicating, receiving, and believing verbal and nonverbal messages and behaviors that shape one's sense of identity across the life span…includes both racially oppressive and empowering encounters," (Stevenson., 1997, p.50).

Stevenson extended his framework of racial socialization into a specific scale for adolescents: the Scale of Racial Socialization for Adolescents (SORS-A). Principal components analyses of the SORS-A revealed four factors: 1) Spiritual and Religious coping, 2) extended family caring, 3) cultural pride and reinforcement and 4) racism Awareness teaching. Stevenson also recognized the existence of a proactive and a protective theme within the racial socialization construct for Black families. Protective racial beliefs view the world as racially hostile, untrustworthy. They encourage youth to discern helpful or harmful racial intentions, approach situations cautiously and push youth to succeed in the face of external oppression. Proactive themes encourage individual success based on individual talent and cultural heritage, but are not so concerned with external oppression. The proactive theme comprises three factors: spiritual and religious coping, cultural pride and reinforcement and extended family caring. The protective theme only has one factor: racial awareness teaching.

Stevenson notes the interplay and distinctiveness of racial and cultural aspects. Although race and culture have been found to be highly related in the dataset that will be used for this study (Cartman, 2007), they have also been recognized as having unique attributes. Stevenson's measure of racial socialization includes attitudes about both culture and race. For Stevenson, racial socialization," denotes the processes of child-rearing techniques and messages…about one' racial makeup…social status [and] one's physical presentation to American society (p.50)." Accordingly, race is seen as a socially constructed idea, with reference to biological and

phenotypic features, which in the case of Black Americans, have been used to, “initiate socially oppressive or culturally empowering encounters (p.63).” This kind of racial socialization framework conceptualizes race as the “outer shell” of an individual whereas a cultural framework includes race as one of a myriad attributes of an individual.

Stevenson has posited five ways of exploring racial socialization measurement. Four of these approaches center around adolescent and parental beliefs about and experiences of racial socialization while the fifth explores the extent to which parental and adolescent communications and experiences match with one another. In other words, the fifth dimension explores that gap between what parents say they are imparting to their children versus what the children actually receive.

Given the extent to which racial socialization practices encompass learning about levels of social awareness and critical thinking, along racial lines, investigating the relationship between particular aspects of racial socialization and levels of critical social analysis may shed light on how socialization processes may influence an awareness and understanding of systems, institutions and their influences on individuals. Racial socialization has been measured in relationship to academic achievement (Bowman, & Howard, 1985; Marshall, 1995) anger/conflict (Johnson, 1989, Johnson & Greene, 1991; Njeri, 1993), stress (Pearlin, 1982) HIV/AIDS prevention (Rupp & Stevenson, 1998), and identity (Spencer, Swanson & Cunningham, 1991; Stevenson, 1995b). However, theorists have yet to explore the relationship between racial socialization and social analysis.

The Present Study

Adolescence provides a pivotal time in development with regard to racial factors and sociopolitical awareness or critical social analysis. The Adolescent Survey of Black Life assesses

three discrete themes often found in the literature: beliefs about blackness, attitudes towards Whites and attitudes about racism (Resnicow et al., 1999). Authors also described a “pro-Black” factor, which includes items that may illuminate some elements of the Black American experience as well as Afrocentric aspects of identity (Resnicow et al., 1999). According to Flanagan & Faison (2001), by high school, adolescents have already begun to explore the political world. Spencer (1999) also notes that racial identity and awareness of actual or potential discrimination has also become salient for young people in this developmental stage.

The preceding review has noted that although well-established measures for evaluating social analysis in adolescents do not exist, instruments measuring their cultural and racial attitudes do (Resnicow et a., 1999; Stevenson, 1994). This study explores the utility of a recently-developed instrument for the measure of social analysis among urban adolescents, and its relationship to Black racial identity and socialization. The first aim of this study is to examine the relationship between private regard, a racial identity component, and cultural pride, a racial socialization component. The literature suggests that although the concepts of race and culture are distinctive, they also share some attributes. Those subscales have been found to capture one’s esteem for one’s race as well as one’s desire to perpetuate one’s culture. Both of these ideas appear intuitively related. The second aim of the study seeks to explore how specific racial elements (i.e., racial private regard, an oppressed minority ideology, and an orientation towards cultural pride and reinforcement) influence critical social analysis in African American adolescents. Furthermore, the study proposes that these racial elements predict critical social analysis above and beyond known predictors of activism and social analysis, such as parental involvement in, or support for activism, and peer support for or involvement in activism. This study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: There will be a moderate positive correlation between racial identity and racial socialization.

H2: Peer support for or involvement in activism will account for significant variance in the prediction of social analysis.

H3: Parental involvement in activism will account for significant variance in the prediction of social analysis.

H4: Racial identity and/or racial socialization will account for significant variance in the prediction of social analysis.

H5: When entered into a single equation, each of the following will account for significant variance in the prediction of social analysis: Peer support for or involvement in activism; parental involvement in activism; racial identity and/or racial socialization.

METHODS

Participants

Data was compiled from two different studies of youth activism conducted in Chicago (N=160) and in Atlanta (N=174), for a total of 334 adolescents. All participants identified as Black or African American. Sixty percent of the Atlanta participants and 58% of the Chicago participants identified as female. Participants' ages ranged from 13 to 19 with a mean age of 15.9, and a median age of 16 for the Chicago youth and a mean age of 15.24 (SD=1.47) for the Atlanta youth. Of the Atlanta participants, five indicated that they were born outside of the United States, although they identified as African American. The Chicago participants were drawn from a study that examined comparison data of students who were members of a math literacy/social justice program. Thus, the baseline data from the students in the comparison group and the students recruited for the program will be used for data analysis. Three different after school program sites were used in the study. The Atlanta dataset was derived from a study about youth sociopolitical development.

A power analysis was conducted for this sample for a multiple regression analyses with a significance level at .05. In this analysis, with a sample size of 334, the study will have a power of 99% ($r^2 = .05$) to yield a statistically significant result.

Procedure

The Chicago data of the present study used surveys originally collected to study the outcomes of a math literacy/social justice youth program. The sample included a total of 196 participants from the Chicago, IL area. Paper and pencil surveys were distributed to youth in a group format at various sites of the math literacy/sociopolitical development program and at the sites of three after school programs. Program participants came from over 100 various high

schools. Surveys were administered during or immediately following program activities. Adult staff and an on site research assistant collected data. Data was collected between November 2004 and August 2005.

Researchers obtained parental consent prior to data collection and youth assent was obtained at the beginning of data collection. Participation was voluntary for all participants and potential participants who abstained or withdrew their participation were not penalized. Each participant was given a movie ticket as an incentive for their involvement in the study.

The Atlanta data set originally included a total of 223 high school aged adolescents from various sites in the city. This data was collected between February 2004 to November 2005. Approximately half of the sample was obtained through oversampling of young people who were already active in their communities. In order to sample these young people, researchers chose various youth focused groups and organizations as recruitment sites. Other youth, who endorsed less activism, were drawn from venues such as public/private high schools, as well as other social, athletic or church groups/events. Researchers offered incentives to the organizations such as workshops facilitated by research staff on relevant youth related topics, and networking and publicizing opportunities on a website created for the project. Each youth received $7 or a free movie pass as well as an opportunity to win a variety of prizes (valued up to $100) through a drawing. Researchers informed the organizations and the young people that their participation was to be voluntary.

Most participants completed the surveys in small groups of 10-25 people and trained research assistants facilitated the survey administrations. In the case of an individual administration, an adult or research assistant supervised the survey administration. Research assistants were also trained to adjust the administration level of the survey in the case of literacy

difficulties, which included reading survey items aloud. Parental consent was also obtained for those participants under age 18.

Measures

Demographic Information. Participants were asked to report their race/ethnicity, gender, academic ranking, birth date, grade level and other demographic information. Participants were also asked to provide information regarding their parents' level of social/political activism and type of activities they were involved in, as well as peer involvement in social/political activism. *Measures of Social analysis*: How youth understood issues of justice and equality and the root causes of common social problems.

Global belief in a Just World Scale (*GBJWS)* (Lipkus, 1991). The GBJWS is a 7-item scale that assesses a person's general belief that the world is just and people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. This scale is derived from a significant body of research in Social Psychology on just world beliefs, and has proven to be the strongest measurement to date of this concept. It has achieved Cronbach's alpha reliabilities that range from .80 (O'Connor, Morrison & Morrison, 1996) to .83 (Lipkus, 1991). Items are ranked on a 4-point Likert scale from (1) "strongly disagree" to (4) "strongly agree," and include such statements as " I feel that people earn the rewards and punishments they get" and "I feel that people who have problems have brought them on themselves." The GBJWS was used to assess one aspect of critical social analysis.

What's Going on in Your City? (WGIYC) (Watts & Guessous, 2004). This 20-item instrument assesses respondents' endorsements of individual-and systems-level explanations of ten common problems in their city of residence. One pair of items (#6) was removed because it was not as conceptually refined as the other items. Factor analysis confirmed the existence of

two subscales: individual-Level Attributions and Systems-Level Attributions. Because these two types of explanations are not mutually exclusive, respondents rate each type of explanation separately. For example on the issue of homelessness, they rate the following two explanations: "there is not enough affordable housing" and "some people don't want to find a job and hold onto it." Each explanation is rated on a 4-point Likert scale that ranges from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Measures of Ethnoracial & Cultural Identity: Identification and affective experience of one's cultural and ethnoracial group memberships.

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton & Smith, 1997) The MIBI is a 51- item scale based on Sellers' Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). Factor analysis resulted in eight subscales- Racial Centrality Salience, Centrality, Private Regard, Public Regard and four ideology subscales. The present study utilizes two modified subscales to measure two aspects of racial identity: Private Regard and the Oppressed Minority ideology. The Private Regard subscale assesses one's affective evaluation of his/her own ethnoracial group membership. The 9-item Oppressed Minority ideology subscale measures the extent to which an individual identifies his/her experience of oppression as related to the experiences of oppression encountered by other ethnoracial groups. All items utilize a 7-item Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree to strongly agree." The MIBI carries a coefficient alpha ranging from .60-.79.

Scale of Racial socialization for African American Adolescents (SORS-A) (Stevenson, 1994). The SORS-A was designed to measure an adolescent's perspective regarding the importance or relevance of racial socialization practices in educational, family and social situations. One modified subscale from this instrument was utilized in the present study: Cultural

Pride & Reinforcement. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The measure’s creator reports a coefficient alpha of .62. This measure was used to evaluate one other racial factor.

Political Socialization Scale. This 12-item scale was constructed specifically for the Chicago youth study in order to assess the extent and type of societal involvement that respondents were exposed to in childhood. This scale asks respondents about the societal involvement of their parents or guardians and adult friends or mentors outside of the home. Items range from “direct action or protests for a political cause” to “held a job that involved working with or providing services to oppressed people.” Responses were ranked on a 3-item scale (“never,” “sometimes,” and “often”). Responses for parental/guardian involvement are computed separately from responses for other adult involvement. A mean score is computed.

Data Analytic Procedure

The independent variables for this study were obtained from two separate measures of racial/ethnic identity and racial socialization. Both instruments were used to measure different racial aspects in the sample. The dependent variables were compiled from two separate measures of social analysis. These measures were designed to examine individual versus systemic causes of social ills and general beliefs about justice and equality in the world.

Preliminary data analysis: Frequencies and descriptive statistics will be obtained to examine the distribution of scores in the data set as well as the variance. Potential outliers will be identified and, depending on the existence of a pattern and the amount of outliers, may be excluded. Non normal distributions of the data will also be identified and examined. A Pearson’s correlation matrix of all the variables will test for covariance with -1 indicating a perfect

negative relationship, +1 indicating a perfect positive relationship and 0 indicating no relationship at all.

Hypothesis testing: The convergent and discriminant validity of the measures of social analysis and racial factors will be examined through bivariate correlational analysis. Next, a Pearson's correlation will be run with the two subscales measuring racial factors to explore the relationship between them. Ultimately, the researcher will examine the relationships among the variables and decide which ones to use for the regression analyses, depending upon, for example, the strength of the correlation relationships.

Stepwise regression analyses will be used to test the unique influence of racial factors on social analysis. A significance value of .05 will to be used to detect an effect. The researcher will use this procedure for two separate regressions. Demographic variables such as age and gender will be entered into the first step of the analysis to control for their effects on the outcome variable. The researcher will then enter familial and peer involvement or support for activism in the second step. Both of these factors have been shown to have a relationship to youth activism and critical social analysis. To test the unique influence of race factors above and beyond familial and peer involvement or support for activism, the racial factors, i.e., Private Regard, Oppressed Minority Ideology, and Cultural Pride & Reinforcement will be entered into the last step of the analysis. The factors will be entered in no particular order as no theoretical grounding exists to suggest that one of the racial variables influences social analysis any more than another of these variables. The first hierarchical regression analysis will regress the above mentioned variables on the scores obtained from the *Global Belief in a Just World* scale as one indicator of critical social analysis. The second analysis will regress the above mentioned variables on the scores from the *What's Going on in Your City* scale, the second indicator of social analysis.

RESULTS

Two scales measuring separate aspects of social analysis comprised the dependent variables in this study: the Global Belief in a Just World scale (*GBJWS*) (*M*= 2.50, *SD* = .51) and both subscales of the What's Going on in Your City? (*WGIYC*) measure. WGIYC includes the Individual-Level Attributions component (*M*= 2.65 *SD*= .52) and the Systems Level Attributions component (*M*= 2.71, *SD* = .50). The independent variables used for this study were the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (*MIBI*) Private Regard subscale (M= 5.84, *SD* = 1.25), the Oppressed Minority subscale (*M* =5.10, *SD* = 1.25) and the Scale of Racial Socialization for Adolescents (*SORS-A*) Cultural Pride and Reinforcement subscale (*M*= 3.84, *SD* = .70). These are measures of different racial and cultural factors. The Political Socialization scale (*PS*), measuring parental & adult involvement in social/political activities (*M*= 1.14, *SD*= .41) and a Subjective Inventory of Support (*SIOS*), measuring friends' involvement in and/or support for social/political activities, (*M*= 1.14, *SD* = .43) were entered as covariates. Reliability statistics indicated Cronbach's alphas for each scale: *GBJWS* (α = .70), *WGIYC* (α =.742), *MIBI* (α = .737), *SORSA* (α = .830), *SIOS* (α = .766), and *PS Parent & Adult* (α = .839).

Although some of the variables were not normally distributed, the sample size and robust nature of regression analysis allows for these deviations from normality. In the same vein, all variables fell within acceptable limits for kurtosis and skewness. Multicollinearity diagnostics indicated that this assumption had been met as well.

Preliminary Analyses

The final data set included responses from a Chicago and an Atlanta sample of African American youth (See Table 1).

Table 1
Demographic and Descriptive Characteristics by City

	Atlanta (*n*=175)	Chicago (*n*=184)
Sex		
Male	68(39.3%)	69(37.5%)
Female	105(60.7%)	113(61.4%)
Age		
10-13	17(9.7%)	31(2.2%)
14-17	141(80.6%)	143(78.2%)
18-21	17(9.7%)	36(19.7%)
GPA		
1.00-2.00	1(.8%)	23 (11.9%)
2.10-3.00	32(24.5)	59(46.9%)
3.10-4.00	99(74.2%)	44(41.2%)
Plans after H.S		
Go to work	7(4.1%)	11(6.1%)
Get additional education/training	4(2.3%)	5(2.8%)
Finish a two-year college program	16(9.1%)	18(10%)
Finish a four-year college program	72(42.1%)	85(47.2%)
Get professional or graduate degree	58(33.9%)	52(28.9%)
Other	13(7.6%)	3(1.7%)

In order to test for equality of variances between the Atlanta and Chicago samples, and for mean differences, independent t-tests were performed. Significant differences in the variance on the Systems Attributions subscale were found, while all other variances can be assumed to be equal. Some significant differences between means did exist. In terms of racial identity, the Chicago sample endorsed a slightly higher level of esteem for themselves as African Americans (M= 6.00, SE = .10) than the Atlanta sample (M= 5.68, SE = .10). The second significant difference between samples was found in the Individual Attribution subscale. The Chicago sample tended to endorse individual factors as the root causes of social problems (M= 2.73, SE = .03) slightly more than the Atlanta sample (M= 2.35, SE = .06). It is important to note that there was a substantial difference between numbers of respondents on this subscale between the cities. The

Chicago sample had a larger number of valid cases (N= 154), than the Atlanta sample (N=68). During the data collection period, researchers did not have this scale available to all of the Atlanta respondents. This same difference was apparent on the Systems Attributions subscale as well. This difference in sample size may have impacted the amount of variability in the data set of the two cities. The difference in the means on the measure of the youth's Belief in a Just World also approached, but did not reach significance at the .05 level. (See Table 2)

Table 2
Regional Differences in Predictor and Dependent Variables

	Atlanta (*n*=175)		Chicago (*n*=184)			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	df	t
PS Parent & Adult Involvement	6.34	68.5	1.52	.39	424	-1.03
SIOS friends, MEAN	1.19	.40	1.16	.46	401	-.63
MIBI Private Regard	5.67	1.26	6.00	1.20	372	2.41*
MIBI Oppressed Minority	5.16	1.19	5.03	1.25	306	-.76
SORSA Cultural Pride & Reinforcement	3.76	.70	4.00	.68	370	1.93
GBJWS	2.38	.51	2.55	.56	458	1.96
WGIYC System Attributions	2.71	.56	2.75	.47	285	.71
WGIYC Individual Attributions	2.35	.54	2.73	.49	284	5.19**

* $p < .05$, ** $p<.01$

In order to test for equality of variances between male and female respondents in the sample, t-tests were performed on the predictor and dependent variables (See Table 3). Although no significant differences were found between means, there were two variables that approached significance at the .05 level. On the MIBI Oppressed Minority subscale, females (M=5.22, SE = .10) identified with this scale slightly more than males (M = 4.91, SE = .12). On the SORSA Cultural Pride and Reinforcement subscale, females (M = 3.90, SE = .05) endorsed slightly more

cultural pride than males (M= 3.75, SE = .07). This indicates that the samples had virtually equal distributions of scores and participants did not respond significantly differently to the surveys.

Table 3
Gender Differences in Predictor and Dependent Variables

	Males (*n*=137)		Females(*n*=218)			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	df	t
PS Parent & Adult Involvement	9.29	87.82	1.53	.41	128	1.00
SIOS friends, MEAN	3.42	3.67	2.64	3.05	317	2.04
MIBI Private Regard	5.77	1.26	5.89	1.24	311	-.82
MIBI Opp. Minority	4.91	1.24	5.22	1.24	248	-1.97
SORSA Cul. Pride	3.75	.74	3.91	.67	308	-1.98
GBJWS	2.55	.48	2.47	.52	353	1.46
WGIYC System Attributions	2.64	.51	2.74	.48	218	-1.50
WGIYC Individual Attributions	2.63	.57	2.66	.50	217	-.41

* p < .05, ***p* < .01

Major Analyses

Hypothesis 1: The findings supported the first hypothesis. A significant positive correlation was found between racial socialization and both components of racial identity. This correlation was found in both the Atlanta and Chicago sample separately and replicated when both regions were combined into one dataset. Private Regard was significantly correlated with Cultural Pride and Reinforcement, (r = .32. p < .01). Oppressed Minority Ideology was also significantly correlated with Cultural Pride and Reinforcement, (r = .16, p < .05). These correlations indicate that racial socialization and racial identity have significant but moderate to nominal positive relationships with one another. As such, they can be understood to tap into different areas of one’s racial understanding.

Additional correlation analyses were run on the entire dataset comprised of the Atlanta and the Chicago sample in order to explore associations between social analysis, racial identity and racial socialization. To account for significant mean differences found in previous analyses and unequal variance between groups on the Systems Attributions subscale, separate correlations were run on the MIBI Private Regard variable and both subscales of the WGIYC measure. The same significant relationships were found on the MIBI Private Regard subscale, when tested separately by city, as was found in the analyses which included both cities. On the WGIYC subscales, relationships were present in the larger dataset that were not evident when the data was separate. This can be attributed at least in part, to the smaller proportion of valid cases in the Atlanta sample on this particular measure.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following results pertain to the entire dataset inclusive of both cities. Significant correlations were found among the social analysis factors themselves and between the social analysis factors, racial identity and racial socialization. "Belief in a just world" was significantly correlated with the Individual Attributions subscale (r =.33, p <.01), and Racial Private Regard (r = -.13, p <.05). The moderate positive relationship between the belief that the world is a just place and a tendency to attribute social problems such as drugs and homelessness to the behavior of individuals implies that people get what they deserve and that personal behavior is the cause of community problems The weak negative correlation between belief in the world as a just place and one's personal regard as an African American indicates that those who see the world as unjust, have a more positive view of their racial identity.

The Systems Attributions subscale was significantly correlated with the Individual Attributions subscale (r = .37, p < .01) and Cultural Pride (r =.22, p <.01). In the separated dataset, a significant relationship between the Systems Attributions subscale and Cultural Pride,

was found only in the Chicago sub-sample, (r =.32, p<.01). Therefore, this relationship may speak more to the Chicago sub-sample than the sample in its entirety.

The Individual Attributions subscale showed a slight correlation with both Racial Private Regard (r = .15, p <.05) and Cultural Pride (r = .17, p <.05). These relationships were not expected. The weak positive relationship to private regard may indicate that those who think highly of their membership in the African American race also believe social problems can be blamed on individual factors and/or decisions. Similarly, the relationship between individual attributions of community problems and cultural pride suggests that those who blame individuals for community problems also believe that positive cultural factors should be incorporated into educating African American children. Correlations are presented for the entire data set (See Table 4), for the Chicago sample (See Table 5) and the Atlanta sample, respectively (See Table 6).

Table 4
Intercorrelations, Means and Standard Deviations for Racial Identity, Racial Socialization and Social Analysis Variables- Complete Data Set

	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD
1. GBJWS	1	.12	.33**	-.13*	-.05	.07	2.50	.51
2. WGIYC Sys. Attributions		1	.37**	.04	.10	.22**	2.72	.50
3. WGIYC Ind. Attributions			1	.15*	-.12	.17*	2.65	.52
4. Private Regard				1	.32**	.32**	5.84	1.25
5. Oppressed Minority					1	.16*	5.10	1.25
6. Cultural Pride						1	3.84	.70

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Table 5
Intercorrelations, Means and Standard Deviations for Racial Identity, Racial Socialization and Social Analysis Variable – Chicago Data Set

	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD
1. GBJWS	1	.09	.26**	-.15	-.02	.19*	2.55	.52
2. WGIYC Sys. Attributions		1	.34**	.05	.10	.32**	2.73	.46
3. WGIYC Ind. Attributions			1	.05	-.12	.16	2.77	.47
4. Private Regard				1	.28**	.21*	6.01	1.23
5. Oppressed Minority					1	.11	5.05	1.30
6. Cultural Pride						1	3.92	.70

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 6
Intercorrelations, Means and Standard Deviations for Racial Identity, Racial Socialization and Social Analysis Variable- Atlanta Data Set

	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD
1. GBJWS	1	.16	.40**	-.15	-.09	-.07	2.45	.48
2. WGIYC Sys. Attributions		1	.47**	-.04	0	.04	2.68	.58
3. WGIYC Ind. Attributions			1	-.11	0	.07	2.39	.54
4. Private Regard				1	.36**	.42**	5.68	1.25
5. Oppressed Minority					1	.26*	5.17	1.17
6. Cultural Pride						1	3.76	.70

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Regression Analyses

In order to test the remaining hypotheses, regressions were performed on each social analysis scale separately. Regressions were run for the GBJWS and on the Individual Attributions and the Systems Attributions subscales of the WGIYC measure. In order to control for regional differences, City was entered into the first step of the analyses. However, a significant portion of the Atlanta sample did not receive the WGIYC scale as researchers did not include this measure until about halfway through the data collection period for Atlanta. As such, most of the Atlanta youth in the sample did not receive this measure. Consequently, the regression results in this section, which included that measure, are largely representative of the Chicago respondents and a very small portion of the Atlanta sample. Age and gender were entered into the second step of each analysis, also as control variables.

Hypothesis 2: The findings did not support the second hypothesis. Peer support for and/or involvement in social/political activity did not explain a significant proportion of the variance in youth's general belief in a just world, $R^2\Delta = .00$, $F\Delta\ (1, 313) = .011$, $p < .05$. This means that for African American youth, the amount of social/political activity that a peer is engaged in or shows support for does not predict whether or not youth will believe that the world is generally a fair and just place.

Similarly, peer support for and/or involvement in social/political activity did not explain a significant proportion of the variance in youth's Systems Attributions, $R^2\Delta = .002$, $F\Delta\ (1, 188) = .380$, $p < .05$. This indicates that for African American youth, the amount of social/political activity that a peer is engaged in or shows support for does not predict whether or not youth will attribute common problems in their community to system level factors.

Peer support for and/or involvement in social/political activity did not explain a significant proportion of the variance in youth's Individual Attributions, $R^2\Delta = .001$, $F\Delta$ (1, 188) = .205, $p < .05$. This indicates that for African American youth, peer engagement in, or support for social/political activities does not predict whether or not youth will attribute common problems in their community to individual level factors.

Hypothesis 3: The findings did not support the third hypothesis. Parental and close adult involvement in social/political activity did not predict a significant amount of variance in youth's general Belief in a Just World, $R^2\Delta = .00$, $F\Delta$ (1, 336) = .142, $p < .05$. This indicates that the involvement of parents and significant adults in social/political activity does not determine whether or not African American youth perceive the world as a fair place.

Parental and close adult involvement in social/political activity did not predict a significant amount of variance in youth's Systems Attributions, $R^2\Delta = .005$, $F\Delta$ (1, 207) = .966, $p < .05$. This indicates that the extent to which one's parent and significant adult engages in social/political activities, does not predict whether or not African American youth cite systemic factors as root causes of common problems in their communities.

Thirdly, parental and close adult involvement in social/political activity did not predict a significant amount of variance in youth's Individual Attributions, $R^2\Delta = .003$, $F\Delta$ (1, 206) = .585, $p < .05$. This indicates that the extent to which one's parent and significant adult engages in social/political activities, does not determine whether or not African American youth cite individual factors as root causes of common problems in their communities.

Hypothesis 4: The findings partially supported the fourth hypothesis. When the Racial Identity subscales were combined, they did not predict a significant amount of variance in a social analysis measure of youth's belief in the world as a fair and just place, $R^2\Delta = .021$, $F\Delta$ (2,

243) = 2.67, $p < .05$. However, when divided into subscales, The Private Regard subscale predicted a significant amount of variance in this social analysis factor, $R^2\Delta = .019$, $F\Delta$ (1, 307) = 6.11, $p < .05$. Results also indicated a negative relationship between racial private regard and one's belief in the world as just such that higher racial regard correlated to less belief in the world as fair. (See Table 7). In all cases, the model accounted for only a small amount of the variance in GBJW.

Table 7
Predicting Belief in a Just World from Racial Private Regard (N = 312)

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
City	-.13	.06	-.13*
Step 2			
Sex	-.09	.06	-.09
Age	.00	.02	-.01
Step 2			
MIBI Private Regard	-.06	.02	-.14*

Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .02$ for Step 3
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

In sum, regarding racial identity measures, Oppressed Minority Ideology makes no contribution to belief in a just world or the attributions respondents made about community problems, whereas, the Private Regard subscale predicted youth's Belief in a Just World. The esteem with which the respondents held their racial group predicted whether or not they saw the world as a just place.

Racial socialization predicted a significant amount of variance in the Systems Attribution subscale $R^2\Delta = .041$, $F\Delta$ (1, 177) = 7.87, $p < .05$. (See Table 8) These findings indicate that African American youth's belief in the role of cultural pride and reinforcement in socializing Black children predicts their views on the root causes of common social problems in their

community. Those who believe in the importance of reinforcing culture are also likely to attribute community problems to systemic factors.

Table 8
Predicting Systems Attributions from Racial Socialization

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
City	-.05	.08	.05
Step 2			
Sex	.11	.07	.11
Age	-.02	.02	-.06
Step 3			
SORS-A	.15	.05	.21*

Note. $R^2 = .00$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 3
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Hypothesis 5: Results indicated partial support for the fifth hypothesis. When entered into a single equation, racial factors, and parental and peer involvement in, or support for activism predicted variance in some, but not all of the social analysis factors. All factors were entered into a stepwise regression. City was entered into step 1, and age and gender were entered into step 2 as control variables. Parental involvement and peer support for and/or involvement in social/political activity were entered into step 3. The racial identity factors and racial socialization factor were entered into the last step, in no particular order, due to the lack of a theoretical basis on which to determine such an order.

Belief in a Just World. When entered into a single equation, including peer and parental involvement and/or support for activism, both racial identity variables and the racial socialization factor, all racial variables predicted a significant amount of variance in a measure of one's belief in the world as a fair and just place $R^2\Delta = .036$, $F\Delta (3, 218) = 2.84$, $p > .05$. (See Table 9). As predicted, this suggests that when accounting for early political socialization by parents or a significant adult, and peer involvement in, and/or support for activism, African American

youth's analysis of the world as just, is influenced by their racial identity and their beliefs about socializing children with positive cultural messages.

Table 9
Predicting Belief in a Just World from Racial Identity and Racial Socialization Factors (N=227)

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
City	-.12	.07	-.11
Step 2			
Sex	-.09	.07	-.09
Age	.01	.02	.03
Step 3			
SIOS Friends mean	.04	.08	.04
PS Parent & Adult Involv	-.13	.08	-.10
Step 4	-.08	.03	-.18*
MIBI Priv. Regard			
MIBI Opp. Min	.01	.03	.03
SORS-A	.10	.05	.14

Note. $R^2 = .02$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Step 3; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 4
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

The single racial identity factor, when entered into the equation without the other racial variables, showed a significant relationship to youth's belief in a just world, $R^2\Delta = .019$, $F\Delta (1, 281) = .502$, $p > .05$. (See Table 10). This indicates that when peer and parental involvement in social/political activity is accounted for, African American youth's level of private regard for their race influences their belief in the world as fair and just. When considered on its own, racial private regard predicts a negative relationship with belief in a just world such that those with high racial regard are also likely to view the world as unfair and unjust.

Table 10
Predicting Belief in a Just World from a Single Racial Identity Factor (N=287)

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
City	-.16	.06	-.16
Step 1			
Sex	-.19	.06	-.09
Age	-.00	.02	-.01
Step 2			
PS Parent & Adult Involv.	.00	.00	.02
SIOS Friends, mean	.00	.07	.00
Step 3			
MIBI Priv. Regard	-.06	.02	-.15*

Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .00$ for Step 3; $\Delta R^2 = .02$ for Step 4
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

System-level Attributions. When entered into a single equation, including peer and parental involvement in activism, the racial socialization factor, (cultural pride), and the racial identity factors, (Private Regard and Oppressed Minority ideology) all predicted a significant amount of variance in the Systems Attributions subscale, $R^2\Delta = .239$, $F\Delta\ (3, 103) = 6.38$, $p > .01$. (See Table 11). This indicates that racial identity and racial socialization predict whether or not youth attribute common community problems to systemic level factors, when peer and parental involvement in, or support for social/political activity are taken into account. As predicted, these findings also indicate that youth who endorse a high level of racial understanding, are very likely to relate community problems to systemic factors, beyond the individual.

Table 11
Predicting Systems Attributions from Three Racial Factors (N=111)

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
Age	-.02	.03	-.05
Sex	.09	.09	.09
Step 2			
PS Parent & Adult Involv.	-.16	.10	-.14
SIOS Friends mean	-.12	.09	-.12
Step 3			
MIBI Opp. Min.	.01	.03	.03
MIBI Priv. Regard	-.02	.04	-.05
SORS-A	.26	.06	.40**

Note. $R^2 = .07$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .14$ for Step 3
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

The racial socialization factor, cultural pride and reinforcement, when entered separately from the other racial factors, accounted for a significant amount of variance in whether or not youth considered their neighborhood problems to be the result of system level factors, $R^2\Delta = .054$, $F\Delta (1, 164) = 9.46$, $p > .01$ (See Table 12). These findings indicate that when peer and parental involvement in, or support for social/political activity is accounted for, racial socialization alone predicts how African American youth attribute community problems to systemic level factors. As such, those who believe that cultural pride and reinforcement should be a part of socializing Black children also attribute some societal problems to social, not individual factors.

Table 12
Predicting System Level Attributions from Racial Socialization (N=168)

Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
City	-.03	.08	-.03
Step2			
Age	-.01	.03	-.04
Sex	.06-	. .08	.06
Step 3			
PS Parent & Adult Involv.	-.13	.10	-.10
SIOS Friends Mean	.00	.09	.00
Step 4			
SORS-A	.17	.05	.24**

Note. $R^2 = .00$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .02$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Step 3; $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Step 4
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Individual-level Attributions. When entered into a single equation including the peer/parental involvement variables, all three racial factors together did not predict a significant relationship to Individual attributions. When entered separately, neither the racial identity factors nor the racial socialization factor predicted a significant amount of variance in the Individual attribution subscale.

DISCUSSION

Young people perceive injustice and inequality in their world in varying ways. The aim of this study was to investigate the contributions of racial identity and racial socialization to the development of critical social analysis in African American youth. According to researchers within and outside of the psychology field, factors such as sense of agency, parental and peer influences and intellectual curiosity contribute to activism for African American youth (Watts, 1999). An awareness of societal inequalities or the development of critical social analysis may also be a contributing factor to activism for young people. (For this section, the term "social analysis measures," speaks to the instruments used, whereas critical social analysis refers to the underlying construct).

Overall, the findings indicated partial support of the five hypotheses. The racial factors of racial identity and racial socialization, on a whole behaved as predicted. Per the first hypothesis, racial identity was positively associated with racial socialization. Findings did not support the second hypothesis, which predicted a relationship between peer involvement or support for activism and social analysis. The study included two measures of social analysis: belief that the world is a fair or just place and attributions youth make about the root causes of common social problems such as drugs and crime. Peer variables did not relate to either component. Findings also did not support the third hypothesis that youth's parental involvement in, or support for sociopolitical activism would influence their belief in the world as just and fair, or how they attributed root causes of common social problems.

The findings partially supported the fourth hypothesis concerning relationships between the racial variables and social analysis. Those with high positive regard for Black people tended to reject just world beliefs. However, feelings of camaraderie with other oppressed groups in the

United States (Oppressed Minority Ideology) had no effect on youths' beliefs about justice in the world or how they attributed underlying causes of social ills. Similar to the racial identity variables, racial socialization, (i.e. youth's endorsement of positive cultural teaching for Black children), was associated with social analysis. Youth who endorsed these values saw both societal and personal roots of social ills when making attributions. Neither youth's racial identity nor their beliefs about socializing Black children had any effect on their beliefs about individual causes of social ills however. The fifth hypothesis brought racial identity and racial socialization together in an effort to predict social analysis. The findings partially supported the prediction that they played a distinctive role: racial socialization and racial identity together accounted for a unique portion of the variance in two of the social analysis variables—over and above that of the peer and parental involvement variables.

Additional Findings

The findings included unanticipated relationships among a number of variables that were theoretically meaningful associations. Firstly, regional differences in the dataset complicated some of the findings. Chicago youth had a higher regard for their identity as African American than the Atlanta youth. Chicago youth also tended to endorse more individual factors as the root causes of social ills. No gender differences were found in the sample. On all other variables, the samples appeared relatively equal.

Youth who believed in a just world also tended to attribute individual responsibility for social ills in their community, which is consistent with previous literature on Just World Beliefs. Yet the results also indicated that youth who believed that social ills could be attributed to systemic causes also recognized individual responsibility. As such, it appears that young people did not see systemic and individual attributions of blame for social ills as mutually exclusive.

Despite the aforementioned findings, some youth endorsed more systemic than individual factors as the causes of social ills. An association was found between youth who did so and an endorsement of positive cultural teachings in the socialization of Black children.

High regard for one's identity as African American and endorsement of positive cultural socialization for Black children was also associated with a feeling of solidarity with other oppressed ethnic minorities in this country. This relationship was expected and could be attributed to an assumption that those youth who identify highly as African American hold some knowledge about their group as an oppressed group in this country as well as other oppressed groups. They may therefore; feel connected to other groups who have felt the same way or who have had similar sociopolitical experiences (Vandiver et al., 2002). Also, because of the way in which ethnic minorities are often lumped together in this country, these youth may have developed a kind of imposed sense of solidarity to one or many of these groups. Additionally, they may have had shared experiences of discrimination, disenfranchisement, and marginalization.

Social Influences on Critical Social Analysis

The following section will elaborate on and integrate the current findings.

Parents & Significant Adults. The psychological literature supports the notion that parental support for activism influences youth's critical social analysis but, the present study diverged somewhat from those findings. Diemer et al. (2006) found that conversations between peers, family members and community members about challenging injustices raised youth's level of critical consciousness. Their study however, differed from this one on several fronts. Firstly, the sample was composed of only 38.8% Black/African American/Caribbean students, whereas this study utilizes an entirely African American sample. Different racial groups may

have experienced varying levels of support for challenging injustice. Secondly, the number of youth in this study was more than twice that of the Diemer et al. study. Perhaps, the smaller sample size was less representative of an adolescent population as it would undoubtedly capture less variation of experiences. Lastly, youth were asked in the Diemer et al. study if they felt supported by key people in their lives in challenging social injustice. Results indicated only a moderate level of support for challenging social injustice. The present study asked participants specifically about perceived levels of support for challenging social injustice from parents or key adults. The finer distillation of the key members in youth's lives that this study offers may have influenced the null finding.

O'Connor's (1997) study found that young people, who had actually witnessed a parent resisting racism in particular, were more likely to engage in activism and demonstrate critical consciousness. Perhaps witnessing key adults, such as parents, confront injustice has more of an influence on youth than their subjective experience of feeling supported in their endeavors to tackle injustice themselves.

Another possibility for the discrepancy between previous literature and this study may be the characteristics of the adolescent time period. Connell, Spencer & Aber (1994) have found that adolescents are often trying to establish their independence, a process that partially entails a separation and at times rebellion against parental values, mores and activities. As such, the youth in this sample may be partially reflecting an adolescent tendency to reject parental values in favor of developing a more independent sense of self. In other words, these youth may have refused to take on more activist, critically conscious thinking, in part because their parents were activists or critically conscious. Additionally, youth may not have yet gained the maturity to demonstrate or explore their own capacity to be critically socially aware. Significant adult

involvement was also included as a predictor variable in this study, which may have precluded finding the same results as previous studies that only examined the involvement of parents.

Peers. The finding that peer behavior had no influence on youth's critical social analysis also contradicts previous psychological literature on this topic. The psychological literature supports the notion that peers of urban adolescents often provide support for challenging injustice and therefore facilitate the reflection component of critical consciousness (Zubrow, 1993; Bryant, 2000). Several explanations may account for these null findings. These studies may have conceptualized peer support differently. For example, the measure used in this study to address peer support asked fairly broad questions regarding whether or not youth addressed political or social issues with their peers. However, studies such as that conducted by Zubrow explored the issue of peer support in the context of a group or project. Perhaps there is something about a group process that affects the development of critical social analysis in adolescents differently than one-on-one conversations.

In the same vein, an issue of internal validity may be raised here. The broad questions asked in this study, such as: "how many of your friends are interested in politics?" may not have been detailed enough. Discussing these issues may or may not have meant that peers showed support or antagonism towards confronting social injustices. More specific questions may have elicited a more concise understanding of how youth discussed these issues, what constituted a "discussion," and whether or not peers expressed attitudes of support, neutrality or disapproval around addressing such issues. Also, as much of the psychological literature supports the importance of peer influences on the behavior of adolescents (Schoeny, 2001, Wilson et al., 1997), perhaps including a measure asking youth about which peer behaviors they have

witnessed could have given some information on ways peers influence one another beyond conversations.

Additionally, the relationship between peer support and adolescent critical social analysis may be mediated or moderated by other variables. Perhaps factors such as quality of peer relationship, credibility or social status of peers or degree of respect that youth have for peers may influence this relationship.

Racial and Cultural Variables

The ultimate goal of this study was to investigate the influence of racial and cultural factors on critical social analysis. I first explored the relationship between the racial and cultural variables. The findings indicated that youth in this study who held positive racial regard (i.e. Private Regard and Oppressed Minority Ideology) were also likely to believe that early cultural messages can serve to develop culturally based pride (Cultural Pride Reinforcement). This is consistent with previous research conducted with Stevenson's Racial Socialization scale and another measure of racial identity, the RIAS (Stevenson, 1994b). In the current study, the relationship between the variables was significant, but moderate *(*r = *.36),* which indicates that both factors tap into different areas of one's racial understanding. Sellers' et al (1998) measure of racial identity explores the various ways that racial identity can be discussed, i.e. through one's personal assessment of his/her membership in a racial group, the salience of one's race, and one's beliefs about how positive racial identity is formed, whereas Stevenson (1997) defines racial socialization as a process of communicating, receiving and interpreting both verbal and nonverbal messages during childhood that influence identity formation. Stevenson includes messages specific to race as well as other influences on one's identity. It is likely that youth in this study are endorsing principles of cultural socialization that reflect both their own

socialization experiences and subsequent positive identity development. Literature supports the notion that those who have received strong racial socialization messages in childhood have stronger identities (Anglin & Whaley, 2006). Thus, racial identity and racial socialization, including positive cultural messages, relate to one another.

While these findings speak to distinct components, they share the ability to influence thoughts and behavior in African American youth. In the United States, the social construction of race is often used as a tool of economic, political and social stratification. As such, one's race often becomes a marker of oppression or privilege. In African American identity, race and culture are partially fused. Although people have multiple social identities, race, as an immediate identifier for African Americans is usually emphasized more than other identities in the social milieu and may be particularly salient for youth in this ethnic group.

The positive association between the racial and cultural variables may also speak to the possibility that young people who identify strongly as African American, tend to support cultural initiatives that promote racial consciousness in others. This may be important to consider when identifying contributing factors to a young Black person's development of critical social analysis. It could be that those who hold such beliefs may see society through more of a cultural or racial lens and thusly approach critical social analysis from that perspective. Researchers in the psychology field (Ibrahim et. al 2001) have noted the importance of social and cultural influences on one's worldview. As such, racially identified and culturally oriented youth may perceive the world itself through a racial and cultural lens and may perceive societal injustice from that place as well. Thus, for these youth, critical social analysis, takes on a definitively racial or cultural tone. Taken on a whole, racial identity was shown to be related to the cultural

variable, (i.e. racial socialization). When separated into the Oppressed Minority and Private Regard subscales, both subscales continued to show this relationship.

In this study, racial identity and racial socialization were found to be the most important influences on critical social analysis in African American youth, a relationship not previously found in the psychological literature. Most studies that consider critical social analysis in young people have measured peer and parental influences and have left racial factors out of the equation. However, both Cross (1971) and Sellers (1997) developed Black identity models that link Black racial identity and political or social consciousness. This is also consistent with other social science researchers who have suggested that race is the preeminent factor molding beliefs about justice and equality in the contemporary United States (Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Hunt, 1996). For this study, racial identity was measured as a combined score (including the Private Regard & Oppressed Minority subscales) and as separate scores for each subscale.

The Oppressed Minority subscale did not show an influential relationship to the social analysis variables, although the combined racial identity score did as did the Private Regard subscale alone. This suggests that generally speaking, a sense of solidarity with other oppressed groups did not impact youth's level of critical social analysis. This may be an age-related, developmental limitation. Oppression is a complicated, abstract idea to understand and high school students may not have yet developed the concepts needed to talk about this issue or to even recognize it. These youth, while they may or may not have named their own oppression, may not have been exposed to the struggles of other minority groups in this country. Therefore they do not have the life experience necessary to see their commonalities with other ethnic minority groups in this country in terms of sociopolitical circumstances. Nor might they see the potential benefits of solidarity across racial lines. This particular aspect of Black racial identity,

as measured by Sellers (1997) has presented difficulties even in adult samples so these findings may be replicating past findings with a different sample. However, when included with Private Regard, the combined racial identity score demonstrated relationships with social analysis. Thus, including the Oppressed Minority scale may have actually decreased the effect of racial identity on the social analysis variables.

Youth's private regard for their race influenced their beliefs about justice in the world and those with high racial regard saw more social injustice. Thus a racial lens appears to contribute to perceptions of justice and critical social analysis. Hunt (2000) has found some support for the relationship between racial identity and belief in a just world. His study found that African Americans, as compared with Whites and Latinos demonstrated the lowest support for a just world belief. The intersection between being Black and experiencing justice in the United States is tenuous at best for many urban Blacks. While the manifestation of injustice or racism may have changed in this country, relative to our recent past, racism still remains. Unintentional racism (Sommers, et. al, 2006) has emerged as a contemporary version of the more overt racism of the past. However, in urban centers, Black adolescents often witness or vicariously experience discrimination from police; they often attend disadvantaged schools and live in disadvantaged neighborhoods. This reality of continued discrimination and oppression may impact how they define societal injustice and how often they perceive it. Combining racial identity and youth's belief about socializing children with positive cultural messages also influenced youth's belief in justice in the world. This relationship reflects the earlier discussion of the interplay between race and culture for African Americans.

When included with the entire racial identity factor, youth's belief in the importance of positive cultural teachings was related to their identification of social systems as the root causes

of common community problems. They were able to understand, for example that drug use in their community did not just result from people wanting to use drugs and that laziness was not a primary cause of unemployment. This finding brings a racial-cultural nuance to critical social analysis for Black youth. In Stevenson's (1997) measure of racial socialization for Black youth, cultural awareness teaching is part of a "proactive" theme he identifies. It focuses largely on encouraging individual success based on individual merit and cultural heritage. The Proactive theme is not directly concerned with external oppression. However, similar to the Private Regard scale, youth's individual beliefs about race, and in this case, culture, seem to impact their views of justice. Additionally, these views influence how they attribute root causes of social problems. This relationship needs to be investigated further. Perhaps in parents' transmission of cultural messages to children, they also relay knowledge about the low value placed on African American culture in society in general. Maybe this speaks to a youth's view of oppression in the world.

In this country Black culture has been tied to, as well as differentiated from Black racial identity (Cartman, 2007); as such it is not unreasonable that race and culture would have similar relationships with factors such as critical social analysis, since both have been so heavily informed by the social milieu. These youth, who had already placed a high value on instilling cultural mores into children and who had positive racial identities also held a level of social awareness that extended beyond individual behavior but included the effects of society at large.

Summary and Implications for Future Research and Practice

The findings from this study suggest that theory and measures for critical social analysis can benefit from a consideration of racial and cultural variables. Racial identity, particularly positive racial regard, is associated with an increased awareness of systemic factors that

contribute to societal injustice and problems. Current research on adolescents has shown the pervasive impact of racial identity as a lens for viewing and understanding their world. Thus, the possibility that racial identity may play an important role in how youth see injustice is a feasible and unsurprising idea. This may have implications for other identity factors, such as gender or sexual orientation.

Similar to racial identity, cultural pride also plays a role in critical social analysis among African American youth, as it appears to be a stronger predictor of system blame than belief in a just world alone. While belief in a just world seems to have obvious connections to a tendency to see systemic causes for injustice, cultural identification and pride may also be a lens through which youth view injustice. For African Americans, because race and culture are simultaneously related and distinct, there may be some instances where they operate in similar ways.

In an African American sample of young people, in the early 21st century, parental involvement or support for sociopolitical activism may not be as important as more psychological factors such as racial pride or cultural beliefs. In the age of single parent households or households where both parents work full-time jobs and children spend more time away from their parents than with them, it may be useful to look beyond parental influences to other socializing mechanisms. Perhaps children are just as influenced by their school or neighborhood environments, or the internet sites, video games, and television shows they watch or books they read.

Lastly, critical social analysis may have to be operationalized in a more ecological way. In operationalizing this concept, particularly through the quantitative measures in this study, an ecological approach was missing. It is not surprising that the youth in this sample could see both individual and social causes of societal problems (evident in the correlational analyses). Ideally,

a systemic understanding of society requires a grasp of the interplay of societal factors among themselves and between societal factors and the individual. Also, in this study critical social analysis was measured in terms of belief in justice in the world and attributions of common social ills. While these form important components of this concept, critical social analysis also includes an understanding of the intersection of various social factors (i.e., political influences, institutional, familial, social identity, etc.) on the individual and on communities. Secondly, this idea includes a type of psychological transformation where a person moves from one state of awareness to another. The measures in this study and in most studies of critical social analysis do not tap into these other components. In terms of critical consciousness, Friere's (2000) original notion of this phenomenon included a more contextual or systemic framework. As such, it is difficult to measure this construct at a decontextualized, individual level.

Limitations

Despite the significant findings of this study, several limitations impacted the data. Primarily, limitations in the sample and the measures impacted the researchers' ability to explore various questions in the study. The researcher used previously collected data and thus was limited in her ability to investigate some questions fully. Also, this sample is atypical in that the principal investigator over-sampled highly engaged students in order to obtain a high frequency and greater variability of youths' political and extra-curricular activities for analysis. This may have produced some unusual findings such as the lack of sex difference in civic and political involvement and in racial and cultural identity as well.

The most noteworthy limitation within the data was the lack of information on Individual or Systems attributions from the Atlanta sample. This missing data significantly decreased the sample size, therefore possibly impacting the strength of the results. Having data on a sample of

youth from only one region in the country may also have limited the generalizability of this study's findings. Region may greatly influence how youth attribute the root causes of social ills as social ills may manifest differently in different parts of the country. There also may be varying levels of support for critical social analysis and activism in different regions. For example, the Midwest is known for its labor movements. Thus a certain regional history exists for this type of social action thereby possibly influencing levels of critical social analysis regarding systemic factors affecting labor.

In addition to sampling concerns, the measures also created limitations in this study. For future studies designed specifically to address the research questions posed here it may be helpful to include measures that speak directly to cultural or racial centrality as well as more measures of critical social analysis. Had these kinds of centrality measures been included in this study, then the results could explore more fully how young people's racial or cultural salience influences their ability to perceive injustice and inequity in their society. Currently, the researcher is assuming that those youth who indicated high private regard for their race and who endorsed positive cultural teaching for Black children also considered their race to be a central part of their lives and identity. More specific measures of centrality would lessen the need for such assumptions.

The critical social analysis measures also presented concerns for addressing this study's primary questions. The instruments that were included face questions of construct validity. While they could be considered measures of this construct, they do not comprehensively address the varying levels of critical consciousness as outlined by various theorists, (Wallerstein and Sanchez-Merki, 1994; Alschuler, 1986; Martin 2003). Additionally, a measure of this construct which is more ecologically appropriate for the population, including better recognition of the

interdependency of individuals and systems may have given a more sensitive measure of critical social analysis as it has been defined. Currently, it seems that the measures in this study may only be tapping a piece of critical social analysis, leaving much to be explored.

A final limitation may have more to do with the construct than the measure. The concept of critical social analysis in an adolescent population has been gaining more and more attention in the psychology field. However, it may be important to consider that adolescents may not be mature enough developmentally to demonstrate the kind of critical social analysis that has been described by prominent theorists in the field, and others, (Martin 2003; Watts, 1999; Wallerstein and Sanchez-Merki, 1994; Alschuler, 1986; Friere, 1970). If an adolescent sample can display critical social analysis, perhaps it looks differently than what researchers may look for in adults.

Future Research and Applications

In terms of further studies, researchers may consider that racial pride may be a more useful factor in considering levels of critical social analysis in African Americans than the extent to which one feels connected to other oppressed groups. Researchers may also consider cultural pride as an important factor in critical social analysis. In terms of activism, beyond critical social analysis, there may be an interplay of several factors for African Americans, of which race and culture play an important part. However, much of the variance in critical social analysis was left unaccounted for, which indicates that other important factors are at work or that the scale or construct is not optimal for this population. Some of these other factors may be other identities, (i.e., gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) or personal experience with activism or working in their communities), to name a few. These factors may also impact decisions about social or political activism among African American youth.

In terms of applications, when considering ways to foster sociopolitical development among African American youth, creating programs with a strong cultural component may be vital. Possibly, some of the most critically socially analytical youth, may be those who are most highly racially identified. Therefore, including an aspect of racial identity development may aid in the development of critical social analysis in African American youth. Also, in the interest of developing cross cultural alliances, leaders or others may have to intentionally build solidarity across oppressed groups in a way that nurtures collaboration and coalition building. The African American youth in this sample found their racial identities to be more salient than their identity and solidarity with other oppressed groups; these other groups may have a strong in-group orientation as well. As such, notwithstanding the need for the development of in-group unity, intentional solidarity across groups may need to be developed to make a way for cross cultural activism and collaboration.

Finally, it may have be useful to use an ecological (Brofenbrenner, 1979) measure of critical social analysis that accounts for the varying influences on an individual's life, at the individual, family system, neighborhood, community, and other levels. This perspective may be more in line with a critical social analysis perspective because it recognizes the interplay of systems and influences, rather than dichotomizing causal mechanisms as either social or individual. Future studies which take this interplay into account may help explain the surprising finding of racial factors influencing youths' attributing individual causes to social problems.

While it was important to investigate associations and causal links between variables, it could have also been helpful to utilize methods for identifying mediating or moderating relationships. This may have served to provide more refined results regarding how certain variables affected one another. This may have been especially helpful in this study because even

the significant causal relationships, often did not account for a large amount of the variance in the data. Future studies may explore the influence of involvement in activities that increase critical social analysis through a racial lens, for example as a possible mediator of this relationship.

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Appendix A

Political Socialization Scale

Activity	**Parent or Guardian In home**			**Adult outside of household Who you talk to frequently**		
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Never	Sometimes	Often
1. Did campaign work or other activities for the Democratic or Republican party	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. Involved in direct action or protests for a political cause	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. Attended political events or party meetings for other than the Democratic or Republican	1	2	3	1	2	3
4. Talked to you about social justice or political issues (political candidates, discrimination, homelessness, etc.)	1	2	3	1	2	3
5. Took you to political events, protests or party meetings	1	2	3	1	2	3
6. Had a job that involved working with or providing services to oppressed people (the poor, victims of abuse, the disadvantaged, etc.)	1	2	3	1	2	3

Appendix B

SIOS – Friendships

1. **How many friends do you have that you talk to for at least an hour every week on average?**	**Write the number here:** _____
The questions below are about the friends you mentioned above. Write a number in the box on the right to answer each question:	**Write in a number below**
2. Of the friends that you mentioned in #1, how many are involved in extracurricular activities or organizations other than sports (boy/girl scouts, YMCA programs, other youth programs)?	
3. How many of your friends are interested in politics?	
4. How many of your friends talk regularly about racial or cultural topics?	
5. How many of your friends are involved in community activities like neighborhood clean-ups, political or cultural activities, any work that helps people or improves the city or neighborhood?	
6. How many of your friends participate in religious activities (going to religious services or programs at their place of worship)?	

Appendix C

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

Private Regard Subscale

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
4. I feel good about Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I am happy that I am Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I feel that Blacks have made major accomplishments and advancements.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I often regret that I am Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. I am proud to be Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. I feel that the Black community has made valuable contributions to this society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Oppressed Minority Subscale

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
20.The same forces which have led to the oppression of Blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. The struggle for Black liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. Blacks should learn about the oppression of other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Black people should treat other oppressed people as allies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. The racism Blacks have experienced is similar to that of other minority groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. There are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to Black Americans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. Blacks will be more successful in achieving their goals if they form coalitions with other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. Blacks should try to become friends with people from other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. The dominant society devalues anything not White male oriented.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D

Scale of Racial Socialization for Adolescents (SORS-A)

Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
1	2	3	4	5

1. Relatives can teach children things that parents may not know.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Schools should be required to teach all children about Black history	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers should make it so Black children can see signs of Black culture in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
4. Parents can teach children to be proud to be Black without saying a word.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Teaching children about Black history will help them to survive a hostile world.	1	2	3	4	5
6. More job opportunities will be open to African Americans if people were not racist	1	2	3	4	5
7. Spiritual battles that people fight are more important than the physical battles.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Black parents should talk about their roots to African culture to their children.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Black parents should teach their children about racism.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

Global Belief in a Just World Scale

The following statements are different ideas about fairness in the world. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the response underneath each item.

1. I feel that people get what they are supposed to have.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

2. I feel that a person's efforts are noticed and rewarded.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

3. I feel that people earn the rewards and punishments they get.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

4. I feel that people who have problems have brought them on themselves.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

5. I feel that people get what they deserve.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

6. I feel that rewards and punishments are fairly given.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

7. I basically feel that the world is a just or fair place.

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly agree*

Appendix F

What's Going on in Your City? (WGIYC)

*This is a list of t**hings that may cause problems for communities in Atlanta**. Circle a number for each statement to show how small or how big of a problem you think it is for Atlanta communities.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

1. **DRUGS**- Drugs are a problem because:				
a. The authorities let drugs into the U.S.	1	2	3	4
b. People want to get high and don't care about anything else	1	2	3	4
2. **EDUCATION**- Youth don't do well in their studies because:				
a. They don't care about school	1	2	3	4
b. Their schools don't get enough money or support	1	2	3	4
3. **NEIGHBORHOOD VIOLENCE** – Crime and violence are a problem because:				
a. People are violent and don't care about others	1	2	3	4
b. The laws make it easy to get guns	1	2	3	4
4. **STREET LIFE:** Young people commit crimes because:				
a. There aren't positive things for young people to do	1	2	3	4
b. They think it's OK to break the law if they can get what they want	1	2	3	4
5.**OWNERSHIP**- Most businesses & shops are owned by Whites because:				
a. racism makes it hard for Blacks and Latinos to start businesses	1	2	3	4
b. Many Blacks and Latinos don't have what it takes to run a successful business	1	2	3	4
6.**HOUSING**- In poor neighborhoods, the houses look run-down because:				
a. People don't care about keeping up their homes	1	2	3	4
b. People don't make enough money to keep up their homes	1	2	3	4
7. **YOUTH**- When youth get into trouble, it's because:				
a. Our city doesn't do much to support and respect youth	1	2	3	4
b. Young people have bad or negative attitudes	1	2	3	4
8. **STREETS**- In poor neighborhoods the streets are in bad condition because:				
a. People don't care enough to make their neighborhoods a nice place to live	1	2	3	4
b. The city doesn't do its job (garbage pickup, street repair, police patrolling)				
9. **HOMELESSNESS**- People end up homeless because:				
a. There is not enough affordable housing:	1	2	3	4
b. Some people don't want to find a job and hold onto it	1	2	3	4