In Search of Progressive Black Masculinities: Critical Self-Reflections on Gender Identity Development among Black Undergraduate Men

Keon M. McGuire[1], Jonathan Berhanu[2], Charles H. F. Davis III[3], and Shaun R. Harper[3]

Abstract

During the last several decades, research concerning the developmental trajectories, experiences, and behaviors of college men as "gendered" persons has emerged. In this article, we first critically review literature on Black men's gender development and expressions within college contexts to highlight certain knowledge gaps. We then conceptualize and discuss progressive Black masculinities by relying on Mutua's germinal work on the subject. Further, we engage Black feminist scholarship, both to firmly situate our more pressing argument for conceptual innovation and to address knowledge gaps in the literature on Black men's gender experiences. It is our belief that scholars who study gender development and expressions of masculinities among Black undergraduate men could benefit from employing autocritography, and its built-in assumptions, to inform several aspects of their research designs.

[1] Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA
[2] University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, USA
[3] University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA

Corresponding Author:
Shaun R. Harper, University of Pennsylvania, 3700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA.
Email: sharper1@upenn.edu

Autocritography is a critical autobiography that some Black profeminist men engage to invite readers into their gendered lifeworlds.

Keywords
college, education, hegemonic masculinity, pro-feminism, race

During the last several decades, research concerning the developmental trajectories, experiences, and behaviors of college men as ''gendered'' persons has emerged (Dancy II 2010a, 2010b, 2011; Davis 2002; Edwards and Jones 2009; Harper 2004; Harper and Harris 2010; Harris and Edwards 2010; Harris, Palmer, and Struve 2011). In the field of higher education, where theory is employed to create foundational and guiding principles for student-centered pedagogies, cocurricular engagement, and other student-related services (Patton et al. 2007), both theoretical and empirical explorations of college men's experiences as men offer strategies to address challenges specific to college men. Although most foundational theories were developed from studies conducted by White men on samples of White, middle-class, heterosexual male students, Davis and Laker (2004) caution scholars and educators against making an erroneous assumption that such studies were about men as gendered beings. This assertion does not minimize the reality that these theories privilege particular men while simultaneously disadvantaging women, persons of color, and nonheterosexual students. Instead, it highlights the fact that these studies offer substantively less information concerning men's gendered experiences. Moreover, most empirical investigations of college men's gender development are at best marginally inclusive of minoritized[1] men in general and Black male students in particular (e.g., Kimmel 2008; Laker and Davis 2011).

Notwithstanding, recent attention to men's experiences in college and university contexts demonstrates an earnest attempt by educators to intentionally include men in ''gender'' discourse; not in an effort to recenter male privilege, but in order to provide educators with necessary tools to assist men in developing healthy, non-sexist, anti-homophobic, and anti-patriarchal identities (Harper and Harris 2010). However, being that empirical studies on the gendered experiences of college men are relatively recent (Kimmel and Messner 2004), certain knowledge gaps remain. Among them is the persistent need for more scholarly investigations concerning the gendered lives of Black male undergraduates.

In this article, we first critically review literature on Black men's gender development and expressions within college environments to highlight aforementioned knowledge gaps. We then conceptualize and discuss progressive Black masculinities by relying heavily on Mutua's (2006)[2] germinal work on the subject. Further, we engage Black feminist theory to firmly situate our more pressing argument for conceptual innovation and to address knowledge gaps in the literature on Black undergraduate men's gendered experiences. It is our belief that scholars who study gender

development and expressions of masculinities among Black undergraduate men could benefit from employing *autocritography,* and its built in assumptions, to inform several aspects of their research design; namely, research topics, sample selection, data collection processes, and data analysis. Autocritography is a critical autobiography that some Black profeminist men engage to invite readers into their gendered life-worlds (e.g., Awkward 1995, 1999). To date, it has been primarily utilized as a literary device (Awkward 1995) or as ''a self-reflexive, self-consciously academic act that foregrounds aspects of the genre typically dissolved into authors' always strategic self portraits . . . [and] is an account of individual, social, and institutional conditions that help to produce a scholar and, hence, his or her professional concerns'' (Awkward 1999, 7). However, we argue that education and gender studies scholars could employ autocritography to capture data of significant empirical relevance concerning how Black men develop and express their masculinities in postsecondary educational environments. In so doing, we engage Black feminist discourse to frame autocritographical authoring. Primarily, we will rely on the work of Michael Awkward (1995, 1999) to operationalize autocritography, while also drawing from Mark Anthony Neal (2005) and other Black male authors who have self-reflexively examined their masculine socialization and gendered performances (Butler 2008).

Black Undergraduate Men's Gender Development

Most literature on college men's gendered experiences has emerged in the last two decades. These studies are noteworthy in that they begin to offer insights into men's lives and help explain troubling behavioral trends on college and university campuses—for example, judicial violations, sexual assault, vandalism, campus engagement, and health and wellness to name a few (Harper and Harris 2010; Harris and Edwards 2010; Kellom 2004; Sax 2008). Moreover, several empirical studies have explicitly examined how college men make sense of, learn about, and perform their masculine identities (e.g., Edwards and Jones 2009; Harris 2010; Yeung, Stombler, and Wharton 2006). Yet, significantly fewer studies have exclusively explored gender performance and expressions among Black undergraduate men. This is not to say that the experiences of Black men have not been investigated. In fact, a growing body of literature has examined the experiences of Black male undergraduates on predominantly White campuses (e.g., Harper 2006, 2009; Harper et al. 2011; Harper and Nichols 2008; Moore, Madison-Colmore, and Smith 2003; Smith, Allen, and Danley 2007; Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano 2007; Strayhorn 2008a, 2008b); at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (e.g., Davis 1994; Kimbrough and Harper 2006; Lundy-Wagner and Gasman 2011; Palmer, Davis, and Hilton 2009; Palmer and Gasman 2008; Palmer and Strayhorn 2008; Palmer and Young 2009; Patton 2011); and at community colleges (Wood 2011; Wood and Hilton 2012; Wood, Hilton, and Lewis 2011; Wood and Turner 2011). This literature covers a broad spectrum of issues such as college access, student engagement, retention, and within-

group heterogeneity. However, these studies focus on Black men in postsecondary contexts, but not much at all on their masculinities. Put differently, it is one thing to study Black men's gendered experiences (e.g., gendered racism) and it is yet another to study Black men as gendered persons.

Only a handful of published studies in the last decade have explicitly focused on understanding Black undergraduate men as gendered persons (e.g., Dancy 2011; Harper 2004; Harris, Palmer, and Struve 2011; Jackson 2012; Martin and Harris 2006; McClure 2006). We briefly summarize some of these articles, placing particular emphasis on the findings and some conceptual and theoretical frameworks scholars engaged to guide the interpretation of findings in their respective studies.

Harper's (2004) study of conceptualizations of masculinity among Black male achievers on six predominantly White campuses found that there remains great tension concerning beliefs about what is considered masculine. Participants used a limited number of variables to describe masculinity, many of which have been characterized elsewhere as hegemonic (e.g., Connell 2005; Harris and Edwards 2010). Hegemonic gender norms, as performed and defined by their Black male peers, included dating and pursuing romantic (oftentimes sexual) relationships with women; any type of athletic activity (organized sports, individual exercise, and bodybuilding); competition through sports and video games; and accumulation and showing off of material possessions. In addition, fraternity membership was associated with participants' notions of masculinity due to the belief that fraternity men attracted and dated more women (Harper). Conversely, participants in the study believed their roles as student leaders and academic achievers did not fit into the undergraduate male portfolio of masculinity. They added that personal responsibility and "taking care of business" were important additional aspects, and although they were not considered a part of their peers' conceptualizations of masculinity, their masculinities were never challenged. Finally, two participants characterized their sexual orientations as openly gay and privately bisexual, respectively. However, the gay student said he was not ostracized or ridiculed because of his sexual orientation.

Martin and Harris (2006) extended the conversation by examining productive conceptions of masculinities among Black male division 1 student-athletes. Similar to participants in Harper's (2004) study, students subscribed to ideals about masculinity that included being strong, upstanding, and of high moral character and integrity. In addition, academic success was included in their personal definitions of masculinity. With regard to personal relationships with women, these men believed monogamy and respect were important, rather than promiscuity and bragging to their male peers about romantic or sexual encounters. These findings were in stark contrast to most previously published studies on Black undergraduate men and student-athletes alike.

In their recent article, Harris, Palmer, and Struve (2011) investigated how twenty-two heterosexual Black men, all enrolled at an elite private university, conceptualized their masculinities and how their ideals of masculinity informed their

behaviors. Harris, Palmer, and Struve discovered that these men associated masculinity with the following: "toughness, aggressiveness, material success, restrictive emotionality, and responsibility" (p. 54). These scholars also posited three behavioral outcomes that were a consequence of the students' characterizations of masculinity: "(a) leadership and student success in college, (b) homophobia and fear of femininity, and (c) engaging in sexist and constrained relationships with women" (p. 54). Thus, Harris, Palmer, and Struve concluded that men in their study expressed and enacted their masculinities in ways that simultaneously reflected and rejected hegemonic cultural notions. For example, they highlighted their participants' commitment to leadership and academic success as gendered behaviors that challenged hegemonic notions of masculinity. However, these men also expressed fears of being associated with femininity as well as held sexist and misogynistic attitudes toward women.

To make sense of contradictory ideals conveyed by Black undergraduate men in their study, Harris, Palmer, and Struve (2011) employed the "cool pose" concept. Majors and Billson (1992) described *cool pose*, a particular masculine strategy embraced by many young Black men to cope with racism, oppression, and marginality, as "a ritualized form of masculinity that entails behaviors, scripts, physical posturing, impression management, and carefully crafted performances that deliver a single, critical message: pride, strength, and control" (p. 4). Accordingly, cool pose embodies expressive styles of dress, speech, and other behaviors that are stereotypically associated with Black male pimps, athletes, and rappers. However, Majors and Billson suggest that being "cool" also entails appearing restrained in high-pressure situations and responding in an emotionless, stoic, and unflinching fashion. Regardless of whether it is expressive or restrained, the primary goal is to remain calm, detached, and seemingly in control amid social chaos, discrimination, and trauma. This attitudinal and performative gender stance often produces negative social and academic outcomes, Harris, Palmer, and Struve argued. Referencing Jackson and Moore (2008), Harris, Palmer, and Struve maintained that many Black men who perform a cool pose tend to "devalue academic achievement and depress educational aspirations" (p. 849). In addition, the authors cited Harris (1995) to highlight how Black masculinity was associated with "sexual promiscuity, toughness, and physical manifestations like styles of dress" (p. 50). Thus, taken together, this literature (and other research such as Harper 2004 and Martin and Harris 2006) was used to explain how participants' expressions of masculinities resisted and reproduced hegemonic norms.

Finally, McClure (2006) examined how membership within a Historically Black Fraternity informed Black undergraduate men's gender identities. Using W.E.B. Du Bois' double-consciousness and Gates' amalgamation theses, McClure complicated prevailing notions of Black men's race and gender identities. McClure found two prevailing conceptualizations of masculinities among Black men in her study: hegemonic and Afrocentric masculinity. McClure utilized Connell's (1995) definition of hegemonic masculinity, which is defined as "being as unlike a woman as

possible ... typically revealed as emotional detachment, to desire and work for success and status, to rely only on yourself, and to have an aura of aggressiveness and violence'' (p. 58). Comparatively, McClure posited that Afrocentric masculinity emphasizes community over individualism and cooperation over competition. Men in McClure's study simultaneously expressed both ideals of masculinity. McClure believed participants' hegemonic-Afrocentric masculinities resulted from their need to distance themselves from negative portrayals of Black men in media and society—often characterized as deficient, pathological, and dysfunctional (Hunter and Davis 1994; Gibbs 1988; Oliver 1984). Participants believed most Black men were seen as such and those who departed from this popular narrative were viewed as aberrations. Frustrated by such racist stereotypes, many participants intentionally aligned themselves with people, organizations, and educational experiences contradictory to prevailing narratives about Black men. Many participants cited their fraternity as a venue through which they could counter negative representations of Black men and actualize educational success (e.g., degree attainment, gainful employment upon graduation, and career success).

Moreover, McClure (2006) found that participants wrestled with their socialization into hegemonic patriarchy, particularly as it related to their roles in a nuclear Black family structure. They complicated their positions on Black men's expected role men as head of household. One participant, for example, challenged the way Black men situated their masculinities within patriarchal hierarchy, suggesting that Black men can exist in "respectful ways," meaning, being egalitarian in thought and practice, rather than authoritative, and domineering. Similarly, another participant deconstructed expectations associated with the role of husband and father, primarily as financial provider. Although his mother earned more than his father, he believed his father displayed an ideal version of Black masculinity by assuming the role of primary caregiver and homemaker. Although his parent's "role reversal" challenged traditional gender roles, their understanding of shared responsibility created a balanced household.

Another example of hegemonic-Afrocentric masculinity was the men's self-ascribed responsibility to hold campus leadership positions within student organizations and affinity groups beyond their fraternity. They stressed the importance of having a connection with other Black students on campus and exemplifying positive Black male attributes and characteristics. Participants also credited their fraternity with shifting their understanding of Black masculinities. One student stated that for the first time, he was around black men who created a safe space for him to express his emotions and feelings without the risk of losing his manhood or being perceived as feminine.

While each aforementioned study provides a necessary scholarly contribution to our understanding of Black men's gendered expressions and conceptualizations of masculinities, there are some noteworthy limitations. First, considering Harper (2004) and Martin and Harris (2006), neither piece framed alternative conceptualizations of masculinity with regard to their intentional position as anti-homophobic,

anti-sexist, or profeminist. Rather, the narratives researchers presented simply do not conform to normalized, hegemonic understandings of masculinities. While this juxtaposition of the findings in some ways counters dominant notions of masculinities, it did so passively rather than affirm new ideas about gender performance. Additionally, despite participants having indicated they did not define their gender in hegemonic ways, both studies reaffirmed beliefs about men as athletically competitive (Martin and Harris 2006), personally and professionally successful, and organizational leaders (Harper). While none of these attributes are negative, per se, they reinforce traditional ways of thinking about Black men, particularly as the men in Harper's study embraced patriarchal notions of Black masculinity.

Furthermore, men in McClure's (2006) study placed a significant emphasis on fraternal bonds, commitment to a [Black] community, and academic success, which led to their development of an Afrocentric masculinity. While we believe these men exhibited aspects of progressive Black masculinities, their approach to leadership within the family and community was rooted in a patriarchal understanding that men by default should assume positions of leadership. The few exceptions participants provided placed women in a traditional patriarchal role of financial provider only when the Black male was unable to assume this position. This undermines Afrocentric masculinities, in that it situates patriarchy at the center of family and community and further perpetuates the dichotomy of social gender roles and norms for women and men.

Finally, Harris, Palmer, and Struve (2011) found contradictory expressions of masculinity among men in their study. To make sense of their participants' perspectives, they employed *cool pose*. This was done in an attempt to incorporate social scientific research that specifically addresses how race informs gender performances among Black men. However, by relying on cool pose, the authors, perhaps unintentionally, reproduce some of the negative gendered and raced stereotypes about Black men's oppositional stance to education.

Jackson (2012) offers a necessary departure from typical studies on Black male college students' gender expressions. His ethnographic study included observations of how brotherhood—"a social construction that creates feelings of togetherness and trust while defining a code for interactions among men" (p. 64)—provided physical, psychological, and social space for men to behave in opposition to masculine gendered norms. Whereas normative expectations concerning masculinities presume restrictive emotionality and independence, the Black men in Jackson's study embraced a version of brotherhood that contradicted these notions. Specifically, Jackson found that men in his study were encouraged to share intimate information about their personal lives with other members as well as build a network of dependency with other Black men in their organization. Here, Jackson's contribution is clear and welcomed: there are spaces on college campuses where Black men's actions contrast normative gendered expectations.

It is critical, however, not to overlook Jackson's (2012) analytical distinction between brotherhood and masculinities. Jackson stated, "brotherhood enabled [the

Black undergraduate students] to retain their masculinity as well as community while violating the conventional cultural ideas of masculinity" (p. 63). That is to say, embracing brotherhood did not necessarily require these Black men to redefine their definitions of masculinity outside of the organization's context. As such, one question that is unanswered within Jackson's study is whether students thought differently about what it meant to be male broadly speaking or did they simply rethink what manhood meant within this single context of brotherhood.

To be clear, this is not a weakness, per se. In fact, Jackson's study productively reframes what is imagined as possible within interactions among Black men on college campuses. Yet, this distinction between masculinity and brotherhood seems to have different developmental processes and goals. Simply stated, to redefine masculinity seems to demand a critical reframing of an individual's beliefs and attitudes about what it means to be a man, which may or may not include one's relationship to other men. Conversely, brotherhood seems to require a critical reframing of how one interacts with those considered brothers, which may or may not include a fundamental reframing of what it means to be a man outside of this single environmental context.

While we do not disagree with findings from these studies, we acknowledge that most did not explicitly locate and offer voice to progressive Black masculinities (see Jackson 2012 for a notable exception), particularly as it relates to men's relationship to and perspectives on women. Although this very well may be because many or most Black undergraduate men express their masculinities in hegemonic ways, we believe that other concepts, theories, and modes of inquiry must be engaged to find voices of progressive Black men. Thus, we turn to Black Feminism. However, we first offer *our* definition of progressive Black masculinities.

What Are Progressive Black Masculinities?

Many definitions of male, maleness, masculinity, and manhood exist. In part, this is a consequence of various academic disciplines that have examined and explained "maleness" in sometimes competing and contradicting ways (Kimmel and Messner 2004). These varied perspectives reflect ideological commitments dominant in certain disciplinary traditions and paradigms embraced by researchers. For instance, some posit that differences in biological sex matter significantly in psychological, emotional, and cognitive experiences of women and men (Kimmel and Messner 2004). Such a position assumes gendered expressions are overdetermined by "biological" differences between sexes. Traditionally, women have been associated with the latter (and presumably negative) terms in a homology of binaries that describe human behavior: rational versus irrational, assertive versus passive, (objective) measurement versus (subjective) feeling, to name a few.[3]

Conversely, we believe that what it means to be a woman or man are socially constructed—meaning, individuals *learn* from parental and guardian influences, peer-to-peer interactions, and media messaging about expected behaviors of them

as gendered beings. This sentiment, arguably, is best captured by Simone de Beauvoir (1949/2009) in her germinal text, *The Second Sex*, when she writes: "one is not born a woman, but becomes one" (p. 283). Similarly, one could assert one is not born a man, but becomes one (Butler 2008; Connell 2005; Harper and Harris 2010; Kimmel and Messner 2004). Many scholars have argued that men are socialized into and rewarded for expressing hegemonic masculinities (Harper, Harris, and Mmeje 2005). Plainly stated, hegemonic masculinity relies on misogyny and homophobia, in part, as means to enforce rigid and limited gender norms and expressions (Connell 2005; O'Neil et al. 1986). These versions of masculinities rely on and reinforce the oppression of women, marginalization of some men, and limitations for all people.

The above statements concerning the socially constructed nature of gender and the idea that many men are socialized to embrace hegemonic masculinities, at least in part, reflects personal beliefs and intellectual approaches to the discussion of gender and masculinities. Stated differently, the way scholars understand, operationalize, and consequently study gender among college men is a consequence of their personal ideas regarding how men are able to express their masculinities. Yet, in addition to expressions of masculinities reported in the previous section, we believe progressive masculinities exist among Black undergraduate men. We are particularly interested in understanding how Black men become (or are made) men during college and how Black male undergraduates express progressive masculinities.

We locate our definition of Black masculinities within the critical work of Athena D. Mutua. In her important text, *Progressive Black Masculinities*, Mutua (2006) states:

> Progressive [Black] masculinities, on the one hand, personally eschew and actively stands against social structures of domination and, on the other, value, validate, and empower [Black] humanity . . . and multicultural humanity of others in the global family. More specifically . . . at a minimum, [they are] pro-[Black] and antiracist as well as profeminist and anti-sexist . . . They are decidedly not dependent and or not predicated on the subordination of others. (p. 7)

We find this articulation of progressive Black masculinities useful to frame our present discussion for several reasons. First, Mutua's definition is simultaneously concerned with personal individual beliefs and public political actions. Second, this definition affirms the possibility of progressive Black masculinities and this affirmation speaks to the core of our argument—namely, that expressions of progressive masculinities exist among Black undergraduate men. However, the challenge remains, how do we find such progressive masculinities among Black men when the extant literature seems to deny their existence? Put differently, how do we, as Marable (2004) asked, search beyond stereotypes to find these Black men? We believe scholars must intentionally search for such men and autocritography is one potential tool for such searching. Before explaining autocritography, we present a concise and

admittedly limited discussion of Black Feminism and its import to discourse concerning Black men's gendered experiences and behaviors.

It is worth noting that a "progressive black masculinity" is not an end goal. Neither is it our intent to pathologize Black men who have expressed their masculinities in non-progressive ways. What distinguishes men who express notions of progressive masculinities is *not* that they have reached a point of developmental perfection. Instead, they are committed to *transgressing* rigid heteronormative masculinities and disrupting heterosexism and homophobia. More pointedly, these men will still sometimes accidently or unknowingly perpetuate the forms of oppression they are attempting to undue, and benefit from their maleness at the expense of others. However, they are continually committed to critical self-examination to improve individually as well as stand with others as allies in the pursuit of greater equality.

Why Black Feminism?

Patricia Hill Collins, an important intellectual contributor to Black Feminism, explains that Black Feminist Thought "consists of specialized knowledge created by African American women which clarifies a standpoint of and for Black women" (1990, p. 22). This definition centralizes the heterogeneous voices of Black women speaking to multiple dimensions of oppression (i.e., the matrix of domination, Collins 1990) and how Black women negotiate social spaces often antithetical to their being. In addition, this articulation requires Black women as central to the development of Black Feminist Thought. While Collins's definition has been focal in shaping feminist politics and discourse, Black Feminism is a broad intellectual and political field that has challenged academic scholarship and cultural representations of Black women portraying them as inherently promiscuous, unfit mothers, and overly domineering, to list a few pejorative tropes of Black womanhood (Collins 1990, 1998, 2004; hooks 1984, 1990). In addition, Black Feminist Thought has contributed much to the fight for class and gender equity within American and global institutions (e.g., Davis 1983; hooks 2004).

In the ongoing struggle for Black women's full freedom, some Black feminists focus on issues that arise from the ways in which some Black men express their masculinities. For instance, scholars (e.g., Collins 2004; Crenshaw 1991; hooks 1990, 2004) posit that Black men maintain gender privilege, particularly vis-à-vis Black women. In no attempt to minimize the lethal consequences of racism inflicted upon all Blacks, these scholars acknowledge that there are other compounding "-isms" that influence the life outcomes and experiential realities of black women and nonheterosexual Black men. As such, they argue the liberation of blacks can only be achieved with the eradication of all forms of oppression facing members of the community, including sexism and homophobia (Collins 2004; hooks 1990). This reality, if we take the thesis of Black male privilege in its most basic articulation to be true—Black [heterosexual] men possess gender (and sexual orientation) privilege—locates part of the problem of sexism, homophobia, and misogyny against

Black women and nonheterosexual Black men within the [heterosexual] Black man and his actions. Consequently, the logic follows, Black men must be responsible for considering ways in which they, too, are complicit in the subjugation of Black women and gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (GBTQ) Black men.

Black feminist writers and scholars have continually engaged this query: how can Black men develop masculinities that simultaneously support racial *and* gender uplift while disrupting the reproduction of sexism, racism, and homophobia? These scholars resist the notion that one's social location or biology overdetermines his "being" and ideological commitments. Thus, although men may be socialized into hegemonic masculinities, there is potential for revolutionary conscious shifting (hooks 1990, 2004).

Of the aforementioned literature (Harper 2004; Harris, Palmer, and Struve 2011; Martin and Harris 2006; McClure 2006) concerning Black undergraduate men's conceptions and expressions of masculinities, no authors utilized Black feminist perspectives to either explicitly inform their research questions or make sense of their findings. As such, we discuss the potential of engaging Black Feminism and Black feminist thought in order to *search* for progressive expressions of masculinities among Black undergraduate men.

As previously stated, Black Feminism aims for progressive Black masculinities that "self actively [engage] in struggles to transform social structures of domination" (Mutua 2006, xi) while also advocating vigorously for personal change. As such, Black women and men who explicitly employ Black feminist perspectives are simultaneously concerned with the political and personal. This includes, but is not limited to, standing and speaking against the oppression of women, nonheterosexual men, and challenging essentialist representations of Black masculinities (Collins 2004; hooks 1990; Lemons 2009; Mutua 2006; Neal 2005).

Hortense Spillers (1987) offered a clear invitation for Black men to engage Black Feminism in "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." Spillers claims, in contrast to conventional Eurocentric categorizations of gender ordering, that "it is the heritage of the mother that the African American male must regain as an aspect of his own personhood—the power of "yes" to the "female" within" (p. 80). This provocative invitation transgresses the distinct borders of heteropatriarchal manhood; meaning, manhood dominated by heteronormative notions of what it means to be a man in such a way that is explicitly oppositional to and distinct from what it means to be a woman. Black men who behave in ways that are deemed feminine are often demonized within communities where restrictions and penalties exist to ensure narrow presentations of maleness (Collins 2004). This is represented not only in the psychoemotional and physiological damage caused by verbal assaults ranging from insidious slurs such as "faggot," "punk," and "sissy," to the ostensibly harmless yet problematic phrases "no-homo" and "pause," but also some men (and women) pay with their lives for attempting to transgress these "fixed" gender borders.

In his text, *Negotiating Difference: Race, Gender, and the Politics of Positionality,* Michael Awkward (1995) engages Spillers' (1987) invitation to rediscover his

personhood by saying "yes" to the "female" within. Awkward is simultaneously concerned with writing Black Feminism as academic critique and self-reflexive authoring. Most beneficial for clarifying our present argument is Awkward's attention to Black men's relationship to a "female" interiority and engagement with Black female subjectivities.

Although he is primarily concerned with locating space for a Black male feminist literary critique, when engaging Spillers' (1987) text, Awkward (1995) begins with a consideration of Black male gender identity formation. Spillers firmly states that Black men must critically engage feminist perspectives in their process of reconstituting their masculinities. As American slavery removed Black fathers from "mimetic" view, Awkward (1995, 52) argues we must not see the "female strictly as other for the Afro-American male." It is worth noting, Spillers' call for and Awkward's response to engaging the "female" within does not reinforce narrow, binary gender categories. Rather, it challenges the binary in two important ways. First, it requires that one not perceive any reference to a "female" within as an existential threat to one's masculine identity. Second, by placing female within quotations, we believe Spillers' is signaling the fragility of establishing this gender category as both conceptually disparate from (i.e., female vs. male) and psychosocially foreign to Black men's identity formation. As such, Spillers and Awkward are theoretically violating traditional gendered boundaries and broadening the *human* potential for what a male identity can become.

Nonetheless, just how one is supposed to engage his "female" interiority is not specifically articulated in Spillers' text. For Awkward, such theorizing about a male's relationship to the "female" within is inextricably linked to his personal history. Cognizant of the physical and psychic abuse his mother suffered at the hands of his father and his father's lack of engagement in his rearing, Awkward began to search for an extra-biological relationship to his maleness not predicated on violence and absence. However, it was his exposure to Black feminist literature that gave him "tools" to develop an identity beyond what he was not to become (his father); but more powerfully what he could be in this world—a man against patriarchy.

Awkward's (1995) personal journey suggests that the "female" within may not be as esoteric as it seemingly appears. Moreover, his narrative reminds us that connecting to the "female" *within* cannot be achieved in the absence of substantive engagement with the "female" *without*—meaning, interactions with women in *real* life. Rather, through an exploration of black women's writings or other means, Black female subjectivities must play a significant role in Black men's rediscovering of their personhood. Awkward warns that Black women must not be "emptied of subjectivity and selfhood" and must be visible beyond "when she is subsumed by male desire(s)" (p. 56). Adherence to this warning is critical if the type of Black male redefinition Spillers (1987) imagined is to be actualized.

We want to highlight two additional tenets of Black Feminism useful for research on progressive Black masculinities: intersectionality and standpoint

theory. Although intersectionality has a long history within the writings of women of color (see The Combahee River Collective Statement, 1983; hooks 1990), Kimberlé Crenshaw is often credited for providing a comprehensive articulation of the concept (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Introduced as a corrective to both Black liberationist and mainstream (White) feminist movements' neglect of gender and race, respectively, Crenshaw (1991) demonstrates how these political struggles often ignore the unique marginalization of women of color. The simultaneous discrimination black women are subjected to—as women, as Black persons, and as Black women—is not fully accounted for through narrow(er) frameworks of Black liberation (re: male liberation) and mainstream feminism (re: White women rights). Instead, Crenshaw posited Intersectionality as a theoretical tool to better capture raced and gendered oppression Black women encountered in their daily lives. Essentially, Crenshaw argues that examinations of racism must be gendered and critiques of sexism must be raced. Extending this concept to Black undergraduate males, Intersectionality allows researchers to make sense of students' experiences as blacks, as males, and most importantly as Black males. At these intersections, scholars may find rich and powerfully progressive testimonials from Black male undergraduates negotiating the simultaneity of their existence as gendered-raced beings in an "imperalist white-supremacist capitalist [patriarchal]" world (hooks 2004, 17).

Second, Black Feminism's attention to how one's social location informs not only how one experiences the world, but also how one sees the world (Collins 1990, 1998; hooks 1990). Resisting ideological inheritances from the enlightenment epoch that remain embedded in evaluation standards of what constitutes rigorous research that demand objectivity and neutrality, Black feminist argue that *seeing* (or data analysis) is a politically produced act. Feminists more broadly and Black feminists specifically, thus, put forward standpoint epistemologies as more intellectually and ethically persuasive. As a critique of androcentric and Eurocentric scholarship attempting to pass as genderless and raceless and choosing not to perpetuate a fiction and "desire to see from nowhere" (Haraway 1988), standpoint epistemology calls for accountability through location. Such a positioning requires scholars to reject the idea of a disembodied gaze and instead interrogate their "seeing" as products of occupied social positions (e.g., social class, race, and academic) and technological mediation (e.g., data collection instruments, audio/video recorders). As Haraway, in concert with others, succinctly phrases—all knowledge is situated (Collins; hooks). Too, we argue, scholars interested in employing autocritography should not only invite self-reflexivity from Black undergraduate men but also from themselves. Specifically, earnestly attempting to trace how political, ideological, and philosophical perspectives mark research endeavors.

The autocritographical texts offered in the next section exemplify instances in which Black male authors have transgressed against or critically examined heteronormative gendered experiences, further theorize Intersectionality, and explicate their positionalities.

Black Men Speak Feminism . . . Autocritographically

Some Black male authors have engaged Black feminist discourse as a tool for personal and political transformation (Awkward 1995, 1999; Neal 2005). These men employ Black feminist principles to examine and critique patriarchy, sexism, and gender privilege in literary texts as well as cultural arenas. Moreover, others have represented their personal narratives in an attempt to trace their own ''arrivals'' at Black feminist—or prowomanist—positions. While narratives of Black profeminist authors differ in discursive style, what remains consistent is a commitment to critical self-examination, transparency, and vulnerability. In many ways, these texts serve as both an indictment against self and society and the harmful consequences of hegemonic (black) masculinities. What follows are excerpts from several authors whose writings are illustrative examples of autocritography.

Awkward proffers his book, *Scenes of Instruction: A Memoir*, as a ''risky attempt to circulate the major themes of [his] mother's narrative, and to demonstrate that [he has] absorbed their form and content well enough to contribute to feminism's efforts'' (1999, p. 7). He then goes on to provide the following definition of autocritography:

> Autocritography is a self-reflexive, self-consciously academic act that foregrounds aspects of the genre typically dissolved into author's always strategic self portraits. Autocritography, in other words, is an account of individual, social, and institutional conditions that help to produce a scholar and, hence, his or her professional concerns. (p. 7)

While Awkward targets his commentary regarding reflexive writing to an academic, we argue other Black men have participated in autocritographical authoring, yet with different ends. Instead of explicating their ''professional concerns,'' these men write to expose their personal concerns and how prior socialization experiences have informed their present ideological commitments. Thus, in addition to including literary and cultural critics, such as Michael Awkward and Mark Anthony Neal, we incorporate the writings of profeminist men like Kevin Powell.

Among the many scenes Awkward recounts in his memoir, we offer two as particularly elucidatory of autocritographical authoring. The first narrative demonstrates how witnessing the vicious consequences of hegemonic masculinity makes one sorely aware of patriarchy's sexist underside. As a young boy, Michael sat in the park listening to his friend Denise recount a tragic encounter experienced by their mutual friend, Katey:

> ''A bunch of boys—Benny, Tyrone, and some others, I think—grabbed her in the field over there. They [were] drinking on the bleachers graduation night and she walked by, and they got her. Right over there.'' Denise pointed straight ahead . . .
>
> ''What they beat her up for?'' I asked, knowing their typical modus operandi.

"Nah. They raped her. Ripped her clothes off her and raped her. Five or six of them. Right over there."...I thought of Katey and imagined her eyes blackened, her lip busted, her nose broken...I thought of my father, whom I knew only as a brutal force. (p. 36–37).

This emotionally engaging retelling of his experience, combined with his internal processing, is what we would argue is a staple of autocritography—that is, a commitment to raw, uncensored narratives and accounting for their influence on one's identity formation. Moreover, there is a commitment to not restricting the female subject's voice. This resists perpetuating a problematic discourse that has been critiqued by both female and male Black feminists alike: the foreclosure of Black female subjecthood and emptied treatments of black women's subjectivity (Lemons 2009).

The second scene we have chosen to highlight from Awkward (1999) focuses on homosocial socialization among young boys. Two older boys grabbed Michael and stuck him in a trash can:

Running together as quickly as they could to build up momentum, they propelled the can toward the hole. I didn't know how to react...Then the can tipped over, and my left shoulder hit the bottom of the rough, rocky hole before anything else did. The pain was excruciating. It felt as though someone had kicked me with a steel-toed work out boot. I screamed unselfconsciously... "Why'd y'all do this to me?"... "We were just playing, boy. You all right?". (p. 39–40)

Here, Awkward's critical reflection exemplifies another strength of autocritographical texts focused on gendered experiences. Namely, through this genre, men can offer rich representations of homosocial settings and methods used to establish the boundaries of masculinities. The response of the young men who threw Michael into the trash can—"We was just playing, *boy*"—requires these acts not to be viewed as malicious attacks as the previous narrated scene (although the consequences were injurious), but rather provides insights into how the seemingly innocuous masculine norms create risky environments for some men. Once these behaviors are normalized, the inherent violence in such actions is overlooked. Consequently, some men are socialized to believe that *real* men do not complain about such physical interaction. Selecting this as a site worthy of investigation, Awkward offers this scene as instructive for both his personal understanding of limited notions of masculine behaviors and a larger critique of what some may interpret as "normal" male homosocial bonding.

In *New Black Man,* Mark Anthony Neal (2005), too, in broaching the question "what the hell is a black male feminist?" recounts noteworthy moments along his journey to embracing feminist perspectives. Neal asserts early "those of us who dare claim the moniker are usually the product of a serious intervention by the women in our lives" (p. 42). Informative for our present discussion is Neal's reflection on his cross-gender interactions with female colleagues and co-activists while in graduate school:

> At the beginning of my graduate school career I was involved in various forms of campus activism . . . I was often disarmed when fellow [Black] women activists often described my leadership style as sexist. I was generally respectful of black women and didn't trade in the kind of rhetoric that depicted black women as bitches and hos, so how could I be a sexist. (p. 44)

Neal's defensive stance against critical feedback from his Black female peers reveals how even Black men who consider themselves progressive may possess significant "gendered blind spots." Neal continues:

> It was [bell] hooks's essay that gave me the language to interrogate my actions in this regard: "Feeling as though they are constantly on edge, their lives always in jeopardy, many [Black] men truly cannot understand that this condition of "powerlessness" does not negate their capacity to assert power over [Black] females' . . . Reading the passage I understood that I often used my position as the "put upon" young [Black] man to silence the ideas and concerns of my black women colleagues. (p. 44)

These quotes offer a transparent assessment of Neal's gender development, particularly the critical role women played. Again, through autocritographical authoring, Black men are able to acknowledge the full human subjectivity of Black women. Women are not relegated to silent actors, but enter texts as full, equal participants. In fact, these texts require and demand full Black female subjectivity. This disrupts the often taken for granted and heteronormative adage, that only "men can raise men." These texts beg that we reconsider how male gender development can benefit from female guidance and mentoring.

The last example we offer is a portion of Kevin Powell's (2001) provocative essay, "The Sexist in Me." Powell shows how this genre can offer productive, yet risky, space for vulnerability. He retells his personal experience as a perpetrator of domestic violence against his girlfriend:

> We struggled in the kitchen, the dining area and the bathroom. As we were moving toward the living room, I shoved her into the bathroom door. Her face bruised, she began to cry uncontrollably . . . When she let out a high pitched yell for help, I jumped to my feet, suddenly aware of what I was doing. (p. 221)

Powell's recount withholds little detail. Rather than attempting to diminish his responsibility, he places himself as the central culprit. He continues:

> Without fully realizing it, I had always taken women for granted, but it wasn't until I committed a violent act that it hit me how deeply I believed women to be inferior to men . . . In retrospect, what happened in my relationship was inevitable. Left unchecked my entire life, my sexist inclinations were building up to a breaking point. (pp. 221–222)

Powell's articulation of how his prior gender socialization experiences contributed to the violent acts of domestic violence demonstrates how this genre of authoring encourages intense interrogation of gendered behaviors as an outcome of non-biological gender development. The essay ends with brief commentary on how he struggled to overcome his personal sexism as well as challenge the sexist discourse and actions of his male peers.

Awkward (1999), Neal (2005), and Powell's (2001) writings effectively model autocritographical authoring applied to gender development. These excerpts are illustrative examples that demonstrate how targeted, reflexive reexamination of one's gendered socialization and gendered lived experiences could offer rich insights into male gendered developmental processes. Yet, just how might scholars employ autocritography and engage assumptions upon which this genre is based as an investigative tool to excavate expressions of progressive masculinities among Black male college students? In the following section, we offer practical suggestions concerning how autocritography and Black Feminism can guide researchers in their search for progressive Black masculinities.

Engaging Black Feminism and Employing Autocritography to Search for Progressive Black Masculinities

Autocritography can provide space for critical self-examination, transparency, and vulnerability for men to discuss their gender development. Moreover, autocritographical authoring, as exemplified by Awkward (1999), Neal (2005), and Powell (2001), demonstrate not only the *necessity* for men to share their stories of transgressions against and complicities in heterosexism and misogyny, but also the *possibility* that such narratives exist. In addition, Awkward and Neal's engagement with Black feminist discourse and perspectives created a practical and intellectual blueprint for refashioning their masculinities. As such, we encourage scholars to employ autocritography and engage Black Feminism in order to capture narratives of progressive expressions of masculinities among Black undergraduate men. More specifically, our recommendations target four areas of research processes: research topics, sampling choices, data collection tools, and data analysis.

Concerning research topics, scholars must intentionally pursue inquiries that will uncover progressive masculinities. Engaging Black Feminism aids in this endeavor as Black feminists (e.g., Awkward 1999; Spillers 1987) earnestly invite men to share stories of transgression against heteronormative gendered boundaries, while simultaneously being critically reflexive about one's own role in reproducing heterosexism, homophobia, and misogyny. Thus, as a point of departure, scholars should consider beginning with the following premise: progressive and transgressive expressions of masculinities exist among Black men in college. Considering research topics are influenced by scholars' acknowledged and unacknowledged assumptions, such an ideological position would substantively inform narratives

researchers would search to recover as well as the type of stories told about Black undergraduate men in social science literature.

In addition, we recommend purposeful recruitment of Black males from *expected* gender progressive spaces on college and university campuses. For instance, researchers may consider engaging Black men who major or minor in Gender and Women Studies (GWS), men who are actively involved in Women Centers or LGBTQ Centers, and men who participate in campus outreach programs such as one in four—an organization that provides rape prevention trainings and workshops for men and women. While one may expect to find men in these spaces who critically reflect on their gender privilege and positionality, who are open to critical feedback concerning their behaviors and ideas that are problematic, and who are involved in and support social justice movements focused on gender and sexual orientation equity (e.g., men who prioritize supporting Coming Out Day), other *unexpected* spaces should not be overlooked. For example, one should not completely ignore men who are in fraternal organizations or participate on athletic teams. Whether recruited from *expected* or *unexpected* spaces, such purposeful sampling is consistent when investigating under-theorized and under-examined areas of research (Patton 2002).

Further, scholars should employ autocritography to capture progressive expressions of masculinities among Black undergraduate men. To do so, researchers could ask men to critically reflect on their experiences, socialization, and behaviors by responding to a variety of questions. Researchers could develop questions by considering the multiple queries Black feminists have consistently raised concerning Black men's gender identities and expressions of masculinities. We offer the following questions, not as an exhaustive or prescriptive list for researchers to follow, but simply suggestive for those invested in a collective search for narratives reflecting progressive masculinities. Too, juxtaposed to certain suggestive questions are queries that if pursued would obscure insights into progressive expressions of masculinities. Such questions may include:

- Could you explain an experience in which you decided not to behave in a way that is typically stereotyped as negative male behavior?
- What resources, materials, and people helped you in your commitment to becoming a male that does not behave in ways typically stereotyped as negative male behavior? (Instead of: Why do Black male students conform to destructive and problematic expressions of masculinity?)
- Can you discuss how college has influenced your development of a progressive masculinity? (Instead of: How has college socialized you into destructive and problematic expressions of your masculinity?)
- What compels you to take a stance against sexism? (Instead of: Why do Black men not take a stance against sexism?)
- What compels you to advocate for gender equity? (Instead of: Why do Black men not advocate for gender equity for women, transgender, and gender queer persons?)

- Could you explain an experience in which you took part in a sexist or homo-phobic act?
- Could you share an incident in which you witnessed a homophobic or sexist act?
- What advice, if any, was given to you that you believe is especially helpful in your commitment to becoming a male that does not behave in ways typically stereotyped as negative male behavior? (Instead of: What was explicitly or implicitly communicated to you that encouraged you to behave in ways typi-cally stereotyped as negative male behavior?)

Essentially, researches should propose questions that invite men to share uncen-sored and transparent self-reflexive stories about their experiences both transgres-sing against and perpetuating heteronormative behaviors.

Finally, concerning data analysis, we encourage scholars interested in studying pro-gressive masculinities among Black undergraduate men to employ Black feminist the-oretical frameworks and literature such as intersectionality as well as standpoint epistemologies to situate their scholarship and themselves, respectively. This requires a deep and sincere engagement with the work of Black feminist scholars who critically investigate issues of race, gender, sexual orientation and positionality—some of who are cited throughout our manuscript. Employing intersectionality, for example, allows researchers to make sense of Black undergraduate men's expressions of progressive masculinities, which are neither completely disempowered by race nor uniformly pri-vileged by their gender, but often somewhere in between based on their unique posi-tions at the intersection of race and gender and how they engage with their respective postsecondary environments.

Our explication of autocritography's emphasis on critical self-reflection of auto-biographical narratives is certainly akin to other qualitative modes of inquiry, particu-larly autoethnography. For sure, similarities exist between what we have described as autocritography and the emerging field of autoethnography, which attempts to turn the ethnographic eye inward even at the risk of being deemed a naval gazing exercise preoccupied with aggrandizement (Patton 2002). However, the primary dis-tinction between these modes of qualitative inquiry concerns the role of the researcher. While a researcher's positionality always informs scholarly inquiries, autoethnographic text engages the researcher's perspectives and experiences as acti-vation for research queries and data for analysis (Fries-Britt and Kelly 2005; Jones 2009; Jones, Kim, and Skendall 2012). Whereas, we argue, autocritography does not require such foregrounding of the researcher's own experiences and biographical narrative in the same way.

Conclusion

While some empirical studies have begun to focus on Black undergraduate men as men and gendered beings, the literature remains largely silent concerning expressions

and conceptualizations of progressive masculinities. Considering this knowledge gap, engaging Black Feminism and employing autocritography could offer great insights into the life worlds of black male collegians and vigorously challenge deficit-laden conceptions of them and their expressions of masculinities. There are several assumptions and commitments that allow for this particular approach to be engaged as an effective resource in research on Black undergraduate men's gender development. First, as Awkward (1995, p. 10) asserts, there is great "potential psychological and emotional benefits of reexamining one's past as a knowledgeable, articulate adult armed with greater insight and a workable, clearly defined agenda." Moreover, as explicated in the above texts (Awkward 1999; Neal 2005; Powell 2001), autocritographical authoring creates space for critical self-reflection on one's gender socialization and how those experiences are linked to the present constructions and performances of one's masculinity.

Furthermore, autocritographical texts are spaces in which men commit to transparency and vulnerability. As such, men could employ this space to acknowledge ways in which they have perpetuated, transgressed as well as been victim to, oppressive forms of masculinities. Through a Black feminist framework, autocritography demands full female subjectivity. Meaning, these texts do not exist without presentations of female subjects. All of these assumptions and ideological commitments make autocritography a useful tool to explore how Black college men learn to be men, perform their masculinities, and engage in homosocial and cross-gender interactions while in college. Finally, autocritography serves as a venue through which progressive Black men can literally write themselves into social science literature. Once captured, such narratives have the potential to radically reshape how educators and scholars collectively think, engage, as well as write about Black undergraduate men as gendered persons.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Notes

1. "Minoritized" is used instead of "minority" throughout this article to signify the social construction of underrepresentation and subordination in US social institutions, including colleges and universities. Persons are not born into a minority status nor are they minoritized in every social context (e.g., their families, racially homogeneous friendship groups, or places of worship). Instead, they are rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain an overrepresentation of whiteness.

2. The title of this article, in part, is an explicit ode to Mutua and other scholars (e.g., bell hooks, Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Rudolph P. Byrd, and Mark Anthony Neal) who have committed their lives and careers to challenging racist monolithic depictions of Black men, while disrupting expressions of sexism and homophobia among Black men.

3. For a discussion of how these binaries are mapped onto methodologies, see chapter 4 in Cerwonka and Malkki's (2007) book, Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork.

References

Awkward, M. 1995. *Negotiating Difference: Race, Gender, and Positionality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Awkward, M. 1999. *Scenes of Instruction: A Memoir*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Butler, J. 2008. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.

Cerwonka, A., and L. H. Malkki. 2007. Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Collins, P. H. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Collins, P. H. 1998. *Fighting Words: Black Women & the Search for Justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Collins, P. H. 2004. *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York: Routledge.

Connell, R. W. 1995. Masculinities: Knowledge, Power and Social Change. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Connell, R. W. 2005. *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Crenshaw, K. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, Feminist theory, and antiracist politics. University of Chicago, 140, 139–167.

Crenshaw, K. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43:1241–299.

Dancy, II, T. E. 2010a. "Faith in the Unseen: The Intersection(s) of Spirituality and Identity among African American Males in College." *Journal of Negro Education* 79: 416–38.

Dancy, II, T. E. 2010b. "African American Males, Manhood, and College Life: Learning from the Intersections." *The College Student Affairs Journal* 29:17–32.

Dancy, II, T. E. 2011. "Colleges in the Making of Manhood and Masculinity: Gendered Perspectives on African American Males." *Gender and Education* 23:477–95.

Davis, A. 1983. *Women, Race, & Class*. New York: First Vintage Books Edition.

Davis, J. E. 1994. "College in Black and White: Campus Environment and Academic Achievement of African American Males." *Journal of Negro Education* 63:620–33.

Davis, T. L. 2002. Voices of Gender Role Conflict: The Social Construction of College Men's Identity. *Journal of College Student Development* 43:508–21.

Davis, T. L., and J. Laker. 2004. "Connecting Men to Academic and Student Affairs Programs and Services." In *Developing Effective Programs and Services for College Men*, edited by G. E. Kellom. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp. 47–57.

de Beauvoir, S. 1949/2009. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books.

Edwards, K. E., and S. R. Jones. 2009. "Putting My Man Face On": A Grounded Theory of College Men's Gender Identity Development." *Journal of College Student Development* 50:210–28.

Fries-Britt, S., and B. T. Kelly. 2005. "Retaining Each Other: Narratives of Two African American Women In academy." *The Urban Review* 37:221–42.

Gibbs, J. T. 1988. *Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species*. New York: Auburn House.

Haraway, D. 1988. "Situated knowledges: The science question in Feminism and the privilege of partial perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14: 575–599.

Harper, S. R. 2004. "The Measure of a Man: Conceptualizations of Masculinity among High-Achieving African American Male College Students." *Berkley Journal of Sociology* 48: 89–107.

Harper, S. R. 2006. "Peer Support for African American Male College Achievement: Beyond Internalized Racism and the Burden of "Acting White." *Journal of Men's Studies* 14: 337–58.

Harper, S. R. 2009. "Niggers No More: A Critical Race Counternarrative on Black Male Student Achievement at Predominantly White Colleges and Universities." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 22:697–712.

Harper, S. R., R. J. Davis, D. E. Jones, B. L. McGowan, T. N. Ingram, and C. S. Platt. 2011. "Race and Racism in the Experiences of Black Male Resident Assistants at Predominantly White Universities." *Journal of College Student Development* 52:180–200.

Harper, S. R., and F. Harris. 2010. *College Men and Masculinities: Theory, Research, and Implications for Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Harper, S. R., F. Harris, III, and K. Mmeje. 2005. "A Theoretical Model to Explain the Overrepresentation of College Men among Campus Judicial Offenders: Implications for Campus Administrators." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 42: 565–88.

Harper, S. R., and A. H. Nichols. 2008. "Are they not All the Same? Racial Heterogeneity among Black Male Undergraduates." *Journal of College Student Development* 49: 247–69.

Harris, F. 2010. "College Men's Conceptualizations of Masculinities and Contextual Influences: Toward a Conceptual Model." *Journal of College Student Development* 51: 297–318.

Harris, F., and K. Edwards. 2010. "College Men's Experiences as Men: Findings from Two Grounded Theory Studies." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 47:43–62.

Harris, F., R. T. Palmer, and L. E. Struve. 2011. ""Cool Posing" On Campus: A Qualitative Study of Masculinities and Gender Expression among Black Men at Private Research Institution." *Journal of Negro Education* 80:47–62.

Harris, S. M. 1995. "Psychosocial Development and Black Male Masculinity: Implications for Counseling Economically Disadvantaged African American Male Adolescents." *Journal of Counseling & Development* 73:279–287.

hooks, b. 1984. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

hooks, b. 1990. *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

hooks, b. 2004. *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*. New York: Routledge.

Hunter, A. G., and J. E. Davis. 1994. "Hidden Voices of Black Men: The Meaning, Structure, and Complexity of Manhood." *Journal of Black Studies* 25:20–40.

Jackson, B. A. 2012. "Bonds of Brotherhood: Emotional and Social Support among College Black Men." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 642: 61–71.

Jackson, J. F. L., and J. L. Moore III. (Ed.). 2008. Beyond Brown: New Approaches to Addressing Inequities in Education for African American Males. American Behavioral Scientist, 51.

Jones, S. R. 2009. "Constructing Identities at the Intersections: An Autoethnographic Exploration of Multiple Dimensions of Identity." *Journal of College Student Development* 50:287–304.

Jones, S. R., Y. C. Kim, and K. C. Skendall. 2012. "(Re)framing Authenticity: Considering Multiple Social Identities Using Autoethnographic and Intersectional Approaches." *The Journal of Higher Education* 83:698–724.

Kellom, G. E. (Ed.). 2004. "Developing Effective Programs and Services for College Men." *New Directions for Student Services* (No. 107). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kimbrough, W. M., and S. R. Harper. 2006. "African American Men at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Different Environments, Similar Challenges." In *African American Men in College*, edited by M. J. Cuyjet, 189–209. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kimmel, M. S. 2008. *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*. New York: HarperCollins.

Kimmel, M. S., and M. A. Messner. 2004. *Men's Lives*. 6th ed. New York: Pearson.

Laker, J. A., and T. Davis. (Eds.). 2011. *Masculinities in Higher Education: Theoretical and Practical Considerations*. New York: Routledge.

Lemons, G. 2009. *Womanist Forefathers: Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. Du Bois*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lundy-Wagner, V., and M. Gasman. 2011. "When Gender Issues Are not Just About Women: Reconsidering Male Students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities." *Teachers College Record* 113:934–68.

Majors, R., and J. M. Billson. 1992. *Cool Pose: The Dilemmas of Black Manhood in America*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Marable, M. 2004. "The Black Male: Searching Beyond Stereotypes." In *Men's Lives*, edited by M. S. Kimmel, and M. A. Messner. 6th ed. New York: Pearson. pp. 21–27.

Martin, B. E., and F. Harris. 2006. "Examining Productive Conceptions of Masculinities: Lessons Learned from Academically Driven African American Male Student Athletes." *Journal of Men's Studies* 14, 359–78.

McClure, S. M. 2006. "Improvising Masculinity: African American Fraternity Membership in the Construction of a Black Masculinity." *Journal of African American Studies* 10:57–73.

Moore, III, J. L., O. Madison-Colmore, and D. M. Smith. 2003. "The Prove-them-wrong Syndrome: Voices from Unheard African-American Males in Engineering Disciplines." *Journal of Men's Studies* 12:61–73.

Mutua, A. D. 2006. *Progressive Black Masculinities*. New York: Routledge.

Neal, M. A. 2005. *New Black Man*. New York: Routledge.

Oliver, W. 1984. "Black Males and the Tough Guy Image: A Dysfunctional Compensatory Adaptation." *Western Journal of Black Studies* 8:199–203.

O'Neil, J. M., B. J. Helms, R. K. Gable, L. David, and L. S. Wrightsman. 1986. "Gender Role Conflict Scale: College Men's Fear of Femininity." *Sex Roles* 14:335–50.

Palmer, R. T., R. J. Davis, and A. A. Hilton. 2009. "Exploring Challenges that Threaten to Impede the Academic Success of Academically Underprepared Black Males at an HBCU." *Journal of College Student Development* 50:429–45.

Palmer, R., and M. Gasman. 2008. "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: The Role of Social Capital in Promoting Academic Success for African American Men at a Black College." *Journal of College Student Development* 49:52–70.

Palmer, R. T., and T. L. Strayhorn. 2008. "Mastering one's own fate: Non-cognitive factors with the success of African American males at an HBCU." *National Association of Student Affairs Professionals Journal*, 11:126–143.

Palmer, R. T., and E. M. Young. 2009. Determined to Succeed: Salient Factors that Foster Academic Success for Academically Underprepared Black Males at a Black College." *Journal of College Student Retention* 10:465–82.

Patton, M. Q. 2002. Qualitative research & evaluation methods. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Patton, L. D. 2011. "Perspectives on Identity, Disclosure, and the Campus Environment among African American Gay and Bisexual Men at One Historically Black College." *Journal of College Student Development* 52:77–100.

Patton, L. D., M. McEwen, L. Rendón, and M. F. Howard-Hamilton. 2007. "Critical Race Perspectives on Theory in Student Affairs." In *Responding to the Realities of Race*, edited by S. R. Harper, and L. D. Patton. New Directions for Student Services (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass), no. 120, pp. 39–54.

Powell, K. 2001. "The Sexist in Me." In *Traps: African American Men On Gender and Sexuality*, edited by R. P. Byrd, and B. Guy-Sheftall. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 221–222.

Sax, L. J. 2008. *The Gender Gap in College: Maximizing the Developmental Potential of Women and Men*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Smith, W. A., W. R. Allen, and L. L. Danley. 2007. "'Assume the Position . . . You Fit the Description': Psychosocial Experiences and Racial Battle Fatigue among African American Male College Students." *American Behavioral Scientist* 51:551–78.

Smith, W. A., T. J. Yosso, and D. G. Solórzano. 2007. "Racial Primes and Black Misandry On Historically White Campuses: Toward Critical Race Accountability in Educational Administration." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 43:559–85.

Spillers, H. 1987. "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." *Diacritics* 17:64–81.

Strayhorn, T. L. 2008a. "The Role of Supportive Relationships in Facilitating African American Males' Success in College." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 45: 26–48.

Strayhorn, T. L. 2008b. "Fittin' In: Do Diverse Interactions with Peers Affect Sense of Belonging for Black Men at Predominantly White Institutions?" *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 45:501–27.

Wood, J. L. 2011. "Leaving the Two-year College: Predictors of Black Male Collegian Departure." *Journal of Black Studies* 43:303–26.

Wood, J. L., and A. A. Hilton. 2012. "Spirituality and Academic Success: Perceptions of African American Males in the Community College." *Religion & Education* 39:28–47

Wood, J. L., A. A. Hilton, and C. Lewis. 2011. "Black Male Collegians in Public Two-year Colleges: Student Perspectives on the Effect of Employment on Academic Success." *National Association of Student Affairs Professionals Journal* 14:97–110.

Wood, J. L., and C. S. V. Turner. 2011. "Black Males in the Community College: Student Perspectives On Faculty and Academic Success." *Community College Journal of Research & Practice* 35:135–51.

Yeung, K., M. Stombler, and R. Wharton. 2006. "Making Men in Gay Fraternities: Resisting and Reproducing Multiple Dimensions of Hegemonic Masculinity." *Gender & Society* 20: 5–31.

Author Biographies

Keon M. McGuire is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at Arizona State University.

Jonathan Berhanu is a doctoral candidate in the School of Education and Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Charles H. F. Davis III is Director of Higher Education Research and Initiatives in the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania.

Shaun R. Harper is on the faculty in the Graduate School of Education, Africana Studies, and Gender Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he also serves as Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.