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AGGRIEVED ENTITLEMENT IN THE IVORY TOWER: EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE RESULTS FROM A LARGE-SCALE CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY

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Abstract

A number of key risk factors are associated with racist, sexist, and homophobic practices on North American college campuses. However, one additional determinant that has thus far been overlooked is male *aggrieved entitlement*. Using exploratory qualitative data gleaned by the Campus Quality of Life Survey administered at a large college in the South Atlantic region of the United States, the main objective of this article is to help fill a major research gap by showing that aggrieved entitlement is a correlate that warrants more attention in future empirical and theoretical work on campus climates.

Keywords: aggrieved entitlement; college; climate survey

INTRODUCTION

Numerous progressive changes spawned by the feminist movement have occurred over the past several decades, but again, a man was elected President of the United States on November 8, 2016. Why Donald Trump and not another man? One answer is that Trump embodies a white type of *hegemonic masculinity* (Katz, 2016), which is a practice that legitimizes male domination and female subordination in the U.S. and other parts of the world (Connell, 2005). The basic components of this masculinity are: (a) avoid all things feminine; (b) restrict emotions severely; (c) show toughness and aggression; (d) exhibit self-reliance; (e) strive for achievement and status; (f) exhibit non-relational attitudes toward sexuality; and (g) actively

engage in homophobia (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; DeKeseredy, 2017; Levant, 1994; Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997).

Indeed, there is some evidence to support the claim that, "the desire for a strong virile man in the White House runs deep in the American DNA" (Katz, 2016, p. ix). As well, there remains a strong, white anti-feminist backlash in the U.S., one fueled in part by "the desire to return to aspects of an idealized past in which structured inequality was normalized" (Dragiewicz, 2018, p. 336). Many people, however, especially those on the Left, did not foresee the possibility of a Trump victory and were unaware that thousands of men across the U.S. are feeling what Kimmel (2013) identified three years prior to the presidential election (DeKeseredy, 2019). He uncovered a "new breed of angry white men" who are experiencing *aggrieved entitlement*:

> It is that sense that those benefits to which you believed yourself entitled have been snatched away from you by unseen forces larger and more powerful. You feel yourself to be heir to a great promise, the American Dream, which has turned into an impossible fantasy for the very people who were *supposed* to inherit it (p. 18, emphasis in original).

The "American Dream" Kimmel refers to is one in which white men are superior to, and receive more privileges than, women and ethnic minorities. Their rage is expressed in many contexts, but the Internet is an increasingly important venue (Dragiewicz, 2008; Rosen, Dragiewicz, & Gibbs, 2009; Levin, 2017). In a culture where most socializing, particularly among youth, is done through electronic channels, using social media outlets enable people to reach a larger audience. In this way, more racist, anti-feminist men can become aware of a very large "support group" and become motivated to join angry white men's organizations.

Though defined by numerous people as bastions of liberal thought, colleges are now more conservative institutions of higher learning and are not immune to racism, sexism, and the growing culture of male aggrieved entitlement (Bove, 2013; DeKeseredy, Fabricius, & Hall-Sanchez, 2015). However, the extant social scientific literature on key sources of racist, sexist, and homophobic practices on campus overlooks the role of aggrieved entitlement. Using exploratory qualitative data derived from the Campus Quality of Life Survey (CQLS) administered at a large college in a South Atlantic region of the United States, the main objective of this article is to show that it is possibly an equally powerful correlate.

Many researchers (e.g., DeKeseredy, 2019) find the concept of aggrieved entitlement to be a useful analytic tool, but it has not been subject to much empirical inquiry. The limited data that have been thus far collected are derived from a small number of interviews with non-college men and some content analyses of postings on social media and various other places on the Internet (DeKeseredy et al., 2015; Kimmel, 2013, 2018). Before presenting the results of our study, it is first necessary to describe the broader social context in which the CQLS was conducted.

"LET'S PUT IT IN CONTEXT": THE RESEARCH SITE

This section's heading is the title of Lab's (2003) commentary on Ireland, Thornberry, and Loeber's (2003) public housing study, but some of his arguments apply to most social scientific research, including the empirical work described in this article. For example, Lab asserts: "One of the most important things that criminologists often fail to address is the context within which they (their projects or topics) are operating. This is true whether they are proposing a new theory, testing an existing explanation, investigating an emerging phenomenon or evaluating an intervention or program" (p. 39).

The broader social, political, and economic context in which this study was conducted is as follows. First, the school is based in a Republican state where, at the time of writing this article (September 2018), Donald Trump had a very high level of popularity and more than 90% of its population is white (Bacon & Mehta, 2018). Further, the demographic characteristics of the research site presented in Table 1 show that the bulk of the students are white and very few students identify with other races. The CQLS sample ($n = 5,718$), not surprisingly then, is also predominantly white, as noted in Table 1. As well, Weiss' (2013) study conducted at the same institution found many students' drinking patterns extend far beyond the typical amount of alcohol consumed by binge drinkers.

What is more, as uncovered by Weiss (2013) and previous analyses of CQLS data, there is evidence of a patriarchal rape-supportive culture. For example, 40% of the sample described in Table 1 reported that they believed women on the campus experience discrimination and of the students who responded to a question asking if they agreed with the statement "The institution tolerates a culture of sexual misconduct," 75% either agreed or strongly agreed. Their perception is well-founded because 34% of the female CQLS respondents reported experiencing at least one of five types of sexual assault since they enrolled at the school (DeKeseredy, Hall-Sanchez, & Nolan, 2018).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Main Campus Population and the CQLS Sample

Status	POPULATION $N = 30,470$	SAMPLE $N = 5,718$
Undergraduate	77.3	78.9
Professional	4.6	5.1
Graduate	18.2	15.9
Sex		
Female	48.6	57.2
Male	51.4	37.1
Other	Not recorded	1.1
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American	6.7	4.4
White	86.5	83.8

Asian	6.4	6.0
Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	0.5	0.2
Native American	1.4	0.4
Hispanic*	3.8	3.1
Other (including mixed race)	Not recorded	2.0
Age		
Average age	23.3	22.1

* The ethnic category "Hispanic" was considered separate from race in the population column and so the total exceeds 100%.

Though not measured by our survey, it is very likely that these findings are strongly associated with high levels of rape myth acceptance among college students (Canan, Jozkowski, & Crawford, 2016; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McMahon, 2010; Phillips, 2017), as well as pornography consumption. Further, false beliefs about rape (e.g., no means yes) are strongly correlated with such consumption, as documented by a rapidly growing body of social scientific knowledge (DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2016). Note, too, that 14% of (*n* = 409) of the above sexual assault survivors have peers who encourage the use of physical and sexual force to deal with problems in intimate or romantic relationships. As well, 54% (*n* = 1,595) have peers who physically, sexually, or psychologically abuse intimate partners (DeKeseredy, Hall-Sanchez, & Nolan, 2018). These data buttress Gwartney-Gibbs and Stockard's (1989) claim that, "Sexual aggression and victimization may be a part of peer group culture. That is, the friendship networks from which individuals draw their partners may allow, or even encourage, male sexual aggression and female victimization in different degrees" (p. 185). Unfortunately, since the two CQLS negative peer support measures are gender-neutral, the number of male and female friends who are abusive and who encouraged abuse cannot be determined.

Consistent with many other college campuses, human and programmatic diversity is not "universally welcomed" at the research site (Perry, 2011). Thirty percent of the CQLS participants reported that people on their campus are unfriendly to Muslims and to transgender people, and almost 25% stated that people are unfriendly to feminists. Nearly 40% of the sample stated that racism on the campus is a problem and close to 60% of the participants revealed being victimized by one or more of 15 types of hate- or bias-motivated behaviors. Among the groups at the highest risk of such victimization are members of the campus LGBTQ community and Hispanics. Additionally, 76% of the sample saw or heard at least one of six things on campus that they thought were offensive to other people because of their race/ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or political orientation (DeKeseredy, Nolan, & Hall-Sanchez, 2019). These things are:

- jokes;
- leaflets or posters;
- spray-painted signs, slogans, or other graffiti;
- comments on campus radio, TV, bulletin boards, or social media sites;
- articles or cartoons in campus newspapers or magazines; and
- general comments or stories that they heard or were told about.

Are the above findings indicators of a campus culture of aggrieved entitlement? Possibly, but this is an empirical question that can only be answered empirically. The CLQS was not specifically designed to do so, but qualitative data presented in a subsequent section of this paper strongly suggest that many men at the research site are experiencing aggrieved entitlement.

METHOD

Sample and Data Collection

The exploratory qualitative data reported here were gathered by a campus climate survey that was administered online in Spring 2016 to 30,470 students enrolled at the previously mentioned U.S. college. Nearly 20% of the total student population ($n = 5,718$) completed the questionnaire, and most respondents took 25 minutes to fill it out. For the most part, as described in Table 1, the sample is representative of the entire student campus community. More women than men, however, participated. Since women are among the highest risk of groups to experience many of the harms addressed in the CQLS, especially sexual assault, it is to be expected that the CQLS elicited a higher percentage of females than that of the school's general population, as well as a lower percentage of men than that of the wider male student community.

Recruiting participants involved a campus-wide effort and entailed using multiple methods, including posters, flyers, direct email communication, and in-class announcements. Incentives were also used to recruit respondents. All types of publicity informed students of the prospect of being randomly chosen to get one of 20 $50.00 VISA gift cards (also made explicit in the instrument). Lotteries are widely used in Web surveys and are repeatedly found to be more effective than other enticements (Couper & Bosnjak, 2010; Pedersen & Nielsen, 2016).

Email invitations to participate in the CQLS were sent to 30,470 students, with the first of four weekly requests issued on March 28, 2016. In each one was a link to the questionnaire that was administered using Qualtrics software. After clicking the link to the survey in the email invitation and then clicking a button to participate, participants were taken to a screen including a consent form. Students who stated that they did not want to participate were deleted from the email reminder list.

Supplementary Open-Ended Question

The CQLS is mainly a quantitative study of students' various victimization experiences, but a supplementary open-ended question is found at the end of the questionnaire. The main reason for using it was to minimize underreporting. There are a wide variety of reasons for why victims, particularly survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence, might not disclose incidents. These include embarrassment, fear of reprisal, "forward and backward telescoping," deception, and memory error (DeKeseredy & Rennison, 2013). Others suggest that underreporting can come from the reluctance or inability to recall traumatic incidents and the belief that violent or other types of abusive behaviors (e.g., digital types of sexual violence) are too minor or inconsequential to mention (Pritchard, DeKeseredy, Nolan, & Hall-Sanchez, 2018).

If, however, respondents are asked to complete self-report, supplementary, and/or open-ended questions, some forgetful participants will reveal they have been victimized (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 1998). For example, Smith (1987), who designed our open-ended question, found that some silent or forgetful female victims of male intimate violence ($n = 60$) who participated in his Toronto woman abuse survey changed their answers when asked again in different words by a telephone interviewer. Belated responses increased the overall violent victimization prevalence rate by approximately 10%, and 21 belated disclosures increased the severe violence rates. Smith defined *prevalence* as the percentage of women who ever reported having been physically abused.

On top of giving respondents more opportunities to disclose events, including those not listed in quantitative questions, supplementary open-ended questions like this one used in the CQLS help build researcher-respondent rapport (Pritchard et al., 2018; Smith, 1994):

> We really appreciate the time you have taken to complete this survey. And, we'd like to assure you that everything you told us will remain *strictly anonymous*.

> We realize the topics covered in this survey are sensitive and that many students are reluctant to talk about their own campus experiences. But we're also a bit worried that we haven't asked the right questions.

> So now that you have had a chance to think about the topics covered in this survey, would you like to provide us with any additional information about the quality of life on this campus? If so, please use the box below.

> Like the rest of your responses to this survey, any information you provide is anonymous and will only be reported grouped with other comments.

Thirteen percent of the 5,718 respondents answered the question. We did not anticipate many comments reflecting aggrieved entitlement, but this was not the case. In fact, 44 participants provided narratives indicative of this problem and the rich qualitative data presented in the next section added much texture and context to the statistical data reported earlier.

Research team members started the work described here by first carefully and separately reading all the responses to the above question, which was time consuming. Then, during several meetings, all team members revealed seeing evidence of aggrieved entitlement, which again, was not anticipated. A decision was thus made to revisit all the responses and to select narratives that (1) deny high rates of female sexual victimization and make claims of false accusations and (2) that reflect anger at, or disdain for, women, ethnic and sexual minorities, and campus diversity, equity and inclusion policies. As well, narratives provided by people who saw or heard things indicative of aggrieved entitlement were chosen. The 18 narratives included in this article are from different people and the demographic characteristics of the 44 respondents are presented in Table 2. Fifty percent are male, 38.6% are female, and the vast majority are white (86.3%) and heterosexual (86.3%).

RESULTS

Kimmel (2013) found that conservative men's rights organizations are prime examples of groups experiencing aggrieved entitlement. They, like the students at our research site, are predominantly white and this white male respondent's voice is arguably the best prelude for the presentation of subsequent student narratives:

> I firmly believe that white males are not being able to express their problems. This is a large population on this campus and while women, colored, and foreign students' problems are being handled, the white males are being portrayed as the "bad guy" and not given the help everyone else is receiving. White males have problems too!

One of the main strategies angry white men repeatedly use to deal with "their problems" is claim that they are the "real victims" and that rates of male-to-female sexual assault are greatly exaggerated (DeKeseredy et al., 2015). This is one of the main themes found in our qualitative data. A white, heterosexual, male undergraduate vividly highlights a variation of this theme, which was found in 18 narratives:

> This survey will undoubtedly be used to show that white men are bad and don't have any of the bad experiences that "people of color" or refrigerator gendered people face… Furthermore, the school police should not handle sexual assault cases. This is to be handled by actual law enforcement not connected to the school. That way there isn't any bias. If one did occur and the perpetrator is found guilty, the school should take whatever action it deems necessary. But we live in country of innocent until proven guilty. The university should at least act like it. But, because I have checked "white" and "male" in your survey, none of this matters to you.

Respondents who were members of fraternities echoed the above respondent's words. This man said:

> Teachers treat Greek life male students unfairly and the school could care less. Just because you wear Greek letters does not mean you can be diminished and treated unfairly at school. The fact a teacher I had pointed at me and blamed me for being a part of the rape culture at this school is out of line. But what am I supposed to do? Tell the school when they will laugh at me so I did nothing and felt uncomfortable talking to the teacher or being in class.

A similar male student adds:

> I would be greatly happy if this school would stop perpetuating the "rape culture" meme. There is no rape culture, and faulty statistics are used when talking about sexual assault. It is nowhere the epidemic academia has made it out to be. Rape is bad, yes, and should be punished to the fullest extent of the law. This enthusiastic consent BS is a load of crap, though. Most of our language is not verbal anyway. It is very obvious if someone does not want to have sex. I think that the social justice warriors have gotten the better of us.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents Who Provided Evidence of Aggrieved Entitlement

STATUS	SAMPLE $N = 44$
Sex	
Male	22 (50%)
Female	17 (38.6%)
Did Not Identify	5 (11.3%)
Race/Ethnicity	
White	38 (86.3%)
Black	0 (0%)
Asian	3 (6.8%
Hispanic	3 (6.8%)
Sexual Orientations/Gender Identities	
Heterosexual	38 (86.3%)
Bisexual	2 (4.5%)
Pansexual	1 (2.2%)
Did Not Identify	3 (6.8%)

It is not only white, heterosexual males who hold the above views. Some white, heterosexual women's responses mirror or echo the words of angry white men. This one's response to our open-ended question is a prime example:

> When discussing "sexual misconduct" and the reporting such a case, I (as a woman) feel like it is easy for young men to become targets of such allegations and young women on campus are not equally held responsible. For instance, the mandatory "alcohol edu" course has largely blamed young men for "sexual misconduct" in scenarios such as "drunken hookups," which are labelled as rape if regretted later. In one instance, it is clearly taught that if a female and male have sex while drunk, the male is at fault even though NEITHER could "properly consent." These scenarios are admonish-able as they demonize young men on campus. I have also seen many flyers stating the very inaccurate statistic that 1 in 4 women on campus are raped. This simply isn't true and has been proven so many times.

She is not a lone voice in the U.S. Many other women across the country sharply oppose the efforts of feminists and declare that they significantly exaggerate male patriarchal practices and discourses, censor "reasonable behavior," and demand "special rights" beyond those of men (Marwick, 2013). Affiliates of *Women Against Feminism* (WAF) are highly visible examples of antifeminist women. In the summer of 2014, they created a Tumblr page, a Twitter hashtag, and campaigns on Facebook, YouTube, and other social media in response to #YesAllWomen and to the Who Needs Feminism campaign. WAF has since greatly increased in size and primarily involves mainly white, college-aged women posting pictures of themselves holding up handmade placards stating why they oppose feminism. Most posts begin with "I don't need feminism because" followed by their reasons. Based on analyses of data gathered from a content analysis of WAF Tumblr postings, DeKeseredy et al. (2015) assert that the WAF social media campaign

not only helps fuel men's aggrieved entitlement, but like Internet-linked men's rights groups, also buttresses rape myths and the claim that women are as violent as men in intimate relationships (Laidler & Mann, 2008; Mann, 2008). Unfortunately, the language and vocabulary for rape myth justification is available to men in many different parts of society. Below is another white female student's statement that is in line with the goals of WAF:

> There needs to be a focus on sexism toward males too. Men get discriminated against as much as females but aren't as apt to reporting it. That doesn't mean it doesn't happen, though.

Her voice and similar narratives provide three key services to angry white men. First, they give many women a false sense of safety. Second, they make thousands of women who are abused by men on a daily basis invisible. Additionally, they buttress attempts to deny the existence of a dominant rape culture and "the cultural normalcy" of male-to-female violence in private places (DeKeseredy et al., 2015; Meloy & Miller, 2011). Further, from a radical feminist theoretical and political standpoint,[1] the female students who support the notion of "men as victims" are *exonerators*. In other words, they are apologists for the patriarchal status quo, exonerate men who oppress them and other women, and turn women against each other (Daly, 1978; DeKeseredy, DeKeseredy, & DeKeseredy, in press; Dines, 2017).

Radical feminists argue that the most important set of social relations in any society is found in *patriarchy* and that, throughout the world, females are the most oppressed social group while, regardless of their race/ethnicity and social class, men always have more power and privilege. The main causes of gender-inequality identified by radical feminists are: (1) the needs or desires of men to control women's sexuality and reproductive potential and (2) patriarchy (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 1996; Renzetti, 2018).

It should be emphasized, nonetheless, that the number of female students in our sample who have views similar to the above women's ($n = 4$) is much smaller than the amount who provided evidence of campus-based male aggrieved entitlement and a rape-culture. This 22-year-old, heterosexual, Hispanic woman is one of 15 such respondents:

> Sexual assault and domestic violence occurs among all student populations, but I believe there is an unprecedented amount going on amongst social fraternity members. It has become a culture among the men of social fraternities to lack any respect for women and to take advantage of females without their consent. This is a personal opinion from personal experience.

Male entitlement is also expressed by this woman:

I feel a HUGE issue with males on this campus is their sense of entitlement to the females' bodies. I have lost count of the number of times I have had my butt grabbed by males I have never spoken to. Catcalling is huge downtown. I have had a man whisper in my ear he was going to rape me and had countless comments telling me to smile, that I looked good or about my boobs bouncing while I walked. I have had strangers make jokes to me saying that they knew me and when I said I didn't recall they said it was because they drugged me.

Though in the minority (*n* =3), a few white, heterosexual men in the sample concurred. This one said:

> I've witnessed many situations in which males have been physically or sexually aggressive under the influence of alcohol. Furthermore, this is what happens and is accepted as "the way things are."

This man more directly speaks to the issue of aggrieved entitlement:

> I also believe that sexual misconduct stems in part from an increasingly individualistic culture in which isolated (usually white) males think that they are entitled to something (respect, love, sex?) from women and, as a consequence, engage in stalking, date rape, and other similar misconduct to "get back" when they don't feel that they got what they "deserved."

One more progressive white male student's voice is worth repeating here:

> It also seems that I usually overhear sexist and objectifying comments from young, seemingly middle-class, affluent, white males. Some of the things I've overheard are abhorrent. The most disturbing thing is the frequency of comments describing women as objects primarily for sex and ownership.

Angry white men, including those who are college students, blame members of LGBTQ and/or certain ethnic communities for their "problems" (Kimmel, 2017). Eleven male narratives illustrate this theme and below is one example:

> All I can say is kids on this campus need to stop being pussies and stick up for themselves instead of tattling. Snitches deserve whatever they get for being babies. This school is sheltering these kids too much and it's wasting the resources. If they can't handle living at college, and getting a taste of what the world is like, they should go back home to suckle of mommy and daddy's teats. These "special snowflakes" should receive no special accommodations and should accept and prepare for the harassment and ridicule that comes with rainbow hair or the flaunting of how gay you are.

In the view of another respondent:

> Gender identity people are getting too many special privileges that they will not get in the real world and they're being coddled and will not be prepared for life outside of academia.

Eminent African-American scholar Cornell West (2001) directs us to the fact that "race matters." Additionally, he notes, "our truncated public discussions of race… fail to confront the complexity of the issue in a candid and critical manner" (p. 4). Race also matters to some of our respondents, but the discussion they would like is fundamentally distinct from that sought by West. Ponder this male student's perception of his school:

> This university is becoming increasingly discriminatory to people who do not fit into the category of "minority." Straight, white, Christians are very frequently silenced in

conversations about any type of social issue, especially men. This university fosters a hostile environment to those who hold conservative principles and are often told their worldview is wrong or bigoted even in classrooms.

This white male student offers a similar observation at the end of his narrative:

I have found with programs and studies like these that often time the obvious is left unspoken, such as how are the groups just talked about racist towards other groups. I have found several ethnic backgrounds to be more racist and more read to be loud and pull the race card without hesitation to almost any circumstance regardless of the actual situation or happenings… Just because some populations, such as white men, are not constantly begging for attention, their situations are often dismissed. I would like to see more studies on this matter.

At the time of writing this article in late September 2018, Judge Brett Kavanaugh was being considered for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court and during the confirmation hearing process, Palo Alto University psychologist Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and two other women accused him of sexual assault. These allegations jeopardized his nomination and thousands of people, including some members of Senate Judiciary Committee, claimed these women made false accusations. Declarations of false accusations and "the rights of the accused" are certainly not new and have been repeatedly stated on college campuses for decades even though less than 2% of campus rapes reported to the police are false allegations. Not surprisingly, then, false accusations and the rights of the accused are two salient themes that materialized from 10 respondents' narratives.

Several statements, such as this one, stand out:

As a native straight white, male, honors student, I feel at risk for prosecution over assault. I am concerned that our society would be more willing to punish me if there were false claims against me. Because the victims… are heavily favored. I worry that an accusation would be enough to ruin my future… I think those who make false accusations should be punished….

Others had similar views, including this male student who said:

Especially in cases of sexual assault/rape, I believe that the University is biased. When a woman reports that she was sexually assaulted by a male, the male is already seen as guilty before any evidence that shows that he actually did in fact commit the crime. Males are "guilty until proven innocent." I have a male friend who was wrongly accused of sexual assault/rape by his ex-girlfriend… His ex-girlfriend is a person who seeks attention and will do so anyway she can get it, including lying about being raped. At first, it all started as physical abuse, and as the case went along, it increased to rape. Before this event, I did not know a person that is that delusional to lie about being sexually assaulted, but I am very surprised. Now, I am not saying that all women are lying to get attention because this is not the case at all. I just know that in this particular case, this girl was lying to get attention. Just wanted to throw it out there.

Like females involved with the WAF social media movement, some female respondents concurred with the above statements. This woman, for example, stated:

> The issue is that the school is TOO nice to the person who reports and therefore is biased towards that person. I had an issue this year where a friend of mine was falsely accused of attempting sexual assault, but because he is a guy and the girl made the report, they were biased towards her and he ended up leaving the school.

Another white, heterosexual woman recommend that the school should "Be sure the people claiming they were raped aren't making up stories to hide their regret. Don't ruin student lives because they were accused falsely of rape." Women's claims like these are not rare and there is a literature showing that women can be hostilely sexist toward other women and police traditional gender norms (DeKeseredy et al., 2015; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Sibley, Overall, & Duckitt, 2007). Moreover, today, many younger female members of the general population find value in pornography, despite its sexist, racist, and violent content. Actually, viewing pornography, particularly on secular college campuses, is now a common experience for female undergraduate students (DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2016; Foubert, 2017). This is due, in large part, to what Dines (2010) coins as "internalizing porn ideology, an ideology that often masquerades as advice on how to be hot, rebellious and cool in order to attract (and hopefully keep) a man." Related to this problem is that scores of young women, especially North American female undergraduates (DeKeseredy, DeKeseredy, & DeKeseredy, in press), accuse anti-porn feminists like Dines of "denying them the free choice to embrace our hypersexualized porn culture" since as "rising members of the next generation's elite," they see "no limits or constraints on them as women" (p. 100).

It should also be noted in passing that some administrators around the U.S. contend that studies finding high rates of campus sexual assault are flawed and, at best, reveal high rates of "regretted sex" (DeKeseredy, 2011; DeKeseredy & Flack, 2007). As demonstrated by the aforementioned events surrounding Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation (which took place two years after the survey was administered) and narratives included in this article, there is still a major anti-feminist backlash against efforts to curb sexual assault and to hold men who engage in this behavior accountable for their actions.

DISCUSSION

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first exploratory study to uncover in-depth qualitative data on aggrieved entitlement on the college campus. The results strongly suggest that many male college students, at least at our research site, feel "stiffed" (Faludi, 1999) despite being in privileged positions. Focusing on these men and the women who support them is what also makes this study unique because most of the previous studies of aggrieved entitlement and similar factors focused heavily on adult, working-class people who were not in college and on young men in extremist groups (e.g., Hochschild, 2016; Kimmel, 2013, 2018). It seems, then, that white male aggrieved entitlement is not restricted to a particular age group or social class and it appears that it also entails promoting rape myths and denying the existence of alarmingly high rates of sexual assault on college campuses like the one uncovered at our research site (34%). Further, the exploratory data reported here suggest that aggrieved entitlement may, in addition to other key risk factors (e.g., alcohol and pro-abuse peer support), contribute to sexual

assault, hate-crime and bias incidents, and other violent behaviors that plague campus communities. Still, at this point in time, the strength of the association is unclear. What we definitely do know, however, is that like the men studied by Kimmel (2013), the bulk of the CQLS male respondents who revealed evidence of experiencing aggrieved entitlement are not supportive of progressive efforts aimed at making communities safer and more equitable for women, sexual minorities, and ethnic minorities.

Still, it may seem painfully obvious, but worth stating nonetheless: more research is necessary. Future studies, too, should involve the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. For example, the concept of aggrieved entitlement needs to be operationalized and included in representative sample surveys to determine the extent, distribution, and key sources of its presence on college campuses. Observational procedures and in-depth interviews are also necessary. Ideally, researchers should strive for *data triangulation* and use several different methods to study aggrieved entitlement in institutions of higher learning and elsewhere (Denzin, 2017).

Likewise, much theoretical work is needed. Why do white male college students experience aggrieved entitlement? We can easily speculate here, but research specifically designed to answer this question will help develop a richer theoretical understanding of college white men's anger and tell us more about why many white college women help fuel male aggrieved entitlement. It is also necessary to focus on patriarchal and racist discourses that exist in mixed-sex peer groups. For example, a few campus surveys found that women in some of these groups contribute to their male friends' sexual assaults on women and their belief that their hurtful behaviors and patriarchal attitudes are regularized parts of campus life (DeKeseredy, Hall-Sanchez, & Nolan, 2018; Gwartney-Gibbs & Stockard, 1989).

In the words of Kurt Lewin (1951), the founder of modern social psychology, "There is nothing so practical as good theory" (p. 169). Surely, to both prevent experiencing aggrieved entitlement and its negative consequences, good theories can lead to the development of effective policies and prevention initiatives. So far, there are few answers to the question "What is to be done about male aggrieved entitlement?" DeKeseredy (2019) and Kimmel (2013) offer some, but like the bulk of the earlier research on aggrieved entitlement, their solutions do not focus squarely on college males and the women who support them. Yet, we must also continually recognize that much of what is good in the world is produced by college males and other men (Bowker, 1998). What is more, every day we see and hear of more men engaging in counterhegemonic practices. We could definitely use a few more of them (Katz, 2006).

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ETHICALLY REPRESENTING DRUG USE: PHOTOGRAPHS AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH WITH PEOPLE WHO USE METHAMPHETAMINE

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Abstract

The use of photographs in criminological research can be an important tool for both collecting data and illustrating findings. When used in published research, photographs can aid in viewers connecting with the subject matter and the participants. However, photographs can also reify and reinforce cultural stereotypes. We believe that the potential damage done by including photographs can be mitigated when the photographs are properly contextualized. Our aim here is to argue for the value of contextualized photographs in research with those who engage in crime or deviance. We illustrate how by including the stories of participants and ourselves we can complicate cultural narratives and act as counter-visuals for stigmatized images found in the media.

Keywords: Visual methods, photo elicitation, photo documentary, counter-visual

INTRODUCTION

The expansive use of methamphetamine (meth) across the United States has led to increased cultural anxiety about the drug and those who consume it. The general narrative of meth use, which highlights its destruction on people's lives, has been heavily influenced by popular television programs and pervasive anti-meth visual campaigns (Linnemann, Hanson, & Williams, 2013; Linnemann & Wall, 2013). Such narratives cast people who use meth as primarily poor Whites who hail from rural areas in the American South and West. Their lives are portrayed to be chaotic and their behavior is assumed to be unpredictably violent. Chronic meth use is thought to have brought about serious changes in users' personalities (becoming increasingly obsessive and paranoid) and to have damaged irreparably their physical appearance (e.g., excessive weight loss, decaying teeth, and open sores). Undoubtedly, the public's perceptions of how those who use meth look (i.e., the "faces of meth") are strongly influenced by the graphic images that are prevalent in media (Linnemann & Wall, 2013).

While there are certainly deleterious effects of meth use and the stereotypes often ring true, existing narratives and imagery fall short of describing the more complex, and contradictory, realities of people's lives. Indeed, people are complex. Even those who use meth

daily are more than the stigmatized monsters portrayed in media (Boeri, 2013; Marsh, Copes, & Linnemann, 2017). They can be caring mothers, dedicated friends, and sympathetic listeners. But these sides to them are easy to ignore or brush aside when confronted with images of them on their worst days (e.g., mugshots). While we do not wish to romanticize those who use meth, we do think it is important to see them as the complex people they are. With this in mind, we engaged in a photo-ethnography of people who use meth in rural Alabama with a larger goal of acting as a counter-narrative and counter-visual to these general perceptions. Our aim was to go beyond presenting mere visuals and instead explicate the meaning of these visuals to produce and present contextualized, representative images of people who use meth. Our aim for the project was to understand how people who use meth in rural Alabama make sense of their lives and navigate their drug use within the context of rural poverty. To depict the worlds of those who use meth, we documented their stories through interviews and observations and illustrate aspects of their lives through photographs (including photographs we took and photographs they contributed)

Although we learned a great deal through using traditional ethnographic methods, we discovered that the photographs were valuable tools for eliciting responses and aiding in relaying participants stories (see Copes et al., 2018). The photographs helped us represent participants in ways text alone could not (Barthes, 1978). We found that the inclusion of photographs in our academic publishing and presentations aided in drawing audiences into the lives of the participants. With the photographs, our work was no longer purely abstract. Indeed, the photographs helped bring to life the multi-layered experiential reality of participants' lives—in both narrative and visual form. In a field like criminology where researchers may be becoming increasingly detached from their subject matter, we believe that this connection with participants is much needed.[1]

While we found significant value in using photographs for the project, we were subject to criticism from some academics. People questioned the participants' abilities to give consent for photographs, which we believe is a paternalistic belief that implies those who use drugs are incapable of having agency. However, some criticisms questioned our larger aim of acting as a counter-visual. Specifically, the inclusion of the images was interpreted by some as being "poverty porn." At one academic presentation, a member in the audience said he felt like he was watching Jerry Springer. Another accused us of being unsympathetic to our participants. This last comment was most troubling as it was a direct attack on our research aims. Although we were surprised that some responded so negatively to the images, these early criticisms did cause us to think more about how we *were* representing people and how we *should* be representing them. We recognize that these criticisms came when we gave a presentation where we only included photographs. While we shared some stories, largely absent was their voices. In short, the photographs were decontextualized.

Decontextualized photographs can reinforce negative cultural stereotypes (Becker, 2007). When people are presented photos without context, they bring their own narratives and assumptions into interpreting them (Barthes, 1972). As such, it is not always possible to control how others interpret photographs, especially when the images depict politically and morally charged topics (Ferrell and Van de Voorde, 2010). Including photographs in research has the potential to harm participants in predictable and unpredictable ways; therefore, we must take care

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[1] Ethnographic work within criminology is a clear exception to this general detachment.

when doing so. We believe that by contextualizing the photographs with the stories and words of participants as well as our own analysis we can reduce the chances of misrepresenting them. Our aim with the current paper is to illustrate the value of photographs for representing those we study and to show how, by properly contextualizing the photographs, we can avoid reifying or validating stigma. Our focus is on how to represent people in a way that is true to their experiences, as well as our own, and to do so in a way that is neither overly romantic nor unduly critical. We believe this can be done by providing context (through our own stories and those of the participants) to photographs included in the final products.

CONTEXTUALIZING OUR PHOTOGRAPHS AND DATA

The photo-ethnography began in the summer of 2015 and lasted for approximately 18 months. All researcher-driven photographs were taken by documentary photographer Jared Ragland.[2] Data collection consisted of formal interviews (with 52 participants), informal observations, and photography (of 29 participants). All participants were actively using meth and were living in rural, north Alabama at the time of the interviews; however, some did stop using over of the course of the project. To locate participants, we relied on a primary recruiter and on snowball sampling. The interviews took place at the recruiter's home, participants' homes, public parks, or other private areas (participants decided where they would like to meet for the interview). The researchers also relied on snowball sampling to extend the sample beyond the initial recruiter's social networks. After the initial interview with a participant, the researchers asked if they could refer others to move beyond the initial recruiter's network. We took photographs of participants (with their consent) and asked some participants to send photographs that they themselves had taken. Twenty-nine participants agreed to being photographed. Only five chose to send photographs.

While we draw on insights gained from our experiences from the project as a whole, here we focus on the photographs taken of and by one participant—Alice[3]—to illustrate the value of using contextualized photographs for representing participants. When we first met Alice, she was a 21-year-old woman who was daily using meth intravenously. Alice was a part of the project for over one year. During this time we visited her two or three days a week for four months and had monthly visits and consistent, regular contact through texting and social media for the other months.

In the time that we have known her, Alice's drug use, relationships, employment, and housing changed regularly. During this period she has lived at several locations, including an isolated trailer with an older man named Chico, a trailer park known for chronic drug use and sales, a "dope house" where she helped to take care of the house, Bruce's (her boyfriend) house where she made a home and helped care for his two children and younger brother, and finally to her own place that she rented with Bruce. She has gone from being alienated from most of her family and separated from her daughter to spending time with them regularly and having weekend visitation rights with her daughter. We have seen Alice's meth use patterns change from daily use to not using for months at a time. At the time of this writing Alice has abstained

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[2] More photographs from the project can be found at https://jaredragland.com/good-bad-people
[3] All names included are aliases. We gave participants the power to choose their own aliases to give them a sense of agency in the project (Burgess-Proctor, 2015).

from using meth for eighteen months and has passed several voluntary drug tests, including random ones for a new job.

We conducted fifteen formal interviews with Alice (six were photo-elicitation interviews) and had dozens of informal interactions and conversations with her.[4] We audio-recorded all of the formal interviews with her. These interviews were semi-structured and focused on themes such as her background, relationships with her family, losing custody of her daughter, and her future aspirations. The photo-elicitation interviews focused on her reflections and interpretations of the photographs we took of her and of those she provided to us. For each of these interviews we prepared a photo interview kit (Cappello, 2005; Epstein et al., 2006), which included a series of pre-selected photographs. We showed the photographs to Alice on an iPad for convenience and portability.

We asked Alice to send us images. We began by giving her loosely defined requests, such as: "take photographs of things that make you happy or sad," "of triggers to use as they arise," and "of things that make it hard to quit." Eventually, she began sending images that were not related to requests (photographs and screenshots of Facebook or text messaging from people in her life). Some of these images were of emotional times (pregnancy and fertility concerns, online verbal abuse from men, or unexpected positive messages from family members), while others seemed more mundane (food she cooked, closets she cleaned, and places she worked). Most of the images she sent to us were unrelated to the requests and instead detailed things that Alice thought significant to send us. These images included naturally occurring situations (e.g., an image of precursor ingredients to cook meth that she found in her mother's washing machine) and posed photographs (e.g., self-portraits that reflected her current mood). These images were sent to either the lead author or the second author through texts, Snapchat, or Facebook messages (often to both via a group message). In addition, she would frequently show us photographs during our visits. When this happened, we would talk to her about what they meant to her and, if important to her, asked if she would electronically send them to us later. Sometimes she would send photos through text and we would ask questions about them through texting. In summary, the manner and frequency with which images were sent developed organically as we became more familiar with each other and the project progressed. Over the course of the project Alice sent us over 100 photographs or images.

REPRESENTING ALICE THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS

A strength of using photographs in research is that they allow for multi-dimensional visual representations of participants, typically absent from the public's reach. Photographs are valuable tools for collecting data, but they can also be used in published products to show aspects of people's everyday lives not possible with just written words (see Agee & Evans, 1941). These representations can be chosen by the researchers or by the participants (Collier & Collier, 1986). A danger of introducing photographs into the final products of research is that we can represent participants in ways they may not like or ways that reproduce stigma. For example, few of the photographs Jared took included smiling faces and self-aware poses: The types of

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[4] After the project was complete we remained in contact with Alice as she became a recruiter for another project. About six months after our final formal interview with her she sent a message that included two photographs she took of herself six months apart and said, "I feel like we should talk about the differences." We then met with her again to talk about how she believed she had changed over this time.

photographs people want to post on Facebook or Instagram or hang on their walls. Rather, the photographs captured the daily lives of participants and those around them, including times of stress and fatigue as well as the mundanity of daily life. Therefore, it would be easy to only include decontextualized photographs that reify the stigma of meth use (Becker, 2007). Image 1 easily fits the stereotype of the dysfunctional meth user who has succumbed to the drug that is found in many anti-meth campaigns (Marsh et al., 2017). In fact, this is an image Alice does not like for this reason. However, if contextualized adequately, this photograph acts as a form of "visual resistance" (David, 2007, p.251) to the stereotypes because it rejects a one-dimensional depiction and instead illustrates her sadness and struggles with overcoming the drug, but also her resilience. It illustrates her low point from which she rose. The accompanying story also highlights the despair and feelings of abandonment she felt, which provides more context to her representation.

Image 1. Alice feeling blurry. Photo by Jared Ragland.

The night the photograph was taken Alice had agreed to meet us, but when we arrived she stopped replying to texts and was not where she asked us to meet her. As we were about to leave, she replied and told us she was nearby and that she still wanted to meet. When we met her she looked upset. She said she was worried about meeting us because she thought we would be disappointed by her recent relapse. She was wearing a long sleeve flannel shirt despite it being late July in Alabama and quite warm even at night. During an interview several months after the photograph was taken we showed her the image and asked, "Does this picture reflect who you are?" She said:

Alice: Yeah, actually [that night] was kind of blurry, it was kind of how my brain was.

Heith: Who are you here in this picture?

Alice: Lost, not sure what to do, where to go, who to turn to, who to trust, what's real and what's not. … You can obviously tell when I am high, I'm sure. I knew that y'all would know, so I felt bad for getting high because I knew y'all wanted to see me get better

Heith: Of course we do.

Alice: But nobody else did, I didn't even really care. I just wanted my daughter and couldn't have her then, couldn't have her tomorrow, or next week even probably, so just do something to make me feel a little bit better until I get there. Then I realized I'm lost, how am I gonna get there if I keep doing this?

This image captures a difficult moment in Alice's life. Just the week before her boyfriend at the time, Ryan, was arrested, she was forced to move, she had relapsed, and she felt detached and alienated from her family. This led to her staying with a group of people who she did not fully trust. This photo represents the struggle she was experiencing with drug use. Alice, like many of those who use meth, struggled with the desire to quit but also the fear of doing so. Meth was both a cause of her loneliness and a means of coping with it. Feelings of being alone and without help were common among those with whom we spoke. They believed they had no help from those around them or from the state. Indeed, government resources for treatment were indeed scarce where our participants lived.

Much photojournalistic research on those who use drugs in rural areas highlights the poverty of their lives. It is common to see trailers, tattered clothes, and other symbols of economic distress in these collections. This has led to the criticism that photojournalism may be responsible for the publics' perceptions of those who use drugs vis-à-vis poverty porn. Image 2 fits the trope of the rural, White meth user living in squalor. The trailer was owned by Chico, and Alice lived there for several months after she and Ryan were on the run from their families and the law. Ryan was eventually arrested for passing counterfeit money and, with nowhere else to go, Alice stayed with Chico. To antagonize local police, Chico had painted the outside of the trailer with anarchy symbols and swastikas. He flew a confederate flag above a tattered, upside down American flag. The inside of the trailer was messy and in a constant need of repair. The room Alice is sitting in was a bedroom that she claimed for herself. It was messy and over-packed with belongings making it hard to navigate.

It is easy to view this image as representing rural poverty. However, Alice spoke fondly of this room. It was a place for her to escape the hectic and chaotic world of those who came in and out of the trailer to buy, sell, and use meth. When asked her thoughts about this photo, Alice had positive things to say. For her it did not reflect the poverty she was living in or the stereotype of the rural user. Rather, it reminded her of sitting in front of a large bay window reading a book. As she said, "I loved that window. I've always wanted a bay window, where I could sit and read in it—kinda like I was in a movie or something. … It would be the escape to get outta the dark." It was a place she could read, write, or simply be alone. It was a place of solitude where she could retain a sense of self. In a home that was often characterized by chaos, this was a place she created for herself. It was a place where she could escape the din of people tweaking, televisions running in the background, and the frequent chatter of people coming and going from the home.

Image 2. Alice's window. Photo by Jared Ragland.

Choosing photographs to represent participants can be difficult, perhaps even more difficult than selecting appropriate quotes from interviews (Copes et al., 2018). As researchers it is our job to synthesize the totality of the findings, analyze them, and interpret them. At times this means including photographs that the participants may not like because of the way they look or the symbols present in them. If we do not include such photographs when appropriate, we risk romanticizing those we study by only including the positive aspects of their lives. Accordingly, it is reasonable for researchers to have different views on the ways to represent participants. Image 3 is an image that we believe represents Alice, but one that she does not like. We believe this image represents a key component to Alice's identity, and one that she often overlooked—her resiliency and good-natured spirit.

Image 3 was taken while Alice was staying with Ryan and several other friends in a trailer park known for widespread meth use. At the time she and Ryan had no place to live and moved into the trailer to help get back on their feet, even though they recognized the risk of living so close to people selling meth while they attempted to stop using. At this same time Chico was determined to use violence to get back at Alice for leaving him and Ryan for calling the police on him. Alice also believed she may have been pregnant (she was not) and knew that Ryan (the potential father) was being unfaithful. Despite the turmoil going on around her, she was able to find and create joy throughout her daily life. This remained true throughout our time with Alice. When we showed her this picture her initial response was that she did not like it because she was not wearing makeup. She said she usually wears makeup but at that time she did not have any because "it was all burnt by Chico." She went on to say, "I've never really thought of all the bad stuff that's going on around me. I know it's been chaotic. I wouldn't really call any of it bad because I did it to myself … so it's my own fault that I have to deal with it." Like image 2, this photograph could be seen as highlighting rural poverty at the expense of the

humanity of the participants. But we believe the story that goes with it highlights a positive trait of Alice and others in her situation—the ability to find joy despite the harsh conditions of her surroundings.

Image 3. Alice happy in trailer. Photo by Jared Ragland.

When we take and use photographs in research with those who use drugs, we have significant power in shaping how people "see" participants. It is important to be aware of this power so that we minimize the replication of stereotypes and direct audiences into a preferred reading that seeks to unravel cultural assumptions embedded in the image (Barthes, 1972; Campbell, 2010). One way to disrupt the power imbalances inherent in research and to empower those we study is to allow participants to choose photographs that they believe represent them. Rather than relying on how others perceive them (in this case researchers), participants can actively engage in their own representation by "directing our gaze" towards photographs of their choosing (Frohmann, 2005). With this in mind, we asked Alice to send photographs that she believed represented aspects of her experiences. One photograph she sent during her most active using period was a self-portrait of her looking down at a mirror. On the mirror was a line of methamphetamine (mixed with Adderall), a razor, and the words, "I love you" written on it (see image 4). When we asked her later, during a period when she was not using meth, why this reflected her she replied:

> Because that was really all I was interested in and I had a thing with razor blades and mirrors to put on my make-up and I'd written "I love you," because in the back of my mind—which it's under everything in the back of my mind you know—I still love Dinah [my daughter].

Image 4. Alice self-portrait with daughter on her mind.

Alice took this self-portrait when she was using meth intravenously daily—a period she described as her worst in terms of the amount and frequency with which she used. At the time, the image reflected the aspects of her life that took precedent over all other things—drugs and self-injury. While she was using meth to blunt the emotional pain of losing custody of her daughter and from being alienated from her family, she focused on the love of her daughter to hold onto the goodness in her life. She said that her love for her daughter (and herself) was hidden symbolically by the drugs on the mirror and in real life. Thus, she saw herself as someone who was doing the wrong thing but was still a good person and a loving mother. Again, without this accompanying narrative the photograph could be further reinforcement that the lives of those who use meth are consumed solely by the drug. The message "I love you" could be interpreted as referencing the drug and not herself or her daughter. Instead, her discussion of the photograph reinforces the idea that, while drugs were currently taking precedence in her life, she still believed that she had not fully lost herself or her love for others to the drug. For her, it was a reminder that she was not a dysfunctional user (Copes et al., 2016).

It is easy to portray Alice as a sympathetic character. Her initiation into meth was largely due to tragic events in her life, including sexual abuse that was ignored by her mother, who was also a chronic user of meth. But this is not her whole story, and if our goal is to show the complexity of participants it is equally important to show their conflicting realities. This includes those aspects of their lives that do resemble stigmatizing cultural narratives. Alice occasionally engaged in relationships with men as a means to get access to meth. During our interactions with her, Alice had several short-term, volatile relationships. These relationships were typically fraught with jealously and violence. Through Ragland's photographs and those Alice sent to us, these toxic relationship dynamics were portrayed repeatedly. It would be easy to include these photographs, demonstrating the stereotypical meth-fueled relationships that are depicted in anti-

meth advertisements. But other less stereotypical photographs show a different version of this same story.

Image 5. Alice and Ryan hand in hand. Photo by Jared Ragland.

Image 5 shows Alice and Ryan walking hand in hand, each carrying a bag of items from a discount store. Ryan had been released from jail and had nothing—no clothing apart from the ones on his back, no personal hygiene products, and no personal identifying cards. We went with them to the store as they shopped to replace some of these items. Later, when we asked Alice about this photo, she reflected on how meth changed their relationship:

Alice: We are together, carrying the same amount of weight. It's not one more than the other because he's a guy and I'm a girl, we're equal.

Heith: Ah, I hadn't thought of that. Is that something that would be ideal?

Alice: That's all I have ever wanted, equality.

Heith: Does that mean you usually don't have equality?

Alice: Nope.

Heith: How does it go?

Alice: Well before this picture, before he went to jail, before all that. When we first got together, I had a job and then he had a job, so we both had a job, then he lost his job and I got a second job. He smoked spice and helped take care of Dinah, so I worked two jobs, and he helped take care of her. He finally realized, 'Hey, I need to step up.' He got on at a BBQ Place, and then the drugs came in. Then he goes get the drugs, I couldn't ask anybody for it. Even when he couldn't find it and we wanted to go get some, I couldn't look around for it or nothing like that.

Heith: So once the drugs came in, he became more controlling and it was no longer equal, it was about him?

Alice: Pretty much. Every now and then he would make sure to take me out to eat or something, but that stopped pretty quick. Then it became about what he had to do, what he could do, what needed to be done for him to get more drugs whenever we ran out or whenever he ran out.

Eventually Alice and Ryan separated largely due to infidelity and emotional abuse. By choosing to include a photograph that shows apparent relationship harmony, we could risk overly sympathizing with the participants and ignoring the toxicity and violence present in many of her relationships. However, by contextualizing the photograph with the background of what was happening, along with Alice's narrative, we do not ignore the realities of her situation or Ryan's actions.

One way to ensure that participants are represented properly is by showing them the final products, including the photographs and the written manuscripts. Accordingly, we showed Alice the manuscripts that included photographs of her, including this one. We asked her if there were any photographs we included that she did not like. She commented that many of the photographs seemed to show her at her worst and many of the photographs were taken while she was high. She said, "I don't want people to think of me like that. I want them to know me as I am now, but for them to know who I am then they would have to see the other [photographs]." To Alice, many of these photographs were of a woman she no longer was, but she added that she understood why we included them and asked that we note that she has grown since then. In response to this we asked her to send another photo that she thought represented her now (at the time of this writing and over a year from the last interview). She picked an image that she originally posted on Facebook, holding her daughter during a supervised visitation. The caption read:

I live for moments like this. Yes, she may be asleep, but I'm getting to hold her. No fussing because she's a "big girl now". No running around with all the energy she took from me. No showing me how much she has grown, and how independent she is. I'm holding my baby again, and giving her all the love in the world!

This image and description reflected what Alice calls her singular purpose in life: to be a mother. We like it because it shows that not all images of those who use meth need to be gritty and sad. Recovery is possible.

As we have shown, the photographs of Alice that we include here (like others we have of participants) are polysemic and can therefore be interpreted in numerous ways (Barthes, 1972). The photographs can easily tell a story of people who are victims of circumstance, who have limited agency, and who are being pushed and pulled to drug use by structural factors beyond their control. We can include photographs that portray Alice as a lost, sad young woman deserving of compassion. The photographs can also be used to tell a story of people who have succumbed to drug use due to their own bad decisions and who are undeserving of sympathy. We can include photographs of Alice that portray her as a selfish user who chose to engage in self-destructive behavior, including prioritizing meth use and romantic relationships over maintaining custody of her daughter. Both are a real part of her story. It is because of the complexity of those who use drugs that it is easy to choose a narrative that fits one's political agenda. By properly contextualizing the photographs included in our research, we hope to

minimize the ability to misrepresent these images and to depict the "truth" as revealed by our data and analysis. However, we recognize that, despite these attempts, even the most "truthful" images are still only representations and not reproductions of reality (Sontag, 1977).

Image 6. Alice and Dinah reunited.

CONCLUSION

Much of what the public knows about those who use meth come from the visually striking anti-meth campaigns that stigmatize and demonize those who use the drug (Linnemann & Wall, 2013). One of the main goals of our photo-ethnography was to counter this one-dimensional image of people who use meth, to instead show the complexity and humanity of them. Using photographs gathered during our ethnographic research, we sought to portray more realistic and nuanced visualizations of people who use meth and their lives that could act as a counter-visual to the various anti-meth campaigns (Brown, 2014; Copes & Lunsford, 2017; Schept, 2014). Our hope is that people will interpret the photographs with a humanistic lens and see the humanity in those who use methamphetamine, which may ultimately aid in getting them resources to overcome their drug use.

The inclusion of photographs brings specific ethical issues that researchers must confront. Despite our larger aim of acting as a counter-visual to cultural narratives of those who use methamphetamine, we faced criticism from other criminologists. In early presentations of our work viewers raised numerous issues and levied harsh criticisms. Their complaints helped us see that we needed to take more care in contextualizing the photographs. We knew what we intended, but it was clear that not all had the same interpretations of the photographs as we did. Accordingly, we now contextualize the photographs in academic writings and presentations more thoroughly. We not only include the social and personal backgrounds of those under study to

make sense of the photographs, but we also discuss our intentions and emotional reasoning for including them. Additionally, when possible, we also provide the participant's reaction to the images we have chosen.

Photographs are useful tools for social science research because they evoke emotion. Not only do they bring out more visceral responses from participants (Harper, 2002) but they can jolt viewers and force them to confront their own biases and presumptions (Barthes, 1972). Viewers who experience discomfort from seeing the images may assume this means that we the researchers must be doing something wrong by showing the lived experiences of people who use meth. We argue that this is not the case. It is important to remember that, as with other fieldworkers, the role of the photographer in the field is to "illuminate the subject's view and to interpret the world as it appears to him" (Matza, 1969, p. 25). The presence of discomfort when viewing these images may force the viewer to confront his or her implicit biases. We ask the viewers who are concerned about the inclusion of photographs to think about why they feel this way.

Our experiences with people who used methamphetamine had profound impacts on our lives and worldviews (Copes, 2019). Our time in the field led us to form connections to people and to want to provide resources to them. While empowering participants is an important facet of the research process, it can also lead to researchers presenting participants in an overly positive light; to ignore faults and bad behaviors in favor of emphasizing the good. But, it is also possible to present them in ways that reinforce stereotypes and reify stigma. This is especially true when including photographs in the final products. Images have a way evoking emotion in ways that words cannot. Despite the additional ethical and practical considerations that visual methods entail, we believe that, with the right participants, photography can greatly enhance ethnographic work. While we were initially put off by the accusations of our presentation being similar to Jerry Springer, it did make us delve deeper into the ways we are representing our participants and to be more sensitive to how others may interpret the photographs. However, we recognize that it is not possible to control how others perceive the images we include. We can only be sincere in our representation of the people we study and hope that viewers interpret the images through the context we provide.

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IT'S DIRTY WORK BUT SOMEONE HAS TO DO IT: AN EXAMINATION OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICER TAINT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

Since the 1950s scholars have applied the term *dirty work* to occupations that society views as demoralizing or disgusting. Occupations are labeled as dirty when they require work which is physically, socially and/or morally tainted. Correctional officers experience pervasive levels of all three types of taint while working in a low prestige occupation. This article relies on ethnographic data to examine how occupational stigma management techniques are taught to new officers and what techniques are most prominent. The findings indicate that new officers are taught occupational ideologies regarding stigma management primarily through sense-making and storytelling. We find that officers manage stigma primarily through reframing their work.

Keywords: Correctional Staff; Dirty Work; Corrections; Correctional Management

INTRODUCTION

According to the most recent data, there are approximately 428,870 correctional officers working in American prisons and jails (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017). These officers are responsible for the safety and security of approximately 2.2 million inmates in a variety of federal, state, county, and municipal institutions (Kaeble & Cowhig 2018). One especially problematic occupational concept for correctional staff is the necessity of engaging in *dirty work* (Hughes 1994). Dirty work is conceptualized as including moral, social, or physical taint such that society views the work as disgusting or degrading (Hughes 1994.) An individual, whose job requires the performance of dirty work, is stigmatized by that work.

Dirty work requires members of an occupation to engage in some form of stigma management in order to protect their identity. The exigent literature has examined stigma management in regard to dirty work in a wide variety of professions including, home health workers, sex workers, nurses, funeral home directors, firefighters and garbage collectors (Bolton 2005; Cahill1996; Grandy & Mavin 2012). The research has also examined stigma management techniques for law enforcement agents (Dick 2005), private security officers (Lofstrand, Loftus, & Loader 2015), and federal law enforcement (Rivera 2015). The existing literature has examined a great deal of correctional officer perceptions on issue ranging from fear, to officer deviance, gender differences, work-family conflict, power dynamics, stress, and burnout among

other issues (Burdett, Gouliquer, & Poulin 2018; Garland 2004; Gordon & Baker 2017; Gordon & Stichman 2016; Lambert, Cluse-Toler, & Hogan 2007; Lambert, Minor, Wells, & Hogan, 2015; Worley & Worley 2016). However, to date there has been only minimal discussion that the author could find of stigma management among correctional officers (Tracy & Scott 2006; 2007).

Individuals in a given occupation tend to use the same or similar stigma management techniques. We argue that stigma management techniques are taught to new members through sense making activities; primarily storytelling. The current research in this area focuses solely on informal storytelling among occupational members. We find similar storytelling patterns, which communicate appropriate stigma management techniques, embedded in the formal training process. This is an addition to the existing research that expands our understanding of how stigma management is learned in tainted occupations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Nature of Dirty Work

Dirty work is a term first coined by Everett Hughes in 1951 (Hughes 1994). Hughes concluded that dirty work was work that society wanted done, but that most citizens were unwilling to do. In 1958, Hughes provided a definition of dirty work as, "occupational activities that are physically disgusting, that symbolize degradation, that wound the individual's dignity or that run counter to the more heroic conceptions of our moral compass" (Hughes 1958: 50). In 1971 Hughes simplified dirty work, saying that it was work that in some way is viewed as tainted, unpleasant, or undesirable (Hughes 1971). The idea of dirty work as tainted leads to two outcomes in the research; first a typology of dirty work focusing on the origin of taint, and second, the impact of stigma attached to dirty work.

Building on Hughes' concept of dirty work, Emerson and Pollner drafted a framework of three types of "taint" (Emerson & Pollner 1976). If an occupation falls into one of these three types, it is then deemed dirty work. The first level of taint involves work with garbage, sewage, bodily fluids, or other physical dirt, and is labeled physical taint (Emerson & Pollner 1976). The second level of taint involves work that requires a servile relationship to others or jobs that require frequent contact with stigmatized populations and is labeled social taint (Emerson & Pollner 1976). The final level of taint involves work regarded as "somewhat dubious of virtue or sinful," and is labeled moral taint (Ashforth & Kreiner 1999:415; Emerson & Pollner 1976).

Correctional officer work fits all three categories (Tracy & Scott 2006). Ashforth and Kreiner (2014) include correctional officers with garbage collectors, exotic dancers and street vendors as examples of dirty occupations. Despite the uniqueness of the work associated with each occupation, each is associated with various types of physical, social, and moral taint. The result is that each occupation is stigmatized by society, which views them as dangerous, immoral, demeaning, or contemptible (Ashforth & Kreiner 2014: 82).

Officers are asked to ensure that inmates do not attempt to hide contraband on or in their bodies by conducting strip searches after each visitation. Officers are also responsible for cleaning up any messes that are made by inmates, both literally and figuratively speaking.

Examples of such messes include inmates who swallow foreign objects, sexually abuse each other, trash their cells, throw food at officers, or play with feces (Tracy & Scott 2006). Such duties demonstrate the occupation is physically tainted.

Correctional officers acquire social taint by their interactions with inmates who are, arguably, the most stigmatized in society. Referred to as a contagion effect, criminal stigma "rubs onto" officers, and outsiders sometimes regard officers as being not so different from the population they control. This effect is prolonged because officers not only interact with the inmates, but often also serve as inmates' "glorified maids" (Tracy & Scott 2006).

Bittner argues that police officers are morally tainted because, "their very existence attests that the nobler aspirations of mankind do not contain the means necessary to ensure survival" (Bittner 1970:8). Correctional officers have the same impact of reminding society of its failures except on an even greater level. Correctional officers bear the burden of denying the most basic liberties from citizens.

In addition, the literature demonstrates a common occurrence of officers engaging in *boundary violations*; instances where they engage in inappropriate relationships with inmates (Worley & Worley 2016; Worley, Worley & Hsu 2018). The literature focuses on sexual relationships between staff and inmates despite moral and legal prohibitions against such relationships (Blackburn, Fowler, Mullings, & Marquart 2011; Dial & Worley 2008; Ross 2013). The literature also suggests that over half of staff sexual misconduct involves female officers, and that male offenders often encourage and initiate taboo sexual relationships (Blackburn et. al. 2011; Marquart, Barnhill, & Balshaw-Biddle 2001; Worley & Cheeseman 2006). The risk of moral taint from engaging in inappropriate relationships with offenders marks the occupation.

Due to the various forms of taint, individuals who conduct dirty work are often stigmatized by their occupation (Ashforth & Kriener 1999; Bittner 1970; Bolton 2005; Cahill 1996; Dick 2005). Goffman defined stigma as, "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (Goffman 1963:3). Once a stigma is attached to an individual they must develop a method of managing that stigma.

Stigma Management

Subsequent research into the stigma associated with dirty work has focused on techniques of stigma management; how do individuals deal with the stigma of their job? (Ackroyd & Crowdy 1990; Goffman 1963; Thompson, Harred, & Burks 2003; Thompson 1991; Tracy & Scott 2006). Depersonalization is a stigma management technique in which workers try to create social distance between themselves and the stigmatizing aspects of their job. Most correctional officers try to maintain a social distance from inmates to avoid "contamination" (Lombardo 1989; Conover 2001; Britton 2003). New officers are warned to keep a distance from and never trust inmates (Jacobs & Retsky 1980; Rhodes 2004; Crawley 2006). Social distance can never be fully achieved because officers must rely on inmates in varying degrees to maintain order (Liebling 2004; Sparks, Bottoms & Hay 1996). Social distancing from inmates is also difficult because officers generally share much in common with the inmates they supervise (Jacobs 1978; Jacobs & Retsky 1980; Morris & Morris 1980; Poole & Regoli 1981; Worley, Marquart &

Mullings 2003). Despite these challenges, depersonalization remains the primary stigma management technique in the exigent literature.

A number of other occupational stigma management techniques have been identified, most prominently in the seminal work of Ashforth and Kriener. These authors point toward the development of occupational ideologies to reframe, recalibrate, or refocus the meaning of the *dirty work* that employees of stigmatized occupations must do to successfully perform their duties (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark & Fugate 2007).

Reframing an occupation instills the work with positive value that overpowers the negative value (Ashforth et al. 2007). For example, a firefighter may cope with occupational taint by recognizing that children idolize the heroic work firefighters do and many children say they want to be firefighters when they grow up (Tracy & Scott 2006). In correctional work, officers may choose to focus on how their work creates a barrier between dangerous offenders and the public.

Recalibrating adjusts the implicit standards that are used to evaluate the scale (how much) and/or valance (how good) of the tainted components. This may be achieved by making seemingly trivial tasks appear important. For instance, exterminators may revel in their extensive knowledge of entomology (Ashforth et al. 2007). A correctional officer may emphasize her ability to count inmates quickly and efficiently.

Refocusing shifts the attention off of the tainted aspects of the occupation onto the non-tainted aspects. For example, a sex worker may emphasize that most of her time with a client is spent speaking to them, with only a small portion of time engaged in actual sex. A correctional officer might emphasize how most of his day is spent in routine and boredom, and how rare use of force is.

Although these three techniques are presented as distinctive, the lines among them are often blurred in the research. For example, Mills (2007) discusses how truck drivers emphasize that they are often the "white knight" who provides assistance to motorists. Mills classifies this as refocusing, but the example also fits a recalibrating strategy. Others have pointed out the blurring of these distinctions as problematic for the use of the typology (Meisenbach 2010). Despite, its issues these three strategies remain dominant in the literature.

Most of the exigent literature on correctional officers focuses on the individualized technique of depersonalization to manage stigma, instead of the occupational ideologies of reframing, recalibrating, and refocusing. Tracy & Scott (2007) however, found that correctional officers' primary method of stigma management was reframing. Specifically, they found that officers stressed that it took a special skill set to perform successfully in the occupation (Tracy & Scott 2007). This work is instructive but limited as it examined officers at two relatively small (less than 500 inmates each) facilities. Further, the two facilities were a county jail and a women's prison. It is reasonable to assume that the culture, and therefore the stigma management techniques, of a larger, all male, state level facility may be quite different.

Additionally, there is little in the existing literature on the method of transmission of stigma management techniques among correctional officers. The current research examines the utilization and transmission of the three primary occupational ideologies by correctional officers through the use of storytelling.

Storytelling

Storytelling is an essential part of the human experience (Frank 2010; Presser & Sandberg 2015). Further, stories are an important form of symbolic communication within occupational culture that is especially useful in transmitting cultural values (Taylor & Van Every 2000; Brown, Denning, Groh, and Prusak 2005; Neuhauser 1998; Mohan 1993; Denning 2005). Stories serve as sense-making devices that allow occupational members to create shared understanding and transmit that understanding to new members (Gabriel 2004; Cassell & Bishop 2014; Ugelvik 2016). The creation of shared understanding is indirect, and storytelling is only one of several potential methods used (see Murphy 1998 for a discussion of various techniques).

The key to storytelling is the active involvement in the sense making process. The new member is told a story and left to interpret the story and decide what values are being promoted (Gabriel 2004). New members must be able to discern the moral of the story, if they cannot, they may fail to adopt the appropriate cultural values and will risk being ostracized. If new members are able to correctly discern cultural values, they are more likely to internalize the values due to the active role involved with interpreting the story (Denning 2005; Gargiulo 2005; Mohan 1993; Neuhauser 1998).

Storytelling has been identified as an informal method of teaching expected occupational behavior among detention officers (Ugelvik 2016), court personnel (Drew 2007), police officers (van Hulst 2013), and private security officers (Lofstrand, Loftus & Loader 2016) among other occupations. Specifically, Ugelvik found storytelling as a primary method for teaching legitimation techniques to immigration detention officers in Norway. The existing literature frames storytelling solely in terms of informally communicating stigma management techniques. Our research examines the presence of storytelling within formal training of new officers. The article now turns to a brief review of the methods used before exploring the findings.

METHODOLOGY

This article utilizes data from a larger ethnographic study of correctional officer culture in a Midwestern state (for a discussion of gaining access to the organization please see Chenault 2014 & Chenault 2012). Data were derived by using participant observation and semi-structured interviews.

The participant observation stage of the research included 25 days of observation at a correctional officer training academy and 31 shifts at four institutions. In addition, officers were observed in social settings outside the correctional institutions. In total, 290 officers were observed during the research. While conducting participant observation, the researcher relied on an extensive use of field notes (Berg 2007; Emerson, Fritz, & Shaw 2001; Geertz 1973). The field notes were designed to be descriptive accounts of daily activities (Emerson et. al. 2001).

During the initial academy training the researcher was able to take notes in the field without being obtrusive. Once the academy training became more hands-on, the researcher relied on memory to collect data. Upon leaving the academy setting each day the researcher used a digital tape recorder to capture the events and stories of that day as close to verbatim as possible from memory. Throughout the academy training war stories told by various personal were noted in the field notes and written down as close to verbatim as possible.

The research also relied on ethnographic interviewing to supplement the observed data. Ethnographic interviewing depends on a high level of rapport with the subjects and an insider's knowledge of the symbolic and real language of the subjects (Becker & Geer 1957; Berg 2007; Hammersly & Atkinson 2007). This makes ethnographic interviewing well-suited for use in conjunction with participant observation, in which rapport is established and an understanding of subject language is developed. A total of 40 semi-structured interviews were conducted, including one with each of the nine officers in the researcher's academy class. The interviews ranged from 50 minutes to approximately two hours. Each interview was recorded, with subject permission, and was later transcribed by the researcher. To ensure confidentiality, once all data was collected the researcher replaced each name with an alias, which is used in the presentation of quotes here.

In the course of the larger project, the theme of storytelling and its importance in the transmission of culture emerged. Over the course of the five week correctional officer training academy, a total of 110 stories were told to the new recruits. The majority of the stories were told by either the training specialists assigned to the class or by one of a variety of guest instructors. The guest instructors are typically subject matter experts who teach a specific section of the training. A few of the stories were told by members of the training class who possessed prior correctional experience and attempted to share this experience with the new officers.

Each of the 110 stories were pulled out of the ethnographic field notes and compiled into a list. A few of the stories were told multiple times during training (this suggests an added importance which will be discussed later). The stories were analyzed using an inductive content analysis approach, whereby researchers performed a close reading of the war stories, searching for key themes and patterns (Patton, 2002). This method aims to capture rich detail and interpret the range and diversity of experience within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis led to the development of 39 codes that were then applied to the stories.

Although dirty work appeared as just one of the themes in the analysis several other themes (i.e. us vs. them, view of inmates) also revealed themes consistent with stigma management issues. After coding the stories the prevalence of the stigma attached to correctional work and the need to manage that stigma became clear themes. The exigent literature on dirty work and stigma management was then applied to the data to seek deeper meaning.

FINDINGS

Although the moral taint associated with correctional officers is largely due to their duty of restricting freedom, the majority of occupational taint comes from the inmates themselves.

The physical taint (i.e. cleaning of bodily fluids), and social taint (regular associating with stigmatized groups), are both a direct result of working in close proximity to convicted felons. The article now turns to a discussion of the role the presentation of inmates plays in the occupational ideologies of stigma management among correctional officers.

Inmate Mindset

Stories that illustrate the inmate mindset make new officers acutely aware of the social taint they will have to navigate in the correctional field. The focus of these stories is to prepare officers for the worldview of their new clientele. Inmates are portrayed as being untrustworthy, unable to take responsibility for their actions, manipulative, lacking in empathy and violent. These characteristics are presented as core personality traits of inmates which led to their conviction and incarceration. The traits of the inmate mindset are the reason the inmates are stigmatized by society and the war stories ensure that officers realize how stigmatized the offenders are.

Carlson, a psychologist with 20 years of correctional experience spoke to the training class during the third week of the academy. Carlson was officially offering training on mental health issues among offenders. Informally he offered a great deal of insight into the inmate mindset for new officers. For example, he told the following story:

> An inmate tried to hang himself from his toilet with his feet and hands bound behind his back. He was lying in a prone position with hands and feet bound, when an alert officer saw him. The staff saved him, and preserved the knots to indicate that he had done it himself. The inmate tied his hands like that to try to get staff in trouble after his death. The position of the body would have made it look impossible for the inmate to have hung himself, and the logical conclusion would be that the staff had executed the inmate in his cell. This inmate was not a good guy, he told me once he was mad that when he shot a girl in an office the gun jammed so he couldn't empty it into her.

This story teaches new officers the extent of moral dirtiness of inmates. Carlson says the inmate was committing suicide in an attempt to manipulate officers and get them fired. Even in death the inmate was untrustworthy and manipulative. The story illustrates that the negative personality traits of offenders are so pervasive, that even in death, inmates remain morally reprehensible. For officers, the primary take away from this story is that inmates should never be trusted, and that the job requires working with individuals who are capable of such immoral acts. This realization solidifies the notion of moral taint for new officers, due to the pervasiveness of the immorality inherent to the inmate mindset, no one can work as a correctional officer without being stigmatized by association.

The idea that inmates are capable of excessively immoral acts is expanded by various training instructors and experienced officers. Although Carlson made the point through an in-prison incident most others accomplished the same goal by discussing various inmate free-world crimes. Stories about inmate crimes drew clear connections between the actions of the inmates prior to prison and their current status as morally tainted.

A series of quotes illustrates the approach of using inmate's crimes to demonstrate their moral dirtiness. Flanders, a guest instructor from the victim's services office with 10 years of correctional experience, told the following story during the 3rd week of training:

> There is an inmate who is in prison for shaking his infant son. He kept the child on life support so he would not be charged with murder only assault. Once the child pulled through he signed away his legal rights so he wouldn't have to pay the medical bills. The child is now in a vegetated state and just sits in a wheel chair all day with a feeding tube.

This story focuses on an especially heinous crime, with an especially defenseless victim. These two traits are common in stories demonstrating inmates' moral dirtiness. Crimes that victimize children, and sexual crimes are the most common means of communicating the moral dirt of inmates. The moral dirtiness and possible contamination inmates present is not limited to male offenders. Corporal Nicker, a female officer with over 25 years of correctional experience at the Prairie Correctional Center for Women, expanded the theme of moral taint to female inmates. The following statement was made to a group of new officers during their first day of on the job training:

> We have a woman here that worked at a daycare and just bashed this kid on the floor until it was dead. We have women here that killed their own kids, we have a woman here that punched this three-year-old until it died and then shoved a quarter in its mouth so it would look like it choked to death.

The quote again focuses on a child victim of a heinous and violent crime. Previous research on correctional staff has found that officers and inmates often have very similar socioeconomic and educational backgrounds (Jacobs 1978; Jacobs & Retsky 1980; Morris & Morris 1980; Poole & Regoli 1981). These similarities could cause new officers to empathize to a degree with inmates and see their crimes as necessary in context. However, children are the most innocent and helpless members of society, which removes virtually any room for interpretation regarding moral taint. This story takes the additional step of showing the offender as lacking remorse. Instead of reporting the crime and showing a remorse for her actions, this offender takes additional steps to conceal her actions. The story shows inmates as morally dirty due to the nature of their victims, and continues to emphasize their untrustworthy and manipulative nature.

Finally, officer Amodopolis, an officer with six months of experience, expanded the moral dirtiness of inmates to the offenders' families. The following excerpt was told to a pair of new officers during their first day of work:

> There's an inmate that just got here who is 19 and got thrown in here because they caught him butt fucking his sister. It was consensual, but still he was butt fucking his sister. He just couldn't understand what was wrong with it. You know you would think that since that is what he's in for they would ban her from his visiting list but oh no she comes in and wears these tight little jeans. The thing of it is, it was his brother that turned him in because he wanted to butt fuck her too but she wouldn't let him. The brother comes down to visit with the sister and they'll go into the little vending room and he'll be trying to feel

on her while they're in there. She always turns to him and says now what would Jesus do? I mean holy shit! What's wrong with these people?

Unlike the other two quotes this story lacks a child victim. However, incest is fundamentally immoral. The officer goes further in the telling of the story by emphasizing the act as anal sex, which has traditionally been seen as deviant. This means the inmate committed two deviant acts at once making him especially morally dirty. The quote is also distinct in that it expands the moral taint beyond the offender to the environment the offender came from. By asking "what is wrong with these people" the officer is suggesting that it is not just the offender that is tainted but their entire social milieu. In contrast to the other two quotes which focus on child victims, who are especially defenseless but relatively rare, this quote demonstrates that even offenders with adult victims present moral taint.

All three of the preceding quotes ensure new officers realize how morally stigmatized the inmate population is. These are not the most common inmate offenses, at the time of the research possession of a controlled substance, followed by possession with intent to distribute were the two most common incarceration offenses, but they are extreme examples of immoral behavior. In order for new officers to engage in effective stigma management they must first recognize that the work is dirty, and where that dirt comes from. These quotes stress to new officers that the "customers" they serve are morally objectionable people by stressing the most heinous crimes among the offender population. Society has mixed views regarding the morality of drug use and distribution but virtually no such ambiguity exists regarding crimes against children or incest. The point of the stories is to show officers that inmates are not just people who were unlucky in terms of getting caught committing crime, but rather morally inferior and tainted beings.

People outside prison often view officers as very similar to inmates due to their close proximity (Jacobs & Greer 1977). The risk of contamination is the core of social taint associated with dirty work. Several officers discussed the risk of contamination during the research. Some focused on the way the job, and the constant exposure to social taint, changes a person's behavior. For example, Lieutenant Lisa who had 16 years of correctional experience told the story of her first Thanksgiving after starting as an officer:

I have a big family and they were all gathered around for dinner, and no one would give me the stuffing. I kept asking and asking but no one would give it to me, so finally I said, Give me the fucking stuffing. My family was all in shock because no one talks like that, especially at a family gathering. After hearing that language every day you are going to pick it up even if you don't want to.

This story illustrates a minor instance of contamination where the officers adopt the language of their stigmatized clientele. Although the story is told in a humorous manner the point is clear that working with inmates will lead to involuntary changes in the officer's behavior. The majority of officers are acutely aware of this risk and while they cannot avoid the taint of working with offenders they try to avoid contaminating their families. Although some officers speak with their significant others about parts of the job virtually all officers avoid discussing the dirty parts. The rationale for this avoidance is summed up by Atkins, an officer

with three years of experience. When asked if he tells his wife about the job he said:

> No matter what kind of day it's been whether good or bad, boring or exciting I tell my wife it was a boring day when nothing happened. I don't avoid talking about it on purpose it just kind of happens. It's not fair to her to have her worrying. When I was assaulted by an inmate who punched me in the eye I didn't tell her because she would assume the worst.

Atkins frames his avoidance of telling his wife as a means of protecting her. Telling his wife all the details of his day would expose her to the same social taint that he must face daily. Officers also avoid discussing the physically dirty aspects of the job with their families, as illustrated by Corporal Hutz (two years of experience) who responded to a question about discussing the job with his wife as follows:

> I stayed at work until four in the morning doing forced cell moves at the youth facility. Then I had to go sit at the hospital for two hours after that getting blood drawn because I got piss thrown all over me. I try to leave that stuff out. You know, she doesn't want to know that I was covered in shit and piss that's just gross.

Like Atkins, Hutz avoids discussing the physically dirty component of the job with his wife to protect her. In this case the protection is not from worry about her husband's safety but rather from the contamination that comes from knowing about the dirty nature of the work. He concludes that this situation was gross when discussing his wife knowing about it. However, in telling the story he laughs about it and much of the officers' humor is focused on exposure to various bodily fluids.

Contrary to the desire to protect their immediate families from the social and physical taint of the job officers reframe these aspects of the job in order to manage the stigma when talking with each other and outsiders. The ability to face immoral, violent inmates and to perform physically dirty work are seen as sources of pride, which set officers apart from the rest of society. The common refrain that "not everyone can do this job" is centered on officers' ability to manage the physically dirty and dangerous aspects of the job. This reframing allows officers to manage their stigma with outsiders even while being acutely aware of it when interacting with their own families.

Reframing

Virtually all of the stories pointed to the notion that "not just anybody can do this job" or that it takes a "special" individual to successfully work as a correctional officer. The prominence of this theme is consistent with the work of Tracy & Scott (2007) and Ugelvik (2016) who both found officers stressing the unique characteristics necessary to work in secure institutions. The viewpoint encompasses all three occupational ideologies, but is most dominantly driven by reframing. Three quotes from two different academy instructors and a Field Training Officer (FTO) illustrate the emphasis on this idea. The first quote is from the second week of academy training and was spoken by Officer Akira, the primary training instructor assigned to the class:

> If at any point you realize this is not for you come talk to us. We will talk to you and

give you some insight, but I'm not going to try to force you to stay. Corrections is not for everybody.

The second quote comes from a guest training instructor, Gumble, during the final week of academy training. The instructor, a late fifties male with over 20 years of experience as an officer, was teaching a course on cell extractions and took the opportunity to compare correctional officers to police officers. He said:

Truly I think that police officers have it easy, they play cops and robbers and deal with the criminal for just a few minutes then they drop them off with us. We have to deal with them every day. The other difference is that a police officer deals with someone and they get rid of them we have to deal with the same people again and again, so this is a much more difficult job than being a police officer. This is a tough job and it's not for everybody, and I don't think that most police officers could do what we do.

This quote creates a comparison between police work and correctional work. Gumble suggests that correctional officers have a much more difficult job that police officers could not effectively perform. Previous authors have noted selective social comparison as a method of managing occupational stigma (Ashforth et. al. 2007). However, Ashforth suggests that individuals will compare themselves to "dirtier" occupations and create an air of superiority through the comparison. Although police work is dirty it is seen as more socially acceptable than correctional work. Gumble is actually comparing correctional officers to a less dirty occupation in an attempt to manage stigma.

The theme of needing a special skill set to work in corrections is prevalent in interviews with officers who directly state this view. In terms of story telling the sentiment is not often directly stated as in the above examples but is typically conveyed by stressing all of the abnormal aspects of the job the officers must learn to process. While the exclusivity of the profession is not directly communicated in most stories, the following exchange between a Field Training Officer (FTO) with over 20 years of experience and a group of new recruits illustrates this concept perfectly.

On the first day of on the job training (during the fourth week of the academy) Christian addressed the new officers:

On average about 50% of the people who complete the academy are no longer with the department within a year, and if you make it to 4-5 years into your career you will look around and be the last person out of your class still here. It's a high turnover rate but that's okay it's a tough gig, and it isn't for everyone.

Christian then asked Bouvier (a new officer) what she did before this and she replied that she was a certified nurse's assistant in a nursing home. Christian responded:

"Did you ever have an old person try to kill you? Cause they will here."

Christian then asked Martin (another new officer) what he did before this and Martin replied that he worked for an insurance company. Christian responded: "When they tried to leave did you shoot them? Cause we do here. The point is that it is a very different job and not

everyone can handle it."

All three of these quotes are in line with the work of Stacey (2005) on home care workers, and Cahill (1996) on funeral home directors. In both instances, individuals who work in stigmatized occupations manage the stigma by taking pride in the "dirty" nature of the work. Specifically, Stacey found that "workers draw meaning from their willingness and ability to perform dirty and mundane tasks that others avoid, knowing that their efforts improve the lives of clients" (Stacey 2005: 845). Individuals reframe the stigma of their occupation into a point of pride by justifying their work as something that only a chosen few could successfully navigate.

Akira, stresses the exclusivity of working in corrections. Despite an ongoing staffing shortage he stresses that he will not force anyone to stay because it takes a "special" person to work in this occupational field. Specifically, the elements of the profession that taint it morally, physically and socially are held up as sources of pride.

The quote from Gumble takes the concept of corrections as something to take pride in a step further by comparing it to police work. Correction officers often compare themselves to the police due to the higher prestige afforded police officers by the public. Gumble's conclusion that most police officers are not capable of doing correctional work demonstrates the truly exclusive nature of the occupation. Even members of a prestigious occupation could not adequately perform the dirty work required of this job. In the quote Gumble points specifically to the fact that correctional officers must interact with offenders for extended periods of time (i.e. caretaking duties). These caretaking duties, and the extended exposure to social taint are sources of dirty work for correctional officers, yet Gumble suggests these very issues are what cause police officers to be unable to perform the job. This is an instance of reframing, the mundane tasks of caregiving (i.e. providing for the day in and day out needs of a captive population) are elevated to a place of honor. Something as trivial as making sure an inmate has toilet paper is seen as a source of pride because others could not deal with the stress of caring for inmate needs.

The final quote from Christian again reiterates the idea that corrections work takes a special kind of person. Christian also begins to address the specifics of why the job is so unique. He specifically addresses the perception that the job is exceedingly dangerous, "did you ever have an old person try to kill you?" Dangerous occupations are commonly afforded a level of prestige and honor in American society. For example, firefighters could be considered a stigmatized occupation, but they overcome this stigma by pointing out the extreme danger and courage of their work. The common refrain, "it takes a different type of person who wants to run into a burning building" emphasizes the courage required to perform the occupation (Tracy & Scott 2006). Christian is making a similar statement here regarding the ever-present danger in corrections and the special courage it takes to face that danger.   Christian is also delineating previous employment experience from the correctional context. He specifically delineates from working in a nursing home, which is typically viewed as dirty work itself, by adding the issue of danger.

Although the exclusivity stressed in these stories illustrates all three stigma management techniques reframing is most prominent. This goal is achieved by stressing the notion that the majority of society could not effectively cope with the moral, physical and social taint associated with correctional work. The stories illustrate that the dirty nature of the work is exactly what

makes it a unique profession that should be a source of pride. As discussed above, there is some disagreement in the literature about the precise application of the stigma management terms. Thus, while Tracy and Scott (2007) found similar stressing of the dangerous aspects of correctional work and labeled it as recalibrating, we argue the officers are actually reframing their occupational experience.

DISCUSSION

The primary method of teaching new members appropriate occupational ideologies regarding stigma management among correctional officers is storytelling. The stories used focus on the inmate mindset which serves two purposes. First it ensures that new officers perceive the correctional officer role as dirty work thus making the need for stigma management clear. The perception is fed by tales of the depravity of inmates both in the crimes they committed and in their institutional behavior. Additionally, stories are told which emphasize the potential for the social taint and moral depravity of inmates to contaminate both the officers and their families. The previous literature on stigma management has focused only on informal storytelling among occupational members. However, in our research we find formal training of new officers to be infused with the same storytelling. This allows stigma management techniques to be both formal and informal in nature which is a key distinction from previous work in this area.

The common thread through most of the stories is the refrain that "not everyone can do this job." We argue this is an example of reframing, which is the primary stigma management technique among officers.   The occupation emphasizes the dirty work of corrections and turns the stigma into a source of pride. Society in general would regard the ability to effectively restrain people, view nudity and clean up fecal matter as extremely stigmatizing. The correctional officer culture instead celebrates the individuals who are most adept at these tasks. This reframing results in officers taking pride in their ability to handle the most stigmatizing aspects of the job.

One final aspect of reframing is the emphasis on the danger of the correctional officer job. The job is seen as dangerous due to the proximity to violent felons, which is also the source of social taint for officers. Officers turn this source of stigma into a source of pride by emphasizing just how dangerous the job is. Several of the stories convey the message that inmates are dangerous, and an officer never knows if they will make it through their shift alive.

There are some limitations to the research. First, the focus was on officers in this research but there are a variety of non-custody personnel working in institutions as well. Future research may explore if non-custody staff utilize the same stigma management techniques as correctional officers. Additionally, the research is from a small Midwestern department of corrections. The culture of this department could be unique and similar research on stigma management is needed in larger and geographically diverse departments.

CONCLUSION

Correctional officers perform a critical function in the criminal justice system. Although America's prison population has leveled off over the past five years it remains the largest per capita in the world, five times larger than England's, six times larger than Australia's and twelve times higher than Japan's (Wakefield & Wildeman 2014). This article has explored a critical element of officer culture: stigma management. The modern correctional officer embodies all three forms of taint that label a profession as dirty, and does so in a low prestige occupation.

This research adds to the existing research on dirty work by exploring how occupational stigma management ideologies are transmitted to new members, both formally and informally. Previous research has focused on the informal transmission of culture, and specifically stigma management techniques, through storytelling among veteran and new occupational members. The current research relies heavily on stories taken from the formal training process for new officers. This sets up stigma management techniques as being conveyed in part through formal modes.

Further the article expands on the work of Tracy and Scott (2007) who explored correctional officer stigma management techniques in a small jail and women's prison. The current study examined stigma management techniques across various security levels and larger state level prisons. Although the findings are similar this expansion to new settings is an important contribution to our understanding of correctional officers.

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#JESUISPARIS?: AN APPEAL TO HYPOCRISY AND JUSTIFICATIONS FOR MASS CASUALTY VIOLENCE

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Abstract

We draw from Sykes and Matza's techniques of neutralization theory to interpret how Islamic State and the Levant (ISIL) soft-sympathizers justify violence perpetrated by ISIL. Data come from Tweets associated with ISIL-affiliated accounts that occurred within 24 hours of three high-profile ISIL-attributed attacks: Paris, Nice, and Orlando. Our findings suggest that *condemnation of the condemners* was a particularly salient neutralization technique used to point out the perverse motives and inconsistent behaviors of Western armed forces, media, and the public. More specifically, we found that the condemnation of the condemners was underlined by three specific claims: (1) *comparable violence*, (2) *selective silence*, and (3) *differential humanity*. Together, these claims intended to display the perceived hypocrisy of ISIL condemners, to undermine the moral credibility of the West, and to serve as the foundation for justifying ISIL-attributed violence. We conclude with theoretical implications and suggestions for policy and practice.

Keywords: Violent Extremism; Terrorism; Neutralization Theory; Islamic State

INTRODUCTION

Terrorist organizations continue to exploit features of the internet to further ideological and organizational goals. In fact, the number of terrorist websites increased from a couple dozen to more than 4,000 from 1990 to 2006 (Weimann, 2006). Terrorist organizations have also taken advantage of social media platforms (e.g., Twitter) in order to recruit and radicalize members, raise finances, and plan attacks. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, for example, disseminates the English-language online magazine *Inspire* via social media. *Inspire* includes articles encouraging jihad and lessons on "How to build a bomb in the kitchen of your mom" (Hove,

2015).[1] Bergen (2016) notes that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) social media usage proved "critical to the group's international appeal" and enabled ISIL "to recruit some thirty thousand foreign fighters, including thousands from Western countries" (p. 247). Much of ISIL's rise to power is attributable to their successful social media campaigns and, as such, warrants further empirical investigation.[2]

While some scholars have examined the types of information disseminated by ISIL (e.g., Derrick et al., 2016), less is known about the ways in which ISIL's non-combatant sympathizers in the West, referred to as soft-sympathizers, utilize social media platforms (see Alexander, 2017; Veilleux-Lepage, 2014). Soft-sympathizers play an important strategic goal. Unlike foreign fighters who travel to Iraq and Syria and individuals who radicalize at home and engage in lone actor attacks, soft sympathizers spread ISIL's message by leveraging social media. While the former two have direct and immediate implications for ISIL's military campaign, soft-sympathizers aid ISIL's agenda without engaging in "kinetic actions such as terrorist acts in their homeland or fighting abroad" (Vielleux-Lepage, 2014: 10). Soft-sympathizers take advantage of social media platforms to propagate ISIL's message on a global scale so that ISIL's ideology and tactics can be recognized, normalized, and accepted by the masses. A related function of these soft supporters and sympathizers is to provide ideological justifications for violent extremism. These ideological justifications offer a "new moral compass" for individuals willing to engage in violent extremism (Lakhani, 2018). These ideological justifications are often similar to the neutralizations for violence found in traditional criminological literature (Sykes and Matza, 1957).

In the present effort, we draw from Sykes and Matza's techniques of neutralization theory to interpret how ISIL's soft sympathizers justify violence perpetrated by ISIL. Data come from Tweets associated with ISIL-affiliated accounts that occurred within 24 hours of three high-profile ISIL-attributed mass casualty attacks: Paris, Nice, and Orlando. Our findings suggest that many soft-sympathizers neutralize violence using some of the techniques originally described by Sykes and Matza (1957). *Condemnation of the condemners* was a particularly salient neutralization technique used to shift blame from ISIL to ISIL's condemners. In doing so, the soft-sympathizers pointed out the perverse motives and inconsistent behaviors of the Western armed forces, media, and the public. More specifically, we found that the *condemnation of the condemners* theme used by many soft-sympathizers focused on three specific claims: (1) comparable violence, (2) selective silence, and (3) differential humanity. Together, these claims intended to display the hypocrisy of Western armed forces and to undermine the moral credibility of the Western media and public, and served as a foundation for justifying ISIL-attributed violence. Before addressing our theoretical framework, we first turn to a short summary of ISIL's rise to power, including its organizational goals and key actors.

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[1] In this article, the words "jihad," "jihadism," or "jihadists" refer to Sunni Muslim militant ideologies and movements calling for armed struggle "in the cause of God", aiming to defend Muslim territories, to establish Islamic Emirates, and to re-establish the Caliphate (Nesser, 2011, p.174).

[2] While we highlight Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIL in this section, it is important to note that not all terrorist organizations are Islamic. We selected these extremist groups as examples given their proliferation in maximizing online resources to further their goals. However, terrorist groups across the ideological spectrum use the Internet and social media for organizational gains.

RISE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE

ISIL is one of the most influential and ultra-violent terrorist organizations over the last decade and has evolved under different names, alliances, and leaders. ISIL began in Iraq during the US-led invasion in March 2003. During this time, the earliest version of ISIL, known as Jama'at al-Tawhid wa-al Jihad (also called Tawhid and Jihad), was established by Jordanian jihadist, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. Although Zarqawi received seed funds to start the organization from Osama Bin-Laden, he initially remained independent and refused to pledge alliance to Al Qaeda. After months of negotiations, however, Zarqawi swore an oath of loyalty and his group took on the name Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004 (Fishman, 2016). To the displeasure of Al Qaeda's central leadership, Zarqawi emphasized sectarian war and violence against Iraqis deemed apostates. The leadership of Zarqawi lasted until June 2006, when he was killed in a U.S. drone strike. AQI appointed Abu Hamza al-Muhajir as the new leader, but his reign was short-lived, and in October 2006 the group changed its name to the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and nominated Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as its new leader. The rebranding and leadership change was motivated by an attempt to regain local support and stress the organization's focus on pragmatic issues such as infrastructure (Byman, 2015).

In April 2010, both Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al-Muhajir were killed and, one month later, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was appointed the leader of ISI. The start of Baghdadi's leadership coincided with the outbreak of the Syrian civil war (Bastug & Guler, 2018; Hashim, 2014). During this time, Baghdadi sent associates to Syria to start a new extremist organization to fight the Syrian regime. This new organization, Jabhat al Nusra, quickly took a leading role among extremist groups in Syria. Later, in April 2013, ISI declared that they had merged with al-Nusra and changed its name to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). This move was contested by al-Nusra and later by Ayman al-Zawahiri, the central leader of Al Qaeda. Because of this, Baghdadi become critical of Zawahiri's leadership and, in May 2014, Al Qaeda cut ties with ISIL. Nearly one month later, in June 2014, Baghdadi declared himself caliph of the newly formed Islamic State – a position he currently still holds.

ISIL's ideological goal is to establish a global caliphate by capturing territory and enforcing its interpretation of Shari'a.[3] ISIL primarily operated in Northern Syria and Western Iraq throughout its peak period of performance (i.e., 2013-2015). During this time, ISIL relied heavily on five funding sources including: illicit proceeds from controlled territories, kidnapping, donations via non-profit organizations, material support from foreign fighters, and fundraising through modern communications networks (FATF, 2015). ISIL recruitment focused not only on the disenfranchised Sunni populations in Iraq and Syria, but also on foreign fighters. As of 2015, approximately 30,000 fighters from at least 85 different countries had joined ISIL (Benmelech & Klor, 2018). Today, ISIL has lost much of the territory it previously controlled in Iraq and Syria. However, ISIL has "mushroomed into a world phenomenon" with so-called provinces located in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, the Northern Caucasus, Egypt, and West

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[3] Shari'a is often used to describe as Islamic law. It gives rules and guidelines on marriage, economic, criminal law, and spiritual and moral undertakings. There are a variety of schools on Islamic law. However, in the context of violent extremism and ISIL, most refer to the more radical interpretations of Shari'a law. That said, Island their ideology is in no way representative of the larger Muslim community.

Africa (Joscelyn, 2018). While these affiliates have different proximal goals and adversaries compared to flagship organization, they are important to the brand and strategic vision of ISIL.

TECHNIQUES OF NEUTRALIZATION

Developed by Sykes and Matza (1957), techniques of neutralization theory holds that delinquents are "more or less" committed to conventional beliefs in the prevailing social system; however, they are able to engage in deviance by employing special justifications or rationalizations for their actions (also see Cressey, 1953; Matza, 1964). These neutralizations precede delinquent behavior and are based on a set of "subterranean values" that encourage deviant behavior in certain situations. Neutralizations are also learned through social interactions similar to the "definitions favorable to law" component of Sutherland's (1955) differential association theory (Matsueda, 1988). As such, techniques of neutralization allow delinquents to escape the social controls that inhibit criminal participation and commit deviant acts without damaging their self-image (Copes, 2003). While originally developed as part of Sykes and Matza's study of youth engaging in delinquent behaviors, neutralization theory has since been used to examine a variety of criminal and deviant behaviors. Previous studies have applied neutralization theory to white-collar crime (Copes & Vieraitis, 2009; Kieffer & Sloan III, 2009; Vieraitis, Piquero, Piquero et al., 2012), workplace deviance (Dabney, 1995; Shigihara, 2013), property crime (Agnew & Peters, 1986; Copes, 2003; Holt & Copes, 2010), drugs and sex crimes (Copley, 2014; Scully & Marolla, 1984), hate crimes (Byers & Crider, 1999), Medicare fraud (Evans & Porche, 2005), aggravated assault (Agnew, 1994), and carjacking (Hochesteler, Copes, & Williams, 2010).

Initially, Sykes and Matza (1957) argued for five justifications or techniques of neutralization frequently used by delinquent youth including denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of victim, condemnation of the condemners, and appeal to higher loyalties. First, denial of responsibility is employed when offenders claim their behavior is due to forces outside of their control (e.g., "I didn't mean it"). Second, denial of injury occurs when offenders claim their behavior is not wrong because it does not cause harm (e.g., "I didn't hurt anyone"). Third, denial of victim is used when offenders claim that their victims deserved their victimization (e.g., "They had it coming to them"). Next, condemnation of the condemners occurs when offenders call attention away from their behavior by pointing out the suspected motives and behaviors of their condemners (e.g., "Everyone was picking on me"). Last, appeal to higher loyalties is employed when an individual claims their behavior adhered to other norms and loyalties greater than those of the dominant society (e.g., "I didn't do it for myself"). While these five techniques remain at the crux of Sykes and Matza's theory, scholars have put forth other neutralization techniques including the defense of necessity (Coleman, 1998), the metaphor of the ledger (Klockars, 1974), denial of the justice (Coleman, 1998), diffusion of guilt (Coleman, 1998), claim of entitlement (Benson, 1985), and justification by comparison (Cromwell & Thurman, 2003).

More recently, researchers have examined the applicability of neutralization theory for studying violent extremism. Liddick (2013) examined justifications for ideological crimes among self-proclaimed members of the radical animal-rights group, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). The author examined 234 online communiqués using a content analysis and found that individual activists neutralized their guilt by appealing to a higher moral cause. While

individuals who were involved in the radical animal-rights scene did not generally support the destruction of property, they viewed these acts as necessary to reduce future animal suffering. Likewise, Al-Khattar (2003) employed Sykes and Matza's (1957) neutralization techniques to examine religious justifications for violence in Muslim, Jewish, and Christian traditions. Through interviews with religious leaders from all three faiths, Al-Khattar (2003) found that subjects made statements justifying violence for engagement in "just wars," preventing future violence, and self-defense or protecting others.

Techniques of neutralization theory has also been used to examine justifications for other forms of political violence such as war and genocide. Halverscheid and Witte (2008) analyzed speeches and explanations for war and terrorism across cultures and types of political violence. The authors found substantial differences in argumentation across both comparisons. For example, the U.S. government's justifications for violence were more likely to focus on the utilitarian benefits of their action for all of humanity, whereas terrorist groups like the Red Army Faction were more likely to stress the negative consequences of a specific group. Kooistra and Mahoney (2016) examined 97 autobiographical accounts from American soldiers across World War II, Vietnam, Iraq, and the war in Afghanistan to understand why citizens—especially young men—were willing to put their lives at risk and kill strangers during wartime. The authors found neutralization techniques to be abundant in the narratives of soldiers and existed at both the organizational- (e.g., loyalty to one's nation) and individual-level (e.g., loyalty to one's brothers). Furthermore, the use of these neutralization techniques were static in neither time nor place; rather they were used as part of an ongoing process for soldiers faced with emotional difficulties or failed neutralizations. Finally, Bryant and colleagues (2017) examined transcripts of 27 defendant testimonies at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to identify justifications for participation in genocide. The authors found those accused of genocide and related atrocities employed techniques consistent with Sykes and Matza's (1957) original theory, as well as two genocide specific techniques. First, defendants most often employed denial of responsibility and condemnation of the condemners. Second, the defendants employed victimization and appeals to good characters to account for their actions and to assert a positive and socially-accepted sense.

Social Reactions to Deviance

Although less frequent, researchers have also applied neutralization theory to explain social reactions to crime and deviance. This application of neutralization theory diverges from the studies outlined above, which generally focus on how offenders justified their own behavior. Instead, research on social reactions to deviance emphasizes how neutralization techniques are used "*by others* to justify or mitigate the normative violations of lawbreakers, making their crimes morally acceptable" (Kooistra & Mahoney, 2016, p. 764). For example, Kooistra (1989, 1990) found several of Sykes and Matza's (1957) original techniques in justifications for the actions of heroic criminal bandits such as Billy the Kid, Jesse James, and Butch Cassidy. These criminals were symbols of extra-legal justice and their crimes were rationalized as part of the fight against unjust authority and those who pervert legal justice (Kooistra, 1990). Alvarez (1997) employed neutralization theory to explain genocide during the Holocaust. Alongside the five original neutralization techniques, Alvarez (1997) identified *denial of humanity* as another technique used by ordinary German citizens adjusting to the Nazi Holocaust. This technique focused on depictions of the out-group as subhuman: devoid of any commonalities with the rest

of humanity. During the Holocaust, the dehumanization of Jews was facilitated through a large-scale, anti-Semitic propaganda campaign in the years leading up to the genocide.

The Current Study

In the context of social reactions to terrorism, Alexander (2017) examined English-language ISIL sympathizers on Twitter. The findings suggested a correlation between frequency of ISIL sympathizers' Tweets and terrorist attacks, especially against the United States, Europe, Turkey, and Russia. The content of ISIL sympathizers' Tweets also tended to dwell on concerns for the global Muslim community and/or matters pertaining to their adversaries, particularly political leaders (e.g., Trump, Erdogan, Putin). The focus on negative consequences presented by specific groups is in line with Halverscheid and Witte's (2008) findings from narratives of terrorist networks like the Red Army Faction. Unsurprisingly, Bashar al-Assad received an overwhelming amount of attention given the ongoing conflict in Syria, and the most Tweets per day mentioning Assad came in the wake of well-publicized attacks on civilians. Although Alexander's (2017) results were not exhaustive, they did suggest two important points. First, violent actions by ISIL served as a unifying theme among its sympathizers. Second, ISIL sympathizers seemed to have a set of common neutralizations for the group's actions.

Our paper extends Alexander's work and relies on techniques of neutralization to identify and understand non-ideological justifications for violence by ISIL against non-combatants. Given that ISIL has effectively and successfully propagated its extremist ideology worldwide via social media (Bergen, 2016), and that Twitter is widely accepted as ISIL's preferred social media platform (Alexander, 2017), this paper examines ISIL's justification messaging on Twitter. Our primary research question is: *How do English-speaking ISIL soft-sympathizers justify mass casualty violence against civilians?* We now turn to the methods section.

METHODS

Data used in this study were drawn from a larger data set collected using a custom program that followed the method outlined in figure 1 (citations removed for peer review). We created a customized WebCrawler to monitor and capture the content from ISIL-affiliated Twitter accounts. Twitter provides an Application Programming Interface (API) that allows automation for interaction with Twitter data. Our system follows and logs ISIL-affiliated users who are identified and posted by the hacktivist group Anonymous. A faction of Anonymous code, named Controlling Section (@CtrlSec), formed in early 2015 to help find and remove ISIL accounts from Twitter (Macri, 2015). Our program first started collecting accounts released by CtrlSec in August 2015 and has been constantly running since. During much of this collection, CtrlSec posts ISIL members' Twitter handles at a rate of approximately one every two minutes. These accounts are stored, and our system utilizes the Twitter API to download a sample of Tweets from each user account. The API allows us to collect earlier Tweets and we gather as comprehensive a sample as each user account and Twitter's APIs allowed. Once an account is identified, and the initial backlog of Tweets is stored, the software constantly monitors and stores all future Tweets from the identified accounts.
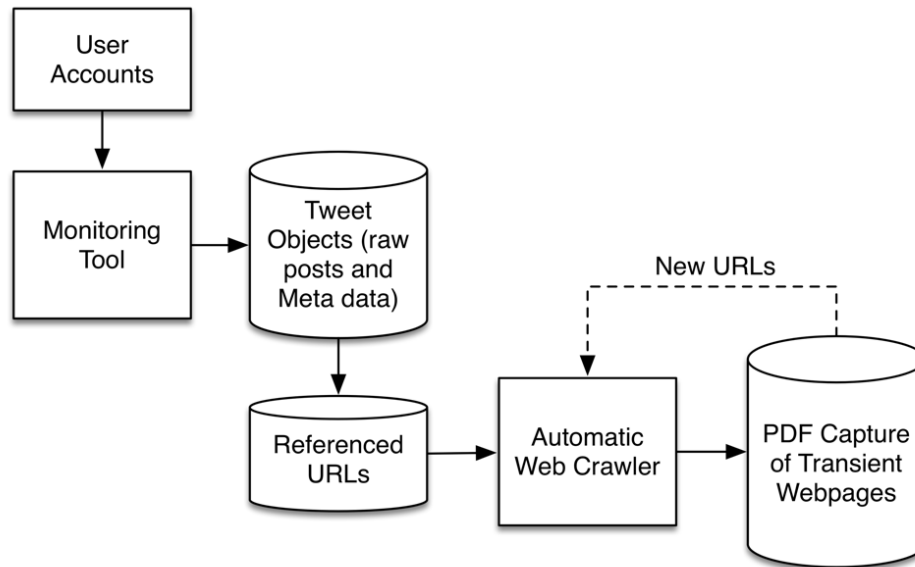
Figure 1. Data Collection Procedure

     The Tweets themselves are sorted into various components (e.g. links, hashtags, mentions) to be analyzed. This allows us to look at metadata (e.g., time, and in some cases location), content, and links to other sites. If a link is discovered in the content of the Tweet, our software automatically follows that link and captures its content. In a recursive manner, the software continues to download and analyze the webpages until all possible links of interest are found and stored. To avoid duplicates in our sample, the system tracks URLs already downloaded and prevents these pages from being saved more than once. Text and meta-data of interest are extracted from the page and stored within our database. To date, this process has produced over 6,000,000 Tweets, 1,500,000 URLs, and 24,000 transient web pages.

Coding Procedure

     We selected a subsample of data for this study that included Tweets ($n = 4,302$) from ISIL-affiliated accounts that occurred within 24 hours of three unique and high-profile ISIL-inspired or ISIL-led mass casualty events, including the Paris Coordinated event on November 13, 2015 ($n = 1,261$), the Orlando Night Club event on June 6, 2016 ($n = 1,781$), and the Nice Cargo Truck Ramming event on July 14, 2016 ($n = 1,260$). These events were selected for two primary reasons: (1) they occurred during ISIL's height of power and (2) they were high-profile events that received considerable attention on social media. Regarding Tweets, certain inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to select our subsample. First, Tweets needed to be in English. This criterion was more of a practicality; despite attempts to translate non-English Tweets, complications related to poor or inconsistent translations proved too complicated to address in the current project. While this restricts the generalizability of our findings, Western policy makers are especially concerned about foreign fighter recruitment, most of whom are English-only speakers (Borum & Fein, 2016), thus increasing the relevance of our sample. Relatedly, the spreading of non-Arabic content is important to ISIL's organizational goals. In fact, pro-ISIL content has been disseminated and spread in more than 40 languages (Alexander, 2017; Prucha,

2016), thus making English-only Tweets important for study. Second, Tweets were to be posted within 24 hours of the event first being reported on Twitter. This timeframe stems from Alexander's (2017) research that identified a spike in English-language ISIL Twitter accounts immediately after an attack, but that the spikes leveled out after 24 hours. To identify and pull Tweets in the 24-hour timeframe, we read each Tweet beginning approximately 30 minutes prior to the start of each event to timestamp the first mention. For example, the Paris Coordinated event is estimated to have begun at 21:16 local time. Thus, we read Tweets starting at 20:46 local time until the first mention of the attack. The first Tweet that referenced the event was at 22:03 local time. As such, we coded all Tweets posted from November 11, 2015 at 22:03 to November 14, 2015 at 22:03:00. This strategy was used for all three terrorist attacks.

The third and fourth criteria for inclusion were grounded in the nature and content of the Tweet. Specifically, we excluded retweets and any Tweet deemed unrelated to the event. The former was implemented because we were most interested in the text and narratives in the Tweet content, rather than which specific messages were repeated via retweeting. In fact, Tweet content has proven to be quite rich and to offer "innumerable opportunities for subsequent analysis" (Alexander, 2017, p. 21). The inclusion of retweeted[4] content in data analysis, while relevant to addressing topics like network analysis, is outside the scope of the present study. The latter exclusion criterion was used throughout the data analysis process. In short, we coded unrelated Tweets as "unrelated" and stored them in a folder separate from the active coding scheme (which is described below). Last, our data analysis excluded non-indexed, transient webpages linked to the Tweets. While prior research has analyzed the content of these transient webpages (see Derrick et al., 2016), the inclusion of these data and linked websites is outside the scope of the current analysis.

Grounded Theory Analysis

Data were analyzed using a modified version of grounded theory (Charmaz 2014; Glaser & Strauss 1967; Miles & Huberman 1994). Grounded theory is a flexible, non-linear methodology that allows themes and ideas to emerge during analysis through the process of creating, comparing, and contrasting categories identified in the data (Charmaz, 2014). In contrast to traditional grounded theorists who prefer data analysis be completed prior to reading extant literature (Glaser & Straus, 1967), a modified approach relies on the extant literature to both guide and to help interpret the findings. Our data analysis involved multiple steps but began by reading Tweets to generate provisional codes. The initial codes are provisional in that we remained open to other directions the data analysis may take. Because Tweets are restricted to 140 characters, our initial coding included word-by-word coding and line-by-line coding. Word-by-word coding was especially useful for highlighting complex and meaningful terminology that has latent or otherwise unknown meanings for Western and English-speakers in the larger Twitter population (e.g., ideological terms like *mujahedeen* or slang words like *kuffar*).[5] As data analysis progressed, we compared, modified, and combined various initial codes to help move them into broader categories.

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[4] Retweets mean that a user reposts or forwards a message (the original tweet). The scope of this paper was the mechanisms used in the originating tweets; thus, this forwarding mechanism was not included in the analysis.
[5] Mujahedeen refers to individuals engaged in jihad and is often used to describe those fighting against non-Muslim forces. Kuffar is a term used to describe "unbelievers" or "infidels."

We coded the terrorist events in chronological order, with the Paris Coordinated event first, followed by the Orlando night club shooting, and concluded with the Nice Ramming event. After coding 42% of the Paris Coordinated event (n = 533)—12% of the larger dataset—only one additional salient code—anti-gay—was identified in the data and was present only in the Orlando night club shooting dataset. Important to note is each event's sub-dataset had its own unique codes that were absent from the other two datasets. These codes were most often in reference to a simultaneous high-profile event. For example, the attempted coup in Turkey commenced soon after the Nice Truck Ramming.[6] Tweets about the coup were a significant presence in the dataset but rarely were both events mentioned in the same Tweet. Following Alexander (2017), this is likely because extremist sympathizers are easily "distracted" by other events and happenings related to the war in the Middle East.[7] Nevertheless, we continued with word-by-word and line-by-line coding for all three attacks despite reaching saturation until the final Tweet to ensure no new or relevant codes were missed.

Next, our data analysis took a more focused approach. Specifically, we returned to the data to develop more salient categories and to integrate theoretical ideas. These emerging themes were advanced, compared, and further explored with memo writing. We compared our data between and within Tweets, which allowed us to compare and contrast the emerging themes. At this stage of data analysis, it became increasingly evident that much of the content was grounded in justifications for terrorism and mass causality violence. The messages not only celebrated the mass casualty event, but also included reasons for why or how such violence perpetrated or inspired by the Islamic State was justified.

Guided by this insight, we turned to the extant literature to determine how our emerging themes compared to those made by other scholars. Our analysis took a more deductive approach in that we looked for codes and messages that were relevant to justifications for violence. This was an important stage in terms of reliability. Reliability in qualitative research can be attained by scrutinizing themes and features in the data multiple times, and by constant shifting between the data, the extant literature, and memo writing (Silverman, 2009). After identifying what we believed to be the primary themes, we purposefully selected data (theoretical sampling) to refine the categories and to reach a higher level of conceptualization (Charmaz, 2014). The data analysis was conducted using pen and paper, Excel, and MaxQDA, professional software for qualitative data analysis.

Before moving forward, it is important to consider the ethical implications of harvesting and analyzing social media data. Twitter, in particular, presents ethical challenges because of the partial free availability of the data. Williams, Burnap, and Sloan (2017: 1150) noted that Twitter's "terms of service specifically state users' posts that are public will be made available to third parties, and by accepting these terms users legally consent to this." Despite this, researchers must always strive to protect their subjects from physical, psychological, and legal harm (Warwick, 1928). This is also true for virtual research methods, especially research focused on populations engaged in "deviance" or criminal activity. To that end, we did not collect any

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[6] The attempted coup occurred in Turkey on July 15th, 2016. During this time, a section of the Turkish military launched a coordinated yet unsuccessful effort to overthrow the government and President Erdogan.

[7] We used the term "War in the Middle East" to encompass three co-occurring conflicts in which the United States and other Western nations are involved include: the War in Afghanistan (2001 – present), Iraq (2003 – present), and Syria (2011 – present).

sensitive personal information for this study, nor did we make any attempts to bind users online and offline identity. We also de-identified each Twitter handle in this manuscript to protect the anonymity of the users. As a result, IRB approval was neither obtained nor required.

FINDINGS

The Tweets analyzed were responses to condemnations of three attacks attributed to ISIL or those inspired by ISIL. The condemnations expressed outrage toward ISIL actions but empathy for the victims of ISIL attacks (Hanley, 2014). The responding Tweets used both traditional and novel neutralization strategies; however, this paper limits its findings to one technique: condemnation of the condemners.[8] In general, our findings suggest that the users expressed frustration with critics for their perceived hypocrisy. In doing so, the users considered the condemners to hold little to no authority when it came to the ethics of war, criminality, and judgment. In the following sections, we illustrate three issues raised by the Twitter users in condemning the condemners: (1) *comparable violence*, (2) *selective silence*, and (3) *differential humanity* (see Figure 2).
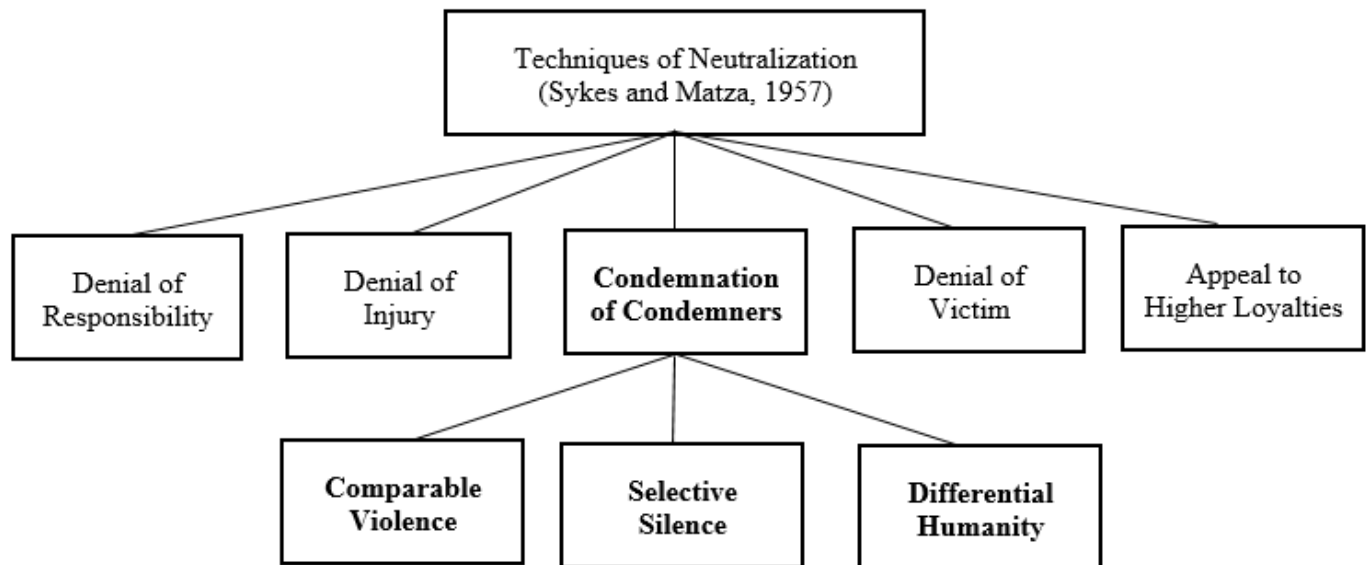

Figure 2. Conceptual Model

Comparable Violence

A variety of media condemn terrorist actions and members of terrorist groups following terrorist attacks (Altheide, 1987; Cho, Boyle, Keum, Shevy, McLeod, Shah, & Pan, 2003) and Twitter is one of many platforms used for such condemnations (Hanley, 2014). The soft-sympathizers' response to such criticism was to compare the violence by the Islamic State with

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[8] Although other techniques emerged during our analysis, we viewed this study as a unique opportunity to explore the particular nuances of a specific type of neutralization when used to justify or mitigate the lawbreaking of others. While researchers have developed new typologies (e.g., Cromwell & Thurman, 2003) or compared across existing techniques (e.g., Liddick, 2013), few studies have explored the intricacies of a particular neutralization technique—especially in the context of social reactions to deviance.

that of other armed forces. In particular, soft-sympathizers emphasized the accumulation of loss of life since the War on Terrorism began in the Middle East. For some users, this dates as far back as the Bush-initiated war in Iraq, while others focused on more recent events such as the 2011 Syrian uprisings. When it comes to the three attacks that are the focus of this study, soft-sympathizers often referenced military assaults by French and American armed forces. Tweets about strikes by the French military were common after the Nice ramming and the Paris coordinated assault, while users focused on the U.S. military after the Pulse Nightclub shooting. Regarding the latter, soft-sympathizers emphasized that Americans have been "dropping bombs" for years:

> #USA strikes against #IslamicState destroyed #MosulUniversity #AishaHospital 100s innocent civilians got killed #OrlandoShooting (K-------------1)

> To be fair the Americans have been doing this in Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 15 years with hundreds of thousands killed. (M--------y)

> @D---------- really? so the US kills no civilians in its wars, wake up buddy (h---------1)

These examples underscored soft-sympathizers' view of violence at the hands of Western Armed Forces as being equal to if not worse than that of the Islamic State. This justification was also a common feature in Tweets that compared the accumulation of civilian casualties between ISIL attacks and those of Western armed forces. The following examples were present after the terror attacks in Nice and Paris:

> It's really not that many, compared to frances air strikes and helpless muslims. (a------------1)

> What has touched #France is nothing compared to what they have caused to the Muslims #IS #ParisAttacks #IslamicState (d---------4)

> At least you were killed by s speeding Truck, not 500kg bombs as your army is dropping on Raqqa and Mosul while you proudly supporting it. (_----k)

The narrative of "sure ISIL did this, but you are worse" and its relation to hypocrisy is especially evident when soft-sympathizers point out airstrikes on soft targets such as "helpless" Muslims or students attending university. An important component of this condemnation is the idea that Western armed forces had long been killing innocent civilians (i.e., since the war in the Middle East) and that, as a result, the Americans and the French were responsible for more civilian casualties than ISIL.

Such condemnation was not restricted to Western forces. Other soft-sympathizers' Tweets referenced violence perpetrated by Saudi Arabia, Russia, and/or Syria. For example, users mentioned the Syrian President's use of chemical weapons against civilians, while others equated ISIL's terrorist attacks with daily life in the Middle East.

> #Assad condemns the #ParisAttacks - What a joke, dictators condemning terrorism while committing massacres in their own countries! #Syria (d---------s)

For perspective: 70 civilians were killed and 550 wounded in a single Assad airstrike in Douma two weeks ago. (i-------------i)

Russia commits the equivalent of an Orlando attack every single day in Syria. (X---------s)

Soft-sympathizers minimized terror attacks by normalizing violence: Attacks like those in Orlando, Nice, and Paris are "normal" and "predictable" in the Middle East. In this case, the condemnation of ISIL's attacks on the West was hypocritical in that, comparatively, these attacks were trivial when contrasted with daily life in the Middle East. In the examples below, the first Tweet, posted just hours after the Nice truck ramming, likened this rare event to "just another hour" in Syria. The second Tweet extended that same sentiment to the broader region in the Middle East.

@w----------t Thats nothing Just normal day or i should say just another hour in #Syria (D-------b)

Your #Orlando is my everyday Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Palestine... (i-------d)

The last feature of *comparable violence* addressed the hypocrisy in labeling events as terror attacks and offenders as terrorists. Many of the soft-sympathizers who compared attacks by Western armed forces with those by ISIL questioned why one attack is labeled terrorism but not the other. According to the users' logic, military violence in the Middle East should also be labeled terrorism since the loss of civilian life was equal regardless of the perpetrators' affiliation.

#Kafranbel: Killing civilians in Paris is terrorism; but what about killing civilians in #Syria?!! #Assad & #Russia (z--------a)

@s-----------2 50 peoples an act of hate but hundreds of Children,Women and Men in Muslimlands arent #WesternLogic (_--------i)

Killing civilians in Paris is terrorism; but killing civilians in #Syria is fight against terrorism! #ParisAttacks (d---------s)

In summary, the Tweets raising the issue of *comparable violence* centered on three specific claims. The first claim is that the amount of violence caused by the condemners' countries was equal to if not greater than ISIL's violence. The second claim is that the victims of violence by the condemning countries were no less innocent or helpless than ISIL's victims. The third claim is that the violence and disruption of life due to ISIL attacks was no different from the destruction in the Middle East at the hands of Western armed forces. Together, these claims intended to display the hypocrisy of the condemners and to undermine their moral credibility.

Selective Silence

The second issue raised in condemnation of the condemners is *selective silence* and the disproportionate amount of attention given to victims of ISIL's atrocities. In general, soft-sympathizers pointed to the general silence and lack of attention provided to victims after attacks in predominately-Muslim countries. Soft-sympathizers equated this silence to a lack of empathy with non-Western countries and Muslim victims. In contrast, soft-sympathizers also heard loud condemnations and expressions of solidarity with the victims and their countries after ISIL-attributed attacks, which they equated to sympathy with Western countries and Western victims. In short, soft-sympathizers equated silence with indifference. It is this perception of *selective silence* and inconsistent empathy that users addressed in their Tweets. For example:

> We are all France. Apparently. Though we are never all Lebanon or Syria or Iraq for some reason (d------------n).

> French flag is all over the world in solidarity with 84 ppl killed in #NiceAttack. South Sudan lost 300+ this week; grieving in agony alone (D----o)

> Where were the vigils, joint statements and day of mournings for all those innocently killed by Bashar, Sisi, Netanyahu, Hollande and Obama? (D------------8)

The above Tweets exemplify the soft-sympathizers' perception of empathy vis-à-vis indifference. Many Tweets focused on solidarity displayed through collective action, whether it be lowering the flag, group vigils, or days of mourning. The collective solidarity after attacks like those in Orlando, Nice, and Paris was interpreted as evidence of empathy, which was contrasted with the absence of expression of solidarity and empathy after events in the Middle East (whether they be assaults by Western armed forces, Assad's regime, or others).

Selective silence was also reflected through the occurrence of specific hashtags after ISIL-attributed attacks but not after military strikes in the Middle East. Hashtags are a categorization tool for social media users; they make it easier for other users to search content specific to that category. For example, after the Paris coordinated attack, some Twitter users tagged their Tweets with indicators of solidarity with Paris and the victims of the attack (e.g., #jesuisparis), while other users altered their profile pictures to include symbols representative of Paris or France, like the Eiffel Tower or the French flag. Twitter users also published hashtags like #PrayForOrlando or #PrayForFrance after the Orlando nightclub shooting and the Nice ramming, respectively:

> Americans and their friends accros Europe and India can use "JESUIS GAY" as insignia for next few weeks (h---------r).

> You hypocrites never made a single hashtag when Markets were bombed in Syria killing 100's -- #FranceAttacks (A-------------s)

Some soft-sympathizers also noted Twitter users' overall silence when it came to the war in the Middle East, only to be interrupted with occasional uproar after an attack on the West.

When you have never heard someone showed concerned about Syria and Iraq then suddenly post #PrayforParis lol (G----------_b)

Thousands of Afghans died and continue to die at the hands of Americans, but they'll only focus on the one Afghan who killed 50 Americans (o------7)

#Syria - Children burned to death in a market in #Idlib bombed by #Russia. World turns a blind eye! (d---------s)

Next, soft-sympathizers pointed to *selective silence* in the reporting by media outlets. Similar to critiques in the previous Tweets, soft-sympathizers argued the media were inconsistent in their coverage of violence and victimization. For some users, they perceived attacks like Orlando and Paris received too much media coverage, while attacks in Iraq or Syria were perceived to receive too little or no coverage comparatively:

Orlando shooting: Death toll: 50 Mass coverage
Idlib Regime aistrikes: Death toll: 41 Nevermind, just another day. (_---------_)

#syriaAttack #franceAttack many France attack take place in Syria on daily basis, how come that didn't hit headlines (R---------1)

The media is focused on the florida shooting killing 50 in a nightclub but ignores the 35 civilians bombed in a vegetable market in Idlib. (A-----------0)

In some cases, soft-sympathizers extended their claim of *selective silence* beyond Western audiences and the media. Users criticized their fellow Muslims for expressing more sympathy/empathy for Western victims than Muslim victims:

The #ParisAttacks is uncovering the munafiqun. Its as if muslim lives does not matter (d---------4)

@m-------k You are despicable! I never hear you condemning kuffar for killing of Muslims. When are your thoughts gonna be with the ummah?! (M----------1)

Just compare the whining about #Orlando by so-called "moderate Muslims" to what happened in #Idlib today. Nifaq and hypocrisy by definition (T-----------o)

As evident in many of these Tweets, soft-sympathizers criticized the munafiqun (i.e., "hypocrites") for the same reasons described earlier. Just as soft-sympathizers criticized primarily Western audiences for their selective attention and disproportionate coverage of ISIL attributed violence, the users claimed the larger virtual ummah to be unsympathetic to victims in the Middle East.[9] For example, some soft-sympathizers focused their attention on how silent Muslims find their voice only after attacks in the West:

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[9] The ummah refers to the global Muslim community. In one of the example Tweets, the word "nifaq" is used and refers to hypocrisy.

We Will see The Hypocrites together with Kuffar, Use US Flags on Profil? or Use some Hashtags #Pray4US, #Pray4LGBT" (C--------7)

Some 'Islamic speakers' don't share a Tweet for millions of muslims killed...but when something happens in west they arise from the dead" (a----------1)

Always silent on Muslim Issues but quick to Pray for the Non Muslims" (F-----L)

Other soft-sympathizers seemed upset over the Westernization of some Muslims who identified more with the West than with their Islamic roots:

These lollypop Muslims shows solidarity with French. Where were you when 1 month baby hit by barrel bomb? (A--------n)

Now those will come out from their holes and caves who will shout with the slogans: 'Not in my name' 'Je suis....' 'I condemn this...'" (S-----------d)

In summary, the theme of *selective silence* focused on selective attention and outrage after civilian casualties in the Middle East compared to ISIL-led or ISIL-inspired attacks in the West. Soft-sympathizers perceived Western audiences, including the general public and the media, to be indifferent to civilian casualties in the Middle East, including causalities that resulted from drone strikes by coalition forces to chemical attacks by the Assad regime. They perceived Western audiences to loudly condemn violence attributed to ISIL against the West, including Western Europe and North America, and to then stand in solidarity with the victims and the victims' countries. What emerged here is the perceived sense of avoidance, insensitivity, and silence in the general population and the media. The perceived degree of social response—the presence or lack thereof—by ISIL's condemners was an important aspect of how soft-sympathizers shifted blame from themselves and the Islamic State to their condemners.

Differential Humanity

The third issue raised in condemnation of the condemners is the perceived *differential humanity* applied to victims of ISIL-attributed violence. For many of the soft-sympathizers, attention and empathy were directly tied to victims' perceived humanity (or personhood). In other words, condemners of the Islamic State did not apply the same concept of humanity to both kinds of victims (i.e., those who are Muslim and those who are not). The lack of empathy for Muslims showed that the condemners unjustly attributed greater worth as human to non-Muslims than to Muslims:

Yet when a few gays are killed then the world goes in an uproar, why? Are your lives worth more than that of muslim women and children? (d--------2)

Why is everyone freaking out all of a sudden? People die everyday in Syria, it's not that big deal ha? I'm done with your selective humanity (F-----------e)

humanbiengs are only non muslims? where you condemnd the gynocide in syria iraq ,afghanistan waziristan burma iran? (A-----------1)

To the hypocrites who shed tears only when the victims are not Muslim. Muslims are humans too . (a------------n)

After terror attacks, world leaders often express condemnations against ISIL and offer support for victims and their families. For example, after the Paris Coordinated assault, Ban Ki-moon, then Secretary-General of the United Nations, condemned the attacks as "despicable," while President Obama called the attacks "outrageous," "heartbreaking," and "an attack on all humanity." U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry "share[d] President Obama's outrage and sadness" and declared the attack an "assault on our common humanity." Condemnations such as these fueled hostility among soft-sympathizers, which was present in their Tweets:

I guess drone strikes killing innocent Syrians, Iraqis, Yemenis, Afghans and Pakistanis isn't an attack on humanity? (o------7)

"Attack on all of humanity" Except the ones we bomb daily (P-------------I)

Obama described the French attacks as an attack against humanity yet the daily killing of civilians in Syria, Iraq & Afg by the West is not? (K-----------6)

Inclusion criteria for humanity was a common feature in the Tweets. Some soft-sympathizers concluded such criteria rested on whether or not a victim was Muslim and who had done the killing. The following Tweets exemplify the general idea that whiteness equals humanity and Muslim equals inhumanity:

 "Some are more equal than others" Describes Wests reaction whenever white people die. #animalfarm #ParisAttacks (N---------h)

4 million dead in bogus war on terror,300k dead in Syria and this cunt @J----------d only pipes up when it's dead Europeans #whitesupremacy (d-------1)

Yea - but they were'nt gay ,or US citizens or shiites or kurds or or or ...They were only muslim students so its ok (F-------d)

Children were murdered today by Russia in Idlib but as they were Muslims not homsexuals it doesnt matter #Orlando (A-------i)

A charge comparable to selective humanity was that of a selective entitlement to kill and not be killed. The following Tweets are examples in which soft-sympathizers note that the condemners think that they and not others have this right.

The problem is France thinks it has the right to kill people but not for its people be killed. Well France, it's unfair#PrayForNice (f------------1)

Western indoctrination teaches it's people that they have the right to bomb & kill without being retaliated against. (_-------m)

they killed more of ours than we have killed theirs.but somehow they always get the right to play as victims.#paris burn.#IS (A------------7)

What emerges from the above examples was the condemnation of the condemners and the perceived inequality between Western and Muslim victims, and who can or cannot be killed in a war. For the soft-sympathizers in our sample, this inequality often served as a foundation for their justification for ISIL-attributed violence.

DISCUSSION

The current paper makes an important contribution to the large and ever-growing body of research on violent extremism by offering a rich account and analysis of English-speaking Islamic State sympathizers. Drawing from Tweets posted by ISIL's soft-sympathizers that occurred within 24 hours of the Paris, Nice, and Orlando terror attacks, our findings suggest that soft-sympathizers commonly used the neutralization technique *condemnation of the condemners* (Sykes and Matza, 1957), which manifested in three unique yet complementary claims of (1) comparable violence, (2) selective silence, and (3) differential humanity. While our findings are consistent with traditional research on condemnation of the condemners, this neutralization technique was more complex than simply shifting attention and blame from oneself (i.e., the Islamic State, its members, and its sympathizers) to another (e.g., Western coalition forces, the media, etc.).

First, the users claimed that violence caused by the condemners' countries is equal to, if not greater than, the violence caused by the Islamic State. Specifically, the theme of *comparable violence* is grounded in the notion that Western armed forces are just as disruptive and destructive as ISIL. Interestingly, while the soft-sympathizers attempted to discredit ISIL's condemners, they simultaneously appeared to accept the immorality of ISIL's own tactics. This has important, albeit nuanced, implications for counter-terrorism strategic communications. The tacit acceptance by soft-sympathizers of the atrocities the extremist organization commits could be amplified to create marked dissonance in their followers. Moreover, as current messaging strategies emphasize the importance of rational appeals (i.e., messaging based on the cost-benefit analysis of supporting extremist groups), message campaigns that instead deploy identity-based appeals (e.g., the identity of nonviolence toward others) may be particularly effective. Given that soft-sympathizers make no attempt to deny the atrocities of which ISIL inspires, it may prove particularly useful to amplify the dissonance that this can cause with non-violent audiences.

The second theme, which we named *selective silence*, addresses the perception that Western audiences are indifferent to civilian casualties in the Middle East, while compassionate for victims in the West. The users perceived the degree of social response by ISIL's condemners as indicative of Western hypocrisy and which victims warrant attention, sympathy, and empathy, while others do not. An important feature of this theme is the soft-sympathizers attempt to discredit fellow Muslims who appear more sympathetic to the West than ISIL's self-declared Caliphate. This finding is significant regarding ISIL's ideology and extremist interpretation of the Qur'an. The concept of the *ummah*, or the global Muslim community, is an important master

narrative for Jihadist extremists for two reasons. First, references to the ummah are used to foster a collective identity among Muslims that cuts across any national or ethnic differences (Corman, 2016; Low, 2016). For example, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's sermons often focused on equivalency and solidarity among the Muslim community. By drawing on their global dissatisfaction, Baghdadi sought to create an ummah loyal to the Islamic State-led Caliphate and himself as the Caliph (Low, 2016). Second, the ummah is significant in defining the out-group and creating a common enemy. From this perspective, the ummah consists of "true Muslims" including those who comply with the rules of Islam and subject themselves to the ruler, while the out-group consists of the *munafiqun*. The munafiqun are the hypocrites: individuals who identify as Muslim, but do not comply with the rules of shari'a (Tibi, 2017; Woodward et al., 2014).This often includes fellow Muslims who criticize the insurgency or collaborate with the state, and are thus viewed as enemies of the faith who share a common destiny of rejection and death. One policy implication of this finding revolves around the credibility of the messenger (Ingram & Reed, 2016). Moreover, one consideration in establishing credibility of the messenger selected for delivery of a counter communication is whether to attribute or not attribute to an actual individual. Given that our findings demonstrate the tendency to denigrate messengers of counter narratives as hypocrites, it is particularly important to amplify messenger characteristics that are resilient to this mechanism. Thus, this finding may indicate that not attributing the identity of the counter-messenger may be an attractive strategy. The identification of so-called "hypocritical Muslims" shows a fissure in the global Muslim community that is in stark contrast to ISIL's master narrative, which could also prove useful in possible counternarratives.

This ties into the third and final feature of *condemnation of the condemners*: the perceived *differential humanity* applied to victims of mass casualty violence. In general, the soft-sympathizers contrasted solidarity with and empathy for non-Muslim victims in the West with a lack of solidarity and lack of empathy for Muslim victims in the Middle East. Taken together, such claims of hypocrisy and inconsistent condemnations are employed by the soft-sympathizers to undermine the moral credibility of ISIL's condemners and served as a foundation for justifying ISIL-attributed violence. One policy implication for this neutralization technique is to amplify the supportive actions the West currently implements in the Middle East, particularly following tragedies that occur there. A policy implication for this is to not only increase funding to the efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing aid in warzones, but also to increase funding for their strategic communications to shift the societal discourse around organizational responses to conflict (Allen, 2016).

Policy Implications

Twitter is a battleground of short ideas and competing thoughts. Twitter gives people an awareness of what hundreds or perhaps thousands of people are thinking at a given moment. This instantaneous awareness has a multiplicity of effects. It can amplify messages. It can exacerbate biases. It feeds selective perception, hindsight bias, availability bias, and many others. The critical policy question is how to operate in this cyber milieu. A recent article from the Wall Street Journal opined:

"Spending time on Twitter became...a deeply demoralizing experience. Often, especially when some controversy of national importance provoked large numbers of users into tweeting their opinions about it, I would come away from Twitter exasperated almost to

the point of madness...After an hour or so of watching humanity's stupidities scroll across my screen, I felt I had peeked into some dreadful abyss..." (Swain, 2019).

A strategy of consistent, voluminous, factual messaging is the only way to counteract such deluge.

When crafting these counter messages, senders could employ influence mechanisms, such as emotionally charged appeals about the future, or emotional comparisons to past referent groups, or rational appeals based on logic, data, and problem-solving rather than emotions and subjective construal. Rational persuasion involves the use of explanations, logical arguments, and factual evidence to show that decision is relevant for obtaining objectives (Yukl, 2006). Counter messages should attempt to provide a stronger form of rational persuasion with more detailed explanations and concrete evidence to back up the assertions. Along with facts and logic, this technique usually includes formal opinions or inferences that the receiver must accept. It has been shown that the success of this technique is moderated by the receivers' perception of the reliability of the source of the information (Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003). So, messengers that are credible in the eyes of the community are key when using this technique. In an inspirational appeal, the messenger makes a request or proposal that arouses enthusiasm by appealing to a target's values, ideals, and aspirations (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). Inspirational appeal moves people to through high rhetoric and linking opinions to values. With an apprising tactic, the messenger explains why a course of action is likely to benefit the target. This tactic also involves using facts and logic, but the benefits of the decision are placed in terms of the individual instead of the group. Unlike exchange tactics, the benefits are a by-product not something that the messenger promises to provide (Yukl, 2006). In order to effectively counteract the mechanisms discovered, thoughtful, consistent, factual, influential and voluminous messaging is required. Beyond this, the deliverer of these messages is crucial and must have credibility in the community.

LIMTIATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While these results are promising, they should be interpreted in light of three limitations. First, we only examined messages on one social media platform (i.e., Twitter) and in one language (i.e., English). While Twitter is one of ISIL's preferred platforms, it is not the only platform used by ISIL members and sympathizers (Derrick et al., 2016). As such, there may be variation in neutralization techniques employed by ISIL sympathizers across online mediums. In addition, because our analysis was limited to English-only Tweets, we have somewhat restricted the generalizability of our findings to drawing conclusions about neutralization techniques among English speaking ISIL sympathizers. Given concerns about foreign fighter recruitment (e.g., Borum & Fein, 2016), this analysis may be of most use to policy-makers in the West.

Second, we only coded Tweets that were posted within 24 hours of three ISIL-affiliated terror attacks. While the attacks in Paris, Nice, and Orlando were salient to Western audiences, they represent a small fraction of ISIL-perpetuated violence. According to the Global Terrorism Database (2018), ISIL has committed over 4,000 attacks since 2013. This figure only accounts for violence that was directed by ISIL (e.g., Paris), and not attacks that were ISIL-inspired (e.g., Nice and Orlando). It is likely that there are a broader set of justifications for ISIL violence surrounding high-profile attacks in the Middle East against non-Western combatants. As such,

our findings are limited to neutralization techniques among ISIL-sympathizers after attacks on Western targets.

Last, we only coded a subset of the data in order to explore the technique of condemning the condemners it its three forms: comparable violence, selective silence, and differential humanity. Given the number of Tweets in our dataset, it would be nearly impossible to code each Tweet. Instead, our goal was to code a subsample of Tweets in order to identify commonalities and reach theoretical saturation. In addition, we did not elaborate on event-specific neutralizations, but rather those techniques that emerged across all three events. In line with grounded theory analysis, our goal was to develop conceptual explanations that best fit the data. Relatedly, our results were framed using one neutralization technique: condemning the condemners. Future research could benefit from exploring additional neutralization techniques. For example, justification by comparison is employed when offenders justify their actions by comparing their crimes to more serious offenses (Cromwell and Thurman, 2003; Peretti-Watel, 2003). Similarly, researchers might find that sympathizers justify violent acts by comparing them to other violence generally, not just in comparison to violence by condemners.

Future studies should explore how these findings compare to neutralizations from members or sympathizers of different ideological orientations and across attack types. More specifically, future studies should compare these findings to neutralizations for violence from the far-right or far-left extremists. Similarly, future research can compare these findings to neutralizations presented around other ISIL-affiliated or Jihadi extremist terror attacks. Finally, future research should continue to unpack how neutralization techniques manifest around terror attacks. While our findings suggest that condemnation of the condemners was a salient technique among ISIL-sympathizers, other researchers should explore the extent to which other techniques are utilized.

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AN ANALYTICAL HISTORY OF BLACK FEMALE LYNCHINGS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1838-1969

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Abstract

Narratives on the lynching of black females in the United States have rarely commanded much more than minor postscripts in the lynching scholarship, thus leaving the historical picture of lynching violence incomplete and distorted. To correct for this unfinished portrait of American lynchings, the present work provides a contextual history on black females victimized largely by white male terrorists. To distinguish black female lynchings and bring into sharper focus the wretched horror suffered by black women and young black girls, this work constructs an inventory of 188 confirmed cases of black females lynched mostly by white mobsters from 1838 to 1969. A contextual history of black female lynchings supports the notion that vigilante violence against black women and girls was a means of gendered racial oppression in American society; black female lynchings were symbolic and cautioned marginalized black women and girls to maintain their inferior place in society to white male supremacy. One objective of this paper is to bring voice to this population of black females wronged by the interlocking systems of gender, race, and class oppression in United States society. Regrettably, black female oppression as an artifact of gendered racism remains a formidable characteristic of today's society.

Keywords: black female lynchings; lynching inventory; white vigilante violence; gender, race, and class oppression

The story of the black women who were caught up in the violent whirlwind of lynching has largely been hidden from history.[1]

INTRODUCTION

Narratives on the victimization of black women and girls through lynching violence are strikingly absent in historical studies. Scholars have noted that "most studies of racial violence have paid little attention to the particular suffering of black women," and as a result, "racial violence against black women has been little understood" (Simmons, 2015, p. 2). One reason for

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[1] Huber, 1998, p. 137.

this lapse in the lynching scholarship is that significant error challenges the reliability of what little attention scholars have presented on the history of black female lynchings. The more widespread difficulties encountered in researching female lynchings involve uncovering factual inaccuracies on the gender and race of lynching victims, discerning victims who did not actually die from injuries suffered from mob violence, and identifying victims who more accurately perished from private murders or lawful executions unrelated to lynching activity (Baker, 2012). It is also difficult for researchers to ascertain black female lynchings because historical records often identify female victims as simply wife, mother, daughter, or sister without reference to a name (Huber, 1998). Historical records invariably identify lynched black women as "Negress." In one account, a newspaper identified a female lynched in Rayville, Louisiana, in March 1892 as an "unnamed black woman." Probing deeper into the historical record reveals that the lynching actually involved a fifteen-year-old black girl named Ella Smith who worked as a house servant for W. R. Helmer on the Grenwell plantation in Richland Parish. Authorities accused Ella of poisoning eight members of the Helmer family and an unnamed black man who worked the stables on the plantation. A mob of masked men overpowered police escorting Ella to a local jail after she supposedly confessed to poisoning the affluent white family and hanged her from a large cottonwood tree. Ella reportedly added rat poison to a pot of morning coffee though none of the family members or the black man died from the poisoning. According to newspaper reports, Ella "often displayed a bad and reckless temper" and she "showed the greatest indifference to the probable results" of poisoning her employer's family. Actually, Ella's motive for the crime was revenge against the black man who had "in some manner offended the kitchen girl" (*Pocahontas County Sun,* 1892, March 17; *Atwood Patriot*, 1892, March 18; *San Antonio Daily Light*, 1892, March 14).

Many black female lynchings remain unidentified in the historical record because secreted lynchings of black women and girls took place where "disappearance [was] shrouded in mystery, for they [were] dispatched quickly and without general knowledge. In some lonely swamp a small body of men [did] the job formerly done by a vast, howling, blood-thirsty mob" (Berg, 2011, p. 165). Another important factor for the lack of information on black female lynchings is that the historical record reveals an overwhelming fixation on white women and the myth of the black rapist though the lynching violence associated with these outrages accounted for less than a third of black male lynchings (Berg, 2011; Hair & Wood, 2013; Wells-Barnett, 1895). The silence about female lynching victims accents the failure of anti-lynching organizations in the early decades of the twentieth century to dedicate ample attention to female lynching victims—only rarely did anti-lynching activists "mention the scattered lynchings of African American women as evidence to undermine the rape mythology surrounding southern mob violence" (Huber, 1998, p. 139). In any event, the number of black women and girls dead from lynching violence are surely undercounts and scholars will likely never know the actual number of black females murdered in response to white male loathing of the black race.

Nevertheless, enough information is available on black female lynchings that scholars recognize that white male vigilantism toward black women and girls was a means of gendered racial oppression in American society; black female lynchings were symbolic and cautioned black women and girls to maintain their inferior place in society to white male supremacy (Garland, 2005). White men regularly raped black women before lynching them, though such degradation rarely accompanied the lynching of white females (Baker, 2016). Mobsters had no concerns for black motherhood when they lynched pregnant black women and teenage girls; at

least ten black female lynching victims were heavy with child at the time of their murders. Worse still, as in the cases of Mary Turner in 1918 and Dorothy Malcolm in 1946, accenting the human tragedy of white male violence against black females involved cutting unborn fetuses from their abdomens (Baker, 1908; Marable, 1985; Newton, 2016; and compare Wexler, 2004). The "evil ingenuity" of a white Texas mob is also instructive—the men sealed a black woman in a wooden barrel lined with long sharp nails driven through the sides, and then rolled the barrel up and down a hill until she was a bloody corpse (Dray, 2003, pp. 103-104). Additionally, as the lynchings of Ella Smith and other young black girls reveal, mobsters harbored no misgivings about savagely murdering black children—even infants. These and other like events make it understandable why commentators on vigilante violence frequently denote black lynchings as *domestic terrorism*, *genocide*, *reigns of terror*, *massacres*, and a *holocaust*.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Compiling an inventory of black female lynchings in the United States required building a master list of unconfirmed black female lynchings from tabulated data in existing lynching inventories and academic sources. The study used several registries to assemble the master list of black female lynchings, though most of the cases included in the master list derived from inventories made up entirely of female lynchings, namely, DeLongoria (2006), Feimster (2009), O'Shea (1999), and Segrave (2010). A major failing of these registries, however, is that they draw from earlier data sources that scholars have challenged as inaccurate; specifically, lynching data collected by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the *Chicago Tribune*, and the Department of Records and Archives at Tuskegee University. Scholars explain that these primary data sources "are so flawed that sole reliance on them could possibly lead to misleading conclusions about the era" (Beck & Tolnay, 1997, p. 259). Indeed, factual oversights in these inventories render the lynching record so dubious that they challenge the accuracy of the historical narratives accompanying the inventories. Necessary to compiling an accurate inventory of black female lynchings was to *confirm*, *disconfirm*, or *unconfirm* each lynching in the master list using commercial digitized newspaper archives, academic sources, and other reputable resources.[2] The digitized archival newspaper sources used for this study were *NewspaperARCHIVE.com*, *Newspapers.com*, and *ChroniclingAmerica.com*.[3]

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[2] A *confirmed* lynching means that the author confirmed through digitized archival newspaper sources, an academic source, or other reputable sources that the lynching actually occurred. A *disconfirmed* lynching means that the author found inaccurate information about the lynching in reputable sources such as a victim's race or gender, no death from a lynching, the lynching was a lawful execution, or the killing was a private murder. An *unconfirmed* lynching means that the author could not find any supporting evidence that the lynching actually took place (see Baker, 2012).

[3] *Newspaper.ARCHIVES.com* provides an online historical newspaper database containing newspapers from 1607 to the present. *ChroniclingAmerica.com* provides a searchable database of United States newspapers produced by the National Digital Newspaper Program in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress. *Newspapers.com* is a subscription-based archive of historical newspapers published in the United States. Researchers note, however, a host of important methodological concerns in using newspapers as a source of socio-historical data and warn that the use of commercial digitized archival newspapers in lynching studies may actually compound these problems (Earl, Martin, McCarthy & Soule, 2004; Tolnay & Beck, 1995). For one, scholars explain that lynching inventories based on newspaper reports may undercount lynchings and thereby moderate the actual extent of lethal mob violence. Researchers attribute undercounts to a number of circumstances including that the lynching was unknown to the news media; though known, the lynching went unreported out of

As a form of "public memory," newspaper accounts of black female lynchings allow researchers to recreate the events in academic and literary narratives to bring greater insight into the contextual realities of black female oppression in the lynching era (Simien, 2011). Yet, there is an intrinsic bias in this public memory; the press often portrayed black female victims of white male violence as women and girls guilty of their supposed crimes and thus deserving of their maltreatment. Newspapers frequently used supportive language when describing the horrific actions of lynch mobs against black females and callously condemned lynching victims. What's more, the white southern press often provided moral and legal justification for mob actions against black women and girls. That is, as Sloan (1994) notes, the press upheld the social order and shaped public opinion on black lynchings. Berg (2011) explains also that researchers studying black female lynchings must recognize that "when a black woman was lynched, the white press usually assumed her guilt and defamed her character" (p. 109; see also Feimster, 2009; Perloff, 2000; Tolnay & Beck, 1995; Arellano, 2012; Waltrep, 2002).[4] Take the case of Eliza Woods lynched in Madison County, Tennessee, in August 1886 when a large mob overwhelmed guards at the county jail, abducted Eliza, bound her hands behind her, dragged her naked body through the streets, hanged her from a tree near the local courthouse, and then riddled her body with bullets. Eliza refused to confess to the killing. Eliza was a seventy-year-old cook who reportedly poisoned her white employer, Mary Wooten, though the only evidence of Eliza's guilt was that the dead woman's stomach contained arsenic and that authorities found a box of rat poison in Eliza's house. As one commentator reminds us, "the traditional fears of Southern planters that their black servants were constantly plotting to poison them made [black female domestics] expedient scapegoats of the unexpected loss of a loved family member" (Berg, 2011, p. 100). The white press disparaged Eliza as "a black female devil" and extolled her white employer as "an esteemed Christian lady." To malign Eliza even further, one newspaper claimed that Eliza was responsible for the poisoning deaths of more than a dozen people including eleven children (*Evening Bulletin*, 1886, August 21). Another newspaper confirmed the legitimacy of Eliza's lynching to the black community by reporting that "a notable feature [of her lynching] was the large number of Negroes present, including a number of women. All of them endorsed the action of the mob. All of them feared her." No newspaper provided any supporting evidence of Eliza's alleged crimes (*Logansport Journal*, 1886, August 20; *Syracuse Daily Standard*, 1886, August 21; *The Tennessean*, 1886, August 19; *Wayne Register*, 1886, August 27). Correspondingly, newspaper publishers cannot claim a naïveté in their denigration of lynched black females in support of white male supremacy. A case in point is that a major Alabama newspaper recently recognized its history of biased publication of black lynchings when it openly apologized for its "shameful" coverage of mob violence waged against blacks from the 1870s through the 1950s. The paper took to task its own "careless and dehumanizing coverage of lynchings [that] fed a false narrative about African Americans and often assumed the victim was guilty of the crime" (Moench, 2018, April 26).

There remains considerable debate among scholars on the definition of *lynching* (Bailey & Tolnay, 2015; Rushdy, 2012; Tolnay & Beck, 1995; Waldrep, 2000). As a result, there is no consensus among social historians on the definition of lynching. Scholars largely subscribe to the

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fear that the event would adversely affect the local community; or, though reported in local newspapers, news services or larger regional newspapers failed to report the lynching (Tolnay & Beck, 1995, p. 161).

[4] Perloff (2000) provides an excellent literature review of the white and black press in their reporting of black lynchings in the South.

NAACP's description of lynching: there must be evidence that a person suffered death; the person must have met death illegally; a group of three or more persons must have participated in the killing; and the group must have acted under the pretext of service to justice or tradition. The present study used this generally accepted definitional rubric to confirm, disconfirm, or unconfirm cases of black female lynchings. Specifically, verification of a black female lynching followed where at least one newspaper story, an academic source, or other legitimate source revealed factual evidence that *a black female victim died unlawfully at the hands of persons acting under a pretense of service to justice or tradition*.

Despite the limitations intrinsic to the NAACP definition of lynching espoused in the lynching literature (Bailey & Tolnay, 2015, pp. 3-4), the process of identifying black female lynching victims using the definition resulted in a list of 188 *confirmed* black female lynchings catalogued in Table 1 (see Appendix).[5] The inventory of black female lynchings includes the victims' names and ages, the date and place of lynchings, the race of lynch mobs, and the allegations or reasons for the lynchings. Included in the inventory of black female lynchings are cases involving riots and mass killings though these murders do not strictly comport with the commonly accepted definitional rubric of lynching. Some researchers believe that these cases should not be included in an inventory of confirmed female lynchings though other researchers believe otherwise. Whites killed thousands of blacks, including women and children, in race riots that one scholar denotes as "racial massacres" (Bell, 2004). It is important that researchers include black female killings resulting from race riots or mass killings as lynchings; after all, as Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal (1944) explains, "Sometimes the killing and beating of a large number of Negroes is called a riot: we prefer to call this a terrorization or massacre and consider it as a magnified, or mass, lynching" (p. 566). These questionable cases remain in the confirmed black female lynching inventory "to encourage others to make their own determinations about what should and should not be included in the inventory," to use Carrigan's (2004, p. 296) language.

A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF BLACK FEMALE LYNCHINGS

Detailed in Table 2 are the characteristics of black female lynchings by region in the United States (see Appendix). The data include the several decades in which mobs lynched black females, the ages of black female victims at the time of their killings, the race of lynch mobs, the methods utilized by lynch mobs to murder black females, and the reasons for mobs lynching black females. The regionalization of black female lynchings is important to the study of lynchings because, unlike other regions of the country, lynchings served the unique purpose of subjugating black females to white male supremacy throughout the southern caste system (Bailey, Tolnay, Beck & Laird, 2011). As a result, lethal mob violence toward black women and girls was largely a southern phenomenon with the vast majority of black female lynchings occurring in the South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central states of Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas. Mobs lynched five adult black females in the Middle Atlantic, East

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[5]One should note that these data include only one black female lynching discovered by the Equal Justice Initiative's (EJI) investigation into lynching in twelve Southern states from 1877 to 1950. EJI researchers documented 4,075 lynchings of African Americans in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia; some 800 more lynchings of black people in these states than previously reported. Despite repeated requests to Bryan Stevenson, Director of the EJI, the EJI has not released these data for public use.

North Central, West North Central, and Pacific states of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Missouri, and California that comprised nearly 3 percent of confirmed black female lynchings between 1838 and 1969. Though these non-southern killings comprised a very small proportion of the overall number of black female lynchings historically, their occurrence reminds us that mobs murdering black women and girls were not restricted to the South (Pfeifer, 2013). There are no recorded black female lynchings in New England or Mountain states. Modernly, scholars have linked the regionalization of lynchings to elevated homicide rates, use of the death penalty, the strength of white nationalism, church burnings, levels of incarceration, and the enforcement of hate crime laws in southern states (see Bailey & Tolnay, 2015, pp. 28-31).

Identifying the ages of black female lynching victims is important because, as one social historian has recently noted, "Destroying black children is an indelible part of a long American tradition of preserving white supremacy" (Patton, 2014, February 18). Accordingly, the beating, lynching, shooting, burning, raping, and the killing of black adolescents in dynamite explosions were essential to maintaining white male supremacy in southern society. For this reason, it is imperative that scholars parse out for analysis the lynching of young black girls in the South. In doing so, researchers avoid erasing the history of young black girls as unique lynching victims. Only then can scholars assure that analysis of lynching atrocities suffered by young black girls remain distinct from the mob murders of older black women. Clearly, this requisite derives from recently published works historicizing black female childhood and the gender and race-based violence accenting their young lives (Chatelain, 2015; King, 2005, 2011; Simmons, 2015; Wright, 2016). The difficulty with realizing this imperative, however, is the dilemma confronting researchers to identifying young black girls as lynching victims in newspaper stories, only rarely did newspapers report the ages of black females subjected to lynching violence. Table 2 reveals that the ages for roughly 70 percent of lynched black females are unavailable, unknown, or otherwise unreported in newspaper stories. Of the fifty-seven cases of confirmed black female lynchings where the age of the victim is available, twenty-two cases involved black girls younger than eighteen years old. Other than the horrific slayings experienced by young black girls, newspaper accounts of young black female lynchings reveal precious little about the lives of these girls (Bailey & Tolnay, 2015).[6] Thus, any discernable patterns in the ages of black females at the time of their mob killings are merely conjectural.

Still, the historical record on black female lynchings reveals that young black girls were infrequently the immediate targets of murdering mobs; most of their deaths were secondary or "collateral victims" to the deliberate killing of their fathers, brothers, and on occasion, husbands (Huber, 1998). Most often, mobsters murdered their intended black male targets by firebombing or shooting indiscriminately into black men's homes and in doing so killed their wives and daughters. The historical record shows that at other times mobsters deliberately murdered teenage black girls in retaliation for their fathers or brothers' misdeeds. As Simien (2011) notes,

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[6]It is imperative that researchers focus far more diligently on the victimization of young black girls during the lynching era. To learn more about the daily lives of these young children, a follow-up study to the present research project will focus on these children using census data and the research methodology utilized by Bailey and Tolnay in their work *Lynched: The Victims of Southern Mob Violence* (2015). Cross-referencing the names of lynched females catalogued in Table 1 with census data may not only increase the number of actual cases of young black females lynched in the period, but also offer considerable insight into the lives of these young victims of murderous violence.

these female deaths were not incidental, but essential to maintaining white supremacy as punishment for defying the social order.

Newspaper stories reveal that in at least six cases mobs deliberately targeted young black girls for offenses that the girls reportedly committed against whites. Accordingly, fifteen-year-old Julia Brandt hanged for her part in the robbery-murder of a white woman named Ada Kennedy, fifteen-year-old Ella Smith hanged supposedly for poisoning a white family, a fifteen-year-old girl surnamed Taylor hanged reportedly for the murderous assault of a white woman, seventeen-year-old Jennie Collins hanged for allegedly assisting Jack Farmer as a fugitive in the killing of a white man named Earl Chase, seventeen-year-old Marie Scott hanged apparently for her part in the killing of a white man named Lemuel Pearce, and sixteen-year-old Alma Howze hanged for ostensibly participating in the murder of a white man named Johnston.

The lethal brutality accenting black female lynchings involved various forms of mob action other than white-on-black violence. One classification scheme explains that although white mobs with black victims comprised the vast majority of *interracial* mob violence, the *intraracial* violence of white mobs with white victims was only slightly more familiar than black mobs with black victims (Beck & Tolnay, 1997; Hill, 2010). Though black female lynchings largely involved white mobs, black-on-black mob violence was an aberrant feature of black female lynchings. Black mobs lynched black women on at least three occasions: black vigilantes burned to death Mary Hollenbeck in Georgia in 1886 for the killing of a black child, shot to death Anna Marby in Louisiana in 1900 during a race riot, and hanged Laura Mitchell in Arkansas in 1910 for spousal murder. American Indian mobs also lynched black females. In at least one case in 1895, a Choctaw Indian mob in eastern Texas dismembered the body of Louisiana Fisher, an elderly black woman accused of witchcraft that the Choctaws feared. Also uncommon were integrated black and white mobs that lynched at least three black women and one young black girl for crimes against whites. Integrated mobs hanged young Julia Brandt in South Carolina in 1880 for robbery-murder; burned to death Jane Campbell in Louisiana in 1881 for arson, hanged Harriet Finch in North Carolina in 1885 for murder, and hanged Eliza Woods in Tennessee in 1886 for poisoning.

Walter White (1929), a civil rights activist and executive secretary of the NAACP, believed that lynching in the South exhibited "a bestiality unknown even in the most remote and uncivilized parts of the world" (p. 21). More recently, social critic Elliott Jaspin (2007) has noted that white mobsters used "the most unimaginable brutality" to enforce white patriarchal control over the southern black underclass (p. 60). These commentators make it clear that contrary to conventional notions about lynching, "these exhibitions of sadism" did not exclusively involve *hanging* victims from a nearby tree or railroad trestle. Accenting the history of black lynchings was a "ritualistic hatred" and "public hysteria" culminating in "public spectacles of mockery, humiliation, and torture" (Brundage, 1993, p. 92). Black women and girls suffered horrendous forms of killing: *burning alive*, *decapitation*, *bludgeoning to death*, *whipping to death*, *drowning*, *stabbing to death*, *cutting victims' throats*, and *dying in dynamite explosions*. Mobsters burned to death at least fourteen black women and girls. Though roughly two-thirds of black female lynching victims died by hanging or shooting, mob lynchings of black females often involved more than one killing method such as hanging and shooting, hanging and burning, and shooting and burning. These are the same killing methods mobsters reserved for black males; as Berg

(2011) remarks, "when black women were accused of especially shocking offenses, white lynchers insisted that they deserved the same rough justice as black men" (p. 109).

One of the more horrific acts of lynching savagery against black women involved the killing of Mary Turner in May 1918. Mary and her husband Haynes Turner were tenant farmers on Hampton Smith's land in Valdosta, Georgia, and had recently quarreled with Smith about wages due the Turners. A black man named Sidney Johnson, fed up with Smith's abuse of black workers, shot and killed Smith and wounded his wife. A mob quickly formed after learning of Smith's murder. Johnson escaped a posse searching for him but hanged Haynes Turner and left his lifeless body hanging for two days after learning that those involved in Smith's murder had plotted the attack at Turner's house. When Mary threatened to swear out arrest warrants against members of the mob, the county sheriff arrested Mary, and while transporting her to a nearby jail, the mob abducted and hanged Mary. White (1929), who interviewed members of the mob responsible for Mary's death, gave a candid account of the lynching:

> Securely they bound her ankles together and, by them, hanged her to a tree. Gasoline and motor oil were thrown upon her dangling clothes; a match wrapped her in sudden flames. 'Mister, you ought to've heard the nigger wench howl!' a member of the mob boasted to me a few days later as we stood at the place of Mary Turner's death. The clothes burned from her crispy body, in which, unfortunately, life still lingered, a man stepped towards the woman and, with his knife, ripped open the abdomen in a crude Caesarean operation. Out tumbled the prematurely born child. Two feeble cries it gave—and received for answer the heel of a stalwart man, as life was ground out of the tiny form. Under the tree of death was scooped a shallow hold. The rope about Mary Turner's charred ankles was cut, and swiftly her body tumbled into its grave. Not without a sense of humor or of appropriateness was some member of the mob. An empty whiskey-bottle, quart size, was given for headstone. Into its neck was stuck a half-smoked cigar—that had saved the delicate nostrils of one member of the mob from the stench of burning human flesh (p. 27).

The motivation of mobs to lynch black women and girls were multifaceted. Mobsters lynched black women and girls for many of the same reasons that they lynched black men, aside from the "rape myth" phenomena. That is, lynching violence toward black women and girls was largely in retaliation for alleged crimes against whites involving cases of murder, arson, robbery, and theft. Black women were more likely to use poisoning as a weapon than black males given the position of black females in white households as domestic servants. Documented cases of black female lynchings reveal that mob lynchings of black women and girls resulted in part from black females lashing out against their white male oppressors. Huber (1998) points out that the "evidence suggests that the majority of female victims of mob violence were sharecroppers' wives, domestics, transients, widows, prostitutes, and other economically and socially marginalized women who lacked major protection" (p. 137). Racial fanaticism frequently motivated mob action against black women and girls; mobs lynched black women when their actions transcended racial boundaries in cases of miscegenation—"white southerners considered interracial sex taboo" (Simmons, 2015, p. 84). White terrorists lashed out against black women and girls when their husbands and fathers engaged in political activities such as registering black voters or organizing black labor. Black women and girls' resistance to sexual attacks, sassing

white men, or exhibiting an unsavory character often triggered lethal mob violence. Hostile race relations threatening the social stability of the southern caste order hastened black female lynchings. Retaliation against civil rights activists moved white men to dynamite black homes and black churches often killing black women and girls; the historical record identifies at least thirteen black women and girls killed by whites during periods of racial unrest.

The racial oppression and violent persecution suffered by black women and girls at the hands of white men surely manifested into deep emotional and psychological trauma for some black females (King, 2005, 2011; Thompson-Miller, Feagin & Picca, 2015; Thompson-Miller, 2011). Undoubtedly, the tyranny of gendered racism typifying the harsh existence of black women and girls drove them to commit horrific crimes against their white oppressors. One measure of this pain and suffering is the violence that some black women directed toward children. The historical record reveals that four black women murdered black and white children. The most troubling of these cases involved Mary Hollenbeck who several newspapers reported in July 1886 committed "one of the more horrible stories of human depravity." The reports reveal that a black man named Samuel Frick had left his four-year-old daughter in the care of Mary while he worked at a turpentine still in a nearby county. When Frick returned and called on Mary to reclaim his daughter, Mary could not produce the child and gave "many evasive and contradictory replies as to arouse a suspicion that something was wrong." With the help of neighbors, Frick searched the premises and soon found his child's body hidden in a salt pork barrel. With the threat of Frick killing her with an axe, Mary admitted that two days after Frick had left the child in her care neighbors called on her to prepare dinner for a neighborhood picnic. "Having no meat, and knowing that she would get no money unless she served some, she determined to kill the child and cook its flesh." Mary had killed the child with an axe, dismembered it, and served it at the picnic as a stew. Soon after her admission, a group of Tattnall County blacks in Georgia took Mary into a field chained her to a post in the middle of a pine wood heap saturated with kerosene, and set the mound on fire. "In fifteen minutes she fell among the blazing knots and was burned to a crisp, nothing remaining after the fire died out but a few charred bones and a ring which she had on one of her fingers" (*Palo Alto Reporter*, 1886, August 6; *Elkhart Review*, 1886, July 28; *Bloomington Daily Leader*, 1886, July 28).

A CONTEXTUAL HISTORY OF BLACK FEMALE LYNCHINGS

Table 2 also shows the number of black female lynchings by decades from the 1830s through the 1960s. The historical record reveals that no black female lynchings took place during colonial slavery; the prevalence of lethal violence did not develop until after the mid-19th century. A few black female lynchings occurred in antebellum slavery, but the vast majority (roughly 80%) of black female lynchings took place in the Jim Crow South beginning in the late 1870s. The historical record also confirms white mobsters killing black women and girls in the civil rights period from the mid-1950s through the 1960s.

Colonial Slavery

Slave historians distinguish *colonial slavery* (before 1790) from *antebellum slavery* (after 1790) to acknowledge the variant forms of slavery that developed in discrete regions of the United States at differing times and for separate reasons (Berlin, 1980; Kolchin, 2003). The historical record reveals that no black female lynchings occurred during colonial slavery. One of the more important reasons for the absence of black female lynchings in colonial slavery is that

mob violence rarely involved deadly assaults before the mid-19th century when non-lethal physical attacks, tar-and-feathering, and banishment largely accented collective violence against marginalized persons (Berg, 2011; see also Rushdy, 2012). It was only after the mid-19th century that "mobocracy" became more frequent and more deadly.

Several events gave rise to increasing rates of collective lethal violence when the United States entered a period of wide-ranging economic, social, and political development. For one, the American population increased dramatically in the first five decades after the war for independence. The non-immigrant population more than quadrupled by the mid-19th century, and the substantial increase in immigrant populations of mostly persons of Irish and German descent directly challenged the dominance of Anglo-Protestant culture in United States society. About one-fifth of the nation's population lived in urban centers while much of the remaining population moved westward into fertile lands to grow cash crops essential to eastern markets that in turn necessitated construction of transportation thoroughfares such as roads, canals, river ways, and railroads. The nation was industrializing, modernizing, and developing a working class. Notably, increased communication among the populace with development of the electric telegraph and increases in newspaper circulation moved to politicize the masses. As a result, citizens brawling with recently arrived immigrants, intensified violence against religious dissidents, fierce clashing of opposing political interests, lynching of suspected criminals, and growing antagonisms over southern slavery accented the era (Berg, 2011; Dale, 2011).

Still, horrific white violence burdened the lives of colonial slave women and girls. Southern planters mostly relied on the brutal violence of "plantation justice" to control recalcitrant slave women and girls. One commentator notes, for instance, that when a Georgia slave girl complained to her master that another slave attempted to rape her, the planter beat the girl with his cane and then "ordered her to be stript stark naked, haul'd up to a Bean by her arms tied … and afterwards to be terribly whipped" (McNair, 2009, pp. 33-34). Milton Ready (2005) describes another horrendous case of plantation justice:

> Dr. Matthew Hardy, colonial North Carolina's 'evil physician,' conducted a petit feu in front of his assembled slaves and their families. In Northampton County in 1743, Hardy had Lucy, a young female slave who presumably refused his advances or who angered him by his actions, tied to a crude triangular ladder. He then made some of her friends whip her, and, in a particularly hateful act, forced her own mother to set fire to the straw gathered at her feet. After a few torturous minutes, Hardy, at gunpoint, orders another slave to drag Lucy's entire body 'through the fire." He then refused supplies and aid to her. She died a few days later from her burns and injuries. Since it was not a felony to kill a slave by the Code of 1741, Hardy appeared in court, offered no explanation for his action, answered some questions concerning his 'breach of the peace,' and went back to his rounds as the county's physician, treating the ailments and injuries of both freemen and slaves (p. 80; see also Berg, 2011; Pierson, 2007).

Antebellum Slavery

In contrast to colonial slavery, the historical record confirms that mobsters murdered black women and girls in antebellum slavery. Citing early newspaper sources, historian David Grimsted (1998, p. 103) confirms one of the earliest recorded black female lynchings in antebellum Arkansas in 1838 when an unnamed slave woman brutally murdered her mistress. Grimsted (1998, p. 108) also reports that in Cane Hill in 1840, a mob of leading citizens including ministers hanged a mulatto slave girl who had axed her mistress to death while being brutally beaten. Female slave lynchings occurred in antebellum Missouri as well. In May 1850 in Clay County, whites hanged slave woman Annice for an attempted murder of her mistress, Mrs. Dinah Allen. It seems Annice entered Allen's bedroom early one morning and struck Allen in the face with a large knife while Allen slept. Allen awoke to find her face bleeding profusely. Weeks after the assault, authorities surmised the plot to murder Allen and arrested Annice who confessed to a priest that she and a white man surnamed McClintock had conspired to kill Allen to steal her money and then leave the state. Apparently, McClintock had promised to marry Annice and take her to California after the murder. Once officials arrested McClintock, a group of white "farmers, mechanics, merchants, lawyers, physicians, and others" met at the local courthouse to decide the defendants' fate. The group's main concern was that neither Annice nor McClintock was eligible for the death penalty because the law only permitted legal executions for actual killings. It troubled the group that since Allen had survived the attack the worst punishment facing Annice was "a whipping, sale, and transportation out of the state," and that McClintock would receive only a prison term. The group voted to lynch Annice and McClintock on the outskirts of town (*Burlington Iowa State Gazette*, 1850, May 29; *Gettysburg Adams Sentinel*, 1850, June 10).

In another antebellum Missouri incident, Callaway County whites hanged bondwoman Teney in November 1860 for bludgeoning to death Susanna Jemima Barnes, the teenage daughter of her white mistress. Teney had beaten Susanna to death with a shovel while her family attended morning church services. Teney confessed to the killing when confronted with a bloody dress found hidden in a cornfield where she had worked earlier in the day and which Teney had worn during the killing. No reports suggest why Teney bludgeoned Susanna to death though she often infuriated Teney, "a female slave of irascible and dangerous temper." A deputy constable arrested Teney and took her to a jail in nearby Fulton, but when the deputy had the prisoner within three miles of the jail, a large mob overpowered the constable, abducted Teney, and then hanged her from a nearby tree (*Manitowoc Pilot*, 1860, November 16; *New York Times*, 1860, November 7).

In the Civil War years, Pike County townspeople in Mississippi hanged two black women. In August 1864, the proprietors (Wolf, Hiller and Company) of slave women Mary and Tena petitioned the state for compensation for the loss of their slaves after townspeople hanged the two women for plotting to murder several "helpless" white families and to destroy the property of their masters by setting fire to a store, warehouse, and several dwellings. Townspeople captured Mary and Tena as they fled to nearby Union soldiers for protection. The slave owners complained that given the virtual suspension of the courts and the insecurity of the jails, county citizens hanged the two slave women in violation of the owner's property rights. Records of the petition give no reason for Mary and Tena conspiring to commit the offenses, though one could reasonably assume that the slave women were emboldened to lash out against

their white oppressors with the Union Army closely approaching (Digital Library on American Slavery, PAR 11086402).

Reconstruction

The decade immediately following emancipation was one of the most turbulent periods in American racial history. Faced with defeat of the Civil War, economic uncertainties, religious fundamentalism, and a collective loss of honor attributed to the former slaves, southern white society unleashed black lynchings as the "hatred, fear, loathing, and horror of Afro-Americans" attained "levels of emotional, political and religious intensity" (Patterson, 1998, p. 192). The institutional confines of slavery that seemingly sheltered black persons from extralegal violence broke down, rendering the former bond people vulnerable to white violence (Marable, 1985; Rushdy, 2012). To Friedman (1993), "Lynching was hardly necessary as an instrument of terror and domination during slavery. But after the [Civil War] lynching became a crucial extramural prop of white [male] supremacy" (p. 190). What's more, as Bell (2004) points out, "the pecuniary value of which the individual Negro formerly represented having disappeared, the maiming and killing of them seemed to be looked upon by many as one of those venial offenses which must be forgiven to the outraged feelings of a wronged and robbed people" (p. 372, note 2). Patton (2014, February 18) specifically notes that the brutal destruction of black children's lives through lynching violence largely occurred when black people "lost their economic value as "property" owned by white slave masters. In return for their lost economic value, black children were further devalued, unlike white children who became national symbols of innocence and worthiness."

Race riots were among the motivations of white mobs lynching black females in Reconstruction. Violent racial confrontations between black and white persons in mass killings took place when whites attacked entire black communities. Race wars resulted from white male supremacists' desperation "to regain their political power and restore their control over the recently emancipated African Americans" (Friedman, 1993, p. 190). One disturbing feature of the period was the vulnerability of black women and girls to white male sexual violence that was greater in the postbellum period than it had been during slavery (White, 1998).[7] The sexual brutalization of black women continued with white men raping, shooting, scalping, and cutting off the ears of black women who resisted their sexual advances (Wade, 1987). White employers beat black women for "using insolent language" and for refusing to call employers "master" (Foner, 1988). Black women often witnessed white mobs whipping, flogging, beating, assaulting, castrating, and murdering their young children (Carrigan, 2004). Whites murdered nearly 300 black persons in Caddo Parish in Louisiana between 1865 and 1876; women were undoubtedly among the dead. Women were among the more than 2,000 blacks slaughtered by whites near Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1865. Whites set fire to an entire black settlement in 1866 during which they lynched more than two dozen black men, women, and children. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, other serious race riots occurred in several cities including Memphis, Meridian, Vicksburg, and Yazoo City. Southern whites regarded the lynching of black

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[7]Accenting southern slave life in early colonial America was also white planters' sexual objectification of enslaved men, the remnants of which remain well seated in white cultural beliefs about black male sexuality today (see Jordan, 1969; Kendi, 2016; King, 2005). As Foster (2011) explains, "Narrowly defining sexual assault along gendered lines has obscured our ability to recognize the climate of terror and the physical and mental sexual abuse that enslaved men also endured" (p. 448).

persons as lawful; they understood it as "law enforcement by informal means, a community-sanctioned extension of the criminal justice system … a legitimate, at times even gallant, defense of all that whites held sacred" (McMillen, 1989, p. 239).

There are several confirmed racial terror killings of black females during Reconstruction though the historical record is often not very instructive on the reasons for mobs lynching black women and girls. In July 1866, an Alabama mob bludgeoned to death an unnamed young black girl for an unknown reason, and in August of that year, a white mob in Texas murdered another unnamed black woman for an unspecified reason. Earlier in April 1866, a mob of white men in Washington County, Texas, murdered freedwoman Maria and two freedmen, James Mayfield and Green Taylor, one of which was Maria's husband.[8] It is unclear why the killings took place other than the broad contempt that whites held toward newly freed slaves. The victims lived with two elderly freed persons in a house on the Husier farm. Federal agents arrested four white men for the murders, but a military commission tried only two of the men—James Hall for Green Taylor's murder and William Benton for Maria and James Mayfield's murders. The commission ultimately acquitted both men because the two unhurt freed persons could not positively identify the murderers and knew only that they were young men of the neighborhood (*Flake's Bulletin*, 1867, March 6). A similar event occurred in Tarrant County, Texas, in August 1866 when a mob of white men took an unnamed freedwoman from her house, raped, and murdered her for an unspecified reason. There is some information in the historical record concerning the racial killing of a black freedwoman named Minerva James in Hopkins County, Texas. There, according to a letter from a white farmer named Joe Easley to the Freedmen's Bureau (1868, July 17), armed men kidnapped Minerva from Herman Spencer's home and brutally murdered her about a mile from the house. Supposedly, Minerva was going to reveal the name of a white murderer to Union soldiers. Joe Easley wrote that if he had space to give the particulars of the killing, "you would say it was the most horrid murder you ever heard of" (McLure, 2013).

Mobsters in Louisiana frequently killed freed persons outright during the period. In late September 1868 at the Shady Grove plantation in Bossier Parish, whites murdered several freedmen and one unnamed freedwoman during a black insurrection against local landowners (*Galveston Daily News*, 1868, September 5; *Dubuque Daily Herald*, 1868, October 30; Freedmen's Bureau Online, 1868, October). Klansmen wreaked havoc on free black persons in several counties in North Carolina by killing entire families. In January 1869, a violent and sadistic outrage occurred when Moore County Klansmen fire bombed the home of black freedman Daniel Blue and murdered his pregnant wife and four of his five children. One of the Klansmen killed another child after discovering it was still alive "by kicking its brains out with the heel of his boot." Though Daniel and three of his daughters were able to escape the inferno through an opening in the floor, the fire trapped his wife and a young daughter both of whom burned to death. The white terrorists targeted Daniel because he was a prosecution witness in an arson case against the Moore County Klan.

The *Wisconsin State Journal* (1871, September 1) reported that a mob of anonymous men shot to death Matthew Deason, the white sheriff of Wilkinson County in Georgia, in early September 1871. The same mob also knifed to death an unnamed black woman employed by

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[8]There is confusion in the historical record as to Maria's surname, "Taylor" or "Mayfield." The Freedmen's Bureau identifies Maria as surnamed "Taylor" and the *Congressional Globe* (1987) identifies Maria as surnamed "Mayfield."

Deason. Afterwards, the mob dumped the two bodies in a millpond. Newspaper reports fail to explain why the mob murdered the white sheriff and his black female employee, but one can reasonably surmise that the mob acted on the notion that Deason and the woman were involved in a romantic relationship forbidden in southern society (Daniely, 2014, pp. 55-59).

Klansmen in Kentucky murdered black women whose husbands were political organizers associated with the Republican Party and engaged in registering black voters despite death threats to stop the practice. Klansmen lynched Mrs. John Simes (given name unknown) in Henry County in September 1870 because her husband was a Republican involved in registering black voters. Two years later in Fayette County, Klansmen abducted and murdered Samuel Hawkins, a black Republican voter-registration leader, along with his wife and grown daughter in early November 1872. Newspaper stories reported that armed men entered Hawkins' house and took him, his wife, and their daughter away to the Licking River where the mob drowned the family. The Klan killed Hawkins and his family to deter other blacks from becoming involved in political affairs (*Fort Wayne Daily Sentinel*, 1872, November 5).

Most white residents of Limestone County in central Texas strongly opposed congressional reconstruction in the aftermath of the Civil War that resulted in many black killings. Race-based sentiments accenting the region became so troublesome in the 1870s that the governor declared the county under martial law. It was in this strained racial environment that white men murdered Nathaniel Burges and his mother-in-law for no apparent reason (Caldwell and DeLord, 2015). Five white men shot into Nathaniel's house killing him while his mother-in-law, Sarah Field, attempted to escape the shooting through the chimney but the murderers shot her to death when she reached the top (*Austin American-Statesman*, 1874, July 9; *Dallas Weekly Herald*, 1874, July 11).[9] Similarly, Klansmen went on a bloody rampage in Shelby County, Kentucky, in late October 1874 after warning white farmers not to hire black workers. In the midst of the unrest, Klansman went to white landowner Thomas Ford's farm where they whipped black farmhands and threatened Ford that he would receive the same unless he drove off the blacks. Afterwards, the same mob went to the house of a black farmer named Barringer and fired gunshots at the house killing his daughter with a bullet to her right eye. The young girl's murder so outraged the state's governor that he put out a $9,000 reward for the capture of the Klansmen. Despite the sizeable reward, "the men responsible for the raid and for the murder of the Barringer girl avoided arrest and prosecution" (Wright, 1990, pp. 31-32).

The Kentucky lynching of Mollie French in May 1876 was unusual because whites hanged Mollie and her husband Benjamin for killing another black person. Mollie was the last recorded racial outrage against a black female during Reconstruction. Gallatin County officials jailed Benjamin and Mollie for the arsenic poisoning death of an aged and respected black man named Jacob (Lake) Jones. The French's poisoned Jones to death in an attempt to get possession of his money. While awaiting trial, a mob of white men took the French's from the county jail and hanged them from a tree about two miles from town. One historian explains, "Whites thought fondly of 'old' Lake Jones, who had served faithfully, before and after emancipation, a prominent white man. He was, in the estimation of regional whites, 'the best nigger in the county'" (Ibid, pp. 98-99). According to the *Titusville Morning Herald* (1876, May 5), "The French's were regarded as bad characters, and probably no steps will be taken to discover the

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[9] There is confusion in the historical record whether the woman killed with Nathaniel Burges was his wife (given name unknown) or his mother-in-law.

participants in the hanging." Reportedly, townspeople knew Ben as a chicken thief and suspected Mollie of several poisoning murders including a past husband (*St. Albans Advertiser*, 1876, May 19; *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1876, May 8).

Jim Crow

Whites in the post-Reconstruction south continued to harbor a gross intolerance toward marginalized persons, and lynching proved an effective means to ensuring whites' social, political, and economic supremacy. Jim Crow segregation took hold as an institutional means of subordinating blacks with the collapse of Reconstruction, and by 1890, southern society had fully established the legal separation of blacks from white society (Sitkoff, 1981). White mobs murdered the vast majority of black female lynching victims during Jim Crow when southern society implemented restrictive measures (black codes) marginalizing black Americans from voting rights, access to public facilities, and equal opportunities in education, employment and housing. Though Congress provided new constitutional protections to blacks with passage of the Reconstruction Amendments to the federal constitution,[10] the U.S. Supreme Court was complicit in sanctioning the institutionalization of white male supremacy in the post-Reconstruction era. Beginning with the *Civil Rights Cases* (1883) striking down the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1875, a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions effectively dismantled the federal civil rights protections put in place during Reconstruction and ushered in a constitutionalization of white hegemony in U.S. society.[11] These judicial mandates effectively replaced laissez-faire segregation and brought about the complete legal domination of black people. As a result, whites again had the full force of law behind them in their social, political, and economic dominion of black people.

The social instability of Jim Crow ushered in yet another killing period for black people. As one scholar puts it, "the history of the post-Reconstruction and Jim Crow South is littered with episodes of horrific violence committed against blacks … men were castrated and women disemboweled" (Jaspin, 2007, p. 164). White violence against blacks accented rural life in small southern towns that often escalated into fierce racial wars in southern urban centers in the Carolinas, Louisiana, Georgia, and Texas. A wave of brutal race riots accented the Jim Crow decades when lynching was but one form of violence directed against blacks. The racial violence accenting the period "included the ethnic cleansing of entire counties and the prohibition of African American residence in certain towns (known as 'sundown towns' as blacks found to be present after dark would be subject to violence)" (Cook, Logan & Parman, 2014, p. 2; Jaspin, 2007). Gendered racism against black women not only exacerbated their lynching numbers, but also increased the volume of black women condemned to the southern convict lease system, chain gangs, and legal executions (Baker, 2008; Blackmon, 2008; Haley, 2016; LeFlouria, 2015).

Vigilantes often hanged black women alongside their children and other family members. In some cases, mobs lynched black women and girls in place of another suspect family member. Take the case of Mrs. Cordella Stevenson in Columbus, Mississippi, in December 1915. There,

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[10] Congress passed the Thirteenth (abolishing slavery except for persons convicted of a crime), Fourteenth (providing for equal protection of the law), and the Fifteenth (prohibiting discrimination in voting rights) Amendments between 1865 and 1870.

[11] The cases were *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896 (upheld separate but equal treatment of whites and blacks), *Williams v. Mississippi*, 1898 (upheld requirements for voters to pass literacy tests and pay poll taxes), and *Giles v. Harris*, 1903 (upheld requirements and qualifications for voter registration).

police officials took Mrs. Stevenson into custody and questioned her about her son's involvement in the arson of a white man's barn. Police questioned Cordella for six days about her son's whereabouts and his involvement in the crime. Police released her after she convinced them that her son had left the area several months before the barn burning and that she did not know of his whereabouts. One commentator notes that Mrs. Stevenson "was an upstanding woman in her community and a good tenant and laborer" (Williams, 2012, p. 135). Still, a white mob abducted Mrs. Stevenson from her home after breaking down the front door and brutally raping her. The mob hanged Mrs. Stevenson's naked body from a tree limb where officials left her hanging for several days.

The lynching of black women and girls from the end of Reconstruction to the early days of the civil rights movement accents the brutality and violence suffered by black females during Jim Crow. Mostly southern jurisdictions lynched black females for crimes of murder against white people. The killing of black women and girls was particularly heinous; white mobs lynched white females but there is no confirmation that white female lynching victims suffered the savagery inflicted on black women and girls. Because white society excluded black women "with little or no formal education and few technical skills . . . from the urban industrial workplace," many black women lynched in the period were domestic servants and housemaids whose offenses involved horrid crimes of resistance against violent white aggression (Seitz, 2005, p. 41).

Table 2 reveals that black female lynchings increased dramatically to their peak in the 1890s. Beginning in the 1900s, though, black female lynchings decreased significantly to the 1930s despite a marginal rise in their numbers in the 1910s. Scholars suggest that an overall decline in black lynchings resulted mostly from the migration of black laborers from southern farms to northern manufacturing industries—commonly known as the "Great Black Migration." At the turn of the 20th century, most of the nine million blacks living in the United States resided in the rural South where black women were domestic workers and black men were sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and farm laborers. Some two million blacks migrated from the South in the early decades of the 20th century and took on unskilled manufacturing jobs in packinghouses and the steel industry in New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Illinois. Black migrants were mostly black males; much about black female migration remains unstudied. As one researcher puts it, "there remains an egregious void concerning the experience of black women migrants" though recently some scholars have explored the lives of black girls and their girlhood in the period (Hine, 1991, p. 128; Chatelain, 2015; Lemann, 1991). Still, some scholars surmise that black female migrants had limited economic gains compared to black men in northern industries. Black women found work as cooks, waitresses, maids, ironers, labelers, stampers in mail order houses, as laborers in garment and lampshade factories, and in food processing and meat packing plants. White women's resentment toward black female workers was also an impediment to black women's employment opportunities, white women strenuously "objected to sharing the settings, including hospitals, schools, department stores, and offices" with black women (Hine, 1991, p. 140).

Scholars offer *economic* and *social* reasons for black Americans migrating from southern states in the period. Economic factors explaining black migration largely involved increased economic opportunities for poor southern blacks in northern industries. Researchers point out that northern employers recruited the low-cost labor of poor and illiterate southern blacks "as

industries geared up to produce the armaments required for the new war [World War I] and the previously steady stream of European migrants slowed to a trickle" (Tolnay & Beck, 1992, p. 217). Social factors for black migration involved voting restrictions, educational inequality, discrimination in public places, and the inequities of a biased southern judicial system. Severe floods and boll weevil infestations added misery to black lives locked in the plantation economy of the South.

Surely, racial violence did much to push blacks out of southern states especially in those areas where white lynch mobs posed the greatest threat to blacks. Scholars explain that a reciprocal relationship existed between migration and racial violence; "not only did black migration respond to the level of racial violence, but the level of racial violence directed at blacks may have been influenced by the level of the black exodus from southern areas" (Tolnay & Beck, 1992, p. 106). Escaping the sexual violence of southern white men gave particular impetus for black women migration (Hine, 1991, 1989). The decline in black female lynchings, however, did not result from changes in improved race relations. Berg (2011) makes it clear that "white supremacists had not surrendered their goal of maintaining racial control over the black population but had merely renounced the extreme and increasingly embarrassing instrument of lynching" (p. 158). It is also clear that the legal establishment had little effect on the demise of black female lynchings in the period:

> Throughout the Progressive Era, lynching remained a brutal crime that went largely uninvestigated, unprosecuted, unpunished, and undeterred by the agents of law at every level of government. State and local officials did not enforce existing law, and federal officials failed to enact any new legislation. Thus, lynchers never faced any serious deterrent from the government and could murder black people openly, notoriously, and boldly, without fear of reprisal. This failure of the state and federal governments to protect blacks from lynching is part of a larger and more persistent failure of American law to find sufficient ways to defend black life and to ensure the promise of the Reconstruction Amendments to make African Americans full citizens (Holden-Smith, 1996, p. 39; see also Kato, 2016).

The historical record on black female lynching reveals that mobsters lynched black women and black girls during Jim Crow mostly for murder, as accomplices to murder, and felonious assaults including poisoning of white persons. Mobsters also lynched black women for murdering their employers' young children and their own children. The burning alive of Jane Campbell in September 1881 by an integrated mob is one such occurrence. Jane Campbell, a black woman living near Dyke's Mill, Louisiana, had become angry at her two young children for disobeying her and she beat them to death—Jane had literally beaten the brains out the children with pine knots. She was a poor woman who supported herself and her children by washing and picking cotton. After a coroner's inquest and a verdict announced, a mob dragged Jane from her cabin and roasted her alive over a fire despite her pleas for mercy (*Brownstown Banner*, 1881, September 29; *Le Mars Daily Liberal*, 1881, September 27; *Burlington Daily Hawk Eye*, 1881, September 18).

In another child murder case, a white mob murdered Rosa Richardson in July 1914 in Okfuskee County, South Carolina. Rosa Richardson was a mentally challenged cook and nanny for Daniel and Rhoda Bell. Daniel Bell was the father of nine and a local landowner and farmer. Rosa, a heavy-set woman and about thirty years old, lived alone in a small house on the Bell

property. Authorities accused Rosa of beating to death Essie Bell, the twelve-year-old daughter of the Bells. Essie went missing after her father sent her to retrieve the family's cow grazing in a nearby pasture. Searchers found the child's body partially hidden beneath a log and badly beaten with her skull crushed. Attention focused on Rosa and her sister Alice who officials jailed. Once searchers learned of Rosa and Alice's arrest, a mob battered the jailhouse door and abducted the two prisoners. Alice quickly confessed that Rosa had killed the child. The mob took Rosa to a large gum tree on the Bell's property where she confessed to the killing. The mob hanged Rosa and riddled her body with bullets; her body remained suspended from the tree for several days. There was speculation that Rosa killed Essie for revenge. One report upholds the notion that Daniel may have killed Essie after the child learned that her father and Rosa were having sexual relations (*Atlanta Constitution*, 1914, July 13; *Keowee Courier*, 1914, July 15).

There is speculation among some lynching scholars that white mobs murdered particular black women and girls because they were members of economically successful households (Feimster, 2009). It may *not* have been the case, however, that four white men killed Ben Pettigrew and his two daughters because the family owned a successful cotton farm in Savannah, Tennessee. In early December 1911, while taking a load of seed cotton to a Savannah cotton gin, four white men ambushed Pettigrew, shot and killed him, and then dragged Pettigrew's two daughters from the top of the cotton load and hanged them from a nearby tree. The white men then drove the wagon to directly below where the young girls were hanging and set it on fire, burning all three bodies. Passersby saw the blazing cotton and pursued the killers but they escaped. A posse of three hundred men quickly formed and chased after the killers. A coroner's inquest resulted in the arrest of two white men named George Sheldon and John Bailey (brothers-in-law) for murder; *the motive for the killings was the robbery of Pettigrew* who was taking money to a bank while transporting his load of cotton. Sheldon and Bailey hanged in Nashville in July 1912 for the Pettigrew robbery-murder (*Reynolds Journal*, 1912, July 31; *The Gazette*, 1912, July 31; Espy & Smykla, 2004).

Several lynchings of black women and girls were revenge killings when white mobs retaliated against black women for transgressions committed by another family member. In March 1900, for instance, a mob lynched a black man (name unknown) for the shooting death a prominent merchant in Letohatchee, Alabama, named Sam Howell. James Crosby, the most outspoken about his friend's lynching, fearlessly declared he would seek revenge. More than a thousand blacks were outraged over the lynching. In response to Crosby's outspokenness about the lynching, whites went to his house at midnight in early March and riddled his house with buckshot killing Crosby. Stepping over Crosby's dead body, the mob dragged Mrs. Cosby and her young daughter and son from their beds and shot them to death (*Cynthiana Argus*, 1900, March 10; *New Castle News*, 1900, March 7; *Atlanta Constitution,* 1900, March 4).

A few years earlier, in November 1893, near Barnstown, Kentucky, authorities arrested and jailed Phil Evans for the rape of a twelve-year-old white girl named Edna Hall, the daughter of Edward Hall. Evans denied the charge and testified that he was at home on the night of Edna Hall's assault. It seems Phil Evans and Edward Hall had been drinking when Evans agreed to take Hall home but instead put him in a straw pile where he fell asleep. Evans then went to Hall's house and tried to break in after Hall's wife refused him admittance to the house. Hall's daughter ran from the house when Evans caught her, took her to an outhouse, and raped the child. Evan's trial so instigated confrontations among white and black residents that officials called in the state

militia to calm the agitations. After an all-white jury convicted Evans of raping Hall, a mob tried to take Evans from the jail to lynch him but the county sheriff and military guards had already taken Evans to Louisville. During Evan's trial, a mob used dynamite to blow up Evan's home killing his mother, his wife, and his "little girl" (given names unknown). One report states, however, that the morning after the bombing of Evan's house his wife had gone to town and made statements to a newspaper concerning the mob's motive behind the bombing. Most other newspapers at the time reported that Evan's family had died in the bombing. Consequently, the historical record is unclear whether Evan's family actually died in the explosion or had escaped unscathed and ran from the area. In any event, the twenty-one-year-old Phil Evans hanged at the gallows in January 1894 where he admitted to raping Edna Hall (*Connersville Daily Examiner*, 1893, November 13; *Marion Daily Star*, 1893, November 13).

Property crimes including arson, theft, and robbery were another reason for white mobs lynching black women and girls. In a theft case in early December 1895, a mob of six white men, and a lone black man in Colleton County, South Carolina, abducted and murdered a young black man named Isom Kearse for stealing a Bible and some pulpit furniture from St. Nichol's Church in Barnwell County. Isom had a reputation as a thief who townspeople also suspected of burning a store some time earlier. The mob took Isom from his house, put a rope around his neck, tied him to the back of a buggy, and then dragged him for two miles to a swamp. Members of the mob also abducted Isom's mother, Hannah Kearse (Walker), more commonly known as "Old Mamma Hannah," and Isom's seventeen-year-old wife, Rosa Kearse, the mother of a five-month-old baby. The mob questioned the three about the stolen church property but they denied having any knowledge of the theft. The mob then stripped the three naked and beat them severely with a buggy trace. Isom received some one hundred fifty lashes but Hannah and Isom's wife broke away and ran into nearby woods during the beating. While Isom's wife was able to make her way back home, authorities found Isom's body where the mob had left him and Hannah's body lying in a pool of water some one hundred yards away. Judge James Aldrich held an inquest "composed entirely of good white men from the neighborhood" and after two trials, juries acquitted the men involved in the Isom killings (*Jeffersonville News,* 1896, February 26; *Atlanta Constitution*, 1896, February 21; *Atlanta Constitution*, 1896, February 24).

Hostile race relations in the Jim Crow south also manifested into race riots, feuds with whites, racial cleansing, or giving testimony against white persons were reasons for black female lynchings. Unadulterated "racial hatred" is the reason sources give for a white mob killing of sixty-year-old Rosemond Cormier, a physician, and his fifteen-year-old daughter Rosalie Cormier in Lafayette, Louisiana, in 1889. Thirty masked men rode up to Cormier's small cabin and demanded entry, but when Cormier refused, they broke down the door. Cormier then fired both barrels of a shotgun into the crowd, killing one white man (John Judice) and seriously injuring several others. Cormier and his daughter ran but the mob soon captured them and blew the entire back part of Cormier's head off and then shattered the front of his head with a rifle. The men cut Rosalie's throat from ear to ear, nearly decapitating the young girl. Authorities arrested two men for the murders including a deputy sheriff. It seems that two months earlier, regulators had whipped Cormier and ordered him to leave the county, but he refused. One newspaper reported that "the residents of Lafayette and the Courts of Louisiana seem content to allow [this atrocity] to pass into history unavenged" (*Lincoln Weekly Nebraska State Journal*, 1889, September 13; *Elkhart Daily Review*, 1889, September 14; *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, 1889, September 11).

Many other black women died at the hands of mobsters for resisting sexual assaults, miscegenation, writing a letter to a white woman on behalf of impertinence and scolding white children. Charlotte Morris and her husband, Patrick Morris, a white railroad worker, underwent tortuous treatment from a mob of whites in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, for their interracial marriage. Whites had torn down their house and threw the debris into a river bordering New Orleans. They later bought a houseboat and whites whipped them after they refused to move. Whites threatened them with death, but still they refused to leave. To some sources, the houseboat soon became "a vile resort for low Negro women" and "such a scandal that the people decided to tolerate them no longer" (*The World*, 1896, January 13). In January 1896, a mob of twenty assembled and set fire to the houseboat. The mob shot Pat Morris in the leg while he attempted to put out the fire and burned to death. The mob shot Charlotte Morris in the head and she too burned in the fire. One source claims that before setting the house on fire, the mob "placed them on their bed and used axes to hack their bodies to pieces" (Tolnay & Beck, 1995, pp. 77-78). The couple's eleven-year-old son, Patrick, Jr., escaped by swimming across the river and told authorities that he recognized a police officer named Jerome and a saloonkeeper named Gasenberg as the men who started the fire, and that a judge of the parish was at the fire (*Janesville Daily Gazette,* 1896, January 13).

A white mob in Jefferson County, Alabama, lynched an older black woman named Elizabeth Lawrence in July 1933 apparently for verbally reprimanding a group of white children who threw rocks at her as she walked down a road. After learning of Elizabeth's scolding of the children, a white mob murdered Elizabeth and burned down her home. Elizabeth's son, Alexander, filed a police report once he learned of his mother's murder; he had been out of town during the lynching. Alexander escaped to Boston to avoid a lynching himself for contacting police (Equal Justice Initiative, n.d.).

In late July 1946 in Walton County, Georgia, a mob of unmasked white men ambushed and shot to death Roger Malcolm, Dorothy Malcolm George Dorsey, and Mae Murray Dorsey— all in their twenties. The mob used rifles, shotguns, pistols, and a machine gun to murder the victims. The killings took place after Roger Malcolm's arrest and subsequent release on a $600 bond for stabbing Barnette Hester, a planter for whom the Malcolm's were sharecroppers. The stabbing resulted from an argument between Roger and Hester about Roger's mistreatment of his wife Dorothy; Hester and Dorothy may have been having an extramarital affair. The mob intercepted the car of a prosperous planter named Loy Harrison who was taking the four back to his farm after posting Roger's bail. The mob dragged the four victims from Harrison's car, tied them to trees, beat them savagely, and then shot them to death ripping their bodies to shreds with the gunfire. One among the mob used a knife to cut Dorothy's unborn baby from her body; Dorothy was seven months pregnant. Authorities found the bodies near the Moore's Ford Bridge spanning the Appalachia River. A coroner's inquest ruled that the four died at the hands of parties unknown. The murders drew national attention and the condemnation of President Harry Truman who sent the FBI to investigate but who met a wall of silence. The FBI suspected that Georgia Governor Eugene Talmadge, one of the state's most virulent racist governors, may have "sanctioned the murders to sway rural white votes during a tough election campaign." The FBI and Georgia Bureau of Investigation recently reopened the case and offered a reward for information about the lynchers, some of whom may still be living (Wexler, 2004; Newton, 2016; *Gastonia Daily Gazette*, 1946, July 29; *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 2002, April 28; *Monroe Morning World*, 1946, July 28).

Another case took place on Christmas Day in 1951 in Mims, Florida, when Klansmen active in the state bombed the Moore home, instantly killing Harry Tyson Moore and seriously injuring his wife Harriette Vyda Simms Moore who died eight days later. Harry was an activist who had a long career of vigorously fighting racial discrimination against blacks in Florida. He founded the Brevard County chapter of the NAACP in 1934, and in March 1938 filed the first lawsuit in the Deep South to bring parity pay to black public school teachers who earned half the salaries of white teachers. Harry was active in organizing black voters, and in 1944, he investigated the lynching of fifteen-year-old Willie James Howard who had sent a Christmas card to the daughter of a white, former state legislator. A federal grand jury in Miami handed down indictments in 1953 against seven Klansmen after an initial investigation into the Moore's deaths in 1951 and 1952, but officials never made any arrests in the case. State prosecutors reopened the case in 1978 and again in 1991, but closed the case in 1992 for lack of evidence. More recently, though 55 years later, investigators with the Florida Attorney General's Office implicated four white Klan members in the killing Harry and Harriette Moore—Earl J. Brooklyn, Tillman H. Bevlin, Joseph N. Cox, and Edward L. Spivey. All but Spivey died within a year of the bombing, Cox committed suicide after an FBI interview about the case, and the other two died of natural causes. Before dying of cancer in 1980, Spivey gave several confessions to investigators about the bombing. The investigation has brought some sense of closure to the Moore's daughter, Evangeline Moore, though the Florida Attorney General's Office closed the murder case of Harry and Harriette Moore in July 2011 (Freedom Never Dies; Reed, 2006, August 17).

On April 25, 1953, Sheriff Jenkins beat to death a paralyzed sixty-three-year-old woman named Della McDuffie during a nighttime raid of a café operated by Della and her husband Willie. On that night in Alberta, Alabama, Sheriff Jenkins led a raid of the café wielding a black weapon resembling a rubber hose and swung it left and right at the patrons, hitting a number of them. In the midst of the mêlée, he shot his gun into the floor and ceiling and patrons scrambled to get out of the café. Della, however, could not get out of her wheelchair and Sheriff Jenkins repeatedly struck her with the hose. Willie summoned a physician to treat Della but she succumbed to her injuries shortly after the physician's arrival at the café. Apparently, the physician falsely stated on Della's death certificate that she died a cerebral hemorrhage brought on by a preceding condition of arteriosclerosis. No authority ever conducted an autopsy of Della's body. Willie sought assistance from the head of the Mobile, Alabama, branch of the NAACP. He and many others supplied affidavits about what happened in the café. The Mobile NAACP branch contacted Thurgood Marshall who persuaded the Justice Department to open an investigation in July 1953 and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice asked the Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate Della's killing. In September 1953, the Department informed Thurgood Marshall that it would take no action in the matter. A year after Della's death, officials found Willie dead under suspicious circumstances and no officials ever conducted an investigation into his death (Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, 2013 May).

Civil Rights

American society was a violent place for black people during the early civil rights period (Daniels, 2005, August 22). Unquestionably, whites invoked a horrific toll against black Americans in the struggle for civil rights with sadistic beatings and the outright murder of

hundreds of civil rights activists. Still looming in our collective memory is the white violence precipitated against black people engaged in nonviolent protests for social, political, and economic equality. A generation ago, the country watched televised broadcasts of nightstick-wielding Alabama state police and mounted sheriff deputies brutally beating hundreds of peaceful civil rights marchers at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma (*Tampa Tribune*, 2004, March 7). The marchers had just made the fifty-four-mile trek from Montgomery protesting Jim Crow policies prohibiting black voting rights and the police shooting of young Jimmy Lee Jackson who died while trying to prevent troopers from beating his mother during a black voter registration march weeks earlier (Perkins, 2002, May 29). Also are the images of whites humiliating and taunting blacks at lunch counter sit-ins, black students escorted to college classrooms by national guardsmen, and white terrorist attacks against freedom riders. The civil rights movement saw the Montgomery bus boycott protesting segregation in the aftermath of Rosa Parks' refusal to relinquish her bus seat to a white man. Moreover, who can forget the angry white mobs attacking school buses carrying black children in northern cities to newly desegregated white schools years later (Rimer, 1995, September 25; see also Bennett, 1992, December 28; Daniels, 1983, April 17). Whites terrorized the black community by burning crosses on black family's front lawns, burning churches, attacking blacks in public places, attacking black students, throwing nooses around black teenagers' necks, shouting racial slurs, random killings of black men and women, holding a knife to young black girls' throats, and targeting and killing black children (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, 2004). What's more, countless black women disappeared from communities throughout the South during the period. Whites meant these acts of racial terror in the civil rights era to warn blacks to "keep their place" in southern society.

White mobs murdered at least sixteen black women and young black girls during the civil rights period. Many of these cases remain unresolved by federal and state law enforcement. One of the earliest racial terror killings involved a black woman in late March 1956, in Hyde County, North Carolina, when Thurman Evans discovered the body of Angenora Spencer, estranged wife of Otis Spencer, on the side of a road while in route to making a delivery. Evans alerted the local sheriff who found Angenora partially clothed with her legs bound to her head by a skirt. She died the next morning at a local hospital. She had suffered a blow over her left ear. Newspaper reports on the killing explain that whites most likely killed Angenora for miscegenation (*Washington Daily News*, 1956, March 25; *Belhaven Pilot*, 1956, March 29).

In East Flat Rock, North Carolina, in November 1957, the State Bureau of Investigation could not explain the killing of Frank Clay and his wife. A passerby found Frank Clay's body in the backyard of the Clay's home and police later discovered Mrs. Clay slumped against a bedroom wall in the home. A coroner's report revealed that Mrs. Clay died from a shotgun blast to the side and that Frank died from a stab wound in the groin. Sheriff Deputies found a twelve-gauge shotgun in the blood-filled kitchen of the home, but they did not find a knife. Prior to their killings, the Clays had received a series of telephone death threats from callers claiming to represent the Klan. Neighbors found a cross smoldering in the Clay's front yard on the day of the murders (*Burlington Daily Times News*, 1957, November 20; *Gastonia Gazette,* 1957, November 20; Dailey, Gilmore & Simon, 2000; Tyson, 2004).

The Klan was active in and around Ringgold, Georgia, in 1960 when Mattie Green, the mother of six children and a domestic worker for a retired railroad worker, suffered fatal injuries

from a bomb blast of her home in May of that year. Investigators suspected that Klansmen had put a homemade bomb under Mattie's bedroom in attempt to kill her husband, Jethro Green, because of his association with the NAACP. In March 2009, the FBI reopened the murder case of Mattie Green as a civil rights investigation. In that investigation, an unnamed black woman reportedly told investigators of a conversation she had with Sheriff J. D. Stewart years after the bombing. In that discussion, the unnamed woman stated that Sheriff Stewart told her that "a white male named Lester Waters had confessed to the bombing and that the guilt had driven him crazy." Sheriff Stewart took Lester Waters to a mental facility in Milledgeville, Georgia. The investigation also revealed that Lester Waters was a Klan member and a friend of Sheriff Stewart. There is no confirmation that Stewart was a Klan member, but according to researchers, "At the very least, the friendship between Lester Waters and Sheriff J.D. Stewart poses the obvious question about equal protection for blacks in a system where law enforcement openly fraternized with known active Klan members." The FBI finally closed the case for lack of evidence in May 2012 (*Appleton Post Crescent*, 1960, May 19; Catherwood & Richardson, 2011, March 19; Newton, 2016).

One of the more appalling displays of racial violence took place in September 1963 when the Eastview Klavern chapter of the Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16th Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, by planting dynamite under the church steps the night before Sunday services. The blast killed four young black girls—ten-year-old Addie Mae Collins, eleven-year-old Denise McNairm, and fourteen-year-olds Carol Robertson and Cynthia Wesley—and injured twenty-two other adults and children. The church had been the center of civil rights activities in Birmingham; the Klan ordered the bombing to protest federal court mandates to desegregate the city's public schools. The bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church was the twenty-first such bombing in Birmingham in eight years and the third in eleven days. One reason for the large number of church, home, and business bombings in Birmingham was that at least a third of the city's police department was Klansmen. With the help of informants, the FBI quickly identified Klansmen Robert E. Chambliss, Bobby Frank Cherry, Herman Frank Cash, and Thomas E. Blanton as the racist bombers. The FBI, however, blocked and eventually stopped the investigation of the four murders principally because FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's fanatical opposition to the civil rights movements. "It has now become clear that the FBI not only impeded the arrest and prosecution of the four suspected men, but for years withheld incriminating evidence from state prosecutors that would have provided overwhelming evidence of their guilt" (White, 2001, May 20).

Alabama prosecutors tried Robert Chambliss for the murders but won only a conviction on possessing dynamite; he paid a fine and spent a short time in jail. In 1971, Alabama prosecutors reopened the case and a state court convicted Chambliss in 1977 for his part in the bombing and sentenced him to prison where he died in 1985. Herman Cash died in 1994. Investigators reexamined the case again in 1980 and 1988 but made no arrests. In response to community pressure, the FBI reopened the case a third time in 1995 and indicted Thomas Blanton and accomplice Bobby Frank Cherry in 2000 using evidence not available to state prosecutors in the original case. A jury convicted Blanton of first-degree murder who is presently serving a life sentence with the possibility of parole at a state correctional facility. An Alabama court declared Cherry incompetent to stand trial, but in January 2002, a circuit court judge reversed the order that held Cherry incompetent. In May 2002, an Alabama jury convicted Cherry for his role in the killings. Cherry died in prison in 2004 (*Washington Post*, 2002, May

24; Randall, 2000, May 5). In May 2013, nearly fifty years after the 1963 attack in Birmingham, President Obama signed legislation to posthumously award the four young girls the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor Congress can bestow upon a civilian. The President signed the legislation before relatives of the young girls (Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Monthly Bulletin, 2013, May).

One unresolved racial killing of a black female during the civil rights period in Florida is that of Johnnie Mae Chappell. One evening in March 1964 in Jacksonville, four young white men senselessly killed Johnnie Mae, a mother of ten who had just finished her grocery shopping at Banner Food Market after a thirty-mile bus ride from her job as a domestic worker for a white family. Once Johnnie Mae arrived home, she discovered she had lost her pocketbook and went to search for it by retracing her steps down New King's Road to the market. Albert Smith and Tildia Sanders were two neighbors that accompanied Johnnie Mae in search of her wallet. At the time, racial violence had erupted in downtown Jacksonville and the white men angered by the racial troubles resolved "to find themselves a nigger to shoot." Wayne Chessman, Elmer Kato, James Alex Davis, and J.W. Rich drove a dark colored sedan down the road from which Rich fired a twenty-two-caliber rifle at Johnnie Mae hitting her in the abdomen. An ambulance service took Johnnie Mae to a local segregated hospital where she later died from the gunshot wound (*Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 1964, March 24; *Manitowoc Herald Times*, 1964, March 24). Jacksonville police detectives investigated the murder after Chessman had approached them at a local diner twice over the next few weeks following Johnnie Mae's killing. At one of the encounters, detectives found Chessman's behavior strange and invited him to the police station where the suspect quickly broke down and confessed to his role in Johnnie Mae's murder. He named his accomplices who confessed to police as well. Authorities indicted all four men for first-degree murder. After a two-day trial, an all-white male jury convicted Rich of manslaughter and the court sentenced him to ten-years in the state penitentiary. Officials dropped all charges against the other three defendants though the men had confessed to their involvement in the crime. In April 2004, Governor Jeb Bush asked the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to reopen the Johnnie Mae Chappell case in hopes of having first-degree murder charges reinstated on the three unindicted murder suspects. These men are now in their late sixties and still live in Jacksonville. Johnnie Mae Chappell's lynching remains an open investigation (Hastings, 2003, December 1; Murphy, 2005, September 7; Smith, 2000, April 5).

Officials know little of the murderous outrage committed against seventy-six-year-old Selma Kelly Trigg in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in January 1965. One historian explains that the racist killing of Selma took place in the aftermath of four days of U.S. Civil Rights Commission hearings wherein public officials were "called to account for their abuse and obstruction of would-be black voters." Selma mysteriously burned to death in a house fire of unknown origin while trapped in her bedroom. The Department of Justice closed the case in May 2010 for lack of evidence that a crime actually occurred and ruled Selma's death accidental. Though the historical record reveals no known reason for Selma's killing, one can logically assume her death resulted from white terrorists lashing out against her as a black voter even if the FBI ruled the murder unsubstantiated (*Hattiesburg American*, 1965, January 22; Newton, 2010; Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.).

The Southern Poverty Law Center lists the police killing of fourteen-year-old Lillie Dell Powers (also reported as Lillie *Bell* Powers) as a civil rights murder. In 1965, the Mississippi

Freedom Democratic Party was organizing voter drives in and around Starkville. One report explains, "The Starkville Community was very active in the campaign, collecting money for the vote drive at businesses in the black community and holding rallies at three churches in the areas, among other tactics." It was during these events that Starkville Police Officers Leonard Green and Huland White shot and killed Lillie as she rode in a car with several other youths. Newspaper stories show that police had chased the car and when outside the city limits shot at the car killing Lillie. Police claim that they attempted to stop the car for a traffic violation and gave chase after the driver of the car tried to run over one of the officers involved in the traffic stop. The teenage passengers in the car claimed that the police simply started following them for no apparent reason and then shot through the window hitting Lillie who later died at University Memorial Hospital in Jackson. Sources reveal that there was no significant police investigation of the shooting (*Charleston Gazette*, 1965, December 1; *Hattiesburg American*, 1965, November 30; Newton, 2010, 2016).

A known tactic of the Klan in the civil rights decades was to devise automobile crashes to make the killing of active civil rights workers appear as unfortunate accidents. In January 1966, Adlena Hamlett and Birdia Beatrice Clark Keglar died in a car crash on a road near the town Sidon in western Mississippi. Adlena was a seventy-eight-year-old retired schoolteacher who worked to register black voters in Tallahatchie County, and Birdia was a fifty-seven-year-old organizer for the NAACP in registering black voters at the time of their deaths. Many suspected that the Klan devised the car wreck to kill the two women who white supremacists had threatened, shot at, and burned in effigy for registering black voters. Both women had testified before a congressional commission in support of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 revealing the abuses they suffered for their involvement in voting rights. At the time of the accident, Adlena and Birdia were returning home from a secreted meeting in Jackson with Robert F. Kennedy, then a U.S. Senator. There are conflicting reports on how the women died. The FBI claimed, "The impact caused the hood of the car to break loose and move through the windshield, fatally injuring Hamlett and Keglar." Grafton Gray, the driver of the car in which Adlena and Birdia were riding, reported that she played dead after the accident, and could hear Klansmen torturing the two women. Klansmen had taken the women to the edge of the woods where they killed and mutilated the women "in the style of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi." Reportedly, Birdia's body was found decapitated and Adlena's arms cleanly severed. The Department of Justice closed both cases in May 2011 (Mohr, 2011, November 5; Newton, 2016).

In September 1968 in Martinsville, Indiana, Klan member Kenneth C. Richmond stabbed twenty-one-year-old Carol Jenkins to death on her first day of selling encyclopedias door-to-door; Carol had been idled by a plant strike at her regular job at the Philco Division of Ford Motor Company. Police did not suspect Carol's death was a racially motivated killing and despite a reward put forward by Collier's Encyclopedia for information on the case, the case went unsolved for more than 30 years (*Anderson Sunday Herald*, 1968, September 22). In May 2002, however, Richmond's daughter, Shirley Richmond McQueen, identified her father as the killer. Police had received an anonymous letter indicating that McQueen had information on Carol's death. According to McQueen, when her father and another man saw Carol walking alongside a road, they started yelling at her and stopped the car in which they were riding with seven-year-old McQueen. It was then that her father grabbed a screwdriver from the seat and got out of the car with the other man. The two men chased Carol, the other man grabbed her, and Richmond stabbed Carol in the chest with the screwdriver. Police confirmed McQueen's story

"when she remembered a key detail – that Carol was wearing a yellow scarf." McQueen stated that her father had "a pronounced dislike for black people" and claimed at the time that Carol "got what she deserved." A review of court documents by an investigative reporter found a jury had acquitted Richmond of murder in 1985, and accused in 1987 of attempted murder but found not guilty due to insanity in Florida. Suffering from mental health and alcohol problems, Richmond was fixated on castrating himself and eventually succeeded. After his arrest in 2002 for Carol's murder, a court declared Richmond incompetent to stand trial. He died of bladder cancer in August of that year (*Delaware County Daily Times*, 1968, December 19; Penner, 2002, May 9; *Salina Journal*, 2002, May 9).

San Antonio Police used fingerprints to identify Gwendolyn Anne Glover, a twenty-eight-year-old mother of three young children, found by city utility workers behind an electric substation near the Joe Freeman Coliseum in early April 1969. Also known as Ann Thomas, Gwendolyn's attackers sexually assaulted her and pulled her slacks down around her ankles; she had suffered six bullet wounds to the head from a twenty-two-caliber gun. Robbery was not the motive for her murder since police found her wearing a diamond ring and discovered a five-dollar bill and sunglasses near Gwendolyn's body. A coroner's report revealed that unknown assailants killed her on Easter Sunday. Gwendolyn's murder remained a cold case under investigation until April 2010 when federal law enforcement officials closed the case (*San Antonio Express,* 1969, April 10; Newton, 2016).

In July 1969, white vigilantes killed Lillie Belle Allen with a "high powered rifle" blast to the chest, "so powerful that it blew her out of her sneakers." Lillie had mistakenly turned into a white neighborhood during ten days of violent race riots in York, Pennsylvania, when a group of about a dozen young men fired more than a hundred rounds at her Cadillac; the shooting stopped only after a police armored vehicle pulled up alongside Lillie's car. Lillie had been in York from South Carolina visiting relatives at the time of her murder. In part, the shooting resulted from a police officer at the time and later mayor, Charles Robertson, telling gang members (the Newberry Street Boys) while passing out bullets to "kill as many niggers as you can" (Bunch, 2001, September 2). The case lay dormant for more than three decades until a series of articles appeared in local papers. In October 2002, state prosecutors won a second-degree murder verdict against two white men named Gregory H. Neff and Robert N. Messersmith. Seven other men pled guilty to lesser charges and a jury acquitted Charles Robertson. Lillie's family won a civil suit against York and its police officers in 2005 (Lueck, 2002, October 20).

There have been some attempts by American law enforcement to atone for the murders of black people killed during the civil rights struggle. In February 2006, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Justice (DOJ) contacted local and state authorities, civic organizations, and community leaders throughout the country for information on civil rights era racially motivated murders that authorities at the time had not adequately investigated or prosecuted. The "Civil Rights Cold Case Initiative" identified 108 unsolved cases. A year later, the FBI and DOJ collaborated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the National Urban League to help investigate the unsolved murders. In November 2009, the Civil Rights Cold Case Initiative made a public appeal to the families of victims in thirty-four cases to inform them of the facts surrounding the victims and to obtain new information on the cases. Meanwhile, Congress passed the Emmett Till

Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act in 2008 (PUBLIC LAW 110–344) authorizing funding for the investigation and prosecution of unresolved civil rights era cases. The act requires the U.S. Attorney General to prepare and submit to Congress an annual report on open investigations on violations of criminal civil rights statutes before 1970. In its latest report to Congress, the Justice Department identified 126 cases of persons murdered during the civil rights era. Of these cases, eleven are black women murdered in southern states; three of the cases remain open (Attorney General's Fifth Annual Report to Congress Pursuant to the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007, 2014, January).[12]

Not all commentators trust that the national government has done all it can to resolve civil rights murders. Critics point out that although the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act authorized some $13.5 million a year to fund investigations of racially motivated murders before 1970, Congress has allocated nothing near these requisite funds to federal law enforcement. Congress allocated no funds for investigations in 2009, and in 2010, it authorized $2 million to the Justice Department and another $8 million to the civil rights division of the FBI for investigating not only civil rights cold cases but also human trafficking, hate crimes, and contemporary civil rights violations (Dewan, 2010, August 23). What's more, though state and federal prosecutors have successfully prosecuted some civil rights cold cases, it is investigative reporters and cold case justice projects initiated by law professors who have done much of the work resulting in prosecutions (Klibanoff, 2010, August 8; McDonald, 2008; Labuda, 2011). As one scholar puts it, "[t]he onus is on the governmental institutions to remedy and explain their respective roles in failing to apply the full force of the law to seek justice for these horrendous crimes against individuals, communities and the integrity of applicable laws" (McDonald, 2008, p. 798).

THE LEGACY OF BLACK FEMALE LYNCHINGS

The United States is a society of intergroup domination and subordination wherein social control of subordinate groups with repressive institutional strategies is essential to maintaining the status quo of such a system. Scholars suggest that black female lynchings not only reinforced a legacy of gender and racial inequality, but that the structured inequality of gendered racism suffered by black females historically is readily apparent in our criminal justice system today. That is, black female oppression as an artifact of the gendered racism accounting for black female lynchings remains a notable feature of today's society (Baker, 2016). Indeed, white males use the justice system as an apparatus to control and subordinate black females to the social, political, and economic interests of white men. In this regard, the justice literature is clear that black women suffer excessively from incarceration rates, a racially biased capital justice system, criminal sentencing, and abuse by law enforcement (The Sentencing Project, 2018). Black

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[12] In July 2018, the U.S. Department of Justice reopened its investigation of the 1955 Emmett Till case "after receiving new information." Associated Press reporter Trévon Austin speculates that the "new information" may be that Carolyn Donham (Bryant) admitted that parts of her testimony were false in a 2008 interview for the book *The Blood of Emmett Till* (2017) authored by Timothy Tyson, historian and senior research scholar at Duke University. The false trial testimony included her remarks at the 1955 trial of her husband that Till grabbed her by the waist and made lascivious remarks. It was the publication of Tyson's book that rekindled the new investigation. To Tyson, however, the renewed investigation is nothing more than a political ploy aimed at distracting from the Trump administration's own civil rights abuses (Auston, 2018, July 16).

females are excessively poor with low-incomes and minor children, high rates of serious mental illnesses, and long histories of substance abuse, sexual victimization, and domestic violence. Disparate contact of black women with the criminal justice system results from more expansive law enforcement efforts, stiffer drug sentencing laws, and post-conviction barriers to reentry. These phenomena are artifacts of the continued subjugation of black women and girls in the American class structure vis-à-vis the discrimination and segregation experienced by black women in the patriarchal system resulting in lower levels educational attainment, lower placement in the occupational structure with low incomes and high rates of poverty (see also Alexander, 2010; Bailey & Tolnay, 2015; Sudbury, 2005).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Criminal justice scholars have largely overlooked the violence-plagued history of American black female lynchings. This paper brings into sharper focus the cruel atrocities wrought upon marginalized black women and girls by hate-mongering mobs of mostly white men bent on controlling black women with brutality and violence. The historical record on black female lynchings depicted in newspaper stories and the academic lynching literature confirm that white men used deadly violence to reinforce the white patriarchy of American society. Construction of a viable inventory of black female lynchings is necessary to constructing an historical and contextual analysis of mob violence against black women. An inventory ridden with factual errors skews the practical reality about vigilante violence and black women and girls. This paper goes far to correct for inadequacies in the historical record on black female lynchings. Still, an inventory of black female victims of lynching amounts to not more than a looking glass through which researchers can peer in hopes of gaining some meaningful insight and understanding into the horrors of black women and girl's lynchings. Indeed, white men used ferocious methods to murder black women and girls, including hanging, strangling, shooting and stabbing, burning alive, sadistically mutilating their bodies before and after death, drowning, and killing them and black girls in dynamite explosions of their homes and churches. Black women often died with their babies in their arms and alongside their husbands and older children. The deranged rationales for mob violence against black women enforced distorted racist and sexist constructions in American society wherein many black women and girls died because of the perverse paternalistic notions of black women and girl's place in American society. Regrettably, black females continue to experience gendered racism in United States society.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Registry of Confirmed Black Female Lynchings in the United States, 1838-1969

Name of Black Female Lynching Victims	Age at Lynching	Race of Lynch Mob	Date of Lynching	Method of Killing	County/City of Lynching	State of Lynching	Allegation/Reason for Lynching
Unnamed slave woman		Unknown	1838	Hanging	Unknown	Arkansas	Murder of mistress
Unnamed slave girl	Young	White	1840	Hanging	Cane Hill	Louisiana	Axing mistress to death
Annice (Slave to Jeremiah Pryor)	38	White	9 MAY 1850	Hanging	Clay County	Missouri	Attempted murder of mistress
Unnamed		White	1852	Whipped to death	Stockton	California	Arson
Teney (Slave to Dinah Allen)		White	28 OCT 1860	Hanging	Callaway County	Missouri	Murder of mistress
Tena (Wolf, Hiller & Co.)		White	JUL/AUG 1864	Hanging	Pike County	Mississippi	Plotted to destroy property
Mary (Wolf, Hiller & Co.)		White	JUL/AUG 1864	Hanging	Pike County	Mississippi	Plotted to destroy property
Maria Mayfield (Taylor)		White	APR 1866	Unknown	Washington County	Texas	Unreported
Unnamed	Girl	White	JULY 1866	Beat to death	Tuscaloosa	Alabama	Unreported
Unnamed		White	AUG 1866	Unknown	Tarrant County	Texas	Unreported
Minerva James	15	White	JUL 1868	Unknown	Hopkins County	Texas	Revealing a killer to soldiers
Unnamed		White	SEP 1868	Unknown	Bossier Parish	Louisiana	Race riot
Unnamed		White	1869	Hanging	Unknown	Georgia	Unreported
Mrs. Daniel Blue (pregnant)		White	JAN 1869	Shot to death/burned	Moore County	North Carolina	Husband's testimony against KKK
Daughter to Mrs. Daniel Blue		White	JAN 1869	Shot to death/burned	Moore County	North Carolina	Father's testimony against KKK
Unnamed		White	1870	Beat to death	Chatham County	North Carolina	Complained to magistrate
Unnamed		White	1870	Drowned in mill pond	Orange County	North Carolina	Impudent to white woman
Mrs. John Simes		White	SEP 1870	Hanging	Henry County	Kentucky	Husband registered blacks
Unnamed		White	30 AUG 1871	Mutilated with a knife	Wilkinson County	Georgia	Miscegenation
Mrs. Samuel Hawkins		White	4 NOV 1872	Hanging	Fayette County	Kentucky	Husband registered blacks
Daughter to Mrs. Samuel Hawkins	Grown	White	4 NOV 1872	Hanging	Fayette County	Kentucky	Father registered blacks
Mrs. Nathaniel Burges		White	4 JUL 1874	Shot to death	Limestone County	Texas	"No provocation"
Daughter to Mr. Barringer		White	NOV 1874	Shot to death	Shelby County	Kentucky	Racial cleansing of county Blacks
Mrs. Benjamin (Mollie) French		White	3 MAY 1876	Hanging	Gallatin County	Kentucky	Poison/Murder of Jacob Jones
Charlotte Harris		White	11 MAR 1878	Hanging	Rockingham County	Virginia	Instigating arson of barn
Maria (Mariah) Smith		White	4 NOV 1878	Hanging	DeSoto County	Mississippi	Murder of white child
Daughter to Sam Faulkner	12	Unknown	22 JUN 1879	Burned Alive	Henry County	Kentucky	Race Prejudice
Daughter to Sam Faulkner	3	Unknown	22 JUN 1879	Burned Alive	Henry County	Kentucky	Race Prejudice
Unnamed (pregnant)		White	1880	Hanging	Warren County	Mississippi	Migrant to Kansas
Milly Thompson (Johnson)		White	29 JUL 1880	Shot to death	Clayton County	Georgia	Testifying again white man
Julia Brandt	15	Integrated	11 DEC 1880	Hanging	Clarendon County	South Carolina	Theft/Murder of Mrs. Kennedy
Eliza (Ann) Cowan (Judith Metts)	35	White	9 APR 1881	Hanging	Laurens County	South Carolina	Arson of white farmer's barn
Jane Campbell		Integrated	16 SEP 1881	Burned Alive	Claiborne	Louisiana	Murder of her two children
Mother to Mike Calvin	Aged	White	1 DEC 1884	Burned Alive	Calhoun County	Georgia	Son voted Republican
Emma Calvin	6	White	1 DEC 1884	Burned Alive	Calhoun County	Georgia	Father voted Republican
Lillie Calvin	4	White	1 DEC 1884	Burned Alive	Calhoun County	Georgia	Father voted Republican
Mrs. Lizzie Jackson		White	21 JUN 1885	Hanging/Burning	Anderson County	Texas	Murder of ex-constable's wife
Harriet Finch	30	Integrated	29 SEP 1885	Hanging	Chatham County	North Carolina	Murder-robbery
Mary Hollenbeck		Black	25 JUL 1886	Burned Alive	Tattnall County	Georgia	Murder of black child

Name	Age	Race	Date	Method	County	State	Reason
Eliza A. Woods	70	Integrated	18 AUG 1886	Hanging/Shot	Madison County	Tennessee	Poison-murder of Mrs. Wooten
Gracy Blanton		White	28 APR 1887	Hanging	West Carroll Parish	Louisiana	Robbery/arson of store
Martha Taylor		Black	20 AUG 1887	Shot to death	Leflore	Mississippi	Killing a black man
Puss Kirkpatrick		White	18 APR 1888	Hanging	Sumner County	Tennessee	Arson of John Kerley's house
Unnamed		White	14 SEP 1888	Shot to death	St. Martin Parish	Louisiana	Race prejudice
Rozelia Cormier	16	White	10 SEP 1889	Throat Cut	Lafayette Parish	Louisiana	Racial cleansing of county blacks
Mother of Wesley Lee		White	9 MAY 1891	Hanging	Lowndes County	Mississippi	Poison-Murder of Barry West
Eliza "Lizzy" Lowe		White	6 AUG 1891	Hanging	Henry County	Alabama	Arson of home to W.P. Davis
Ella Williams		White	6 AUG 1891	Hanging	Henry County	Alabama	Arson of home to W.P. Davis
Louise (Lou) Stevenson		White	28 SEP 1891	Hanging	Washington County	Mississippi	Murder of white man
Mrs. Martin		White	3 FEB 1892	Shot to death	Sumner County	Tennessee	Mother of alleged arsonists
Mrs. Hamp Biscoe (pregnant)		White	18 JAN 1892	Shot to death	England	Arkansas	Husband committed assault
Ella Smith	15	White	12 MAR 1892	Hanging	Richland Parish	Louisiana	Poisoning of white family
Daughter to John Hastings	14	White	2 NOV 1892	Shot to death	Natchez County	Mississippi	Father accused of murder
Emma Fair (Ellen Fant)	60	White	14 SEP 1893	Shot to death	Pickens County	Alabama	Arson of cotton gin and mill
Louisa (Lou) Carter		White	14 SEP 1893	Hanging	Monroe County	Mississippi	Well poisoning/murder
Mahaley Jackson		White	14 SEP 1893	Hanging	Monroe County	Mississippi	Well poisoning/murder
Mother of Phil Evans		White	13 NOV 1893	Hanging	Nelson County	Kentucky	Revenge for rape of white girl
Wife of Phil Evans		White	13 NOV 1893	Hanging	Nelson County	Kentucky	Revenge for rape of white girl
Daughter of Phil Evans		White	13 NOV 1893	Hanging	Nelson County	Kentucky	Revenge for rape of white girl
Mary (Eliza) Motlow (Waggoner)		White	4 NOV 1893	Hanging	Moore County	Tennessee	House and barn burning
Unnamed	30	Unknown	10 MAR 1894	Hanging	Pulaski County	Arkansas	Unreported
Unnamed	Elderly	White	24 JUL 1894	Hanging	Simpson County	Mississippi	Conspiracy to kill whites
White (given name unknown)		White	APR 1895	Hanging	Limestone County	Texas	Unreported
Alice Greene		White	21 APR 1895	Hanging	Butler County	Alabama	Murder of Watts Murphy
Martha Greene		White	21 APR 1895	Hanging	Butler County	Alabama	Murder of Watts Murphy
Mary Deane	40	White	21 APR 1895	Hanging	Butler County	Alabama	Murder of Watts Murphy
Harriet Talley		White	18 MAR 1895	Hanging	Lincoln County	Tennessee	Arson dwelling of Mr. Marshall
Hannah E. Phillips	12	White	20 JUL 1895	Dynamite explosion	Sanpete County	Texas	Feud with whites
Mary (Mrs. Abe) Phillips	55	White	20 JUL 1895	Dynamite explosion	Sanpete County	Texas	Feud with whites
Unnamed		White	23 JUL 1895	Shot to death	Sanpete County	Texas	Race prejudice
Mrs. James Mason		White	2 AUG 1895	Shot to death	Dangerfield County	Texas	Unreported
Catherine Matthews		Unknown	11 OCT 1895	Unknown	Baton Rouge Parish	Louisiana	Poisoning
Louisiana Fisher	Aged	Choctaws	12 OCT 1895	Decapitated	Shawneetown	Texas	Witchcraft
Hannah Kearse (Walker)	Elderly	White	2 DEC 1895	Hanging	Colleton County	South Carolina	Knowledge of stealing a bible
Charlotte "Lottie" Morris	68	White	12 JAN 1896	Shot/Burning	Jefferson Parish	Louisiana	Miscegenation
Unnamed		Unknown	9 FEB 1897	Unknown	Tallahatchie County	Mississippi	Robbery-Arson
Amanda Franks	44	White	12 MAY 1897	Hanging	Madison County	Alabama	Poisoning of white family
Molly Smith (Molly White)		White	12 MAY 1897	Hanging	Madison County	Alabama	Poisoning of white family
Mrs. Jake Cebrose		White	14 JUN 1897	Hanging	Collin County	Texas	"nothing"
Mary Pearson	Old	White	26 JAN 1898	Shot to death	Adams County	Mississippi	Mother of perpetrators
Julia (Rosa, Dora) Baker	Infant	White	22 FEB 1898	Shot/Burned	Williamsburg County	South Carolina	Race prejudice toward father
Lorilla Weaver		White	10 AUG 1898	Hanging	Monroe County	Arkansas	Accessory to murder of John Orr
Susie Jacobs		White	10 AUG 1898	Hanging	Monroe County	Arkansas	Accessory to murder of John Orr
Eliza Goode	60	White	13 NOV 1898	Shot to death	Greenwood County	South Carolina	Race riot
Fannie Boynton		White	9 FEB 1899	Shot to death	Clay County	Georgia	Unreported
Mrs. James Crosby		White	4 MAR 1900	Shot to death	Lowndes County	Alabama	Revenge killing

Daughter to Mrs. Crosby		White	4 MAR 1900	Shot to death	Lowndes County	Alabama	Revenge killing
Anna Marby		Black	25 JUL 1900	Shot to death	New Orleans	Louisiana	Race Riot
Ballie Crutchfield		White	16 MAR 1901	Shot to death	Smith County	Tennessee	Theft of lost pocketbook
Betsy McCray		White	1 AUG 1901	Hanging/Shot	Carrollton County	Mississippi	Aided in murder of Taliaferros
Ida McCray (daughter to McCray)		White	1 AUG 1901	Hanging/Shot	Carrollton County	Mississippi	Aided in murder of Taliaferros
Unnamed	Child	White	4 OCT 1901	Shot to death	Marshall County	Tennessee	Assault of white man
Unnamed		White	2 NOV 1901	Burned Alive	Washington Parish	Louisiana	Threats against whites
Unnamed		White	2 NOV 1901	Burned Alive	Washington Parish	Louisiana	Threats against whites
Connelly's Daughter		White	2 NOV 1901	Burned Alive	Washington Parish	Louisiana	Threats against whites
Emma (Mary) Wideman		White	27 DEC 1902	Hanging/Shooting	Abbeville County	South Carolina	Murder of a white planter
Unnamed		White	8 JUN 1903	Shot to death	Smith County	Mississippi	Murder of a white man
Jennie Steers (Jennis Sturs)		White	25 JUL 1903	Hanging	Caddo Parish	Louisiana	Murder of Elizabeth Dolan
Jennie McCall		White	28 OCT 1903	Shot to death	Hamilton County	Florida	Mob intended to kill husband
Mrs. (Anne) Luther Holbert		White	7 FEB 1904	Burned Alive	Sunflower County	Mississippi	Murder of white planter
Martha (Marie) Thompson		White	14 JUN 1904	Shot to death	Bullitt County	Kentucky	Murder of John T. Irvin
Meta Hicks		White	8 NOV 1906	Shot to death	Mitchell County	Georgia	Husband accused of murder
(given name unknown) Taylor	20	White	19 MAR 1907	Shot to death	Lafayette County	Arkansas	Murderous assault of white woman
(given name unknown) Taylor	15	White	19 MAR 1907	Shot to death	Lafayette County	Arkansas	Murderous assault of white woman
Mrs. (Sula) Sam Padgett		White	21 MAY 1907	Hanging	Lafayette County	Georgia	Involved rape of white woman
Dosia Padgett	10	White	21 MAY 1907	Shot to death	Lafayette County	Georgia	Involved rape of white woman
Mrs. David Walker		White	3 OCT 1908	Shot to death	Fulton County	Kentucky	Husband swore at white woman
Daughter to Mrs. David Walker	5	White	3 OCT 1908	Shot to death	Fulton County	Kentucky	Father swore at white woman
Laura Mitchell	40	Black	5 APR 1910	Hanging	Lonoke County	Arkansas	Spousal murder
Laura Porter		White	25 JUL 1910	Drowned	Quachita County	Louisiana	Disreputable house/robbery
Hattie Bowman		White	2 SEP 1910	Hanging	Jackson County	Florida	Accessory to murder of Sheriff
Laura (Mary) Nelson	33	White	25 MAY 1911	Hanging	Okemah	Oklahoma	Murder of Sheriff
Daughter to Ben Pettigrew		White	4 DEC 1911	Hanging/Burned	Savannah	Tennessee	Robbery victim
Daughter to Ben Pettigrew		White	4 DEC 1911	Hanging/Burned	Savannah	Tennessee	Robbery victim
Belle Hathaway		White	22 JAN 1912	Hanging	Harris County	Georgia	Murder of Norman Hadley
Unnamed		White	11 FEB 1912	Unknown	Jefferson County	Texas	Murder of white planter
Mary Jackson	45	White	13 FEB 1912	Hanging	Harris County	Texas	Murder of white man
Ann Boston (Barksdale, Bostwick)		White	24 JUN 1912	Hanging	Dooly County	Georgia	Murder of white employer
Lew (Sweetie) Burns		White	5 AUG 1912	Shot to death	Corpus Christi	Texas	Altercation with whites
Marie Scott (pregnant)	17	White	31 MAR 1914	Hanging	Wagoner County	Oklahoma	Stabbing death of Lemuel Pearce
Jennie Collins	17	White	28 JUN 1914	Shot to death	Bolivar County	Mississippi	Accessory to murder
Rosa Richardson (Rose Carson)	35	White	12 JUL 1914	Hanging/Shot	Okfuskee County	South Carolina	Murder of white child
Mrs. Frederick (Jane) Sullivan		White	25 NOV 1914	Hanging	Marshall County	Mississippi	Arson of barn of employer
Ella Barber		White	14 JAN 1915	Hanging/Shot	Jasper County	Georgia	Murder of police officer
Eula Barber		White	14 JAN 1915	Hanging/Shot	Jasper County	Georgia	Murder of police officer
Bessie Perry	21	White	13 MAR 1915	Shot to death/Burned	Vance County	North Carolina	Unreported
Josephine Perry	5	White	13 MAR 1915	Shot to death/Burned	Vance County	North Carolina	Unreported
Cordella Stevenson		White	8 DEC 1915	Hanging	Lowndes County	Mississippi	Son committed arson
Mary Dennis (pregnant)	35	White	19 AUG 1916	Hanging	Alachua County	Florida	Accessory to Murder
Stella Young (Long)	25	White	19 AUG 1916	Hanging	Alachua County	Florida	Accessory to Murder
Mary Conley		White	23 SEP 1916	Shot to death	Calhoun County	Georgia	Mother to son who killed white
Mother of Peter Hudson		White	3 OCT 1916	Hanging	Calhoun County	Georgia	Mother of accused murderer
Emma Hooper	45	White	1 MAR 1917	Hanging	Tangipahoa Parish	Louisiana	Murderous Assault

Name	Age	Race	Date	Method	County/City	State	Reason
Mary Turner (pregnant)	20	White	18 MAY 1918	Hanging	Lowndes County	Georgia	Murder of Hampton Smith
Bessie Cabiness		White	4 JUN 1918	Shot to death	Huntsville	Texas	Revenge killing
Sarah Cabiness		White	4 JUN 1918	Shot to death	Huntsville	Texas	Revenge killing
Lena Cabiness		White	4 JUN 1918	Shot to death	Huntsville	Texas	Revenge killing
Dovie Cabiness		White	4 JUN 1918	Shot to death	Huntsville	Texas	Revenge killing
Alma Howze (pregnant)	16	White	20 DEC 1918	Hanging	Clarke County	Mississippi	Murder of Dr. E. L. Johnston
Maggie Howze (pregnant)	20	White	20 DEC 1918	Hanging	Clarke County	Mississippi	Murder of Dr. E. L. Johnston
Unnamed		White	5 MAY 1919	Hanging	Holmes County	Mississippi	Writing letter to white woman
Unnamed [Mrs. July Perry?]		White	2 NOV 1920	Burned Alive	Orange County	Florida	Race riot at election poll
Minnie Ivory		White	18 NOV 1920	Shot to death	Coffee County	Georgia	Murder of Pearly Harper
Rachael Moore		White	4 APR 1921	Hanged	Rankin County	Mississippi	Mother-in-law of lynched man
Unnamed	Old	White	20 APR 1921	Drowned	Southwest Georgia	Georgia	Murder of constable
Mercy Hall		White	25 JAN 1922	Burned Alive	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Strike activity
Sarah (Bertha) Carrier		White	4 JAN 1923	Shot to death	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Lesty (Lexty) Gordon	42	White	4 JAN 1923	Shot to death	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Unnamed		White	4 JAN 1923	Hanging	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Unnamed		White	4 JAN 1923	Hanging	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Unnamed		White	4 JAN 1923	Hanging	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Unnamed		White	4 JAN 1923	Shot to death	Levy County	Florida	Rosewood race riot
Unnamed		White	29 SEP 1923	Shot to death	Holmes County	Mississippi	Mob in search of brother
Unnamed		White	31 SEP 1923	Shot to death	Holmes County	Mississippi	Race prejudice
Penny Westmoreland		White	24 JUN 1924	Shot to death	Spalding County	Georgia	Argumentative with whites
Annie Mae Simmons		White	JUL 1926	Flogged to death	Crenshaw	Alabama	Racial cleansing
Lilly Cobb		White	27 APR 1926	Shot to death	Birmingham	Alabama	Unreported
Bertha Lowman	18	White	8 OCT 1926	Shot to death	Aiken County	South Carolina	Murder acquittal of sheriff
Sally Brown		White	11 NOV 1926	Shot to death/Burned	Houston	Texas	Revenge for killing white man
Unnamed		White	12 DEC 1928	Unknown	Jackson	Louisiana	Dispute with whites
Unnamed		White	12 DEC 1928	Unknown	Jackson	Louisiana	Dispute with whites
Laura Wood (Weed)	65	White	11 FEB 1930	Hanging	Rowan County	North Carolina	Landlord/tenant dispute
Viola Dial (pregnant)		White	4 JUL 1930	Shot to death	Narketta	Mississippi	Race riot
Holly White		White	10 SEP 1930	Hanging	Kemper County	Mississippi	Robbery of Thomas McCoy
Mrs. Wise		White	MAY 1931	Hanging	Frankfort	Virginia	Resisting Klan
Mrs. James Eyers		White	6 JUL 1930	Shot to death	Sumter County	Alabama	Racial disorder from killings
Elizabeth Lawrence		White	5 JUL 1933	Hanged	Jefferson County	Alabama	Chastising white children
Mrs. Lea (Willie) Mae Dorsey	23	White	25 JUL 1946	Shot to death	Walton County	Georgia	Revenge killing
Mrs. Dorothy Malcolm (pregnant)	20	White	25 JUL 1946	Shot to death	Brevard County	Georgia	Revenge killing
Harriette Vyda Simms Moore		White	3 JAN 1952	Injuries from bombing	Hyde County	Florida	Civil rights activist
Della McDuffie	63	White	25 APR 1953	Bludgeoned to death	Wilcox County	Alabama	Murdered by police
Angenora Spencer	48	White	25 MAR 1956	Bludgeoned to death	East Flat Rock	North Carolina	Miscegenation
Mrs. Frank Clay		White	18 NOV 1957	Shot to death	East Flat Rock	North Carolina	Dispute with whites
Mattie Green	32	White	6 MAY 1960	Bombing of home	Catoosa County	Georgia	Ku Klux Klan retribution
Addie Mae Collins	10	White	15 SEP 1963	Bombing of church	Jefferson County	Alabama	Ku Klux Klan retribution
Denise McNair	11	White	15 SEP 1963	Bombing of church	Jefferson County	Alabama	Ku Klux Klan retribution
Carol Robertson	14	White	15 SEP 1963	Bombing of church	Jefferson County	Alabama	Ku Klux Klan retribution
Cynthia Wesley	14	White	15 SEP 1963	Bombing of church	Jefferson County	Alabama	Ku Klux Klan retribution
Unnamed		Unknown	FEB 1964	Unknown	Unknown	Mississippi	Unreported
Johnnie Mae Chappell	36	White	23 MAR 1964	Shot to death	Duvale County	Florida	Racial unrest in Jacksonville

Selma Kelly Trigg	76	White	21 JAN 1965	Burned Alive	Forrest County	Mississippi	Unreported
Lillie Dell Powers	14	White	10 NOV 1965	Shot to death	Oktibbeha County	Mississippi	Shot by police
Adlena Hamlett	78	White	11 JAN 1966	Tortured to death	Leflore County	Mississippi	Outspoken civil rights activist
Birdia Beatrice Clark Keglar	57	White	11 JAN 1966	Tortured to death	Leflore County	Mississippi	Outspoken civil rights activist
Carrol Marie Jenkins	21	White	16 SEP 1968	Stabbed to death	Morgan County	Indiana	Random murder by KKK member
Gwendolyn Glover (Ann Thomas)	28	White	8 APR 1969	Shot to death	Bexar County	Texas	Unreported
Lillie Belle Allen	27	White	21 JUL 1969	Shot to death	York County	Pennsylvania	Gang killing during race riot

Table 2. Characteristics of Confirmed Black Female Lynchings in the United States by Region, 1838 to 1969

Characteristics of Black Female Lynchings	Middle Atlantic States		East North Central States		West North Central States		South Atlantic States		East South Central States		West South Central States		Pacific States		Total Lynchings	
	N=1 (0.5%)		N=1 (0.5%)		N=2 (1.0%)		N=57 (30.4%)		N=75 (39.5%)		N=51 (27.2%)		N=1 (0.5%)		N=188 (100.0%)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Decades of Lynchings[1]																
1830-1839	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.3	1	1.9	0	0.0	2	1.0
1840-1849	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9	0	0.0	1	0.5
1850-1859	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	2	1.0
1860-1869	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	3	5.2	3	4.0	4	7.8	0	0.0	11	5.8
1870-1879	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.0	8	4.3	1	1.9	0	0.0	13	6.9
1880-1889	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	14.0	4	4.0	5	9.8	0	0.0	17	8.6
1890-1899	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.2	22	29.7	15	29.4	0	0.0	40	21.3
1900-1909	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	8.7	11	14.8	7	13.7	0	0.0	23	12.2
1910-1919	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	22.8	8	4.3	12	23.5	0	0.0	33	17.6
1920-1929	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	19.2	5	6.7	4	7.8	0	0.0	20	10.6
1930-1939	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.2	3	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	3.2
1940-1949	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
1950-1959	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.2	1	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.1
1960-1969	1	100.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	2	3.5	9	12.1	1	1.9	0	0.0	14	7.4
Ages of Lynching Victims																
Less than 18 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	8.7	10	13.5	6	12.0	0	0.0	22	11.7
18-30 years old	1	100.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	6	10.5	1	1.3	4	8.0	0	0.0	13	6.9
31-40 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	6	8.7	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	8	4.3
41-50 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0	2	4.0	0	0.0	4	2.1

51-60 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7	2	2.7	1	2.0	0	0.0	4	2.1
61-70 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7	1	1.3	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
71-80 years old	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	35	64.9	59	78.3	35	70.0	1	100.0	131	68.5
Race of Lynch Mobs															
White	1	100.0	1	100.0	2	100.0	51	92.7	69	91.9	44	88.0	1	100.0	172	91.3
Black	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	2	4.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
American Indian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Integrated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	1	1.4	1	2.0	0	0.0	4	2.0
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	5	6.8	2	4.0	0	0.0	8	4.3
Method of Lynching															
Hanging	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	17	30.9	35	47.3	14	28.0	0	0.0	68	36.0
Shot to Death	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	34.5	20	25.7	14	28.0	0	0.0	54	28.4
Hanging and Shot	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	3.2
Hanging and Burned	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.7	4	2.0	0	0.0	5	1.6
Burned Alive	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	9.1	4	5.4	5	10.0	0	0.0	15	7.5
Shot and Burned	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.5	1	1.4	2	4.0	0	0.0	6	3.2
Stabbed to Death	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
Decapitation/Disemboweled	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	3.6	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Bludgeoned to Death	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	5	6.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	3.7
Whipped to Death	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	0.5
Drowned	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
Dynamite Explosion	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	4	5.4	2	4.0	0	0.0	8	4.3
Throat Cut	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.7	9	18.0	0	0.0	11	7.5
Reasons for Lynchings															
Murder/Attempted Murder	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	12	21.8	16	20.3	8	16.0	0	0.0	38	19.8
Accomplice to Murder	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.5	3	4.1	2	4.0	0	0.0	8	4.3
Related to Victim	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.5	8	10.8	2	4.0	0	0.0	13	6.9
Knowledge of Crime	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Felonious Assault/Attempt	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	1	1.4	4	8.0	0	0.0	7	3.7
Poisoning	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.1	2	4.0	0	0.0	5	2.6
Robbery-Theft	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.1	1	2.0	0	0.0	5	2.6
Robbery-Arson	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Arson	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	7	9.5	0	0.0	1	100.0	9	4.8
Insult to White Persons	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Feud with Whites	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	9.1	0	0.0	8	16.0	0	0.0	13	6.9
Race Riot	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	16.4	2	2.7	1	2.0	0	0.0	13	6.9

Race Prejudice	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.1	2	4.0	0	0.0	5	2.6
Resisting Sexual Assault	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Miscegenation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
Political Activity	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	5	6.8	1	2.0	0	0.0	10	5.5
Revealed Killer	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Giving Testimony	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
No Provocation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
Racial Cleansing	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.7	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
Conspiracy to Commit Crime	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.1
Migration	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Witchcraft	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Prostitute/Notoriousness	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Mistaken Killing	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Shot by Police	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
Revenge Kill	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.5	9	12.2	5	10.0	0	0.0	17	9.1
Random Killing	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Letter to White Woman	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	4	5.4	7	14.0	0	0.0	15	8.0

[1] **Middle Atlantic States** – New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania; **East North Central States** – Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin; **West North Central States** – Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas; **South Atlantic States** – Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida; **East South Central States** – Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi; **West South Central States** – Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas; **Mountain States** – Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada; **Pacific States** – Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington.

"I DID WHAT I BELIEVE IS RIGHT": A STUDY OF NEUTRALIZATIONS AMONG ANONYMOUS OPERATION PARTICIPANTS

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Abstract

Our knowledge of online activists or hacktivists is growing, but it is still far from complete. The reasons why some of these individuals violate computer laws or how they justify their behavior remains elusive, yet one particular framework that lends itself to understanding a hacker or hacktivist's belief system is Sykes and Matza's (1957) neutralization theory. The present study involved a content analysis of publicly available commentary found online and made by participants in Anonymous operations against United States targets from 2008-2013. Over 13,000 words were analyzed, and of the 384 passages of text and phrases, roughly 62% of passages contained some type of neutralizing statement, whereas 38% of passages were coded as containing no neutralization technique. Among the 238 passages and phrases of neutralizations, over half contained neutralizations that reflected condemnation of the condemners, appeal to a higher moral principle, and denial of the victim. Another important finding was that several participants in Anonymous operations justified their actions as simple acts of protest or civil disobedience. While this study sheds light on how hacktivists may justify their behavior, it also paves the way for exploring other neutralizing techniques and signals the need for developing crime-specific neutralizations.

Keywords: techniques of neutralization, hacktivism, hacking, computer crime

INTRODUCTION

In 2008, in an authorized video, actor Tom Cruise is shown boasting the efforts of fellow Scientologists. The video was leaked and posted on YouTube among other websites (Barkham, 2008; Dibbell, 2009). Gawker Media, who allegedly posted the clip, was subsequently issued a cease and desist letter to remove the video, since it was copyright protected by the Church

(Kushner, 2014). Word spread quickly, and many of those who were using 4chan[1] were infuriated claiming that the Church of Scientology did not have the right to censor what was posted on the Internet. Considering this to be a threat to free speech, members of Anonymous took action and launched Project Chanology, which began with a wide-scale series of trolling[2] attacks on the Church's website. For example, Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS)[3] attacks were used to strain the Scientology website to the point of crashing, and "Google bombs" were emitted where simply searching the term "Scientology" on the Internet would yield "dangerous cult" on the results page. In addition, several mischievous acts or "lulz"[4] were carried out, some of which included ordering numerous pizzas to the Church and sending all-black faxes to diminish the ink supply of fax machines. Moreover, serious death threats were issued against Church members (Kushner, 2014).

The movement was heightened by a video message directed at the Church of Scientology on January 21, 2008. It included imagery of ominous clouds and a digitally-altered voice recording. The message contained in the video was as follows:

> *Over the years, we have been watching you. Your campaigns of misinformation; suppression of dissent; your litigious nature, all of these things have caught our eye. With the leakage of your latest propaganda video into mainstream circulation, the extent of your malign influence over those who trust you, who call you leader, has been made clear to us. Anonymous has therefore decided that your organization should be destroyed. For the good of your followers, for the good of mankind--for the laughs--we shall expel you from the Internet and systematically dismantle the Church of Scientology in its present form. We acknowledge you as a serious opponent, and we are prepared for a long, long campaign. You will not prevail forever against the angry masses of the body politic. Your methods, hypocrisy, and the artlessness of your organization have sounded its death knell....*
> *You cannot hide; we are everywhere.*
> *We cannot die; we are forever. We're getting bigger every day--and solely by the force of our ideas, malicious and hostile as they often are. If you want another name for your opponent, then call us Legion, for we are many....*
> *Knowledge is free.[5]*
> *We are Anonymous.*

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[1] 4chan is an image board where members post anonymously. The site houses many discussion boards devoted to various subject matter, ranging from Japanese anime to political incorrectness. Some of the boards can be characterized as mindless fodder and totally benign, while others are well-known for pejorative and defamatory content. It is the source of many Internet memes.

[2] Trolling is an action to "try to upset people by spreading grisly or disturbing content, igniting arguments, or engendering general bedlam" (Coleman, 2014, p. 4). Examples of trolling include ordering numerous pizzas to be delivered to a certain location, using SPAM, or calling the police about a fake crime that warrants the SWAT team to respond.

[3] A DDoS or denial-of-service attack involves the disruption of services by overloading a system with traffic from numerous sources (Karanasiou, 2013). For example, a website may be targeted, making it a challenge for the web server to manage all of the incoming activity at once.

[4] Lulz is a term that derives from LOL (Laugh Out Loud) and encompasses invoking deviant and dark humor. While lulz are "primarily about humor," they are "acquired most often at someone's expense, prone to misfiring and, occasionally, bordering on the disturbing or hateful speech" (Coleman, 2014, p. 31).

[5] Interestingly, this particular line, "knowledge is free" has not been used in future Anonymous messages.

We are Legion.
We do not forgive.
We do not forget.
Expect us.

(Jacobsen, n.d., para. 8)

Protests at various Scientology centers around the world took place in February and March of 2008 (Coleman, 2012; Dibbell, 2009; Kushner, 2014). Thousands of members claiming an affiliation to Anonymous appeared in Guy Fawkes masks, in reference to the movie, *V for Vendetta* (Penny, 2011). What was notable about this first Anonymous operation, according to Coleman (2012), was that the common lulz-based activities or simple mischief of 4chan users shifted to what could be called a newfound culture of not just hacking, but of hacktivism. However, hacktivism began in the 1990s and was embedded in anti-neo-liberal-globalization movements well before Anonymous took center stage (Jordan & Taylor, 2004). Nonetheless, this protest against the Church of Scientology gave rise to the group, Anonymous, which had "emerged from its online sanctuary and set to improve the world" (Coleman, 2012, p. 87), and in many ways, brought the term "hacktivism" back to the attention of mainstream media (Barkham, 2008; Coleman, 2012; Dibbell, 2009).

This marked another important turning point for hackers, as in the 1980s they were commonly viewed as misfits and pranksters with a keen knowledge for the computer (Halbert, 1997; Jordan & Taylor, 2004). According to Coleman (2011), hackers tend to be "skilled programmers, security researchers, hardware builders, and system administrators," who often share a liberal vision and sensibilities about the Internet (p. 512). Hacker culture is further supported by Steven Levy's hacker ethic, which contains five main tenets:

(1) Access to computer-and anything which might teach you something about the way the world works-should be unlimited and total. Always yield to the Hands-On Imperative!, (2) All information should be free, (3) Mistrust authority-Promote Decentralization, (4) Hackers should be judged by their hacking, not bogus criteria such as degrees, age, race, or position, and (5) You can create art and beauty on a computer. (Levy, 1984, pp. 28-31)

However, this hacker ethos has not meshed well with federal law, namely the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA), which was enacted by Congress in 1984 and codified as 18 U.S.C. § 1030 (Clifford, 2011). The act was modeled after the 1952 wire-fraud statute, which penalized phone-phreakers[6] and mail fraudsters, and was the first piece of federal legislation to target fraudulent activities in connection with government computers (Tuma, 2011). In the years that followed, the act was amended to impose criminal liability not only for those who targeted a government-operated computer, but computers that were privately maintained. In essence, both criminal and civil charges can be applied, protecting not only federal computers, but those of banks, and any other computer connected to the Internet (Doyle, 2014). The act used today outlines seven computer crimes (i.e., computer trespassing in a government computer; computer

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[6] Phone phreaking began in the 1950s among individuals who learned how to reverse engineer the telecommunications system in order to make free long-distance phone calls. Some consider phone phreakers to be one of the earliest form of hackers as they not only manipulated the system to their advantage, but possessed a deep interest in experimenting with and understanding telecommunications networks.

trespassing resulting in exposure of government, credit, financial, or protected information; damaging a government or bank computer using worms or viruses or DDoS attack; committing fraud involving unauthorized access to a government computer or bank computer; threatening to damage a government or bank computer; trafficking in passwords for a computer; and accessing a computer to commit espionage) and their penalties. Penalties range from one year to ten or more years in federal prison, including sizable fines.

Since the image of the hacker is debated as one of mischief maker to mere criminal, researchers must move away from a myopic understanding of the hacker or even the hacktivist, and in turn, embrace the complexities beholden to these online subcultures (see Holt 2007; Holt, 2010; Holt & Copes, 2010; Jordan & Taylor, 2004; Steinmetz, 2015). Not only is there great complexity when defining and describing the different types of hackers, which is beyond the scope of this paper (see Rogers, 2006; Steinmetz, 2015), the reasons why individuals participate in such acts or how they justify their behavior still remain elusive. One particular framework that lends itself to understanding the cognitive mechanisms used by a hacker or hacktivist is Sykes and Matza's (1957) neutralization theory. While this theory has been used to examine a variety of crimes and behaviors such as white collar crime (Piquero, Tibbets, & Blankenship, 2005), identify theft (Copes & Vieraitis, 2012; Copes, Vieraitis, & Jochum, 2007), human trafficking (Antonopoulos & Winterdyk, 2005), hate crimes (Byers, Crider, & Biggers, 1999), and animal rights activists (Liddick, 2013), only a handful of studies have applied neutralization techniques to individuals who have committed computer crimes or participated in online activism (Chua & Holt, 2016; Hindjua, 2007; Hutchings & Clayton, 2016; Ingram & Hindjua, 2008; Morris & Higgins, 2009; Smallridge & Roberts, 2013, Turgeman-Golschmidt, 2009; Walkley, 2005). Moreover, this study uses a qualitative and content analysis-based approach, as survey research has not been able to adequately capture the neutralization process and often relies on measures that are mere abstractions rather than reality (Maruna & Copes, 2005). The primary purpose of this study was to examine the types of neutralizations used among individuals who participated in Anonymous operations against United States targets from 2008 to 2013. It is important to note that we use "Anonymous operations" in this study as an umbrella term to refer to the operations that were carried out by members of Anonymous and in some cases participants who were once affiliated with Anonymous or an Anonymous operation in some capacity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Neutralization Theory

Introduced by Gresham Sykes and David Matza (1957), neutralization theory is based on the idea that offenders will use verbal or nonverbal utterances prior to committing an act in violation of laws or values to which they claim to follow. Essentially, neutralizations allow the offender to temporarily suspend judgement or deflect blame in order to commit an act they would normally consider wrong. As stated by Copes (2003), offenders can, and frequently will, use these techniques to justify their actions and cleanse their conscious, casting aside any possible feelings of guilt or to avoid a negative self-image.

In their original work, Sykes and Matza (1957) presented several ways an offender may justify his/her behavior. First, offenders may thwart negative appraisals by using a technique known as *denial of responsibility*. Here, the offender may excuse their actions by claiming it was unintentional or the act was caused by outside factors beyond one's control. *Denial of injury* also

allows the offender to relinquish their responsibility for committing a deviant act. However, for this technique, the offender does not view the victim as suffering from any real injury. Instead the injury is simple mischief or harmless in nature. The next technique of neutralization, *denial of the victim*, is when the offender acknowledges the harm as retaliation and/or views the harm as deserved or even as punishment for something the victim may or may not have done (i.e., victim blaming). *Condemnation of the condemners*, the fourth technique of neutralization, occurs when the offender justifies the act by moving the attention away from themselves onto those passing judgement. In this case, an offender accused of a crime may instead turn the focus toward the criminal justice system and those in charge of the judicial process, asserting that they too are corrupt and deviant individuals themselves. The last technique, *appeal to higher loyalties*, occurs when an individual may feel the need to commit a deviant act in order to demonstrate loyalty to a personal subgroup by violating social norms or laws.

Over the years, additional neutralizations have been developed. For example, Klockars (1974) conducted a life history study on a professional fence, that is, a person who knowingly sells stolen merchandise. The neutralization, *metaphor of the ledger*, was created, which allowed the "fence" to put his behavior in perspective with the totality of all his past behaviors. In other words, the person views themselves as having done more good than bad in their lifetime. In similar research about fencing stolen goods, Henry (1978) derived that adult offenders may use a *claim of normality*, which follows the idea that "everyone is doing it." This neutralization is particularly similar to *diffusion of guilt*, as explained by Coleman (1989) in the context of white collar criminals. The idea here is that it is unfair to criminalize the behavior of just one individual when "everybody's doing it." Additional research in the 1970s on white collar criminals brought to light that they may employ the *defense of necessity*, a neutralization where illegal activity is not perceived as really illegal, but "standard business practice" (Minor, 1981, p. 298) and in some ways a necessity to being a successful business person.

In a different vein, the *claim of relative acceptability* is a neutralization that was used among illegal gun owners, who used this justification to appeal to a larger audience that their misconduct was relatively moral or the lessor of two evils (Moss, 1989). Among students using bottle rockets to prank others, the neutralization, *denial of negative intent*, was used (Moss, 1989). The claim here is that the act was just to have fun and no harm or ill-will was intended. Conducting interviews with misdemeanant shoplifters, Cromwell and Thurman (2003), established two additional neutralizations-justification by comparison and postponement. Shoplifters who used the *justification by comparison* neutralization, claimed that their crime paled in comparison to more serious acts such as robbery. *Postponement*, on the other hand, allowed shoplifters to put aside any feelings of guilt momentarily, much like Scarlet O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*, who remarked, "I can't think about that right now. If I do, I'll go crazy. I'll think about that tomorrow."

Neutralization theory was originally written to explain juvenile offending but has included adult offenders, spanning many different types of crimes. However, despite its many applications, empirical support for neutralization theory can be best characterized as mixed (Maruna & Copes, 2005). Maruna and Copes (2005) suggest that limited support for the theory is because neutralizations are difficult to test and those who have attempted to test it have used it for causal explanations for crime when in fact it "plays a role in persistence in or desistance from criminal behavior" (p. 221). Moreover, testing the theory has been plagued by a time order issue.

Sykes and Matza (1957) claimed that neutralizations can precede the behavior, while others have claimed that neutralizations can come after the act (Hindelang, 1970; Hirschi, 1969; Maruna & Copes, 2005).

Hacking and Computer Crimes As Explained by Neutralization Theory

As mentioned, some notable studies have been conducted to further examine hackers or computer criminals' use of neutralizing the techniques, and it is upon which the current study is situated within this body of literature. For one, while a few studies have relied on qualitative methodologies to examine hacker motivations and techniques of neutralization (Turgeman-Goldschmit, 2009), most others have issued self-report surveys with a set of pre-defined responses (Chua & Holt, 2016) or open online surveys (Hutchings & Clayton, 2016). Second, most studies have utilized younger and college-aged populations (Hindjua, 2007; Ingram & Hindjua, 2008; Morris & Higgins, 2009; Smallridge & Roberts, 2013). Last, the extant literature has captured hackers and hacking behaviors in general (Turgeman-Goldschmit, 2009), Internet fraudsters (Walkley, 2005), malicious software virus writers or distributers (Chua & Holt, 2016), digital pirates (Hindjua, 2007; Ingram & Hindjua, 2008; Moore & McMullan, 2009; Morris & Higgins, 2009; Smallridge & Roberts, 2013) or those who market DDoS attack services (Hutchings & Clayton, 2016). Indeed, the present body of literature has clearly evolved to examine hackers and other types of computer criminals using techniques of neutralization as a framework, but it has not delved deeply into specifically examining the neutralizations of hacktivists. Hacktivists are known to employ the same tactics as hackers such as website defacement, launching DDoS attacks, theft of information, or sabotage, yet, they use these tactics for political or social reasons, whether it be promoting a social cause, addressing some form of injustice, or revealing abuses of power (Karanasiou, 2014). Thus, the current study attempts to broaden the existing framework by examining hacktivists and by using qualitative methods to provide greater explanatory power of the neutralizations that may be used among them.

The existing research demonstrates that hackers, virus writers, and digital pirates, among other computer criminals, use various neutralizations. For example, Turgeman-Goldschmidt (2009) conducted 54 in-depth, unstructured interviews from 1998 to 1999 with Israeli hackers who engaged in crimes, such as software piracy, hacking into computer accounts, distributing viruses or DDOS attacks, and phone phreaking, and found the use of five different neutralizing techniques. Many hackers believed issuing a computer virus harbored no ill will or malicious intent [denial of injury] and that among those who stole and download information, hackers did not believe any real damage was caused. Denial of the victim also came into play as many hackers viewed Microsoft as the enemy and one who deserved to be attacked. They similarly condemned their condemners, such as Microsoft and other software giants, who were viewed as the "'real' criminals of the computer world" (Turgeman-Goldschmidt, 2009, p. 327). Evidence of appeal to higher loyalties was found in a different sense where it was tied to a hacker's desire for freedom of information. Additionally, the neutralization, self-fulfillment, identified by Scott and Lyman (1968) was used by hackers to express the sense of joy, thrill, and excitement that hacking provided them. Interestingly, the Israeli hackers did not use the technique denial of responsibility; however, Walkley's (2005) research on Internet fraudsters yielded the most support for denial of responsibility, but very little support for the others.

Chua and Holt (2016) filled yet another research gap by taking not only a comparative approach that involved distributing a self-report survey to a sample of 713 students in the United

States, Taiwan, and South Africa, but also focused on those who created and distributed malicious software. The authors found that denial of injury, denial of responsibility, and appeal to higher loyalties correlated with simplistic hacking behaviors as well as the creation of malware or distribution of malware to intentionally harm another's computer.

In contrast, the research on digital piracy is somewhat more abundant, but mixed results abound. On one hand, Morris and Higgins (2009) found a moderate level of support among digital pirates (i.e., college students) using neutralizations, yet their study revealed stronger support where retrospective neutralizations appeared more often than prospective ones. Hindjua (2007) cited weak support for neutralizing techniques among online software pirating college students, yet Ingram and Hindjua (2008) described that neutralizations such as denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, and appeal to higher loyalties were employed among college students who engaged in online music piracy. This was true for Moore and McMullan (2009), who also noted that among college students who shared files via peer to peer networks, the most commonly used neutralizations were denial of injury and denial of the victim. When examining music, movie, software, and gaming piracy, Smallridge and Roberts (2013) found mixed support for some neutralizations such as a s metaphor of the ledger, condemnation of the condemners, claim of future patronage, and denial of responsibility, but found stronger support for defense of necessity, appeal to higher loyalties, the claim of normality, and digital rights management software defiance, a new neutralization that was found mostly among gaming pirates.

Aside from digital piracy, which is seen as a low-skill computer crime, Hutchings and Clayton (2016) narrowed in on the neutralizing techniques among a small surveyed group of individuals who operated or used booter services, which provided customers with DDoS attacks against targets of their choosing. They found that most neutralized their actions with the claim that they were motivated by the provision of stressor tests for networks and were therefore contributing to the common good of improving network security. This motivation of "the common good" was then interpreted by Hutchings and Clayton as an appeal to higher loyalties.

Anonymous

Anonymous originated from the 4chan image board known as /b/, where users simply posted under the name "Anonymous." To some, defining Anonymous borders on the absurd, much like trying to pin down a cloud (Coleman, 2014). In many ways, it may be easier to define what it is not. For one, not all users of /b/ or 4chan, for that matter, can be labeled as members of Anonymous. And for those who have participated in Anonymous operations, not all of them claim to be hackers or hacktivists. Second, add to this the complexity of understanding the sheer number of Anons. Coleman (2012) states that participation in Anonymous is fluid, and membership is global, so it is difficult to identify an exact number. Third, there is no hierarchy or leader, and by all means, the group is not a united front. Last, while the group is comprised of an assortment of members, ranging from hackers and human rights advocates to geeks, not all of them engage in illicit activities. On the other hand, others have caused real damage and have been charged with violating federal computer protection laws.

What is better understood is that prior to the move to Internet relay chats (IRCs)[7] for Anonymous communications, 4chan initially provided the necessary platform to hold world-wide assemblies. Even though /b/ board is most widely known for seedy mischief and lulz, some trolling attacks evolved into taking political and social action by way of the Internet or in-person protest (Coleman, 2012). It is also important to recognize that not all operations have involved illegal activity; some were certainly legal and other activity drifted into legally gray areas (Coleman, 2014). Nonetheless, conversations through chats and memes[8] made many Anons come to the realization that as a collective, they are disenfranchised with the government and the corporate elite, a sentiment that has been echoed by other online activists before Anonymous garnered so much attention (see Jordan & Taylor, 2004). Many pride themselves on exposing the truth and for protecting free speech (Penny, 2011). This has been demonstrated via numerous operations over the years following the group's first steps into online activism. The list of such operations is substantial and may continue exponentially into the future. For the purposes of this paper, however, only operations from which data was collected for this study are described in the following section[9].

Anonymous Operations. Roughly two years after Project Chanology, the next major campaign under the banner of Anonymous began in September 2010 after The Pirate Bay, a file-sharing website, was brought down by a DDoS attack. Anonymous claimed that the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) hired Aiplex Software, an Indian firm often employed by the film industry to use DDoS actions against file-sharing websites (Grubb, 2010), to carry out the attack (Sauter, 2014). The MPAA and RIAA are the major trade organizations representing the American content industry and have a history of opposing file-sharing websites, like The Pirate Bay, by initiating law suits against both users and providers. Sauter (2014) explains that the organizations' actions were not only viewed by Anonymous as a threat to freedom of information and sharing on the Internet, but also as a form of hypocrisy and abuse of corporate power. The group argued that while DDoS tactics were used against The Pirate Bay without penalty, Anonymous members had been convicted for using the same methods against the Church of Scientology. Though it is unclear

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[7] Internet Relay Chat, or IRC, is a teleconferencing system that is primarily designed to facilitate a forum for group text communication. Channels can be created in which multiple clients connect to a central server and can send messages that are seen by other clients within the same server (Oikarinen & Reed, 1993).

[8] Introduced in 1976 by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, memes are a "unit of cultural information spread by imitation" (Rogers, 2019, para. 1). Memes replicate and evolve within a culture as they carry information from person to person and are copied. They take numerous forms, such as ideas, phrases, or behaviors, and are spread primarily through various types of communication ranging from conversations and television to the Internet (Rogers, 2019).

[9] Operations such as "Op Tunisia" and the Occupy Wall Street movements also were significant events for members of Anonymous. However, they were excluded from the analysis. It can be argued that Operation Tunisia was one of the first of many Freedom Ops (i.e., Operation Algeria, Operation Egypt, Operation Libya, and Operation Iran) where members of Anonymous played a role as global citizens. As a result of civil and political unrest in several Arab countries across the Middle East and in parts of North Africa, numerous revolutionary demonstrations and protests started in December 2010. These waves of demonstrations have been referred to as the Arab Spring. Political scientists point to the civil uprising as a result of human rights violations, corruption among political officials, government censorship, and poor social conditions, including unemployment and poverty, among other socio-political issues. To a degree, this operation and additional international operations to combat dictatorial regimes splintered Anonymous into some who see their role as human activists instead of carrying out acts of simple mischief, according to Coleman (2012).

whether Aiplex was actually hired by the MPAA and RIAA, Anonymous nonetheless perpetuated and used this narrative to launch a collective DDoS campaign against anti-piracy organizations as part of Operation Payback (Coleman, 2014; Sauter, 2014). The websites of the RIAA, the MPAA, the International Federation of Phonographic Industry, Aiplex, and a British law firm, ACS: Law, were all taken offline for various lengths of time (Coleman, 2014).

In November of the same year, WikiLeaks, a prominent whistle-blowing website founded by Julian Assange, published 220 of 251,287 classified U.S. diplomatic cables that were obtained and fully leaked the rest to various news organizations (Coleman, 2014; Leigh, 2010). The disclosures revealed a multitude of sensitive details, such as questionable U.S. intelligence gathering methods, candid discussions between U.S. diplomats regarding foreign leaders, and U.S. criminal dealings with corrupt foreign officials (Coleman, 2014). After the U.S. government condemned the acts of WikiLeaks (Shane & Lehren, 2010), PayPal and several other financial corporations buckled under political pressure and refused to process donations to the website (Coleman, 2014). Members of Anonymous considered WikiLeaks' mission of providing truth to the public (WikiLeaks, 2011) to be in alignment with their own values and goals and were incensed by the backlash. Viewing this treatment of the website as a form of censorship, the group launched Operation Avenge Assange in December as the second stage of Operation Payback (Coleman, 2014). Thousands of participants downloaded and used Low Orbit Ion Cannon (LOIC)[10] software to contribute to the DDoS campaign against the websites of not just financial companies like PayPal and Mastercard, but any other parties that acted against or criticized WikiLeaks (Coleman, 2014; Mansfield-Devine, 2011a). As a result, several of the targeted websites experienced downtime and service outages (Sauter, 2014).

While Anonymous was being investigated for the Operation Payback attacks, Aaron Barr, the CEO of the computer security firm HBGary Federal, publicly boasted in 2011 that he had infiltrated the organization, identified key members of the group, and planned to expose them (Dysart, 2011). Anonymous mocked Barr's inaccurate claims and decided to teach him a lesson by hijacking his Twitter account and using it to post offensive comments and his personal details (Wisniewski, 2011). The group next hacked into the HBGary Federal website and its email servers. The website was defaced to taunt the security company's failure to protect its own network, employee passwords were changed, a large amount of data was wiped, and over 70,000 private company emails were downloaded and published (Coleman, 2014; Dysart, 2011; Zetter, 2011).

A few months later, the Anonymous offshoot group LulzSec[11] initiated a mayhem-filled hacking campaign that included publicly exposing security vulnerabilities of companies entrusted with personal information (Coleman, 2014). In one such operation, the group gained

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[10] Low Orbit Ion Cannon software, or LOIC, is an easy-to-use open-source application that grants users the ability to target a specific IP address and perform DDoS attacks against it with the click of a button (Coleman, 2014; Microsoft, 2017). The simplicity of the tool allowed even users with little to no hacking knowledge to participate in Anonymous DDoS operations, such as Payback. The application's Hive Mind mode was also used by Anonymous to remotely control the computers of volunteers to carry out the scheduled attacks while the owners were away from their machines (Sauter, 2014).

[11] According to Coleman (2014), the group responsible for the HBGary Federal breach broke from Anonymous to form LulzSec, or "Lulz Security" in May 2011. The crew of tricksters embarked on a fifty-day period of hacking activities primarily for the joy of creating mayhem and exposing poor computer security practices.

access to the computer systems of Sony Pictures in 2011 through an SQL injection[12] attack on the company's website and subsequently published the confidential data of thousands of Sony customers (Broadhurst, Grabosky, Alazab, & Chon, 2014). LulzSec mocked Sony for its website's vulnerability to rudimentary attacks and the company's poor security practices regarding customer information (Albanesius, 2011).

After disbanding in June 2011, LulzSec became AntiSec when the motive of sowing chaos shifted toward a more serious hacktivist stance while cooperating with Anonymous in Operation AntiSec (Coleman, 2014). Mansfield-Devine (2011b) states that the group "focused on alerting the world to security weaknesses – particularly on the part of government entities and corporates – and what AntiSec [saw] as dishonesty and ineffectiveness on the part of the information security industry" (p. 5). The group set its sights on the global intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting, Inc., or Stratfor, as a major target for potential exposure. By late 2011, according to Coleman (2014), AntiSec had infiltrated Stratfor and downloaded nearly five million company emails, collected over 50,000 credit card numbers−30,000 of which were used in attempts to make various donations, wiped entire data servers, and eventually leaked both the emails and credit card numbers.

In the following year, 2012, a sexual assault case in Steubenville, Ohio drew the attention of Anonymous. Two high schoolers were facing trial for the rape of their classmate and there was suspicion that that the juvenile suspects were being protected by the town due to their status as football players (Kushner, 2013). Named after the slogan on the school's sports website, Operation RollRedRoll was initiated to seek justice for the victim (Vaas, 2013). It began with the release of an ominous video that threatened to dox[13] all parties complicit in protecting the accused athletes unless the suspects came forward and publicly apologized to the victim (Kushner, 2013). The school's sports website was hacked and defaced with the Op RollRedRoll video, rallies were organized outside the Steubenville courthouse, and incriminating social media evidence that had been previously overlooked by police was gathered and publicized (Kushner, 2013; Vaas, 2013). Both suspects were later convicted for the rape (Vaas, 2013).

Acting on behalf of another individual, Anonymous commenced an additional operation between 2012 and 2013. Aaron Swartz, a renowned hacktivist and proponent of free information, committed suicide when he was faced with a hefty fine and 35 years in prison for allegedly downloading a large number of academic journal articles (Coleman, 2014). Viewing Swartz's death as a line that had been crossed, Anonymous launched Operation Last Resort against federal websites. The group specifically hijacked the website of the U.S. Sentencing Commission (USSC) and defaced it with a video in which they expressed anger over the arrests and disproportionate sentencing of hacktivists. The message called for a reform of what the group

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[12] Kaspersky Lab (2018) describes SQL injection as an attack "in which a hacker uses a piece of SQL (Structured Query Language) code to manipulate a database and gain access to potentially valuable information" (para. 1). This form of attack is further noted as one of the most prevalent threats because any website that uses an SQL-based database is potentially vulnerable to it.

[13] Doxing is the act of obtaining and publicly unveiling the personal information of a targeted individual, such as name, phone number, address, and social security number (Coleman, 2011).

considered to be overbroad and outdated computer legislation that is abused by prosecutors, a reform of computer crime sentencing to make punishment proportional to the harm done, and a governmental commitment to the freedom of information on the Internet (Aarons ArkAngel, 2013). Anonymous also transformed the website into an interactive video game at one point (Blue, 2013) and exploited flaws in Adobe's Coldfusion software to infiltrate multiple U.S. government systems, including those of the U.S. Army and U.S. Missile Defense Agency, from which they stole vast amounts of personal and intelligence data (Department of Justice, 2013). The group threatened to disclose the obtained government information if their demands were not met.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this study consisted of three phases. First, a list of Anonymous operations that took place against targets in the United States and individuals affiliated with each operation was created. Publicly available information was gathered from a variety of Internet sources (i.e., online newspapers, websites, LexisNexis, etc.) using open source intelligence techniques (Bazzell, 2016). Because the information was publicly available and did not involve human participants, internal review was not required. Arrest information was also obtained from the U.S. Department of Justice's news release website, which explicitly named the alleged offenders who were charged. Sources from online news websites that publicized the trials or cases were also downloaded and systematically reviewed regarding the types of offense(s) for which each participant in each Anonymous operation was charged, and if known, the sentence that was issued post-conviction. Demographic information such as age, gender, and state or country of residence, was obtained if available. All gathered information was placed into a database.

The initial challenge with this study was identifying and obtaining information from actual Anonymous participants. After all, these individuals are often able to escape identification and, as reiterated by Coleman (2012), no one can really calculate the number of participants for any given operation. Given the complexities of "sampling" true Anonymous participants, the best method for the purpose of this study was to trace and identify Anonymous participants by way of publicly available documents (e.g., news stories, U.S. federal indictment news releases, or video media) on the Internet in which the participant had been named. The limitation of such a method is forthright and recognizable. That is, the results may be skewed by including only those who were found to be linked to these operations, yet this method was determined to be the best alternative to identify "real" and "genuine" participants who would have otherwise remained "anonymous."

The first phase of the study yielded a list of 47 members, who participated in one or more Anonymous operations, over the time period of 2008-2013. The average age and median age of participants in these Anonymous operations was 26. The youngest member was a minor (age 16), but because minors are a protected population, and further information was unattainable, the youngest in this study was 18. In contrast, the oldest member of Anonymous was 65. In terms of gender, the majority were male (95.7%, $n = 45$). As expected, there was no real geographic pattern regarding where participants lived. Eleven lived in the United Kingdom and the remainder were from the United States. Among those who lived in the United States, at least four of them resided in California, four resided in New York, and the remaining individuals lived in seventeen different states.

Thirty-six participants in the United States were charged with intentionally damaging a protected computer (18 U.S.C. § 1030(a)(5)) and in a few cases some were additionally charged with conspiracy (18 U.S.C. § 371). The remaining individuals were arrested and charged in United Kingdom. In the majority of cases in the United States, a plea deal was made and not all resulted in federal incarceration. For example, after pleading guilty, charges were reduced for 11 of the 14 individuals who participated in Operation PayPal/Avenge Assange, with most of them paying $5,600 in fines and serving probation. Only a few were penalized with serving time in federal prison, ranging from one year to ten years.

Using the list of participants in Anonymous operations, the second phase of the study involved scouring the Internet for all comments that each individual made publicly about these operations and their involvement. Again, open source intelligence techniques were used to glean data from online news articles, video interviews, documentaries, and other forms of publicly accessible content. Only relevant quotes and text communications made by participants about the operations were copied verbatim and pasted into a document file. In the cases of video sources, the audio content was transcribed and placed into the same document file. If the quotes exceeded the scope of the study by not involving any reference to Anonymous or an Anonymous operation, it was excluded. The web address or media source where the content was located or recorded was entered into the document file as well.

During this phase, passages were found for 31 (66%) of the 47 Anonymous operation participants. With that said, this process yielded over 55 pages of relevant and pre-selected text and over 13,000 words for analysis. The majority of retrieved text was generated by very outspoken individuals involved in HB Gary and Stratfor. Smaller amounts of text, albeit still meaningful, were found for those who participated in Project Chanology, RollRedRoll, and Operation Sony.

Latent coding marked the third phase of the study (Neuendorf, 2017) using a document file where all passages were assigned alpha and numerical identifiers. To begin, coding involved using Sykes and Matza's (1957) five techniques of neutralization (i.e., the denial of responsibility, the denial of injury, the denial of the victim, the condemnation of the condemners, and the appeal to higher loyalties), in addition to other pre-defined neutralizations such as the defense of necessity (Minor, 1981), diffusion of guilt (Coleman, 1989), justification by comparison (Cromwell & Thurman, 2003), postponement (Cromwell & Thurman, 2003), metaphor of the ledger (Klockars, 1974), claim of normality (Henry, 1978), denial of negative intent (Moss, 1989), and the claim of relative acceptability (Moss, 1989). There were several passages that were deemed as "non-neutralizations" or not germane to the purpose of the study. For example, one hacker remarked, "The day my indictment went public my name trended on Twitter." Such text was not indicative of any neutralizing techniques and was coded as a "99." Moreover, the coders marked certain passages as a "98" if there was some evidence that the statement contained a neutralization, but for which there was no neutralization code. Among these passages, the theme of moral high ground and protest took shape, and from that point forward such passages were coded as a "14."

With any content analysis, validity and reliability are always a major concern. To strengthen the coding process, an iterative process of coding and recoding was used among three coders. Training for each of the coders involved a thorough review of each neutralization and its meaning. A small sub-set of the document file was selected (about 20 passages) and coded by

each researcher to pre-test the coding process. The coders met to assess how passages were coded, which warranted further discussion about the interpretation of each neutralization (the initial inter-rater reliability coefficient using Krippendorff's alpha was a .80). For instance, key words and phrases were discussed as ways to more definitively identify certain neutralizations over others. Then, the document file was split in half and each of the researchers coded all of the passages independently. Several meetings were arranged to discuss and compare the passages of coded text. In some cases, disparities of the coded text were reconciled or a consensus was reached about the type of neutralization that was expressed in the text. Coding and analysis continued until the point of saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1988). Krippendorff's alpha was used to calculate inter-coder reliability for all the passages (including those not germane to the study), which yielded a reliability coefficient of .94 (Krippendorff, 2004). In addition, Krippendorff's alpha was calculated for just the passages containing neutralizations, resulting in a reliability coefficient of .92.

One final step was employed to ensure correct coding. All passages that represented a particular neutralization were copied and pasted into a separate document file. For example, all quotes and phrases that were coded as "condemnation of the condemners" were grouped separately into one document, then all quotes and phrases that were coded as "denial of responsibility" were copied into another, etc., allowing the researchers to compare and determine whether each passage clearly represented that neutralization technique. This was an additional layer of the process to assess validity and internal consistency and proved to be a very valuable final check of the assigned codes.

RESULTS

With a few exceptions, Sykes and Matza's (1957) five neutralizing techniques were most evident in this study. Over 13,000 words were analyzed, and of the 381 passages, roughly 62% of passages contained some type of neutralizing statement, whereas 38% of passages were coded as containing no neutralization or as not germane to the study. Among the 238 passages and phrases of neutralizations, condemnation of the condemners accounted for most of the coded passages, followed by appeal to a higher moral principle, and denial of the victim. Appeal to higher loyalties, "other" neutralizations, denial of responsibility, and denial of injury comprised the remaining most common neutralizations used by participants in Anonymous operations. There were fewer neutralizations such as justification by comparison, postponement, metaphor of the ledger, claim of normality, and claim of relative acceptability, ranging from 3.7% to .4% of passages. Of the 31 participants in Anonymous operations, for which text and passages could be found, 84% made some type of neutralizing statement.

Condemnation of the Condemners

Participants in Anonymous operations were most likely to neutralize their behavior by using the condemnation of the condemners technique (26%, $n = 62$). In several cases, participants in Anonymous operations deflected blame by focusing on the injustices carried out by law enforcement officials. One individual commented,

> *Should police, having obtained a reason to acquire information but lacking any overt evidence of criminality sufficient to bring prosecution, be allowed to withhold private data?*

Another participant, who was involved in Stratfor, listed several reasons pertaining to the injustices of not only law enforcement, but of the military and security firms.

> *I targeted law enforcement systems because of the racism and inequality with which the criminal law is enforced. I targeted the manufacturers and distributors of military and police equipment who profit from weaponry used to advance U.S. political and economic interests abroad and to repress people at home. I targeted information security firms because they work in secret to protect government and corporate interests at the expense of individual rights, undermining and discrediting activists, journalists and other truth seekers, and spreading disinformation.*

One participant expressed disdain for the government, turning the blame away from himself to the wrongful act committed by the government instead.

> *My government used a DDoS attack against servers I owned, and then convicted me of conducted DDoS attacks.*

Appeal to a Higher Moral Principle

The second most common neutralization used by participants in Anonymous operations was not one created by Sykes and Matza in 1957, but by Liddick (2013), known as appeal to a higher moral principle. Liddick found this neutralizing technique among communications by animal rights activists. Among those who adopt this neutralization, "in certain situations, man-made law is superseded by a higher moral principle" (Liddick, 2013, p. 628). Liddick remarked that this ties into ideology, and for the present study, it can be argued that hacktivists may follow their own set of ideological values. Hacktivists see the act as having a deeper meaning and purpose to achieve some political goal or end (Jordan & Taylor, 2004; Kopstein, 2013). To them, the act is altruistic in nature even if it means launching DDoS attacks, defacing a website, or publishing classified government documents. As Penny (2011) asserts, "…one person's cyberterrorist is another person's digital freedom fighter, and for many, that's precisely what hacktivists are" (p. 3).

In the early stages of the coding process, these passages were originally identified as 14s for which there was no preset code. The common denominator was that these expressions contained the theme of righteousness, morality, and moral high ground. Once the coding process was complete, it became clear that these passages reflected the sentiment of appeal to a higher moral principle by Liddick (2013). Yet, adopting this neutralization had to be reconciled with the neutralization, appeal to a higher loyalty. Looking back at Sykes and Matza's (1957) work, appeal to a higher loyalty was referenced as "scarifying the demands of the larger society for the demands of the small social group to which the delinquent belongs such as the sibling pair, the gang, or the friendship clique" (p. 669). For the delinquent, the resolution of this dilemma between the dominant normative system to the norms of one's friendship group, are met by siding with the friend or buddy. Whereas here, the neutralization being made by Anonymous participants were uniquely describing a higher call or sense of duty, not necessarily devotion to one's peer-group or even to the group Anonymous, for that matter. In sum, 14% ($n = 33$) of the neutralizations conveyed this principle as shown in the following excerpts.

Would I do it again? And, honestly after thinking about it, I felt that I did what was right. I had a belief, I still do, that what I did was the right thing, and hopefully someone got some good out of it.

Now that I have pleaded guilty it is a relief to be able to say that I did work with Anonymous to hack Stratfor, among other websites. Those others included military and police equipment suppliers, private intelligence and information security firms, and law enforcement agencies. I did this because I believe people have a right to know what governments and corporations are doing behind closed doors. I did what I believe is right.

Though misguided, I truly acted out of a hope to live in a world less fraught with violence and war.

Among the passages that embodied the spirit of appealing to a higher moral principle, there are two subthemes that also emerged. That is, some of the participants in Anonymous operations framed their behavior as online protest or civil disobedience.

All I did was leave the LOIC [Low Orbit Ion Cannon] software running on my computer because I viewed it as a way of 'donating' to support the cause that I believed in, which was protesting against Visa, MasterCard, and PayPal for the unjustified — and ultimately ruled illegal in Icelandic court — financial blockade of WikiLeaks.

I was on the Internet, reading the news. I saw something about PayPal shutting down payments to Wikileaks, and I clicked on some other site and joined a protest. And next thing I knew, my house was surrounded by guns.

[I] chose to participate in a mass online protest run under the guise of Anonymous — which is not a group, it's just an idea — in which thousands of people on the Internet agreed and organized to protest in defense of freedom of speech and freedom of information.

I broke the law, but if you look at history, there's a place for civil disobedience…My civil disobedience was for the greater good, for transparency; the government was not being truthful, the leaks showed, and so I felt compelled to maintain moral integrity by taking action.

Yes I broke the law, but I believe that sometimes laws must be broken in order to make room for change.

Denial of the Victim

Almost 12% (*n* = 27) of neutralizations were indicative of the technique, denial of the victim. Following the original work of Sykes and Matza (1957), responsibility is accepted for the actions taken and the harm caused, but neutralization occurs through the insistence that the injury is not wrong and is instead a form of rightful punishment dealt to a deserving target. For participants in Anonymous operations, the same line of thinking is evident. The victim, whether it was a global intelligence corporation, such as Stratfor, deserved the harm that was inflicted.

I spent some time researching Stratfor and reviewing the information we were given, and decided that their activities and client base made them a deserving target.

It was further observed that the technique allowed a participant to move "into the position of an avenger and the victim is transformed into a wrong-doer" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 668). Here, participants neutralized the harm of their actions by viewing and presenting themselves as seekers of justice outside of the law.

I am happy with what I was part of because I helped stand up to a bully.

Like I said, they incriminated themselves. There's clear-cut evidence and a jury of their peers is what they are entitled to. And are we not their peers?

Interestingly, even a member of LulzSec justified the prankish group's activities with the purpose of punishing targets for what they considered to be wrong-doing.

I think what was more important, for Lulzsec at least, was showing the world how these major corporations weren't following basic security.

The Appeal to Higher Loyalties

The fourth most common neutralization in the dataset was appeal to higher loyalties (8.5%, *n* = 20). First, it must be noted that while this neutralization has sometimes been interpreted to include morality or the common good (Hutchings & Clayton, 2016), the interpretation within this study strictly adhered to Sykes and Matza's (1957) original definition of appeal to higher loyalties. That being said, the researchers expected to find more evidence where participants justified their behavior as part of their devotion and allegiance to Anonymous. However, it became clear that this was not the case. In fact, Anonymous solely served as the vehicle in which to carry out the act. For instance, one participant in Operation Sony remarked,

When your friend asks you to do something, saying he needs your help, and he offers, 'You want to be as good as me? This is the way to do it,' younger self is more than accepting of those terms. Younger stupid self is happy to oblige.

Another participant more explicitly expressed higher loyalty to Anonymous. Again, this was not common among the passages that were analyzed.

We [Lulzsec] actually started because one of the hacks . . . and it was a security company [HBGary] and they threatened to attack Anonymous, or release information relating to Anonymous members, and I got upset.

Other Neutralizations

During the coding process, several passages were identified as containing some type of neutralizing statement, but that did not fit any of the original preset codes. Among these passages three themes were evident but not overwhelmingly abundant. These are not statements that justified the behavior per se, but certainly seem like an attempt to diminish culpability.

The first theme was among a set of expressions in which the individual did not view themselves as a criminal or deviant, but as a normal everyday citizen. It may have been that the participant was experiencing some type of cognitive dissonance once they were formally charged with criminal hacking.

I'm normal. I have a garden, I'm a person.

> *They pulled me out and said, 'We're looking for anti-American propaganda' . . . I was like, 'You're in Kentucky! I live on a farm and drink Bud Light!'*

The second theme among these general neutralizing statements pertained to the idea of becoming involved in the act and reaching a point from which there was no stopping or turning back.

> *But there's a point where you're past the point of no return.*

> *After you're hacking for so long you reach a point of no return. Regardless if you fear that they're gonna get you one day, it's too late.*

Last, participation in the Anonymous operation was depicted as some form of excitement or like a game. This finding was very similar to one of Turgeman-Goldschmidt's (2005, 2009) findings involving Israeli hackers, many of whom were involved in behaviors such as software piracy, virus writing and distribution, stealing credit card information, and phone phreaking. Turgeman-Goldschmidt labeled these neutralizations as self-fulfillment and described how these hackers spoke freely about how computer crimes provided them with genuine excitement and enthusiasm. It is important to note that self-fulfillment as a neutralization stemmed from the work of Scott and Lyman (1968) involving LSD users who regarded their drug use as expansion of the mind and homosexuals who regarded their existence as part of an enlightened experience to become a more complete person.

> *I wouldn't use the term 'joyride' . . . I'd be lying if I said it wasn't exciting. As a kid, if you're with computers, you think it'd be really cool to be a super-cool hacker…*

> *It was sort of like solving a puzzle or problem-solving. You find that you complete the problem and you do get quite a sense of achievement.*

Denial of Responsibility

Denial of responsibility was not a common neutralizing technique (5.4%, *n* = 13). As shown earlier, most participants explicitly denounced the actions of those they were hacking. Conversely, there were a few participants who claimed no wrong-doing or involvement. However, diminishing and denying culpability may have come after the act and as a way for the participant to avoid prosecution. For instance, one participant in Operation Payback remarked,

> *I left this software running in the background on my computer at my off-campus home at UConn as I went to class throughout the day and largely had little to no interaction with how things went down. I allowed others to control my computer for me and specify targets during that time, and that was all I provided.*

An Operation Sony participant minimized his contributions by denying that his role involved anything beyond gaining server access and passing it along.

> *. . . and once I got in I didn't really care for the server. I never maintained access. I just passed the shells on to someone else and let them do whatever they want with it.*

The Stratfor hack involved a participant who also avoided disapproval by claiming ignorance.

I never knew those [credit card] numbers were in there. It's very clear from the transcript [from] the IRC chat that I didn't know that they were in there.

The Denial of Injury

In addition to explaining that delinquents may evaluate the wrongfulness of an act by whether anyone was clearly harmed by it, Sykes and Matza (1957) noted that juveniles may neutralize their deviant behavior as simple mischief or pranks. Here too, it can be observed among participants in Anonymous operations. However, this neutralization did not appear as commonly as the others (5.2%, *n* = 12). This is unexpected, as part of the backbone of hacking culture is pulling pranks or doing something "for the lulz."

...those ccs [credit cards] and financial mayhem is definitely the most lulzy and newsworthy element of this attack.

And at this point I was just a spokesperson, I didn't actually hack anything, or do anything – it was just jokes and tweets, and a radio show.

One participant appeared to neutralize the wrongfulness of the behavior by viewing it as simply embarrassing targets and not as actual injury to the victims.

[T]he motivation was the ability to use basic technology to embarrass major corporations and people in authority. . . .

Others denied that they would intentionally harm others through their behavior, or simply denied the injury completely.

I never would even dream of hurting anybody. It's just not me.

I never harmed society . . .

Additional Findings

A unique finding was that there were a few expressions of guilt and remorse by the participant in the operation. Sykes and Matza (1957) point out that "there is a good deal of evidence that many delinquents *do* experience a sense of guilt or shame, and its outward expression is not to be dismissed as a purely manipulative gesture to appease those in authority" (pp. 664-665). While a number of participants in Anonymous operations were passionate about standing up for what they felt was right and just, there were still those that upon reflection, bemoaned the wrongdoing or acknowledged the harm that was caused to others. A deeper analysis into the subculture may also reveal that these participants are "partially committed to the dominant social order" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 666) and that they follow some patterns of conformity (i.e., drift).

All this [Sony data hacks] is illegal and thinking back to it . . . I do regret a lot of it.

I realize that I released personal information of innocent people who had nothing to do with the operations of the institutions I targeted. I apologize for the release of data that was harmful to individuals irrelevant to my goals.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the neutralizations used among participants in Anonymous operations against U.S. targets from 2008-2013. The findings suggest that not only did the majority of participants use neutralizing techniques in these operations or suboperations, but that most deflected attention to the wrongfulness of others. By condemning the condemners, such as the police, big business, or the government, participants in Anonymous operations showcased who in their minds was the real villain or wrongdoer. Following the use of this technique, it made sense for the second most common neutralization to be an appeal to a higher moral principle (Liddick, 2013). Here, the present study offers what could be a possible crime-specific neutralization (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Further study is certainly needed, but it could be argued that this neutralization is where the ideology among hacktivists is embedded. Some participants outwardly stated their desire to fight for the common good and to be the vehicles for justice. It became clear that fighting for a cause to better society or to help others was also construed as an act of protest or civil disobedience (Jordan & Taylor, 2004; Karanasiou, 2013) and could be characterized more so as expressive hacking and not criminal hacking (Hampson, 2012). The denial of the victim was the third most common neutralization. This hinges on the previous neutralizations where, to the participant in the operation, the wrongdoing was deserved. Interestingly, there were fewer cases in which participants used neutralizations such as appeal to higher loyalties, denial of responsibility, and denial of injury. Replication of this study using other hacktivist or online activist groups, however, may show otherwise.

The present study is not without limitations. While these passages were primary sources or the spoken word of the participant in an Anonymous operation, passages were extracted from the Internet, documentaries, online news sources, and online magazines, etc. Moreover, the researchers were sometimes unable to determine whether the neutralization occurred before or after the commission of the act. The context of the documentaries and the newspaper interviews suggests that the participant in the Anonymous operation had some time to reflect on the behavior and the pending investigation and charges, which may have altered the original neutralization used when the act was committed. Another related limitation was the inability to find commentary from all operation participants. Again, passages were found for 31 of the 47 (66%) individuals. It is possible that other neutralizations would have surfaced, so the results should be interpreted with some caution.

Neutralization research about hacking and hacktivism is still in its infancy, although the current study attempts to move us forward in grasping at a better view of the cognitive mechanisms used by hacktivists. McQuade (2006) provides unwavering support for its use in studying certain types of cybercrimes, as the lack of physical interaction with the victim allows the offender to become detached and to more easily neutralize his or her actions. He explains that "since they cannot see the Internet or the people who create content, victims, if they are contemplated at all, become faceless entities, computer systems, or perhaps corporations rather than real people whose livelihoods and wellbeing are compromised" (McQuade, 2006, p. 160). Despite the apparent value of this type of research, however, it is important to tread carefully here as a few issues when using a neutralization theory as a framework to examine hackers and hacktivists still need to be considered.

For one, the issue of teasing out the hacker from the hacktivist is not an easy task. As stated by Jordan and Taylor (2004), "it is difficult to identify where hacking ends and hacktivism

begins" (p. 2). Not all hackers are hacktivists, so choosing a sample population must be done with considerable care. Online hacktivist groups like Anonymous may appear, disappear, or reappear, adding another layer of complexity to better understanding these groups. For Anonymous, hacktivism peaked with operations from Chanology through the hack of Strafor in December 2011. As the hacks grew larger with each operation, Anonymous gained more attention from the mainstream press, more chatter reverberated on the Internet, and more data was created to analyze in the current study. Anonymous members were energized by the attention, and the call for addressing many forms of injustice ensued until the veil was removed and some members found themselves facing federal computer crime charges. Because social online activism and groups like Anonymous are global, this study also puts forth the importance of examining hacktivists using a comparative approach.

The second issue on the radar is the need to carve out crime-specific neutralizations or in this case, neutralizations that may explain not only hackers but hacktivists. The neutralization, appeal to a higher moral principle, that arose may just be the inauguration of this, yet it implores greater exanimation and scrutiny. Liddick (2013) in his research on animal rights activists called for this neutralization to be added to the already existing body of neutralization techniques and even mentioned that this technique may be a variation of appeal to a higher loyalty. In pursuit of neutralizations used by hacktivists, this study also calls for turning to socio-political explanations. As stated by Karanasiou (2014), "hacktivism is found to be consistent with the philosophy of civil disobedience" (p. 101) where the intent is to call attention to and repair injustices.

The third issue requiring further investigation, as Maruna and Copes (2005) point out, is that neutralization theory alone cannot fully explain the etiology of criminal behavior. Instead, it offers some understanding of how individuals engage in criminal or deviant acts and how they suppress feelings of resentment or shamefulness in order to continue to commit an illicit act. The case is not fully closed on this issue, however. Liddick (2013) disagrees and suggests that cognitive processes are at work and that neutralization has greater value in explaining crime causation, especially among ideologically based crimes. For example, if animal rights activists follow and are motivated by a certain ideology, then that ideology or set of beliefs sets in motion the appropriate neutralizations before a crime is committed. In this study, the ideology that is swirling around Anonymous, and for many hackers for that matter, is the hacker ethic or perhaps even *The Hacker Manifesto* written by The Mentor in 1986 (Yar, 2005). Future studies should therefore provide a smaller lens on how ideology may or may not play a role in offending.

Similar to the conclusion brought on by Cromwell and Thurman (2003), this study may not definitively provide any answers as to what causes hacking or hacktivism, but in turn, it sheds light on the process of how a person frees themselves from constraint and a damaged self-concept. Even though the Anonymous movement is currently simmering, acts of hacktivism and online protest are not likely to cease anytime soon. Future research is necessary and narrative approaches or qualitative interviews are favorable along with studies that widen the scope of data to include international targets and ones that develop crime-specific techniques, which potentially hinge on some form of ideology.

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