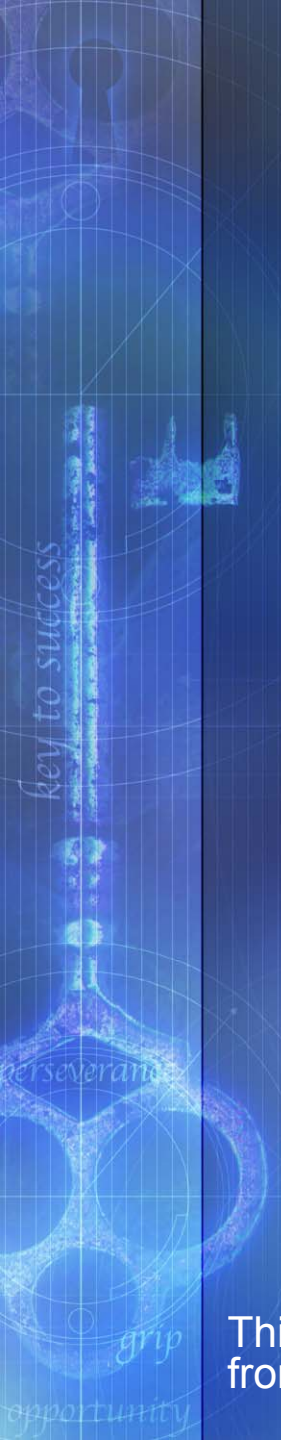


Intervention Strategies for African American Males: Considering Culture

Vanessa Nyborg, PhD
University of California, Santa Barbara

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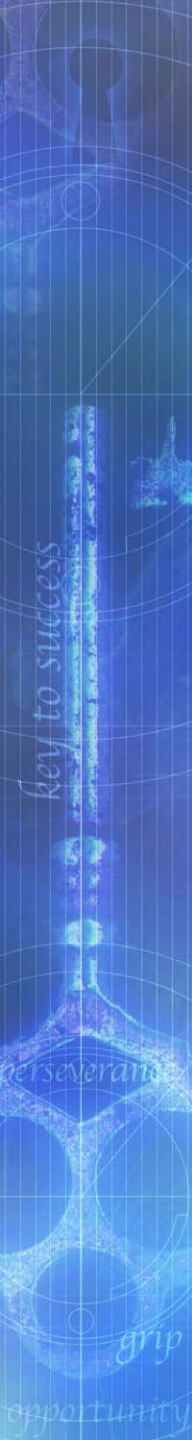


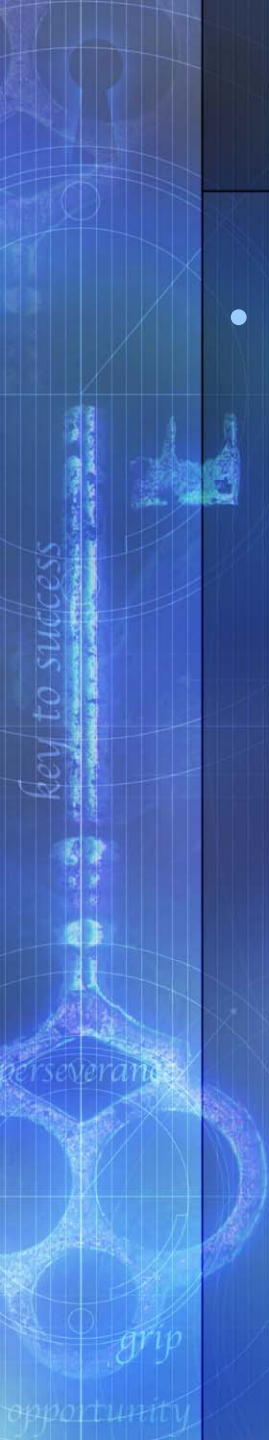
Rationale

- African American males particularly at risk for negative outcomes
 - Nationally, homicide leading cause of death for African Americans age 15 - 20
 - In CA, African American homicide rate 10 ½ times higher than Whites and 3 times higher than Latino (Children Now, 2002)
 - In CA, 13% of African American homicide victims were males under 19 (Children Now, 2002)
 - In CA, African American youth comprise 7% of the population, however their incarceration rate is 1,666 per 100,000 compared to 623 per 100,000 for Hispanics and 269 per 100,000 for Whites (Children Now, 2002)

Research on Racism

- 96% experienced racial discrimination over the past year and 98% experienced over lifetime (Klonoff & Landrine, 1999)
 - Treated unfairly by teachers and professors, being treated unfairly by employers, being called racist names, and being accused or suspected of doing something wrong
 - 95% found racial discrimination to be stressful
- Psychological impact including stress; episodes of intrusive thinking and periods of avoidance; and decreased life satisfaction (Broman, 1997; Thompson, 1996; Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002; Utsey, Payne, Jackson, & Jones, 2002).

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- Increased experiences with racism related to increased levels of hostility among African American men
 - African American men had significantly higher experiences with racism than African American women (Utsey, 1998)
 - Anger has been found to be strongly related to the experience of racism among African American adults (Clark, 2000; Swim et al., 2003; Utsey, 1998).
 - Among African American college students exposure to racist stimuli, but not anger provoking or neutral stimuli, was found to increase blood pressure (Armstead, et al., 1998).

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- African American women used social support to cope with racism significantly more than African American men (Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Cancelli, 2000).
 - Avoidance as a coping strategy found to predict lower self-esteem and decreased life satisfaction among African Americans (Utsey et al., 2000)
 - Swim et al. (2003) also found women more likely than men to seek social support, to talk to their friends about the incident, and to directly or indirectly respond to the racist incident
 - African American men may not respond either directly or indirectly to racist incidents given possible negative societal consequences

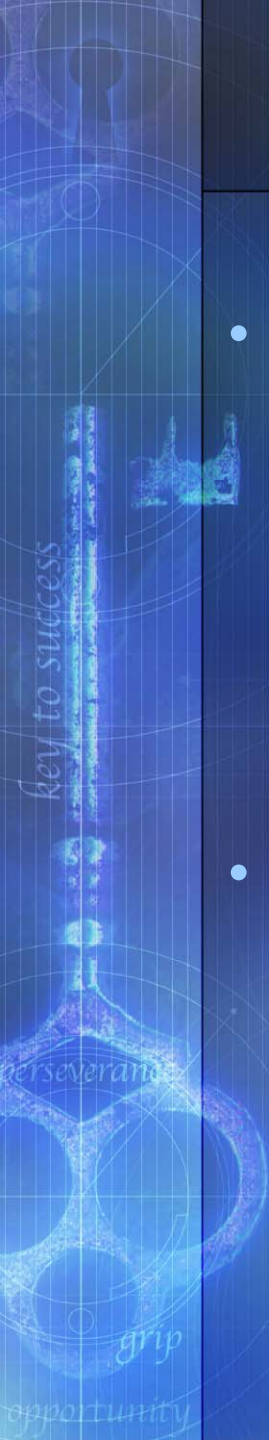
Findings among youth....

- Personal experiences of racial discrimination related to depressive symptoms
 - Prevalence of discrimination within the community related to depressive symptoms even after controlling for the effect of personal exposure (Simons et al., 2002)
- African American male adolescents - situations where someone else is present, those with perceived low personal control were more likely to endorse hostile responses to racism
 - Hypothesized that hostile responses help the boys from being perceived as weak by their peers – opposite of strong masculine gender role identity (Wakefield & Hudley, 2001)

- African American boys - total experiences with racism related to self- and parent-reported externalizing symptoms

Personal experiences of racism related to self-reported internalizing symptoms, lower self-concept and higher levels of hopelessness (Nyborg & Curry, 2003)

- Anger as an emotional response to racism was related to higher levels of externalizing symptoms, higher levels of internalizing symptoms, and lower self-concept
 - Feeling strong was related to lower levels of hopelessness

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- Fighting as a coping response was significantly correlated with higher levels of both parent- and self-reported externalizing symptoms
 - Crying was related to higher levels of self-reported internalizing symptoms
 - Proving someone wrong as a coping response was related to lower levels of hopelessness and increased self-concept
 - Speaking up was related to increased self-concept

Masculinity

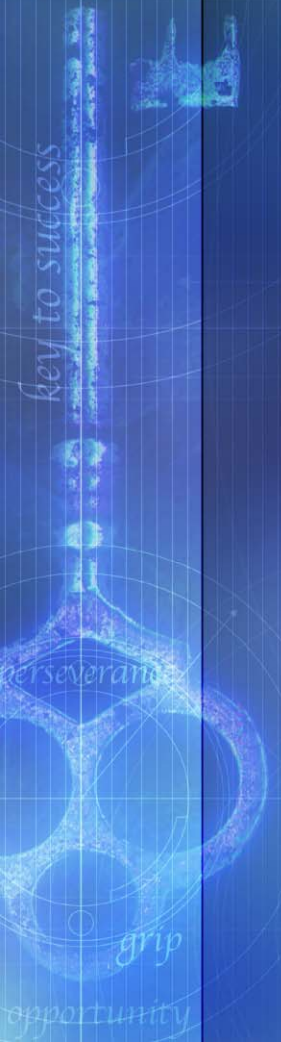
- No one definition of masculinity
 - Traditional stereotyped definition: a man provides for his family, independent, unemotional, aggressive, logical, and strong (both physically and emotionally)
- Theoretical work on African American masculinity suggest current message that many receive emphasizes sexual promiscuity, toughness, thrill seeking, and use of violence/aggression
 - May have adopted this definition of hypermasculinity due to social and economic barriers that impede traditional definition of masculinity

• Spencer and Cunningham's work emphasized interactions between a person and their context, where one's perceptions and experiences with racism are considered

- Conceptualize hypermasculinity among African American boys as a reactive coping response because of stress producing situations
- Negative teacher perceptions, increased unpopularity with peers, and having a higher aggressive attitude score were related to increased hypermasculinity (Spencer, 1999)
 - Stress variables accounted for 15% of the variance for hypermasculinity
 - Combined stress and coping variables accounted for 22% of the variance
- Negative Black male experiences (e.g., salesman think you're doing something wrong, police stop and question you) were the most consistent and strongest predictors of exaggerated masculine attitudes among adolescent males (Cunningham, 1999)

Creating School-Based Intervention Strategies for African American Males

- Three related sub-studies:
 - Development of culturally-sensitive and age-appropriate masculinity scale
 - Assessment of relations between racism, masculinity, school engagement, well-being (hopelessness, self-concept, internalizing/externalizing behavior)



- Development of school-based strategies to foster success of African American boys



key to success

perseverance

grip

opportunity

- Participants

- African American male adolescents (N = 135)

- Mean age = 17.64 (.86 SD)
- Mean grade = 11.73 (.65 SD)

- Recruited from large urban high school in Los Angeles, CA

- School demographics

– Total Enrollment	2,995	
– African American	2,140	71.5%
– Hispanic	828	27.6%
– White	60	.02%
– Asian	20	.01%
– American Indian	11	.004%
– Filipino	8	.003%



– Title 1 School (Schoolwide Program)

- Title I schools with more than 50 percent of their students from low-income families are eligible to become SWP schools.
- Free/Reduced Meals 1,942 66.8%
- The Academic Performance Index assigns number to a school on a scale of 200 to 1,000, with 800 as the goal
 - 2004 Base API 492, with a ranking of 1 (the lowest)

Findings from focus groups

- Defined manhood as someone who was physically strong, emotionally mature, intelligent, successful, and a provider
 - Peers behave like being a “gangbanger,” a “pimp,” a “player,” or being “physically strong and mentally stupid” (e.g., always getting in fights, hitting women, being sexually promiscuous) defined manhood
- When asked about obstacles to success, several of the participants reported living in bad neighborhoods, getting arrested, getting killed
 - Reported gangs were one of the biggest threats to success

Attitudes About Manhood

- Began as a 30 item scale designed to measure attitudes regarding manhood
 - Likert rating scale: 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree)
- Psychometric testing including reliability estimates and factor analyses
 - 13 item scale

Means and Standard Deviations

	Mean (SD)
It's important to be successful at school	4.55 (.95)
Men should always be respectful of women	4.28 (1.12)
Men should be free to date as many women as they want	3.69 (1.35)
It's ok for men to express their feelings	3.57 (1.30)
It's ok to walk away from a fight	3.38 (1.35)
It's ok for men to cry	3.34 (1.50)
It's important to look good in front of your friends	3.30 (1.25)
Any guy who backs out of a fight doesn't deserve respect	3.01 (1.35)
Sometimes I like to act tough	2.98 (1.31)
Being successful means having a lot of money, girls, and nice cars	2.94 (1.48)
Men who are sensitive will not be successful in life	2.73 (1.43)
Men who talk about their feelings are weak	2.49 (1.27)
The only women you should respect are family members	2.24 (1.42)

Key Correlations

- **It's ok for men to cry**
 - Significantly and positively correlated with:
 - ok for men to express feelings (.43)
 - ok to walk away from fight (.38)
 - men should respect all women (.25)
 - important to be successful in school (.19)
 - Significantly and negatively correlated with:
 - men who talk about their feeling are weak (-.38)
 - men should be free to date as many women as they want (-.29)
 - important to look good in front of friends (-.27)
 - not respecting men who back out of fights (-.22)
 - material success (-.22)
 - men who are sensitive will not be successful in life (-.21)



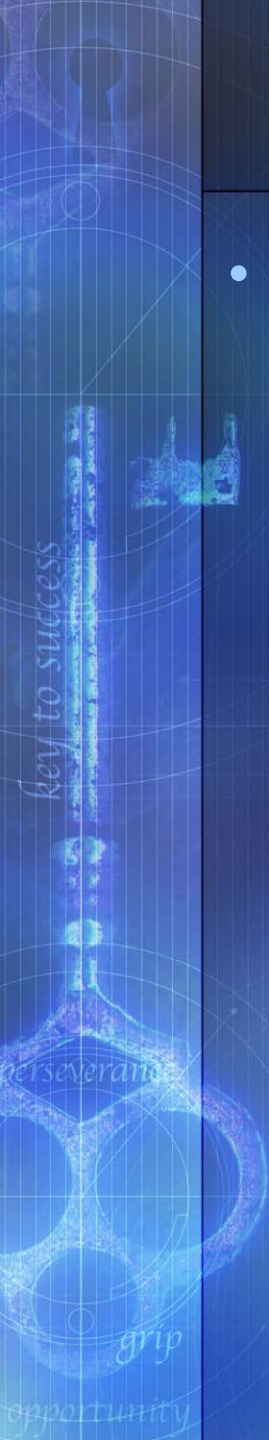
- **It's important to be successful at school**

- Significantly and positively correlated with:

- men should respect all women (.42)
- ok for men to express feelings (.26)
- ok to walk away from fight (.24)
- ok for men to cry (.19)

- Significantly and negatively correlated with:

- men who are sensitive will not be successful in life (-.20)
- only women one should respect are family members (-.18)

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- **Being successful means having a lot of money, girls, and nice cars (“Material success”)**
 - Significantly and positively correlated with:
 - important to look good in front of friends (.43)
 - not respecting men who back out of fights (.38)
 - only women one should respect is family (.37)
 - like to act tough (.32)
 - men who talk about their feelings are weak (.31)
 - men who are sensitive will not be successful in life (.22)
 - men should be free to date as many women as they want (.21)

Attitudes About Manhood Factor Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
It's important to look good in front of your friends	.73	
Being successful means having a lot of money, girls, and nice cars	.69	
Sometimes I like to act tough	.63	
The only women you should respect are family members	.59	
Any guy who backs out of a fight doesn't deserve respect	.58	
Men should be free to date as many women as they want	.53	
Men who talk about their feelings are weak	.53	
Men who are sensitive will not be successful in life	.49	
It's ok for men to express their feelings		.68
It's important to be successful at school		.65
Men should always be respectful of women		.64
It's ok to walk away from a fight		.63
It's ok for men to cry		.55

Conclusions

- Need for interventions aimed at increasing positive developmental outcomes for African American males
- Physical health factors should be examined (e.g., risky sexual behavior, smoking, alcohol/drug abuse)
- Essential to broaden research to other youth of color
 - Collaborative research, especially given the increasing violence in schools between African American and Latino students
- Anchor interventions in culturally-relevant contextual frameworks in order to secure chances of success