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Victimization, Separatism and Anti-intellectualism: An Empirical Analysis of John McWhorter's Theory on African American's Low Academic Performance

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Victimization, Separatism and Anti-intellectualism:
An Empirical Analysis of John McWhorter's Theory on African American's
Low Academic Performance

by

Marlon DeWayne Marion

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to test John McWhorter's theory on African American academic underachievement. The theory claims that since the 1960s African American identities have been significantly influenced by beliefs of victimization and anti-intellectualism along with values of separatism. In order to test for the existence of these dimensions in African American's thinking and for their relationship to academic achievement, data from the Maryland Adolescence Development In Context Study (MADICS) were used. Findings indicated that victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism have a causal relationship to academic achievement and that sentiments of victimization are found to be significantly higher among African Americans. A Bourdieuan theoretical framework is used in the framing and interpretation of the results.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Imagine growing up in a society where your racial group had a history of being treated unequally. That subtly and overtly the dominate group was discriminating against you. Envision living in this society years after civil rights legislation has made drastic changes in the treatment of the people of your racial group, yet every day you still felt victimized because of the color of your skin. How would this make you feel? How would you respond to such perceptions? Would you want to put yourself around this oppressing group of people? Would you want to be anything like this group? Now imagine that you regularly perceived racism from the dominate group of this society and that you separated yourself from characteristics held by this dominant group and activities that this group participated in. Would you, go as far as to, not to take school seriously because you perceived it as being a distinguishing characteristic of the oppressing dominant group? Such responses to perceived racism could have an enduring negative impact on a minority's achievement.

African Americans academic achievement has been argued to be the product of such perceptions (McWhorter, 2001). McWhorter argues that they have developed three cultural characteristics that have trained them to view things through a victimized lens, and separate themselves from European American's practices to such an extent that they alienate themselves from schooling and develop a counterproductive anti-intellectual identity. Compelling as this argument sounds, no research has looked at the interaction between these cultural characteristics, neither has any research fully tested the soundness of the theory. If this theory isn't found to be sound, it will be necessary to determine

what factors better work together in explaining African American academic underachievement, because only then can the factors that contribute to African American achievement in academia be understood.

The Problem

The achievement gap between European Americans and African Americans continues to be a very popular phenomenon of interest. This is because, while the test scores of African Americans are increasing, the test scores of European Americans are also increasing (Vanneman, et al. 2009). And while the achievement gap has generally been defined as differences in grades and test scores, it branches out much further than that. In 2008 African Americans constituted “20% of the students in special education, 30% of the students in vocational education, [and] 23% of the students in alternative schools” (Worrell, 2011). African Americans, as well as Latino Americans, have been disproportionately disciplined in educational institutions (Skiba et al. 2010). Regardless of the fact that studies have shown an increase in scores and degrees received, there is still an achievement gap between African Americans and European Americans.

This academic achievement gap between the two groups has wider implications. Academic achievements have varying outcomes with regards to health (Snyder, Dillow, and Hoffman, 2009), annual earnings, and employment outcomes (Wirt, Choy, Rooney, Provasnik, Sen, and Tobin, 2004). The findings show that as the level of education increases positive outcomes also increase. For example, findings have shown that the more educated you are, despite your income, the more likely you are to report having “excellent” or “very good” health (Wirt et al.. 2004). Studies have also found that

students with a bachelor's degree make 29 percent more than those with an associate's degree and 55 percent more than those with only a high school degree (Wirt et al. 2004).

Roland G. Fryer (2006) states in his article, "Acting White," that anti-intellectualism is far less prevalent among white students than African-Americans or Hispanics. Given the positive outcomes of being educated and the degree of education received, it is important to examine the manifestation of anti-intellectualism among African Americans in order to develop preventive measures in hopes of closing the achievement gap between European Americans and African Americans. Closing the achievement gap can lead to equal opportunities for positive outcomes for African Americans. The goals that are pertinent to the research reported here are to test and refine McWhorter's theory, and to advance new theories in the process of identifying general patterns and relationships among victimization, separatism, anti-intellectualism and academic achievement variables (Ragin 1994).

This research will evaluate John McWhorter's theories addressing the academic achievement of African Americans through a sociological lens. The purpose in this present study was to investigate whether victimization, separatism, and anti-intellectualism are related to differences in academic achievement. Another desire of this study was to provide a theoretical lens in which to interpret the interaction between these variables. This study was further interested in whether the predicted relationships between the variables were better predicted by control variables. For example, the expected connection between these concepts and academic achievement are said to cut across social classes, thus social class was used a control variable.

More specifically, this paper aims to answer the following questions:

- 1.) *Separatism* refers to a mind-set that encourages a group or an individual of a particular Ethnicity to separate or disassociate themselves from the dominant cultural group (McWhorter, 2001). What effect does *separatism* have on *anti-intellectualism* (i.e., the negative feelings expressed towards academics, academic achievement, intellectuals, and intellectual pursuits)?
- 2.) *Victimization* has been referred to as a tendency to blame one's problems on racism as opposed to the result of one's own actions (McWhorter, 2001). What effect does *victimization* have on *separatism*?
- 3.) What effect does *victimization* have on *anti-intellectualism*?
- 4.) What effect does *anti-intellectualism* have on achievement?
- 5.) Are there significant differences between the concepts of *Victimization, Separatism, and Anti-intellectualism*; and
- 6.) Do the predicted connections between these concepts explain the achievement gap?

Because McWhorter's theory is offered as an explanation of the achievement gap, the study was also interested in whether there was a significant difference between African Americans and European Americans in terms of the degree each of the variables are found in these two cultural groups. Emphasis will be placed on the initial presuppositions of the ties between victimization, separatism, anti-intellectualism and achievement. A major objective of this study is to determine the significance of the initial concepts (victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism) in the lives of African Americans students.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

McWhorter's Theory

John McWhorter is an American linguist and an author of numerous books and articles, including the New York Times best seller *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America*. In this book, McWhorter introduces what he calls the three cults that plague African American achievement: victimology, separatism, and anti-intellectualism. In the first three chapters McWhorter clearly defines and illustrates these concepts as well explains the linear connection between the concepts. In the fourth chapter he gives a more socio-historical explanation of how ~~the~~ anti-intellectualism is manifested. It is from these chapters that the testable hypotheses are drawn from for this study. The following chapters discusses the ways (according to McWhorter) African Americans self-sabotageing, and ends by giving suggestions on how to remedy these “plagues.”

The manifestation of these cultural characteristics, McWhorter (2001) believes, evolved out of the response to racism during the civil rights movement “which granted freedom so abruptly that it left behind a tragic combination of unprecedented opportunity and historical inferiority complex”. Thus, the growth of theses cultural identities, McWhorter (2001) argues, involves the rapid desegregation which granted African Americans the opportunity to “confront whites with their indignation and frustration on a regular basis and be listened to.” He argues that although much good had come from this and it was particularly healthy for the time, it is problematic now that it is today a cultural identity. In *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* McWhorter illustrates how

easily the manifestation of these cultural characteristics are transmitted from a response to centuries of oppression in the late 1960's to a cultural identity today. His purpose is to show that not only is the state of African Americans today not their fault, but also that it would have been difficult for African Americans not to adopt these cultural characteristics. This is because, according to McWhorter, it was natural for African Americans to internalize the dominant perception after years of marginalization. Internalized racism lead to an inferiority complex, which, according to McWhorter (2001), "Has sad masochistic effects...[that makes] a race driven by self-hate and fear to spend more time inventing reasons to cry 'racism' than working to be the best that it can be."

He argues that there is a significant difference between what the African Americans are doing today and what they did during the civil rights movement. Compared to the modern African American, African Americans from the 1960's, McWhorter (2001) argues, were faced with much more "abasement and marginalization," which warranted their regular displays of frustration towards European Americans. He argues that over 40 years after the civil rights movement not only do blacks practice this behavior, but that it is part of their identity, that they know no other way but to look at the world from this view point. That is, African Americans cannot help but view things from a victimized perspective, separating themselves from the dominant culture which leads to (probably the worst cultural characteristic of the three) anti-intellectualism.

To McWhorter, the 1960's were a pivotal period in shaping of the current African American identity. This period brought about changes in the way African Americans viewed themselves and the way they viewed European Americans. African Americans began to reshape what it was to be African American, deliberately putting race and

ethnicity at the center of their everyday life during the 1960's. Much of how African Americans view the society that they live in is the product of the "romantic" rhetoric of the civil rights movement. Years of degradation gave way to the salient cultural traits that are part of the African American identity today.

McWhorter argues that there is a linear relationship between victimology, separatism, and anti-intellectualism. He discusses the links between these concepts at length:

As Victimology leads naturally to Separatism, Anti-intellectualism follows from Separatism out of a sense that school is a 'white' endeavor...

- When a race is disparaged and disenfranchised for centuries and then abruptly given freedom, a ravaged racial self-image makes Victimology and Separatism natural developments.
- Victimology makes mediocre scholarly achievement seem *inevitable*.
- Separatism, casting scholarly achievement as 'what white people do,' *sanctions* mediocre scholarly achievement.
- It is a short step from *inevitable* and *sanctioned* to 'authentic,' and authentic is just another word for 'cool.' (McWhorter, 2001)

Figure 1 McWhorter's Theory



After thoroughly reviewing *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America*, McWhorter's theory appears persuasively logical and convincing: as American society became rapidly integrated, the oppressed came into close contact with the oppressor and inescapably began to develop these cultural identities.

For example, McWhorter believes that it is no accident that African Americans rather than other marginalized groups inherited these identities. There are numerous minorities that have a history of being victimized in America. However, "It is historically unprecedented that a disenfranchised group effected an overhaul of its nation's legal system to rapidly abolish centuries of legalized discrimination," McWhorter (2000) asserts. What is distinctively different is that "a context was set up in which black Americans were free to confront whites with their indignation and frustration on a regular basis and be listened to – Jews, the Irish, turn-of-the-century Asian immigrants, and other formerly disenfranchised groups never experienced such a stage in their journey to equality" (McWhorter, 2001). Other minorities in America who suffered similar inequalities were not freed so abruptly and the context of their transition to equality was not set up in way that they would develop these cultural characteristics. Consequently, African Americans, due to the context in which they were released developed these identities.

Furthermore, the "lethal combination of this inherited inferiority complex with the privilege of dressing the former oppressor" is where victimology originates (McWhorter, 2001). The threshold of inferiority and frustration rose and victimization became an increasingly acceptable identity; a "race driven by self-hate and fear to spend more time inventing reasons to cry 'racism' than working to be the best that it can be" (McWhorter,

2001). Henceforth, victimization would be a normal part of African American identity, generating more forms of cultural plagues (separatism and anti-intellectualism) thereby, as McWhorter (2001) put it, replacing “the shackles whites hobbled us with for centuries with new ones of our own.”

McWhorter is not the first to discuss the impact of the movements during the 1960’s on African Americans. William Cross also has a substantial amount of work on the subject of this era. Interestingly, Cross’s work uncovered identities among what Cross calls Black militants similar to those McWhorter identifies in his theory. An extensive review of empirical literature has suggested that Black militants were:

“more likely to (1) identify with Black cultural values; (2) show a preference for people with dark skin and African physical features; (3) adhere to a strong system of blame ideology; (4) prefer black organizations that are run solely by black people; (5) evidence strong anti-white perceptions; and (6) evidence greater aggression and high risk-taking propensities” (Hall, Cross, and Freedle, 1972).

Cross (1991) found that the majority of African Americans even if they were not classified as Black militants and came from various backgrounds and identities, have been impacted by the movement of the 1960’s.

Although today McWhorter is an increasingly ~~more~~ respected journalist, political commentator and author, there is literature that heavily criticizes his lack of empirical evidence in his theories on African American academic achievement. It has been argued that McWhorter downplays race (Aronowitz, 2001) or that he seems to just want to blame the victim. Many reviewers of McWhorter’s work criticize him for this. McWhorter has been notably criticized for his disconnect between theory and evidence as

well as “non-robust statistical technique” (Dickens, 2001); failure to understand the complexity of how African American culture is developed (Louis, 2001); and for being young and naïve (Bates 2000). Unless these criticisms are driven by the fact that it is hard to stomach blaming the victim, their assessments demonstrate that McWhorter’s theory lacked empiricism. Admittedly, much of McWhorter’s knowledge on the phenomenon is derived anecdotally, but he argues that these only support secondary data.

Despite the many criticisms there has been no real empirical work done to test the McWhorter’s theory, that is, although he derives at his theory from personal experience that may mirror actual research, does not mean that the research is empirical. In fact, McWhorter never really did any statistical analysis to derive at this theory; he used both qualitative and quantitative secondary data to support his theory. One can hardly dismiss a scholar who has clearly put much thought into such a pressing issue without thoroughly and scientifically studying the theory. By analyzing McWhorter’s theory from a sociological lens, whether support is found or not, much can be learned.

Before analyzing McWhorter’s explanation of the achievement gap, it is important to review other explanations of this phenomenon. There have been many explanations of the achievement gap, this research briefly describes six of the explanations. Specifically, cultural explanations, stereotype threat, tracking, socioeconomic status, academic self-concept and racial group cultural identity are reviewed.

Further Cultural Explanations of the Achievement Gap

Of the abovementioned alternative explanations of the achievement gap, to begin, cultural explanations of the achievement gap will be reviewed. McWhorter argues that anti-intellectualism can explain the achievement gap. McWhorter (2001) gives a cultural explanation of black underachievement in his book, *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* in which he claims that anti-intellectualism limits opportunities and prevents high academic achievement for African Americans.

Anti-intellectualism is a concept that has had varying meanings and dimensions. Anti-intellectualism has also been divided into two dimensions: type and degree. Richard Hofstadter in his 1963 book, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* focuses on types of anti-intellectualism rather than the degree. This study will utilize the degree of anti-intellectualism. Degrees of anti-intellectualism exist among all population groups or communities and each is differentially affected by it. Eigenberger and Sealander constructed anti-intellectualism into either of two divided attributes, pro or anti, in which individual or group feelings are expressed toward academics, intellectuals, and intellectual pursuits (2001).

A growing body of research indicates, like McWhorter's theory, that culture is a key predictor in academic performance. As early as 1977, a cultural theorist, Paul Willis, noted that there are contrasting cultural behaviors and attitudes among social classes (primarily working and middle class). Similarly, Ogbu, in 1997, proposed that there was a prominent oppositional culture among African Americans. Oppositional culture assumes that African Americans develop a culture in the home that is oppositional to the schooling system. It argues that like cultural capital, that these behaviors are learned in the home. Ogbu argues that African Americans as minorities differ in academic

performance from immigrants as minorities because of their history in America. Ogbu explains that African Americans as involuntary immigrants “have experienced significantly more systematic oppression” (Langlie, 2009). Consequently, African Americans do not believe that it is possible to reap the rewards of embracing school wholeheartedly. Voluntary immigrants come to America with a totally different perspective and experience. Not having undergone the unfavorable experiences of the involuntary immigrant, the voluntary immigrants are less likely to see their cultural differences as a barrier.

Drawing upon Ogbu, Carter (2003) takes the argument a step further and argues that the integration of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital and Ogbu’s theory of oppositional culture, may suggest that there is “...variability of cultural capital and of the ways in which a group of students use both ‘dominant’ and ‘non-dominant’ cultural capital” that “...the maintenance of different cultural (and not necessarily ‘oppositional’) repertoires dictates that these students convert their own cultural resources into capital to maintain valued status positions within their communities.” Basically when minorities of lower social class value these styles (non-dominant cultural capital), the non-dominant form of capital becomes a capital of choice, especially when reinforced by the non-dominant group. This implies that depending on the setting (field) “...one form of cultural capital may be valued over another” (Wagner, 2010). Hence, minorities are capable of having forms of capital that may not necessarily be a form of capital among the dominant group, in fact, these alternate forms of capital may be viewed negatively in particular fields, producing unfavorable outcomes in the field. This is Carter’s argument that low-income minorities have both dominant and non-dominant forms of capital to

draw from to reach a particular end, depending on the particular field. Although, the alternative form of capital may be produce unfavorable outcomes in various fields, the reinforcement from the non-dominant group and the self-gratification of practicing what is valued among the individual groups carries more weight. Carter's research like much of Ogbu's work focuses on low income minorities, failing to explain why racial/cultural behaviors remain consistent across classes. In addition as McWhorter (2001) states, "Fordham and Ogbu, however, focused on rough urban schools. Especially since their article, it has long been accepted that children in this environment actively reject school" (see also Willis 1977).

Taking the argument in a similar direction is Nasir et al. (2008) who attempts to analyze the relationship between varying racial identities and academic achievement while accounting for local (amongst peers outside of a formal setting, in the neighborhood) and distal (institutions and society) context. They hypothesized that the effect racial identity on academic achievement would vary depending on situational factors. To test their assumption, Nasir et al. (2008) analyzed both survey data and observational data that were collected in an urban public high school. The observational data consisted of seven students and the survey data consisted of 121 participants (68 of which were African American) that was representative of the entire high school. Of the observational data, only six of the participants were African American and only these were included in the analysis. Obtained data were both analyzed by qualitative and quantitative methods. In this study, they found that what it meant to be African American varied among African Americans. They also found that African Americans local community and school context play a defining role in how they perceived school. Like

Tyson (2002) they found that students learning experience played an important role in how they developed divergent schooling identities. Nasir et al. (2008), found that both high and low achieving students, African American identity were important but they varied in what they believed being African American encompassed. For some of the students' academic achievement was part of their identity, that is, part of what they defined as being black. They concluded that African American identities are further maintained and developed by tracking. This is because students that were in a higher track, "were offered a school context that affirmed the importance of the cultural history of African Americans and gave them multiple messages about the possibility of their academic success and college attendance" and students on the lower track "were not offered such opportunities to develop a sense of their academic possibilities and did not experience high-quality teaching or high expectations" Nasir et al. (2008). Therefore, for students in the lower track academic achievement was not part of what it meant to be black.

One important research study that further explains the varying identities among African Americans was conducted by William Cross. Cross (1991), explains that African Americans have a wide variety of identities to choose from. He explains that contrary to what McWhorter claims, a great deal of African Americans do not identify with race and black culture (Cross, 1991). Instead, Cross (1991) reports that there is a difference between personal identity and reference group identity. Namely, African Americans personal identities may be more salient than their reference group identities. This may explain why the participants in the study done by Nasir et al. (2008) had varying identities (i.e. personal identities), while maintaining similar dress and language styles

(i.e. reference group identities). According to Cross, varying factors contribute to what will be the most salient identity, arguing that some African Americans may identify more with their personalized identities. For example, “social identity or reference group orientation may be grounded in religious ideas or the fact that they are gay or lesbian, whereas for others, race ethnicity, and black culture are the core of their existence” (Cross, 1999).

Currently there are many popular theories about the academic achievement of African Americans and many of which are concerned with inequalities and capital deficiencies, which generally portray African Americans as the victim (McWhorter 2000). McWhorter (2000) argues that, certainly, African Americans are subject to inequalities at times, but those who claim that these are reasons for their underperformance are “trained to frame the black student as a victim” and that they do this because wandering away from victimized explanations are difficult; “it smacks of feeding the stereotype of black mental inferiority.” In fact, McWhorter argues that the popular theories such as; stereotype threat, tracking, and underfunding among other popular explanations, are products of this frame of mind. A sign, according to McWhorter, that research must look elsewhere. Culture has increasingly become a popular and promising explanation of the achievement gap; even McWhorter’s theory is a cultural explanation of the disparities in achievement.

Stereotype Threat

The theory of stereotype threat, another explanation of the achievement gap, originated in the work of the psychologist Claude Steele (1995, 1997). Instead of focusing on individual capital inequalities, Steele sought to explain academic

underachievement of racial and gender minorities with reference to narrower social psychological structures. Steele (1995) suggests that domain identification is necessary to "sustained school success" and that social forces have the potential to disturb this identification, hence disturbing sustained school success. Domain identification assumes that in order for a student to do well in school she/he must first identify with school, that is, "one must be identified with school achievement in the sense of its being a part of one's self definition" (Steele, 1995). Not only must the student identify with academic achievement, the student must have "interest, skills, resources, and opportunities to prosper," as well as having a sense of belonging (Steele, 1995). In addition to all the inequalities African Americans and women have had to endure, Steele argues that there is an additional barrier that affects their domain identification. This barrier Steele terms "stereotype threat."

Stereotype threat is a concept that refers to the effects of negative stereotypes on individuals. It is complex in that the effects of the concept will vary depending on the situation. That is, it will affect an individual's behavior depending on the setting or activity, if the individual is part of a group that has a negative stereotype pertaining to that setting or activity. So, according to Steele, members of particular minority groups have to worry about whether or not they are living up to a negative stereotype every time that they are in a domain in which the stereotype is applicable.

Steele arrives at several assumptions about the effects of stereotype threat on domain identification. His first assumption is that in particular domains such as "a domain performance classroom presentation or test taking," (Steele, 1995) stereotype threat can trigger an emotional response that could possibly hamper domain

identification. Second, if an individual is in a persistent domain, in which a threat is applied to a group in which she/he is associated with, it could possibly cause disidentification. Disidentification refers to the removal of the particular domain identification. That is, if academia is the domain in which a negative stereotype is associated and you are consistently dealing with the threat associated with it, you would naturally not identify with it. This is problematic according to Steele because, "it can undermine sustained motivation in the domain, an adaption that can be costly when the domain is as important as schooling" (1995). The logic is, where individuals do not have to worry about stereotype threat they are less likely to emotionally react in those domains and depending on the frequency of the situation they are less likely to disidentify with the domain. Thus, they are more likely to sustain motivation in the particular domain (i.e. excel in those setting).

Steele's final assumption is that if an individual is subject to stereotype threat yet has the resources and confidence to identify with the academic domain she/he will still underperform. This is because of 'their identification with the domain and the resulting concern they have about being stereotyped in it' not the stereotype per se (Steele, 1995). More clearly put the idea that you may be judged by the stereotype is the threat to your performance, not the stereotype itself.

Stereotype threat has been a very popular theory for well over ten years, yet McWhorter suggest that, stereotypes have an effect on all groups; and that without a doubt, without the negative stereotypes, any group would perform better in the field that the stereotypes applied. He points out that Steele shows the effects of stereotype threat on other ethnic groups when compared to other ethnic groups in the same fields, an

indication to McWhorter that all groups are subject to such threats, which makes him question the significance of this threat in predicting academic achievement. He questions, that like victimization, “how important this factor might be in black students’ performance here in the real world-where they are never required to indicate their race on their schoolwork, are only rarely threatened so explicitly with racial stereotypes in the course of being assigned school work” (McWhorter, 2001). McWhorter believes that stereotype is a real observable threat yet it does not explain underperformance, if anything he argues, it is another example of a study that reinforces victimization. Lack of confidence is not the answer but black identity, according to McWhorter (2000), and that “if this were what holds black students back, the gap between white and black students would have virtually closed twenty years ago, with the unprivileged minority creating a small lag.”

Tracking

Another popular explanation of the achievement gap has been, in many studies, concerned with separating students by academic ability, also known as tracking (Ellison, 2008). Although some research suggest that there is positive outcomes from tracking (Kerckhoff, 1987) other studies have shown unfavorable differences in academic outcomes (Hallinan, 2003, Harris 2010; Lee & Bryk 1988). The students that are most negatively affected by tracking are the ones placed in low ability groups (Hallinan, 1994); this is because students in these groups are not provided with appropriate learning opportunities and “receive a low-quality instruction” (Ellison, 2008).

It is for the abovementioned reasons that tracking is criticized as well as maintained as one of the contributing factors of the achievement gap (Ellison, 2008).

Indeed, the majority of students found in low ability groups are African American (Ellison, 2008), providing them with fewer learning opportunities, but it has been argued that social class has a greater affect on whether or not a student will be assigned to low ability groups (Ellison, 2008; Rist, 1970). In fact, Rist's (1970) longitudinal observational study of one classroom consisted of only African American students, an indication that race could not play a role in group assignment, or at least for this sample. According to Rist (1970) the teacher, in the beginning of the school year, used subjective criteria to break the students in to what she called fast learners who she assigned to a table in the front of class and slow learners who she put at a table in the back. The students that were labeled "fast learners" received more attention and quality instruction than those labeled "slow learners." It is no surprise that Rist (1970) found that "the interactional patterns between the teacher and the various groups in her class became rigidified, taking on caste like characteristics, during the course of the school year, with the gap in completion of academic material between the two groups widening as the school year progressed." Unless the teacher correctly tracked the students, these findings demonstrate how students can be coerced into a group that they would not usually identify with. This also illustrates, like the students in Rist study, how over time, a student can adopt the characteristics of any group that they are put in.

There are studies that argue that tracking needs to be reformed. For example, Hallinan (2003) argues that tracking does not operate according to theory which produces inadvertent unfavorable outcomes (i.e. unequal distribution of learning opportunities). Tracking in theory is supposed to effectively and efficiently help students learn more. For this reason, Hallinan (1994) argues that instead of removing tracking from schools,

more focus should be put on getting the practice of tracking aligned with the theory of tracking. Hallinan (1994) believes that it is this disconnect between theory and practice that contributes the achievement gap, arguing that because “low ability is related to race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, tracking discriminates against students in these demographic categories. The disadvantages of tracking for low-ability students perpetuate the effects of background characteristics on achievement.”

Somewhat in contrast to the popular views on tracking is McWhorter (2000), who argues African Americans are rightly placed in low ability tracking and that this is because their aversions to school exist before they are placed in low ability tracking groups. To that end, his logic is because African Americans come to school already dissociating themselves from school when they arrive, this dissociating from school is reflected in their school performance; thus, their performance not their race places them in low ability tracking. He argues that African American commentators who tend to argue that African Americans are tracked into low ability classes because of their race make this argument “because Victimology trains black people to assume that racism rages eternally.” In sum, McWhorter views the relationship between tracking and African American achievement as spurious relationship and that the key explanatory factor is African Americans anti-intellectualism.

Socioeconomic Status

One of most well-known explanations of the achievement gap is social class. Although much research has found socioeconomic status to be the key predictor in educational differences (Gamoran, 2001), many researchers are discovering something otherwise (Alexander and Gosa, 2007; Harris, 2006, McWhorter, 2001). The logic

behind the socioeconomic explanation is that minorities disproportionately make up the lower class which puts them in neighborhoods with limited resources (i.e. schools with limited resources). It is the limited resources (i.e. motivated teachers, small classes, mentoring, rigorous curricula) in the schools that put minorities with low income at a disadvantage.

Though evidence has been found that supports the theory that socioeconomic status can explain differences in academic performance; what it cannot explain is why African Americans still underperform European Americans when they grow up in circumstances quite opposite the ones mentioned above. Specifically, even when African Americans grow up in affluent neighborhoods, attend good schools, and are reared in families with high income backgrounds, they still underperform European Americans (Alexander and Gosa, 2007; McWhorter, 2001; Ogbu, 2003). Ogbu (2003) reports that one of the reasons for not doing as well academically in these healthy settings is that African Americans simply do not focus enough time and effort into schooling. He labeled this phenomenon “low effort syndrome” and reports that this syndrome increases as African Americans progress through school.

Socioeconomic status has also been found to be associated with identity attitudes. Somewhat in contrast to McWhorter’s argument research has found that socioeconomic status is associated with separatism (Demo & Hughes 1990; Allen et al.. 1989; and Broman et al.. 1988) and anti-intellectualism (Battistich, 1995). Carter and Helms (1984), in accord with McWhorter’s theory, found that socioeconomic status and racial identity attitudes are not closely associated. This is in line with McWhorter’s theory because McWhorter argues that socioeconomic status has little to no impacts on

intellectual identities. More specifically, Carter and Helms (1984) found there was no causal relationship between these the two concepts. Finding support for Cross' work, Carter and Helms (1984) argue that "researchers cannot assume automatically that being Black means that one identifies with Blacks or Black culture, or that being Black and middle or upper class means that one does not identify with Black socioeconomic status." It seems that socioeconomic will have varying influences on African American identity, and because there are contrasting findings and views on its influence, it is uncertain about whether or not there is support for McWhorter's theory.

Academic Self-Concept

African American academic performance may lag because they lack confidence in their intellectual abilities in comparison with others, an alternative explanation of the achievement gap, generally defined as a lack of "positive academic self-concept". One problem involves the historic defining of African Americans as intellectually inferior in comparison to their European American equivalents. African Americans may lack academic self-concept when comparing themselves to European Americans. African American engineering students attending historically black colleges have reported higher academic self-concept than African American engineering students attending predominately white colleges and universities (Gerardi, 1990).

Germine Awad (2007) conducted a notable study on African American achievement. He attempted by collecting surveys to see if academic self-concept, self-esteem, or racial identity was a better predictor of academic performance. The results helped determine whether or not the popular perception that racial identity is the best predictor of academic performance. It was innovative in that it used both GPA and SAT

scores to measure achievement. Results revealed that academic self-concept was a better predictor of GPA (but not SAT) than racial identity. Germine (2007) argues that the setting plays a significant role in academic self-concept, which probably explains the differences in degree of academic self-concept among the students who attended historically black colleges and those who attended predominately white colleges and universities.

Somewhat in contrast to what was found in this study and others (Brookover and Passalacqua 1982) Cokley (2000) found no difference in academic self-concept between historically black colleges and predominantly white colleges. He also found, contrary to Germine's findings, that GPA was a predictor of academic self-concept. It was not until 2008 that Cokley found a positive link between academic self-concept and GPA, supporting the broadly accepted hypothesis (Germine, 2007; witherspoon et al., 1997). Another significant finding, that is very relevant to the current study, is that Cokley (2008) found that African Americans who held strong dislikes toward European Americans and did not value school did poorly academically. While this finding could be interpreted as African Americans with separatist and anti-intellectual ideals underperform academically, Cokley (2008) argues that, contrary to McWhorters argument, his sample "appears to value academic success, and they do not harbor strong dislike of White people."

Racial Group Cultural Identity

It has been argued that, an alternate explanation of the achievement gap, is the way in which individuals feel about their racial identity, rather than the particular identities among racial groups, helps explain how racial minorities interpret their place in

the educational institution. Similar to what Cross (1991) has argued in his studies, researchers are starting to recognize the importance of how racial groups view themselves (Chavous et al., 1998). Similar to academic self-concept, the focus is the self-concept of racial groups and its relation to academic achievement. The logic behind this argument is, presumably, racial groups that feel close to and positively about their racial groups do better academically (Chavous et al., 1998; Eccels et al., 2006).

While some research has found no association between these variables (Eccels et al., 2006), a longitudinal study conducted in Detroit revealed such a relationship (Oyserman et al., 2001). They found that positive racial identity significantly predicted both academic efficacy and grades. Supporting the claim that positive racial identity is a key factor in academic performance. In addition, they found similar to the findings of Nasir et al. (2008) that African Americans who considered academic achievement to be part of their identity increased academic efficacy.

Contrary to McWhorter's theory, Oyserman et al. (2001) found that African American males who were aware of racism reported higher feelings of academic efficacy. However, in support of McWhorter's theory, for African American females there was opposite effect. These differences between genders may be attributed to the fact that African American females are a dual minority. Oyserman et al. (2001) offers the following explanation:

For girls, then, feeling connected to and part of a group that one feels is negatively viewed by others is detrimental to academic efficacy only when one does not view achievement as part of one's ingroup identity. For boys, controlling for school grades and fall levels of efficacy, no significant effect is found—the

positive effects of the achievement and awareness of racism components seen cross-sectionally are no longer evident in the longitudinal analyses.

These findings have several implications. First, it is clear that both race and gender are key predictors in academic achievement. Second, this research sheds light on the importance of both how racial groups feel about their racial group as well as how they feel other groups view about their racial group. Ultimately, this research reveals the importance of considering the crossing points of all four of these variables.

The six explanations of the achievement gap are all unique and seem promising and some of these explanations, that McWhorter dismisses, are supported with much empirical evidence. What is interesting about McWhorter's critiques of previous explanations is that he generally critiques them under the framework of his own theory and like any good debater he is good at making his arguments inarguable. Even work that he did not critique can usually fall somehow under a victimized perspective. This raises the question, which will be returned to in the discussion, of whether it is desirable to seal the argument so tightly. In fact, this is one reason for which McWhorter's theory needs to be studied.

Significance of the study

This study is significant in several ways. First, the findings will empirically test McWhorter's theory using secondary data, and possibly develop a better theoretical framework from the results for further studies on the achievement gap. The study will test the relationship of the key variables (victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism) and their cumulative effect on academic performance.

Because, as mentioned before, the achievement gap is such a huge problem it is important for educators and administrators to know whether McWhorter's theory is correct. Therefore the hope is to determine if the variables that McWhorter's identified are truly contribute to the achievement gap so methods to address them can be developed. If the lends support to McWhorter's theory then it will be easier to address the individuals or groups that are subject to these identities. Fundamentally, programs and educational policy makers need to know the results of this research so they can determine if they need to invest programs to decrease anti-intellectualism.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Statement

The purpose of this chapter is to explore, Pierre Bourdieu's social practice theory, a theoretical framework, that serves as a useful model in clarifying the wider sociological reasons of why and if McWhorter's theory matters. Bourdieu makes an effort to provide a means to understand dialectical and irrational viewpoints of individual and collective actions (Calhoun, 2002). Social practice theory attempts to explain the complexity of one's lifestyle, as it pertains to their knowledge and resources they bring to each environment and how the relationship of both shape their behavior (Crossley, 2005). This theoretical framework addresses, by explaining the relationship of, the internalized perspective along with the outward behavior in particular fields (Winkle-Wagner, 2010), and revealing "perceptions, appreciations and actions" (Bourdieu, 1977) in particular environments or situations (fields).

Bourdieu's social practice theory shows the duality of subjectivism (the individual) and objectivism (the social structure) (Jenkins, 1992). Noting that "objective structures never work in the abstract" (Lemert, 1993), Bourdieu asserts rather they, "exert themselves in the habitual dispositions of individuals." In bridging the duality of subjectivism and objectivism, Bourdieu used the now well-known concept of habitus.

The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an

express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu 1990: 54)

Bourdieu did not coin this term, it was first used by Norbert Elias (1969), a German sociologist, in *The Civilizing Process* but Bourdieu is more commonly recognized for habitus.

While Bourdieu is best known for tackling the duality of agency and structure, he is not the only person to address this issue. Anthony Giddens also addressed this same issue around the same time (1970s) with his notion of structuration (Jenkins, 2004).

Giddens' notion of structuration, similar to Bourdieu's social practice theory, implies:

“1) Structure, understood to be the set of rules and resources belonging to a specific social system, limits and makes possible the action of individual actors; and (2) action, insofar as it consists of carrying out and updating the structure, contributes to reaffirming it and transmuting it and, consequently, to reproducing and transforming the social system.” (Requena, 2006)

Both Bourdieu and Giddens attempt to, make known the complex duality between agency and structure, reject traditional sociological explanations of social action (Callinicos, 1999), stress the importance of historical indicators, and stress the importance of time and space. It has been argued that their main difference lies in Bourdieu's theory of habitus (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Although Bourdieu and Wacquant recognize that there is a difference between the social practice theory and Giddens structuration theory, it can be argued that Giddens practical consciousness is not too far from the same, albeit not as developed. Whereas Bourdieu locates habitus in his model of social practice, Giddens uses practical consciousness, to bridge agency and

structure: “structuration theory is marked by the same tension as Bourdieu’s writing where he recognizes the intersubjective nature of social life but overlays this interactive ontology—expressed in the concept of ‘practical consciousness’—with a dualistic one, expressed by his concept of ‘structure’” (King, 2000). Practical consciousness refers to “the tacit knowledgeability that an agent brings to the task of “going on” in everyday life, a practical type of knowledge that is usually so taken for granted that it is hardly noticed, if at all, by the person exercising it” (Stones, 2004).

Social practice theory has been used as a lens to understand career research (Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2011), sickness absence rates (Virtanen et. Al, 2004), physical activity choice (Lee and Wright, 2009), farm systems (Raedeke et. Al, 2003), gender differences in educational outcomes (Mickelson, 2003), and family school relationships (Lareau and Hovart, 1999). The reason that this theory is popularly used is because, like most of Bourdieu’s work, it is “enormously good to think with” (Jenkins, 2004). This is because Bourdieu’s theory is good for thinking about “human social practice” by capturing “the intentionality without intention, the knowledge without cognitive intent, the prereflective, infraconscious mastery that agents of social world” (Wacquant 1992: 20). It is good for explaining taken for granted behavior while accounting for practices unprepared, spontaneous nature and fuzz logic (Wacquant, 1992). For this reason, Bourdieu’s theory of practice is good for, in applying this logic to the field of education, understanding how agents produce their academic practices through their experiences. Namely, educational behavior, a repetitive and mundane part of day to day student life, can be seen as being guided by the logic of practice.

Bourdieu's social practice theory consists of four key concepts, habitus, capital, field and practice. Habitus in the formula refers to "practical mastery' of skills, routines, aptitudes and assumptions that leave the individual free to make (albeit limited) choices in the encounter with new environments and fields" (Booker 1999).

The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.

(Bourdieu 1990: 54)

Basically, habitus is a set of dispositions that one almost always uses in particular contexts. The dispositions of habitus are produced historically, as Bourdieu explains: "The habitus – embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active past of which it is the product" (Bourdieu, 1990: 56). For Bourdieu, habitus is a product of history, the foundation, which is recreated in practice. The habitus is internalized as a child as taken for granted knowledge, which is then practiced, which causes an individual or group to repeat history. What makes this concept relevant to this study is, which will be explained more later, is that, according to Bourdieu, habitus can produce a practice that is no longer relevant to the history in which it was produced. Bourdieu explains that "the tendency of groups to persist in their ways, due to *inter alia* to the fact that they are composed of individuals with durable dispositions that can outlive the economic and social conditions in which they were

produced, can be the source of misadaptation as well as adaptation, revolt as well as resignation (62). Several attempts have been made to use habitus to explain varying practices in education. For example, Janse et al. (2010), in a case study, suggested that the habitus of student can be reformed with interventions that will prepare a student for productive practices. Colley (2005), in a case study of eighteen teenage students, used Bourdieu's concept of habitus to develop a better understanding of learning experiences in young females in vocational training. Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of habitus, they developed the concept of vocational habitus "as a way of expressing a powerful aspect of the vocational culture: the combination of idealistic and realized dispositions" (Colley, 2005).

Habitus is an essential variable in the application of this study. This is because it has the ability of explaining variation in practice beyond class, which is to say, it has the ability to penetrate class. It has been suggested that "Bourdieu might argue that the notion of habitus incorporates race more plainly" (Winkle-Wagner, 2010). Other studies have attempted to explain how habitus and race as well as gender can be thought of concurrently, such as Horvat (2001/2003) and Dumais (2002). Horvat noted that the African American students in his study had "an internalized or innate sense embodied in their habitus of the role race plays in their lives. The habitus of each student bears the mark of this racial influence in the practices and dispositions which make up the daily enactment of their lives" (2001).

Capital refers to the types of resources an individual can draw from in exchange for something of value. Examples of capital include but are not limited to: economic,

cultural, symbolic and social. Economic capital and cultural capital have been commonly used to explain academic underperformance.

Cultural capital assumes “acquired cultural knowledges, skills and credentials function socially in ways analogous to economic capital, providing individuals with a kind of ‘wealth’ that can be used to secure social and economic advantage” (Milner & Browitt, 2002). It is the “knowledge, skills, and other cultural acquisitions, as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications” (Bourdieu, 1996: 351).

Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which

are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee. (Bourdieu, 1986: 282)

Cultural capital is made up of, but is not limited to, being culturally informed, being knowledgeable of particular institutions, having institutional qualifications, being familiar with aesthetic standards (Winkle-Wagner, 2010). Bourdieu (1984) explains that cultural capital is shaped through social origins and educational institutions. Of these shaping factors Bourdieu argues that the educational institution plays a role in reproducing class stratification. Bourdieu explains:

“The educational system acts like Maxwell’s demon: at the cost of the energy which is necessary for carrying out the sorting operation, it maintains the preexisting order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital. More precisely, by a series of selection operations, the system separates the holders of inherited cultural capital from those who lack it.

Differences of aptitude being inseparable from social differences according to inherited capital, the system thus tends to maintain preexisting social differences.”

(Bourdieu, 1998: 20)

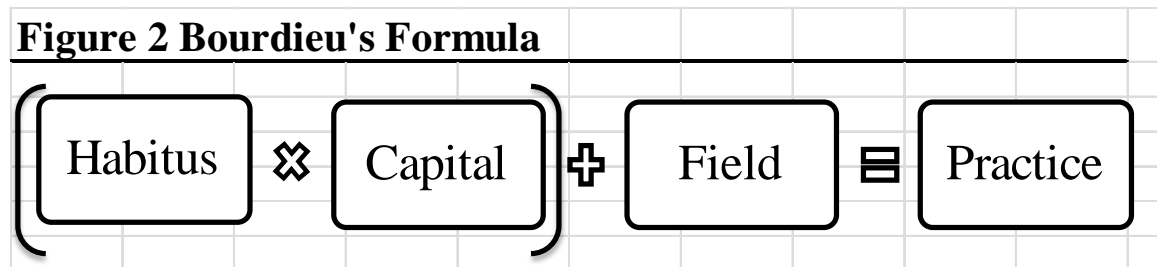
Cultural capital has been commonly used to understand differences in racial educational outcomes (Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999), “social background inequalities and educational attainment” (Katsillis & Rubinson, 1990), parental involvement (Lee & Bowen, 2006) and teacher relationships and expectations (Tang & University of Hong Kong, 1988).

Field refers to distinct domains similar to social institutions: for example, religion, family, church and education (Crossley, 2005). Beliefs, perceptions and what an individual or member of a particular group desires from the field will vary greatly, mostly depending on time spent in the field and motives in the field. The field is basically the setting of the particular game that one is playing, and each game has “pre-established rules and taken-for-granted structure of both meaning and power” (Crossley, 2005). How an individual will operate in these fields will depend on their knowledge of the field and resources that they have in order to operate in it. The combination of the habitus and capital will shape how an individual will perceive the field. Many scholars have used the concept field, for example, in a recent analysis of masculinities Holly Thorpe (2010)

collected her data in what she calls snowboarding field. The concept has also been used to analyze fields such as the field of music production (Prior, 2008), the juridical field (Bourdieu, 1987), and the journalistic field (Krause, 2011), there is a substantial amount of research on the educational field (Grenfell, 1996; Strange & Banning, 2001; and McDonough, 1997).

Practice refers to human behaviors, actions, essentially what people do.

Explaining the social practice formula, Bourdieu (1984) indicated that four variables must be considered: capital, habitus, field and practice. Bourdieu uses these variables to explain how one’s manner of living may be shaped. His formula indicates that habitus (kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation) times capital (resources useful in particular situations) plus field (distinct sectors such as school or family) equals practice (individuals established lived out customs or habits).



(Winkle-Wagner, 2010).

McWhorter’s model penetrates beyond class. In reference to anti-intellectualism (one of the self-sabotaging cultural identities) McWhorter says that, “cultural disconnect [cultural backgrounds that differ significantly between two groups] is almost always evident to at least some extent regardless of class lines, conditioning vastly different life trajectories for black students growing up with the same advantages their white classmates had” (2001). Getting beyond the scope of class, in reference to all three of the

self-sabotaging cultural identities, McWhorter argues, “even middle class black students tend to make substandard grades even in well funded suburban schools where teachers are making herculean, culturally sensitive efforts to reach them” (2001). Habitus serves as a good theoretical framework for several reasons. First, as noted before, the dispositions of habitus are produced historically, forgotten and yet practiced like second nature. This ties in well with McWhorter’s explanation of how victimology, his root concept, came about. McWhorter conceptualizes his variables as historically situated and it is for this reason that habitus is a good tool. McWhorter asserts that the desegregation of and removal of legalized discrimination during the 1960’s had several outcomes on African American perceptions and behaviors. This historical change, according to McWhorter, caused African Americans to express their frustration regarding race relations much more regularly and comfortably. McWhorter writes:

Centuries of abasement and marginalization led African Americans to internalize the way they were perceived by the larger society, resulting in a postcolonial inferiority complex. After centuries of degradation, it would have been astounding if African Americans had *not* inherited one (2001)

I propose that, another reason that this framework suits this study is the three cultural traits may be seen as forms of habitus. That is, they are forms of dispositions; this is illustrated very well by McWhorter in explaining separatism:

To be meaningfully “black” it is assumed that a black person will spontaneously filter all of his opinions through in-group separatism, which focuses on victimhood. This is not a conscious phenomenon. No one is

taken into a corner and told what he “must say like a Serbian reporter; black academics and journalists do not sit in their studies yearning to assess a case objectively but “forced” to “follow the party line.” Separatist morality, despite the temptation that certain academic theories to analyze it this way, is not a strategy wielded deliberately to amass resources of shape thought or gain power. It is a cultural thought pattern: the culturally black person does not need to be told or taught what to say any more than a child has to be taught to swallow; the black academics and journalist who dwell in Separatism do not know any other way to think, and indeed are appalled to encounter black people who do not think like them. Because Separatism is so much more psychologically deep-seated than a mere political pose, it is that much more difficult to imagine being culturally “black” without. (2001)

It can be seen from this excerpt that McWhorter conceptualizes separatism in a way that echoes Bourdieu. At the end of this excerpt it can be seen why cultural capital is not considered as the key explanation in McWhorte’s model.

The concept of *embodied cultural capital* (one of three types of cultural capital that Bourdieu identifies) may also be used to fully understand McWhorter’s theory. Carter (2003) argues there is “variability of cultural capital and of the ways in which a group of students use both ‘dominant’ and ‘non-dominant’ cultural capital” that “the maintenance of different cultural (and not necessarily ‘oppositional’) repertoires dictates that these students convert their own cultural resources into capital to maintain valued status positions within their communities.” Basically, when minorities of lower social

class value non-dominant cultural capital, the non-dominant form of capital becomes a capital of choice, especially when reinforced by the non-dominant group. Therefore, depending on the setting (field) “one form of cultural capital may be valued over another” (Wagner, 2010). Carter’s argument is that low-income minorities have both dominant and non-dominant forms capital to draw from to reach a particular end, depending on the particular field. Carter’s research revealed that the non-dominant cultural capital of lower socio economic status did not hold any importance in schools. This can explain a portion of the achievement gap, that is, for low-income African Americans.

Embodied capital, an individual’s “sense of culture, traditions, norms” (Winkle-Wagner, 2010), does not need to be used for capital. Actually, this is what separates habitus from embodied cultural capital, that embodied cultural capital depending on the setting, can be used as a means to an end (resource) and be culturally valued at an individual level. Essentially, outside of this distinction embodied cultural capital and habitus overlap (Crossley, 2005).

- 1) Victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism can be seen as forms of habitus.
- 2) Victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism can also be seen as forms of embodied cultural capital.
- 3) The field relevant to this study is educational institutions.
- 4) The social practice under consideration here is academic performance.

The following is a restating of McWhorter in Bourdieu’s theoretical terms: The likelihood of exhibiting any degree of intellectual practice will be dependent on the degree of internalized cultural dispositions (i.e. victimology, separatism and anti-

intellectualism) and learned cultural capital (i.e. victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism) associated with the educational field. Additionally, according to McWhorter there should be a linear association between these dispositions and cultural capital. Finally, these forms of dispositions and cultural capital according to McWhorter should be more likely to be found among minorities than the dominant group, meaning that there should be significant differences between African Americans and European Americans.

The following expressions articulate the theoretical perspective used in this study. If an individual views social phenomena from a victimized perspective, unconsciously separates oneself from anything related to the oppressor and views academia as being part of the oppressors culture, then she or he will attain lower levels of achievement in educational institutions.

Figure 3 Conceptual and Operational Model

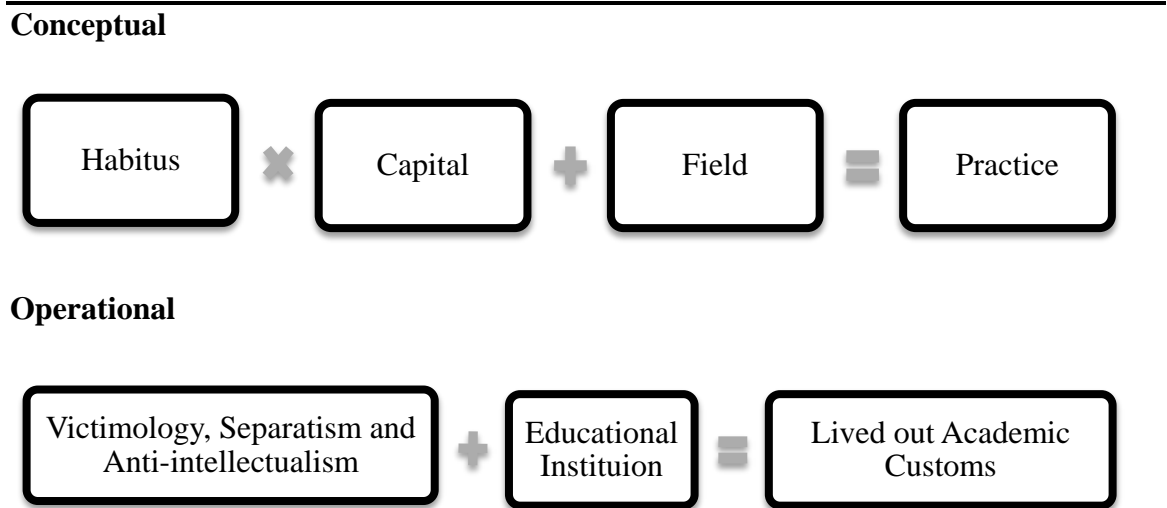


Figure 3 illustrates a conceptual framework or model of academic achievement. The main purpose of the above figure is to illustrate how useful Bourdieu’s model might

be in consideration of McWhorter's work. In the discussion of the results Bourdieu's concepts will be used to deepen the interpretation. A theoretical tool to guide both the inquiry and analysis of academic performance can be derived from operationalizing Bourdieu's social practice theory using McWhorter's concepts. Bourdieu's social practice theory serves as a resource for interpretation. Reviewing the empirical results of this study in the context of Bourdieu's rich conceptual framework will be very helpful in the interpretation of them. This may extend our understanding of African American underachievement and prove a useful analytical perspective for future research on this phenomenon.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Nature of the Study

The analytic frame of this study is fixed in nature. Fixed framed studies are “most common in quantitative research where the goal is to test hypothesis. When analytic frames are fixed, the relevant cases and aspects of cases (variables) change little, if at all, over the course of the investigation” (Ragin 1994:187). In the present quantitative study, attempts will be made to determine if there is a relationship between the variables victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism. If the findings are not in agreement with the abovementioned hypothesis, the hypothesis will be rejected and the theory will be refined.

Data

This study requires data that revolves around academic psychological sentiments and behavior. In this study, longitudinal secondary survey data from the Maryland Adolescent Development in Context Study (MADICS) will be used. The study population is limited to primarily European American and African American families in Washington DC. There are a total of 1,407 participants included in the analysis of this study. The participants were sent letters asking them to participate. Stratified sampling was employed in order to gather multiple ecological settings such as urban and suburban areas. The original study has five goals: (1) to gather a comprehensive description of adolescence development; (2) to test behavior and identity theories; (3) to link variations in contextual characteristics and individuals; (4) to interpret the interplay between social spheres of experience and processes, and (5) to develop a better understanding of

African-American adolescents focusing on both general developmental processes and the specific dynamics associated with ethnic identity, prejudice, discrimination and social stratification (<http://rcgd.isr.umich.edu/garp/projects.htm>).

Data were collected from the time the subjects were admitted into middle school up until three years following high school. Participants of the study consist of 51 percent African Americans and 43 percent European Americans. The data set currently has 6 waves available for analysis. Waves 5 and 6 will be used to test the theory because they are the only waves that possess all the necessary variables. The participants were selected from several thousand families in Maryland. The sample is very diverse in regards to socioeconomic status (SES) and location (rural and urban). Because the data were initially designed to measure the psychological determinants of behavior, particularly academic behavior, it is logical to use this dataset.

The longitudinal design and number of cases has the potential to allow for more sophisticated analysis of the data and will help determine when, where or if these sentiments/behaviors of victimology, separatism, and anti-intellectualism occur. While there are seven waves of data this study, wave six only is the only wave that will be used, this is because it has all the variables and wave seven has not been made available yet. The large number of cases increases the data's reliability. That is, there is enough data to produce consistent and dependable results. Even though the instrument was not designed to measure the key variables of this research, they have validity, in that the items on the instrument accurately measure the intended concepts of this study. The increased validity came from having multiple participants select randomly selected items from the survey at face validity as well. That is, a Q-sort technique, explained in more detail on page 41,

was used in the scale development to eliminate validity problems. The instrument was designed to measure psychological influences on behavior, more specifically academic behavior. This is important to this research because two of the key concepts (victimology and separatism) possess psychological aspects, which theoretically determine the anti-intellectual attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

Composite Variables

Developing the composites for victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism involved several steps. First, *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* was thoroughly reviewed so that the researcher could obtain a clear conceptual understanding of what the relevant terms meant as well as look for operational cues. After carefully reviewing *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* the researcher made note of several operational cues to look for while selecting items at face validity from the MADICS survey. Table 1 illustrates a non-exhaustive compilation of operational cues drawn from the book.

After carefully reviewing these cues and the conceptual definition of these concepts, 39 items were selected from the MADICS survey. These 39 items were selected to reflect the theoretical representations of the identities. The items selected can be broadly organized into three categories: (a) victimology, consisting of 10 items that reflect perceived racism and sentiments of victimhood; (b) separatism consisting of items that represent both separatist attitudes (12 items) and behaviors (4 items); and, lastly, anti-intellectualism also consisting of both attitudinal (6 items) and behavioral (7 items) aspects of anti-intellectualism.

Table 1. Operational Cues

| Cues for Anti-intellectualism | Pages |
|---|--------------|
| Assignments turned in on time | pg. 144 |
| Use of office hours | pg. 144 |
| Use of teaching assistance for extra help | pg. 144 |
| Quality of Assignments | pg. 90 |
| Time spent on Assignments | pg. 90 |
| Attendance | pg. 90 |
| Communication with professor | pg. 90 |
| Communication with professor regarding help or problems | pg. 93 |
| Degree of effort | pg. 100 |

Cues for Victimology

| | |
|--|--------|
| Someone who “exaggerates the extent of his victimhood” | pg. 2 |
| Tends to stress issues that “barely exist,” | pg. 2 |
| Tends to “dismiss” racial improvement | pg. 4 |
| Tends to claim that the state of racisms has not changed much | pg.5,6 |
| Believe that “most blacks are poor” | pg. 9 |
| Believe that “blacks get paid less that whites for the same job” | pg. 9 |
| Believe that “there is an epidemic of racist arson of black churches” | pg. 10 |
| Believe that “the U.S. government funneled crack in south central Los Angeles,” | pg. 11 |
| Believe “the number of black men in prison is due to a racist justice system” | pg. 13 |
| Believe that “the police stop-and-frisk more black people than whites because of racism” | pg. 15 |
| Believe that “police brutality against black people reveals the eternity of racism” | pg. 21 |

Cues for Anti-intellectualism

| | |
|--|---------|
| Separate themselves from foreign cultures and languages | pg. 237 |
| Do not participate in the “general campus drama scene | pg. 237 |
| Opposed to “writing for the campus newspaper,” | pg. 237 |
| Do not participate in activities “outside of the expressly black-oriented realm” | pg. 237 |
| View mainstream culture as “white” culture | pg. 51 |
| Do not read novels written by whites | pg. 52 |
| Would not attend a white musical | pg. 53 |
| “Restrict their study to black issues” | pg. 53 |
| Discouraged from learning languages other than Spanish and French | pg. 53 |

Q-Sort

Because the items representing McWhorter's concepts were selected at face validity, Q-sorting was used to help determine the validity of the items. In addition, insights from the participants of the Q-Sort were used to in selecting items used in this study. Q-Sorting is an analysis wherein items are categorized (Colman, 2009) to represent the subjective perspective or experience of the sorter in relation to the items (Pittman et. al, 2009). The analysis usually consists of having participants sort items into categories. The items are sorted "often by arranging a deck of cards showing trait-descriptive statements into a fixed number of piles" (Colman, 2009). The purpose of Q-Sorting is to build theory/descriptions and is generally used in the social sciences to quantify subjective data (Brewer, 2006).

Q-Sort Sample

Four African American sorters were recruited from Portland State University to categorize the items that would serve as indicators of the three theoretical identities. Two of the participants were graduate students and the other two were faculty. Of the two faculty members, one was a female.

Q-Sort Procedure

In addition to the 39 original items selected, 13 miscellaneous items were added to the set making a total of 52 items. Each participant was, at separate times, given written instructions (see Appendix A for Q-Sort instructions). In accordance with the common method of conducting a Q-Sort, participants were provided with cards with the survey items on them. Four boxes with brief definitions of the concepts were placed in front of them with the exception of one which was labeled miscellaneous. The

participants then, after reading the instructions and definitions, sorted the 52 items into the four boxes, determining, for example, which survey items most accurately represented the concepts laid before them. Items that seemed irrelevant were placed in the box labeled miscellaneous.

Q-Sort Results

The participant's sorts were assessed for validity by calculating mean scores for each item to determine its consistency with the concepts definition. Results of the calculated means indicated that (1) victimization had 78% validity, (2) separatism at the attitudinal level had 88% validity, (3) anti-intellectualism at the attitudinal level had 88% validity, (4) separatism at the behavioral level had 0% validity, and (5) anti-intellectualism at the behavioral level had 57% validity. A one-way analysis of variance showed significant difference between the concepts at a $p < .000$ level [$F(4, 15) = 19.06, p = .000$]. Post hoc comparisons, for further analyses, using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for victimization ($M = 8.25, SD = 1.71$) was significantly different from the behavioral level of separatism ($M = 2.00, SD = 1.00$), however the items selected for the remainder of the concepts did not significantly differ from victimization. Separatism ($M = 10.50, SD = 1.00$) was significantly different from the items selected for anti-intellectualism ($M = 5.25, SD = .50$) the items selected for anti-intellectualism at the behavioral level ($M = 4.75, SD = 2.36$) and significantly different from the items selected from the behavioral level of separatism ($M = 1.00, SD = .200$). There was no significant difference found between Separatism at the attitudinal level and victimization. Anti-intellectualism ($M = 5.25, SD = .50$) was significantly different from the items selected for the separatism ($M = 10.50, SD = 1.00$) and the items selected for separatism at the

behavioral level ($M = 1.00$, $SD = .2.00$). There was no significant difference found between anti-intellectualism and victimization nor anti-intellectualism at the behavioral level. There were significant differences found between both anti-intellectualism at the behavioral level and the separatism at the behavioral level but since there are not used in the study as will be explained below the results are not reported.

Results indicated that the participants could not significantly differentiate between anti-intellectualism and separatism. This was expected; that is, theoretically, if items that represent intellectualism are considered something that African Americans separate themselves from then it could be easily mistaken for separatism. This can also go the other way, i.e. one of the items read “About how many hours do you usually spend doing art, drawing, or drama?” If you read the book, this would be a clear indicator of separatism, but at first glance could be confused for an indicator of anti-intellectualism. But since there was so much confusion about this variable, separatism at the behavioral level was omitted. Also, some of the items that were coded differently and/or had no reliability such as with anti-intellectualism and victimization were omitted.

It is for the abovementioned reason that, after carefully reviewing the Q-Sort results, composite variables were constructed at the researcher’s discretion. Below the operationalization of the composite variables are presented as well as the operationalization of the other variables used in this study.

Chapter 5

Results

Univariate Analysis

Operationalization of Variables in Study

Anti-intellectualism. The first key dependent variable in this study is anti-intellectualism (DV). Anti-intellectualism is indifferent, oppositional, or hostile feelings expressed towards academics, intellectuals, and intellectual pursuits. This variable will be measured at both the attitudinal level and behavioral level. The degrees of anti-intellectualism will be determined by the responses to the following statements: 1) Assignments are a waste of time, 2) Schooling is not so important for people like me, 3) School is a waste of time, 4) and homework is a waste of time, and 5) I don't really care about school ($\text{Alpha}=.87$). Scales were not created to measure anti-intellectualism at the behavioral level, because the items cumulatively lacked validity (57%) and had insufficient reliability ($\text{Alpha}=.501$). To measure the full range of variation of anti-intellectualism, the items that measured attitudes towards intellectualism were operationalized with a range from 1=Disagree, through 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, to 5=Strongly Agree. The closer to 1 a participant is the more intellectual their attitudes and the closer to 5 the more anti-intellectual the participant is. To capture the variability of the scores for the variable anti-intellectualism measures of central tendency were calculated. The results of this analysis are; $N = 327$, $M=1.73$, $SD=.635$. When you look at the mean, it appears that most participants are not anti-intellectual. Additionally, based on the small standard deviation, it looks like this does not vary much.

Separatism. The next variable is separatism. Separatism is an intervening variable. Separatism is a mindset that encourages a group or an individual of a particular race to separate themselves from other races or anything culturally similar to that particular race or races (McWhoter 2000). The levels of separatism are determined by the responses to the following statements: 1) It is better when schools have students of just one race, 2) Blacks and whites at my college are better off when they stay away from each other, 3) Blacks should not interact socially with Whites, 4) Blacks should only buy from Black businesses, 5) Blacks should not rely on help from other groups to solve their problems, 6) Black students are better off going to schools run by Blacks, 7) Blacks should not be fully involved in American politics, 8) It is not important for Blacks to have experience interacting with Whites ($\text{Alpha}=.87$). To measure the full range of variation of separatism, the items that measured separatism were operationalized with a range from 1=Disagree, through 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, to 5=Strongly Agree. The closer to 1 a participant is the more non-separatist they are and the closer to 5 the more separatist they are. To capture the variability of the scores for the variable separatism measures of central tendency were calculated. The following are the results of this analysis; $N = 260$, $M=2.23$, $SD=.502$. When you look at the mean, it appears that most participants have separatist ideals.

Victimology (Victimization). Victimology is a tendency for minorities to blame their problems on often nonexistent white racism (McWhoter 2000). The degree of victimology is measured by the responses (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree) to the following statements: 1) there should be PREFERENCE programs to correct for racial or ethnic discrimination, 2) discrimination

because of your race might keep you from getting the job you want, 3) Blacks are discriminated against In gaining positions of leadership over men and women, 4) discrimination because of your race might keep you from getting the amount of education you want (Alpha=.94). The variation of victimization was captured by operationalizing the items that measured victimization from 1=Disagree, through 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, to 5=Strongly Agree. The closer to 1 a participant is the fewer sentiments of victimization the participant had and the closer to 5 the higher the degree of victimization the participant has. To capture the variability of the scores for the variable victimization measures of central tendency were calculated as well. The following are the results of this analysis; N = 321, M=2.57, SD=.785. When you look at the mean, it appears that most participants have some degree of victimization.

Academic Achievement. Academic achievement will be measured using GPA. Participants GPA's will be measured on a five point scale. The grades of the participants will be coded as follows: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, 4=D and 5=F. Measures of central tendency results were as follow; N = 456, M=3.05, SD=.479. The mean shows that the average participant was a little above average.

Academic Self-Concept. Academic self-concept will be measured using the academic ability self concept scale. Academic self-concept is measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 = much less able, 3 = about the same and 5 = much more able. The degree of academic self-concept is measured by the participants responses to the following statement: compared to the average college student at your school, 1) I am able to: do my schoolwork quickly and efficiently, 2) write good papers for my courses; 3) excel in math and science, 4) feel that I'm pretty intelligent; and 5) do very well at my

coursework, 6) do well in math (Alpha=.78). The measures of central tendency indicated that average participant felt that they performed as well as most students (N=464, M=2.23, SD=.684).

Racial Group Identity. Racial group cultural identity is the positive or negative sentiments an individual feels towards his/her own racial/ethnic group. The levels of racial group cultural identity are determined by the responses to the following items: 1) I have a close community of friends because of my race/ethnicity, 2) people of my race/ethnicity are very supportive of each other, 3) people of my race/ethnicity have a culturally rich heritage and 4) I have meaningful traditions because of my race/ethnicity. The response categories consisted of 1 = not at all true for me, 3 = somewhat true for me and 5 = extremely true for me (Alpha=.88). The average participant has positive sentiments towards the racial/ethnic group; N=320, M=2.99, SD=1.06.

School Climate 1) I feel like part of a family at my college. 2) I feel emotionally attached to my school. 3) I feel that any problems faced by my school are also my problems. 4) My school really cares about me. 5) My school values my contributions to it. 6) My college is willing to help me when I have special needs. 7) **I do not feel comfortable talking about my culture in class discussions.** 8) **I cannot talk to my family about my friends at school or what I am learning at school.** 9) **I feel like a chameleon at school, having to change my “colors” according to the ethnicity of the person I am with.** 10) **I feel as though I cannot be myself at my school because of my ethnicity.** The response categories consisted of 1 = almost never and 7 = almost always; scoring closer to one indicated that the participant had more negative sentiments towards the school climate as where closer to seven meant the participant had more positive

sentiments towards the school climate. The variability of the scores for the variable school climate was captured by calculating measures of central tendency. The following are the results of this analysis; $N = 460$, $M=3.15$, $SD=.945$. Most participants, according to the mean, have slight more positive sentiments about the school climate.

African American Respondents who indicate that they are African American or Black. 0 = Other and 1 = Black. Measures of dispersion resulted in $N = 464$, $M=.413$, $SD=.493$.

Socioeconomic Status The response categories consisted of 1 = Less than \$5,000, 2 = Between \$5,000-9,999, 3 = Between \$10,000-19,000, 4 = Between \$20,000-29,000, 5 = Between \$30,000-39,999, 6 = Between \$40,000-49,000, 7 = More than \$50,000. Socioeconomic status accounted for every source of income a household had within 12 months. Measures of central tendency results were as follow; $N = 458$, $M=5.49$, $SD=1.41$.

Table 2 describes the variables, gives variable values, gives mean differences by race and *t*-test values. The column marked description gives a description of the items used to measure the variables. Anti-intellectualism is measured at an attitudinal level. The distribution of anti-intellectualism is negatively skewed, that is, most of the respondents report having high regards towards intellectualism with a mean of 1.73. As Table 2 shows African Americans on average, have a slightly lower degree of anti-intellectualism (Mean = 1.63) than European Americans (Mean = 1.78).

The variable victimology, is measured using a 4 point scale, with 4 being a high degree of perceived racism and 1 having no perceived racism. This variable has bell shaped distribution mean of 2.52. Separatism is measured on a five point scale as well,

with 5 indicating that the participant has a high degree of separatism and 1 signifying that the participant does not have any degree of separatism. The distribution of this variable is negatively skewed as well. Namely, the majority of the respondent on average (3.05) reported anti-separatist attitudes. Separatism is both an independent and dependent variable. This is because according to the McWhorter's theory, victimology leads to separatism and separatism leads to anti-intellectualism.

Table 2: Variables Descriptions and Univariate Analysis (N=464)

| Variables | Description | Metric | Mean | | t-test |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-------|-------|--------|
| | | | Black | White | |
| Ant-intellectualism (Attitudinal) | 1) Assignments are a waste of time, 2) Schooling is not so important for people like me, 3) School is a waste of time, 4) and homework is a waste of time, and 5) I don't really care about school (Alpha=.87). | 1 = Strongly Disagree 5= Strongly Agree | 1.63 | 1.78 | -2.09* |
| Separatism | 1) It is better when schools have students of just one race, 2) Blacks and whites at my college are better off when they stay away from each other, 3) Blacks should not interact socially with Whites, 4) Blacks should only buy from Black businesses, 5) Blacks should not rely on help from other groups to solve their problems, 6) Black students are better off going to schools run by Blacks, 7) Blacks should not be fully involved in American politics, 8) It is not important for Blacks to have experience interacting with Whites (Alpha=.87) | 1 =Strongly Disagree 5= Strongly Agree | 2.2 | 2.32 | -17 |
| Victimization | 1)there should be PREFERENCE programs to correct for racial or ethnic discrimination, 2) discrimination because of your race might keep you from getting the job you want, 3) Blacks are discriminated against In gaining positions of leadership over men and women, 4) discrimination because of your race might keep you from getting the amount of education you want (Alpha=.94) | 1 =Strongly Disagree 5= Strongly Agree | 2.97 | 2.33 | 7.74** |

Note:*p<.05; **p<.01.

Table 2: Variables Descriptions and Univariate Analysis (N=464) Cont.

| Variables | Description | Metric | Mean | | <i>t-test</i> |
|--------------------------|---|--|-------|-------|---------------|
| | | | Black | White | |
| <i>Control Variables</i> | | | | | |
| Academic Self-Concept | 1) compared to the average student at my school, 2) I am able to: do my schoolwork quickly and efficiently; write good papers for my courses; 3) excel in math and science; feel that I'm pretty intelligent; and 4) do very well at my coursework | 1 = much more able , 3 = about the same and 5 = much less able | 2.21 | 2.25 | -0.67 |
| Racial Group Identity | 1) I have a close community of friends because of my race/ethnicity, 2) people of my race/ethnicity are very supportive of each other, 3) people of my race/ethnicity have a culturally heritage and 4) I have meaningful traditions because of my race/ethnicity. | 5 = extremely true for me, 3 = somewhat true for me and 1 = not at all true for me | 2.49 | 3.28 | -6.81** |
| School Climate | 1) I feel like part of a family at my college. 2) I feel emotionally attached to my school that any problems faced by my school are also my problems. 4) My school really cares about me. 5) My school values my contributions to it. 6) My college is willing to help me when I have special needs. 7) I do not feel comfortable talking about my culture in class discussions. 8) I cannot talk to my family about my friends at school or what I am learning at school. 9) I feel like a chameleon at school, having to change my "colors" according to the ethnicity of the person I am with. 10) I feel as though I cannot be myself at my school because of my ethnicity. | 1 = Almost Never and 7 = Almost Always | 3.1 | 3.19 | -0.91 |

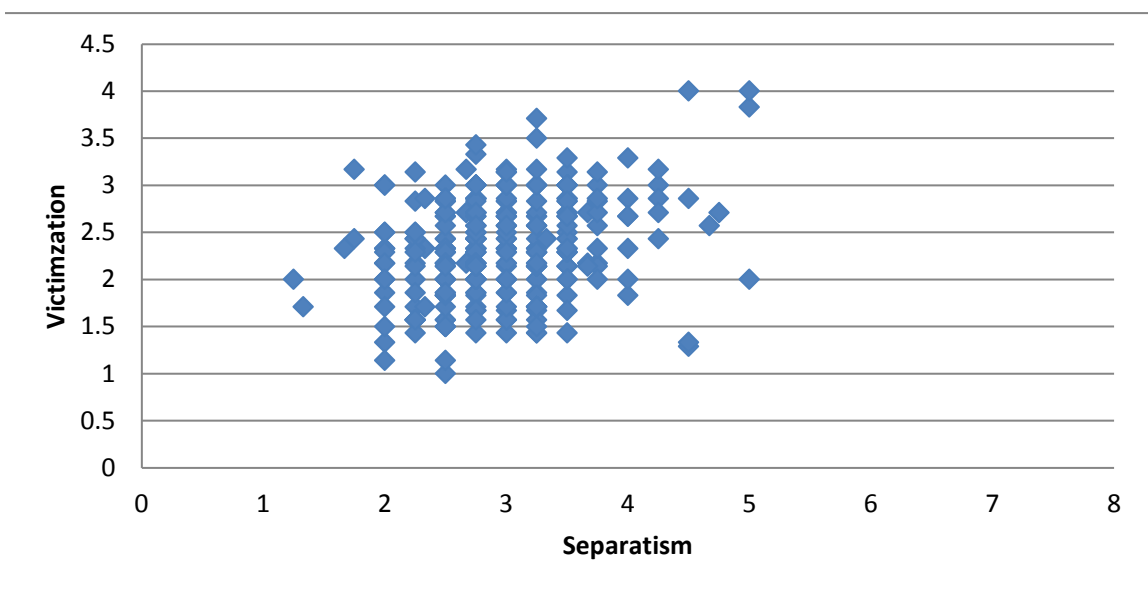
Note: *p<.05; **p<.01.

Note: Bold font is reverse coded

Bivariate Analysis

Several Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the relationship between the hypothesized variables. A correlation was found between the two variables victimization and separatism, $r = .303$, $n = 179$, $p = .000$.

Figure 4 Scatter Plots



Victimization-The tendency for minorities to perceive racism in various situations.

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Victimization and 5=High Degree of Victimization

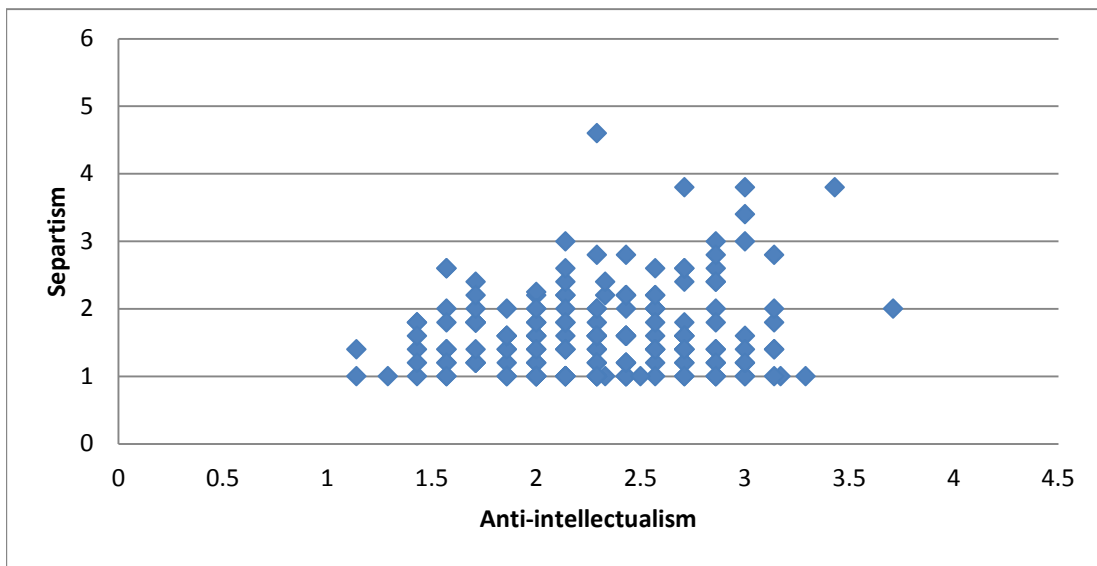
Separatism is a mindset that encourages a group or an individual of a particular race to separate themselves from other races or anything culturally similar to that particular race or races (McWhorter 2000)

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Separatism and 5=High Degree of Separatism

There was also a correlation found between the two variables separatism and anti-intellectualism, $r = .178$, $n = 176$, $p = .019$. There was no correlation between the variables anti-intellectualism and achievement. Scatter plots summarize these results

(Figure 4 and Figure 5). Overall, there is a moderate positive relationship between victimization and separatism, that is, increases in victimization are correlated with increases in separatism. These correlations also show that increases in separatism are positively correlated with increases in anti-intellectualism. However, there was no correlation found between the variables anti-intellectualism and achievement.

Figure 5 Scatter Plots



Separatism is a mindset that encourages a group or an individual of a particular race to separate themselves from other races or anything culturally similar to that particular race or races (McWhoter 2000)

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Separatism and 5=High Degree of Separatism

Anti-intellectualism-is indifferent, oppositional, or hostile feelings expressed towards academics, intellectuals, and intellectual pursuits.

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Anit-intellectualism and 5=High Degree of Anti-intellectualism

McWhorter's Testable Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1- *Students with high degrees of victimization are more likely to have higher degrees of separatism than students with lower degrees of victimization.*

McWhorter (2001) claims that it is “through the prism of Victimology...” that separatism (the habituation of keeping oneself within particular cultural limits) is born. He contends that “most African Americans now perceive it [separatism] not as a strategic choice but as pristine moral judgment” (McWhorter, 2001). According to McWhorter separatism begins as an embrace of one’s identity and that it is the misleading nature of victimology that makes separatism a more of repudiation of anything considered “white”.

McWhorter does a good job of conceptualizing and through anecdotal means operationalizing separatism. He conceptually and theoretically illustrates how African Americans internalize separatism and act it out in daily life. Unfortunately Hypothesis 1 is tested by assessing only separatist attitudes. That is, because the q-sort items for the separatist behaviors yielded neither reliability nor validity.

Table 3 consists of regression models for separatism. The model labeled 1 in table 3 consists solely of victimization’s effect on separatism (testing the hypothesis 1 without accounting for how other variables affect the relationship). The models labeled 2 in table 3 control for race and socioeconomic status (SES). Race and SES are added to the models because McWhorter states that African Americans are more likely to obtain these theoretical identities regardless of socioeconomic status. Logically then, it can be

expected that what a participant indicates as her/his race should significantly affect separatism. Additionally, even though McWhorter argues that class is not a factor, SES has been found to have a significant effect on African American adults, that is, the higher the SES the lower the academic achievement (Demo & Hughes 1990; Allen et al.. 1989; and Broman et al.. 1988). Because racial self-esteem (referred to as racial group identity in this study) has been found to be significantly related to be separatism (Hughes and Demo 1989), racial group identity is added to the models labeled 3 in table 3. Finally, an interaction is included to analyze the relationship of African American’s social class on separatism.

Table 3: Linear Regression Models Separatism

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Constant | 1.605** (0.170) | 1.489** (0.231) | 1.313 (0.340) |
| <i>Theoretical Variable</i> | | | |
| Victimology | .235** (0.056) | .233** (0.057) | .235** (0.058) |
| <i>Race</i> | | | |
| African American | | -0.017 (0.077) | -0.405 (0.330) |
| <i>Socioeconomic Status</i> | | | |
| Total Household Income | | 0.023 (0.027) | 0.073 (0.045) |
| <i>Racial Self-Esteem</i> | | | |
| Racial Group Cultural Identity | | | -0.043 (0.041) |
| <i>Interaction Effects</i> | | | |
| African American × Total Household Income | | | -0.074 (0.056) |
| Number of Observations | 179 | 177 | 175 |
| R ² | .087 | 0.078 | .084 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses

*p < .05; **p < .01.

The simple regression analysis in model 1 of table 3 was conducted to examine the bivariate relationship between victimization and separatism. Results indicated that there is a significant relationship between victimization and separatism, $b = .235$, $SEb = .056$. Not only is there is a significant ($p = .000$) relationship between separatism and victimization but there is a positive relationship. That is, for every unit increase in victimization there is a predicted increase of less than one unit (.235) in separatism. Only around 9% ($R^2 = .087$) of the variation in degree of separatism was explained by victimization. As such, this finding supports the logic behind McWhorter's theory that high degrees of victimization will be followed by high degrees of separatism. Table 3 models 2 and 3 illustrates similar finding for every model. That is, every model shows a significant relationship between victimization and separatism, and every model has a positive relationship. While, contrary to what research suggests, McWhorter is correct in that SES is not contributing factor, at least at this stage, however, being African American is not a contributing factor either. Model 2, after accounting for race and SES, found victimization to be the only significant (.000) factor. The regression coefficient is positive (.233), solidifying the relationship pointed out in model 1, the higher the victimization the higher the separatism. After accounting for the effects race and SES model 2 continued to explain approximately 8% (Adj R-square=.078) of the variation in separatism.

Model 3 in table 3 takes in to account the unique effects of victimization, race, SES, racial group identity and the interaction of African American and SES on separatism. Model 3 of table 3 further indicates that victimization is positively related to separatism. Suggesting that the higher the degree of victimization the higher the degree of

separatism. This relationship, even after accounting for the unique effect of the control variables, is statistically significant ($p = .000$). The negative regression coefficient ($-.043$) for racial group identity is not statistically significant, and it does not support what Demo and Hughes found in their study on self-esteem and personal efficacy that separatism increases with higher racial group identity. Both race and SES remained non-significant in model 3 of table 3. However, including all the variables in model 3 of table 3, even the non-significant interaction between African American and SES, victimizations positive relationship $b = .2.35$ remained significant. Victimization's consistent significance in every model, showed support for McWhorters theory that the higher the degree of victimization the higher the degree of separatism. Model 3 of table 3 explained around 8% ($R\text{-Square}=.084$) of the variation in the model. These results, as in the bivariate analysis, suggest a strong relationship between the variables separatism and victimization even after accounting for the control variables.

Hypothesis 2- *Students with high separatism are more likely to have high anti-intellectualism than students with low separatism.*

McWhorter (2001) claims that anti-intellectualism is born out of separatism the “conditioning a restriction of cultural taste, a narrowing of intellectual inquiry.” McWhorter maintains that African Americans have a tendency of not enthusiastically nor wholeheartedly adopting an intellectual identity and that they actually intentionally separate themselves from it because intellectualism is considered a European American identity. This hypothesis is not new. This is not the first time this theory has been suggested, Ogbu (1986, 2004) prior to his death published his thesis on this concept as well. According to Ogbu, Black students do not aspire to or strive to get good grades

because it is perceived as acting white. Since Ogbu published this theory many researchers have tested this theory, nevertheless, none of the studies have assessed separatism's effect on anti-intellectualism. Research has also suggested that student's intellectual attitudes can be attributed to race (Cool and Ludwig, 1997; Davis 2003), socioeconomic status (Battistich, 1995) and school experience (Tyson, 2003). Again, to test McWhorter's theory that African American's social class is an insignificant factor, an interaction (African American \times SES) is included. Therefore, the control variables for this portion of the analysis will consist of race, socioeconomic status and school climate and the interaction between African Americans and SES.

In examining Hypothesis 2, several linear regressions are run to determine whether separatism influences anti-intellectualism. Support for hypothesis 2 is found when a bivariate regression is run between separatism and anti-intellectualism. The regression coefficient is positive (.229) indicating that the more separatist a student is the more anti-intellectual a student is. This relationship is statistically significant (Sig = .019). This model only explains about 3% (Adj R-square=.026) of the variation in separatism.

Model 2 in table 4 is testing hypothesis 2 (separatism's effect on anti-intellectualism) controlling for African American and SES. Model 2 in table 4 suggests that anti-intellectualism has nothing to do with being African American or SES but is solely predicted by separatism. Separatism's positive regression coefficient (.225) remains statistically significant (.023) after accounting for the non-significant control variables. However, this model only explains about 2% (Adj R-square=.020) of the variation in anti-intellectualism.

Table 4: Linear Regression Models Anti-Intellectualism

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Constant | 1.138** (.229) | 1.117 (0.304) | 0.095 (0.412) |
| <i>Theoretical Variable</i> | | | |
| Separatism | 0.229** (0.097) | 0.225* (0.098) | 0.250** (0.094) |
| <i>Race</i> | | | |
| African American | | -0.094 (0.103) | 0.435 (0.416) |
| <i>Socioeconomic Status</i> | | | |
| Total Household Income | | 0.016 (0.036) | 0.057 (0.057) |
| <i>Perception of School Environment</i> | | | |
| School Climate General | | | 0.227** (0.050) |
| <i>Interaction Effects</i> | | | |
| African American x Total Household Income | | | -0.09 (0.071) |
| Number of Observations | 176 | 174 | 172 |
| R ² | .026 | .020 | .124 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses

*p < .05; **p < .01.

Model 3 of table 4 also shows support for hypothesis 2 even after controlling for race, SES, school climate and the interaction between African American and SES, reestablishing the relationships between separatism and anti-intellectualism in models 1 and 2 of table 4. Separatism's positive regression coefficient (.225) not only remains statistically significant (.009) but increases in significance after accounting for the control variables. The only statistically significant (.000) control variable in model 3 of table 4 is

school climate. This relationship, with its positive coefficient (.227), suggest that the more negative a student feels about the school climate the more anti-intellectual a student is. These findings are consistent with Tyson's (2002) study on attitudes towards schooling, who found that student schooling experiences was a better predictor of attitudes towards school. Nonetheless, the findings are inconsistent with Battistich's (1995) research which found that SES significantly associated with attitudes towards school. There is no significant interaction between African American and SES. Overall, these analyses suggest that the more negative one feels about their school climate and the more separatist one is the more anti-intellectual one is. The results suggest that School climate and separatism, with the inclusion of all the control variables unique effects, explains about 12% (Adj R-square=.124) of the variation in separatism.

Hypothesis 3- *Students with high degrees of anti-intellectualism will have poorer academic achievement.*

The most controversial view that McWhorter puts forward is that African Americans poor performance can be attributed to their culture of Anti-intellectualism. McWhorter (2000) claims that it is not "unequal distribution of educational resources" but anti-intellectualism that "is the root cause of the notorious lag in black students' grades and test scores regardless of class or income level." The popularity of this claim resulted in numerous articles reporting claims about the validity of the theory. The articles tend to provide descriptive reasons for why McWhorter's method and theory are flawed (Aronowitz, 2001; Louis 2001; Cokley, 2004, 2008). Research has reported that African Americans are not anti-intellectual and that academic self-concept is a better predictor of GPA (Cokley, 2008).

Hypothesis 3 is first analyzed by running a bivariate regression analysis (not shown) to examine anti-intellectualism and its effect on achievement (G.P.A.). This analysis showed no support for hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 is further analyzed, in model 1 of table 5, accounting for the variables anti-intellectualism and academic self-concept. Model 1 of table 5, like in the bivariate analysis, found no support for hypothesis 3. However, model 1 indicated that the lower a student's academic self-concept the lower their academic performance. This model (1 of table 5) explains around 15% (Adj R-square=.152) of the variation in achievement.

Model 2 of table 5 further analyzes hypothesis 3 accounting for the variables anti-intellectualism, academic self-concept and racial group identity. After accounting for all of these variables, the only statistically significant (.000) predictor of achievement in model 2 of table 5 was academic self-concept. Academic self-concept's positive regression coefficient ($b = .275$) suggests that achievement has less to do with anti-intellectualism or racial group identity than it does with how much a student believes in his/her academic abilities. Model 2 of table 5 explains around 14% (Adj R-square=.144) of the variation in achievement. This model finds no support for Nasir et al. (2008) hypothesis that argues that racial group identity is positively correlated with academic achievement.

The final analysis of hypothesis 3 in model 3 of table 5 which included the following variables anti-intellectualism, academic self-concept, racial group identity African American, female, SES and the interaction between African American and SES. The only statistically significant relationship (.000) found in model 3 of table 5 is between achievement and academic self-concept. Anti-intellectualism remained

insignificant. The positive coefficient (.284) for academic self-concept suggest that the higher the degree of negative academic self-concept the lower the achievement. There were no statistically significant relationships for African American, SES, racial group identity nor the interaction. Model 3 of table 5 explains around 15% (Adj R-square=.154) of the variation in achievement.

Table 5: Linear Regression Models Achievement

| | Achievement (G.P.A.) | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
| Constant | 2.272** (0.230) | 2.307** (0.237) | 2.247** (0.257) |
| <i>Theoretical Variable</i> | | | |
| Ant-intellectualism | -0.065 (0.040) | -0.060 (0.042) | -0.055 (0.042) |
| <i>General View of Oneself (in Academic Domain)</i> | | | |
| Academic Self-Concept | 0.281** (0.047) | .275** (0.048) | .284** (0.048) |
| <i>Racial Self-Esteem</i> | | | |
| Racial Group Cultural Identity | | -0.011 (0.026) | -0.013 (0.027) |
| <i>Demographic Variables</i> | | | |
| African American | | | -0.06 (0.248) |
| Female | | | 0.065 (0.074) |
| <i>Socioeconomic Status</i> | | | |
| Total Household Income | | | 0.006 (0.030) |
| <i>Interaction Effects</i> | | | |
| African American × Total Household Income | | | -0.012 (0.045) |
| Number of Observations | 189 | 186 | 183 |
| R2 | .152 | .144 | .154 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses

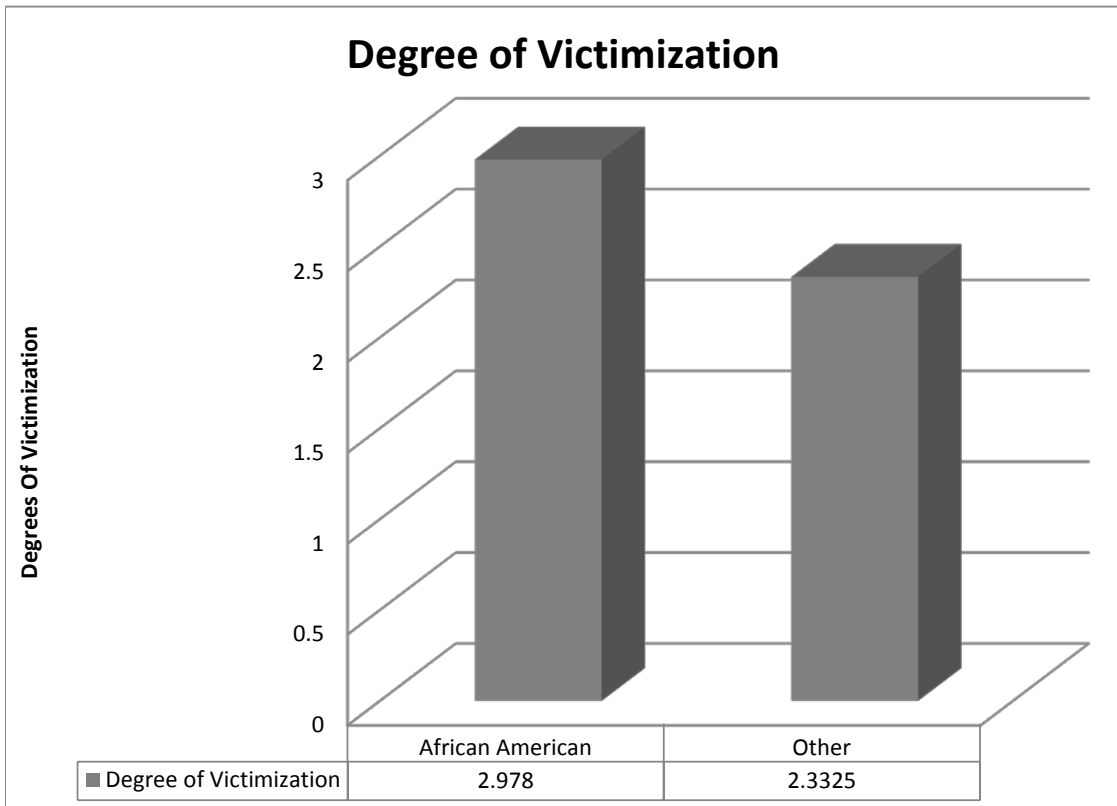
*p < .05; **p < .01.

In every model, even after introducing control variables, academic self-concept predicted achievement; yielding results inconsistent with hypothesis 3. Anti-intellectualism does not explain the disparities in academic performance. Though no support is found for hypothesis 3 in this analysis, this does not mean that African Americans do not carry anti-intellectual dispositions. It is in the testing of hypothesis 4 that a clearer understanding of this will be revealed.

Hypothesis 4- *African Americans have higher degrees of victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism than other racial groups.*

McWhorter (2000) argues that the socio-historical events of the 1960's for African Americans played an important role in how they significantly differ in how they identify themselves and perceive particular phenomenon today. More specifically, McWhorter claims that, as a consequence of the 1960's, African Americans do not enthusiastically take on academia because they have developed three self-sabotaging cultural traits, victimology, separatism and anti-intellectualism. Hypothesis 4 was tested by determining whether African Americans reported higher degrees of victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism.

Figure 4 Degree of Victimization



$N= 321, t(319)=7.738, p=.000$

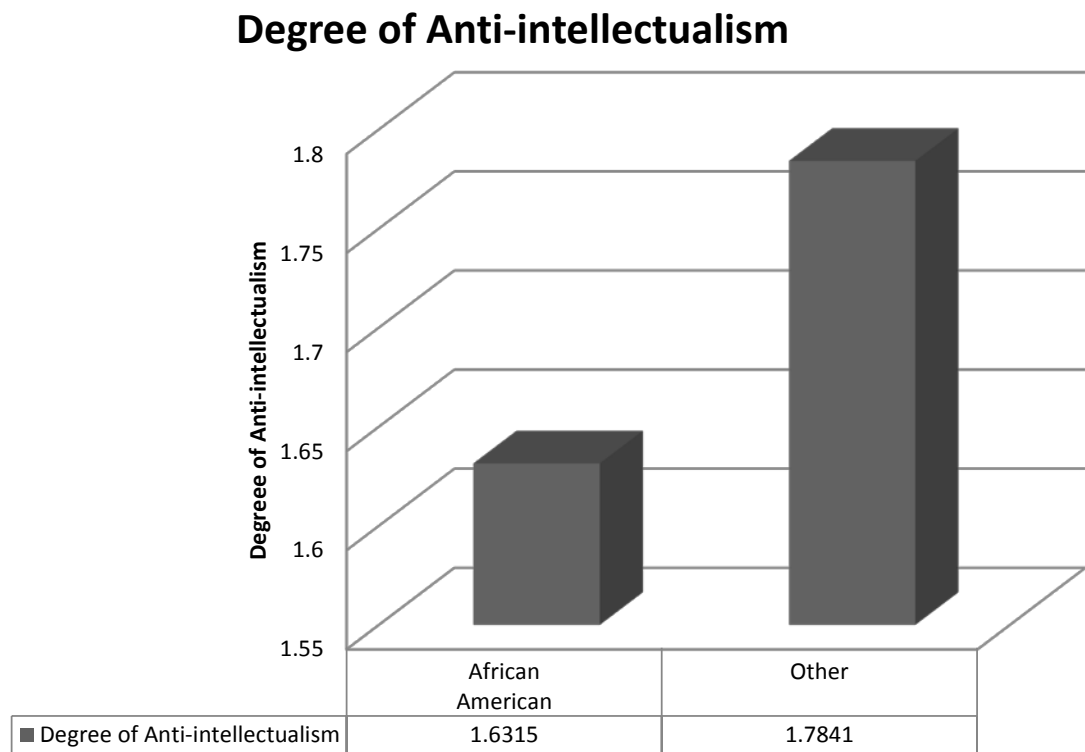
Victimization-The tendency for minorities to perceive racism in various situations.

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Victimization and 5=High Degree of Victimization

Several independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the degree of victimization, separatism, and anti-intellectualism between blacks and whites at the attitudinal level. The data indicated that there is a significant difference in the degree of victimization for blacks ($M=2.97, SD=.589$) and whites ($M=2.33, SD=.788$), conditions; $t(319)=7.738, p= .000$ (see Figure 4). These results suggest that African Americans sense a higher degree of victimization than do European Americans. The sample t-test for separatism did not yield significant differences between African Americans and European Americans suggesting that they have the same degree of separatism. African Americans

($M=1.63$, $SD=.556$) scored significantly lower degrees of anti-intellectualism than European Americans ($M=1.78$, $SD=.670$), conditions; $t(325)=-2.087$, $p=.038$. In this analysis, the closer to 1 a participant is the lower degree of anti-intellectualism a participant is. This analysis, while significant finds no support for hypothesis 4, instead African Americans report lower sentiments of anti-intellectualism than do European Americans.

Figure 5 Degree of Anti-Intellectualism



$N= 327$, $t(325)=-2.067$, $p=.038$

Anti-intellectualism-is indifferent, oppositional, or hostile feelings expressed towards academics, intellectuals, and intellectual pursuits.

Metric: 1=Low Degree of Anit-intellectualism and 5=High Degree of Anti-intellectualism

As McWhorter suggested victimization is more salient among African Americans. These findings indicate that there are no significant differences between African Americans and Others in separatism. The data also reveals that African Americans have significantly lower degrees of separatism. Thus far, contrary to what McWhorter argues, there is no significant difference between European Americans and African Americans in degree of separatism and African Americans are significantly more pro-intellectual. African Americans degree of intellectualism may be the product reporting the dominant norm, that is, African Americans have a history of reporting abstract attitudes (e.g. socially accepted responses) which mirror dominant principles (Mickelson 1990).

While anti-intellectualism does significantly differ between European Americans and African Americans, anti-intellectualism does not significantly predict poor performance. In sum, the results finds partial support for hypothesis 4 in that victimization is found significantly more among African Americans. However, there was no support in the argument that separatism is found more among African Americans and while there is a significant difference between African Americans and others, the findings are opposite from what was predicted.

Discussion

The goal of this thesis was to empirically test McWhorter's theory on the relationships between victimization, separatism, anti-intellectualism and achievement. The results of this study yielded support for several of the hypothesis. First, in the preliminary bivariate analysis, I examined the relationship between victimization and separatism. In addition, I examined whether there was a linear relationship between victimization and separatism and whether or not there was a significant difference in degree of these concepts among African Americans and Others.

There was support for hypothesis 1 that predicted victimization would have an effect on separatism: Higher degrees of separatism are associated with higher degrees of victimization. Researchers that suggest that racial self-esteem (referred to as racial group identity in this study) is significantly related to separatism (Hughes and Demo 1989) will not find support in this study. The results of this study also do not confirm that being black (McWhorter, 2000) is associated with separatism. The results of this study also does not confirm with the literature that argues that there is a positive relationship between SES and Separatism (Hughes and Demo 1989). Instead, the results of this study do confirm McWhorter's argument that SES is not associated with separatism. This finding is further supported in Hypothesis 1 when the interaction of both African American and SES are accounted for. The data suggest that victimization is the number one predictor of separatism. For example, it appears that people that believe that they are victimized because of their race in various ways and are deserving of preference policies have higher separatist sentiments than those who do not feel victimized. Furthermore, African Americans have statically significant higher degrees of victimization than others.

These findings are consistent with McWhorter's theory which argues that victimization and separatism are related and prominent among African Americans (McWhorter, 2001).

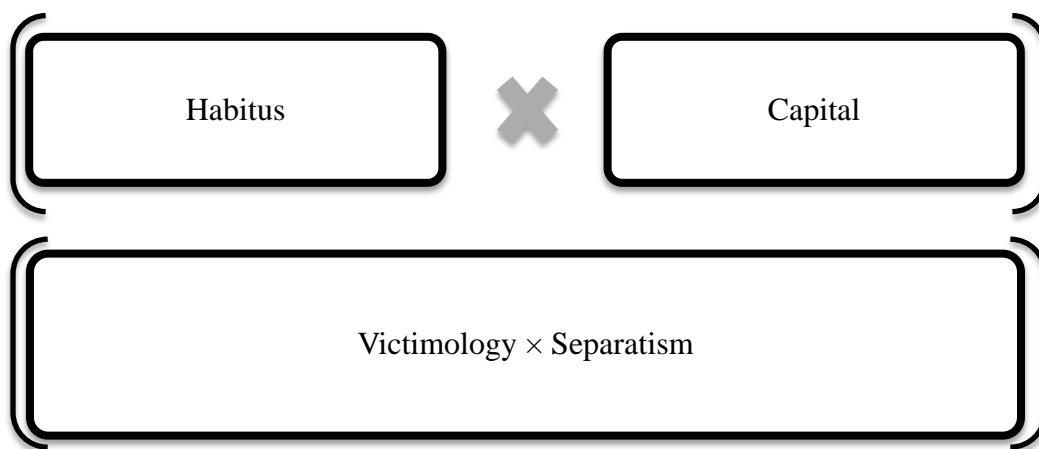
While research has found that socioeconomic status has influence on separatist attitudes (Demo & Hughes 1990; Allen et al. 1989; and Broman et al. 1988) the results of this study suggest that, even after controlling for socioeconomic status, victimization is the number one predictor. Actually, contrary to theory and research, being African American (McWhorter, 2001) and having a high degree of racial group cultural identity (Hughes and Demo 1989) are not at the heart of separatism ideals. In table 3, in every model victimization had a significant score of .000, a sign that there is without a doubt a strong association between victimization and separatism, or at least among this sample. In Model 3 of table 3, for example, 10% of the variation in separatism, after accounting for race, socioeconomic status and racial self-esteem, can be explained by victimization. Unless these models are not taking into account a more significant variable, these data demonstrate that African Americans in the framework of either habitus or embodied cultural capital or the overlap of both, externally or internally, operate with victimization and separatism. Admittedly, these data do not show whether or not the victimization felt by African Americans are justified. But until research that can accurately and empirically observe subtle and blatant racism commentators should be careful not to down play perceived racism. Regardless of the validity of the sentiments of victimization and separatism, the data suggest that they exist, are strongly related and African Americans are operating with them. The data finds support for hypothesis 1; students with high degrees of victimization are more likely to have higher degrees of separatism than students with lower degrees of victimization.

Although the findings of this analysis lends support to the idea that perceived racism compromises separatist ideals, it does not reveal whether or not solely perceived racism or actual racism is the contributing factor. McWhorter argues that African Americans have learned to look at things from a victimized perspective, leading them to see racism and discrimination where it does not exist. Although, research has shown and agrees that actual recognition of various racial barriers has an impact on its victims (Allport, 1958) McWhorter argues that most of these scholars (particularly African Americans) are viewing things from a victimized perspective. McWhorter (2001) also argues that even the dominant culture reinforces this mindset. He argues that European Americans actually feel sorry for African Americans and are in agreement that we deserve preference policies such as affirmative action (McWhorter, 2001).

The high degree of victimization and its relationship to separatism, as McWhorter claimed, among the participants of this study can be understood within the framework of social practice theory (Bourdieu, 1977). People who have dispositions of victimization are more likely to have separatist dispositions. The social practice theory framework (Bourdieu, 1977) seems to draw a holistic picture of the themes that emerged from the analysis of hypothesis 1 and the arguments that McWhorter offers. Based on the results, that hypothesis 1 yielded, Figure 6 illustrates a partial version of the conceptual framework presented in Figure 3. Findings show support for the operational section in parentheses. That is, unless these models are not taking into account a more significant variable, these data demonstrate that African Americans in the framework of either habitus or embodied cultural capital or the overlap of both, operate with victimization and separatism. Admittedly, these data do not show whether or not the victimization felt by

African Americans are justified. While there was no significant difference in separatism and others, it can be assumed that since African Americans have a significant difference in victimization and separatism increases with higher degrees of victimization that African Americans, although a statistically insignificant in difference, have a higher degree of separatism.

Figure 6 Partial Conceptual and Operational Model



The theoretical framework presented in Figure 6 finds partial support for the framework proposed in Figure 3. It suggests, in Figure 6, that there is a degree of internalized cultural dispositions (i.e. victimology, separatism) and learned cultural capital (i.e. victimology, separatism). Theoretically, as McWhorter claimed, there is a linear association between these dispositions and cultural capital (victimization and separatism). Finally, these forms of dispositions and cultural capital, as McWhorter argued, are more likely (apart from separatism) to be found among minorities than the dominant group.

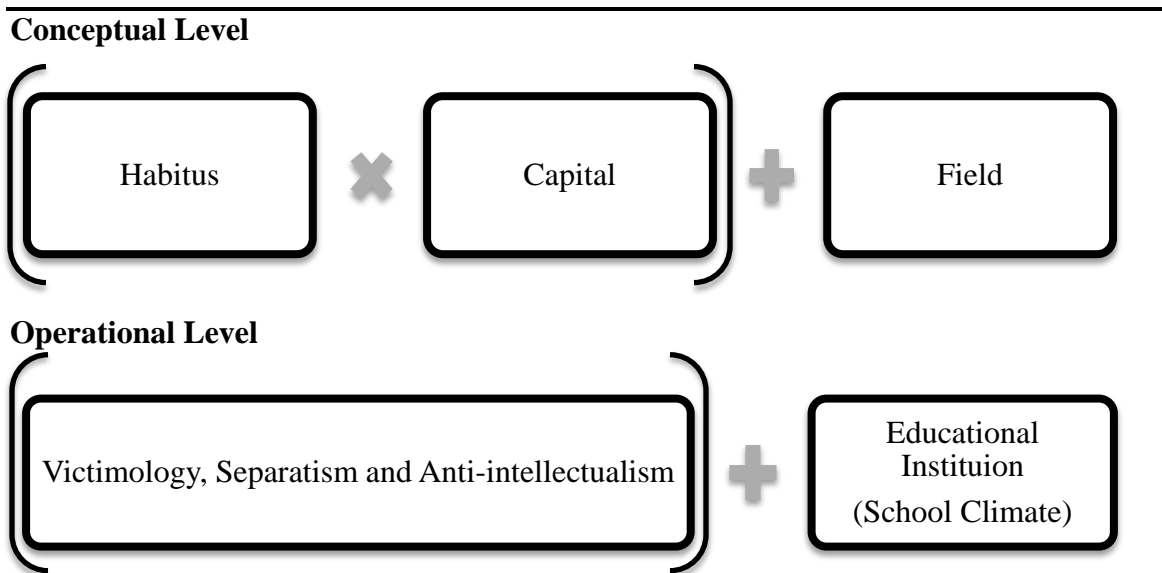
There was also support for hypothesis 2 that predicted separatism would have an effect on anti-intellectualism: Higher degrees of separatism are associated with higher

degrees of anti-intellectualism. The results of this study not confirm that being black (McWhorter, 2000) is associated with anti-intellectualism. The results of this study do confirm McWhorter's argument that SES is not associated with anti-intellectualism. Further support, in Hypothesis 2, is found when the interaction of both African American and SES are accounted for. The results of Hypothesis 2 did confirm the literature (Tyson, 2002) that found that perception of the school environment (school climate in this study) is a good predictor of intellectual attitudes. The data suggest that both separatism and school climate are the number key predictors of anti-intellectualism. That is, it appears that both people that have separatist ideals because of their sense of victimization and feel negative about their school climate have higher anti-intellectualism. However, African Americans have significantly lower degrees of anti-intellectualism than others. These finding is consistent with McWhorter's theory which argues that separatism and anti-intellectualism are related however inconsistent in that anti-intellectualism is not prominent among African Americans (2001). These findings are consistent with Tyson's (2002) research who found that school perception is a good predictor of intellectual ideals.

Hypothesis 2 yielded results that highlighted both the impact of separatism and school climate on anti-intellectualism. Findings further support the theoretical framework presented in Figure 3. Based on the results, that hypothesis 2 yielded, the partial conceptual framework presented in Figure 6 can be reexamined in Figure 7. When examining both hypothesis 1 and 2, support is found again for the operational section in parentheses which demonstrate that participants in the framework of either habitus or embodied cultural capital or the overlap of both, overtly or internally, operate

with victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism. Accounting for school climate and its relation to anti-intellectualism illustrates the role of the educational field as provided in Figure 7 as well. Given that African Americans have a significantly lower degree of anti-intellectualism, and that anti-intellectualism is partially, yet significantly, influenced by school climate, it seems unreasonable to assume that African Americans approach to intellectualism, in the educational field, is being influenced by their perception of the field. That is, black anti-intellectualism cannot be ascribed to their negative perception of the field. However, as mentioned before, it could be that African Americans are reporting the dominant norm.

Figure 7 Partial Conceptual and Operational Model



There is no evidence, for hypothesis 3, that the higher degree anti-intellectualism the lower the achievement. In every analysis we found no support for this hypothesis. The regression analyses run to test hypothesis 3 were inconsistent with McWhorter's theory, instead academic self-concept is the number one predictor of poor performance (G.P.A.) consistent with Cokley's findings. These results are consistent

even after controlling for anti-intellectualism, being black, being female, socioeconomic status, and racial group identity. Student's academic self-concept influences their academic achievement as theoretically predicted. Thus, the academic self-concept results presented here reinforce Cokley's claim that academic self-concept is the key predictor in poor performance. But as stated before, although academic self-concept is the most influential predictor of achievement, it does not explain the disparities of achievement between African Americans and European Americans because there is no significant difference between the two in groups statistically. This poses a major threat to the McWhorter's theory and the theoretical lens in which this study uses.

While, the results of this study suggest that there is a degree of habitus or embodied cultural capital or the overlap of both, in the form of victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism that is real among African Americans, anti-intellectualism (statistically and from the theoretical lens) does not impact academic achievement. These results show a relationship between the depositions and the field and the influence on anti-intellectual behavior. Even though, the data suggest that academic self-concept has the only observable influence on achievement, the data also suggest that McWhorter has correctly identified three observable internalized dispositions; culturally valued ways of thinking. Victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism among African Americans do not explain the disparities in academic achievement but McWhorter's theory along with Bourdieu's framework serve as essential tools in the understanding of African American academic practice.

The findings of this study suggest that McWhorter's theory is threatened. However, there are several explanations for why it may be premature to invalidate both

McWhorter's theory and the theoretical lens. One plausible explanation is that anti-intellectualism at the attitudinal level is not the best predictor, that is, anti-intellectualism may be better measured at a behavioral level (time spent doing assignment, frequency seeking help or office hours). That is, using perceptions of intellectualism, while significant, may illustrate an incomplete assessment of how anti-intellectualism impacts academic achievement. Instead, future studies may need to include both behavioral and attitudinal measures of anti-intellectualism. Another explanation, that needs to be explored as well, is the relationship between McWhorter's theoretical variables and academic self-concept. It may be that there is a correlation between academic self-concept and anti-intellectualism. If that is the case, then McWhorter's theory may not be fully compromised but may only need to be revised. This only reiterates the complexity of practice.

Using Bourdieu's conceptual thinking tools, one must assume that if a student who views social phenomena through a perceived racist lens, consciously or unconsciously disconnects oneself from anything similar to the mainstream oppressor and associates intellectualism and intellectual efforts as being part of the oppressors culture, then she or he will attain lower levels of achievement in educational institutions. The evidence of this study, suggest that anti-intellectualism does not have an influence on academic achievement; indeed, there is still a significantly linear relationship between victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism, yet academic self-concept is the influencing factor in academic achievement.

In the results of hypothesis 2, there is a significant relationship between school climate and anti-intellectualism, a sign of the influence of the field (educational

institution). Because the field is such an important part of Bourdieu's reflexive theory, future research may want to account for its statistical significance in every regression model. That is, although school climate (field) was only accounted for in one model, to get a more holistic view of how the dispositions and/or embodied forms of capital interplay with the field, then, according to the theoretical framework, in future research, every model should account for field.

Limitations

The results of this study should be reviewed with caution for various reasons. First, although we see a significantly higher degree of victimization among African Americans, it is unknown whether or not their sentiments are a legitimate. McWhorter argues that African Americans view things through a victimized lens most of the time, hence, feeling victimized in situations that they are not actually being victimized in. However, whether African Americans are truly being racially victimized or it is just a perception, there are navigating the educational domain with these sentiments and they are impacting their separatist ideals. Another limitation of the study was our inability to capture behavioral measures of separatism and anti-intellectualism. This is important because, as mentioned before, African Americans have a tendency to report dominant norms that do not align with their behavior. Future studies may be able to capture a more holistic picture if behavioral indicators of the concepts study are measured. The generalizability of this study is another limitation. Because the concepts have not been studied at the national level, nor has the full model been tested, it cannot be argued that national data has reflected similar results. In fact the study that attempts to test McWhorter's theory does not tackle it fully.

Another limitation in the study is the constraints that come with working with secondary data. The data was not designed to measure the concepts that I was attempting to measure. It is for that reason, for the scale construction of the concepts victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism, a Q Sort (a method usually used in psychology) was conducted. This method was used because it helps with increasing validity in early stages of scale development (Ekinici, 1999).

Further, as I mentioned before, a significant number of cases were removed from the data. Wave 6 of the panel data, which was used in this study, had 900 participants originally. Unfortunately, because participants that who were not in college during the time that survey was taken, 436 participants were removed from the data. This is because they participants that were not in college were asked different set questions on the survey. The items on the survey that were needed to test McWhorter's theory were available for the participants that were in college. This dropped the N from 900 to 464. This limitation, made it difficult to account for all the possible variables when running regressions. That is, with every variable added to the regression models, the N would drop. Therefore, only the variables that the research had suggested as well as what could be captured using secondary data were accounted for in this study. Hence, additional variables, such as structural variables were not accounted for. Another limitation, a product of removing the 436 participants from the data, is the representativeness. While there is still a reasonable amount of data, it is unknown, because of the dropped data, whether the sample is representative of the targeted population. Despite the limitations that this study has presented, this study yielded several interesting findings.

Conclusion

Although McWhorter's theory has been heavily criticized for lacking empiricism (Aronowitz, 2001, Dickens, 2001, Louis, 2001, Bates 2000), the results of this research suggest that, for this participants of this study, that there is some soundness to his notion; indeed, apart from the last argument of his theory (anti-intellectualism produces lower academic achievement), there is a linear relationship between victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism as depicted in Figure 8.

Figure 8



The evidence of this study suggest that African Americans have significantly higher degrees of victimization, that victimization leads to separatism and that leads to anti-intellectualism; this is a sign that African Americans are navigating domains with these sentiments, or at least the educational domain. However, African Americans have significantly lower degrees of anti-intellectualism and anti-intellectualism does not predict achievement neither at the bivariate of multivariate level. This compromises McWhorter's theory greatly. It seems therefore, that McWhorter's theory may need to be modified or just reconsidered all together.

Additionally, in hypothesis 2, both the perception of the domain (school climate) and separatism had significantly unique impacts on anti-intellectualism. However, my inability to determine whether the victimized sentiments were valid demonstrates, at least for this study, that it may be too premature to undermine racism and its impact on behavior. Admittedly, McWhorter would argue that African Americans culture of

victimization has outlived its need. Bourdieu explains that this happens when conditioned habitus is ill-adapted to the present social conditions. But either way, those who argue that the African Americans are to blame for their underperformance concentrate too much on the agent. To have a more holistic dialogue about African American underperformance, researchers must take into account that the field is just as important as the disposition and forms of capital the agents bring with them. Further, researchers must remain open to the fact that African Americans' victimized sentiments may be valid. Namely, dispositions are generative; meaning that African Americans' victimized sentiments may be being legitimized by the external factors. This suggests that Bourdieu's logic of practice framework and its adaptation McWhorter's theory should focus not only on victimization, separatism and anti-intellectualism, but academic self-concept and the culturally significant field. Then a more fruitful understanding of the African American academic achievement gap can be developed.

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Appendix A

Item Sort Instructions

Item Sort Instructions

In front of you are a collection of statements on card that have been randomly selected from a general survey of African American attitudes and behaviors. We would like you to help us by reading the statements and then deciding where to place it in one of the four boxes in front of you. These boxes are labeled:

Separatism

Anti-intellectualism

Victimology

Miscellaneous

It is unclear which statements belong to each of these categories and we need your judgment to help us to decide. Below are some definitions that should help your decision.

Separatism : McWhorter (2000) refers to separatism as the attitude that to be Black a

person restricts their full commitment to only Black oriented culture. It is beliefs and behaviors that reflect a separation from mainstream (White or Anglo) culture. People who hold separatist ideology frequently do not participate in activities outside of the expressly black oriented realm.

Anti-intellectualism : This concept reflects individuals or groups who have negative feelings or behaviors expressed towards academics, intellectuals and intellectual pursuits. It refers to a tendency to NOT embrace school wholeheartedly. Individuals expressing anti-intellectualism may defer in turning in assignments on time if at all, and reject making an effort to do as well in school as they possibly can.

Victimology : Is the tendency to blame ones problems on other's racism? a tendency to exaggerate the degree of black oppression. For example a belief that US Government funneled crack cocaine into black communities? or that police profiling and excessive use of force are inevitable because of enduring racism.

Appendix B

Miscellaneous Q-Sort Items

Miscellaneous

If you had a million dollars, what would you most want to do with it?

How comfortable or uncomfortable do you think you would be Asking for a raise or promotion?

Compared to other people, how good are you at Repairing mechanical equipment?

About how many hours do you usually spend each week playing or practicing a musical instrument?

Because of your drinking, how many times in the past six months have you had difficulties with a relationship (such as with friends, parents, teachers, or supervisors)?

Please tell us about the LAST (most recent) time you were raped. Was this person male or

female?

During the past 12 months, did you or anyone else close to you move?

What do you think the chances are that you will have limited opportunities due to the economy?

At your current place of work or school setting, have you ever had a situation when your job benefits/grades depended on submitting to unwelcome sexual advances or have you ever been penalized for refusing to participate in unwelcome sexual conduct?

How often do you give up easily when you meet difficult problems?

Think about the last six months. About how often in those 6 months did you use prescribed tranquilizers (Valium, barbiturates, etc.)?

How many times have you brought alcohol or drugs to school (or work)?

Because of your drinking, how many times in the past six months have you missed work (or school) or had to call in sick?