Raced and gendered reactions to the deviance of drunkenness: A sociological analysis of race and gender disparities in alcohol use

BY ROBERT L. PERALTA

Research has consistently documented race and gender disparities in alcohol use. In this article, I refine the "time-out" hypothesis while arguing that these longstanding disparities in use are in part due to the impact of gender and race on deviance categorization. Public drinking behaviors operate within social spaces that may or may not be hospitable to a given person's gender and/or race status. I explore how formal and informal modes of social control influence alcohol use behavior. Findings are based on semistructured interviews with 78 American Black, White, male and female college students. Grounded theory was used in the development of three themes: (a) Acute awareness of women's otherness: multiple jeopardy and the multiple standard of alcohol use; (b) the gendered violence of women's marginalization; and (c) fear of violent victimization: alcohol and the dangerous Black male. Each theme illustrates how social inequalities structure alcohol use and reactions to alcohol use differently, depending on the intersections of race, gender, and situated contexts.

KEY WORDS: *Alcohol, morality, deviance, race, gender, inequality, violence.*

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Notions of "morality" or what constitutes "moral behavior" contribute to a social system that differentially distributes stigma and marginalization. The morality of alcohol use, an area relatively neglected in alcohol studies (Room, 2005), lends itself well to an intersectional analysis of why gender and race differences in drinking continue (Wechsler & Kuo, 2003). For women and racial minorities, questions of morality have historically been used to exclude minorities from partaking in various aspects of social interaction (e.g., occupational and/or educational opportunities) or to justify otherwise unjust treatment (Pfohl, 1994). Nevertheless, MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969) argued that drunkenness afforded the inebriated a "time-out" from social sanction. Grounded in interview data, I identify race- and gender-based structural inequality's impact on alcohol-use behavior and reactions to drunkenness. I explore how raced and gendered social arrangements might shape the social contexts necessary for the discouragement of drinking behaviors for women and racial minorities through stigmatization, denigration practices, and the threat of violence—therefore perpetuating disparities in drinking and disaffirming the time-out phenomena (at least in part).

The legacy of moral standards continues to affect attitudes toward various behaviors and does so differently for women and racial minorities because of a gendered and racialized system which subordinates women and nonwhite people in White male status-ascension processes (Messerschmidt, 1993; Schur, 1984). Marginalization and stigma, as consequences of morality, are facets of social inequality that have been found to impact social behavior and social interaction (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Public drinking behaviors operate within social spaces that may or may not be receptive to a person's gender and/or race status. Belknap and Holsinger (2006) emphasized the critical importance of "accounting for intersecting oppressions and identities when assessing gender differences" (p. 66). I rely on this vantage point of intersectionality theory in my examination of how race and gender differences in heavy episodic drinking and alcohol-related problems

might stem from negative race- and gender-based societal reactions. Using semistructured interviews, I illustrate how inequalities structure alcohol-use behavior in the situated context of a university setting during a specific time period: 1998-2001.

A gender- and race-informed critique of the time-out phenomenon

MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969) argued that drunken comportment, conceptualized as a time-out period during collective intoxication, was a state of reprieve from social sanction against immoral or otherwise untoward behavior. This process was found to be socially determined and varied across time and space. This suggests that, theoretically, drunken individuals can engage in deviant behavior (e.g., immoral behavior) without reprisal. Note that in this conceptualization, intoxication as a condition was not necessarily considered deviant. While this influential research illustrates the complex relationship between alcohol use and social interaction, the concept of time-out can be assessed from an intersectional perspective.

Scholars such as Partanen (1991) and Room (2001) have provided such an assessment by suggesting the time-out theory neglects the significance of drinking as social interaction. These scholars suggest that it is misleading to think of cultural contexts as having a single set of norms informing a lone, well-defined, time-out condition equally applied to all regardless of race and or gender. Other scholars have looked closely at race *and* gender and have reported that Black males, for example, may operate differently from White males when drinking. In fact, such research raises the question of whether Black males become unaffected or at least less disinhibited by drinking than White males. Herd suggests this may be illustrative of cultural norms within the Black community (Herd, 1983).

Researchers have long documented a similar "double stan- dard" for alcohol use among women (Wilsnack & Wilsnack, 1997; Blume, 1997). Male bar patrons, in one study, judged women bar patrons negatively (Parks & Scheidt, 2000). Women in these contexts were stereotyped as sexually promiscuous, rendering these women of questionable character. Others have similarly found that women are more vulnerable to social dis- approval for displaying the effects of heavy alcohol consump- tion (Landrine, Bardwell, & Dean, 1988; Windle & Barnes, 1988). With regard to racial minorities and drinking, minori- ties are much more likely than their white counterparts to be victims of police brutality and harassment in public spaces, especially when dominant group members perceive the use of alcohol consumption (Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Mastrofski, Reisig, & McCluskey, 2002). African Americans are also more likely to be associated with substance abusing stereotypes yet nation- ally representative surveys typically find African Americans to abuse substances less frequently and are more likely to abstain compared to their White counterparts (Wallace & Bachman, 1991; Wechsler & Kuo, 2003). Taken together, this body of research suggests the time-out phenomenon may be working differently or not at all for minorities.

Negative outcomes for minorities: A note on situated contexts and violence

With respect to alcohol use and aggression, the research in this area predominantly finds a positive association wherein alcohol use by perpetrators and/or victims increases the likelihood of victimization (Bachman & Peralta, 2002; Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; Rolfe et al., 2006; Young, Morales, McCabe, Boyd, & d'Arcy, 2005). While researchers continue to debate whether increased victimization represents a direct, causal determinant of drinking or more complex, indirect social processes (Lipsey, Wilson, Cohen, & Devon, 1997 or Brecklin, 2002), the positive association between alcohol consumption and victimization is not in question. What remains to be understood is why groups

such as women and racial minorities experience a heightened risk for certain types of victimization (e.g., sexual assault [Gidycz & Koss, 1989; Seifert, 1999]; and police brutality [Feagin & Sikes, 1994]) when studies consistently show that these groups drink much less than their White male counterparts.

There are types of victimization for which women are at greater risk in the context of drinking. For example, women who binge drink are more likely to be sexually assaulted and blamed for their victimization than their nondrinking counterparts (Blume, 1991; Wilsnack, 1991; Young et al., 2005). Ullman, Karabatsos, & Koss (1999), using nationally representative data, confirmed that women who consume alcohol are at risk for violent victimization and men who consume alcohol are at risk for perpetrating these crimes. This research further suggested that it is not uncommon for men to target women who are drinking at social events in order to commence sexual advances and, in worst case scenarios, sexual aggression against women.

On enduring alcohol use disparities: What a sociological perspective can offer

For the reasons discussed above, minorities may drink less than their White counterparts. Indeed, epidemiologic evidence consistently shows that, compared to women, men drink more frequently and drink larger quantities of alcohol (Fergusson, Horwood, & Lynskey, 1994; Wallace & Bachman, 1991; Wechsler & Kuo, 2003). Similar studies indicate that African Americans drink less than Whites; and Black females drink the least (Christie-Mizell & Peralta, 2009). Interestingly, colleges and universities with higher numbers of minorities have lower rates of overall drinking behaviors (Wechsler & Kuo, 2003).

Brezina and Piquero (2007), who recently found that race and gender predict abstention from "delinquency" (largely defined as substance use that included alcohol use measures), postu-

late that isolationism and moral beliefs are both at work in substance use abstention among youth. However, the authors do not critically assess how or why female and racial minorities in particular are more likely to be isolated from the majority or popular group (i.e., substance-using youth) in this particular study. One plausible reason for the lack of attention to how women and racial minorities are perceived and treated within the drinking environment may very well be due to the fact that higher levels of drinking on the part of White males result in the greater likelihood that White males are perpetrators and victims of alcohol-related problems (Graham & Wells, 2001; Wells & Graham 2003; Rolfe et al., 2006). With White men partaking in most of the abusive drinking and alcohol-related behaviors, this empirical fact may sociologically engender a larger context where this activity becomes normative and implied in social settings *and* scientific analysis.

Although researchers have taken note of the importance of race, gender, and context in shaping alcohol consumption (Watt & Rogers, 2007; Herd, 1997; Herd & Grube, 1993; Maddox, 1970) and the convergence of drinking behavior between men and women (Christie-Mizell & Peralta, 2009), few qualitative studies have presented in-depth analyses of this process, with notable exceptions that include Herd (1983), Törrönen and Maunu (2005), and Russell (1970). It is important to continue such research endeavors insofar as other research has demonstrated that together race and gender shape not only how individuals are socially perceived and sanctioned, but also how individuals perceive themselves and whether they experience fear or safety in a given social setting (Herd & Grube, 1993; Timberlake & Estes, 2007). In particular, it is important to examine how the intersection between race and gender shapes perceptions of drunkenness, decisions about which contexts are suitable for alcohol consumption, and whether or not to consume alcohol at all and, if so, in what quantities.

In sum, rendering or constructing persons as "different" is a formidable form of social control (Schur, 1984). Schur and

others (Messerschmidt, 1993; Di Stefano, 1998) identify areas where the application of deviant labels based on gender and or race is an expression of power and thus shapes social interaction and structural inequalities. The social process of deviance categorization can control behavior and mandate conformity. Because gender and race are understood to be a significant condition of global, national, and local identity constructions, and research on the effects of gender and race on social interaction are well established (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), I take a closer look at the culturally produced time-out at the local level (e.g., face-to-face interaction) using a race-gender intersectionality theoretical framework. In so doing, I question whether the time-out phenomenon is at least partially dependent upon the intersecting effects of gender and race. I thus fill a gap in the literature by addressing in theoretical terms how race- and gender-based marginalization and stigma shape alcohol use behavior (thereby maintaining disparities in alcohol use behavior [Wechsler and Kuo, 2003]).

Methods and data

To better understand variation in reactions to drunken comportment as a possible force related to drinking disparities, I turn to gender and race as intersecting forms of inequality. I heed the call to begin a more detailed description of the normative contours (e.g., morality) that influence social interaction and contribute to structural inequality within given subcultures (Room, 2005). The meaning of alcohol use is analyzed here by asking college students about gendered and raced expectations and reactions to alcohol use among minorities. To research the structuring action of gender and race on social interaction, I employ a theoretical purposive sample of American female and male, Black and White college undergraduates.

Accounts of alcohol use and quotes pertaining to White female and African American male and female alcohol use are

used to examine the consequences of race and gender norm violations associated with alcohol use. I also theorize about how marginalized status might shape drinking behavior and reactions to drinking behavior. An analysis of race and gender integrated into a systematic sociological analysis of deviance and the consequences for such deviance among marginalized groups is my intended purpose of this article. I ask: Are reactions to alcohol use dependent upon race and gender? Does alcohol use afford minorities a time-out? Do gender and race vary the effectiveness of time-out? What are the social forces shaping students' drinking behavior by race and or gender?

Procedure and data analysis

Data were largely collected by the primary author between 1997 and 2001. The University Office of Human Research reviewed and approved the protocol and granted ethical approval for the project. Participants were between the ages of 18 and 24. All were attending the university (research site) at the time of the study. The legal drinking age at the time of this study was 21. About half of the respondents were over 21. Participants were recruited via class announcements and advertisements posted on campus. Minority participants were purposely sought out to allow for an intersectional analysis of race and gender. Twenty-two of the 78 interviews were conducted by a White female research assistant trained in qualitative methods; the remaining interviews were conducted by the author (gay Hispanic male). We each interviewed both men and women. Interviews were between 1 and 3 hours long with a mean of 1.5 hours.

Rapport was established by assuring confidentiality; providing a safe, secure, and private interview space; and establishing a nonthreatening, nonhierarchical atmosphere where the participant was informed that he or she was the "expert" in the area of "college student alcohol use." The age difference between interviewers and participants was about 7 years, which may have aided in the establishment of rapport. All participants were free to skip any question or to discontinue the interview at any time (all participants completed the interview in full).

All data were audiotaped and transcribed with participants' permission. Pseudonyms and minor quote editing are used to protect informants' identity and to condense lengthy quotes.

Data were analyzed using grounded theory techniques. Grounded theory as a methodology is the appropriate approach for this research design because the intent was to illuminate the social processes of race and gender involved in the context of alcohol use. I specifically intended to generate theory from data at the outset of the study. Themes were inductively generated from these data using a line-by-line open coding method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As data were being collected, the author simultaneously consulted the literature as part of a grounded theory research process involving data collection, literature review, coding, cross comparison, and revisiting the literature to develop a theory and data-driven piece. I was not constrained by theory. The experience was one of exploration and discovery—as grounded theory approaches should be. Participants, especially minority participants, informed me about the meaning of alcohol use thus eradicating previously held assumptions. Initial codes included "racism," "violence victimization," "privilege," and "social control." The analytic goals were to generate concepts and hypotheses directly from these data by identifying the meaning of alcohol use and discovering how drinking becomes a gendered and raced experience (Glaser, 1995; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The results presented here are not meant for broader generalization; they are intended for theory-building.

I searched for gendered and race-related features of alcohol use and reactions to alcohol use via the reading and coding of interview transcripts. I read through all interview data several times focusing on accounts of behavior that reflected race and gender marginalization. After I established emergent themes, I refocused on gender and race by placing drinking activity and reactions to alcohol use at the center of my analytic framework. I then compiled the data using this framework from which patterns of gendered and raced alcohol use were cate-

gorized. I selected representational accounts from the generated themes to be used as illustrations of each emergent theme. The themes discussed here and their supporting quotes represent emergent properties supported by the majority of respondents. A discussion of my search for disconfirming evidence (important for reducing threats to validity and strengthening the credibility of the findings) conclude each thematic section.

Interview guide   I developed and tested a semistructured, open-ended interview guide that consisted of 12 main questions. Demographic questions were asked in addition to questions about drinking quantity and frequency, attitudes toward drinking, reasons for drinking, expectations of alcohol use, and consequences of drinking (e.g., blackouts, alcohol-related injuries). Questions were expanded through the use of probes and projective questioning to reduce the response effect of sensitive questions (e.g., questions were asked about friends' use of alcohol in addition to questions about interviewees' own use of alcohol). Some of the main questions were: "How do you feel about getting drunk? What have been your experiences with alcohol use on this campus? Have you experienced alcohol-related violence? What do you think of students who drink very little or who abstain? What do you think of students who take risks when drinking?" Participants were asked to discuss and elaborate upon perceived gender and race differences. The majority of participants spontaneously discussed "women's" behavior in comparison to "men's" behavior and vice versa. African American participants were far more cognizant of race and readily made comparisons between Black and White alcohol-related behaviors compared to White participants who did not spontaneously offer such descriptions.

Participants   Respondents were a volunteer group of 78 never-married undergraduate students at a medium-sized state university in the mid-Atlantic region. Sixty-nine percent ($N = 55$) were European American, and 27% ($N = 20$) were African American. Two Hispanics (one male and one female) and one Asian male were also interviewed. Forty-four men and 34 women partici-

pated. The respondents were evenly distributed across the college years; almost one third were either freshmen ($N = 24$) or seniors ($N = 25$), 15% were sophomores ($N = 11$), and 22% were juniors ($N = 18$). The mean age was at the median point for traditional college students: 20 years, 5 months. Fifteen percent ($N = 11$) of the sample reported membership in a fraternity or sorority. Nearly all (95%) reported "middle" or "upper-middle class" status.

Findings

Below I present themes pertaining to attitudes and reactions toward White women's and African American men and women's drinking in order to establish how societal reactions to alcohol use is different for people of marginalized status, and how gendered and raced processes structure social interaction and marginalization at the local level. Three specific themes comprise my findings: 1) *Acute awareness of women's otherness: multiple jeopardy and the multiple standard of alcohol use;* 2) *the gendered violence of women's marginalization; 3) fear of violent victimization: alcohol and the dangerous Black male.* Below, each theme is discussed and supported with illustrative quotes.

Acute awareness of women's otherness: Multiple jeopardy and the multiple standards of alcohol use

I move beyond the "double standard" literature by adopting a "multiple standards" perspective in light of the existence of multiple forms of marginalized identities and inequalities which inform and are informed by social alcohol-use processes (Collins, 2000). The outcomes of multiple jeopardy and marginalization are not about the quantity of inequality one faces, but more about the quality of the experience as suggested by respondents' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes. Grounded in the data, I theorize and evidence multiple standards for alcohol use by examining how the nexus of morality and being a White or Black female creates a particularly complex and precarious situation (e.g., multiple jeopardy) for women in the university drinking scene. Illustrations of how Black and

White women are perceived and how these women experience marginalization (i.e., the quality) in the context of social-drinking practices are presented below.

Questions of morality attributed to alcohol use appear to contribute to Black or White women's marginalization in that morality is differentially applied to women. The social mechanisms by which women suffer outcomes related to alcohol use were not found to be due to alcohol use per se, but instead to negative societal reactions to heavy alcohol use among women in the context of a male-dominated university party scene. Take the following account:

It is something that just males do. Women do drink it and I know we should not look down upon women who drink and they don't but it is in the back of everyone's mind that at one time it was wrong. They do drink but tradition is there. (Thomas; Black male)

Thomas spotlighted a certain conspicuousness associated with female drinking. Tradition was invoked as a reason as to why a woman's drinking is evaluated according to different standards. It is the societal reaction to heavy alcohol use among women which is important here, and not necessarily the physical act of alcohol use among women. Women's traditionally subordinated status, combined with alcohol-related behavior considered "immoral" for women, place women at risk for negative labeling. Thus, women were not privileged with a time-out period. In fact, alcohol use in and of itself can be constituted a deviant act for women specifically—which is indicative of one of the ways in which multiple standards pertaining to alcohol use operate.

Many examples of which "types" of women was appropriate for the development of romantic relationships were discussed by men. Women who were perceived to be heavy users of alcohol were explicitly omitted as potential romantic partners because of their conspicuous alcohol-related gender violations. One African American male (Thomas) said: "I would never consider developing a [romantic] relationship with

someone who was drinking at a party, period." Below are additional examples:

For me (a woman who is) drunk is a very total turn off. They (women) are sloppy obnoxious and it is a turn off. I think that if a female is tanked, I don't think that she is at all attractive. I'm not being like sexist but there is something about a woman chugging back a beer that looks so masculine, you know what I mean? (Bryan; Black male)

I think casually, women drinking, is alright but to see a girl all drunk is not cute at all. It would not attract me in the least. But to be a little bent is okay. Like me and my girlfriend I can't imagine going out and holding her up. Like no way, it looks bad. (Jake; Black male)

If women "drank too much" (e.g., too often and or too heavily) women were negatively described by participants. Also, participants noted that their friends and family also described "heavy drinking women" in a negative fashion. Importantly, both men and women described frequent and heavy drinking women negatively and as particularly "problematic." These collective reactions may have dissuaded women from taking part in the drinking culture to the extent that men regularly do. Below are further illustrations.

What makes me worry? Yeah . . . females looking like they'll have sex with anyone. Like a group of drunk women walking, you can hear the mating call of freshman girls [when they say} "I AM SO DRUNK!" This is the mating call of freshman girls. But yeah . . . like if you see a group of girls and they are walking and they are all stumbling and like it's like no, that is no good. That bothers me. (Maria; White female)

[My mother once told me] "We are not going to have drunks in our family." [My mother] doesn't like seeing women like that because she knows women like that. My dad's sister used to drink all the time. (Janice; Black female)

Because of negative perceptions based on race, Black students appear to curtail and/or alter drinking behavior to avoid negative labeling. The intersection of being Black and female also structured the drinking behaviors of Black women. Take the quote below as an example. Donna (Black female) discusses how race and gender structured drinking.

But the thing here is I can never be myself around these [White] people because they really don't know me so I would hate for their first impression to be "oh man, she got wasted, she's drunk all the time" where back home, they'd know, we grew up together, we evolved into drinking together. I don't want anyone to say like "wow, she gets really drunk."

Donna goes on to discuss how she is very careful about where and how she imbibes alcohol in her ongoing efforts to deflect or avoid negative evaluations. Importantly, Donna is concerned not just about her personal "reputation" but is also concerned about what her behavior suggests of Black women at large. Other Black students felt that they could not appear to be a "partier" and, in fact, felt that they had to work harder than White students to maintain a level of respect from Whites on campus. One Black female (Alice) stated, "I definitely feel that I have to work even more because I'm a Black female because women are minorities, Blacks are minorities. We have to show that we can do this; we have to knock this out."

Black female and White female participants recognized that informal social barriers were an impediment that structured their leisure time. Female participants also recognized the relative freedom with which White male participants consumed alcohol. This is not surprising given research that documents how alcohol use for White men expresses and reinforces hegemonic standards of "male" behavior (Capraro, 2000; West, 2001). Thus, drinking, including heavy drinking, was largely acknowledged as normative for White men (Peralta, 2007). For Black and White women and Black men, drinking behaviors were prone to deviant categorization.

It is important to note that for men heavy drinking did not need to be explained, excused, or nullified (Peralta, 2007). For women, excessive use of alcohol conjoined with visible intoxication performance in a sense backfired and no longer functioned as a viable time-out period when signs of intoxication were overt. In fact, obvious intoxication became a form of female-specific deviance (see Schur, 1984)

that rendered women vulnerable to a gender-specific form of marginalization.

The findings presented here suggest that Black and White women perceive that informal institutional arrangements have made it difficult to consume alcohol without social sanctioning. These social constraints hinder the use of alcohol for women and especially racial minorities. In other words, multiple standards for alcohol use emerged suggesting the time-out phenomenon is tempered by race and gender socialization. This process is similar to the ways in which cultural stereotypes are applied to Black women but are absent in discussions of White women and men (e.g., such as "matriarchs," "mammies," and "hoochies") (Collins, 2000).

These findings support a general multiple standard of drinking which negatively affects Black or White women for using alcohol in the way White males might be socialized to use alcohol. Data suggest that the ways in which racism and sexism operate in the context of social alcohol use in turn affect perceptions of individuals by one's master status (i.e., race and/or gender categories; see Schur, 1984), which impact subsequent decisions on whether and/or how to use alcohol socially. Attempts to find disconfirming evidence in the transcripts was a futile exercise in that participants were apparently unable to ignore or overlook gender in discussions of alcohol use. However, cultural explanations related to alcohol consumption could explain why Black males did not consider engaging in romantic relationships with women who were heavy users of alcohol. This, however, is beyond the scope of the current paper (see Herd [1983] for an excellent discussion of culture and the African American experience).

The gendered violence of women's marginalization

Based on accounts presented here, drunkenness among women appears to violate a gender norm in that emphasized femininity (i.e., the dominant form of femininity) requires the embodiment of characteristics such as attractiveness, sexual abstinence, purity, and innocence (Messerschmidt, 1993). When perceived

drunkenness among women is detected (mainly among unknown women), participants reported viewing women partaking in this behavior as "bad women" or unacceptable in general as described earlier. As such, "bad women" are not given the level of respect afforded to "good women," which in part may be code for "women who do not [abuse] alcohol." Empirically, we know that alcohol has been used to seduce women and to impair their efforts at resisting unwanted advancements (Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004), thus increasing women's risk for sexual victimization. Interviews with participants revealed that women who appeared drunk evoked concerns about their well being and safety, especially in regard to the threat of sexual assault by men. Female and male participants alike feared for the safety of women who appeared to be intoxicated because they were considered vulnerable targets. Moreover, respondents believed that any negative consequences stemming from female drunkenness would ultimately be blamed on women choosing to become intoxicated. Below, Donna, a Black female, said:

If a woman is drunk, it's like I hope she has someone around her, a guy that's going to protect her or I hope she's not dressed real sleazy like, because she might be taken advantage of. But a woman drunk is a sign of vulnerability. When I see a woman who is drunk and her friends are helping to carry her out, like holding her up, you just never know what can happen because you are not with it. So, if something would have happened, you would have gotten blamed for it because, you know, you asked for it. And some guys don't think of you as "that could be my sister, or my mother." But she would be blamed for it.

Other women avoided the drinking culture as much as possible for the fear of being taken advantage of, as suggested below:

That is a reason why I don't drink too much. I'm afraid of going to bars and having something put into my drink. Or you know, if I, see, one time I was really drunk and the thought occurred "what if I passed out what would happen?" I have heard lots of stories and I don't want to become one of the statistics. (Laura; White female)

Participants spoke of experiences where women were in fact "taken advantage of" during intoxicated states. The following

accounts exemplify how drunkenness among women subjects these women to violence because of their deviance and not because of their intoxication. Respondents discussed how alcohol was literally used as a device which transformed female peers into "loose women" undeserving of respect and subject to maltreatment. Daniel, a White male, explains:

Daniel: I have seen guys try to get girls drunk like pouring them— like you know, if they are sitting there, drinking, especially if they are drinking hard alcohol, the guy will pour the girl more or pour her the same amount he is drinking and he is 50, 60, 70 lbs. heavier than her and he has more experience with alcohol.

Interviewer: Is this involved in rape?

Daniel: Yeah definitely. I don't [pause] I think [pause] like with people who I know who try to get girls drunk um wouldn't say rape but I would say like trying to like get somewhere with them like to, you know, to try to get them to at least hook up. Umm but I know that if a guy is drunk or whatever and coming back from the bar, I think it takes a certain kind of person to perform rape. I don't think any one of my friends would fall into that category. But yeah it would play a role in rape.

In the quote above, note how only "certain types" of people are understood to be capable of rape. The use of alcohol for sex is not necessarily considered rape by acquaintances or friends. It is thus not the alcohol per se that is creating dangerous situations for these women. Instead, it is the negative social sanctions applied to women (and not men) in the form of punishment for alcohol use and gender norm-based violations. This form of sanctioning is a process that subordinates women while elevating male students to dominant status. A method that facilitates the construction of women as "other" or "less than" is to have women drink heavily. When a woman becomes drunk, her feminized gender identity is diminished as evidenced by (a) her drunken behavior and (b) her presumed loss of "inhibition" that can be interpreted as a posture that is sexually promiscuous. In addition, because of societal norms that judge drunken women more harshly compared to drunken men, dehumanization is made possible. These cultural understandings, coupled with the way alcohol use facilitates the

construction of masculinity, produces contexts where alcohol use and sexuality coexist. Seth (White male), for example, discusses the importance of women being present at parties, the ease at which women appear to access alcohol, and the ominous reason why women have easier access to alcohol, compared to men:

Seth: It is hard for guys to get beer and to get drunk.

Interviewer: Why is that the case?

Seth: Oh, well of course. Guys, guys, like at a fraternity. Well, here is a story: Me and my friends went to a fraternity party last week and this guy, this big muscular guy upstairs said you are not getting in unless you have a group of girls with you. So the guys won't let you into their fraternity party unless you up their chances of getting laid for the night. Not till you up their boys' chance of getting sex from girls. That's what it is about . . . the guys they give the beer to the girls and they don't want to give it to the males because they want to get the girls drunk so that there is a better chance of having sex with them.

Interviewer: And the girls know this?

Seth: I don't think so. No. I think that the girls feel prioritized because a good-looking girl wearing tight clothes is getting attention. They are not thinking "oh he is trying to get into my pants." They do but not to that point. They think "he thinks I'm pretty and he is just doing me a favor" just like a cop will let a girl walk on a ticket. . . . They don't know.

Take the following account from James (White male) as an illustration of how intoxication, assumptions about emotional status, and gender operate in unison in the marginalization of women who use "too much" alcohol:

Interviewer: About sexuality, some say when alcohol is around, it makes it easier to talk . . . how does that work?

James: It makes it easier to hook up with a girl. . . .

Interviewer: Do you think that is your motive sometimes?

James: It used to be but I try not to be like that. Um, it's like a dead end if you find a girl who comes home with you. It's a dead end. Especially if she has been drinking. She is basically a whore, a slut if she has been drinking and comes home with you. I mean I don't have respect for the girl in the morning. I mean I'll give her a ride

or something but I wouldn't call her. I have no respect. I mean it's not like I'm some special guy, like she has never done this before.

Interviewer: So has this happened or . . . ?

James: Yeah, I've fucked them. That's just my attitude.

In the current study, some men perceived "drinking women" as attractive so long as the drinking was not in excess. Women perceived to drink to excess were not only considered "unlady-like" but were perceived to be likely targets for sexual assault by the majority of respondents. This may be a form of dehumanization particular to women's deviance (Schur, 1984). Women who were not perceived to be feminine (i.e., their "natural role") seemed to be equated with being the other which Schur suggests is a risk factor for violent victimization. Women acknowledged the belief that drunken women are targeted for sexual activity by virtue of their intoxication.

While it appears on the surface that drinking among women is no longer as discouraged as it has been historically, we learn that heavy alcohol use among women continues to be socially defined in a stigmatizing fashion. Furthermore, the labeling of heavy drinking women as deviant seems to place women at risk for violence. This process of marginalization shapes social interaction, which in this case involves drinking behavior. Women spoke of avoiding drinking altogether or being hypercognizant of their surroundings when drinking in public. For fear of being subjected to violent assault, women brought trusted friends to events for protection. Men and women alike discussed drunken women negatively and suggested that these women would not be afforded legitimate victim status should any victimization be encountered in heavy alcohol-use contexts. Women's intoxicated states were more likely to be viewed as having sexual implications compared to male drunkenness. Therein lies one of the ways in which the multiple standards of alcohol use materialize for women.

While it may be more socially acceptable for women to drink today, women may still be judged by different standards com-

pared to men when it comes to how women use alcohol and their presumed intentions for alcohol use. Thus it appears women have to walk a fine line between relying on alcohol to establish a time-out period and appearing to use alcohol "inappropriately" (e.g., to excess). Intoxication, then, is an inexcusable gender norm violation while alcohol use in itself may be acceptable so long as control is not lost. It is important to note that instances of disconfirming evidence did materialize but were overshadowed by the preponderance of negative reactions to heavy drinking among females. Some of the disconfirming evidence centered on men "admiring" women who could "hold their liquor" or respondents reporting heavy drinking women as "more fun."

These findings perhaps help to explain why the gender gap remains between male and female drinking and especially why alcohol-related social problems are largely stemming from male drinking. Finally, the marginalization of women for public alcohol use (a behavior that is equally available to men) illuminates how the gender system subordinates femininity to masculinity. For women, heavy use was largely condemned and expected to net deleterious results. Women who drink too much become dehumanized; they become "ho's" and ho's are responsible for the negative encounters they experience. Thus, this social standard puts all women in danger of acquiring the label "drunken whore."

Fear of violent victimization: Alcohol and the dangerous Black male

A component of privilege is to be unaware of the daily work associated with being disadvantaged. In terms of White privilege (see McIntosh, 1993), White participants in the current study were largely unaware of the daily inequalities faced by African American students and the ways in which Black students had to regularly endure overt and institutional racism. For this section, only African American quotes are selected because only African American participants keenly discussed the kind of alcohol-related multiple standards presented under this emergent theme.

Black male and female participants shared their experiences with what they perceived to be "biased" social control over African American and especially Black male drinking behavior. In particular, Black men's drinking appeared to be highly suspect and more likely to be controlled formally (i.e., by the police). Also, the control appears to be informed by stereotypes of the "Dangerous Black Male." Take the following comments from two respondents:

We have the [town] police, we have public safety [university police], we have state police, we have all these people who come up with their dogs and their mace and they're spraying mace on some of the Black people. I can remember a couple of years ago there was a fight at one of the parties, I wasn't there but there was a fight and in [the student newspaper] they wrote that it was a "riot." That's not a riot, a riot is when there's a whole group of people throwing things and fighting. I think in that respect, Black people might be more scrutinized than White people. If we're drinking less and we're not disturbing people, then why are we being so scrutinized? Honestly, I don't bother any of the White people here. I have no reason to . . . I mean we're trying to get an education as well and we know it's going to be a little more difficult because we are a minority so we don't have time to disturb anyone; we just want to come here and learn. (Jenna; Black female)

While Jenna refers to '"Black people" above, she was referring to Black men in particular. Black men in a group perceived to be drinking or drunk is a particular form of multiple-jeopardy and a norm violation that renders Black men subject to particular forms of social control. The example below further illuminates the theme.

I have never seen a whole bunch of Black guys walking on campus and I think that the police have something to do with it. Even if they weren't drunk, you see five Black guys and you think something is up; but if they were drunk that would worsen the scenario for them. I think for their safety they don't do that. (Alice; Black female)

In the quotes above, being Black and using alcohol is perceived to be met with formal, direct, and swift intervention. Importantly, I saw no evidence of a time-out period being

afforded to African American males as a result of their alcohol use in the context of a predominantly White university. In fact, like women in general, Black male drinkers became stigmatized for their alcohol use but, for Black men, the stigma was more likely to be acted upon by formal aspects of social control. A Black male (Fred) illustrated this by asking, "who looks like the criminal to public safety?" He went on to say that racism among those in power kept his leisure time with Black male friends confined to private space while public leisure time was spent with White friends. Black men thus do not necessarily enjoy "male privilege" continuously. I theorize that the structural conditions at play can not only remove, but reverse male privilege for Black men in particular social contexts (in this case, alcohol use contexts on a university setting). This reversal of male privilege for Black men renders their participation in the leisure activity of alcohol use rife with possible formal and informal sanctions. African American participants did, however, experience periods of the alcohol time-out among each other and with friends. The reversal of male privilege occurred or was perceived to occur in the face of formal reactions to public alcohol use or the threat of formal or informal reaction in White space(s).

Being Black and male becomes a particular form of disadvantage due to the intersectional effects of race and gender. Race-based male disadvantage in the context of alcohol use in majority White-situated contexts was prevalent among Black participants. Take the instance below concerning police intimidation at a party predominantly peopled by African Americans:

I was in the [dorm] and we were having a social gathering…the police came. They knocked on the door . . . they started saying somebody stole something two doors down . . . and so [one person] started leaving and they said "let's see your ID." He said "alright" and he asked "what for?" He shows them the ID. They said "no, we want to see your license." He showed the license and then he kept asking "what do you want?" The cops said "can you get up against

the wall? Get up against the wall." They eventually handcuffed him and took him downstairs (Kevin; Black male)

The situation described by Kevin above is a powerful example of the use of formal social controls on Black people and the way this control operates in private and public spaces. The symbolic message of being handcuffed and taken away is not likely to be lost among those witnessing the event. Black participants also discussed the pressures associated with being a racial minority in a predominantly White university. Pressures included feeling scrutinized, compared, and the potential for becoming exemplars of "the Black community." For instance, one Black female participant (Janine) stated, "it seems like non-Black students can get away with drinking and then if we have like a get together, it's like all the cops come." Moreover, Black participants routinely suggested that White students had certain perceptions, largely negative, of "Black parties" where alcohol was being used. For instance, a Black male, Jim, stated: "If White people see Black people smoking weed [White people think] "well I told you," starting a fight, [White people think] "yeah, there they go again." If Black people are drinking, they are 'alcoholics,' but so what, they [White people] are drunk too!" For this respondent, the multiple standard is evident: Drinking among Whites is normative, but among Blacks it is problematic. Michael, another Black male, said:

I try not to be out there in public view where people can see us. All that does [is] create more stereotypes like, all Black people, all they do is drink and get drunk. Yeah, I drink and might get drunk, but they [White people] really don't know you they only know your color. They are going off the fact that I am Black and I am drunk and that becomes the whole opinion of you. When I do go out to a club or something like that I definitely try not to get drunk. . . . If I do drink, I really don't come out or anything like that because . . . I don't want to give them a chance to make a stereotype about me.

In a search for disconfirming evidence, that is, positive impressions of Black drinking, I found none. However, an interesting quote from a Black male is suggestive of race-based substance abusing stereotypes. Cedrick said, "I was at a

fraternity party and this [White] girl came up to me and she was drunk and she said 'you are not drinking?' I said, 'naw, I'm not drinking.' And she said, 'What, are you gonna role some weed? I know you guys like to roll some weed.' And I was like 'yeah, us, us niggers, we love ta, we like to smoke pot, don't we? Smoke some herb." Cedrick's sarcasm was his response to overt racist assumptions. Perceptions of drinking behavior among Black men and women were racially charged overall according to Black participants. LaToya (Black female), for example, said this:

No, all parties are not like that. I think White people are ignorant to the fact that [our parties are] different. They might see a Black party where late at night, our parties end at 2 [AM], we all come out and White people are like 'why is there a whole bunch of Black people coming out?' Like it's a problem or it's a situation. So just because we are Black doesn't mean we conduct ourselves any worse.

The formal institution of the university and the various social organizations associated with the university control much of the social space and leisure activities for students and hence structure race, gender, and privilege. Moreover, these formal aspects of social control appear to be quite influential in establishing and maintaining gender and race-based drinking norms. Behaviors associated with White male-drinking, such as vandalism, visible drinking behavior, and loudness may work to establish White-male domination of campus space. In fact, participants suggested this kind of alcohol-related behavior was normative and in some ways rewarded (at least informally). Black male college students may not be socialized to engage in this type of behavior for fear of formal and informal social repercussions.

Drinking cultures are exemplary of more than leisure or stress-reduction behavior in that drinking is highly meaningful (Wilsnack & Wilsnack, 1997; MacAndrew & Edgerton, 1969). Furthermore, drinking cultures help to form, shape, and maintain social hierarchies. In sum, I found that the time-out phenomenon did not operate for Black men and that male priv-

ilege not only disappears for Black men, but Black maleness becomes a liability in White university space. Social control via police activity and the dominant backlash against Black-male-group-public-drinking was evident. Those who can drink openly, who can use alcohol to construct a positive identity, and who can thus use alcohol to do behavior that would otherwise be considered destructive belong to a privileged class of people.

Discussion and conclusions

How raced and gendered formal and informal aspects of institutions encourage and or discourage alcohol use for persons marginalized by race and or gender reveals the social interaction processes underlying social inequities. The question of who can drink openly, whose drinking is closely monitored, whose alcohol-related behavior is overlooked, pardoned or praised, and whose drinking is stigmatized and by whom have profound influence on taken-for-granted social rituals (i.e., alcohol use). Here, I evidence how informal and formal forms of social control that are steeped in the race and gender order shape social interaction and, subsequently, drinking behavior. Informal and formal societal responses influence drinking and thereby construct and reinforce social hierarchies. Reactions to alcohol use appear to be dependent upon race and gender; thus the effectiveness of the time-out phenomenon appears to also vary by race and gender.

Three themes useful for theorizing about disparities in alcohol use emerged in this study. The first theme centered on women's acute awareness of difference when navigating the drinking culture. Informed by the existing literature on multiple jeopardy, I found women's experiences with, and attitudes toward, drinking (as well as their male counterparts' perspectives) suggested multiple standards for alcohol use that cut across not only gender but also race lines. In other words,

White and Black women perceived (and experienced) that female heavy drinking was reacted to differently. The second theme focused on gendered victimization. I found that women who appeared to be intoxicated were subject to both violent and sexual victimization and/or the threat of such violence because of a female-specific gender norm violation: perceived public intoxication. Third, the complexities of privilege based on race and gender are discussed. A reversal of male privilege for Black men occurred in drinking contexts whereby being male and Black became a clear disadvantage. Black men presumed to be using alcohol was an impetus for the summoning of informal and formal forms of social control. Thus, the status of being Black and male disadvantaged Black men in a drinking culture that informally rewards such behavior in general among White men (i.e., White male privilege).

The first two themes are closely linked. It seems that in order for a female to keep her feminine identity, she has to stay away from alcohol (according to male and female standards). The flip side of this is that females can lose feminine identity and be taken advantage of if a woman gets drunk (willingly or by a male getting her drunk). What is evident when seen together is that there is pressure for females to drink *and* not to drink. Regardless, drinking seems to end with women losing feminine identity. Another overarching finding is that Black males seem to be more controlled by formal sanction or control systems (the police), whereas females (Black and White) are more heavily controlled by informal sanctions (norms and perceptions of femininity).

MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969) proposed that there was a certain level of deviant behavior that could not be excused by alcohol in a given culture and/or context. Respondents in the present study touched on this issue in regard to female drunkenness. Perhaps it is through women's acquired deviant status stemming from "drinking too much" that women were in effect dehumanized and thus rendered susceptible to rape and other forms of violent assault. Furthermore, this process has

contributed to subsequent "blame the victim" processes. Women who appear to be drunk or "sloppy" are in essence defined by men and women alike as acceptable targets. What is important to understand is that this alcohol-dependent negative status can be attributed to any female who appears to have used "too much" alcohol. Both women and men played a part in the dehumanization of other women as evidenced by the multiple standard of drinking where overindulgence by White men is "normal" but morally condemned for women.

The dominant status of White masculinity (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), a status and process that requires the suppression of race and gender minorities, has many repercussions. Research has firmly established that encounters with discrimination can have lasting implications for psychological well being as well the ability to feel safe and function in public spaces (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). While women were subject to far less condemnation for alcohol use in the present study than women might have a century ago, women who appeared to drink "excessively" were at risk for stigmatization. It is important to think systematically about the problem of violence in light of the obvious patterning of gender in the commission of violence. Importantly, women and men both participate actively in the culture of marginalization and stigma which sow the seeds of violence. Herein lays a fundamental aspect of violence as we know it in the United States: When categories of people become commodified, individuals of subverted categories can be victimized via interpersonal violence and sexual violence in as much as commodities are disposable. The rationalization of violence is facilitated by social structural conditions that help to deconstruct individuals (i.e. women, African Americans) into "things" and where behaviors acceptable for one group—but not another—fuel the dehumanization process.

Perhaps themes discussed here are ramifications of alcohol's history in the United States. Drinking behavior was primarily reserved for White men, while drinking performed by White

and Black women was considered grounds for marginalization and disdain (Nicolaides, 1996; Murdock, 1998). As with any human activity, alcohol use takes meaning from broader social institutions and behavioral patterns. Alcohol use has been found to be an important resource in the construction of gender and overlapping expressions of sexuality, especially for men who align themselves with hegemonic masculinity dicta (Miller et al., 2003; West, 2001). Specifically, research on alcohol and the meaning of its use increasingly denotes how alcohol is useful in the demonstration of masculinity for men in particular social contexts and social settings (see Capraro, 2000, for an overview). Research also suggests heavy and frequent alcohol use is indicative of strength among men in particular subcultures (West, 2001). These findings have been highlighted in the compensatory masculinity literature as well (Hemmingsson, Lundberg, Diderichsen, & Allebeck, 1998; West, 2001; Gough & Edwards, 1998). This is further evidence that the disparities in drinking that linger today are a gendered historical artifact: They are remnant societal norms regarding male versus female roles where men and masculinity were—and continue to be—centered. Although it is much more acceptable for women to drink today, women's reasons for drinking appear to be grounded in a distinct historical landscape marked by less overall freedom, and whose legacy continues to influence modern social interaction. Indeed, White masculinity has long been the standard by which to judge the behavior of others.

With regard to race, research emphasis has been on the prevalence of heavy drinking among Blacks; this ignored patterns of abstinence and light or infrequent drinking despite the fact that Blacks have higher overall abstention and lower drinking rates compared to Whites (Caetano, Clark, & Tam, 1998). Heavy drinking among Blacks has been thought to be the function of social disorganization in the sense of family breakdown or psychological dysfunction (Herd, 1987). Problematic drinking among the Black population was also thought to be a part of "Black" culture in that attitudes about drinking (e.g., having more liberal or permissive attitudes) were thought to

contribute to problem drinking, until more recent research found attitudes toward drinking among Blacks were in fact more conservative and less permissive compared to Whites (this is especially true for Black women, who as a group have significantly lower rates of heavy drinking [Dowdall & Wechsler, 2002]). The early research focus is perhaps suggestive of a pervasive racial stereotyping of the Black community as a people prone to immorality and hence substance abuse (which, interestingly, has historically been used as evidence for immorality). The Black experience may have thus been subverted via public or lay stereotypes about substance use as well as through formal research pursuits.

The fundamental need for social acceptance is likely what keeps minorities from abandoning the college drinking culture altogether. Drinking may be an important aspect of acquiring social acceptance among women, in particular, for two reasons. The drinking culture has been firmly entrenched as an important part of the White undergraduate experience. White college youth lack the resources for social acceptance which come with marriage, employment, and parenthood, and thus seek out contexts (e.g., parties) where social acceptance might be found. Black students, though less likely to participate in traditional college activities in general (Feagin, Vera, & Imni, 1996) (e.g., binge drinking), may participate in efforts to maintain or create new or existing relationships early in their college careers with individuals who use alcohol.

A discussion of the present study's limitations is in order: The race and ethnicity of the interviewers may have affected the interviews. White participants may have shared more information upon learning that the interviewers were White. African American participants may not have been as forthcoming about their alcohol use behavior because of the effects of race. It is unclear what effect the author's Hispanic identity had on the process. Next, these data were reliant upon participants' memories of alcohol use, which may not be entirely accurate. However, the manner in which participants constructed their

drinking stories is what is most important: The stories are telling of gender dynamics in general, and are telling of the meaning of alcohol in particular (see Orbuch, 1997, for a discussion on the importance of accounts for deriving meaning from social behavior). Next, because these data were collected between 1997 and 2001, drinking cultures may have shifted since this study was conducted (see Day, Gough, & McFadden, 2003). It is important, however, to recognize that the purpose of this study was not to purport a fixed gendered and raced reaction to alcohol or to generalize these findings to other populations, but to provide a theoretical consideration of the significance of race and gender in drinking cultures, to illustrate the process of gender and race marginalization, and to further theory on why gender and race disparities in alcohol use continue.

Social hierarchies are formally institutionalized by social structure, but it is in everyday social interaction that hierarchies manifest themselves: It is in everyday action where hierarchies are perceived and felt. An in-depth analysis of interaction presented here reveals how the reproduction of social hierarchy is inextricably connected to drinking cultures that arise out of established social arrangements. Future research should examine how this process might impact other forms of substance abuse. Examining other statuses that are susceptible to moral condemnation (e.g., homosexuals; the impoverished) in the context of drug use holds promise to further enhance our theoretical understanding of the structuring effects of inequality on contemporary drug problems.

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