

INCARCERATION, GENDER, AND HEALTH: REAL MEN AND SOCIAL
IMPLICATIONS

by

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the
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Abstract

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Drawing on theories of gender, race, inequality, and delinquency, this dissertation explores progressive masculinity and social exclusion among young men leaving jail. This project examines how young men, rather than matching stereotypes of hyper-masculine at-risk individuals, endorse a masculinity that is not necessarily misogynistic or violent, and does not correlate with expected risky sex behaviors, drug use, violence, and recidivism. Additionally, this project examines how social structures and policies (economy, gender, race, education, criminal justice) prevent these young men from achieving pro-social goals or experiencing the potential benefits of progressive views of masculinity.

For this dissertation, I analyze data from the Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) study conducted between 2003-2007, which enrolled 552 adolescents in a New York City jail and followed 397 of them one year after their release. I use logistic regression to examine the association of sex partner experience with sex risk, drug use, violence, recidivism, and to examine the

extent of social exclusion for these young men based on school, employment, criminal justice, housing, and health care characteristics. Focus groups I conducted in 2008 with 38 young men at an alternatives-to-incarceration program in New York City serve as a second data source for this dissertation. I explore and analyze participants' perceptions of masculinity based on these data.

The findings indicate that young men leaving jail have more complex views about manhood than societal stereotypes suggest, and do not always endorse patriarchal, misogynistic, or violent attitudes about masculinity and relationships. Additionally, when these young men have long-term sex partners in their communities, which many report, they seem to be protected against negative outcomes related to sex risk, drug use, and violence in the short term. Finally, incarceration and housing instability are the most important structural predictors of negative outcomes for young men leaving jail, making progressive approaches to manhood less important.

This dissertation fills a gap in the literature on progressive masculinity and social exclusion for young men involved in the criminal justice system. This dissertation also informs interventions designed to improve outcomes for young men with criminal justice histories.

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With love,

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Behaviors and attitudes related to masculinity among young Black and Latino males involved in the criminal justice system are often conceived as inherently risky – risky for sexual health, drug involvement, and violence. This has the potential to snowball into other detrimental social outcomes, including dropping out of school, unemployment, family and housing instability, and going to jail. Only a few researchers have looked at masculinity in a more complex light, and they generally do not examine masculinity as potentially protective of health outcomes, especially among jailed youth. Therefore, this dissertation will try to understand the impact of different behaviors and attitudes related to masculinity on the outcomes I've outlined above – sexual and drug risk, violence, recidivism, family and housing stability, education, and employment – among young men involved in correctional facilities in New York City. I will also examine the extent to which social exclusion based on social structures and policies plays a role in blocking young men involved in the criminal justice system from reaching pro-social goals and experiencing the potential benefits of more progressive views of masculinity.

Rationale

In 2004, an estimated 800,000 people under age 20 spent time in a correctional facility in the United States, the highest number of incarcerated youth in the developed world (Beck, 2006; Harrison & Beck, 2005; Sickmund, Sladky, & Kang, 2005). The majority of youth in jail are male, and more than 60% of all inmates are racial or ethnic minorities (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006; Daniels, Crum, Ramaswamy, & Freudenberg, 2009).

Researchers consistently show that compared with young people who have never had criminal justice involvement, incarcerated male adolescents engage in higher levels of sex risk behavior, drug use, and violence (Canterbury et al., 1995; DiClemente, Lanier, Horan, & Lodico, 1991; Harwell, Trino, Rudy, Yorkman, & Gollub, 1999; Magura, Shapiro, & Kang, 1994; Morris et al., 1995; Morris, Baker, Valentine, & Pennisi, 1998; Teplin et al., 2005; Teplin, Mericle, McClelland, & Abram, 2003). The educational and employment outcomes of young men involved in the criminal justice system vary, however, a large percentage of youth often end up at an educational and employment disadvantage when they leave correctional facilities (Freudenberg, 2005).

Few interventions seem to mitigate the negative health and social outcomes experienced by adjudicated youth (Daniels et al., 2009). Thus, the intersection of incarceration, gender, and health affects real people, with real lives, and relationships. There are indeed significant health and social implications at stake. One question this dissertation addresses is whether there are alternative routes to reducing the negative outcomes related to the incarceration experience for young men. Given that so many youth in criminal justice facilities are males, what if understanding gender better could lead to the development of new interventions?

Indeed, social scientists (Aronson, Whitehead, & Baber, 2003; Cloward & Ohlin, 1996) have questioned whether there is a particular kind of masculinity that these men embody that contributes to health behavior choices, criminal activity, and social functioning. Rather than focusing on how masculinity is a “risk” for young men of color leaving jail –

which may further stigmatize these men – a theory of “progressive masculinity” (Mutua, 2006) offers an empowering, non-racist, non-sexist framework for looking at gender that is more fitting with the current world young people inhabit. Such an approach moves away from further stigmatization of young men involved in the criminal justice system, and offers new opportunities for the design of interventions that may improve outcomes for these men once they leave jail.

This dissertation will fill a gap in the literature on progressive masculinity among young men with criminal justice involvement, and focus on interventions designed to improve outcomes for these men, given the economic, educational, race, gender, and criminal justice barriers to their success after release from jail.

Theoretical Framework

Post-industrialization brought major changes in social conditions to the West. Neo-Marxist subcultural theory in the tradition of the Birmingham School (Cohen, 1972; McRobbie, 1977; Willis, 1977) addressed the particular response of working class youth to some of these economic and social conditions, such as changes in job opportunities, restructuring of housing developments and subsequently the family, and a new consumerist culture being channeled through the mass media. Whereas Marx focused on the need for resistance to bourgeois capitalism, Birmingham School theorists primarily explored the ways in which youth adapted to changes in the economic and social climates through culture.

In many ways, the social milieu of the Birmingham School studies parallels the experience of urban youth in America, particularly in New York City neighborhoods such as the South Bronx and Harlem. Several American urban researchers have recently documented similarly shifting job opportunities, restructuring of housing, and the reliance on new cultural adaptations to changing circumstances (e.g., through participation in the drug trade or hip-hop culture) (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1996; Chang & Herc, 2005). Although the current study does not address the cultural production of masculinity, it does address how young men involved in correctional institutions have adapted to their situations (or have failed and been picked up by the criminal justice system), in making decisions about partners and romantic relationships, making money, dealing with housing, and family issues. With its focus on American young people, this dissertation also examines the intersection of race with class and gender (Hill Collins, 2004).

When social scientists (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995) examine masculinity among low-income, urban, young men of color, they say that these men often define manhood as a search for respect – that is, through employment, power over women and in communities, access to financial resources or material goods, and the number of one's sexual partners. As Barker (2005) points out, even if there are two versions of masculinity available to poor, urban, young men (e.g., violent street-based masculinity versus breadwinner masculinity [Anderson, 2000; Aronson et al., 2003]), the latter version of masculinity is extremely hard to achieve in an economic climate fraught with classism and racism. Additionally, both types of masculinity have the potential to reinforce patriarchal family structures and non-egalitarian gender relations and roles

(hooks, 2004; Neal, 2004). Such constructions of masculinity can be disempowering in that they are considered negative or impossible to achieve. Finally, it is unclear if these descriptions of masculinity fit with modern life, given changing roles and opportunities for men and women (Levitan, 2005). Therefore this project strives to explore and define a non-stereotypical, progressive version of manhood.

The Investigation of “Progressive Masculinity” in this Dissertation

The starting point for this dissertation was an exploratory analysis of data collected as part of the Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) study. In preliminary analysis, Daniels et al. (2009) found that the young men in this study did not always endorse stereotypically violent or misogynistic attitudes about gender roles and relationships, and entered into a variety of relationships, including that of exclusive long-term sex partnerships. In addition, a relatively new literature on “progressive Black masculinity” (hooks, 2004; Mutua, 2006; Neal, 2004) described a more empowering, non-racist, and less sexist approach to studies of masculinity. Taken together, there was some evidence that low-income, urban, young men of color – in this case men leaving jail – might embody a more complex set of gender roles than has been previously recognized.

Athena Mutua, editor of *Progressive Black Masculinities* (2006), defines progressive [Black] masculinities as, “Unique and innovative practices of the masculine self actively engaged in struggles to transform social structures of domination.” The structures of domination for the subjects of this dissertation include, but are not limited to, the

economy, racism, gender discrimination, family, and the criminal justice system. In this project, I extend the definition of progressive [Black] masculinities to the plight of both Black and Latino young men. As yet, such a literature has not been applied to Latino men, but arguably these men struggle against similar systems of oppression, with slight variation based on immigration status, language, and culture. Finally, though the men in this dissertation do not appear to actively *transform* social structures, as per Mutua's definition, their actions and beliefs certainly occur in the context of these larger social structures. To me, the extent to which these young men embody alternative progressive views of manhood represent their understanding of the social context in which they live and perhaps their struggle against existing systems of domination.

Ultimately I am interested in investigating a masculinity that is empowering. If indeed the young men in my studies embody a progressive masculinity, how can this be used to improve outcomes for these men and for others? A progressive masculinity is non-racist, non-sexist, and provides an explicit critique of systems of oppression. One goal of this project is to see where the young men's beliefs and behaviors intersect with the particular social circumstances of their lives – criminal justice involvement, economic opportunity, education, housing, and interpersonal relationships.

My objective in highlighting such a progressive masculinity in this dissertation is to illuminate broader dimensions of my study subjects' masculinity – not to show that these men are never misogynistic or violent – but rather to demonstrate the complexity of their

masculinity and its implications for designing interventions to improve outcomes for these young men.

The substantive chapters in this dissertation are to some degree, data-driven. Therefore I use this idea of a progressive masculinity, as it fits with data I have access to. I investigate gender and social circumstances in order to look at the experience of young men leaving jail. In the chapter on sex partner experience, the starting point for an investigation of progressive masculinity is evidence in the literature that low-income, urban, young men typically have multiple sex partners and are at risk for a host of negative outcomes relating to sexual health, drug use, and violence. But what if the sex partner experience of young men leaving jail reveals something else? Furthermore, this chapter attempts to take the sex partnerships of adolescents seriously, which has generally not been done in mainstream society or in prior research. This chapter speaks to the way that young men embody masculinity, specifically by looking at sex partner experience; how this experience might be used in interventions to improve their health; and lastly provides an overview of the social circumstances these young men are up against – possibly making gender unimportant in the scheme of these young men’s lives.

In the chapter on perceptions of masculinity among men in an alternatives-to-incarceration program, I look specifically at how progressive ideas of masculinity fit into the lives of these men and their beliefs about what it means to be a “real man.” Lastly, the chapter on social exclusion does not deal directly with masculinity. Rather it focuses on the set of social circumstances these men live with – the extraordinary experience of

disconnection from education and employment before criminal justice involvement, and then the deeper experience of social exclusion after release from jail. Though this chapter does not address the role of masculinity as a key outcome of interest, the dissertation as a whole raises the issue of whether a progressive masculinity matters, given the obstacles in these young men's lives.

In summary, the study of progressive masculinity in this dissertation includes an investigation of functions of long-term sex partners, non-traditional ways of thinking about manhood, childrearing, and attitudes about love in the context of low-income urban life and criminal justice involvement.

From a micro-sociological perspective, drawing particularly on studies of masculinity in urban ethnography and theory on progressive masculinity, this dissertation examines how young men leaving jail, rather than being hyper-masculine "at-risk" individuals, actually embody more complex masculinities that often avoid the stereotypical traits of misogyny, violence, and anti-social behavior. From a macro-sociological perspective, drawing heavily on theories of gender, race, inequality, delinquency, and social exclusion, this project also explores how marginalization based on economic structures, race, gender, public policies, and the incarceration experience may block urban Black and Latino young men from reaching pro-social goals and structure the extent to which young men can actually embody a progressive masculinity.

The ultimate purpose of this dissertation is to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent (on a micro-sociological level) does masculinity, when defined in this case as sex partner experience, influence negative sexual health and drug use outcomes, violence, and recidivism among young men in the criminal justice system?
2. How do young men involved in the criminal justice system (on a micro-sociological level) conceptualize their own manhood? Is this conception in line with how social science researchers have traditionally constructed masculinity? How can these perceptions of masculinity be used to improve health and social outcomes?
3. On a macro-sociological level, how do economic trends, public policies, race, and gender discrimination influence employment and educational outcomes among young men involved in correctional facilities? What is the relationship between social exclusion and incarceration?

Contribution to the Field

Previous research has not fully addressed the ways behaviors and attitudes related to a progressive masculinity potentially influence positive social and health decision-making among young men leaving jail. Furthermore, the nature of these young men's perceptions of their own manhood, especially upon leaving jail, has been undertheorized. Lastly, the correlation between social exclusion and incarceration has not yet been fleshed out in the literature. This project aims to contribute to a literature on progressive masculinity and the criminal justice system, as well as inform interventions designed to mitigate the impact of incarceration.

Overview of Chapters

This dissertation is a collection of three articles that address the goals presented at the beginning of this introduction: to understand a progressive version of masculinity among young men leaving jail; and to show how social exclusion is related to incarceration,

economic factors, policy factors, and discrimination based on race and gender. Below is a summary of the chapters of this dissertation:

Chapter 1

Chapter 1, the present chapter, provides an overview of the dissertation. In this chapter, I review the statement of the problem, rationale for the project, theoretical framework, research questions, and the project's contribution to the field.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides detail about data collection (participant recruitment, interviewing), human subjects protections, data analysis, and limitations of data. I divided this chapter into two parts: 1) a description of data collection for the Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) study and how that data was analyzed for this dissertation; and 2) a description of data collection and analysis from focus groups on masculinity at an alternatives-to-incarceration program. In this chapter, I also provide detail on the methods and data analysis used in each of the three substantive chapters (Chapters 3, 4, and 5).

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 examines masculinity as related to sex partner experience. In this section, I analyze the relationship between sex partner experience in the past three months (i.e., long-term partners, casual sex partners, or simultaneously having long-term and casual sex partners on the side) and subsequent high-risk behavior, in order to examine how sex

partner experience can provide insight into these outcomes. The findings from this study indicate that having a long-term sex partner prior to incarceration protects against negative sex, drug use, and violence outcomes. However, over time, education, employment, and housing instability are more important predictors of sex risk, drug use, violence, and recidivism. I discuss implications for public health and structural interventions at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 explores how young men in an alternatives-to-incarceration program define manhood and to what extent their definitions go beyond traditional notions of manhood. In this chapter, I analyze focus group data collected at an alternatives-to-incarceration program. Young men in this study primarily define what it means to be a “real man” as supporting for and caring for family. Additionally, men define some of this care work in the form of basic household responsibilities, such as cooking, cleaning and taking care of children – responsibilities that they learned from women in the family. Participants also define masculinity in terms of love that they give their children and receive from institutions, partners, and others. I present sociological and policy implications at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 examines the relationship between incarceration and social exclusion for urban young men of color leaving jail. In this chapter, I argue that education, employment, and criminal justice policies, as well as larger social and political trends, target “disconnected

youth.” Disconnection refers simply to the lack of participation in key social activities, such as school and work. However, after incarceration, these young men’s options for employment and school are even further limited upon release, and they face additional disadvantage due to unstable housing and high rates of recidivism. In this chapter, I present a conceptual framework to show how incarceration may lead to social exclusion for low-income, urban, young men of color. Public policy implications are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 6

The final chapter of the dissertation revisits the findings from Chapters 3-5. In this chapter, I also summarize the set of theoretical, research, and policy contributions that this dissertation aims to make. Finally, I outline future directions for research and policy.

Chapter 2. Methods

Data Collection from the Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) Study

Overview

This study was based on data that was collected as part of the REAL MEN study (Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods – data collection supported by the National Institute of Drug Abuse R01 DA014725 Impact of an HIV Intervention on Adolescent Males Leaving Jail, PI: Nicholas Freudenberg), which was designed to assess the impact of an intervention for young men leaving New York City jails (Daniels et al., 2009). Its goals were to reduce drug use, risky sexual behavior, and criminal activity among 16-18-year-old males.

Setting and Data Justification

Participants were recruited from two facilities located at the New York City Department of Correction's Rikers Island Detention Center, housing all New York City male adolescent inmates. In general, the sample selected for this study resembled the racial/ethnic and criminal justice characteristics of the overall adolescent population leaving New York City jails. In New York State, youth 16 and older are sent to adult jails; those under 16 enter the juvenile justice system. Therefore results from this study are only comparable to other states in which 16-18-year-olds are incarcerated in the adult system.

Enrollment and Time 1, Time 2 Interviews

Investigators enrolled 552 young men in the study after the informed consent process. Individuals were recruited during jail orientation sessions and from jail housing units, as well as through referrals from social service, correctional and health staff, and word-of-mouth. Based on interviews with project staff, it is estimated that about 3,500 to 4,000 young men were invited to participate during the four years of recruitment for REAL MEN, resulting in a yield of about 15%. Given the dynamic and changing characteristics of the jail environment, it was not possible to ascertain the number or characteristics of all potential participants in the settings where investigators recruited. However, as stated earlier, the sample resembled the overall adolescent population leaving New York City jails on racial/ethnic and criminal justice characteristics.

All participants completed an informed consent document approved by the Hunter College and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Institutional Review Boards. Participants were volunteers who received no special legal considerations for enrollment.

The jail project staff conducted the intake interviews. After the interview, staff randomly assigned participants to receive a single jail-based discharge planning session or a 30-hour intervention that began in jail and continued in the community after release. The 30-hour intervention consisted of groups, individual case management and referral, and collaboration with a community-based organization that provided post-release services for youth returning from jail or prison. The groups (five were offered in jail; three in the

community) covered a range of topics: 1) getting ready to go home and thinking about organizations designed to help former inmates; 2) thinking about HIV in the context of sex, drugs, and relationships; 3) discussing the implications of using and selling drugs; 4) contemplating what it takes to be a real man in the world; and 5) considering ethnic pride and solidarity. Although the goal of the present study was not to evaluate this intervention, results presented in Chapter 3 took into account the effect of the intervention.

The REAL MEN project contracted with The Center for Urban Epidemiologic Studies (CUES) at the New York Academy of Medicine to conduct follow-up Time 2 interviews with enrolled participants at approximately 12 months after release from jail. The Time 2 interview was completed by 397 participants – a follow-up rate of 72%. The majority of participants completed the follow-up interview in a CUES office, while others completed the interview in a New York City jail or state prison, by telephone, or at some other location.

Overview of Variables

Both Time 1 and Time 2 interviews included questions on demographic, education and employment histories, criminal justice involvement, health (which includes substance use, HIV knowledge, and sexual behavior), as well as attitudes about racial/ethnic identity and gender norms.

Dependent variables of interest (see Appendix A, Table 1 for dependent variables) were continuous, categorical, and dichotomous variables that assessed behavioral traits, criminal justice characteristics, school, employment, housing, and health insurance.

Independent variables of interest (see Appendix A, Table 2 for independent variables) were continuous, categorical, and dichotomous variables that assessed sex partner experience, criminal justice characteristics, school, employment, and housing.

Control variables of interest (see Appendix A, Table 3 for control variables) were also categorical and dichotomous variables that assessed school involvement, employment, housing, days spent in jail between interviews, and intervention status (randomized to intervention or not).

Because Chapter 3 and 5 each used specific variables and analytic procedures, a description of research methods is included below for each of these chapters.

Research Questions, Variables, and Data Analysis in Chapter 3

Research Questions. 1) What is the nature of sex partner experience among incarcerated adolescents prior to their incarceration and one year after their release from jail? 2) How is sex partner experience related to sex risk, drug use, violence, and recidivism over time?

Variables. The key independent variable of interest was a categorical variable designed to assess sex partner experience in the three months prior to the initial incarceration and

one year after release from jail. The following three categories were analyzed: 1) having a long-term sex partner only, defined as a partner for at least three months and for whom participants have romantic feelings; 2) having a short-term sex partner only, defined as someone participants had sex with that they just met, someone they've been with for less than three months, someone participants don't know very well but have sex with occasionally, or "causal" sex partners; and finally 3) having both long-term and short-term sex partners simultaneously. Though over time, long-term partners may have become short-term partners, for example, so the categories over time may have changed. Each regression model accounted for sex partner status at each time point. For multivariate analysis, each category was recoded into a dummy variable.

The primary dependent variables were both continuous and dichotomous, which assessed behavioral and criminal justice characteristics both prior to incarceration and one year after release from jail. The following variables were used to measure sex risk: having three or more sex partners in the past three months, using condoms inconsistently with all sex partners in the past three months, and being under the influence of drugs or alcohol more than half the time during intercourse with all sex partners in the past three months. To measure drug risk, I examined the following variables: drug and alcohol dependence in the past year based on DSM IV criteria, daily marijuana use in the past 30 days (prior to incarceration) or past 90 days (one year after release), and any hard drug use in the past 30 days (prior to incarceration) or past 90 days (one year after release). The following variables were examined to measure violence: carrying weapons during illegal activity in the past year, sustaining an injury due to violence in the past year, or having a current

violent charge on record (only measured prior to incarceration). Finally, I used the following variables to measure recidivism one year after release from jail: any further arrests and a subsequent incarceration.

All multivariate analysis included controls for the following variables: age, Black or Hispanic race/ethnicity, number of previous arrests, days incarcerated between index and follow-up interview, randomization to the intervention that was part of the parent study (to assess whether the intervention had any effect on outcomes of interest in this chapter), not attending school, ever being held back, not being employed part-time, full-time, or on and off, not living with parents, and having an unstable living situation, which was defined as living in a shelter, living from place-to-place, homeless, living on the streets, in an empty building, or in an institution. For multivariate analysis, each category for all dichotomous dependent and control variables was recoded into a dummy variable.

Data Analysis. Analysis of variance was conducted to assess the relationship between independent variables with dependent and control variables, as well as to generate descriptive data on key variables of interest. Post-hoc comparisons were used to explore differences in variables of interest by the three categories of sex partner experience. I then used logistic regression to measure the relationship between sex partner experience and the four key outcomes: high-risk sexual activity, drug abuse, violent behavior, and recidivism (Morgan & Teachman, 1988). In multivariate analysis comparing sex partner experience, those with long-term sex partners only were used as the reference group. Controls were included in each regression for the variables described above. Three

primary regression analyses were conducted: 1) to assess the relationship between sex partner experience prior to incarceration and the key outcomes (outlined above) prior to incarceration; 2) to assess the relationship between sex partner experience prior to incarceration and key outcomes one year after release from jail; and 3) to assess the relationship between sex partner experience one year after release from jail and key outcomes one year after release from jail. All analyses were conducted with SPSS Version 16.1 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, Ill).

Research Questions, Variables, and Data Analysis in Chapter 5

Research Questions. 1) How do incarceration and release from jail influence subsequent involvement in school and work, and therefore disconnection? 2) How do the post-incarceration experience and reentry policies and trends amplify disconnection and lead to social exclusion?

Variables. First, in order to provide background on demographic and criminal justice characteristics before incarceration and after release from jail, I presented data on age, race, living situation and housing instability, health care coverage, education, and involvement with the criminal justice system. Second, variables selected for the analysis in this chapter were based in part on those presented in the study on “disconnected youth” in New York City (Levitan, 2005). Therefore I analyzed the following data: school participation and labor participation both before incarceration and one year after release from jail. Finally, to examine indicators of social exclusion that could be measured with the REAL MEN study data, I analyzed lack of school attendance, unemployment,

housing instability, recidivism, and lack of health care coverage at Time 2. These five outcomes were selected based on definitions of social exclusion in the literature (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000; Young, 2007); relevant changes in Time 1 and Time 2 data in bivariate analyses; and lastly, on research about the relationship between health care coverage and disadvantage (Freudenberg et al., 2005).

To meet the standard definition of disconnectedness in this study, I defined the “in school” measure to include those who reported both being enrolled in school and attending most of the time. Respondents who said they did not attend school most of the time were considered “out of school” because my experience suggests that youth delay officially dropping out until long after they stop attending. Following the Community Service Society study definition, the variable “in labor force” included all youth, not just those out of school (unless otherwise specified in Table 2), as well as those who were unemployed but were looking for work. “Disconnected” was defined as anyone not enrolled in school and not in the labor force. For “employment” I included anyone who reported full-time work, part-time work, or off-and-on work not at a regular job.

Unstable housing was defined as living in a shelter, living from place-to-place, homeless, living on the streets, in an abandoned building, or in an institution. Recidivism was defined as being incarcerated again in the one-year interval after release from the index incarceration. Lack of health care coverage included those who reported not having Medicaid or some other health insurance to pay for medical care. Independent variables were Time 1 age, race, child welfare history (this included involvement in Administration

for Children's Services – the New York City child welfare agency – a group home, or foster care), not living with parents or a legal guardian, having unstable housing (as defined above), no health care coverage (as defined above), number of previous arrests, no school attendance (as defined above), and no labor market participation (defined as not being employed full-time, part-time, on and off, or looking for work). Indicators of social exclusion listed above were also added as independent variables, in order to assess the relationship between these Time 2 characteristics and each dependent variable.

Data Analysis. To compare demographic, criminal justice, and disconnectedness data I used a z-test to compare column proportions for all ordinal variables at Time 1 and Time 2 (Healey, 2004). I then used logistic regression to measure the relationship between the dependent and independent variables (Morgan & Teachman, 1988). Model I was run with the Time 1 independent variables. Model II added four of five indicators of social exclusion at Time 2 to be analyzed with each dependent variable. I assessed logistic regression coefficients (B's) and odds ratios (Exp (B)) in each model, and then tested model significance with the χ^2 omnibus test for model coefficients and used the Nagelkerke R^2 to assess model fit. All analyses were conducted with SPSS Version 16.1 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, Ill).

Overview of Data Limitations

One limitation of the REAL MEN study was the uncertainty inherent in asking subjects to self-report data about sex partners and behaviors, drugs, and incarceration histories. There was no simple solution to this problem, because investigators did not have access

to official criminal justice data or school records, for example, which would allow crosscheck of data. Second, because this study was based on survey data, it was difficult to know how the relationships and other factors examined in this study actually fit into the daily lives of the respondents. Although the REAL MEN study included questions about relationships and gender norms, none of the chapters in this dissertation used that data for a couple of reasons: 1) scales used for these questions were not used in their entirety for the REAL MEN survey, so could not be scored as recommended in the literature; 2) though exploratory factor analysis resulted in several distinct factors, preliminary analysis against selected outcomes did not reveal significant findings of interest; 3) I decided that from an intervention standpoint and in terms of gaps in the literature, sex partner experience among the adolescents leaving jail was a more interesting story to tell. Further limitations specific to Chapter 3 and 5 are addressed in each respective chapter.

Focus Groups on Masculinity at an Alternatives-to-Incarceration Program

Overview

These data came from focus groups that were conducted at an alternatives-to-incarceration program in New York City (data collection supported by Ford Foundation Research Grant, The Graduate Center, Masculinity as Risk, Masculinity as Protection: Sex, Drugs, Violence and Recidivism Among Incarcerated Urban Adolescents; PI: Megha Ramaswamy). Over the course of three months in spring 2008, I conducted eight focus groups, which together consisted of 38 male participants. I recruited these participants at the alternatives-to-incarceration program during a weekly morning

meeting. The hour-long focus groups addressed perceptions about masculinity. For example, I asked participants: “What is your definition of a real man?” “What are some examples of things that you or guys like you do that make you feel like a real man [in the home, school, on the job, with sex partners]?” (See Appendix B for complete list of questions.)

Prior ethnographic work (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1995; Whitehead, 1992) showed that masculinity in the eyes of low-income males includes having a job, supporting a family, and being respected in the community. One goal of the current study was to see if my sample challenged these ideas with an alternative view of masculinity or supported the findings of previous researchers. I was interested to see if young men’s views of masculinity corresponded to recent research on progressive masculinities (hooks, 2004; Mutua, 2006; Neal, 2004), e.g., not necessarily misogynistic, violent, or patriarchal attitudes about gender roles and relationships.

Setting and Data Justification

Participants were recruited from The Fortune Society, a community-based organization in New York City that runs an alternatives-to-incarceration program for people with criminal justice involvement. The Fortune Society is one of two alternatives-to-incarceration programs that serve young people in New York City, and therefore in some ways it is representative of young men’s experiences with these programs in New York City. Clients at The Fortune Society resembled the racial/ethnic characteristics of the population leaving New York City jails. For practical and ethical reasons, only those 18

and older were interviewed, so they were more likely to resemble the REAL MEN population on age characteristics at the Time 2 interview for REAL MEN (where participants range in age from about 18-21 years old). The group also resembled the REAL MEN study population on criminal justice characteristics, because participants were only selected if they were charged with less severe crimes earning sentences of under a year. This was done in order to study the reentry process from jail to community in a relatively short period of time. To be eligible for services at the alternatives-to-incarceration program, clients generally had to be charged with non-violent, less serious crimes.

Study Procedures, Enrollment, and Focus Groups

Participants were recruited from The Fortune Society. I made arrangements with The Fortune Society to gain entry into the organization as a facilitator of sessions for men in the alternatives-to-incarceration program. The primary method of recruitment was during a morning meeting, which all current and new clients of the program were required to attend. Approximately 20-30 participants attended the meeting, where I announced and briefly described the study. I used this time to ask participants to inform me if they wished to participate in the study, adding that they were free to call me or simply show up to the focus group. The focus group was held about four hours after the morning meeting. A few participants were referred to me by their counselors or called me based on flyers posted at the alternatives-to-incarceration program.

Over a period of three months in spring 2008, I facilitated eight focus groups and had a total of 38 participants. Each focus group met once per week for one hour. Each focus group had a range of 2-9 participants (mean 5.4). Prior to starting the focus groups, I obtained written informed consent from each participant. The focus groups primarily covered participants' perceptions of masculinity. (See Appendix B for full list of focus group questions.)

All participants completed an informed consent document approved by the Hunter College Institutional Review Board. Participants were volunteers who also received no special legal considerations for enrollment.

Reflexivity and Confounders Related to the Setting

It is worth noting that my ethnicity, gender, age, and the fact that I presented myself as a researcher may have affected the focus group conversations. I am a fairly young Indian-American woman who conducted focus groups with mostly Black and Latino males. When discussing whether or not I would recruit enough participants, one of the program directors said since I was a young lady, and paying the men \$25 to participate, I'd likely have no problems. Thus, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact motivations for why the young men wanted to participate in this study. A few participants stopped me in the hall and asked repeatedly if they could come to another focus group. Though at times this came in the form of what I perceived as mild flirtation (a few of the men offered to help me "in any way they could"), I think they were ultimately interested in doing a focus group because they could earn \$25 for one hour's worth of participation. Some of these

men said to me, “I could really use the money today.” In order to minimize the effect of my gender and ethnicity, I played up my role as researcher and worked from a list of questions and probes to steer the conversation, though this role might have also affected participants’ willingness to open up. My gender, in particular (but perhaps not my ethnicity since I am a woman of color), may have elicited certain responses. But when I discussed the results presented here with three agency group facilitators, they confirmed they had heard similar stories to what these men shared with me.

The results of this study should also be understood in the context of programming at the alternatives-to-incarceration program. Data were collected in a program where participants were spending up to four hours per day for six to nine months in skills-building groups about anger management, self-esteem development, and featuring conversations around image, values, and beliefs. Participants might also have attended parenting groups at the agency, which promote involvement in children’s lives, discussions about family configurations, and barriers to parenting. This programming likely affected participants’ responses to certain questions, although their comments are still very much a reflection of how they are learning to talk about gender issues and family.

Setting and Reflections on Methodology

I specifically chose the alternatives-to-incarceration program as a setting for this study and the focus group as a method for data collection in order to make some preliminary observations about how group discussions can be used in a rehabilitative context (much

more so than serving jail time). Focus groups are helpful for understanding how people interact to produce a specific discourse (Hollander, 2004), and researchers have argued that capitalizing on certain dialogue between men can be useful, especially in terms of violence prevention or health promotion (Barker, 2005). If a particular conversation about progressive masculinity is possible, then this study design has the possibility to change the way interventions happen and improve outcomes for young men involved in correctional institutions. One potential problem with focus groups is that they don't capture the way people talk in their "natural settings." However, because the young men in this study have been meeting in small groups for the past six to nine months as part of regular programming at the agency, their conversations and the groups are "natural" in the context of the alternatives-to-incarceration program (Kitzinger, 1994). Conducting focus groups in this setting might provide insight into how an alternatives-to-incarceration program can be used as an interventional setting.

Because the data were part of a larger conversation in a focus group, what I present is group discussion in a safe space. It is unclear if the respondents would give me the same answers or act the same way if I encountered them alone on the street. But I do know how a group of Black and Latino men in an alternatives-to-incarceration focus group interact with each other to produce a discourse about manhood. This is a study about how a group of men *talk* about manhood.

Research Questions and Data Analysis in Chapter 4

Research Questions. 1) How do young men recently out of jail/prison and in an alternatives-to-incarceration program define manhood? 2) Are there alternative narratives about what it means to be a *real man*, or discussions that go beyond traditional notions of manhood?

Data Analysis. The focus groups were audiotape recorded. I then transcribed and coded the interviews, with the coding system being based on recurring themes in the focus groups, connected to masculinity in both existing literature, and my own previous research. A sociologist colleague also read through the transcripts to identify themes, in order to ensure that the data presented here reflect obvious themes that surfaced in the transcripts. I used pseudonyms to identify participants in these transcripts, as well as in this chapter. Research Question 1, in particular, was assessed through analysis of the focus group data. Research Question 2 was answered through a review of focus group data, the literature on masculinity among urban young men, and theory on progressive masculinity.

Overview of Limitations

The primary limitation of the study was that although participants were similar on race/ethnicity and criminal justice characteristics to participants in the REAL MEN study, they were still not the same individuals. Furthermore, some participants in the qualitative study were significantly older than those in the REAL MEN study. Next, an alternatives-to-incarceration program is different from a jail and has a different set of goals for clients.

This limitation, however, was of analytic interest. For example, it was interesting to see how the alternatives-to-incarceration program created a safe space for discourse, as it was still a part of the free world compared to a jail. Finally, the effect of the alternatives-to-incarceration program (its counselors, skills building sessions, and overall supportive environment) and the reentry experience needed to be taken into account when analyzing data from this study.

Chapter 3. Understanding How Sex Partner Experience Mitigates the Health and Social Risks of Young Men Involved in The Criminal Justice System

Abstract

This chapter explores how sex partner experience can actually protect against harmful sexual health behaviors, drug problems, violence, and recidivism in 16-18-year-old Black and Latino men leaving jail. To illustrate this, data are drawn from the Returning Educated African-American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) study conducted between 2003-2007, which tracks 552 adolescents during their time in a New York City jail and 397 of them one year after their release. Analysis of variance and logistic regression are used to examine the relationship between sex partner experience and sex behavior, drug use, violence, and recidivism. This study indicates that young men who have long-term sex partners prior to incarceration engage in lower risk sexual behavior, use less marijuana, and are less likely to carry weapons, especially compared with peers who simultaneously take on long-term and casual sex partners. However, the positive effects of having a long-term sex partner generally do not apply over time – in this case, one year after being released from jail. Aside from sexual partners, factors such as educational involvement, employment, and housing stability often predict whether these young men will experience positive or negative outcomes post-incarceration. Based on these realities, this study highlights the importance and potential benefits of health interventions that engage young Black and Latino men who are involved in the criminal justice system, as well as their sex partners, in health promotion programs. The study also confirms the need for specific structural interventions that address the

educational, employment, and housing needs of young men after they leave correctional facilities.

Introduction

Research consistently demonstrates that compared with non-incarcerated youth, incarcerated adolescents face disproportionately high health and social risks related to sex, drugs, violence, and recidivism (Canterbury et al., 1995; DiClemente et al., 1991; Morris et al., 1995; Teplin et al., 2005). Most interventions designed to mitigate these risks operate at the behavioral level (Daniels et al., 2009) and rarely lead to significant or lasting behavioral changes – and therefore health and social outcomes – in the long term. Interestingly, recent studies of adolescent relationships confirm that both romantic and non-romantic sexual relationships influence a teen’s sex choices, drug use, crime, and educational involvement – research that appears to confirm what I propose as a correlation between sexual partnership and risky behavior (Giordano, Phelps, Manning, & Longmore, 2008; Haynie, Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2005; McCarthy & Casey, 2008). However, these latter studies fail to place these findings in the social context in which urban Black and Latino young men live. For example, these youth generally face significant race, gender, educational, and economic barriers to success, which are only added burdens to the fact that the youth in the present study already have criminal histories. Therefore, high-risk behavior among these youth is often a multi-factorial issue, of which sexual health and history is only one component.

That being said, this study aims to illustrate how sex partner experience can mitigate high-risk health and social behaviors by taking into account this prior research on risk factors and interventions for incarcerated adolescents, studies on teen relationships, and an understanding of the social context in which urban Black and Latino youth involved in the criminal justice system live. To conclude, I offer recommendations for multiple levels of intervention including addressing the significance of sex partner experience, as well as the various structural factors that have the potential improve outcomes for young Black and Latino men looking to avoid repeat offense, or the criminal justice system altogether.

Literature Review on Outcomes of Interest

Sex Risk. Previous studies show that 90% or more of incarcerated adolescents are sexually active (Harwell et al., 1999; Morris et al., 1998; Teplin et al., 2005; Teplin et al., 2003). Over two-thirds have multiple sex partners (Canterbury et al., 1995; Teplin et al., 2005), and between one and three-quarters of incarcerated adolescents report not using condoms (Canterbury et al., 1995; Morris et al., 1998). Compared to their non-incarcerated counterparts, those in correctional facilities exhibit higher rates of risky sexual behavior. In one study (DiClemente et al., 1991) nearly all incarcerated adolescents reported having had sexual intercourse, compared to 28% of the high school comparison sample. About 84% percent of incarcerated adolescents say they have had three or more sex partners in their lifetimes, while only about 15% of the high school sample report a similar level. Compared with their non-incarcerated peers, incarcerated adolescents are 2.6 times more likely to have used alcohol or drugs the last time they had

sexual intercourse (Crosby et al., 2003). In sum, the sex risks of incarcerated adolescents are generally high.

Drug Risk. Among incarcerated adolescents who have experimented with alcohol, 50% report having been drunk or engaging in binge drinking, while 88% who identify as current drinkers in another sample report the same experiences (Morris et al., 1995; 1998). Furthermore, Freudenberg, Daniels, Crum, Perkins, & Richie (2005) report that over 80% of male adolescents used marijuana in the six months prior to arrest. It is this type of heavy alcohol and marijuana use that could affect health choices, rather than experimentation with these drugs. Other investigators show that anywhere between 25 and 30% of incarcerated adolescents used hard drugs prior to their arrests (Morris et al., 1995; 1998). But more recently Freudenberg and colleagues (2005) have called this research into question, showing that fewer than 4% of a sample of adolescent men in New York City used hard drugs. Though it is unclear what accounts for these differences, other than perhaps geographic, demographic, and cohort (i.e., generational) differences.

Violence. In a five-state study spanning 39 correctional facilities, nearly 70% of adolescents reported having been in a fight in the year before incarceration, with 76.4% of those respondents reporting being part of fights involving weapons (Morris et al., 1995). Finally, close to half of all incarcerations of adolescent males in New York City are for violent offenses, which includes weapons possessions (Freudenberg, 2004).

Recidivism. Most incarcerated adolescents return to their communities shortly after incarceration, and between half and three-fourths of them are rearrested in the year after their release (Fagan, 1996; Freudenberg et al., 2005). This movement or “churning” (Taxman, 2005) from correctional institutions to the community negatively affects individuals and society at large (Daniels et al., 2009). It contributes to an inability to attend school, which leads to failure, dropout, and ultimately, reduced employment prospects (Holzer, Offner, & Sorenson, 2005). Recidivism is also related to high-risk sexual behavior and drug use, as well as poor physical and mental health (Golzari, Hunt, & Anoshiravani, 2006). By nature, churning can also contribute to higher crime rates and reduced community cohesion (Clear, Rose, Waring, & Scully, 2003), both of which are associated with increased instances of violence and a more rapid spread of infectious diseases (Cohen, Spear, Scribner, Kissinger, Mason, & Wildgen, 2000; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Recidivism is also expensive for communities – annual incarceration costs for adolescents can reach as much as \$100,000 per year, per adolescent – which in turn leads to fewer resources for education and health care (Daniels et al., 2009; Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005).

Interventions that Address Sex Risk, Drug Use, Violence, and Recidivism

Public health researchers generally employ three types of interventions to improve outcomes for incarcerated adolescents (Daniels et al., 2009): one-on-one programs that are based on the individual’s sex and drug risk, more comprehensive psychosocial interventions, and finally, larger-scale reentry programs that facilitate the transition from correctional institutions to the community. The first type of intervention – designed to

reduce sex and drug risk – is successful in improving knowledge around HIV risk, for example, but rarely leads to change of behavior in any palpable way (Schlapman & Cass, 2000; Shelton, 2001). It is also important to note that these interventions do not address the range of social and economic barriers that prevent youths from practicing safe sex or abstaining from drug use (Daniels et al., 2009). The psychosocial interventions, which often include onsite service delivery and address a broader range of social issues, have shown some success in reducing excessive alcohol and drug use (Dembo, Wothke, Livingston, & Schmeidler, 2002). However, these services do not focus on empowering the family and community to aid the individual; rather, they locate the problem within the individual, despite the involvement of a support team as part of the intervention (Blechman & Vryan, 2000; Daniels et al., 2009). The final model shows the most promise, in that it facilitates transition from corrections to community services (Freudenberg et al., 2005; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005; Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005; Travis & Soloman, 2005). This type of intervention works by seeking policy change in correctional institutions and the community at large. The problem, though, is that these interventions do not target the specific needs of incarcerated adolescents (Daniels et al., 2009), nor are they able to reduce sex and drug risk, as illustrated by the few that have been evaluated. In summary, interventions have fallen short when it comes to improving the health and opportunities for incarcerated adolescents – and for this study, none of these interventions seriously consider the romantic and sexual relationships of adolescents, a matter central to their lives.

Adolescent Relationships

A recent but significant body of work exists on adolescent sexual relationships. Analysis of national and local longitudinal data on adolescents (not specifically urban nor with largely Black and Latino samples) reveals that many adolescents enter into a variety of sexual relationships (Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2005; Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2006; McCarthy & Casey, 2008). Manning and colleagues (2005) found that three-fifths of participants in a national survey of adolescents had sex with “romantic partners only,” a category based on self-report of sexual relationships with romantic partners. One-quarter of participants reported sex with non-romantic partners only. Finally, 14% of participants reported sex with both types of partners. In another study (Manning et al., 2006), close to half of adolescents reported sex with non-romantic partners, categorized as sex not with a “girlfriend” or “boyfriend,” which confirms that adolescents enter into a variety of relationships that are difficult to define. Furthermore it is unclear if non-romantic relationships (or even having both romantic and non-romantic relationships) represent any greater “risk,” or instead are part of the normative experience for adolescents (Giordano, 2003; Manning et al., 2005, 2006). For example, Manning et al. (2006) found that most adolescents who entered into non-romantic sexual relationships were involved with friends and peers, and not necessarily in high-risk contexts.

The type of relationship, that is romantic versus non-romantic, has also been associated with educational and delinquency outcomes. Giordano et al. (2008) found that adolescents’ grades in school reflect romantic partners grades, with a stronger effect for

boys, meaning that boys are more likely to get good grades if their female partners do. The authors point out this potentially illustrates a “good marriage effect” for boys, described elsewhere (Laub & Sampson, 2003). Indeed, for adults, Laub and Sampson (2003) found that wives prevent criminal activity in adult males. Among adolescents, Haynie and colleagues (2005) found that romantic partners and peers have a negative effect on delinquency, although peers affect delinquency more. McCarthy and Casey (2008) found that “romantic love” – measured with a scale based on behaviors and activities – protected against substance abuse and delinquent activity. In this same study, relationship-exclusive sexual activity was not related to criminal behavior over time. But those who had non-romantic or both types of partners engaged in more criminal activity over time. None of these studies focused on differential class effects. Giordano, Manning, and Longmore (2005) found that Black adolescents reported relationships of longer duration than White adolescents, but of less intensity. However, these results did not hold after controls were added. As for gender differences, Giordano, Longmore, and Manning (2006) demonstrated that contrary to prior research, boys appear less confident and more engaged in romantic relationships.

It is worth noting that in the present study, although the terms “long-term” versus “short-term” partners are used, “long-term” in the REAL MEN study was defined both in terms of duration of relationship (for at least three months) and whether the participant had “romantic feelings” towards the partner. Although this terminology may be interpreted differently from the terminology in the previously described studies, generalizations may be drawn based on the categorization of having “romantic” partners or not.

Researchers who study the relationship between adolescent romantic and sexual relationships against a set of outcomes generally draw on attachment theory (see Giordano, 2003 for discussion of limitations) or theories of social control (see McCarthy & Casey, 2008 for application of social control theory) – the notion that romantic love discourages criminal activity by improving social bonds. Giordano and colleagues (2006) also apply a symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective to understanding adolescent romantic relationships to argue that adolescents navigate their social worlds as part of the experience of relationship formation and peer interaction.

These authors provide a generalized theory on adolescent relationship and sexual behavior with the application of aforementioned theoretical perspectives. However, most of these works fail to capture the specific disadvantages that Black and Latino youth face both before and after they are involved in the criminal justice system. Perhaps this is where a theory of progressive masculinity (Mutua, 2006) could fill a gap in the literature on adolescent relationships among low-income, young men of color. For one, this theoretical perspective argues against narrow definitions of what sexual relationships are supposed to look like for young men of color according to stereotypes – for example the assumption that these men only want multiple sexual partners and no commitments. Secondly this progressive theory of masculinity acknowledges the structural disadvantages that these youth face – poverty, racism, and sexism in everyday life. And finally, a progressive theory of masculinity takes seriously the behaviors and activities of

participants, rather than pointing to “ideals” or “stereotypes” about the kinds of relationships young men of color enter into.

Social Context of Black and Latino Young Men Involved in the Criminal Justice System

Young Black and Latino men living in urban areas face a number of barriers to success, such as disadvantage in the educational system (Dellums Commission, 2006), inequities in employment compared with their White and female counterparts (Levitan, 2005), and exceedingly higher rates of arrests and incarcerations compared with White youth (Levine & Small, 2008). Young men involved in the criminal justice system are also disproportionately represented in the child welfare system and homeless shelters (Culhane & Park, 2007) and face a very specific set of structural inequalities that prevent them from high achievement in education and employment. Yet all of these studies that focus on disadvantage (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995) fail to address the potential positive (or negative) role that sex partners play in these young men’s lives.

Ethnographic studies in particular seldom do a thorough investigation of sex partners of poor, young Black and Latino men. They do suggest, however, that the majority of these men prefer to have multiple sexual partners, often in order to reinforce a specific kind of masculinity (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995). Young men in these studies do mention the importance of children in their lives, and sometimes by extension, the mothers of their children as well (Barker, 2005). This type of study, although highly informative about the lives of poor minority youth in urban areas, fails to acknowledge an important and rather normative part of adolescent development – both long-term and

casual sexual partnerships. The current study, though limited in its scope due to its focus on the New York area, seeks to fill this gap through a quantitative analysis of data collected from interviews with young men leaving jail. Not only does this chapter describe the partnerships of these young men, but it also investigates the outcomes they experience in relation to these sexual partnerships over time.

As discussed earlier, incarcerated adolescents are at substantial risk for a number of negative potential outcomes – a reality only heightened by their economic disadvantages that often trigger repeat offenses and lead to reincarceration. Because recidivism rates are so high among adolescents, returning to jail has become the normative rather than exceptional experience, further restricting these youths’ opportunities for better lives. To make matters worse, interventions designed to reduce risky and violent behaviors have not been consistently effective among incarcerated adolescents. In addition, interventions designed to reduce recidivism in adolescents have been understudied. Because of the lack of demonstrable success of these interventions and the dearth of studies examining potential effects of adolescent sex partnerships on criminal activity among Black and Latino men, the present chapter seeks to understand whether there is an alternative route to risk reduction – that is, the support (or lack of) of sex partners. Should sex partner experience serve as an important protective or risk-enhancing factor, then interventions designed to engage young people will certainly need to include discussions around sex partnerships into their folds.

In order to investigate the effects sex partner experience on the behaviors of adolescent Black and Latino men leaving jail, this chapter will 1) describe sex partner experience among incarcerated adolescents prior to their incarceration and one year after their release from jail; 2) demonstrate how sex partner experience is related to sex risk, drug use, violence, and recidivism over time; and 3) offer recommendations to address individual, community, and structural-level interventions, building on the findings from this study.

Data procedures and analysis are described in Chapter 2.

Results

Analysis of Variance by Sex Partner Experience

Table 1 (see Table 1 at end of chapter) presents data on background characteristics and variables of interest prior to incarceration, organized by sex partner experience prior to incarceration. The Time 1 interview was completed by 552 participants. Almost 98% of participants reported having sex partners prior to incarceration and were included in the analysis in Table 1. The mean age of participants at Time 1 was 18.01. About 57% of participants were Black, and 38% were Hispanic. The mean number of previous arrests was 5.32, and those with long-term partners only had fewer arrests than those with short-term partners only (4.60 versus 6.06 arrests, $p \leq 0.05$). Although about half of participants with short-term partners or both long/short-term partners at the same time reported having three or more sex partners in the past three months, only 5% of people with long-term sex partners had three or more sex partners in the same period ($p \leq 0.05$). More

people with long/short-term partners at the same time reported inconsistent condom use (78% compared with 59% and 29% for other types of sex partner experience, $p \leq 0.05$) and having sex while under the influence of drugs or alcohol more than half the time (73% compared with 62% and 52% for other types of sex partner experience, $p \leq 0.05$). On average, about half of the participants reported daily marijuana use, although the rate was lowest for people with long-term sex partners only ($p \leq 0.05$). Over half of participants reported carrying weapons during illegal activity (lowest rates for people with long-term sex partners only, $p \leq 0.05$).

Table 2 (see Table 2 at end of chapter) presents data on background characteristics and variables of interest one year after release from jail, organized by sex partner experience prior to incarceration and one year after release from jail. At the Time 2 interview, participants were on average 19.60 years old. Interestingly, there were fewer differences overall by sex partner experience when measuring outcomes one year after release from jail. When looking at Time 2 outcomes by sex partner experience prior to incarceration, more participants with short-term partners only were randomized to the intervention than people reporting both long/short-term partners at the same time (59% versus 46%, $p \leq 0.05$), which means that people with short-term partners only may have been more likely to receive an intervention that sought to reduce key outcomes in this study. Lower rates of marijuana use for those with long-term partners only compared with those with both types of partners simultaneously carried over to the Time 2 interview (23% versus 36%, $p \leq 0.05$). People with short-term partners only (4%) reported reduced hard drug use than those with both types of partners simultaneously (15%), ($p \leq 0.05$).

When analyzing variance in outcomes one year after release from jail by sex partner experience one year after release from jail, 76% of participants reported having sex partners after release from jail and were included in the analysis in Table 2. People with long-term sex partners only were more likely to have sex while high on drugs or alcohol (91%) than people with other types of partners (80% for those with short-term partners and 59% for those with both types of partners simultaneously, $p \leq 0.05$). People with long-term partners only reported lower rates of unemployment (66%) than people with both types of sex partners (78%), ($p \leq 0.05$). Although fewer people with long-term partners only reported more than three sex partners in the past three months ($p \leq 0.05$), it is important to note that 100% of those with only long-term partners reported inconsistent condom use. Ninety-four percent of those with only short-term partners reported inconsistent condom use, and both rates were higher than those for people engaging with both types of sex partners simultaneously (70%), ($p \leq 0.05$). Consistent with previous analysis, daily marijuana use was still lower for those with long-term sex partners (28%) compared to those with short-term sex partners (42%) and those with both types (40%), ($p \leq 0.05$).

Studying the outcomes one year after release from jail by sex partner experience at both times points reveals some differences, for example more days spent incarcerated between interviews and higher reports of unstable living situations when looking at variables by sex partner experience prior to incarceration. A significant limitation of the data is its inability to capture whether long-term sex partners at Time 2 are in fact the same partners documented at Time 1, prior to the incarceration. It seems there may be some added

benefit to having post-incarceration relationships for risk reduction, but the lack of information on how long subjects retain their partners prohibits a more robust analysis.

However, the extent to which partners types are statistically significantly different was measured. In analysis of the Chi-Square statistic, sex partner experience prior to incarceration and one year after release is, in fact, significantly different ($p \leq 0.01$ when comparing all groups). This indicates that sex partner experience (and sex partners) probably do change over time, particularly after an incarceration experience for one of the partners. For example, if a participant reported having a long-term partner only prior to incarceration, his chances of having a different type of partner (e.g., short-term only) after release from jail were likely, or vice versa. This may explain some of the differences in outcomes when looking at data in Table 2, given that sex partner types probably changed over time, in part due to the disruptive nature of incarceration as well as the nature of adolescent relationships.

Multivariate Analysis of Sex Partner Experience

In logistic regression analysis, the type of sex partners these young men experienced prior to incarceration was related to number of sex partners, condom use, having sex while high, marijuana use, and carrying weapons during illegal activity prior to incarceration. For each of these indicators, the regression models had good fit (see Table 3 at end of chapter for model fit, odds ratios, and logistic regression coefficients). As discussed earlier, people who reported short-term partners only and simultaneous short/long-term partners were 25-27 times as likely as those with long-term partners only to have three or

more sex partners over the course of three months (OR=25.53, 27.57, respectively, $p \leq 0.001$), and people with simultaneous short/long-term partners were twice as likely to be inconsistent condom users (OR=2.05, $p \leq 0.01$). People with short-term partners were three times likely to have sex while high on drugs/alcohol (OR=3.42, $p \leq 0.001$), and people with both types of partners simultaneously were almost seven times as likely to have sex while under the influence (OR=6.77, $p \leq 0.001$) compared with young men with only long-term partners. Young men with short-term partners and those with simultaneous short/long-term partners were also twice as likely as individuals with only long-term partners to be daily marijuana users (OR=2.17 for both categories, $p \leq 0.01$ and $p \leq 0.001$, respectively). Finally, those participants with both types of partners were also more likely (OR=1.72, $p \leq 0.05$) to carry weapons during illegal activity than those with long-term partners. Once again, and in multivariate analysis, stability with sex partnerships correlates with a reduction of risky behavior.

Aside from sex partner experience, the number of previous arrests (OR=1.04, $p \leq 0.05$) and school attendance (OR=1.61, $p \leq 0.05$) predicted whether young men would be likely to have more than three sex partners in the span of three months. Previous arrests were also related to daily marijuana use (OR=1.08, $p \leq 0.001$), and those not attending school were at least twice as likely to have drug/ alcohol dependence (OR=2.65, $p \leq 0.001$). It is also important to note that the number of previous arrests also correlated with higher instances of sex while high on drugs/alcohol (OR=1.09, $p \leq 0.001$). Furthermore, respondents' race (in this case, Black race) was inversely related to hard drug use (OR=0.20, $B = -1.60$, $p \leq 0.01$), while ever being held back was positively associated with

hard drug use (OR=2.09, $p \leq 0.05$). Previous arrests indicated whether young men were prone to carrying weapons possession during criminal activity (OR=1.09, $p \leq 0.001$), and not being in school was inversely related to having a violent charge (OR=0.60, $p \leq 0.01$).

Table 4 (see at end of chapter) presents outcomes one year after release from jail when analyzing sex partner experience prior to incarceration. Sex partner experience prior to incarceration only predicted daily marijuana use. Those who reported both long/short-term sex partners prior to incarceration were twice as likely to be daily marijuana users (OR=2.04, $p \leq 0.05$). Other predictors of daily marijuana use were number of days incarcerated (an inverse relationship) (OR=1.00, $p \leq 0.01$), not attending school (OR=1.99, $p \leq 0.05$), and being unemployed (OR=2.88, $p \leq 0.01$). An unstable living situation was inversely related to hard drug use (OR=0.24, $p \leq 0.05$). But those with an unstable living situation were almost three times as likely to be rearrested (OR=2.73, $p \leq 0.05$) or reincarcerated (OR=2.86, $p \leq 0.05$) in the one year after release from jail. Other significant predictors of reincarceration were days spent in jail between interviews (OR=1.00, $p \leq 0.01$) and not being enrolled in school after release from jail (OR=2.13, $p \leq 0.05$).

When analyzing sex, drug, violence, and recidivism outcomes one year after release from jail by sex partner experience one year after release from jail (see Table 5 at end of chapter), it became clear that having both long/short-term partners simultaneously made men more prone to weapon possession during illegal activity compared with those who were in long-term relationships (OR=1.91, $p \leq 0.05$). However, having both long/short-

term partners was inversely related to engaging in intercourse while high on drugs/alcohol (OR=0.01, $p \leq 0.01$). Age was also a significant factor in whether respondents had sex while high (OR=1.91, $p \leq 0.01$). Age (OR=1.67, $p \leq 0.05$), along with lack of school attendance (OR=2.13, $p \leq 0.05$) and unemployment (OR=2.64, $p \leq 0.01$), also predicted the frequency of daily marijuana use. Those with unstable housing one year after release from jail were almost six times as likely to be rearrested (OR=5.95, $p \leq 0.01$) and more than seven times as likely to end up back in jail (OR=7.46, $p \leq 0.001$) within the first year after release.

As discussed earlier, it is of analytic interest to see if sex partner status at Time 1 predicts sex partner status at Time 2. Although this data is not displayed in a separate table, any changes in the data over time are presented in Table 5. When re-running the models in Table 5 and adding controls for sex partner experience at Time 1, the models changed in the following ways: the model for daily marijuana use was still accurate (Chi-Square = 20.12, $p=0.01$), age became non-significant, and those with simultaneous long and short-term partners were more likely to become daily marijuana users after release from jail (OR=2.18, $p \leq 0.05$). In the model for weapons possession during illegal activities, after adding the controls for partner status during Time 1, the model no longer had good fit (Chi-Square = 18.78, $p=0.13$), and the effect of partner status during Time 2 was no longer pertinent. All other models essentially stayed the same.

Discussion

The goal of the parent study (REAL MEN) was to explore and address the contextual factors that may lead to HIV risk and recidivism for young men leaving jail (Daniels et al., 2009). Sex partner experience as defined in this chapter explored just one of these contextual factors. Prior to incarceration for 16-18-year-old men, having a long-term sex partner is protective against sexually risky behavior, daily marijuana use, and carrying weapons during illegal activity, especially compared to those who have both long/short-term partners simultaneously. These results build on prior work that demonstrates the potential positive influence of having a romantic relationship for adolescents (Giordano et al., 2008; McCarthy & Casey 2008). It is also worth noting that the present study demonstrated that having casual sex partners only, did not generally increase risk.

Equally important for long-term outcomes is an individual's school involvement. Staying in school and performing well (i.e., not getting held back) may be protective against sexual risk-taking, drug/alcohol dependence, and hard drug use. But strangely, school involvement is inversely related to having a violent charge in this study, a relationship potentially explained by reported levels of violence in New York City schools (Devine, 1996). Not surprisingly, the number of previous arrests was also related to all three indicators (e.g., sex risk, drug use, and violence). Taken together, these findings show that keeping kids in safe schools and out of the criminal justice system in the first place might help prevent health and social risks later in life.

Over time, the effect of sex partner experience on the outcomes in this study diminished. After a certain amount of time, having a long-term partner no longer looked “less risky,” which confirms the argument that “risk” is variable for young people and hard to define (Giordano, 2003; Manning et al., 2005, 2006). Having a long-term sex partner only consistently remained protective against daily marijuana use and carrying weapons during illegal activity, the latter still a substantial risk. While pathways to sex risk behavior are still unclear after the present analysis (although participants seem to be having less sex overall post-incarceration), school attendance, employment, and housing stability were major predictors of all Time 2 outcomes, particularly recidivism. Unstable housing was arguably the most important predictor of being rearrested and reincarcerated.

These latter findings highlight the larger structural barriers to success for Black and Latino youth involved in the correctional system. If the findings in this study prove correct – that school, employment, and housing stability equal positive outcomes – then the barriers in education, employment, and housing must be also be highlighted. Recent reports of the school and employment outcomes among New York City youth reveal that Black and Latino men aged 16-24 are less likely to be in school than females and Whites, and Black males are least likely to participate in the labor force compared with all of the aforementioned groups (Levitan, 2005). Explanations for the disparities in school enrollment in New York City are, for example, disinvestment in educational and vocational programs and policies that prohibit young people over the age of 21 from obtaining high school educations (Treschan & Molnar, 2008). Young people leaving jail

in New York City are often discouraged from re-enrolling in school (Rimer, 2004), which only puts them at greater risk of reincarceration.

Policy analysts and researchers explain low rates of employment among young Black and Latino men by pointing to the decline in opportunities to work in the public sector and manufacturing, industries in which many minority males have traditionally worked in the United States (Bourgois, 1995; Levitan, 2007). In addition to lack of opportunity, people with certain types of criminal records are prohibited from working in several types of jobs, and they are restricted from obtaining licenses for certain forms of employment (Miller, 2006). These policies also make finding housing a burden. In some states, public housing authorities specifically prohibit drug offenders from living in public housing or even residing with other relatives in public housing – a significant burden for inmates with children or who are juvenile drug offenders (Fernandez, 2007). Research on housing instability and ex-offenders usually focuses on adults, particularly women, yet studies like the current one demonstrate the significant housing needs of recently released young men as well.

To summarize, while sex partner experience – in particular, having long-term sex partners – may protect young men from some risky sexual behavior, drug use, and violent activity, much larger structural interventions are needed to combat the effects of incarceration, aging, and instability in young people's lives as they move from correctional facilities into the community.

But what is it about having long-term sex partners that seems to protect these young men, at least prior to incarceration? Is it as McCarthy and Casey (2008) argue improved social bonds and increasing social control? Perhaps there is a developmental explanation, as well. For young men (the REAL MEN participants were 16-18 at the time of the first interview), having a long-term partner may be protective against negative health and social outcomes. However by age 21 or so, having different types of relationships may become a normative experience and other threats (like not being in school or employed) become more solvent. While a progressive theory of masculinity may not explain the benefit of long-term sex partners for adolescents prior to incarceration, it does encourage further investigation of the role of relationships within young minority men's lives – how do these relationships operate? How are they balanced against other sources of oppression in these young men's lives? It also suggests a movement away from the assumption that poor, young men of color operate independently of the women around them.

Limitations of the Present Study

It is important to point out the methodological limitations of the present study. For one, the presence of sex partners was a “yes-no” response to a survey question. Research assistants did not probe participants about the nature of these sex partners. This study does not illustrate how sex partners actually function in the lives of the adolescent men on a day-to-day basis. Second, it is unclear *why* having both long-term and casual sex partners simultaneously represents a risk. Having both types of relationships may be a normative experience for young people, although this may also represent lack of

consistent social support, trusting relationships, or disorganization. Third, there was no information obtained during the two interviews about who the sex partners are as individuals. While the study is able to demonstrate overall differences in type of sex partner at both time points, I have no way of knowing if the sex partner at Time 1 was the same sex partner at Time 2. Fourth, the survey did not assess opposite sex versus same-sex relationships – no such questions were included in the survey because of prior inclusion of such questions and extremely low rates of same-sex relationship reports. As it is, there is a dearth of research on same-sex adolescent relationships, and this study also fails to advance that research agenda. Such limitations warrant further ethnographic investigation and the addition of new questions in future studies of this nature.

Another important and perhaps ethical limitation is the absence of women in studies like this. It is unclear from this study as to what the female partners of the young men derive. Among adolescents in the free world, Giordano et al. (2008) demonstrated that females don't stand to gain as much in terms of school performance as boys in relationships. As for health risk, Grinstead et al. (2005) showed substantial HIV risk for female partners of incarcerated men. Future research must investigate the experience of these types of long-term relationships for women or other partners of young men involved in the criminal justice system.

Recommendations for Interventions

This study illustrates two important findings: sex partner experience matters when it comes to certain health and social risks; and, there seem to be larger structural and policy

barriers to success over time for young Black and Latino men involved in the criminal justice system. In light of these findings I propose the following:

Sex partner-level interventions. In addition to individual behavioral-level interventions, partners should also be incorporated in research and interventions for young people involved in the criminal justice system. The REAL MEN study demonstrates the willingness to participate in interventions among criminally-involved youth, as illustrated by reasonably high follow-up rates (Daniels et al., 2009). Prior research demonstrates that recruitment of sex partners into research and interventions is certainly possible (Grinstead, Comfort, McCartney, Koester, & Neilands, 2008; Leverentz, 2006) and that there is substantial HIV risk to female partners of incarcerated males (Grinstead et al., 2005). However, most of these studies have focused on the risks for adult female partners of incarcerated men. These studies could easily be redesigned and geared towards the risks for both male youth and their female partners.

Community-level interventions. In order to address the educational, employment, and housing needs of young men leaving jail, community-based interventions that help young people move from jail to the community should be expanded. Such interventions have proven effective in several different settings and resulted in lower rates of recidivism and less spending for local jurisdictions (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005).

Larger policy and structural-level interventions. Individual, partner, and community-level interventions should not detract from the larger problems of the massive expansion

of the criminal justice system (Mauer, 2006), race and gender inequality in multiple sectors (Hill Collins, 2004), and general poverty. Specific policies that prevent young men from engaging in school, qualifying for educational loans, obtaining employment, and securing permanent housing need to be revisited and revised. Such a change in policy would result in money saved for local governments, increased community cohesion, social justice, and fewer young people in jail.

Tables

Table 1. Variables of Interest Prior to Incarceration, by Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration, N=552

	Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration		
	Long-term partner only (N~113-130/ 20-24%)	Short-term partner only (N~113-115/ 20-21%)	Both long/short-term partners at same time (N~288-294/ 52-53%)
Variables of Interest Prior to Incarceration			
Age	Mean=18.05	Mean=17.96	Mean=18.01
Black	55%	59%	57%
Hispanic	40%	36%	37%
Previous arrests	Mean=4.60*	Mean=6.06	Mean=5.29
Not in school	70%	66%	67%
Ever held back	50%	50%	45%
Not employed	72%	80%	79%
Not living with parents	13%	10%	13%
Unstable living situation	2%	4%	2%
3+ sex partners	5% ^{*,†}	55%	56%
Inconsistent condom use	62% [†]	52% [‡]	78%
Sex while high	29% ^{*,†}	59% [‡]	73%
Drug/alcohol dependence	19%	23%	23%
Daily marijuana use	41% ^{*,†}	62%	60%
Any hard drug use	7%	9%	6%
Weapons possession	55% [†]	63%	69%
Any violent injury ^a	51%	57%	55%
Incarcerated for violent charges	32%	38%	38%

ANOVA comparisons, post-hoc test differences:

* Long-term partner only vs. Short-term partner only, $p \leq 0.05$

† Long-term partner only vs. Both long/short-term partners at same time, $p \leq 0.05$

‡ Short-term partner only vs. Both long/short-term partners at same time, $p \leq 0.05$

^aReduced base: Long-term partners only, N=37; Short-term partners only, N=30; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=96

Table 2. Variables of Interest One Year After Release from Jail, by Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration and One Year After Release from Jail, N=397

	Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration			Sex Partner Experience One Year After Release from Jail		
	Long-term partner only (N~73-91/ 18-23%)	Short-term partner only (N~66-79/ 17-20%)	Both long/short-term partners at same time (N~183-218/ 46-55%)	Long-term partner only (N~97-112/ 24-28%)	Short-term partner only (N~57-66/ 14-17%)	Both long/short-term partners at same time (N~108-125/ 27-31%)
Variables of Interest One Year After Release from Jail						
Age	Mean=19.70	Mean=19.54	Mean=19.62	Mean=19.67	Mean=19.51	Mean=19.61
Black	55%	59%	57%	55%	67%	54%
Hispanic	40%	36%	38%	40%	26%	39%
Days incarcerated	Mean=77.05	Mean=67.07	Mean=95.07	Mean=58.73	Mean=51.08	Mean=45.69
Randomized to intervention	48%	59% [‡]	46%	51%	52%	46%
Not in school	80%	78%	80%	81%	81%	81%
Not employed	78%	76%	78%	66% [*]	73%	78%
Not living with parents	37%	41%	38%	36%	27%	30%
Unstable living situation	22%	30%	24%	12% [*]	12%	21%
3+ sex partners	2%	1%	6%	1% ^{*,†}	8%	6%
Inconsistent condom use ^a	84%	83%	84%	100% [*]	94% [‡]	70%
Sex while high	69%	71%	71%	91% [†]	80% [‡]	59%
Drug/alcohol dependence	21%	23%	18%	16%	21%	19%
Daily marijuana use	23% [†]	32%	36%	28% ^{*,†}	42%	40%
Any hard drug use	10%	4% [‡]	15%	13%	6%	14%
Weapons possession	28%	28%	30%	23%	20%	32%
Any violent injury ^c	41%	48%	56%	61%	56%	42%
Rearrest	68%	68%	60%	62%	66%	70%
Went back to jail	49%	48%	47%	41%	35%	42%

ANOVA comparisons, post-hoc test differences:

* Long-term partner only vs. Short-term partner only, $p \leq 0.05$

† Long-term partner only vs. Both long/short-term partners at same time, $p \leq 0.05$

‡ Short-term partner only vs. Both long/short-term partners at same time, $p \leq 0.05$

^aReduced base for Sex partner experience prior to incarceration: Long-term partners only, N=49; Short-term partners only, N=35; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=134; Sex partner experience one year after release from jail: Long-term partners only, N=73; Short-term partners only, N=17; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=122

^bReduced base for Sex partner experience prior to incarceration: Long-term partners only, N=39; Short-term partners only, N=42; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=130; Sex partner experience one year after release from jail: Long-term partners only, N=34; Short-term partners only, N=44; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=124

^cReduced base for Sex partner experience prior to incarceration: Long-term partners only, N=22; Short-term partners only, N=29; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=57; Sex partner experience one year after release from jail: Long-term partners only, N=23; Short-term partners only, N=18; Both long/short-term partners at same time, N=36

Table 3. Sex, Drug, and Violence Outcomes Prior to Incarceration, by Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration, N=552

	OUTCOMES PRIOR TO INCARCERATION, OR (B)								
	3+ sex partners	Inconsistent condom use	Sex while high on drugs/alcohol	Drug/alcohol dependence	Daily marijuana use	Any hard drug use	Weapons possession during illegal acts	Any violent injury	Incarcerated for violent charge
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND CONTROLS PRIOR TO INCARCERATION									
Short-term partners only	25.53 (3.24)*	0.64 (-0.44)	3.42 (1.23)*	1.11 (0.11)	2.17 (0.77)**	1.03 (0.03)	1.22 (0.20)	1.42 (0.35)	1.35 (0.30)
Both long/short-term partners simultaneously	27.57 (3.32)*	2.05 (0.72)**	6.77 (1.91)*	1.25 (0.22)	2.17 (0.77)*	0.75 (-0.29)	1.72 (0.54)***	1.31 (0.27)	1.42 (0.35)
Age	0.89 (-0.11)	0.89 (-0.12)	1.02 (0.02)	0.86 (-0.16)	0.90 (-0.10)	1.58 (0.46)	0.92 (-0.08)	1.20 (0.18)	0.82 (-0.20)
Black	2.14 (0.76)	0.40 (-0.92)	1.22 (0.20)	0.68 (-0.39)	2.16 (0.77)	0.20 (-1.60)**	1.55 (0.44)	1.01 (0.01)	0.77 (-0.27)
Hispanic	2.42 (0.88)	0.50 (-0.68)	0.86 (-0.15)	1.01 (0.01)	1.84 (0.61)	0.33 (-1.12)	1.59 (0.46)	1.12 (0.11)	0.68 (-0.39)
Previous arrests	1.04 (0.04)***	0.99 (-0.01)	1.09 (0.09)*	1.01 (0.01)	1.08 (0.07)*	1.03 (0.03)	1.09 (0.08)*	1.02 (0.02)	0.98 (-0.02)
Not in school	1.61 (0.48)***	1.35 (0.30)	1.33 (0.29)	2.65 (0.98)*	1.37 (0.31)	1.49 (0.40)	1.10 (0.10)	1.60 (0.47)	0.60 (-0.51)**
Ever held back	0.97 (-0.03)	0.88 (-0.13)	1.22 (0.20)	1.05 (0.05)	1.19 (0.18)	2.09 (0.74)***	1.14 (0.13)	0.77(-0.29)	0.91 (-0.09)
Not employed	1.03 (0.03)	1.02 (0.02)	1.42 (0.35)	1.59 (0.46)	1.29 (0.26)	1.50 (0.41)	1.23 (0.21)	1.21 (0.19)	0.92 (-0.08)
Not living with parents	0.99 (-0.01)	2.05 (0.72)	1.60 (0.47)	0.78 (-0.25)	1.35 (0.30)	1.17(0.15)	0.87 (-0.14)	1.49 (0.40)	0.78 (-0.25)
Unstable living situation	.047 (-0.77)	0.64 (-0.45)	0.467 (-0.77)	3.41 (1.23)	1.90 (0.64)	1.63 (0.49)	0.88 (-0.13)	0.48 (-0.73)	1.60 (0.47)
Omnibus test of model coefficients χ^2 (p value)	136.46 (0.00)	37.53 (0.00)	94.50 (0.00)	29.86 (0.00)	45.81 (0.00)	20.57 (0.04)	28.75 (0.00)	5.31 (0.92)	18.16 (0.08)
Nagelkerke R2	0.31	0.10	0.23	0.09	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.05

*p<0.001, **p<0.01, ***p<0.05

Table 4. Sex, Drug, and Violence Outcomes One Year After Release From Jail, by Sex Partner Experience Prior to Incarceration, N=397

	OUTCOMES ONE YEAR AFTER RELEASE FROM JAIL, OR (B)									
	3+ sex partners	Inconsistent condom use	Sex while high on drugs/ alcohol	Drug/ alcohol dependence	Daily marijuana use	Any hard drug use	Weapons possession during illegal acts	Any violent injury	Rearrest	Went back to jail or a prison
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES PRIOR TO INCARCERATION, CONTROLS (EXCEPT AGE, RACE) ONE YEAR AFTER RELEASE FROM JAIL										
Short-term partners only	0.64 (-0.45)	1.19 (0.17)	2.10 (0.74)	1.07 (0.06)	1.97 (0.68)	0.58 (-0.54)	0.85 (-0.17)	1.75 (0.56)	0.74 (-0.30)	0.83 (-0.19)
Both long/short-term partners simultaneously	1.89 (0.64)	0.69 (-0.38)	1.30 (0.26)	0.81 (-0.21)	2.04 (0.71)***	2.21 (0.79)	1.04 (0.04)	1.65 (0.50)	0.96 (-0.04)	0.88 (-0.13)
Age	1.07 (0.07)	1.92 (0.65)***	1.75 (0.56)***	1.60 (0.47)	1.44 (0.37)	1.70 (0.53)	1.11 (0.10)	1.69 (0.53)	1.10 (0.10)	0.73 (-0.31)
Black	0.25 (-1.34)	0.59 (-0.53)	2.66 (0.98)	1.73 (0.55)	1.08 (0.07)	0.63 (-0.46)	0.56 (-0.59)	1.74 (0.55)	0.83 (-0.19)	0.50 (-0.69)
Hispanic	0.24 (-1.42)	0.56 (-0.59)	3.98 (1.38)	1.63 (0.49)	1.42 (0.35)	0.96 (-0.04)	0.89 (-0.11)	1.53 (0.43)	1.29 (0.25)	0.78 (-0.25)
Days incarcerated in last year	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (-0.00)	1.00 (-0.00)	1.00 (-0.00)**	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)**
Randomized to intervention	0.64 (-0.45)	1.11 (0.11)	0.86 (-0.15)	0.90 (-0.11)	0.84 (-0.18)	1.02 (0.02)	1.23 (0.21)	0.95 (-0.06)	0.79 (-0.24)	1.03 (0.03)
Not in school	1.60 (0.47)	0.55 (-0.60)	1.92 (0.65)	1.58 (0.46)	1.99 (0.69)***	0.89 (-0.12)	0.88 (-0.13)	1.46 (0.38)	1.62 (0.48)	2.13 (0.76)***
Not employed	5.20 (1.65)	0.67 (-0.40)	1.90 (0.64)	2.47 (0.90)	2.88 (1.06)**	1.41 (0.34)	0.98 (-0.02)	1.21 (0.19)	1.59 (0.46)	1.48 (0.39)
Not living with parents	0.39 (-0.93)	3.43E8 (19.65)	0.60 (-0.51)	0.45 (-0.80)	1.08 (0.08)	1.07 (0.06)	1.46 (0.38)	1.48 (0.39)	0.93 (-0.07)	1.74 (0.55)
Unstable living situation	0.00 (-17.65)	0.00 (-19.40)	1.52 (0.42)	2.43 (0.89)	0.70 (-0.36)	0.24 (-1.43)***	1.68 (0.52)	0.93 (-0.08)	2.73 (1.00)***	2.86 (1.05)***
Omnibus test of model coefficients χ^2 (p value)	18.07 (0.08)	15.12 (0.18)	15.68 (0.15)	14.31 (0.22)	39.66 (0.00)	21.29 (0.03)	20.92 (0.03)	8.07 (0.71)	19.20 (0.06)	67.73 (0.00)
Nagelkerke R2	0.19	0.13	0.12	0.08	0.16	0.12	0.09	0.11	0.08	0.25

*p<0.001, **p<0.01, ***p<0.05

Table 5. Sex, Drug, Violence Outcomes One Year After Release from Jail, by Sex Partner Experience, One Year After Release, N=397

	OUTCOMES ONE YEAR AFTER RELEASE FROM JAIL, OR (B)									
	3+ sex partners	Inconsistent condom use	Sex while high on drugs/ alcohol	Drug/ alcohol dependence	Daily marijuana use	Any hard drug use	Weapons possession during illegal acts	Any violent injury	Rearrest	Went back to jail or a prison
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND CONTROLS (EXCEPT AGE, RACE) ONE YEAR AFTER RELEASE FROM JAIL										
Short-term partners only	5.89 (1.77)	0.00 (-18.25)	0.35 (-1.04)	1.26 (0.23)	1.81 (0.59)	0.50 (-0.70)	0.99 (-0.02)	0.73 (-0.31)	1.05 (0.05)	0.90 (-0.11)
Both long/short-term partners simultaneously	4.29 (1.46)	0.00 (-20.12)	0.10 (-2.29)**	1.03 (0.03)	1.63 (0.49)	1.04 (0.04)	1.91 (0.65)***	0.40 (-0.91)	1.13 (0.12)	1.00 (-0.00)
Age	1.27 (0.24)	1.44 (0.36)	1.91 (0.65)**	1.51 (0.41)	1.67 (0.51)***	1.79 (0.58)	1.34 (0.29)	1.52 (0.42)	1.40 (0.34)	0.86 (-0.15)
Black	0.26 (-1.36)	0.44 (-0.82)	1.73 (0.55)	1.32 (0.28)	1.33 (0.28)	0.74 (-0.30)	0.51 (-0.67)	1.43 (0.36)	0.87 (-0.14)	0.55 (-0.61)
Hispanic	0.25 (-1.40)	0.43 (-0.86)	3.12 (1.14)	1.14 (0.13)	1.72 (0.54)	1.25 (0.22)	0.82 (-0.20)	1.65 (0.50)	1.01 (0.01)	0.61 (-0.50)
Days incarcerated in last year	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (-0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.01)*
Randomized to intervention	0.90 (-0.10)	0.94 (-0.07)	0.78 (-0.24)	0.78 (-0.25)	0.95 (-0.06)	1.34 (0.29)	1.06 (0.05)	1.41 (0.34)	0.79 (-0.24)	1.14 (0.13)
Not in school	1.19 (0.18)	0.54 (-0.61)	1.59 (0.47)	1.59 (0.46)	2.13 (0.76)***	0.82 (-0.20)	1.08 (0.07)	1.58 (0.46)	1.46 (0.38)	1.80 (0.59)
Not employed	4.29 (1.46)	0.81 (-0.21)	1.61 (0.47)	2.51 (0.92)	2.64 (0.97)**	1.49 (0.40)	0.94 (-0.06)	1.41 (0.34)	1.48 (0.39)	1.23 (0.21)
Not living with parents	0.50 (-0.70)	3.01E8 (19.52)	0.42 (-0.86)	0.47 (-0.79)	1.07 (0.07)	0.94 (-0.06)	1.60 (0.47)	1.70 (0.53)	1.01 (0.01)	1.94 (0.66)
Unstable living situation	0.00 (-17.90)	0.00 (-19.06)	2.56 (0.94)	1.89 (0.64)	1.04 (0.04)	0.24 (-1.44)	1.47 (0.39)	0.61(-0.50)	5.95 (1.78)**	7.46 (2.01)*
Omnibus test of model coefficients χ^2 (p value)	14.22 (0.22)	44.52 (0.00)	32.32 (0.00)	10.73 (0.47)	27.11 (0.00)	12.40 (0.33)	19.32 (0.06)	6.61 (0.83)	25.72 (0.01)	80.96 (0.00)
Nagelkerke R2	0.18	0.35	0.23	0.07	0.13	0.09	0.10	0.12	0.13	0.35

*p<0.001, **p<0.01, ***p<0.05

Chapter 4. Alternative Paths to Masculinity among Young Men in an Urban Alternatives-to-Incarceration Program

Abstract

This study examines non-traditional notions of masculinity among young men in an alternatives-to-incarceration program in New York City by analyzing focus group data collected from a study of 38 men. This chapter utilizes urban ethnographic studies of masculinity and theory on progressive masculinities and crime as a framework for analyzing findings. Interestingly, the young men in this study define their own masculinity primarily as supporting family, but emphasize caretaking and maintenance of the household as part of “being a real man” – skills they learn from women in their families. They also discuss roles of fathers and children, being there for kids emotionally, physically, and recognizing children’s autonomy. Finally the men in this study talk about masculinity in terms of love received and love given in the context of family and community. The findings from this study illustrate to some degree notions of a progressive masculinity and lead to suggestions for improving outcomes for young men involved in alternatives-to-incarceration programs.

Introduction

Researchers consistently show that young people with criminal justice histories engage in higher levels of risky sexual behavior, drug use, and violence (Canterbury et al., 1995; DiClemente et al., 1991; Morris et al., 1995, Teplin et al., 2005) than their peers. To make matters worse, a large percentage of youth are often at an educational and employment disadvantage when they leave correctional facilities (Freudenberg 2005).

Social scientists (Aronson et al., 2003; Cloward & Ohlin, 1966; Messerschmidt, 1993) question whether a particular kind of masculinity contributes to poor health choices, criminal activity, and lack of social functioning.

Traditional models of masculinity – with an emphasis on patriarchal family structure, non-egalitarian gender relations and roles, toughness, and domination over women – are decidedly a bad thing in the changing norms of our society and economy, defined by new immigration patterns and increasing opportunities for women. Indeed traditional models of masculinity may be related to high-risk behavior for both men and women (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1995; Fiorentino, Berger, & Ramirez, 2007; Keung, 2005; Pleck & O'Donnell, 2001; Smith, 2006). According to several researchers and cultural theorists, poor, urban men of color tend to endorse these traditional models of masculinity, though often they enact a more violent version of this masculinity (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1995). Some of these same researchers also suggest that “masculine” values such as identification with the community, identity as a breadwinner, and the maintenance of stable families may be associated with positive outcomes (Anderson, 2000; Aronson et al., 2003). Even if there are two versions of masculinity available to poor, urban, young men (e.g., violent street-based masculinity versus breadwinner masculinity), the latter version of masculinity is extremely hard to achieve in a bad economy fraught with classism and racism – and even harder with a criminal record. Additionally both types of masculinity may reinforce patriarchal family structures and non-egalitarian gender relations and roles (hooks, 2004; Neal, 2004). This chapter explores an alternative more complex view of manhood among young men involved in the criminal justice system,

which includes masculinity learned from women, less patriarchal attitudes about childrearing, and a discourse on love.

Masculinity Among Poor, Urban, Young Men of Color in Prior Fieldwork-Based Studies

Although none of the prior fieldwork-based studies reviewed here (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995; Smith, 2006) focused solely on young men with criminal justice involvement, participants resemble the urban youth in the current study, both demographically and geographically. By reviewing prior research on this subject, I illuminate the ways that masculinity is traditionally discussed in social science research. One common thread in research on masculinity among urban young men is the link between masculinity and respect. Generally speaking, in the context of poverty, a bad economy, and discrimination based on race and immigration status, urban, young men of color often struggle to achieve financial respect in their communities (Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995; Smith, 2006). As Bourgois demonstrates with drug sellers in Harlem, these young men lack the social capital to navigate the limited number of low skill and low wage “legit” jobs available in white collar markets. They also lack the bureaucratic skills needed to hold down such a job, like getting a driver’s license or applying for necessary permits. However, these men possess the social capital required to navigate the underground markets in their own urban communities, which secures them limited financial resources. More importantly they garner respect from their families, peers, and communities through expressions of domination, power, and in some cases, giving back to the community.

Researchers also explore the relationship between masculinity and money. Financial resources are immensely important in a culture that is on the one hand tied up in consumerism and on the other restricting access to legitimate sources of income for poor, urban, racial and ethnic minorities (Merton, 1938; Young, 1999). But money is not just about consumerism – young men in these studies express a strong desire to care for families (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005). In a post-industrial environment where jobs are scarce, men travel farther away from families for work (if there is work available), and welfare policies make marriage and earning money prohibitive (Anderson, 2000; Stack, 1975). Yet poor, urban men of color consistently say they want to provide for families and usually take action to achieve these goals, even if it is done illegally or through work deemed illegitimate by mainstream society.

Another theme that surfaces in fieldwork-based studies on masculinity is the desire for women and sexual conquests. As Barker (2005) found in an international study of masculinity: “We heard typical and predictable stories about what it meant to them [Brazilian youth in favelas] to be men: having sex and finding a job were the two main responses. It was easier to have sex, they said.” This is not the only reason having sex with women is tied to masculinity – but in the context of differential opportunity systems, getting women is the most attainable goal.

Finally researchers characterize masculinity as a set of new “codes” – that is patterns of values, speech, and overall demeanor in urban environments (Anderson, 2000; Majors & Billson, 1992). Anderson speaks to the same issues of post-industrial poverty, which

includes out-migration patterns and urbanization policies, restructuring of housing developments and resistance to the dominant culture that Bourgois and many other subcultural studies scholars address (Cohen, 1972; Hall, 1990; Hebdige, 1981). As a result of these trends, new “codes” emerge – a “Set of prescriptions and proscriptions or informal rules of behavior organized around a desperate search for respect that governs public social relations, especially violence among so many residents, particularly young men and women” (Anderson, 2000). Separate from behavior and more akin to the issue of style that emerges in subcultural studies (Hall, 1990), Majors and Billson (1992) describe how Black males in America create a “cool pose,” which allows them to be cool under pressure, exhibit detachment, and have poise in tense situations.

What does all this subcultural expression mean for the embodiment of masculinity? The search for respect occurs in the context of restriction from mainstream avenues of success and financial gain. It’s ultimately about securing capital. Second, learning and identity formation around masculinity happens independently of women. The majority of these studies describe how young poor or working class men create these new subcultures of cool, and women only play a supporting role in this identity formation. Finally, men in these studies perceive themselves to be the sole providers for family with little regard for the woman’s role, which is ultimately a patriarchal notion they inherit from the parent culture and previous generations.

Rethinking Masculinity

The starting point for this chapter is bell hooks' (2004) call for understanding alternative non-stereotypical views of masculinity among Black men, in particular. She argues against "the more mainstream writing about Black masculinity that continues to push the notion that all Black men need to do to survive is to become better patriarchs." Athena Mutua (2006) points out that "masculinity as domination" (or patriarchy) is indeed reinforced by several larger social structures – the economy, government, the family, and the criminal justice system. But these same structures have only oppressed men of color in America. Patricia Hill Collins (2006) charges that if men of color reject social norms that celebrate traditional gender roles for men (i.e., playing the provider) – roles that they have difficulty achieving in this economy and society – only then can they begin to heal from the damage that has been done to them.

Collins argues for a distinction between dominance and strength in defining more "progressive masculinities." Although she refers specifically to Black masculinity, the research agenda she poses can be applied to any oppressed group, based on race/ethnicity, immigration status, or criminal justice history. To paraphrase Collins (2006) and define progressive masculinity: How can men craft a progressive masculinity that isn't based on dominance and exploitation of others? How can a progressive masculinity that isn't grounded in dominance help men develop affirming social relations with children, partners, family, and peers? What strategies can help men redefine notions of strength within progressive masculinities? The current study seeks to address some of these questions.

Mark Anthony Neal (2004) says that the ultimately we need to embrace a “New Black Man” that is grounded in resisting a “wide range of forces and finding a comfort with a progressive existence as a Black man in America.” Researchers have also found that Latino immigrants tend to abandon more traditional models of masculinity in new waves of immigration to the United States (Smith, 2006; Taylor & Behnke, 2005), although perceived cultural and familial pressures often make this difficult. A progressive approach to redefining masculinity could have implications for the men themselves, their partners, children, and the community. bell hooks wonders whether Black men, in particular, would see better outcomes in their lives if they were freed from these social constraints on their manhood. She argues that if Black men were encouraged to communicate, express their feelings, show love, feel love, and express insecurity, they might overcome some of the disadvantages they face. Barker (2005) also finds that there is immense pressure for young men, both Black and Latino, to conform to certain standards of toughness and financial prowess by any means necessary. By meeting these standards, poor minority men often get themselves in trouble – through violence and with the law. Barker argues that exploring alternative ideas about masculinity (which some of his participants express) could be effective in violence prevention and health promotion.

Barker says that men of color experience disproportionately high rates of homicide, violence, traffic accidents, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections. All of these outcomes are related to how young men are socialized, not any biological or genetic deficits (Barker, 2005). Indeed, others have traced the history of violence in poor, urban

neighborhoods and the evolution of masculinity “scripts” that perpetuate this violence (Canada, 1996). Therefore, targeted programs that address gender socialization and the social context in which violence, disadvantage, and disease occur, might lead to improved outcomes.

Though most of the theory on progressive masculinity addresses the experience of Black men in America, the theory may be applicable to any oppressed group of men. The fieldwork-based studies about Black and Latino men are ultimately stories of men trying to gain respect amidst multiple avenues of oppression. Both Black and Latino young men in these studies seem to experience the same kinds of marginalization in the work place, struggles to “prove” themselves in an economy where they cannot be breadwinners, and high rates of incarceration (Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995; Mauer, 2006).

The current study is also an attempt to respond to a popular theory attributing “hyper-masculinity” – that is behavior characterized by the overcompensation of males (i.e., males who are violent, domineering) – to child-rearing in female-headed households. In other words, boys respond to the lack of a male role model by acting out in hyper-masculine ways. Such notions stem from policy reports like the Moynihan report on the Black family (United States Department of Labor, 1965) to broader theories on crime and family. Miller (1958) argues that because males are usually absent from the structure of poor families, a network of female kin usually supports the family while the adolescent male “street corner group” provides youth with the opportunity to develop male roles

according to the values of the “lower class culture,” for example toughness and thrill-seeking. However, Cloward and Ohlin (1966) dispute this notion that delinquent subcultures are determined by masculinity or by “lower class culture.” In fact, there may be benefits to growing up in female-headed households, such as the adoption of androgynous sex roles and healthy gender role development (Ellis & Russell, 1991), child-rearing in a large and supportive kinship network (Stack, 1975), and freedom from pressure for males to be sole providers for a family, especially when males are incarcerated and rendered incapable of being sole financial providers in some cases (Fainsod Katzenstein & Lyndon Shanley, 2008).

Thinking about the interplay between social conditions, criminal justice history, and masculinity, this chapter attempts to re-envision a more progressive masculinity for poor, urban men of color involved in the correctional system. There may be benefits for understanding and encouraging even a discourse of progressive alternative paths to masculinity among poor, urban men of color (Barker, 2005; hooks, 2004; Neal, 2004) for health promotion and improved social outcomes, such as family involvement and criminal justice records.

In summary, there is significant research about masculinity among poor, urban minority men. But most studies confirm a more stereotypical view of masculinity – being a provider as a primary goal for these young men. These studies also tend to ignore the influence of women on masculinity. Recently, researchers (Collins, 2006; Kimmel, 2006; Mutua, 2006; Neal, 2004) have begun to reframe a progressive masculinity for men

of color. Though most of this work addresses the plight of Black men in America, the ideas can be applied to any oppressed group, Black or Latino, and those with criminal justice involvement. As some theorize, there may be benefits for analyzing and promoting an alternative discourse on masculinity among a disadvantaged group of young men, for example for health promotion interventions. These theories of an alternative discourse around masculinity have seldom been examined in fieldwork (Barker, 2004). In this chapter alternative narratives about masculinity are explored with young men in focus groups at an alternatives-to-incarceration program, in order to develop a discourse about how young men with criminal justice histories can use these alternative paths of masculinity to stay out of trouble. The research questions addressed in this chapter are: 1) How do young men recently released from jail/prison, and currently in an alternatives-to-incarceration program, define manhood? 2) Are there alternative narratives about what it means to be a *real man*, or discussions that go beyond traditional notions of manhood? 3) How can these alternative voices improve outcomes for young men involved in the correctional system?

Data procedures and analysis are described in Chapter 2.

Results

Participants

All participants were male. Twenty-one (55.3%) participants were Black; 14 were Latino (36.8%); three were White or Other (7.9%). The median age of participants was 21, and ages ranged from 18-54. For all clients in the alternatives-to-incarceration program,

(there were 323 at the time of this study), the median age was 21, and ages ranged from 16-57 – so the sample was fairly representative of the population. One-quarter of participants in this study were incarcerated one year or more, and among them the average time spent behind bars was 4.6 years. According to records for all clients in the alternatives-to-incarceration program, 10.8% of clients (those reporting incarceration for one year or more) had been incarcerated on average for 5.2 years. Although the agency only collects data on incarceration history for one year or more, participants in this study reported incarcerations anywhere from 24 hours to a few days to a few months or years. All clients in this alternatives-to-incarceration program had been in jail for at least one day, with rare exceptions. In addition, most were first-time felony offenders with few prior arrests or incarcerations (most had charges for weapons possessions, robberies, and drug possessions/sales).

What it Means to be a “Real Man”

To contextualize responses and the “alternative” approaches to manhood, below I provide an overview of how the participants in this study defined manhood, organized by the most common definitions as well as the priority of definitions. For example, if nine participants said being a man was about paying the bills, but only five men said it was about taking care of kids, I classified paying the bills as the most common definition. Second, when a participant said being a man was about getting a job, putting food on the table, and taking responsibility for kids, I asked the participant to tell me what was the most important part of that definition to determine priority.

The most common definition of what it means to be a real man, in addition to the definition of highest priority, was supporting and caring for one's family. Participants defined family generally in this order – children, the mother of a man's children, their own mothers (or parents), grandmothers, sex partners, and close friends. Financial resources, even if obtained illegally (part of “doing what you gotta do”), made the first goal of supporting and caring for family possible. Third, taking care of kids was important, and not just financially. Several of the men expressed the importance of meeting the physical and emotional needs of their children. The fourth most common response was taking care of household responsibilities. While this was not a number one priority for anyone, it was still important. Participants defined household responsibilities as cooking and cleaning – “Making sure everything around the house is nice and dandy,” in the words of one participant. Other responses had to do with individual responsibility for actions, self-confidence, and taking care of female partners, mostly for love but also sex.

In order to explore some of the themes above, but with a focus on non-stereotypical views of masculinity, I divided the results below into the following categories: masculinity as taught by mothers; children and masculinity; and love and masculinity. I also briefly addressed how the participants talked about the effect of incarceration on manhood. Though participants' primary definitions of masculinity conform to more traditional notions, examining their conversations illuminates some differences.

Learning to be a Man from Mom

Researchers have documented that poor minority families are often headed by females (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006; Stack, 1975). It is no surprise then that children can learn masculinity from women. As I have said earlier, single-parent families have been cast as deficient, and even as producing a violent or domineering type of masculinity. Yet when participants in this study talked about where a guy learns to be a man, they spoke about this learning in a way that is starkly different:

Brian: I learned how to be a man from my mother. She had me doing manly things to prepare me for the world. Doing the laundry, giving me responsibilities to go pay this, go buy groceries, giving me responsibilities to cook, clean, take care of stuff that a man would do for himself if he didn't have no woman around. My mother always prepared me – I need you to be a man cause I may not always be here. So she showed me certain things about how to be a man, do this and that. And that's how most men learn.

Brian, a 25-year-old Black man, was generally soft-spoken but quick to point out his opinions. Given his extremely large stature (he was easily over six feet), it was ironic that he defined “manly things” as taking care of the home, cooking and cleaning. Second, his description was more about self-sufficiency than a strict gender-based interpretation of “manly” responsibilities. Nevertheless Brian still described self-sufficiency in the context of not having a woman around to do this work. Brian started this conversation by saying first, that a boy could learn how to be a man from a grandfather, father, or even an older cousin – all male figures. A lot of participants started the conversation this way, by pointing to male figures as a source of where a person learns about manhood. But when pressed for exact role models in a man’s life, like Brian, several of the participants noted that if he [father, grandfather, or other men] isn’t around, then you learn from your mother.

In a separate focus group, four men had a very similar conversation about learning those “manly” household tasks as part of manhood. Sean, a quiet and slight Black male, aged 21, started the conversation:

Sean: My father was in my life, in and out though. So I had my mother and my stepfather. I used to have to watch my little brother when she was at work. Had to make em something to eat when they came home from school. Had to take care of em, bathe em at night. I had to know how to fix the game box. Take em to the store.

Sean gave this response when asked how his mother taught him to be a man. This conversation followed yet another participant brainstorming about the kind of men who could teach a guy to be a man – father, grandfather, uncle, guy on the street. Then Brandon, who joined in on the conversation below, said, well not for nothing, but my mom taught me how to be a man. Bill, a 54-year-old Black man interjected:

Bill: My mother she had a hand in everything. Just like when you say your mom showed you how to cook that’s being a man right there. Don’t have to worry about someone doing something else for you. She pays the bills. My pops gives her the money so she can pay the bills. But seeing her take responsibility for certain things that shows me that you know all those responsibilities they share I could hold those responsibilities.

There it is again – learning how to cook – “that’s being a man right there.” It was so interesting that both Bill and Brian actually used the words *man* and *manly* to describe basic household tasks like cooking and cleaning. This seems completely non-stereotypical, with respect to gender roles (by referring to how cooking is “being a man right there”), except that Bill couched this in terms of his dad giving his mom the money to pay bills. But in the last sentence about responsibilities, Bill demonstrates that he respects his mom’s responsibilities by saying that it gave him confidence to carry out some of those same tasks. It is also worth noting that Bill said his father’s primary role was to check up on his schoolwork and punish him if he misbehaved. But as he said, his

mom had a hand in everything. In response to this, Brandon offered the following account of his childhood and learning to be a man:

Brandon: My pops took the easy way out. See that's how I know what being a man is not. You know? Like instead of really being there for my moms he pretty much left my mom, but I couldn't see my moms doing all that herself. So that's when I saw that I had to be the father figure to my three little brothers. So I started doing things I wasn't supposed to do for the man responsibilities, like selling drugs, pretty much nothing to be good in life. I couldn't sit around and see my brothers wanting cause my moms can't do what they want. So I'm gonna go out there and do what I gotta do.

Author: What other things did you have to do?

Brandon: Maybe cook, maybe take em to school, maybe clean. My moms got to get the rent up, you know what I'm saying?

Brandon, a good looking, well-built Black man of 25, had a commanding presence in the room. He wasn't afraid to speak his mind or engage with the others. He explained that he learned to be a man by example, from the absence of his father. For Brandon and some of the others part of becoming a man and doing the work of caring for siblings was about necessity, including acquiring financial resources, even if through illegal means. For the participants in this study, selling drugs, robbery, or engaging in any illegal activity to get money was always about getting financial resources. Only one participant in all of the groups said it may have been about "being cool," but this was in the context of learning that it's cool from television and the media. When asked if selling drugs was ever about being cool, all the other respondents said no. Rather, it was quick and easy money, and would help contribute to the family's income. As for the necessity to raise siblings, one participant said he had to play the role of a parent because of his mother's drug use.

Unlike the other participants, Brandon framed his role as a “father figure.” The others at least did not express this gendered role when discussing their responsibilities for siblings. Brandon not only assumed the role as provider, but also as caretaker. Interestingly, he also points to his mother’s role at the end of the passage as financial provider – being the one who has to “get the rent up.” Whether or not this was officially a single-parent household, it was certainly a household with at least two caretakers and two providers.

In all of the conversations about how these household responsibilities were part of learning to be a man, generally speaking, none of the other participants ever objected or asked for clarification. On one occasion when a young man said it was important to make the home “nice and dandy,” a couple of participants chuckled. But the young man pressed on. As noted earlier, when I asked the participants where they learned to be a man, usually they brainstormed male figures that might be in their lives. But I came to expect that someone in each group would eventually talk about his mother – and the participants legitimated that expectation. Though only a few participants lamented the absence of their fathers, with the exception of Brandon, three of the agency group facilitators I spoke with said this was a recurring theme in their own skills-building sessions. Agency group facilitators said that often the young men would aspire to be better than their own fathers – an aspiration consistent across racial/ethnic and economic categories in other studies (Kimmel, 2008; Taylor & Behnke, 2005).

These young men seem to feel a good deal of insecurity about being able to take care of siblings and a mother. Although this theme came out only with Brandon, agency group

facilitators said clients frequently worried about how they were going to keep up the apartment, help take care of their siblings, and ensure they could still pay rent at the end of the month. Typically, children are not on the lease for apartments and are given little agency, especially in public housing in New York City. If for some reason the rent is not collected, the family is at risk of losing the apartment, and it is highly likely that kids will be dispersed through the foster care system. One agency group facilitator said this causes tremendous anxiety for older siblings in the family who are trying to hold the house together. And if an adult or even an adolescent gets a drug conviction in New York City (which many of the alternatives-to-incarceration program participants have experienced) they are no longer allowed to live with family in public housing and subsequently cannot take care of the family.

Other women, like partners, figured less prominently into the conversation about manhood. A few young men in different focus groups said that partners could be a good influence if they helped you stay on track and out of trouble. An equal number of men said partners could be a bad influence because of the financial demands they placed on participants, not just for material items, but also for supporting a family. These discussions did not consistently support or refute findings in Chapter 3.

Children and Manhood

When describing how they learned to be men from their mothers, participants generally referred to caretaking responsibilities for siblings. They also talked in the *past* tense. But when they talked about their own children, the men generally spoke about the future or

the present, and the language of caretaking tasks was absent. It's likely that some of the respondents did not have kids yet, although at least 25 out of 38 participants (65.8%) reported having children. With this slight distinction in language, I began to notice a difference in past experience versus expectations for how things should be in the future.

Family and children (or siblings) figured prominently into the men's definitions of manhood. When talking about kids, the participants returned to this focus on being a good provider or support system. But they were clear about "support" not just being financial. Frankie, a soft-spoken and introspective Latino man aged 21, gave the following example:

Frankie: My definition of a real man is like someone who is responsible for his actions, responsible for his own decisions, making his own decisions. If he brought a kid into this world, taking care of that child. First and foremost is emotional support, like not having an image around the kids – "Oh I'm daddy, daddy don't do this." Cause kids don't set boundaries on the love they want...Cause if you don't got it [money] you don't got it. But love is always there.

In the way that Frankie talks about "providing" for his kids, he is primarily concerned with providing love if all else fails, as well as the ability to provide financial support.

Frankie is also someone who spent four years of his late adolescence/early adulthood in prison. This experience rendered him incapable of providing financial support for a child during that period of time (he has a child of about 4-5 years old). Perhaps it is this experience that leads him to place emphasis on love and emotional support. On the other hand, it is unclear whether this notion of being an emotional provider, not just a form of financial support to kids, is something the program staff engrained in the participants. However, as seen in other research, it would not be surprising to hear young men of child-rearing age talking about a desire to support children (Barker, 2005).

The next passages, which came up in two separate focus groups, revisit this issue of supporting children. Dennis, a Black male, aged 21, said the following about the future, in the context of answering a general question about “What kind of man do you want to be?”:

Dennis: When I do have kids, I want to be the type of man whose kids can look back on what I did and say, Yo this dude was this...besides financially just being there. If you there financially you giving child support but not there. To be there physically – as long as you come through on the weekend, let's go here there or you know what I'm saying. Just somebody your kids can talk to when kids have problems.

Dennis talked about the importance of being physically present, which he defined here as “coming through” on the weekends. His expectations of childrearing (he isn't a father yet) are that of someone who doesn't live with the mother of the child. In this passage, Dennis distinguished parental involvement from just financial support and emphasized physical presence in the child-father relationship. He also discussed being the kind of parent that kids can just talk to if they have problems, which refers back to emotional support. This sentiment is exactly (down to the words) what Neal (2004) describes as a progressive masculinity, with an emphasis on the emotional and physical aspects of fathering.

Raymond, an older Latino man, spoke about physical presence of fathers as well, but also pointed to traditional notions of being a provider:

Raymond: A real man is the one that comes home whatever he does. He takes care of his bills. He don't have to buy \$190 sneakers. Take one day in the park and chase after Mr. Softee [the ice cream truck], you know what I mean? Attend all the graduation things like that – that's a man.

Here, Raymond refers explicitly to paying the bills, but the bulk of this passage is about physical presence in a child's life. Although Raymond spoke about children in the present tense, he is a 45-year-old man with seven children and could have spoken about past experience with his kids. He is also a man that was hesitant to tell me how long he had been incarcerated in his life, feeling embarrassed about the length of time. Raymond responded with the passage above when I asked him the following: "You said that part of being a man is dealing with the negative stuff. Is that something that's different from when you were younger? Did that change at a certain point in your life?" Given that his response to this question was about children (above), it is possible that these ideas came after some time of reflection on negative occurrences in his life, especially his incarceration history.

In addition to talking about emotional and physical demands of childrearing, two young men in one of the focus groups discussed the roles of children in the family. When I asked J.C, a 22-year-old Latino man to give me his definition of a real man, he said that a real man holds his family together. I then asked him if it was ok for someone else, not a man, to hold the family together:

J.C.: It's a partnership between family – a man, woman, and the children. And the children play their part as they grow up. So they can learn. My nephew since I watched him growing up is that they started to play a role as they get older. It's not just me telling em what to do. Everybody plays a role. Of coming together.

What is notable here, is the hierarchy in family. J.C. framed the family as an entity in which all members, including kids, were on equal footing, at least in terms of playing a role in the family. In contrast, the traditional head-of-household role for males is fairly consistent in the literature on Latino immigrants in the United States (Smith, 2004;

Taylor & Behnke, 2005). It is also curious that J.C. described this awareness of a child's role by pointing to his nephew as an example, considering he himself has a school-aged daughter. It is possible he didn't speak from experience with his daughter because his nephew was a more constant figure in his life. In the same conversation with J.C. above, Bobby added:

Bobby: I think a real man has to express all his different sides so that his children or the other family he's raising can see that there is many ways to be as opposed to just following all the time. And you show em all the different facets – personalities – so kids who are coming up, they see that and not be afraid to show a little bit of themselves too.

Here Bobby also speaks to the hierarchy in the family. He rejects the notion that kids (or anyone else) should be “followers.” Bobby says kids should not be afraid of revealing their personalities, something that bell hooks (2004) says Black men are generally not encouraged to do. Finally, Bobby says that it's perfectly acceptable to take care of children, even if they are from other families and he is helping to raise them.

The most striking thing about the way the participants in this study talked about children (even their own children) was that they talked in terms of expectation, not necessarily experience. When the men talked about raising siblings in the previous section, they spoke about specific experiences and caretaking tasks. Though when they talk in terms of expectation, it is unclear if they are repeating what they learned at the agency. Nevertheless, the agency still provides a safe space to at least have this discourse.

After speaking with an agency group facilitator who leads the parenting groups at the agency, she explained that the expectations of fatherhood presented here (the “shoulds”) was likely a gap between what the young men *want* to do and what they actually *can* do.

She said that because the men were explaining these expectations they could have been demonstrating to me: “Here, let me show you that I understand what being a good father is like.” She also said that she is sure most of these men would love to be the parent who shows up to parent-teacher meetings. But several of the agency group facilitators I spoke with said that the young men face extraordinary barriers to parental involvement – their youth and inexperience, the pull of the street, conflict with custodial parents, not being able to have a job or engage with school, and criminal justice involvement.

Love and Masculinity

bell hooks (2004) and Barker (2005) argue that poor men of color (hooks refers explicitly to Black men) aren't taught to love themselves, rarely have examples of familial configurations in which married couples show love and respect for each other, and as a result, don't always experience love themselves. Even one of the agency group facilitators said that when discussing how to show love to children, some of the young men just don't have the tools or experience with their own fathers. Given this background, I wanted to present some passages in which the participants discussed love in their lives.

Rick, a Black man in his late 20s, reflected on how so much of his experiences of *doing* masculinity as a younger man were reactive and about having to prove his manhood. In Rick's focus group, three out of the four participants engaged in a discussion about how especially in jail, physical space had to be defended to prevent clothes, food, and phone minutes from getting stolen. One of the younger participants said that getting a black eye

in jail was nothing, if it meant keeping his clothes. At the end of the day, the black eye would go away, but to have pride intact and minimize emotional pain was much more important. When I asked Rick what would help him heal emotional pain, for example, he talked about violence:

Rick: It's the way we express our anger. Some people paint, some people ride a bike, some people box. We don't have all those luxuries where we from. [Another participant interrupted and said, Some people have guns and knives.] They infest us with drugs, they put liquor stores all over the place. There's nothing to do. There's a park up the block, but you can't be there after a certain time. We pay taxes and we can't stand outside.

I included this excerpt both as a demonstration of how these men talk about options for resolving emotional pain, and as background for how Rick thinks about expressing emotion in the street compared with expressing emotion with loved ones. Rick said about his child:

Rick: As a father now, it's so much more different.

Author: How is it different, in terms of your masculinity and having to prove stuff?

Rick: Well like you're always at an, you're always vulnerable with your children. There isn't a wall you know? They open to you and you're open to them. They see the mood swings and the mood changes and they alter their moods. There's no guard. It's a totally unconditional relationship where that love is something back and forth.

I presented these two passages to show the contrast in how Rick talks about the love he receives from his community compared to his child (he has one child with a long-term trusted partner). He says he is vulnerable to his children. Given that he talked about having to prove himself in jail and on the street, he's vulnerable to those settings, too.

The difference though is that amidst the vulnerability with children, there is mutual love, compared with an emotional “guard” when dealing with other institutions.

In thinking about love, especially bell hooks' (2004) assertion that Black men aren't shown love by White men and women, Black women, or other institutions and society, there is a small window of opportunity for children to be able to show love to men. As Rick says, men can show love to children in return without feeling insecure about the vulnerabilities that come with showing love. He also said that after years with his current partner and shedding that sense of having to prove himself, he was able to love her "better."

Other participants also talked about love and the responsibility of showing love. When asked for his definition of a real man, Jamal, a 25-year-old Black man said the following:

Jamal: If you a real man you live your life for people who care about you. A real man ain't scared to love nobody. You gotta show love to the people who care about you. Even though how old he may get or how grown he think he is, remember if it wasn't for that lady or that man he wouldn't be here. Take em out, go home for Sunday dinner every once in awhile. Catch up with them every once in awhile.

Author: How does a real man show love to his wife?

Jamal: Be there for her. When she's stressed be there for her. Support her, spend time with her, and take her out. Let her know that you still care.

Jamal does not have a wife, and didn't indicate whether he has a long-term partner. It is interesting that he said, "A real man ain't scared to love nobody." Is this an ideal? Is this expectation or experience? Jamal did not indicate whether he did this in practice or whether this was the "right" thing to do. Two of the young men in another focus group questioned the use of the term "real man." They said that it was problematic because who's to say what's "real?" They thought they could offer descriptions of what it meant to be a "decent" man. Perhaps that is what Jamal is getting at – what it means to be a

decent man. This expectation is different from what Rick describes above, which would be categorized more as experience with love.

Participants were very consistent about their *expectations* for how to love a woman, particularly a long-term partner (the men never talked about homosexual relationships, except for an isolated homophobic comment, perhaps a drawback of data collection through focus groups). When talking about relationships the participants echoed Jamal's statements about caring for a wife or long-term partner: be there for her, take her out, chill with her, make her feel loved. Plenty of the men discussed short-term relationships outside of the relationships with their main partners, but the kind of language presented above was only associated with main partners – not short-term relationships or affairs. The men felt much less responsible to the women in short-term relationships or affairs, for example with gift-giving, time spent with partners, and overall loyalty. It is unclear whether these short-term partnerships represent any greater risk or instability in the young men's lives – casual sex partnerships were not related to elevated health or social risk based on findings in Chapter 2.

Another important aspect of love was its role in the reentry process. In thinking of helping young men with incarceration histories, supportive families and other resources (participants consistently pointed to how helpful the alternatives-to-incarceration program was) helped make for a successful transition from jail to community. When asked who would help a person snap out of the harmful jail mentality upon reentry, one young man talked about people who “care for you.”

Greg: Even if you in jail and you come out, you got family that cares for you. They tell you like what happened in jail, all right, you gotta realize that it won't happen again...It could be a friend that you knew before you got locked up in jail or it could be [Another participant said: your parents, your brother, your sister] or sometimes it could be your bunk partner, the guy that been there for 30 years and you got five and you coming out. And he's telling you, "Yo I'm an old head. I been here 30 years. Yo – don't be back here! Don't be back here, do the right thing!"

Greg, a Black 19-year-old with a kind demeanor and short stature, lamented about how difficult it might be to return home. The men in this particular conversation said that it's hard to transition from defending your space "24/7" and living in a tiny jail cell to coming back to the community. What's interesting about this passage (whether it's a demonstration of love or not) is that men seem to rely on individuals who nudge them along through the process, at least with words of encouragement. During this same conversation Jamal echoed this sentiment and said that you might have somebody tell you, "Stay in school, man. Do what you gotta do. Stay away from the people that get caught up." Although it is unclear if Greg and Jamal are referring to actual experiences above, all the participants in the group agreed with this conversation, suggesting that it may indeed be based on experience.

In discussing how the alternatives-to-incarceration program was helpful, especially in showing love, Carlos, a thoughtful 19-year-old Latino man, described the staff in the following way:

Carlos: They talk to you like, you know, give you that little bit of courage. You know that you don't get. You know some people don't get love at home, [the agency] shows you that [love].

Author: And how do you think the agency shows you love, what are some ways?

Carlos: Just that they tell you. They tell you. "You sure you going back to jail, you know that right? I don't want to see you go back to jail." Just like that. You have somebody

that cares for you. You ain't have nobody before tell you that I don't want you to go to jail. When that money's coming in and they see that money, they want to be your best friend. They don't care you the one out there selling drugs. You getting the money. As long as they get some of that money they don't care.

Carlos speaks of a specific set of experiences here. One interesting aspect of this passage is the extent to which a community-based agency can show encouragement and love, while providing direct services. Just as Rick discussed the set of institutions that don't demonstrate love towards him, here is an example of an institution that is capable of love. The other sobering part of this passage is that people in poor, urban communities desperately need money, and often are willing or forced to let others engage in illegal activities to get that money. Carlos did not indicate who was willing to be his best friend and take his money (it could have been a sex partner or even a parent). But other young men, like Brandon, for example, spoke of the necessity to "do what you gotta do," even if that meant robbing or selling drugs to put food on the table and help contribute to the family income. Carlos also told a slightly different story from Greg and the others (and Carlos was in a different focus group). Whereas it is assumed that Greg had people that might comfort him about going to jail or not going back, Carlos said that nobody ever told him not to go in the first place.

This section certainly does not deal with the complexities of love in these young men's lives. But to some degree it demonstrates the frustrations and joys around the love they receive from certain institutions and people. Focusing especially on the *experiences* with love might have implications for helping these men stay out of trouble. One implication from a theoretical standpoint is to think about how to incorporate a narrative of love into the study of masculinity, building on bell hooks' (2004) work, for example.

Masculinity and the Incarceration Experience

The participants in this study had a very specific history – all had been incarcerated for some period of time, though only a quarter had been incarcerated for a year or more. If they had spent more than a day in jail, they were certainly familiar with the criminal justice system. When talking about becoming a man, participants emphatically rejected the idea that age had anything to do with it. Rather it was about dramatic life experiences, like “getting locked up,” “losing a close friend,” “losing a life,” “losing family,” or even gaining family, in the form of children or a long-term sex partner.

When I asked if jail or prison taught participants to be men, the majority responded that jail was just a holding cell for “animals.” Frankie responded that in some ways jail was like gladiator school – teaching men a specific kind of masculinity. For example, for most of the participants incarceration was a time in which they constantly felt the need to protect themselves and defend their space. Though this topic is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth thinking how this experience could have affected the young men’s views on manhood. Scholars observe that men leaving prison may be traumatized by the aggressive masculinity they are forced to embody in jails and prisons in order to survive (Miller, 2006).

Public health researchers express concern that this reactive, gladiator-like masculinity could be transferred from jail to the community. As Greg and Jamal said, that mentality is a reality, and it helps to have people assist them in snapping out of that mentality when transitioning back to the community. If such an aggressive masculinity is transferred into

the community, the men's actions could affect their partners, families, children, as well as their own economic and social viability (Miller, 2006).

Alternatively, the experience of leaving jail and having a chance of redemption (through parenthood, for example) might enable these men to reflect on their lives and goals with respect to their manhood. Given that some of these participants – Frankie, Rick, and Raymond, for example – were away from their children because of an incarceration, they might have used the jail time as an opportunity to consider changing certain behaviors.

At the very least, the results from this study should be understood in the context of the setting and time as it relates to the participants' lives – they have all had recent criminal justice histories, and they are in an alternatives-to-incarceration program. This context may confound the results presented in this study, but it may also provide insight into how to improve outcomes for people who are leaving jail and working with reentry organizations by channeling alternative perspectives on masculinity. Improving long-term outcomes for people leaving jail is essential given the high rates of recidivism for young people with criminal justice histories.

Discussion

Addressing the Research Questions

The goal of this chapter was to explore how urban Black and Latino men in an alternatives-to-incarceration program defined masculinity and to examine how those definitions went beyond traditional notions of manhood. As previous researchers have

demonstrated in other urban low-income communities (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995), the participants in this study defined being a “real man” primarily as supporting and caring for family, which lives up to traditional views of manhood. When compared to these other studies, family was a much more central concern among these participants.

However, when participants spoke of past experiences with caretaking, they referred to the “manly” tasks, like doing laundry, cooking and cleaning. Participants explicitly said they learned how to be a man from their moms. When other fieldwork-based researchers (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995) talk about masculinity, they seldom focus on the woman’s place in a man’s identity formation or in his performance of masculinity, except to say that women are vulnerable to abuse or that women are used as sex objects. Further, in the public consciousness, single-mothers have gotten a bad reputation for creating “hyper-masculine” boys that turn to the streets. In this study, I learned that *real men* cook and parent, often because of what their mothers taught them about manhood. Perhaps this example also reflects the reality of manhood. One potential explanation for this account of household tasks as part of being a “real man,” is that the men indeed have more egalitarian notions of gender roles compared to traditionally defined values. Or, they are enacting a distinct version of manhood in the home – one that is separate from the street. Messerschmidt (1993) has referenced other studies in which gang members act out in certain ways on the street, but embody an entirely different kind of masculinity in the home, where enjoying housework is acceptable. Either way, such an account of manhood was unexpected.

As participants discussed their own children, however, they turned back to patriarchal norms to some degree – they focused on being providers. Though the men consistently pointed out that providing meant more than financial support – it was also about emotional and physical support. This response could signify a shift away from traditional constructions of fatherhood. As I said earlier, it could also be due to recent criminal justice involvement that forced them to spend time physically apart from their children. Other possible factors include the absence of their own fathers, the presence of their mother’s new boyfriends, or simply wanting to prove their perceptions of manhood by being good parents in the future. Or perhaps because these men lack control in so many areas of their lives (the streets, school, work, jail, society at large), the thought of parenting a new baby might allow them to exert control in one important area of their lives, as one agency group facilitator said. Finally, moving away from being sole financial providers for children could be a reflection of their acceptance of having a limited capacity to provide financial resources.

The last alternative narrative I explored in this chapter was love. Although the data did not provide a comprehensive view of how love figures into these men’s lives, it highlighted some of the ways that love is lacking in their lives or how love could be useful. Studies of masculinity generally fail to take love into consideration, particularly as it relates to identity formation. More recently, scholars (Barker, 2005; hooks, 2004) have called for an exploration of this narrative. In this study, almost predictably, participants felt isolated from some social institutions and in one case, from family as well. But as Barker (2005) has shown, the opportunity for parenting has the potential to

change that. The nature of a child's capacity to love coupled with a new parent's vulnerability, allowed for at least one young man in this study to experience one of his only truly mutually loving relationships. Participants also pointed to the capacity of community organizations or people to show love and support in order to help young men stay out of trouble.

I should also note that the young men in this study forayed into more typical conversations about manhood, as other researchers have described (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2004). For example, the participants said they felt like less of a man when unemployed. As for sexual relationships, several of the men discussed sexual performance as part of being a "real man," though no participants explicitly said anything about having many sexual partners. In general, the men expressed egalitarian views of gender roles when speaking about their sex partners. For example, several said responsibilities should be split 50/50, and that men and women should please each other equally, sexually and emotionally. Though a couple of participants pointed out that they didn't want a woman who could have control over them. For example, one participant said it was appropriate for a woman to be as smart as a man, but not smarter if she were a long-term partner. In this chapter, I specifically chose to highlight aspects of the discussion that reflected a progressive masculinity. But I have tried as much as possible to include all divergence from this construction of masculinity that emerged from the data, both here and throughout the chapter. Further research needs to examine the full range of differences in views of masculinity and how those views change over time.

The young men's views of their own masculinity are embedded in specific social conditions, power relations, and criminal justice histories (Connell, 1987; Messerschmidt, 1993). What emerges, however, is not the usual story of limited power leading to social disorganization or hyper-masculine behavior. Rather, the ideas expressed by the young men in this study reflect a more progressive adaptation to social circumstances – for example, thinking of gender in terms of household responsibilities and coming up with different ways of contributing to parenting. Such views may be generational, and attitudes about gender roles may indeed be changing. But these views might also be a more progressive adaptation to social conditions. As Kimmel notes (2006), “Just as Black men have sought to use the trappings of patriarchy, of male privilege, to restore and revive a damaged sense of masculinity – hyper-masculine overcompensation – it is equally true that some Black men have used their problematized masculinity to redefine it, to forge a strategy of resistance to such images.” Whether or not this reframing of masculinity is due to criminal justice experience still needs to be fleshed out.

Limitations

A more thorough study of incarceration history (length of incarceration, facility type, crimes committed) would offer more insight into how incarceration history affects manhood. Second, expectations of what a man *should* act like has its place for understanding the existing discourse these young men have to work with. But examining the experiences of young men might offer more insight into how discourse translates into behavior. Third, although focus groups present some advantages for understanding group discussions, they also may prevent people from speaking freely about controversial

topics, for example in this study, same-sex relationships, which are certainly important to a progressive and comprehensive study of masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1993; Neal, 2004). Fourth, programming at the agency could have affected the way these men talked about what a man was *supposed* to be like. Still the alternatives-to-incarceration program created a space safe where men could come together and at least discuss alternative narratives about their masculinity, even if it's unclear whether this talk translates to changed behavior. Finally, although it was not clear if there were any race or ethnic differences that affected responses in this study, because masculinity is likely tied to ethnicity and the immigration experience, a more thorough analysis of these differences may be warranted in future studies.

Using the Alternative Voices to Improve Outcomes for Young Men Involved in the Criminal Justice System

One of the conversations that sparked my interest in channeling masculinity for improving health and social outcomes for men involved in the criminal justice system was the extraordinary amount of care and dedication some of the younger men felt towards taking care of family. It's one matter for these men to be released from jail as adults and say they want to be there for their kids (which they consistently said), but it's much more compelling that in their youth, these young men dedicated time to taking care of family in the form of sibling caretaking. Free from the pressures to make money and provide financially in some cases, it seems that these young men could be thoughtful and skilled caregivers. Women of their same age, income range, race/ethnicity, and neighborhood of residence are given cash, food, and medical benefits to take care of

children. What if these men could be given those same benefits (Canada & Parsons, 2006)? Especially in a society where studies have consistently demonstrated that it's easier for poor, urban women of color to get jobs and an education, such policies might make sense given that women are more likely to get low-wage jobs (Levitan, 2007, 2005). Such policies might also prevent these young men from engaging in illegal activities to support family.

Second, because of the structural and interpersonal barriers to parenting that poor, urban, young men of color involved in the correctional system face, it's worth thinking about how to support these young men's desires to be parents not just in financial terms, but also for physical and emotional presence (Neal, 2004). Some of the young men in this study expressed a keen awareness of their limited financial and physical capacity to be supportive of children, and as a result were able to have a consistent discourse (even if learned at the agency) about emotional and physical support of children. Such support could include parenting classes and childcare support, for example.

Third, bell hooks' (2004) argument that men of color have not been given a sufficient amount of love is compelling – whether this comes in the form of being blocked from opportunity, blamed for crimes, or charged as unmarriageable by women in their own communities – and more importantly, not being encouraged to love themselves or taught how to love others. Neal (2004) also calls for “faith in love” as part of the definition for studies of masculinity. Although this chapter provides no concrete answers for how to explore love, it does show that a discourse about love is possible in a specific setting. A

discussion based in experience of love – not just expectation of how to love a child or partner – may encourage men to reflect on how to use love to build confidence and gain respect for themselves (Bourgois, 1995; Hill Collins, 2004), instead of gaining respect through violent or illegal activities. Neal (2004) says that, for example, Black men have been taught that the responsibilities of fathers are to provide financially and to discipline children. This construction of fatherhood prevents these men from being there for children and partners emotionally, as nurturers, because of perceived weakness associated with that role. So if men of color cannot find work, then they are necessarily not good fathers. Neal suspects that this belief system about fathering is directly related to the high numbers of Black men working in the illicit drug selling economy.

Finally, this work also confirms what others have suggested about reentry programs being helpful in keeping people out of jail, saving cities money, and getting people access to needed community and health care services (Freudenberg, 2002; Hernandez, 2008). At least one participant, but many others in conversation, said the agency showed love and encouragement and provided much needed technical assistance around education, work, and other social services. Additionally, this sort of program provides a safe space in the free world where young men can get together and talk through issues of masculinity, parenting, and love. A facilitated discussion of this sort is certainly much more feasible in such an environment, compared with that in a jail, for example. This study also demonstrates that young men are willing to have such conversations in a protected setting.

In conclusion, urban men of color in an alternatives-to-incarceration program can certainly have a discourse about alternative views of manhood. Given the potential positive influence of these alternative views on the lives of these men, future researchers and policy makers might continue to study these alternative notions of masculinity as a way to improve outcomes for young men with criminal justice involvement. The goal of such research and policy would be to decrease recidivism, health risk, and poor social outcomes for individuals, families, and communities.

Chapter 5. The Cycle of Social Exclusion: What is the Role of Incarceration?

Abstract

This chapter explores how incarceration amplifies the disconnection experienced by low-income, urban, young men of color, brought about by education policies, work policies, social trends, and political changes. Previous investigators have described the characteristics of disconnected and socially excluded youth. Here, this chapter shows how the criminal justice system targets the most vulnerable youth, exacerbating their disconnection from school and work and, thus, leads to social exclusion. To demonstrate this, I first present a conceptual model illustrating the hypothesis that disconnection increases the risk for incarceration and that incarceration ultimately contributes to social exclusion. Second, to illustrate how this process works in an urban location, I examine disconnection specifically in the setting of New York City. I also present data collected over the course of two time periods from a sample of 397 young men aged 16 to 18 recruited in a New York City jail. These data allowed assessing levels of participation in school and work before these men were incarcerated, as well as one year after they were released from jail. I also measure post-incarceration school attendance, employment, recidivism, housing stability, and health care coverage as indicators of social exclusion. Finally, this paper recommends policies to reduce the adverse effects of incarceration and disconnection on low-income, urban, young men of color.

Introduction

In the last two decades, the United States has relied heavily on incarceration as a social response to a variety of social problems, including drug use, crime, violence, and mental

illness (Clear, 2007). As a result, millions of people, especially young Black and Latino men, have spent time or will spend time in jail or prison. In this chapter, I explore the social consequences of this policy of mass incarceration, with a specific focus on how the intersection of economic trends, gender, and race or ethnicity precipitates the disconnection of low-income, urban, young men of color. I explore how public policies often exclude young men of color from attending school and finding work, thus leaving them vulnerable to conditions that lead to arrest and incarceration. Finally, I describe how post-incarceration policies and trends solidify this separation, leading to deeper social exclusion. To examine the relationships between incarceration and social exclusion in urban areas, I compare disconnection in New York City among two samples: a representative sample of all New York City young people between the ages of 16 and 24 and a convenience sample of young men in jail in New York City.

To assess the unique ways that incarceration enhances the disconnection associated with poverty, race, and gender, I present a conceptual framework for the relationship between disconnection, incarceration, and social exclusion. I then use this framework to describe and analyze the school, work, criminal justice, housing, and health care experiences of a group of 397 young men, aged 16-18, recruited and interviewed while in jail and then again one year after their release.

Conceptual Framework

In order to analyze the social processes that link incarceration to social exclusion, I propose a multi-level conceptual framework in Figure 1 (see figure at end of chapter). In

this framework, “disconnected” describes young people who do not attend school and are not employed (Levitan, 2005). Social exclusion, a “deeper” social process, refers to the economic, housing, medical, political, and spatial exclusion of selected groups (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000; Young, 2007). As shown in Figure 1, structural factors such as changes in the global economy, together with national and local educational, drug, and welfare policies shape the options for school and work opportunities available to, in this case, young men of color. The framework posits that the incarceration experience exacerbates disconnectedness among poor, young men of color, contributing to social exclusion, as defined above.

Specifically, the framework shows that wide-reaching policies that are based on broader social and economic trends influence who gets access to schooling and employment. For a variety of reasons, policing and criminal justice policies disproportionately target those who have not completed school or found work. To make matters worse, the post-incarceration experience and reentry policies further block access to work or education, contributing to an even more profound exclusion from mainstream adult society.

New York City provides an interesting “lab” for studying this relationship between incarceration and social exclusion in the target population. Many residents of this urban center are racial and ethnic minorities, who often reside in segregated, underserved neighborhoods. To some extent, these neighborhoods are cut off from the rest of the city and country. Those who are incarcerated in these neighborhoods often leave New York City jails and return to the same areas poor in resources and opportunity. I believe that

researchers can apply the findings from this study to other urban areas by examining location-specific policies and trends that mediate the relationship between incarceration and social exclusion.

Disconnectedness and Social Exclusion

As discussed earlier, several researchers have defined disconnection as a lack of participation in key social activities, most often education and employment (Besharov, 1999; MacDonald & Marsh, 2001; Levitan, 2005). Evidence suggests that disconnected youth are at higher risk of drug abuse, crime, teen pregnancy, and other adverse outcomes (Resnick et al., 1997; Besharov, 1999; MacDonald & Marsh, 2001).

A Community Service Society report, “Out of School, Out of Work...Out of Luck?” (Levitan, 2005) showed that in 2000, about half of New York City youth aged 16-24 (51.3%) were in school; a quarter (27.4%) were working, but not in school; 5.3% were seeking work and not in school; and 16.2% (about 170,000 young people) were “disconnected youth” not seeking work or attending school. These data came from the Current Population Survey (data collected monthly by the Census) and the decennial Census public use micro sample from 2000 (Levitan, 2005). As shown in Table 1 (see table at end of chapter), school and work engagement varied by age, race, and gender. Compared with their respective counterparts, those in the younger age group (16-19), females, and non-Latino Whites were more likely to be in school; those in the older age group (20-24), males and Hispanic and White males, compared with non-Hispanic Black and Asian males, were more likely to be in the labor force. People in the older age group,

females, Blacks, and Hispanics were more likely to be disconnected. New York City has a higher rate (16.2%) of “disconnected youth” (age 16-24) than other cities in the United States (average 9.3%) or the United States as a whole (7.7%) (Levitan, 2005).

As noted above, social exclusion is a broader process referring to economic, political, and spatial exclusion, in addition to being shut out from educational opportunity, medical services, housing, and security (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000; Young, 2007). Social exclusion is not characterized by individual dysfunction or marginalization – rather it is a collective usually class-based phenomenon (MacDonald, Shildrick, Webster, & Simpson, 2005; Young, 2007). As Young (2007) argues, social exclusion is global in its causes – due to changes in the international labor market, for example – but local in its impact since the dynamics of unemployment and limited opportunity are place-specific.

Furthermore, social exclusion draws on class-based analyses that take work opportunity and labor market patterns into account, in addition to the availability of local social networks that connect people to job markets (MacDonald et al., 2005). The study of social exclusion also pushes for action and inclusion of affected populations in society (Young, 2007), offering an implicit critique of underclass theory, which locates the root of the problem in the underclass itself (MacDonald & Marsh, 2001).

Social exclusion can be seen as both the cause and consequence of high rates of violence, risky sexual behavior, drug use, poor educational attainment, unemployment, unstable housing, and lack of political participation (Barker, 2005; MacDonald & Marsh, 2001; Young, 2007), a relationship illustrated by the two way arrow in Figure 1. Finally, the

study of social exclusion implies agency: socially constructed and politically determined structures and policies exclude selected people. Social exclusion can thus be viewed as a more fundamental cause (Phelan & Link, 1995) of the social problems of incarcerated youth, rather than the behavior patterns that are often the focus of social and health researchers (Daniels et al., 2009).

It is important to note that social exclusion can also be a subjective experience for young people and communities, as it is difficult to quantify the feeling that one is not a valued member of society. Barker (2005), who studied low-income, urban, young men of color in several countries, demonstrated that social exclusion is not just a question of being poor and lacking access to educational and vocational opportunities. Rather, it is very much an issue of being denied respect, status, and admiration from communities, peers, and women, notably.

Social exclusion research and theory has grown largely out of concern in the European Union regarding economic and social issues that emerged in the late modern period after the decline of industry and manufacturing in the West (Young, 2007). Because of its class-based focus and the context and location in which the research has occurred, many works overlook issues of race and gender particular to urban America. Therefore, as I discuss the various components of the conceptual model, I will also address the intersection of race, gender, incarceration, and disconnection as it applies to New York City. My goal in the next section of the chapter is to illustrate how disconnection increases risk for incarceration.

Structural Factors – Changes in the Economy and Opportunity for Men of Color

Levitan (2007) provides evidence that in recent years, the employment prospects for young men of color have decreased steadily. Compared to a relative post-2001 recovery of the economy in New York City – with decreases in overall unemployment rates – young people (Black and Latino men in particular) have actually seen fewer employment opportunities in recent years. In general, the unemployment rate has held relatively steady for 16-19-year-olds in New York City since the recession-related high of 28.7%, despite a decline in unemployment for older adults. Interestingly enough, the stagnant employment rates among teens do not reflect and are not caused by increased enrollment in schools either (Levitan, 2007).

Rather, changes in those industries with high concentrations of Black male employees may explain the community's higher rates of unemployment (Levitan, 2007). For example, Black males are overwhelmingly employed in the public sector (19% in 2000), as well as in four other private sector industries employing almost 60% of Black men across the board. Between 2000-2003, these five sectors lost more than 100,000 jobs in New York, a 50% decline in the number of available jobs. The current economic crisis will likely result in even more jobs lost.

Similar trends contribute to gender disparities in employment, although these trends are more specific to local economic forces, such as a decrease in jobs in manufacturing, transportation, and public utilities – labor markets that have sustained the male labor force in preceding decades (Levitan, 2005). Levitan (2007) reports that compared with

women, men often work in industries that are more affected by trends in the business cycle. The Community Service Society report showed that two-thirds of 16-24-year-old disconnected males had not worked in the prior year, and half had not worked in the past five (Levitan, 2005). And while New York males have had lower rates of labor market participation compared with their national counterparts, females in New York have been doing much better over the years, almost meeting national rates.

These employment trends undermine the commitment to work that defined the careers of prior generations of men of color – a dynamic exacerbated by a lack of social capital for navigating new labor markets (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1995). In an ethnographic study of drug-selling markets in Harlem, Bourgois (1995) examined the differences between the first wave of Puerto Ricans immigrants to the United States and young Puerto Ricans living in New York today. The first wave immigrants found ample low-wage semi-skilled work opportunities in factories in New York in the 1950s. Those jobs were replaced with low-wage jobs in white collar markets, such as mailroom clerks, inventory jobs, and porters. But swings in the business cycle ultimately made these jobs unstable. Additionally, Bourgois presented evidence that young men of Puerto Rican descent often lacked the social capital to navigate these markets, even in low-wage positions. Some didn't have driver's licenses, while others lacked basic education and training and were generally unable to navigate the bureaucracies of these low-wage white collar positions. Moreover, Bourgois claimed the low wages and lack of respect young Puerto Rican men experienced in these workplaces often made jobs in the illicit economy

seem preferable. But these jobs in the illegal economy put people at risk for incarceration.

Similarly, Anderson (2000) investigated the loss of manufacturing jobs in Philadelphia that instigated the movement of working class Black families out of their old neighborhoods in search of new opportunities. Anderson showed that as a result, old urban Black neighborhoods were left without jobs and community institutions like churches and youth organizations, rendering the neighborhoods susceptible to a restructuring of housing developments in the face of out-migration patterns and urbanization policies. Eventually, new “codes” of the street emerged due to the loss of community infrastructure – codes often associated with violence.

As a result of an increasing breakdown of community structures like school and work, young men of color in urban centers may turn to gangs and peers for protection, support, and income, limiting their prosocial involvement. In a study of New York City gangs in the 1990s, Brotherton and Barrios (2004) attributed increased gang involvement to, among other factors, the decrease in employment opportunity for Latino immigrants, low school funding and overall achievement, and the massive build up of incarceration. Furthermore, jails often serve as prime recruiting venues for youth gangs, and high rates of incarceration thus facilitate their expansion. Vigil (2002, 1988) demonstrated that immigrants, mostly Mexican youth, in Los Angeles often found the necessary social controls and solidarity in gangs, which served as an antidote to the multiple marginalities they faced in their new communities. However, by joining gangs, young men may

become further excluded from their own communities and mainstream society, and be at higher risk for police targeting or serving jail time because of gang-related illegal activities.

Gender

These trends in employment and education also affect opportunities differentially according to gender. As service and other low wage job sectors have expanded, young women's employment prospects have improved somewhat over time, although young women aged 16-24 in New York City still have lower rates of labor force participation than young men. They also have higher rates of school enrollment (Levitan, 2005), improving later job prospects. Young women are also more likely than young men to have their own child living within their own household (13.2% versus 4.1%), although young women with children are 3.4 times more likely to be disconnected than those without. In comparison, young men with their own child in the household (4.1%) are only 1.6 times more likely to be disconnected than those without a child (Levitan, 2005).

For young men, fulfilling traditional masculine roles may contribute to differential work and school opportunities. As employment opportunities modestly expand for women and contract for men (Levitan, 2007) some men may revert to more patriarchal forms of masculinity to maintain a sense of self-worth (Young, 1999). Such masculinity is characterized by more traditional (patriarchal) gender roles, less willingness to assume parental roles, and a greater propensity towards violence within intimate relationships (Barker, 2005; Menjivar, 2003).

Some researchers theorize that there are different paths to masculinity, and that social and economic conditions can push young men of color down one path or the other (Anderson, 2000; Aronson et al., 2003; Whitehead, 1992). Whitehead (1992), for example, wrote about two particular paths – one of respectability, characterized by males who were strong economic providers, married, homeowners, and had an education; and one based on reputation, where males gained power through sexual prowess, toughness, defiance, and fathering many children. Anderson (2000) also presented two similar paths, a code of decency and a code of the street. The path of respectability promoted social order and healthy family functioning. In contrast, the path of reputation was marked by social disorder and poor family functioning. As is the case with employment opportunities, home ownership, and education levels, the path that is considered most respectable may be filled with obstacles, whereas the path associated with reputation may become more accessible (Wilson, 1996).

Reputation-based masculinity becomes functional in other settings, such as in jail, with the drug trade, or on the streets (Whitehead, Peterson, & Kaljee, 1994; Payne, 2006). It can also be associated with gaining respect in a community, as Hill Collins (2004) and Bourgois (1995) argue, pointing out that young men of color are actively seeking the respect they are unable to get in other settings. In the absence of other more progressive avenues to manhood (Mutua, 2006), this search for respect translates to a search for economic and social opportunities within the confined structures of their daily lives – including limited opportunity that can drive men to illegal work in the drug trade, street vending, or under-the-table labor in the “gray” economy. Notably, these paths

significantly increase the risk for incarceration, thus exacerbating disconnection. At least in a practical sense, low-income young men of color may have difficulty escaping rigid definitions of masculinity that prioritize money and work over other types of contribution, for example to the family.

Race

Another significant finding comes from Levitan (2005), who reports differences in school and work engagement by race – the majority of “disconnected youth” in the study are Black and Latino. Black youth make up the largest portion of those left out of the labor market, while Latino youth have the lowest school enrollment rate. Latinos also account for the largest proportion of “disconnected youth” (42.1%), followed by Blacks (31.8%). Overall, Black and Latino young men in New York City are twice as likely to be disconnected as Whites (16.6% for Black versus 16% for Latinos and 7.6 % for Whites). Hill Collins (2004) argues that racial minorities face a closing door of opportunity when it comes to employment opportunities, education, equitable housing, and neighborhood integration. For example, with the Black community in particular, she ties this disenfranchisement to a history of slavery, segregation, and urban dislocation. For Latinos, opportunity may be related to immigration status, but also to marginalization from mainstream institutions, such as schools (Bourgois, 1995).

In its consequences, high rates of disconnection put young Blacks and Latinos at multiple jeopardy for arrest and incarceration. First, access to gainful employment provides income, which may reduce the need to engage in illegal activity (Sullivan, 1989). More

specifically, labor force participation reduces the pressure to participate in the informal or illegal economy, further reducing the risk of arrest. Second, when it comes to education, schools – compared to communities – have the potential to provide safe environments for young people, although low-income, urban youth do report experiencing violence and lack of safety in schools (Devine, 1996; Fine, Freudenberg, Payne, Perkins, Smith, & Wanzer, 2003). Finally, police are much more likely to stop and frisk Black and Latino youth than their White peers, specifically in New York City communities (Spitzer, 1999; United States Commission on Civil Rights, 2000). By sheer probability, being out of school and work puts these young men at higher risk for police encounters.

Public Policies Leave Young Men of Color Vulnerable for Incarceration

In the past three decades, numerous public policies around education, drugs, and welfare have contributed to the disconnection of young men of color, whether intended or not. These policies, which have been implemented at the city level in New York as well as nationally, result in leaving young men vulnerable to targeting by the criminal justice system.

In New York City in particular, Treschan and Molnar (2008) estimate that publicly funded education and vocational programs serve only 18% of the disconnected youth in need. Additionally, of the young people who are served by these programs, the majority are placed in programs planned by and for older adults, reducing their effectiveness and reach with young people. Only 7% of disconnected youth in New York City are in programming specifically designed to help them reconnect. As for students who do

attend school, education policies can also deter them from earning their degrees. For example, New York City does not allow young people over the age of 21 to earn a high school diploma, even though two-thirds of disconnected youth are between 20 and 24 (Treschan & Molnar, 2008). Instead, older youth are encouraged to earn General Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs), a credential whose value for higher education and employment is frequently questioned (Tyler, 1998).

Unfortunately, older youth are also generally unwilling to return to high schools where they have previously failed. Treschan and Molnar (2008) found that these youth would rather attend smaller community-based programming to receive high school equivalency, but only one such program exists specifically for disconnected youth in New York City. Furthermore, this program has only 5,500 slots for the 85,000 disconnected youth without a high school diploma or GED. For the most part, New York City Department of Education policies and funding target those youth already in high school, but at risk for dropping out – not those who are altogether disconnected (Treschan & Molnar, 2008).

Nationally, high school graduation enrollment rates for Blacks and Latinos are disproportionately low. In a national study of high school graduation rates by racial/ethnic groups and gender, while 70.8% of White males graduated, only 42.8% of Black males and 48% of Latino males finished on time (Swanson, 2004). In addition, Barker (2005) argues that poor minorities in urban areas may be under pressure to support their families financially, and there are more rewards for quick financial gains (often in the illegal economy) compared to staying in school. He also cites teacher

stereotypes regarding low-income boys, as tough, unruly, and unteachable – characteristics that teachers have trouble addressing. Barker also notes that the nature of these male peer groups might make dropping out an acceptable option – it’s better to “hang out” than learn.

Finally, the federal No Child Left Behind legislation creates new incentives for schools to push out or exclude students with educational and social problems. These young people lower average scores on national tests, thereby lowering a school’s overall ranking and ability to receive funding (Darling-Hammond, 2007). In New York City, young people leaving jail are often discouraged from re-enrolling in school (Rimer, 2004), putting them at risk of disconnection and reincarceration.

Together these educational policies have created what some have called the school-to-jail pipeline (Advancement Project, 2005), a pathway sanctioned by policy that pushes low-income young people of color from the school system into the correctional system. One indicator of this alarming trend is that many states now spend more on corrections than public higher education and admit more young men of color to their jails and prisons than their universities (Brotherton & Barrios, 2004; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006; Dellums Commission, 2006).

Drug policies also increased the risk for incarceration and disconnection from school or work. Between 1996 and 2007, New York City police made 353,000 arrests for marijuana, compared to 30,000 in the previous decade. Most of those arrested spent at

least one night in jail, though many with prior arrests spent more time. Most were young adults – 52% were Black, and 31% were Latino – although Blacks and Latinos make up only 53% of the city’s total population (Levine & Small, 2008). Failure to make drug treatment accessible, especially for young people, also contributes to disconnection. Research shows that disconnected youth have higher rates of drug and alcohol use than their peers (Townsend, Flisher, & King, 2007). Drug use ultimately interferes with school completion and employment (MacDonald & Marsh, 2001). However, New York City, like other jurisdictions, faces an overall shortage of drug treatment slots and an acute deficit of treatment programs for young drug users (Bolas, 2005), a group that does poorly in adult-oriented treatment programs (Bolas, 2005; Brannigan, Schackman, Falco, & Millman, 2004).

In a New York City jail, one study found that adult males with drug problems were four times more likely to get drug treatment in jail than adolescent young men with drug problems (Freudenberg, Moseley, Labriola, Daniels, & Murrill, 2007). Drug problems and lack of drug treatment consistently predict further criminal justice involvement (Broome, Knight, Hiller, & Simpson, 1996; Freudenberg et al., 2005), and contribute to housing instability, since New York City public housing policies require those charged with drug crimes to be evicted (Boire, 2007). These policies leave young drug users vulnerable to reincarceration, exacerbating their disconnection from school and work.

On a national level, other drug policies include the replacement of drug treatment and rehabilitation programs with criminal prosecution and incarceration. This shift occurred

in the 1980s, and the 1990s saw the movement of young offenders into the adult correctional system, and zero-tolerance policies that pushed youth out of public schools (Dellums Commission, 2006). These policies have resulted in increasing dropout rates and skyrocketing incarceration rates for young men of color (Dellums Commission, 2006). Other provisions of the “war on drugs” have also unfairly targeted racial minorities. For example, the stiffer penalties for crack sellers, 80% of whom are Black, than for powdered cocaine sellers (Mauer, 2006), exacerbate racial disparities. In New York, Rockefeller-era drug laws have imposed unfair mandatory minimum sentences on young, often first-time, offenders for possession of certain drugs (Chan, 2008). The majority of people targeted under these laws from the mid 1970s until 2005 were Black and Latino, despite the fact that Blacks generally use drugs less than Whites (Moore & Elkavich, 2008).

Welfare policy is another factor working against disconnected youths. In New York City, young people leaving the child welfare system have disproportionately high rates of homelessness. In one study, 29% of people who had been in homeless shelters had a child welfare history, and the group with the biggest burden was those who aged out of the system (Culhane & Park, 2007). In New York City, youth typically age out of the child welfare system at age 18, unless they are involved in approved programming, in which case they can stay in the system until age 21. Thus, the system established to protect vulnerable children discharges many of its clients without high school diplomas, employment skills, or for some, even safe shelter. Not surprisingly, youth involved in the child welfare system are thus at risk for involvement in the criminal justice system

(Jonson-Reid & Barth, 2000; Lopez & Allen, 2007). In the present study of incarcerated New York City youth, 27% reported child welfare histories, again amplifying their disconnection.

After the 1996 welfare reform laws were enacted, 500,000 New Yorkers lost cash assistance and food stamps by 2000 (Bloomberg, 2003). To cut costs and dependency on welfare benefits, New York City changed eligibility standards and created barriers to enrollment (Chernick & Reimers, 2001). However, the City was later found to have violated federal laws by creating some of these barriers (Houppert, 1999). Lastly, studies demonstrate that women are much more likely to receive public benefits than men, especially adolescent men. For example, despite the fact that almost all participants in one jail-based study met eligibility criteria for public benefits, 51% of women and less than 1% of adolescent men actually reported receipt of public benefits (Freudenberg et al., 2005).

Nationally, welfare policy has always been designed primarily to serve single mothers and their children, often excluding targeted benefits for young men (Canada & Parsons, 2006). Although welfare policy is supposed to encourage people to work, the policies do not address the persistence of disconnection and stigma associated with incarceration histories and the problems they pose for Black or Latino youths looking for work (Pager, 2003). As a result, young men of color – a sector of the population with some of the highest rates of unemployment and poverty – are left without even the inadequate safety net programs that could mitigate their difficult circumstances. This lack of support

provides further incentives for participation in the illegal economy (Freudenberg et al., 2005) and subsequent risk for incarceration.

In sum, a cascade of policies in multiple sectors function to separate young people of color from school, employment, housing, and public benefits – the very support systems that could serve as an antidote to disconnection. As a result, these young people become targets for another set of policies – in policing, public safety, criminal justice, and drugs – that put them at risk of incarceration. In the final section, I will explore how incarceration can push disconnected youth further into social exclusion.

Young Men in Jail in New York City, the Disconnection Experience, and Social Exclusion

To examine the dynamics of disconnectedness for young men in urban areas and to illustrate the pathways between disconnectedness, incarceration, and social exclusion, I present data on school and work participation, recidivism, housing stability, and health care coverage for a group of 16-18-year-olds recruited and interviewed in a New York City jail, and then interviewed again one year after they were released. Thus, I follow a cohort of young people from the time they were incarcerated (Time 1, intake interview) to one year after they were released from jail (Time 2, follow-up interview). This provides an opportunity to examine the rates and correlates of disconnection and social exclusion over time for a sample of incarcerated young men.

I then present these data as a case study of the relationship between disconnection, incarceration, and social exclusion in an urban area in order to answer the following

questions: 1) How do incarceration and release from jail influence subsequent involvement in school and work, and therefore disconnection? 2) How does the post-incarceration experience – including reentry policies and trends – amplify disconnection (from school and work) and lead to social exclusion (a much deeper social process)? Finally I provide a set of policy and research recommendations based on the conceptual framework and prior work on this subject.

Data procedures and analysis are described in Chapter 2.

Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Table 2 (see table at end of chapter) presents background demographic and criminal justice characteristics of the sample before the index arrest/incarceration and one year after their release from jail. All participants were male, and the mean age at the time of the intake interview was 17.99 (SD 0.71). One year after release from jail, the mean age of participants was 19.60 (SD 0.93), suggesting that on average young men spent seven months in jail prior to release. The majority of the sample was Black (55.8%) and Latino (38.1%).

Disconnection

A comparison of how much the young men were attending school and/or work during both Time 1 and 2 shows that there was little change between these periods (see Table 3 at end of chapter). Although the proportion in school decreased by 36% and the

proportion of out of school and in the labor force increased by 23%, these changes did not achieve statistical significance. At both Time 1 and 2, about a quarter of the young men were disconnected, meaning they were out of school and out of work. This rate is 50% higher than the rate reported for the 20-24-year-olds in the Community Service Society sample, a representative group of non-institutionalized young people in New York City.

Education

At the time of the index arrest/incarceration, more than a third (35.8%) of the young men had not completed tenth grade, and almost half (48.4%) had been held back a grade at least once. Very few (6.8%) had completed high school or a GED program. At the one-year follow-up interview, another 20% of the sample had finished high school or a GED program, a significant increase ($p < 0.05$). However, almost three-quarters (74.2%) had still failed to complete high school at the average age of almost 20. Age (odds ratio [OR]=1.37 at Time 1, OR=1.39 at Time 2) and number of previous arrests prior to incarceration (OR=1.42 at Time 1, OR=1.44 at Time 2) predicted no school attendance at Time 2 in both Model I and Model II (see Table 4 at end of chapter). None of the Time 2 indicators predicted lack of school attendance.

Employment

During the intake interview, the young male subjects reported that in the year prior to incarceration, 66.5% had some form of employment. A year later, the proportion working had not changed. In Model I, child welfare history at Time 1 (OR=2.13)

predicted unemployment at Time 2, though the model overall was not a good fit ($p=0.133$). However, in Model II the effect of child welfare history decreased, became non-significant, and the model had good fit ($p=0.000$). Model II also showed that those participants with unstable housing ($OR=11.49$) at Time 2 were more likely to be unemployed than those with stable housing.

Criminal Justice Involvement

Prior to the index arrest/incarceration, 75.1% of the interviewees had between 1 and 9 prior arrests, 15.4% had 10 or more arrests, and 66.5% of the sample had experienced at least one prior incarceration. One year after release from jail, participants had an average of 1.43 (SD 1.58) new arrests. Almost 47% had been reincarcerated in the past year, and those reincarcerated spent an average of 84.92 (SD 119.89) days in jail in the one year after release. Model I showed that child welfare history ($OR=1.67$) and previous number of arrests prior to incarceration ($OR=1.33$) predicted recidivism. In Model II, the effects of both of these factors decreased and became non-significant. Furthermore, unstable housing at Time 2 ($OR=8.36$) became a predictor of recidivism. The Nagelkerke R^2 in both models also indicates that Model II was a better fit. The addition of the Time 2 indicators explained 19.9% of the variance in predicting recidivism.

Housing

At Time 1, the majority of participants (89.9%) reported living with parents, a legal guardian or other family. One year after release from jail, the numbers of people living with other family or alone, with friends or with partners was about the same, although the

number of people living with parents or family declined significantly (89.9% at Time 1 versus 62.1% at Time 2) ($p < 0.05$). Not surprisingly, the number of people living in either unstable living situations or institutional housing increased significantly (2.5% at Time 1 versus 24.8% at Time 2) ($p < 0.05$). At Time 1, one-third of all participants had been involved in the child welfare system, and more participants reported homelessness in the one year after release than at intake (5.5% at Time 1 versus 9.3% at Time 2) ($p < 0.05$). Those with a child welfare history at Time 1 ($OR = 1.94$) were more likely to have unstable housing at Time 2. However, when adding Time 2 indicators in Model II, the effect of child welfare history decreased and became non-significant. Model II showed that unemployment ($OR = 13.61$), recidivism ($OR = 9.04$), and lacking health care coverage ($OR = 2.86$) at Time 2 predicted unstable housing at Time 2. The Nagelkerke R^2 in both models also indicated that Model II was a better fit. The addition of the Time 2 indicators explained 32.3% of the variance in predicting unstable housing at Time 2.

Health Care

Regarding health care at Time 1, 93.2% of participants reported that they had Medicaid or another form of health insurance in the past year. By Time 2, this number decreased, with only 75.7% reporting health care coverage ($p < 0.001$). Age ($OR = 1.66$) and not having health care coverage at Time 1 ($OR = 6.86$) predicted not having health care coverage at Time 2. In Model II, age ($OR = 1.59$) and not having health care at Time 1 ($OR = 7.15$) were still significant predictors, but in the second model those who had unstable housing ($OR = 2.60$) were more likely to not have health care coverage at Time 2. The Nagelkerke R^2 in both models also indicated that Model II was a better fit. The

addition of the Time 2 indicators explained 3.9% of the variance in predicting lack of health care coverage.

Discussion

These data demonstrate that at the individual level, low-income, urban, young men of color involved in the criminal justice system are already facing greater disconnection compared to the general population of their peers before they're ever incarcerated.

Additionally, they are even more unequipped to meet important educational and employment standards after they are released from jail. As illustrated in the conceptual model (Figure 1), after release, many young men experience school dropout, unemployment, and multiple incarcerations. Contrary to my hypothesis, the incarceration experience does not appear to exacerbate disconnectedness directly. Incarceration does, however, contribute to unstable housing, which in turn leads to several negative outcomes related to social exclusion – unemployment, recidivism, and lack of health care coverage. Thus, unstable housing is one of the most important predictors of social exclusion for this sample, and may be just as important as the incarceration experience in leading to social exclusion for a group of disconnected young men in New York City.

How the Post-Incarceration Experience and Reentry Policies and Trends Amplify the Effect of School and Work Problems and Lead to Social Exclusion

I defined social exclusion as a broad process resulting from economic, political, and social trends, as well as public and criminal justice policies (see Figure 1), that leave urban youths with a wide range of problems related to school, work, housing, and health

care. These often lead to political and spatial exclusion, and the subjective experience of exclusion from society. Here I review the education, employment, criminal justice, housing, and health care outcomes of the young men in this study, as well as a set of post-incarceration policies and trends that solidify young men's disconnection and lead to social exclusion into adulthood.

After incarceration, half of the young men who had not completed the 10th grade prior to the index arrest/incarceration went back to school and finished the tenth grade after being released from jail (At Time 1, 35.8% of the sample had not finished 10th grade at Time 2 the rate fell to 15.3%). By Time 2, almost three times as many young men had completed high school or its equivalent as at Time 1. This shows that finishing school after an incarceration is certainly possible.

Moreover, only 26.8% of the young men in this study completed high school or the GED at Time 2. According to New York City school data (New York City Department of Education, 2008) about 35% of Black and Hispanic young men entering high school in 2002 had graduated by 2006. In other words, the men in this sample – all of whom served jail time – had a school completion rate that was only 76% of the completion rate for the general population of young men of color. In assessing the relationship between disconnection, incarceration, and social exclusion, I found a relationship between lack of school attendance (including aging out of school) and criminal justice involvement. This was only worsened by the previously described barriers to education, such as lack of community and government investment in high school education, and minimal services to

help people over the age of 18 to complete school (Treschan & Molnar, 2008). Given that 60% of people in American jails lack a high school diploma (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003) – and that it is extremely difficult to reconnect with the educational system upon leaving prison (Freudenberg et al., 2005; Rimer, 2004) – the pathways for seeking out post-incarceration education are narrow at best.

Employment rates in the jail population are not encouraging, either. Though more of the interviewees participated in the labor force at Time 2 (perhaps because of older age and lower school enrollment), the number of them who were out of school and actually employed didn't change during either time period. Among all New York City youths, four times as many 20-24-year-old males were in the labor force as 16-19-year-old males (48.8% versus 12.0%) (Levitan, 2005), suggesting that young men with incarceration experience are less successful in transitioning into the labor force than their peers in the general population.

Significantly, the rate of disconnectedness (disengagement from both school and work) did not vary from Time 1 to Time 2. I expect that at the index incarceration, the participants were still young enough to go back to school. But because some spent more than six months in jail during the index incarceration, and almost half were reincarcerated the year after release from jail, it is likely to become increasingly difficult for them to reengage with their school and work lives. Many of the young men have a history of multiple incarcerations, which often leads to employer discrimination (Pager, 2003) and

in turn, an incredibly high risk that these young men could return to jail for a minor infraction (Gonnerman, 2004).

People with criminal justice involvement, in general, face extraordinary barriers to employment, like discrimination and prohibition from certain government jobs and positions requiring special licenses (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2003; Pager, 2003). And incarceration only exacerbates these youths' vulnerability to race discrimination and educational setbacks. Pager (2003) showed that a White man with an incarceration record was more likely to get a job than a Black man with no such record, which means that disconnected Black men face the triple burden of race, incarceration record, and fewer educational opportunities. Unemployment in this context is also often associated with substance abuse and mental health problems (Cotton-Oldenburg, 1999; Lundgren, Amodeo & Chassler, 2005), further barriers to finding and keeping a job. The combined experience of encountering institutional obstacles to employment and education, discrimination based on race and a criminal justice record, and the negative health consequences of unemployment push young men down the path of disconnectedness into the deeper waters of social exclusion with no lifejacket.

Almost half of the young men in this study were reincarcerated between the Time 1 and Time 2 interviews. Those men who went back to jail were nine times as likely to have unstable housing situations. Nationally, recidivism predicts poor educational and employment outcomes (Freudenberg et al., 2005; Holzer et al., 2003; Rimer, 2004), family and housing instability (Beckerman, 1998; Black & Cho, 2004), and a lack of

community and social cohesion (Taxman, Byrne, & Pattavina, 2005; Urban Institute, 2005). However, in the current analysis, housing instability was by far the strongest indicator of social exclusion.

Many more people reported unstable housing conditions or institutional housing at Time 2 (24.8% compared to 2.5% at Time 1), which means that finding housing is a significant burden for young men leaving jail, most likely because many leave their parents or guardians after they turn 18 and move to a more unstable living situation.

It is also worth noting that prior to the index arrest/incarceration, a significant proportion of young people (27.0%) were involved in the child welfare system. Young men who spent any amount of time in the child welfare system were more likely to face unemployment, recidivism, and unstable housing post-release. Those participants with unstable housing post-incarceration (one-quarter of this sample) were 11 times as likely to be unemployed, eight times as likely to be reincarcerated, and almost three times as likely to not have health care. As mentioned earlier, unstable housing was the single most important indicator in this study of outcomes related to social exclusion. While the study design precludes determining whether unstable housing is the cause or consequence of these other adverse outcomes, deeper insights into these possibly reciprocal relationships might inform policy and programmatic interventions.

In New York City, a research group estimated that just under 4,000 young people are homeless on any given night (Freeman & Hamilton, 2008), and almost 30,000 youth are

in foster care or child protective services in a given month (New York City Children's Services, 2008). Young people with criminal justice contacts also represent a disproportionate share of homeless youth in New York City (Freeman & Hamilton, 2008). Nationally, young people leaving prison also find it difficult to secure housing upon re-entry into their communities, which illustrates why a majority of the homeless population has a criminal justice history (Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005). Depending on the nature of a criminal record, some state laws restrict or ban a former inmate's public housing eligibility altogether (Roman & Travis, 2004). Researchers have also demonstrated how vulnerable homeless populations are to high-risk sexual behavior, drug abuse, and infectious diseases such as HIV (Cotton-Oldenburg, 1999; O'Leary & Martins, 2000). Given the instability that young people with criminal justice histories experience, the likelihood that they will go on to become adults with criminal justice records only makes any future prospects for housing security even more bleak.

Finally, it is important to note that the proportion of young men with health insurance coverage decreased from Time 1 to Time 2 (93.2% versus 75.7%). As young men turn 18 or move out of their family household, they may lose health insurance coverage. Given that so few are finding employment and that low wage employers seldom provide health insurance, it is unlikely that they receive health care coverage from employers. Prior studies show that having health care coverage (Lee, Vlahov, & Freudenberg, 2006) or continuity of health care (Sheu et al., 2002) post-incarceration is inversely related to rearrest, reincarceration, drug use, and drug sales.

Although the study did not directly measure political participation, spatial exclusion, or the subjective experience of marginalization, I believe these are also aspects of social exclusion that are related to incarceration. Certain state laws prohibit people with criminal justice involvement from participating in the political process – in 32 states felons cannot vote while on parole. Such a policy excluded 13% of Black men from voting in the United States in 1998 (Iguchi, 2002), suggesting that post-incarceration policies exclude a large segment of the population from political participation – in particular, men of color.

The majority of people leaving jail and prison return to a handful of resource poor communities (Urban Institute, 2005), suggesting that spatial segregation may further contribute to social exclusion. In New York City, half of all former inmates leaving jails return to just seven of the poorest New York City neighborhoods (New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2002). A study in San Francisco recently showed that women return from jail to communities with the highest concentrations of HIV/AIDS cases and substance abuse treatment clients (Kim et al., 2008). In these cases, spatial exclusion associated with incarceration is also related to poverty and extreme health risk.

This subjective experience of marginalization is reflected in young minorities' perceptions of police and the criminal justice system. While researchers have demonstrated that the criminal justice system targets Black and Latino people more frequently than their White counterparts, research has also shown that Black and Latino

youth actively perceive such injustice and betrayal by adult authority figures not only in the criminal justice system, but also in their schools (Fine et al., 2003; Hagan, Shedd, & Payne, 2005). This makes it difficult for them to trust the very program – the educational system – that could keep them out of jail.

The evidence presented above illustrates how the post-incarceration experience and reentry policies affect the educational and employment prospects of the young adults in the current study. It also suggests that as these young men age, the patterns of disconnection and exclusion described here may influence longer-term and increasingly negative criminal justice, social, and health outcomes. Recently, several researchers suggested that current incarceration practices may actually contribute to widening disparities in well being between better off and White populations and lower income, Black and Latino populations (Blankenship, Smoyer, Bray, & Mattocks, 2005; Iguchi, Bell, Ramchand, & Fain, 2005; Gaiter, Potter, & O'Leary, 2006; Schnittker & John, 2007). For that reason, it is important to consider alternative policies that could reduce the adverse impact of high rates of incarceration.

Policy Recommendations

I have described how economic, social, educational, and criminal justice trends and policies affect poor, young men of color, particularly those involved with the criminal justice system. Incarceration, unstable living circumstances, and certain public policies serve to exclude young Black and Latino men from the benefits of social inclusion. As a result, I deem it necessary to provide policy and research recommendations that can

reduce potential disconnection from school and work, criminal justice involvement, and social exclusion.

Reengage Disadvantaged Young People

New York City has the highest number of disconnected youth among five large cities in the United States. Young men in the jail sample are about three times as likely to be disconnected as other New York youth, have high rates of recidivism, and struggle with unstable living conditions. I believe the experiences of New York City youth may be similar to the experiences of other low-income young men of color living in urban areas and involved with the criminal justice system. In order to reengage these disadvantaged groups, I recommend the following, which policy makers can accomplish at both local and national levels:

Improve high school completion rates. Close to 60% of students graduate from high school in four years, but 70% will graduate in seven years (Canada & Parsons, 2006). Given this evidence plus data on high school completion for young men of color and those involved with the criminal justice system, I propose the expansion of opportunities for high school completion. Such opportunities include promotion of alternative high schools and easy transfer to these schools, learn-to-work programs, alternative diploma/GED programs, tracking and modeling successful programs, and working to bridge the gap between high school and college for low-income under-prepared students (Canada & Parsons, 2006).

Provide career support for at-risk young adults. Each year 1,200 people leave foster care at age 18, and about 3,500 return to their communities from youth detention facilities in New York City (Canada & Parsons, 2006). About half of ex-offenders will return to jail within one year, and the rate is likely higher for young ex-offenders (Freudenberg et al., 2005; New York City Department of Correction, 2003). In order to provide support for these youth, I recommend the creation of career pathways, such as mandating literacy and vocational programs in jails/prisons for youth, creating transitional jobs for ex-offenders, investing in alternatives-to-incarceration programs, and creating “second-chance” programs for at-risk youth who face greater barriers to employment (Canada & Parsons, 2006; Levitan, 2007). These second-chance programs could provide transitional job placements along with remedial education and training (Canada & Parsons, 2006; Freudenberg, 2001; Levitan, 2007).

Expand alternatives-to-incarceration programs. Because incarceration is an expensive and often ineffective solution to public safety problems and, as I have shown, it has high unintended social costs (Pattillo, Weiman, & Western, 2004), it ought to be the last rather than the first resort. Yet too often New York and other cities have “front-loaded” punishment, relying on low-level drug arrests, neighborhood sweeps, and “zero-tolerance” policies to improve public safety or allay citizen concerns about crime (Jacobson, 2001). Alternatives to incarceration include expanded drug treatment programs, community service, and other similar plans (New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, 2008). Although the New York City Criminal Justice Agency (2003) concluded that, “Research results provide strong justification for

the City’s continuing support for alternatives-to-incarceration programs on the grounds that the programs do displace a substantial amount of jail time for both misdemeanor and felony defendant,” to date, these programs have reached only a small fraction of those who could benefit. Expanding alternatives to incarceration can save money and also block the journey down the path to disconnection and social exclusion.

Address transitional housing as an important part of the reentry process for men in late adolescence. Research shows that for adults, finding housing after release from jail can be a significant burden, and also an important predictor for post-incarceration success (Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005; Roman & Travis, 2004). To date, the research has not addressed the housing needs of young men in late adolescence. Because they stand at a precarious point between adolescence and adulthood, young men need more flexible and age appropriate policies and programs that help them to negotiate the transition to independent living. Policies that fail to provide ongoing housing support for young people leaving foster care or those that continue to exclude young men with drug charges from living in public housing with family members (Boire, 2007), serve as major obstacles in the path to achieving housing stability. Since my findings show that many young men rely on institutional housing – and that unstable housing is an important indicator of social exclusion – policies that expand housing options for youth age 18-24, including for those with criminal justice histories, could help to connect young people to school and work.

Ensure continuity of health care coverage. Not only is lack of access to medical services an indicator of social exclusion, but for those involved in the criminal justice system, having health care coverage after release from jail protects against rearrest, going back to jail, drug use, and drug sales (Lee et al., 2006; Sheu et al., 2002). Since those with criminal justice records experience difficulty finding employment (Pager, 2003), and thus acquiring employer-based health care, short-term health care coverage for those leaving jail or prison could provide a safety net against the health problems that can derail successful reentry. Current public insurance programs often provide limited coverage for young women with children, but not for young men (Canada & Parsons, 2006). By making government-funded health care coverage more equitable for both genders, policy makers could help young men play a role in their family's health and obtain the health care that contributes to success in school or at work.

Reduce racism and stigma in educational, workforce, and criminal justice policies to address spatial exclusion and the experience of discrimination. Researchers have demonstrated the differential educational, work, and correctional outcomes for young men of color compared with their White peers (Clear, 2007; Levitan, 2005). The processes by which these mechanisms work are often understood only at the theoretical level (Hill Collins, 2004). By understanding better the pathways by which these processes operate at the jail, school, employer, and community levels, researchers and policy makers can develop more effective policies to reduce these barriers. For example, legislative action addressing the stigmas that formerly incarcerated racial minorities face (Pager, 2003) could significantly improve their access to employment. Examples include

having specific justifications for why criminal justice history questions should be included on job applications or result in trade license restrictions, such as for working as a barber. In some instances, such measures are unnecessary and add to the stigmas that prevent former inmates from reentering the workforce. In addition, policy makers should assess criminal justice and drug policies, to ensure they do not disproportionately burden racial minorities and poor neighborhoods, in part as a way to reduce actual segregation, spatial exclusion, and the subjective experience of discrimination (Chan, 2008; Fine et al., 2003; Hagan et al., 2005; Mauer, 2006).

In the coming years, broader trends due to the economic downturn may encourage policy-makers to cut services for people leaving jail, contributing to additional disconnection and social exclusion. By acting to prevent such reductions, researchers, advocates, and policy makers need to highlight the urgency of preventing the further social exclusion of poor, young men of color in urban areas.

Tables

Table 1. School Enrollment, Labor Force Participation, and Disconnected Status by Age, Race/Ethnicity and Gender*, Reproduced from Levitan, 2005.

Share of Population	Males (%)			Females (%)		
	In School	In Labor Force	Disconnected	In School	In Labor Force	Disconnected
<i>All</i>	54.0	33.2	12.8	57.4	27.3	15.3
<i>Age</i>						
16-19	79.3	12.0	8.7	82.3	8.6	9.1
20-24	35.4	48.8	15.8	40.5	40.0	19.5
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
Non-Hispanic White	59.2	33.1	7.6	58.6	31.0	10.4
Non-Hispanic Black	54.7	28.7	16.6	57.7	27.0	15.3
Asian	66.7	25.9	7.3	67.6	19.8	12.6
Hispanic	45.5	38.5	16.0	52.9	26.7	20.5
<i>Nativity</i>						
Native-born	57.1	30.2	12.7	58.6	28.3	13.1
Foreign-born	48.5	38.4	13.0	54.8	25.3	19.8
<i>Presence of Own Child in Household</i>						
None	55.5	32.0	12.5	62.6	25.7	11.6
One or more	20.3	59.8	19.9	23.0	37.5	39.5
			<i>Among Mothers:</i>			
			Married	15.6	33.6	50.8
			Single	27.9	40.1	32.0

* Data tabulated by the Community Service Society (Levitan, 2005) from the 2000 Census Public Use Micro Sample.

Table 2. Background Demographic and Criminal Justice Characteristics for Young Prior to Incarceration and One Year After Release From Jail, N=397

	Time 1 (%)	Time 2 (%)
<i>Age</i>	17.99 (SD 0.71)*	19.60 (SD 0.93)
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i> ***		
Black, non-Latino	55.8	--
Latino	38.1	--
<i>Living Situation</i>		
Live with parents, legal guardian or other family	89.9**	62.1
Live alone, with friends, or other partner	7.6	13.0
Unstable or institutional housing	2.5**	24.8
<i>Living Circumstances</i>		
Homeless in past year	5.5**	9.3
Ever been in child welfare system	27.0	--
<i>Health Care Coverage in Past Year</i>		
Paid for medical care with Medicaid or other health insurance	93.2*	75.7
<i>Education Prior to Arrest (Since Release at T2)</i>		
Had not completed 10 th grade	35.8**	15.3
Completed high school or GED	6.8**	26.8
Held back a grade at least once	48.4	--
<i>Prior Involvement with Criminal Justice System at Arrest</i>		
1 – 3 prior arrests	40.1	--
4-9 prior arrests	35.0	--
10 or more prior arrests	15.4	--
Prior incarcerations	66.5	--
<i>Number of Rearrests in Past Year</i>	--	1.43 (SD 1.58)
<i>Percent Reincarcerated In Past Year</i>	--	46.9
<i>Average Length of Reincarceration in Past Year</i>	--	84.92 (SD 119.89)

*p<0.001; **p<0.5; *** Other race categories: Other (4.0%); Biracial (1.0%); White, non-Latino (1.0%)

Table 3. Disconnection: School and Labor Characteristics for Young Men Prior to Incarceration and One Year After Release From Jail, N=397

	Time 1 (%)	Time 2 (%)
In school	32.0	20.3
In labor force	66.5	67.3
Out of school and in labor force	43.7	56.5
Out of school, in labor force and employed	21.3	19.1
Disconnected (not in school or labor force)	24.4	23.6

Table 4. School, Work, Recidivism, Housing, and Health Care for Young Men One Year After Release from Jail, N=397

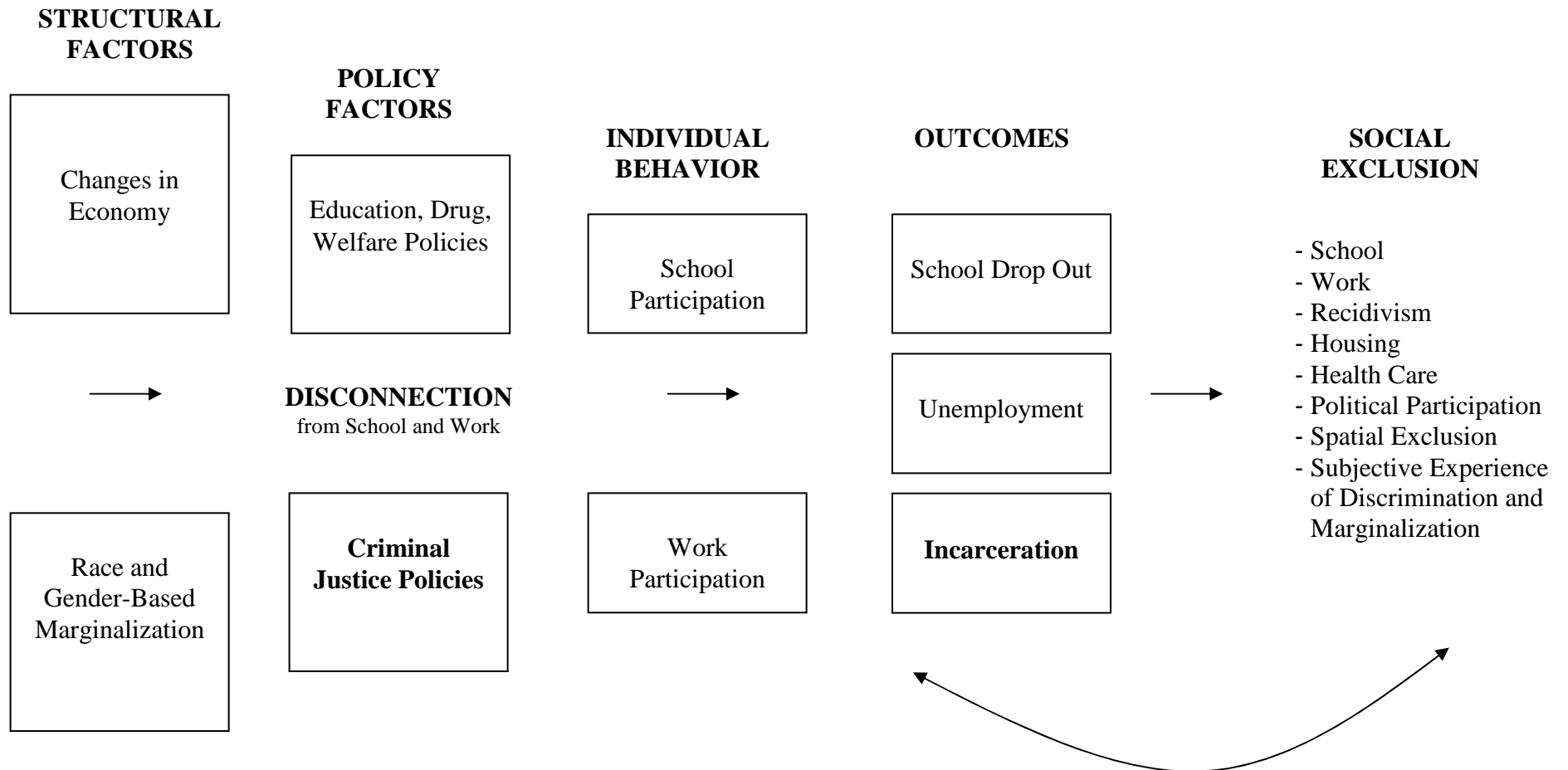
<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Dependent Variables - One Year After Release from Jail</i>									
	<i>No School Attendance</i> OR (B)		<i>Unemployment</i> OR (B)		<i>Recidivism</i> OR (B)		<i>Unstable Housing</i> OR (B)		<i>No Health Care</i> OR (B)	
	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II
<i>Prior to Incarceration</i>										
Age (Mean = 17.99)	1.37*** (0.32)	1.39*** (0.33)	1.02 (0.02)	1.03 (0.03)	1.00 (0.00)	0.90 (-0.10)	1.24 (0.22)	1.25 (0.22)	1.66* (0.51)	1.59** (0.47)
Black (55.8%)	2.31 (0.84)	2.18 (0.78)	0.84 (-0.17)	1.44 (0.36)	0.74 (-0.30)	0.93 (-0.07)	0.52 (-0.65)	0.42 (-0.87)	3.04 (1.11)	3.35 (1.21)
Latino (38.1%)	1.91 (0.65)	1.84 (0.61)	0.89 (-0.12)	1.35 (0.30)	1.03 (0.03)	1.13 (0.13)	0.92 (-0.08)	0.77 (-0.26)	3.03 (1.10)	2.91 (1.07)
Child welfare history (27.0%)	0.87 (-0.14)	0.94 (-0.06)	2.13*** (0.76)	1.82 (0.60)	1.67*** (0.51)	1.34 (0.29)	1.94*** (0.66)	1.48 (0.39)	1.36 (0.31)	1.25 (0.22)
Not living with parents/ guardian (10.1%)	1.00 (-0.01)	1.07 (0.07)	0.80 (-0.22)	0.65 (-0.43)	1.11 (0.10)	0.93 (-0.08)	1.61 (0.48)	1.90 (0.64)	0.76 (-0.27)	0.69 (-0.37)
Unstable housing (2.5%)	0.61 (-0.49)	0.72 (-0.33)	3.99E8 (19.81)	3.07E8 (19.54)	0.56 (-0.58)	0.30 (-1.18)	2.01 (0.70)	2.35 (0.86)	2.76 (1.02)	2.54 (0.93)
No health care (6.8%)	3.62 (1.29)	3.23 (1.17)	0.57 (-0.56)	0.65 (-0.43)	1.80 (0.59)	2.10 (0.74)	0.79 (-0.23)	0.03 (-1.16)	6.86* (1.93)	7.15* (1.97)
Number of previous arrests (Mean = 5.35)	1.42*** (0.35)	1.44*** (0.36)	1.18 (0.16)	1.19 (0.17)	1.33*** (0.29)	1.23 (0.25)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)
No school attendance (68.0%)	1.60 (0.47)	1.62 (0.48)	1.31 (0.27)	1.34 (0.29)	1.44 (0.36)	1.53 (0.43)	0.97 (-0.03)	0.72 (-0.33)	0.70 (-0.35)	0.71 (-0.36)
Not in labor force (33.5%)	0.74 (-0.31)	0.77 (-0.26)	1.45 (0.37)	1.38 (0.32)	1.19 (0.18)	1.07 (0.07)	1.41 (0.35)	1.32 (0.28)	0.99 (-0.01)	0.90 (-0.10)
Omnibus test of model coefficients χ^2 (p value)	22.96 (0.011)	--	14.98 (0.133)	--	20.43 (0.025)	--	18.64 (0.045)	--	33.19 (0.000)	--
Nagelkerke R ²	0.107	--	0.071	--	0.082	--	0.083	--	0.147	--
<i>One Year After Release from Jail</i>										
No school attendance (79.7%)	--	--	--	0.53 (-0.63)	--	1.40 (0.34)	--	0.61 (-0.49)	--	1.32 (0.28)
Unemployment (77.0%)	--	0.58 (-0.55)	--	--	--	1.52 (0.42)	--	13.61* (2.61)	--	0.79 (-0.24)
Recidivism (46.9%)	--	1.39 (0.33)	--	1.48 (0.39)	--	--	--	9.04* (2.21)	--	1.09 (0.08)
Unstable housing (24.8%)	--	0.56 (-0.59)	--	11.49* (2.44)	--	8.36* (2.12)	--	--	--	2.60** (0.96)

No health care (24.3%)	--	1.24 (0.22)	--	0.76 (-0.27)	--	1.09 (0.08)	--	2.86** (1.05)	--	--
Omnibus test of model coefficients χ^2 (p value)	--	28.60 (0.012)	--	44.51 (0.000)	--	76.03 (0.000)	--	103.10 (0.000)	--	42.47 (0.000)
Nagelkerke R ²	--	0.132	--	0.201	--	0.281	--	0.406	--	0.186

*p<0.001, **p<0.01, ***p<0.05

Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the Relationship between Incarceration and Social Exclusion



Chapter 6. Conclusion and Future Directions for Research and Policy

Overview

In writing this dissertation, my goal was to highlight a more progressive notion of masculinity for urban, young, Black and Latino men involved in the criminal justice system. Too often, the media and researchers cast these men as delinquent, misogynistic, and violent. This is despite the fact that plenty of evidence exists showing that men of color in urban areas are simply more likely to get picked up in neighborhood drug sweeps, for example. These same men get pushed out of the educational system and into a dismal economy with limited work opportunities. The nature of their “delinquency” ultimately stems from a specific set of structural conditions.

Taken together, the chapters in this dissertation demonstrate a kind of masculinity and set of relationship behaviors that do not necessarily correspond to the stereotypes of delinquency, misogyny, and violence. Instead, these men enter into long-term relationships and short-term relationships with little risk to their health. The young Black and Latino men described in this dissertation say they learn their masculinity from women, reporting that their notions of manhood are tied into family and children. One key theoretical and policy point is questioning to what extent these men can tap into more progressive ways of “being men” to improve outcomes related to their health and social well-being in the long term.

Sadly, many barriers complicate this vision. First, and in some ways most important, the incarceration experience obviously disrupts these young men’s lives. Though the men

described in this dissertation ranged from age 16-25, on average, all had several prior run-ins with the criminal justice system. Such incidents disrupt education, employment, and personal relationships. Additionally, this dissertation demonstrated that these young men face disadvantage in education and employment even before they experience incarceration, placing them in a vicious cycle.

One of the most important barriers to success that surfaced in this dissertation is the extent and effect of housing instability in the young men's lives. Housing instability came in many forms – not having a steady place to live, living in an institution, or being part of a household where young men experienced stress and anxiety from taking care of younger siblings. Policy barriers, such as housing and welfare ineligibility related to drug offenses, complicate these stresses even further, and trap many of these men in a cycle of illegal activity and incarceration. Though much is known about the relationship between housing instability, recidivism, and health risk in adults (especially among women), housing instability remains an under-emphasized area in policy and research on adjudicated, male youth. Furthermore, people assume education and employment are key to keeping people out of jail; however, something as basic as stable housing turns out to be a much more important predictor of success for young men involved in the criminal justice system.

The primary tasks for future research and policy on incarceration, gender, and health will be to: 1) figure out how to tap into progressive notions of manhood that don't stigmatize and marginalize urban, economically disadvantaged, young men of color; and 2)

simultaneously figure out how to address the multiple policy and structural barriers that ultimately prevent these men from succeeding. Promoting a progressive masculinity could mitigate health and social risks; however, social circumstances, such as education, employment, housing, incarceration, and racism may limit the effect of such individual gender-based interventions.

Main Findings

This dissertation demonstrated that contrary to stereotypes, young incarcerated men have some progressive views and behaviors related to their embodiment of masculinity and these views and behaviors, if developed, supported and promoted, could help to connect them to society, protect their health, and enable them to make more contributions to family and community. However, social policies on education, employment, and housing prevent young men from realizing these progressive opportunities; instead such policies send them back into illegal activity or more traditional male behaviors and attitudes, putting them at further risk.

For example, Chapter 3 argued that prior research on urban young men of color portrays them as individuals who only care about sex with multiple women and are generally uninterested in commitment (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995). As it turns out, these young men, even as young as age 16, enter into a variety of sexual partnerships, some of which include levels of commitment. One-quarter of the young men in the REAL MEN study reported having only long-term sex partners. One-fifth reported having short-term or casual sex partners only, and a little over half reported

having both of these types of sex partners simultaneously. The latter category turned out to be associated with high-risk behavior, while having a long-term sex partner seemed to protect these young men from negative outcomes, at least prior to incarceration. Over time, though, sex partner experience didn't matter as much. I hypothesize this had a lot to do with the disruptive nature of the incarceration experience. Ultimately, education, employment, and housing stability were the most important predictors of success, particularly for avoiding arrest and additional jail time.

This chapter concluded by recommending that it is necessary and worthwhile to engage young men and their partners in risk reduction interventions. Public health researchers have traditionally emphasized individual behavioral problems and assumed higher risk for young people of color. However, I recommend more of an emphasis on protective factors, in order to move more toward a progressive masculinity, or even a more progressive public health. The “progressive” represents a movement away from research that further stigmatizes already disadvantaged groups of young people by focusing on risk and negative outcomes.

In focus groups with another set of participants recently out of jail/prison and in an alternatives-to-incarceration program, I demonstrated that young men indeed endorse some aspects of what I consider a “progressive masculinity”. The young men in the focus group study, described in Chapter 4, repeatedly said they learned masculinity through their mothers. Several of the young men described “being a man” as cooking, cleaning, and successfully raising children. The men in this study moved beyond the

traditional notion of being a father as being financial provider. I hypothesize that due, in part, to barriers to their own financial success, these young men said being a “real man” was about being there for kids emotionally and physically – not just financially. Just as the men’s social situations were changing (pushed out of school, incarcerated, blocked from employment), it seemed to me the young men envisioned new ways of successfully embodying manhood as they imagined it.

This chapter concluded with a set of policy recommendations based in part on the theory of progressive masculinity – figuring out how to enable these young men to adopt the roles they saw for themselves. For example, I suggested some form of formal compensation for childcare, since many of the men reported skillful childrearing in their pasts. Though admittedly prior criminal records might prohibit such a policy change. Second, a discourse around manhood is possible when given the right environment. Alternatives-to-incarceration programs provide appealing sites for intervention, both in terms of locational accessibility and timing during the reentry process from jail to community.

The clearest indication of structural barriers to success for urban, young, Black and Latino men involved in the criminal justice system was described in Chapter 5. Using data from the REAL MEN study and recent policy reports on “disconnected youth” – youth out of school and out of work (Levitan, 2005) – this chapter described how young men of color who become incarcerated are often already disconnected long before entering the criminal justice system. Once they leave jail, these men face nearly

insurmountable barriers to social inclusion, given current economic, social, and policy conditions.

The success of this chapter is its description of the pathways to disconnection for poor, urban, young men of color. It starts by describing the local economic trends that have resulted in diminished work opportunity, especially for men of color. Joblessness, community re-structuring, and race and gender-based discrimination all contribute to a higher risk for incarceration (Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 1995; Hill Collins, 2004; Levitan, 2007). There are also specific educational policies that disadvantage older youth, resulting in high dropout rates (Dellums Commission, 2006; Treschan & Molnar, 2008). National policies like the federal No Child Left Behind act push under-performers out of the school system with little effort at creating educational alternatives. Policy and ethnographic reports describe how teachers in poor neighborhoods often ignore Black and Latino youth, casting them as unruly and unteachable (Barker, 2005; Dellums Commission, 2008). Over the long term, these policies push young men of color out of school, into the streets, and onto the path of the criminal justice system.

In evaluating disconnection and social exclusion with the REAL MEN data, however, it's neither the educational disadvantage nor the incarceration experience that leads to social exclusion. Rather, the primary predictor of social exclusion in this study was housing instability. Housing instability predicted lack of employment, recidivism, and lack of health care access, and a full quarter of participants in the REAL MEN study reported unstable housing situations after release from jail. The relationship between housing and

social exclusion was no doubt mediated by the incarceration experience and previous experiences of disconnection, though it is unclear how housing instability is related to sex partner instability. Housing, as a specific barrier to success, emerged in each of the three substantive chapters in this dissertation. Although many researchers focus on education and employment as specific predictors of post-incarceration success, stable housing turns out to be especially important (and a significant burden) for young men leaving jail.

In essence, in each of the three substantive chapters in this dissertation, micro-sociological factors – specifically the young men’s views and behaviors related to a progressive masculinity – were embedded in larger macro-sociological trends. Effecting change on individual-level outcomes and improving the lives of young men involved in the criminal justice system is only possible by taking into consideration the larger structural and policy barriers at play.

Theoretical Contributions

When I began this project I wanted to move away from stereotypes about young men of color who go to jail – stereotypes suggesting that these men were tough, violent, and misogynistic. Such stereotypes only further marginalize men of color. Inspired by subcultural theory that addressed “deviance” and simultaneously provided subjects with agency, I initially looked to the Birmingham School. In the face of large-scale structural changes at the city and neighborhood level, Birmingham theorists showed that young people ultimately adapt to their social situations by rebelling against mainstream institutions or creating new subcultures of “cool,” for example (Cohen, 1972; McRobbie,

1977; Willis, 1977). What is appealing about Birmingham School theorists is that they frame adaptation as resistance. Using a resistance framework takes into consideration structural disadvantages but also provides the actors with agency. Because my data didn't necessarily allow an investigation of the cultural production of masculinity, I looked for this agency in other studies of gender (and race).

I found that kind of agency in newer theory on progressive masculinities (hooks, 2004; Mutua, 2006; Neal, 2004). Such a literature and research agenda moves away from a body of highly informative ethnographic research on urban men of color in the United States (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995; Majors & Billson, 1992).

Though this literature provides significant insight into the rules and "codes" of urban street life, it runs the risk of further stigmatizing the young men it portrays. I tried to look for features of masculinity that would allow for an exploration of non-stigmatizing ways to "do" gender and for the subjects of this study to be "real men."

In an edited volume, *Progressive Black Masculinities*, Athena Mutua (2006) describes progressive masculinity as innovative practices of masculinity that push against oppressive social structures. Although nothing is particularly innovative about adolescents choosing to be in long-term relationships, highlighting those relationships among young men who usually get cast as uninterested in entering into committed partnerships, seemed like one approach to investigating a progressive masculinity. While the participants weren't necessarily actively "transforming" or pushing back on oppressive social structures, there was evidence in Chapter 4, for example, that young

men were certainly operating within the confines of these structures. Examples included child-rearing responsibilities – describing manhood as caring for, cooking, and keeping a home for siblings – as a necessity of their home lives. Another example of the awareness of structural obstacles was how young men redefined providing for their own children – not just financially, but in other more tenable ways, given their criminal justice histories. Neal (2004) describes exactly such an approach in his work on progressive masculinities.

Though none of the participants in this project provided an explicit critique of oppressive social structures, there is some evidence that the young men themselves resisted and can critique traditional gender norms. For example, in Chapter 4, I mentioned that two young men questioned my use of the term “real man.” They said that it was problematic because who’s to say what’s “real?” They thought they could offer descriptions of what it meant to be a “decent” man, but criticized my conflation of gender and “decency.” One of the participants in this conversation also pointed out that poor, urban youth aren’t encouraged to talk or to think – in school, in the home, or in jail. This awareness represents to me a critique of social norms, even if it was only mentioned by a couple of participants. Barker (2005) also highlights the resistance to traditional gender norms among his participants. He provides several examples that show young men disregarding violent behavior or drug use – one such participant said, “If they think I’m uncool, so, okay, I’ll be uncool then.” But this kind of resistance is no accident, according to Barker. These young men who resist gender and social norms in impoverished urban areas have several supports in place – family members, sex partners, progressive peer groups, and most importantly the ability to “see beyond the gender matrix.” This ability to critique

the gender structure (which would require certain communication abilities and peers willing to engage in such a discourse) was key to the resistance expressed by Barker's participants.

This project as a whole did not provide a comprehensive empirical investigation of progressive masculinity, as I point out in the limitations section below. Two notable omissions both in the literature on progressive masculinity and in this project are: 1) an investigation of progressive masculinity that accounts for racial/ethnic differences, particularly the experience of young Latino men; and 2) the function of a progressive masculinity for women – what's in it for the partners (female or male) of young men involved in the criminal justice system?

This dissertation ultimately draws on theories of progressive masculinity (hooks, 2004; Mutua, 2006; Neal, 2004), ethnographic research on poor, urban, young men of color (Anderson, 2000; Barker, 2005; Bourgois, 1995), recent studies on adolescent relationships (Giordano et al., 2008; Manning et al., 2008, 2005), and finally, local and national policy and economic trends (Levitan, 2005; see Chapter 5 for others). This dissertation fills a theoretical gap in the literature by building on progressive masculinities in the context of research on incarceration and health.

Methodological Lessons and Limitations

This mixed-methods dissertation resulted in several methodological lessons learned. For one, conducting focus groups allowed me to actually spend time with young men

involved in the criminal justice system. Although I was part of the REAL MEN research team, I never personally collected any data in the New York City jails. Having spent time with the young men may give me more credibility as a researcher, but also enabled me to have a “voice” and perspective about the subjects of my research.

Though the crossover of the two data sets (REAL MEN and the focus groups) was not necessarily highlighted in this dissertation, focus group questions were designed based on an exploratory analysis of REAL MEN data. A next step – and with more focus group data collection – would be to really flesh out any crossover in the data (e.g., to flesh out the role of sex partner experience in “protecting” young men against some health and social outcomes). Finally, the experience of doing a mixed-methods dissertation reinforced (for me) the potential of mixed-methods studies to show patterns of behavior with aggregated data, and then examine the “stories” on a more individual level.

Some methodological limitations prevent this dissertation from providing a more comprehensive investigation of the research questions. First, although I defined masculinity in certain ways – for example, as sex partner experience – I had no way of knowing how sex partners actually functioned in the day-to-day lives of the men. Sex partner experience, though an aspect of masculinity, in no way provides a comprehensive view of the subject. Such limitations stem from reliance on quantitative data sets with fixed study designs. While I was a member of the research team, questionnaires had been designed and most data had already been collected before I came onto the team.

In order to get at the nuances of masculinity and to spend time with my participants, I decided to conduct focus groups at an alternatives-to-incarceration program. The first problem is that the alternatives-to-incarceration participants were not the same as the REAL MEN participants, although they are similar on demographic and criminal justice characteristics. As a result, I could not do an accurate comparison across studies. This project was also dictated by the themes that arose during the focus groups, such as learning masculinity from women and an emphasis on childrearing. Therefore, I did not illustrate every aspect of progressive masculinity because my qualitative data depended on the topics that came up during the interviews. Some notable omissions in truly defining a progressive masculinity include a discussion of homosexuality and sexual performance, for example. Furthermore, time constraints (I spent three months conducting focus groups) prohibited a more comprehensive analysis of these themes around manhood.

Finally, though I was able to tell a story of discrimination by examining employment, education, and housing, I had no direct way of actually measuring how the young men in the REAL MEN and focus group studies actually experienced marginalization. I could only provide structural context for the micro-level data, but could not measure structural factors directly.

Future Directions for Research

Priorities for future research on incarceration, gender, and health for young men involved in the criminal justice system include: 1) conducting research on health risk that does not

stigmatize and further marginalize economically disadvantaged young men of color; 2) conducting mixed methods studies that explore the relationships between variables of interest, but also how certain variables function in the lives of participants; 3) finding alternative criminal justice venues to conduct research that would make it feasible to include an investigation of the effect of sex partnerships on couples – both men and women involved in these relationships; and 4) creating study designs that take into account and can measure the way that micro-sociological factors (e.g., behaviors, attitudes, and interactions) are embedded in larger macro-sociological contexts (e.g., economic, political, social, and policy trends).

One approach to giving research participants agency in the research process is to utilize community-based participatory research (CBPR) methods of data collection and intervention planning. Not only does CBPR operate on the principle of inclusion (rather than marginalization), but it also leads to more robust intervention designs that take into account the beliefs and needs of the people meant to benefit from such interventions. Research participants and their communities should be involved in study/intervention design, data collection, and data interpretation in future studies.

Secondly, continuing an investigation of progressive masculinity also increases agency for the young men engaged in studies of masculinity, rather than relying a purely risk-based framework for assessing health and social outcomes for young men involved in the criminal justice system. The key, however, is to conduct a more thorough analysis of progressive masculinity in future research.

Future studies that investigate progressive masculinity should be designed explicitly as mixed-methods studies. That is, new studies should have both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative part of the studies can measure specific relationships and outcomes, and the qualitative portion of the studies could help flesh out how variables actually function in the lives of participants.

To empirically test theories of progressive masculinity (e.g., ways to “do” gender that don’t correspond to traditional, patriarchal, sexist, homophobic, or racist versions of masculinity), new quantitative questionnaires should be designed to measure some of these constructs and outcomes of interest specifically. Such questionnaire design would rely heavily on a relatively small body of research devoted to progressive masculinity. In addition, because prior research is largely concerned with Black masculinity, future studies would have to account for multiple racial/ethnic characteristics of participants.

To accompany the quantitative instruments, qualitative data would also have to be collected in order to: 1) validate constructs relating to progressive masculinity in the quantitative questionnaires; and 2) more importantly, to investigate how certain variables actually function in the lives of participants. For example, participants may endorse non-traditional views of gender roles and relationships when administered a questionnaire, but their actual experiences with adults and sex partners may be different. The unanswered question of *why* long-term sex partners may be protective for young men – and other types of partnerships for dangerous (and what effect these relationships have on female or

other partners) – might also be fleshed out in more in-depth conversations. Additionally, giving research participants the opportunity to create their own narratives about masculinity in their lives ultimately gives participants more agency than aggregated questionnaire responses.

In future research, I would continue to conduct research in criminal justice settings outside of a jail, for example in alternatives-to-incarceration settings. This dissertation demonstrated the feasibility of conducting research and implementing interventions in jails and other types of criminal justice settings. Alternative criminal justice settings are understudied and underutilized as venues for criminal justice and health interventions. These settings also serve as good places to recruit young people with shorter criminal justice histories, because only such people would be eligible for jail diversion programs. Engaging young people with shorter criminal justice histories could potentially make interventions more meaningful – theoretically this group has more potential for staying out of jail, being in school, and maintaining employment in the long term.

Such a setting also makes it easier to recruit sex partners of participants, if pursuing such a line of research. Although researchers have been successful at engaging the partners of incarcerated men, working with young people in the free world (i.e., in community-based criminal justice programs) would create fewer obstacles for getting sex partners to participate in programming. Both research participants and their partners could move somewhat freely through the programming and their communities, making access easier for researchers. Implementing a CBPR model would be more feasible in such a setting,

as jails are highly protected and regulated environments. The importance of including sex partners in these studies cannot be underestimated. It is very unclear if different types of sex partnerships – particularly when one member of the couple experiences incarceration – leads to benefits or create additional health and social risks for partners in the free community.

Another challenge for future research is to study the relationship between micro-sociological and macro-sociological factors. Specifically, future research of the kind described in this dissertation would investigate how individual behavior, attitudes, and interactions are embedded within larger social structures. One way of measuring the types of social structures described here is to measure perceptions of marginalization, discrimination based on race, gender, and to explicitly measure the experience of social exclusion (e.g., the perception of exclusion from housing, medical services, and public space, for example). Although this data would be captured at the individual-level in questionnaire form, it still evaluates the experience of marginalization and interaction with larger social structures.

Secondly, though it may be difficult to measure individual action in the context of larger economic, political, and social trends, it is possible to describe these macro-sociological factors through a descriptive and historical analysis. Such a description is warranted in order to provide context to a particular story, for example, geographic-specific stories of de-industrialization, immigration, and segregation.

Finally, hierarchical models may be employed when larger structural factors are measurable. For example, individual-level behavior can be measured in the context of community-wide poverty rates, school enrollment rates, crime rates, public housing rates, and level of neighborhood segregation. Data could be aggregated for these larger structural factors at the community level. Individual behavior could then be nested under the community-wide data.

Future Directions for Policy

This dissertation has largely been concerned with thinking through interventions that might improve the life chances of young men involved in the criminal justice system. This dissertation ultimately proposes three levels for intervention – individual, community, and structural-level intervention.

At the individual level, this dissertation demonstrated how two novel approaches to interventions for adolescents are both warranted and feasible. First, it seems that even for adolescents, sex partner choice does matter and is a significant aspect of their daily lives. Given that certain types of sex partners can be protective against a set of negative health outcomes, engaging individuals and their partners in health interventions seems advisable. Prior research has shown this approach is successful with adults (Grinstead et al., 2008, 2005). Such models for intervention might draw on studies of family or peer-based intervention.

Secondly, this dissertation showed that young men are willing to talk about their masculinity and that a progressive discourse on manhood is indeed possible. Recently, researchers have argued that such a discourse is the starting point for both defining a progressive masculinity and using it to improve health and social outcomes (Barker, 2005; hooks, 2004). However, little prior research has specifically outlined *how* to use such a discourse as intervention. The parent REAL MEN study did incorporate focus group discussions into the intervention planning, but preliminary analysis does not demonstrate the success of this approach, at least as far as changing outcomes. Perhaps intervention design for harnessing discourse could be borrowed from psychological studies of group therapy.

Each chapter of this dissertation highlighted the significant barriers young men of color face for success in education and employment. The parent REAL MEN study demonstrated that connecting young men from jail to community-based organizations is possible (Daniels et al., 2009). Such jail-to-community connections have a history of proven effectiveness elsewhere, as well (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Due to the inequities in education, employment, housing, and correctional system involvement, this dissertation proposed several types of community-level interventions that could meet the needs of low-income, urban, young men. Rather than relying on a particular theoretical orientation to intervention design, such jail-to-community interventions would have to rely on community collaborations, networking, policy, and political support.

Structural interventions that reduce inequity in education, employment, criminal justice, and housing would include, for example, the removal of criminal justice questions on job and housing applications, where not pertinent to the application. Criminal justice policies could be revised so they don't disproportionately target minority and low-income neighborhoods. Policy makers could rewrite mandatory minimum sentence laws so that they don't incarcerate first-time, non-violent offenders. Individual states and local jurisdictions are starting to make such changes in local policy. These changes could be incorporated into more local jurisdictions and possibly at the federal level.

Finally, although structural-level interventions may never fully address and erase race, gender, and criminal history-based discrimination, research that focuses on larger economic, political, and social trends can at the very least highlight the inequities that influence individual-level behavior. Such studies might draw on the work of Pager (2003), for example, which explicitly measured employer-based racial discrimination on a case-by-case basis.

Although individual-level interventions are feasible and important, until the set of policy and structural barriers to success for young Black and Latino men are addressed, we will continue to see these young men trapped in a cycle of disenfranchisement and reincarceration.

Appendices

A. Dependent, Independent, and Control Variables for REAL MEN Study

Table 1. Dependent Variables of Interest

Outcomes	Outcome Descriptions	Data Collection
Sex risk	Age at sexual initiation, more than 3 sex partners in past 3 months, consistency of condom use, sex while high on alcohol/drugs	Time 1, 2 data
Drug risk	Alcohol/drug dependence, daily marijuana use, hard drug use	Time 1, 2 data
Violence	Possession of weapons at time of criminal activity, violent criminal charges, admission to hospital for injuries related to violence	Time 1, 2 data
Recidivism	Rearrest, reincarceration, length of reincarceration	Time 2 data
School	No school attendance, ever held back	Time 1, 2 data
Employment	No full-time, part-time, or on and off employment	Time 1, 2 data
Housing	Unstable or institutional housing, not living with parents	Time 1, 2 data
Health Insurance	Not having health insurance coverage	Time 1, 2 data

Table 2. Independent Variables

Predictors	Predictor Descriptions	Data Collection
Sex partner experience	Having long-term sex partners only, having only casual sex partners, having long-term sex partners and other partners simultaneously	Time 1, 2 data
Demographic characteristics	Age, race	Time 1 data
Housing	Unstable or institutional housing, not living with parents	Time 1, 2 data
Criminal justice characteristics	Prior arrests	Time 1 data
School	No school attendance, ever held back	Time 1, 2 data
Employment	No full-time, part-time, or on and off employment	Time 1, 2 data

Table 3. Control Variables of Interest

Controls	Control Descriptions	Data Collection
School	No school attendance, ever held back	Time 1, 2 data
Employment	No full-time, part-time, or on and off employment	Time 1, 2 data
Days in jail between interviews	Days incarcerated in past year	Time 2 data
Housing	Child welfare involvement, unstable or institutional housing, not living with parents	Time 1, 2 data
Intervention	Randomization to intervention	Time 1 data

B. Focus Group Questions on Masculinity

Focus Groups with Alternatives-to-Incarceration Participants Protocol

Thank you for attending this focus group. My name is Megha Ramaswamy, and I'm a graduate student at the City University of New York. As part of my studies at CUNY I'm doing a focus group to ask you some questions about masculinity. So that's what we're here today to do. You don't have to answer a question if you don't want to. I just ask that you be respectful, so if someone else is talking that you don't talk over them. There are no right or wrong answers, and I'm interested in hearing everyone's opinions. If it's ok with everyone here, I'd like to audio record this group, that way I don't have to take notes while everyone is talking, and I won't have to stop the conversation to make sure I've gotten everything written down. I can go back later and listen to the recording and write things down then. When I do that I won't use your names or identify who said what. It'll just be, "One participant said this, and another said this..." Sound good? Ok. Let's first just go around the room and introduce ourselves, first names are fine.

Before we start our discussion, I just want to describe what you can expect from this study, and then get your written consent. Please feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions at any point.

Masculinity questions:

- What is your definition of a real man?
- When do you or guys like you get away from this? What prevents you or guys like you from meeting your definition of a real man?
- What are some of the ways that real men differ from men who aren't real men?
- How is masculinity handed down to guys like you? How do guys like you learn how to be a man? From family, in homes, schools, street corner, jail, where?
- Can you give me some examples of things that you and guys like you do that make you feel like a man?
- What are some of the things you do in different areas – relationships, school, work, that make you be the kind of man you want to be?
- Are you a different kind of man with your long-term (sex) partners, compared to your other casual partners?
- What role do these partners play in getting you in trouble or preventing you from getting into trouble?
- What role to marijuana and alcohol play in being a man, for you or guys like you?
- In terms of being a real man, what are some ways you are different (as a man) before and after incarceration

- What kind of man do you want to be?

Demographic questions:

- What is your age?
- What is your race/ethnicity?
- Do you have a child? If yes, how many?
- What borough do you live in?
- How long have you spent behind bars, total?
- How long have you been out since your last incarceration?

Ok, that's it. Thank you so much for participating in this focus group! Let me know if you have any questions.

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