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Letter from the Editor

I’ve been involved with Social Dialogue for four years now, and I every year I have been impressed by the quality of the submissions that we receive. The articles that I have had the privilege to publish have all not only been outstanding pieces of scholarship, they have also demonstrated an intellectual curiosity that is rare among undergraduates.

The articles in this issue carry on this proud tradition. They address a wide variety of topics, all of which speak to the key political, social, cultural and demographic concerns of our time. Mark Revia takes a provocative look at the way crime is co-created by the perpetrator, the victim and society by analyzing the Facebook posts made in response to an article about sex offenders. McKenzie Schwartz offers an exercise in environmental sociology, examining the ways in which the international floriculture industry has negatively affected those living in and around Kenya’s Lake Naivasha Basin. Alonso R. Reyna provides a thought-provoking look at the ways in which Latina mothers instill in their children a sense of cultural validation, not to mention the tools they need to survive in the often hostile social environment that exists in the United States. Colbie Rae Shanley takes a slightly less rosy look at home life, examining the wide-ranging, negative effects of intimate partner violence. Her article does end on a positive note, however, as it offers potential solutions to this serious social problems. Finally, Nykole Sargent scrutinizes the ways in which our educational system encourages white and Asian students to pursue careers in fields related to science and technology, often at the expense of their minority peers.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Social Dialogue. Our goal has always been to challenge the preconceptions that our readers may hold while simultaneously creating a dialogue between undergraduate students, graduate students, professors and community members with regard to local and global social issues. To contribute to the dialogue, send comments to socialdialogue2015@gmail.com or consider submitting a paper to Social Dialogue for our next edition!

Tom Quinn
Editor-in-Chief
June 10, 2013
Talked Into Exile: Discourse, Constitutive Dialectics and the Sex Offender
By Mark Revia

INTRODUCTION

We live in a world of information. Language shapes that world around us. We shape it and it shapes us. Power comes from the ability to influence that process. Consequently, modern media producers exploit that fact. Due to its popular appeal, a large number of news stories tend focus on crime. Correspondingly, those stories about sex offenders gain the most interest—the more sensational the story, the better. The most horrific go something like this:

Another child has gone missing. It has been over four hours since seven-year-old Amanda disappeared from the playground, and her parents fear the worst. The police have begun canvassing the neighborhood, making a point to search the home of every registered sex offender in the area. The local news stations broadcast reports of her disappearance and plead for information. After a week of futility, police make a second search of one particular registrant’s house. A basement door is found concealed in a closet. The remains of Amanda are discovered in a box under the stairs. She has been repeatedly raped, and then strangled to death.

The perpetrator is a monster with whom we’re all familiar due to popular media. In spite of the familiarity of this account, it is statistically atypical. Yet, fueled by selective reporting by the media, this is the image of the “sex offender” that most people retain. This image is reinforced by the discursive practices engaged by the public in response to such stories. Additionally, academic research efforts often produce incomplete, if not conflicting, conclusions regarding the issue—thereby creating confusion. Even more, public officials must maintain social control, as well as appeal to the electorate, compelling them to enact legislation to quell the moral panic (Jenkins 1998). As the discourses from the various participants are reiterated, they create a master discourse and that effectively reinforces the image of the sex offender. This process suggests that the image of the “sex offender” is socially constructed.

This paper attempts to illustrate that process by exploring the iterative discourses in reader comments to a news story on the issue of sex offending, within the framework of constitutive criminology. The purpose of this exercise is to discover how the “monster” image of the “sex offender” is socially constructed, in order to understand how stigmatization can affect the social reintegration, and even influence first-time offenses.

BACKGROUND

Crime is an integral part society. As each culture codifies behavioral norms into law, there inevitably are behaviors that fall outside those expectations. Typically, the response to those deviations is punitive, with varying levels of severity. Such forms of retributive justice are based on an emphasis of individual agency in the commission of a crime. In other words, for some reason or motive, the perpetrator has decided to violate the law.

Over the years, theories of criminogenesis have evolved to focus more on circumstances within society, as opposed to simple individual agency. Although each theory identifies a different aspect of society as the cause—economic disparity in Marxist
theory, hegemonic masculinity in feminist theory, and ethnic discrimination in critical race theory—there is one underlying theme in them all: divisiveness (e.g., us vs. them). This tendency toward division can be traced to language. As words require definition to convey meaning, so also do their definitions. By defining anything, it is contrasted with everything else and that difference is delineated through language.

Inspired by this premise, constitutive criminology was developed by Stuart Henry and Dragan Milovanovic in their book, Constitutive Criminology: Beyond Postmodernism (1996), as a branch of critical criminology. By it, the dualism of modernism and postmodernism is resolved into the continuum that it is; whereby, deconstruction is followed by reconstruction. In it, an alternative paradigm of criminological thought is proposed—one that abandons timeworn assumptions and embraces uncertainty. The framework draws from several well-established disciplines: phenomenology, ethnomethodology, social constructionism, labeling theory, discourse analysis, feminist theory, Marxist theory, and chaos theory. The fundamental influence of these areas will not be discussed here, as they are extensively referenced in Henry and Milovanovic’s aforementioned book (q.v.). However, the news story under consideration in this paper will be analyzed using the tools of discourse analysis and chaos theory. But first, it will be necessary to briefly outline each one for the purpose of this work.

**Discourse Analysis**

The main premise of this theory is that crime is co-created by perpetrator, victim, and society—through iterations of a master discourse. The idea of the master discourse is taken from Lacan (2007), to refer to the expression of the dominant group’s “truth.” This truth is based in the idea of desire, that is, the drive to make a difference in the world. But it is so subtle and pervasive that its essence is rooted in the subconscious. Like Tatum’s (1997) “smog of racism,” its hegemonic influence constantly influences our thoughts and behavior. Its purpose is to explain, or conceal, some fact about objective reality—forgotten due to having been taken for granted for so long or to being just too painful to process. It is as difficult to perceive as the water is to a fish, in Linton’s often-referenced fishbowl. (Henslin 2012: 36)

From the post-modern perspective, every individual is a subject in the process of discourse. The motives for engaging in the process are the maintenance and expression of one’s self. Consequently, discourse is accomplished by means of various texts, or modes of expression. Any mode is applicable: speech, gestures, or symbols. All texts consist of signifiers—each of which specifies a particular object or concept. When any discourse is engaged, the meaning of its text unfolds, as participants reinterpret the message through the filter of their own perspectives. (Lacan and Russell 2007)

**Complexity and Chaos Theory**

This aspect of constitutive criminology receives the most criticism, perhaps because it triggers math anxiety for most people. However, due to its qualitative nature, it can be understood without numbers and formulas simply using one’s imagination to visualize the process. For the more mathematically-inclined, any book on chaos theory, such as by Williams (1997), can be consulted.

According to complexity theory, every discourse can be considered a specific sub-system within the whole system of human society. This is less a functionalist perspective than an integrated one. As humans, we affect one another. The nature of communication necessitates it. Through our discourse, we connect with each other. Through our discourse, we define ourselves and each other.

Drawing from chaos theory, this process of discourse is nonlinear and dynamic—nonlinear due to its repetitive nature and dynamic due to its constant change. Although deterministic, it is unpredictable. When modeled using the iterated functions of dynamic systems and fractal geometry, these qualities can be understood to contribute to the repetitive, mutable, and seemingly uncontrollable nature of crime.

For clarity, an iterated function is essentially a mathematical model representing a complex system, whereby the output is continuously recycled as input. The system consists of specific processes, or rules, which represent the relationship between all components. As these rules are applied, the input is converted to a new form—varying in identity from unity, as convergence, or to infinity, as divergence. While this process is iterated, an unlimited number and type of meanings is produced. The outcome is
solely based on the initial state of the system. In other words, it demonstrates what is known as “a sensitive dependence on initial conditions.” (Williams 1997: 211-19) Slight changes in the input can produce tremendous fluctuations in the output. Yet, it is nigh impossible to account for all those conditions, much less control them—just like when a mistakenly-uttered statement is regretfully un retractable and can produce unforeseen and unfortunate effects. “Since an infinite number of contexts can appear, iteration will produce an indeterminate number of nuanced meanings: it produces undecidables.” (Derrida 1998) Therefore, this theory posits, the way that we talk about crime has unknown consequences.

As the function is iterated, bifurcations are produced where the graph splits in two—a strange attractor, representing the clouds of probability surrounding the new alternatives. As time progresses, the number of splits increases to a critical value, and the dialectic system exhibits chaotic behavior. (Williams 1997: 221-28) At this point, from the perspective of the criminal, an ‘invitational edge’ (Matza 1969) is reached where the individual engages in the ‘edgework’ (Lyng 2005) of the option toward order or disorder. (Henry and Milovanovic 1996) It is the crime itself that is the emergent behavior. As a product of the chaos of society’s relationship with the issue, the crime happens. Certainly, individual agency is significant. But also significant is the uncertainty of social influence in the commission of crimes.

**The Constitutive Dialectics of Crime**

The synthesis of these ideas form the basis of the constitutive dialectics influence in the construction of crime. The victim, as a “recovering subject,” is in pursuit of the unattainable—a completion of its contingent self. The victim can never regain what has been taken by the criminal—as an “excessive investor” in the master discourse. According to constitutive criminology, crime is defined as “the expression of some agency’s energy to make a difference on others and it is the exclusion of those who in the instant are rendered powerless to maintain or express their humanity.” (Henry and Milovanovic 1996: 116) Crime, as harm, takes two forms: harms of reduction, whereby the recovering subject (victim) experiences a loss of some kind, and harms of repression, whereby the same is denied access to a desired status. (Henry and Milovanovic 1996: 103) Therefore, crime occurs at the intersection of discourse and power. As the system is constantly in flux, the crime occurs when the perpetrator clings to the master discourse that power is obtained by imposing order onto another, thereby inhibiting the other’s desire to make a difference in the world.

This phenomenon can be modeled in what are called constitutive interrelational (COREL) sets. (Henry and Milovanovic 1996) A COREL set is essentially the graph of any discourse as an iterated function. Each one is interrelated and interconnected with infinite other COREL sets, as the representation of a vast dialectical network. As graphic models, they have several layers of geometry. Each COREL set and its complex shape represents the countless variables that comprise the discursive process—serving as a visual aid for the interaction between discourses. In appearance, they resemble a gear assembly, with each gear interlocked with those around it, turning according to its own size in relationship to the speed of the others. A change in momentum or resistance can often be accommodated by all gears involved, but an excessive change, or one at an inopportune moment, can cause the entire assembly to seize.

**Method**

As an illustration of the constitutive dialectics involved in the co-construction of the “sex offender,” I selected an article pertaining to the issue that had been circulated via a social media website. The focus of the story itself was not emphasized in my analysis; a premise for this exercise is that all articles are suitable candidates and follow a particular typology. Furthermore, as structuralist semioticians may emphasize the importance of the story itself, as the moment of encoding, that is not my focus here. My focus is how we, the public, both produce and consume the messages in news media through the way we repeatedly “talk” about, and thus create, the concept of the “sex offender.” In other words, how the message is decoded and re-encoded by us. (Hall 1974)

On May 8, 2014 at 3:07 a.m., NBC News posted the story, *My Son, the Sex Offender: One Mother’s Mission to Fight the Law* (Dokoupil 2014) on its Facebook page, about the plight of Sharie Keil, the mother of a sex offender turned activist. Distraught over her son’s struggle to reintegrate into society
in the face of the requirements of the Sex Offender Registry, Sharie became involved with the sex offender advocacy and lobbying organization, Reform Sex Offender Laws, Inc. She argued that lifetime registration for juvenile offenders is unreasonable. Furthermore, she suggested that the Sex Offender Registry should be eliminated altogether. The author also quotes authoritative figures who have come out in support of reform.

Within eight hours, the Facebook post had garnered approximately 1,700 likes, 700 shares, and 1,000 reader comments. Comprising eighty-six pages of printed text, I compiled these comments as a representative sample of the opinions of internet news media readers, on the topic of sex offenders. To capture the reader comments, I converted them to Portable Document Format (PDF). After evaluating the comments, I established a typology of responses based on the different discourses, or recurrent themes, within each reader comment. For typification within the document, I assigned each discourse a particular text highlight color: indignant (red), punitive (brown), disgusted (green), horrified (yellow), analytical (orange), anecdotal (light blue), and mythopoeic (blue), progressive (fuchsia).

**Analysis**

Readers expressed a myriad of thoughts and feelings on the story itself, as well as sex offenders in general. Admittedly, some of the comments were positive, if not supportive and compassionate. However, a majority were negative, if not vengeful and merciless. Many comments consisted of several discourses; some were even undecided. Indignant discourses were prevalent. Analytical discourses around the age of consent were also common. Many readers were angry; some were disgusted or fearful—each expressed as their own iterative discourses. The discourses were iterative in that they were continuously reinforced—not only by the very act of engaging them, but also by the feedback effects in the forum itself. Essentially, other participants would repeat what was previously iterated by many before them—thus, an iterative discourse.

**Decoding the Decoding**

The development of the categories was based on my own personal interpretations of the various discourses in the comments. I applied my intuition and life experience, in addition to critical discourse analysis, to evaluate each one. I frequently found the consistent application of the typology to be challenging. For instance, a comment such as “Our children should not have to pay for the wrongs of these sick individuals” (NBC News Facebook Page 2014; Gloria Maria Vasquez, May 8, 8:53 am), could have been decoded several ways. To the discourse segment, “our children should not have to pay,” the indignant discourse could be assigned due to the tone of outrage and resentment in the statement. Also, a degree of paranoia is indicated in the lack of imminent threat to any number of unspecified victims, suggesting application of the horrified discourse.

**Indignant Discourse:** The expression of anger toward sex offenders, toward the story, toward Sharie Keil, and toward each other was the underlying theme in the indignant discourse (red). This is the discourse that actually dehumanizes the sex offender, by applying some label that denotes “monster.”

“It is amazing how people feel sorry for sex offenders they are the lowest life form there(sic) lives should be ruined an(sic) whatever happens to them to(sic) bad maybe this woman should not have raised a pervert.”

Retributive shaming was also a component. Much opprobrium was heaped upon Keil’s son for his crime. “Her son was rightfully labeled a sex offender, and deserves what he’s gotten.” In some comments, Sharie Keil was inaccurately labeled a sex offender.

**Punitive Discourse:** The punitive discourse (brown), either as retribution or vigilantism, offered up numerous imaginative suggestions for methods to dispatch the sex offender. Some were humane; others were not. “Oh, well, if we cannot execute them, then we just must castrate them, that’s the only way.”

**Analytical Discourse:** Elements that focused on the specific details of Rand’s legal case were assigned to the analytical discourse (orange). There was an obsession with the “letter of the law” and how it applied in particular circumstances. “A preteen? come on lady, that is down right(sic) rape no matter how you look at it.” A disproportionate number of readers engaged in very passionate debates about the definition of the term “aggravated,” the privileging of the term “rape” over the term “sex abuse,” and the various standards for the age of consent.
Horror Discourse: The expression of fear or moral panic in the horrified discourse (yellow) invokes images of "stranger danger"—a predator in a trench coat lurking around the school yard hunting for any vulnerable child he can find. "Let everyone know where he lives. I sure as hell wouldn't want him around my family."

Disgusted Discourse: Specific expressions of disgust received the simple designation "disgusted" (green), in reference to the sex-related disgust response innate in all of us. "Her son is disgusting." The significance of this discourse is how such a primal and visceral response to an issue can severely incapacitate the resolution process to this, or any, problem. Our efforts become as iterative as our language.

Interestingly, a 'reverse disgusted' discourse was even observed among the comments, whereby one individual re-directed disgust away from the story and toward the less compassionate members of the dialectic. "You people with a zero tolerance attitude are disgusting human beings."

Anecdotal Discourse: The sharing of personal experiences or those of acquaintances comprised the anecdotal discourse (light blue). These tales were told either from a third-person perspective or even from the offender or victim perspective—some supportive and some condemning. Each instance attempted to relate to the conversation or to lend legitimacy to one’s position. "[A]s someone who worked in a prison, I’ve see[sic] what one offense (minor) can do to completely DESTROY good lives."

Mythopoetic Discourse: A mythopoetic discourse (blue) emerged as participants navigated the myriad assumptions and rampant misinformation about human sexuality in general and about sex offenders in particular. "They say pedophilia is the highest repeat crime." Nevertheless, recent recidivism research suggests otherwise. (Bench and Allen 2013) The manufacture and perpetuation of sex offender myths is a major contributor to the hostility around the issue. The access to accurate information regarding a situation is critical in assessing risk.

Progressive Discourse: The call for change is fundamental in the progressive discourse (fuchsia), with a theme of sex offender law reform prevalent in these statements. The reframing of the image of the sex offender was also a component of this discourse. Incidentally, there was a progressive discourse that addressed the harmful effects of labeling upon society. "Not to mention that labeling sex offenders as evil and incurable does nothing to solve the problem. It's a harmful generalization; and when I say harmful, I mean harmful to all of us. When we put labels...on these people, then we no longer need to look at the root of the issue. We stop looking for ways to end the cycle of abuse..."

A Note about Trolling: In my analysis, I have not discounted the incidence of trolling, whereby a forum participant interjects outrageous claims and invective solely to aggravate the other participants. Rather than determining whether a particular comment was trolling or a genuine contribution to the dialectic, in consideration of the systemic nature of social dialogue, I included those which may have represented individuals engaging in such activity, according to the particular discourses they contributed.

Results

As this exercise was merely illustrative, I did not subject the data to any rigorous statistical testing. However, I did tabulate the accumulated totals to offer a simple quantitative comparison.

Because many readers’ comments transitioned from one type to another, I counted multiple occurrences of a particular discourse type within a single comment only once. By referencing Table 1 below, the indignant discourse was clearly the most common with the highest discourse-to-comment ratio (0.45). The progressive discourse occurred with second greatest frequency (0.35), indicating the momentum toward reform. Curiously, the disgusted discourse had the lowest ratio (0.051). The meaning of this and other relationships suggest questions for additional research.

Minimal cohesiveness existed between comments. No sustained conversation or discussion existed. Small vortices of connection remained evanescent. It was more akin to an opinion dump—where one’s ubiquitous perspective was offered up as an attempt to engage (or disengage) "the problem." It seemed as if only a small percentage of the readers even read the article in its entirety—much less understood the author’s message.

Although not within the text coding intentions of this article’s author, many readers became hung up on the details of the original sex offense by Sharie’s
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Discourse</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Discourse to Comment Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indignant</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>Fuchsia</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punitive</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horrified</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mythopoeic</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal</td>
<td>Light Blue</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1: Discourses within reader comments. n=1052, 178 missing.

son. There was a dearth of discussion regarding any viable alternatives to the registry. Any attempts to offer solutions were quickly subdued or simply disregarded. The tone of the forum was violent, suggestive of the angry mob. I found wading through the quagmire of emotions to be grueling.

After my initial astonishment had waned, the patterns in the discourses became painfully obvious. Within each dialectic itself, transformations would occur as iterations: indignant, analytical, disgusted, punitive, and followed by a return to indignant. In spite of a lack of awareness regarding the mechanics of constitutive dialectics, all participants both affected, and were affected by, that process. The emergence of each participant’s own discourse was visible as the order within the chaos. “The fact that this was your takeaway just highlights how difficult it is to have a rational conversation about these issues. Your black-and-white thinking contributes to the problem.” (NBC News Facebook Page 2014)

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Although a single story discussed on Facebook is not representative of the general population, it is illustrative of how dialectics develop within one specific subculture. It does not say anything about the others. An examination of additional subcultures would most likely answer that question. People are clearly angry—so angry that they have forgotten or have never realized their own part in the process. They easily fall into irrational opposition, a super-meme identified by sociobiologist Rebecca Costa. (Costa and Wilson 2010) This phenomenon is a perturbation in the dialectic process, whereby the increased feedback to the system increases its chaos and threatens disorder. This can be thought of simply as information overload. As the complexity of the issues becomes unmanageable, we tend to oversimplify them.

The sex offender has been deemed a “monster” for many reasons. Dion Dennis suggests that one may be that it serves as an “incarnation of difference.” (1999) One can’t *not* be a sex offender, if sex offenders don’t exist. It’s simply another effect of social structuration, yet it evokes possibility that makes people nervous.

Regardless of one’s position regarding the matter, it remains a social issue. With nearly 800,000 sex offender registrants nationwide (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children 2014) and estimates that only 30% of sex abuse and assault cases actually being reported (Finkelhor 2009: 171), the actual number of sex offenders numbers may be nearly 2.7 million—a medium-size U.S. metropolis. The population of Salt Lake City itself is less than 200,000 people. (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) This is not about a few anonymous, derivatized individuals that are just “sick in the head” or “breaking the law.” This is a subculture that is emergent from our own, through our structures and discourses.

Registry or not, castration or not, execution or not—sexual deviants exist. They are our grandfathers and grandmothers, mothers and fathers, uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers. They are our friends and our neighbors, whether we like it or not. Society models the derivatization of people, especially...
women, in many ways. (Cahill 2011) As the sex offender derivatizes their victim, so too does society derivatize the sex offender—and unknowingly contributes to tertiary deviance. (Kitsuse 1980: 12)

The development and propagation of replacement discourses is a highly probable solution to the sex offender issue. The critical theory at the foundation of social movements has always called for replacement discourses—from Civil Rights to Feminism to LGBTQ Pride movements. This trend suggests a broadly-accepted awareness of the tremendous relationship between language, our problems, and their solutions.

One question looms large: What are we ultimately going to do about the issue of the sex offender? The solution is in the problem. But are we going to allow our power, fear, and ignorance to sabotage our efforts? It is a challenging task, indeed—one that will require a great deal of us, as a species. Finally, people are talking about this issue. As we discuss it, we create it—in countless ways, most with outcomes beyond our control. Ultimately, things may not turn out the way that we had hoped.

To suggest any culpability by society is surely met with vehement opposition. Most people just can’t see it. Others just don’t want to see it. Those that do see it, don’t know what to do about it.

Granted, critical criminology’s postmodern, anarchistic leanings render it an extreme perspective, if not one deviant from the master discourse. Yet, it addresses this criticism by virtue of the social edgework implications found in its own chaos theory models. Constitutive criminology IS edgework. It possesses the audacity to consider and examine the dark, scary corners of human society, and then suggest that they are simply of our own making. We just need to watch how we talk about them.

REFERENCES


The Role of Ecologically Unequal Exchange in Kenya’s Developing Water Crisis
By McKenzie Schwartz

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing struggle worldwide as clean water becomes increasingly difficult to access. Lake Naivasha in Kenya is one example of a body of water in decline. Although Kenya’s international floriculture industry contributes to the nation and the local community in many ways, the industry is also the main culprit in the lake’s decline. An ecologically unequal exchange approach provides an explanation for this phenomenon. Kenya is a developing nation, and developed nations exploit the natural resources found there. In order to find real solutions for Lake Naivasha, an understanding of the global causes of these issues needs to be developed.

DRIYING UP

Each year in Kenya, over 1,000 water-centric nonprofit organizations work toward providing accessible freshwater (NGO Bureau). The World Bank alone has lent $159 million to Kenya for their Water and Sanitation Service Improvement Project. (World Bank) This project aims to increase access to water and sanitation services and to improve existing water and wastewater services (World Bank).

This massive project is a response to the startling lack of access to clean water in the country. According to WHO and UNICEF’s 2014 Joint Monitoring Programme, 38 percent of people in Kenya lack access to improved water and 70 percent lack access to improved sanitation facilities. These figures mean that 16.4 million Kenyans go without clean water. Kenya’s already significant water scarcity is only exacerbated by years of drought, poorly managed water supplies, contamination of available water and a rapidly growing population (Marshall 2011). Polluted water in Kenya has led to epidemics of cholera and other water-related diseases, which have affected both the quality of health and the economy. (Marshall 2011) Access to clean water in Kenya is already a massive issue, and it is estimated that the water shortage will only increase. It has been projected that in the next ten years water availability in the country will drop by roughly two-thirds (Marshall 2011).

In addition to health and social issues, water shortages in Kenya greatly influence the economic growth of the country. The Kenyan economy is grounded in agricultural production, which accounts for approximately one-third of the GDP. (Marshall 2011) Droughts have severe implications for the already stagnant agricultural economy. Data from the World Bank indicate that the Kenyan GDP per capita has not risen in the last 20 years. Furthermore, data show that Kenya’s poor, a segment of the population that are particularly vulnerable to water scarcity, are suffering the most (World Bank 2013).

Kenya is not the only country facing the issue of a lack of water and industrial exploitation. Maude Barlow wrote in her book, Blue Covenant, that the world is running out of fresh water. Countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are fighting to create accessible clean water, while corporations, climate change, and industry are polluting and draining the limited resources available. Worldwide, 80 percent of disease is now connected to dirty water.

The world is facing a water crisis, or as Rockstrom would put it, we are coming upon our
freshwater boundary. The freshwater boundary represents the limit that when crossed could create irreversible damage to ecosystems and society (Rockstrom et al. 2009). This crisis is caused by many factors including industry misuse, climate change, deforestation and pollution. As easy as these culprits are to identify, none exists in a vacuum. Kenya’s is a situation that I propose be critically reviewed in order to gain a better understanding of the social factors involved in this dilemma.

This paper is designed to foster a growing understanding of the causes of Kenya’s water crisis, which must be done before attempting to develop solutions. Rather than speculating on treatments for the symptoms, this paper seeks to first find the ailment. The case study of this paper will be Lake Naivasha, one of Kenya’s few freshwater lakes. Lake Naivasha is rapidly shrinking, and its waters have become increasingly polluted in recent decades. Recent data on the lake’s decline point to an unlikely culprit: flowers. According to research done by the United Nation’s food and agriculture organization, the flower industry may be partially responsible for the depletion of Lake Naivasha (UN FAO). Kenya’s flower industry, which supplies European markets, is the fastest growing sector of the country’s economy, supporting 50,000 workers (Dolan 2007). The 30 large flower farms that surround Lake Naivasha have been accused of polluting and degrading the surrounding environment (Michaud 2012). In a recent study conducted by Awange et al., floriculture was found to be a major contributor to water loss in this region (Awange 2013). While money is flooding into Kenya through water nonprofits, the use of fresh water in Kenya is being taken advantage of by large flower corporations, poisoning and draining water supplies (ICTSD).

This paper is examines the drivers of Kenyan water pollution and misuse by asking two questions. First, what drives societies to trade away clean water? Second, how can this pattern of water sacrifice be reversed? In order to gain a better understanding of this effect and the water issue surrounding lake Naivasha, this paper will utilize an ecologically unequal exchange perspective.

**ECOLOGICALLY UNEQUAL EXCHANGE**

Ecological unequal exchange describes the unbalanced trade structure that currently exist between nations (Austin 2010). Due to global inequality, developed nations are able to set low prices on developing nations’ natural resources (Clark et al. 2009). The set prices do not reflect true environmental costs that less-developed nations bear. Extraction, processing, transportation and waste treatment activities contribute to the environmental costs of production (Ciccantelli et al. 2009). While these activities produce commodities for the receiving countries, they result in deforestation, pollution, and biodiversity loss for the exporting countries.

Ecological unequal exchange theory suggests that due to international inequality, more developed nations are able to minimize their environmental footprints at the expense of less-developed countries (Jorgenson et al. 2006 and 2009). By importing products and raw materials, more developed nations save land, water and natural resources (Lawrence 2009). Even as more developed nations increase consumption, environmental degradation within their borders remains constant, or even drops (Rice 2007).

Some theorists dispute that more developed nations are simply ‘dematerializing,’ and decreasing their environmental impacts (Jorgenson et al. 2011). This line of theory contests that since more developed nations’ environments are improving; their environmental footprint must be decreasing. Ecological unequal exchange explains how this thought process is flawed. More-developed nations are able to lessen their footprints without reducing consumption because they are able to pass along the side effects of production. In other words, developed nations are creating an environmental overdraft. Instead of decreasing consumption, developed nations are maintaining their “environmental overdraft” by drawing natural resources out of less-developed countries. Extraction depletes the environment and slows growth in less-developed nations, forcing them further and further into debt to the very countries exploiting their natural resources (Clark et al. 2009).

**LAKE NAIVASHA’S ECOLOGICALLY UNEQUAL EXCHANGE**

As previously discussed, a booming floriculture industry has blossomed around Lake Naivasha. Flower producers currently use up to 30 percent of the irrigated land near the lake, producing 95 percent of Kenya’s flowers (Mekonnen 2012). The flower industry surrounding Lake
Naivasha has been lauded for its benefits to the country. Annually it contributes 141 million dollars in foreign exchange, and it provides employment, revenue and infrastructure to the nation. Additionally, the flower farms provide housing, medical services, and schools for community members in the Naivasha Basin (Mekonnen et al. 2012). However, these benefits may not outweigh the costs of exporting virtual water, polluting freshwater and damaging the lake’s biodiversity.

According to Mekonnen et al. (2012), Lake Naivasha’s drop in water levels is mainly attributed to commercial farming around the lakes. Their research also highlighted that the nutrient load-based pollution can be tied back to the flower industry (Mekonnen et al. 2012). Each flower is estimated to require 7 to 13 liters of water during the cultivation process. Overall, massive amounts of virtual water— the volume of water consumption required to produce commodities traded from an exporting nation—is shipped each year to the European Union (Hanasaki et al. 2010). This virtual water primarily ends up in the Netherlands, the UK, and Germany (Mekonnen et al. 2012). The resulting water loss effects both lake biodiversity and community health in the area. The growing population of flower industry workers migrating into the basin also strains the already shrinking lake (ibid).

If the floriculture industry is economically beneficial to the region around Lake Naivasha, the results are unapparent. Kenya’s development has not increased in the last twenty years, with the poor in Kenya doing markedly worse than poor in other nations (World Bank Database). According to ecological unequal exchange theory, this outcome is not surprising. From a theoretical standpoint, Kenya is an extractive country, sacrificing its water quality, water quantity, and environmental health in exchange for undervalued prices. Through exportation of underpriced natural resources, Kenya is hindering its own development whilst simultaneously experiencing environmental degradation. While the Lake Naivasha region sacrifices environmental quality, nations like the Netherlands, the UK and Germany, are saving their water from the cost of flower production by exporting their water deterioration to Kenya.

Organizations such as the Lake Naivasha Riparian Association, the Lake Naivasha Growers Group and Kenya Wildlife Services, have formed in an effort to stem the deterioration of Lake Naivasha.

The Lake Naivasha Management Implementation Committee has also been formed in order to prepare a management plan for the lake (Mekonnen et al. 2012). As water becomes scarce, these groups have worked on increasing water prices to reflect the real environmental cost of water use, creating more equality. Unfortunately, these organizations have so far been unable to successfully implement full-cost water pricing (Mekonnen et al. 2012).

These organizations have few options when it comes to bargaining for fair trade. Flower companies are already threatening to relocate to Ethiopia if water prices or taxes are raised in an effort to spur lake conservation. Losing the floriculture industry would eliminate employment, housing, schools and hospitals. On the plus side, it would also remove a large portion of Lake Naivasha’s water loss and pollution (Mekonnen et al. 2012). Due to ecological unequal exchange, and Kenya’s lack of power in this situation, Kenyan stakeholders must choose between lake conservation and economic growth. Unfortunately, the situation is unlikely to change, as Kenya’s growing external debt only increases its dependence on developed nations (Trading Economic Data).

In addition to the inability to barter for fair water prices, Kenya struggles to enforce the regulations that are in place, and many farms simply ignore existing laws (Marshall, 2011). Although water consumption is supposed to be regulated and reduced, many farms have disconnected their water meters and continue to pull water at will (Marshall, 2011). Without a solid economic structure, Kenya will continue to be unable to enforce water policies. And until such an organization is in place, equal trade agreements with developed nations will have little effect on Lake Naivasha (Mekonnen et al. 2012).

Rather than continuing to pour money into Kenya for boreholes and water projects, the systemic issue needs to be resolved. Corporations in Kenya have been shown to overuse and abuse the country’s water. Kenya does not have the global or economic position to bargain, and as a result it is forced to accept the ecological effects of the floriculture industry. Lake Naivasha needs global equality before more NGO projects. The people surrounding the lake need the ability to bargain with corporations, and other governments, without the fear of economic degradation. The community surrounding Lake Navisha needs the opportunity to have equal
exchange with other nations, in order to protect their environment, water quality and health.

**CONCLUSION**

Lake Naivasha is drying up and its waters are polluted thanks largely to international trade (Mekonnen 2012). Each year, nonprofit organizations contribute millions of dollars into the country in an effort to combat this issue. Due to Kenya’s position in the global economy, however, the nation is unable to negotiate fair trade agreements. From an ecological unequal exchange position, this inequality allows developed nations to rob Kenya of its natural resources while protecting their own. Power to set prices and undervalue products from Kenya is what allows developed nations to perpetuate inequality (Mekonnen 2012). Rather than continuing to treat the symptoms of water scarcity, organizational changes need to be made in the international trade system, which will place nations on equal footing. Lasting solutions to drought have more to do with structural inequality than a lack of wells.

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Seeds of Resistance: Pedagogies of the Home, Oppositional Culture and Trans-Border Resistance

By Alonso R. Reyna

INTRODUCTION

Incluso, siempre me acuerdo y siempre me acordaré, como no teníamos dinero mi mamá lo que hacía era freíra unas tortillas, unos frijoles y los embarraba [las tortillas] de frijoles, y un poquito de salsa con un jitalomate que encontraba. Y me causa curiosidad—o no sé cómo [es] que mi mamá con un jitalomate, hacía una sopa para todos, o hacía una salsa para todos. Lo hacía alcanzar. ¿Cómo era que mi mamá hacía un jitalomate rendir, para todos?

(Also, I always remember and will always remember, because we didn’t have money my mom would fry tortillas, beans and spread the beans [on the tortillas] with a little bit of salsa she would make from a small tomato she could find. And I’m still very curious—or I don’t understand how my mother, with one tomato, would make sauce or salsa for all of us. She would make it last. How did my mother make a tomato last for everyone?)

Like many Latina immigrants in the United States, Sofia1 reflects upon her mother’s teachings and life experiences with reverence and awe. Sofia’s mother’s wisdom has played a critical role in Sofia’s survival in United States. Time and time again, Sofia turns to her mother’s teachings to resist and survive the every day oppression she faces as

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1 Name was changed to protect the identity of the participant

A Latina immigrant worker. This paper intertwines pedagogies of the home theory (Delgado Bernal, 2001) and oppositional culture theory (Mitchell and Feagin 1995) to discuss some of the ways in which Latina immigrant workers like Sofia resist and survive oppression in the United States.

Latina immigrant workers often face similar struggles, as many are caught in the center of the matrix of racial, gender, economic, linguistic and immigration status oppression (Collins, 1991). Moreover, this paper introduces a theory, “seeds of resistance,” as a way of looking at the relationship between pedagogies of the home theory and oppositional culture theory in subjugated immigrant communities in the United States. Throughout this paper I weave in Sofia’s testimonio to help contextualize theory. In addition, throughout this paper I engage the use of Spanish words to remain truthful to my origins and way of knowing/speaking, as well as Sofia’s experiences shared through her testimonio.

HOME SPUN RESISTANCE: THEORETICAL GROUNDINGS AMONG LATINA IMMIGRANTS

I had the wonderful opportunity to meet Sofia, a Latina immigrant working in Salt Lake City’s hospitality industry, five years ago. Since that time, we have built a genuine, friendly relationship while working in a hotel in the city.

As Patricia Hill Collins (1991) would affirm, methodologies used by people of color pivot the
center of methodological focus from the “subject” of research—in the masculinist positivist sense—to a methodology which affirms, validates, and cares for the authentic, blood and bone human being who is a partner in the shaping of study. Sofia and I, then, built a genuine relationship with no research agenda, and I feel fortunate that she agreed and aided me in the shaping of this study. The theoretical underpinnings for the study are discussed below.

**PEDAGOGIES OF THE HOME**

Dolores Delgado Bernal (2001) maintains that Latina mothers teach their children “family and community knowledge” through informal methods such as “legends, corridos, storytelling and behavior” (p. 114, my own emphasis). These methods of teaching and learning are significant and entrenched in cultural ways of knowing passed down from mothers to daughters via what Delgado Bernal calls pedagogies of the home.

The concept of pedagogies of the home emerges from what critical feminista scholars have called, “Chicana feminist pedagogies” (Elenes, Delgado Bernal, González, Trinidad and Villenas 2000). These forms of Chicana feminist pedagogies refer to “culturally specific” ways of teaching and learning that occur in informal settings, such as the home (Delgado Bernal 2001: 114).

Pedagogies of the home lend considerable significance to the issues of resistance and survival for Latina immigrants in the United States. This form of learning, which occurs in the home, not only teaches Latina immigrant workers cultural forms of validation, but also carries tools that can be drawn and utilized to resist and survive social oppression.

**OPPOSITIONAL CULTURE**

Bonnie Mitchell and Joe Feagin (1995) suggest that when underrepresented groups are marginalized, they will turn to their own cultures to resist oppression (Martínez, 2005). Mitchell and Feagin argue that marginalized groups will create a “culture of resistance” that signifies a “set of values, beliefs, and practices which mitigates the effects of oppression and reaffirms that which is distinct from the majority culture” (p.68; Martínez, 2005).

Whether the engagement of oppositional culture is conscious or unconscious, turning to one’s culture to resist day-to-day oppression has been a mode of resistance adopted by U.S. communities of color for centuries (Martínez, 2005). Furthermore, Mitchell and Feagin (1995) maintain that the range of resistance to which subjugated groups subscribe via oppositional culture ranges widely.

In “Making Oppositional Culture, Making Standpoint: A Journey into Gloria Anzaldúa’s Borderlands,” Theresa A. Martínez (2005) argues that, “oppositional culture can mean everything from the creation and expansion of kinship networks... to the organization of civil rights movement” (p. 541; Mitchell and Feagin, 1995). The “creation and expansion of kinship networks” is one of the methods by which Latina immigrants engage everyday to also resist and survive oppression (Martínez 2005; Mitchell and Feagin 1995).

Pedagogies of the home (Delgado Bernal 2001) and oppositional culture (Mitchell and Feagin 1995) help us understand some of the ways in which Latina immigrants engage day-to-day acts of resistance and survival. The theory of pedagogies of the home holds large significance in the lives of Latina immigrants resisting and surviving oppressive patriarchal systems such as the United States hospitality industry (Delgado Bernal, 2001). Oppositional culture (Mitchell and Feagin 1995) however, suggests hope, which to me translates into the resistance and survival strategies these women engage in day-to-day life.

In her book, From Margin to Center, bell hooks (1984) argues that a dominant perception of women of color is that these women are silent victims of their oppression. However, in reality, this conceptualization of women in the margins as silent comes from research that emerges from the “center” of society, and not from the margins. This collective form of research emerges from the margins.

**LATINA IMMIGRANT WORKERS AT THE CENTER**

Patricia Hill Collins (1991) suggests that when we place Black women at the center of our analysis, a revolutionary standpoint emerges, a standpoint grounded in the lived experience of Black women. This brief analysis seeks to place the voices of Latina immigrant workers, like Sofia, at the center of the analysis. In this regard I found Verónica Perez’s (2010) painting, “Seeds of Resistance,” a key
inspiration in pivoting the center. Perez writes of her work, “Seeds of Resistance portrays Yum Kaax, keeper of the corn and cacao. He is planting seeds of maiz, symbols of love, strength, resistance and knowledge, that sprouts into two strong Zapatistas. The woman holds in her hands two forms of resistance and change. On our left, a strong spiral of light and energy represent her actions, her words, her love, and her strength. On our right, the child represents the continual acquiring and sharing of knowledge. Sharing our traditions and educating our youth in one of the strongest forms of love and resistance (Perez 2010).”

In like manner, the seeds of resistance Latina mothers carefully plant and tend in their daughters are part of the education that occurs in these informal spaces such as the home (Delgado Bernal 2010). These seeds of resistance are essential survival needs when Latina immigrants, like Sofia, face oppression from across the geopolitical borders in the United States.

I learned early where Sofia’s oppositional consciousness was grounded. In her testimonio she focused on the teachings of her mother and stressed “siempre me acuerdo y siempre me acordaré” (I always remember and will always remember). In this way, Sofia’s words mark the importance and value of her mother’s teachings in her life. Pedagogies of the home carry in them the wisdom of resistance. Sofia’s mother’s pedagogies of the home are not only important because of the sharing of family and community knowledge (Delgado Bernal 2001), but also because her mother carefully planted in Sofia the seeds of resistance she relies on to survive systematic labor oppression in the United States on a day-to-day basis.

Seeds of resistance are also reflected in the actions Sofia’s mother took on behalf of her family—unstated acts of resistance. As Sofia reflected upon her and her mother’s experiences back in Mexico, their homeland, she stated,

Cuando [mi papá] se iba a trabajar afuera de Puebla, mi papá le daba a mi mamá 200 pesos, o llegaba a darle 1000 pesos—y esos 1000 pesos [mi mamá] tenía que hacerlos rendir desde hasta que [mi papá] se fuera y volviera a regresar. Estamos hablando de 20 días hasta un mes. Mi papá se iba de ocho a 15 días, y cuando regresaba le daba ese dinero [a mi mamá]. [mi papá] estaba en la casa por ocho días, y se iba otra vez. Como te digo, ese dinero que le daba mi mamá lo tenía que hacer rendir por 20 días y mantener a cinco personas—mis papas, mis dos hermanas, y yo.

(When [my dad] would go out of Puebla to work, he would give my mom 200 pesos, or he would even give her 1000—and those 1000 pesos [my mom] would have to make them last until [my dad] left out of town and came back. We are speaking of 20 days up to a month. My dad would leave from eight to 15 days, and when he would come back he would give that money [to my mom]. [my dad] would be home for eight day, and would leave again. Like I tell you, that money that my dad would give my mom she would have to make it last for 20 days and feed five people—my parents, my two sisters, and me.)

Dolores Delgado Bernal (2001) suggests that pedagogies of the home occur via informal forms of teaching, such as behavior. In this excerpt, it is evident that from her mother’s experiences Sofia draws not only an understanding and critique of patriarchal oppression, but also a sense of economic survival and resistance.

For Sofia, the seeds of resistance her mother planted in her via pedagogical moments in the home were transplanted across the border in Mexico. However, these seeds of resistance were triggered to grow when Sofia faced the oppressive social and economic structures of the United States. For example, as a hospitality industry worker, Sofia faces day-to-day oppression in forms of labor exploitation. Sofia contends, “Si es trabajo duro [‘housekeeping’]. A veces nos tienen limpiando entre 18 a 22 cuartos, cuando solo nos deben dar 15.” (It is difficult work [housekeeping]. Sometimes they have us cleaning between 18 to 22 [guest] rooms, when they should only be giving us 15.) Like Sofia, many Latina immigrant workers struggle with grueling work days and other forms of labor exploitation, caught up in a matrix of domination along several axes including race, gender, class, linguistic and most equally significantly, immigration status oppression.

Earlier in the interview Sofia related to something a co-worker had said, “aguantamos
*porque no nos queda de otra* (we uphold because we have no other option). Similarly to her mother, who was constrained within the social oppression of a traditional patriarchal household, Sofia is constrained by the oppressive hospitality industry as a Latina immigrant in the U.S.

Through her mother’s informal teachings of the home, Sofia learned her mother had to create a separate reality from which to resist and survive the patriarchal oppression she lived in (Delgado Bernal 2001; Mitchell and Feagin 1995). After Sofia migrated to the United States, she relies on the seeds of resistance her mother nurtured in her to survive her own oppression in a patriarchal economic system.

**Conclusion**

Oppositional culture helps describe the turning back point to pedagogies of the home—to find the resistance necessary to survive oppressive patriarchal economic structures in the United States. This turning back point is where oppositional culture meets pedagogies of the home.

For Latina immigrants in the United States, like Sofia, the informal teachings she received from her mother via day-to-day interactions, sharing and behavior (Delgado Bernal 2001), were later reproduced across the border in the United States to ensure Sofia’s ongoing economic survival. Hence Sofia’s mother planted in Sofia the seeds of resistance Latina immigrants rely on to ensure survive across the border in the United States.

Oppositional culture allows for these spaces of sharing, such as the one Sofia and I built, to be created (Mitchell and Feagin 1995; Martínez 2005). For Latina immigrants, these safe spaces are created in tight relationship to oppositional culture as they navigate, survive and resist oppressive institutions in the U.S. (Mitchell and Feagin 1995). Additionally, the creations of these spaces of oppositional culture attest to “the creation and expansion of extensive kinship networks that survive even in the face of harsh economic realities…” (Mitchell and Feagin 1995; Martínez 2005:541).

The beauty that occurs in these spaces of oppositional culture is the reality that the dominant culture cannot see and cannot understand; in these spaces of oppositional culture “family and community knowledge” and the lived experiences of these hard-working *mujeres* are understood and validated (Mitchell and Feagin 1995; Delgado Bernal 2001; González, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Redón, González and Amanti 1995; Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg 1992).

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The Devastating Effects of Intimate Partner Violence
Colbie Rae Shanley

INTRODUCTION

Various research demonstrates that domestic, dating, and sexual violence are serious issues that are currently plaguing American society. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly one in four women in the United States reports being violently victimized by a current or former spouse or boyfriend (CDC, 2008). In addition, the CDC also found that women in the United States experience two million injuries from intimate partner violence per year (CDC, 2008).

In short, domestic, dating, and sexual violence are costly and persistent issues that cause victims much pain and loss. Upon acknowledging the prevalence of domestic, dating, and sexual violence in the United States, the next logical step involves determining what sort of preventative measures might be taken to address this significant social problem. With this in mind, this paper will further explore the negative effects and consequences that victims experience, assess who is at greatest risk of experiencing intimate partner violence, and examine what is currently being done to reduce the rates of intimate partner violence. A possible solution to further prevent intimate partner violence will also be offered.

THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Not only are victims of domestic, dating, and sexual violence at risk for both serious injury and death, they may also experience less obvious but equally damaging physical and psychological consequences. For example, victims of any form of domestic violence are 80 percent more likely to have a stroke, 70 percent more likely to develop heart disease, and 60 percent more likely to develop asthma (CDC, 2008) than are individuals who have not been the victims of intimate partner violence. Perhaps even more alarming is the fact that victims of intimate partner violence are more likely to contract some form of sexually transmitted disease than are non-victims. As Coker (2000) noted, “a study found that women disclosing physical abuse were three times more likely to experience a sexually transmitted infection, and women disclosing psychological abuse were two times more likely to experience a sexually transmitted infection.”

While victims of intimate partner violence are at a greater risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection of any kind, the possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS is particularly worrisome. Garcia-Moreno (2000) identified at least three reasons why victims have a greater risk of experiencing HIV/AIDS. First, the extent to which safe sex practices are utilized during the assault is usually determined by the abuser, which more often than not means that contraception will not be employed. Second, abusers usually prove to have more sexual partners than the average individual, increasing the probability of being exposed to and/or contracting HIV/AIDS. Third, the vaginal wall can be traumatized from frequent sexual assault, resulting in easier access of the HIV virus.

In addition to increased risk of contracting physical illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, victims of intimate partner violence are also shown to experience
mental illnesses brought on by cumulative stress and trauma. Such illnesses include anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression (Leserman, 2008). Simply put, intimate partner violence erodes the overall health of victims on many levels.

The above-mentioned physical and mental health issues may be exacerbated by the fact that many victims do not have access to a safe place that might allow them to escape the abusive situation. As a result, women often either remain in the home with the abuser or they are forced to become homeless, neither of which constitutes a desirable option. In many cases, not only abused women, but also their children will be forced to live on the streets as a result of escaping the abuser. In fact, in one study, it was reported that "sexual abuse before leaving home was reported by 61 percent of homeless girls and 19 percent of homeless boys" (Estes, 2001).

Sadly, it seems that once a victim escapes from the first difficult situation—the abusive relationship— they only find themselves homeless with nowhere safe to go. Even more heartbreaking is the fact that the negative effects of intimate partner violence go far beyond what has been covered in this brief summary.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone and everyone has the potential to become a victim of domestic, dating, or sexual violence, which means that we are all at risk of experiencing the harsh consequences of the abusive situation. However, women are much more likely to be victimized by a current or former intimate partner than are men. The United States Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics provides figures that support this notion that women are at greater risk of experiencing intimate partner violence, noting that "women are 84 percent of spouse abuse victims, 86 percent of dating abuse victims, and about three-fourths of the persons who commit family violence are male". Furthermore, although intimate partner violence does not discriminate by age, women ages twenty to twenty-four are at the greatest risk of intimate partner violence, of rape and other forms of sexual assault (Catalano, 2007). In other words, women—particularly young women—are at the greatest risk of experiencing the devastating consequences, mentioned above, of intimate partner violence.

CURRENT SOLUTIONS

In response to the harmful and persistent nature of intimate partner violence, some (though not nearly enough) resources have been established to provide assistance to victims. And because women are at the greatest risk for becoming victims of intimate partner violence, many of said resources are tailored to fit their needs. For example, there are many women's shelters around the nation that are dedicated to serving intimate partner violence victims specifically. In fact, this past semester I enjoyed the great opportunity to complete an internship at the YWCA, which is one of these particular women's shelters.

The YWCA, which was organized over 100 years ago, reaches out to women and their families who have experienced various forms of intimate partner violence. Inspiringly, the YWCA believes that better opportunities for every individual woman will lead to healthier families and more peaceful communities. In short, the YWCA strives for equality. More specifically, they strive to confront and alter inequality created by gender bias and sexism. At the YWCA, numerous resources are offered that help intimate partner violence victims deal with the issues mentioned earlier in this paper.

The YWCA takes a three-pronged approach. First, issues involved with the psychological effects of intimate partner violence are confronted with counseling services offering emotional support. Second, health issues are confronted with various medical services, including on-site rape screenings. Third, the issues associated with homelessness are confronted by offering victims shelter, clothing, and food. Basically, the shelter can not only be considered a safe haven for the victims of intimate partner violence, it can also be seen as a place where they can get their bearings and plan their next steps.

Through my internship at the YWCA, I was able to personally witness the ways in which victims of intimate partner violence benefit from the wide variety of services provided there. I was also fortunate to observe inspiring cases of success in which women who had formerly been shattered and vulnerable transformed themselves into powerful, independent individuals. However, my time at the YWCA also afforded me the opportunity to witness firsthand and comprehend the serious nature of intimate partner
violence. As a result I have recognized not only a further need for victim resources and support, but also a need for preventative measures.

**A Preventive Solution**

Generally speaking, efforts to educate the public on the issue of intimate partner violence are usually directed at women. This tactic is understandable, and to an extent effective. While working at the YWCA, I have observed many situations that would suggest these efforts have given women a better understanding of intimate partner violence, as well as a more attainable feeling of hope and safety.

However, the rates at which these services are utilized by women demand that something be done to further prevent intimate partner violence cases. Framing intimate partner violence as a women’s issue is perhaps counterproductive in that it implies that women are responsible for its prevention. Although we as a society would undoubtedly benefit from additional efforts to educate women on the issues surrounding intimate partner violence, the more effective solution might be to educate men with the goal of challenging traditional narratives regarding masculinity and male privilege.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper began by observing that intimate partner violence is a serious and persistent issue in American society. After determining the current prevalence of intimate partner violence in the United States by providing figures that demonstrated the devastating reality of many individuals being abused, this paper also examined more extreme cases in which victims were severely abused and even murdered by current or former significant others.

In addition to recognizing the prevalence of intimate partner violence, this paper further explored certain issues and effects that intimate partner violence creates for victims. More specifically, this paper demonstrated conclusively that intimate partner violence, along with the persistent threat of injury and/or death, causes victims to experience psychological and health consequences, forces women and their children out of their homes and puts victims at a significant risk of contracting HIV/AIDS as well as other sexually transmitted infections. Of course, there are many other difficult issues that result from being a victim of intimate partner violence that were not addressed in this review due to a lack of space.

Next, young women were acknowledged to be at the greatest risk for being victims. Current solutions that assist victims, including the services provided at the YWCA, were also introduced. Then, finally, a future solution, implying that young boys should be educated about the consequences of intimate partner abuse, is briefly discussed.

In short, it can be concluded that in order to experience a greater sense of gender equality in American society, as well as decreasing intimate partner violence rates, men and women must unite and participate in prevention and education efforts together.

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Widening the ‘Pipeline’: Encouraging Minority Participation in Advanced STEM Classes

Nykole Sargent

Demographics are rapidly changing in the United States, and demographers predict that Caucasians will no longer be the majority nationwide by year 2040, a fact that is already true in Washington D.C., Hawaii, New Mexico, Texas, and California (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). As such, an equal educational opportunity for minorities is an increasingly important topic for the U.S., as minority students already fall behind in completing their education compared to their White or Asian peers. This fact is particularly true for mathematics and scientific-related disciplines (Oakes 1990; Alters 1997; Duarte 1999; Anderson and Dongbin 2006).

This paper will discuss possible hindrances that keep non-White and non-Asian minorities from participating in high-level math and science classes in high-school, and it will explore methods to increase minority participation in these disciplines.

Researchers on this topic have identified an academic “pipeline” that is said to be followed by most professionals in science, technology, engineering, or mathematic (STEM) disciplines. This pipeline begins in elementary school in most cases and extends through graduate education. The pipeline seems logical, with students who are more inclined in mathematics in elementary school because they are more likely to be participants in accelerated learning programs, which increases their exposure to further math and science topics at a young age. These ‘advanced’ students are then more likely to excel in these areas later in life, which gives them an advantage in advanced STEM classes during high school. One drawback in the development of the pipeline is that white and Asian children are far more likely to participate in these steps than other minority peers (Oakes 1990). This fact is supported by reports that the number of minorities who take Advanced Placement (AP) classes in high school is disproportionately low compared to whites and Asians (Klopfenstein 2004).

One advantage of a ‘science and math participation pipeline’ is that it helps us identify possible problems and shortfalls in the current system, as well as benefits. One issue is the relatively young age that perceived capabilities in science and mathematics seem to take shape. Interestingly, data show that all races and ethnicities have an equal interest in math and science throughout most of elementary school, but a disparity becomes obvious in about 5th grade and grows with each grade (Duarte 1999). Many advocates for minorities in science maintain that the quality of education these students receive in the lower grades is what influences their later decisions about math and science (Alters 1997), which demonstrates the need for equal opportunity among students starting at a young age. This may require changes to our current education system.

There are also many subjective reasons why minorities may or may not be interested in taking science classes. Interviews with teenage students revealed that most think advanced science and math classes are daunting, regardless of race. The expectation is that the material will be difficult, and the decision to learn it is based on what the outcome is worth. For example, taking AP chemistry in high school, rather than General Chemistry in college...
may or may not be worth it. One significant factor is quality of the teacher, particularly when the teacher can make complex concepts seem simple and relatable. With this fact in mind, it might be worthwhile to examine specific training for high school science teachers, which again suggests the need for a paradigm shift in the presentation of science and math in order to make it attainable for everyone, not just the ‘smart’ kids. Studies on this topic have specifically pointed to encouragement and opportunity as the main contributors in the decision to participate in math or science (Oakes 1999; Alters 1997). Positive encouragement at school comes from teachers, counselors, and peers. In this sense, the students’ natural talents are observed and fostered in the classroom, building confidence and helping guide their decisions. It is also important that students are informed about what opportunities they have to participate in math and science classes, and what subjects might fit their individual interests.

Research has also identified many factors at home that influence a student’s decision to participate. Klopfenstein (2004) suggests that parents who have a college degree, who promote and reward educational achievements and encourage students, to prepare for college create a “learning culture” among the family. Creating a “learning culture” at home seems to boost higher education aspirations and attainment, and participation in high-level classes in general. Since most students find advanced classes intimidating, the reinforcement they receive from their family supports their decision making process.

In addition to belonging to a minority ethnicity, belonging to a low-income family is one of the best indicators for lack of participation in advanced classes. Students from low-income families have the least likelihood of participating in high-level math and science classes. One possible reason for lack of participation is these students might be pressured to maintain a job outside of school in order to support themselves financially where their family is unable. In this case, youth begin to see the immediate benefits of having their own income, whereas the benefits from investing in education are often delayed until after graduation. Youth who are raised in a low-income family might perceive that investment period as arduous when they could be making money in a regular job.

Much of the research on minorities in science points to a looming edge: “the nation as a whole loses when its science workforce weakens” (Alters 1997). The message is coming from every direction; government, economists, researchers and the public in general believe in varying degrees that our job market is growing ever more tied to technology. However, an equally important message is not being resounded; advancing our nation’s technology markets depends on the rapidly expanding minority (and in some cases now minority-majority, see Figure 2 for growth rates) populations to help sustain these aspirations. Without minority populations, we simply won’t have the numbers we need to withstand these big future plans.

In summary, the point of this nationwide effort is to make sure that everyone who has interests in science and/or math has the opportunity to explore and learn more about these subjects as part of their education, which has not been the case for minorities. In short, our nation is depending on it. Part of ensuring this happens is reinforcing positive perceptions about learning math and science. Next is making sure all students have equal exposure and encouragement in science and math throughout elementary and middle school, and are aware of the options in high-school when many science classes are elective. Central to this endeavor is providing encouragement at home and in school for all students to discover what they like about science and math.

References


Author Bios

Mark Reviea is an undergraduate in the University of Utah’s Department of Sociology. Formerly a professional chemist, he has recently changed career paths in pursuit of a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology, a Criminology Certificate, and a Mathematics Minor. He is currently the Vice-chairperson of Development for the Sociology Student Advisory Committee (SSAC). Furthermore, he is a recipient of the 2014-2015 Department of Sociology Scholarship. His research interests include complex adaptive systems, constitutive criminology, agent-based modeling, and sexual deviance.

McKenzie Schwartz will be graduating December 2014 with a b.s. in Sociology and a minor in Environmental Studies. Post graduation, she intends to continue volunteering with the Utah Water Watch, begin a masters in Environmental Management, and continue her research into the ecological impacts of globalization. She currently lives in Provo where her and her wife, Gretchen, volunteer for the Center for Women and Children in Crisis.

Alonso R. Reyna Rivarola is an Assessment Analyst in the Office of Assessment, Evaluation and Research at the University of Utah. In 2013, he graduated with an Honors Bachelors of Science from the Department of Sociology at the University of Utah, the same institution where he will be commencing a graduate program in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy in the Fall 2014. His experiences migrating from Lima, Perú to the United States inform his work with immigrant communities in the state; his research interests particularly include issues of educational access, retention, validation and graduation for immigrant, working class students and families of color in the United States.

Colbie Rae Shanley is a recent graduate from the University of Utah where she studied both Sociology and International Studies. The topic discussed in this paper was inspired by the experiences she had upon completing an internship at the YWCA, a domestic violence shelter for women. As a result of these particular experiences working with domestic violence victims, along with her passion for building relationships and working with people, she aspires to complete the graduate program in Clinical and Mental Health Counseling here at the University of Utah.

Nykole Sargent works as a lab technician at the Huntsman Cancer Institute where she conducts research on the genetic antecedents of colon cancer. She recently completed a Bachelor’s degree at the University of Utah, where she studied cellular and molecular biology. Prior to graduation, Nykole received the prestigious Undergraduate Research Scholar designation, which required that she not only conduct research, but also that she present her research at a professional conference and publish it in an undergraduate journal. Her interests include biotechnology, molecular genetics and promoting STEM education amongst disadvantaged populations.

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