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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

SPEAKING OF RIGHT AND WRONG:
BLACK GIRLS AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN APPLIED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

BY

TONYA BIBBS

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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ABSTRACT

Our current approaches to moral development were generalized from the experiences of white males and females. This study draws upon existing theory in order to consider its relevance to Black girls' everyday lives. The study draws upon the moral reasoning gathered from ethnographic dilemma interviews with 8-11 year old girls and their mothers to develop a grounded theory of moral development. The contents of the resulting theory suggest that, while there are aspects of existing moral development theory that appear to be consistent across contexts, the particularity of Black community and middle childhood culminate in a theory of moral development that revises concepts of autonomy, cooperation and adult constraint.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In her 1976 article, *Socialization and Education of Young Black Girls in School*, Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot noted that “minimal attention is given to the early stages of Black female development or to the path she has had to traverse to maturity – only to the culmination of her role development, the hardened and fixed images of many generations of restrictive and prejudicial stereotyping” (p. 239). A review of the literature currently available on the early stages of Black female development suggests that, save a smattering of articles (Evans-Winters, 2005; Grant, 1984; Ladner, 1995; Rollock, 2007) academia has failed to generate significant knowledge in this area during the intervening years.

The consequence of this knowledge vacuum have become particularly alarming in the past decade as the fields of education and psychology have become increasingly concerned about the prevalence of relational aggression and school discipline problems among Black girls. Recent research has demonstrated that relational aggression (e.g., gossiping, threatening to withdraw friendships or otherwise alienate a peer) is associated with peer relationship difficulties, clinically significant internalizing and externalizing problems, and possibly later mental health disorders among girls (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Leff et al., 2009). In a study of fourth-grade White and Black girls, Putallaz, Grimes, Foster, Kupersmidt, Coie, and Dearing (2007) found that teachers, lunchroom

monitors and peers reported a higher incidence of relational aggression amongst Black girls. This finding echoed related studies (David & Kistner, 2000) and expanded on it by finding that rejected and controversial girls amongst both groups were more likely to commit such acts of aggression. Furthermore, Black children appear to be at greater risk for social emotional problems that affect their relationships, academic performance (Barbarin, 2002; Black & Krishnakumar, 1998) and increased relational aggression that often precedes physical aggression.

The increase in relational aggression may be one factor in the increase in incidences of Black girls' school suspension and expulsion. A study by Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, and Bachman (2008) on the racial, ethnic and gender differences in school discipline among U.S. high school students points to increased rates of disciplinary measures taken against Black girls. In their four-year study, they confirmed previous findings that found Black boys experience higher rates of suspension and expulsion. However, they also found that Black girls were two times more likely to be sent to the school office than White girls and five times more likely to be suspended or expelled.

Programmatic interventions directed at Black behavior raise additional problems. In an ethnographic study conducted by Morris (2007) illustrates the ways in which this approach might be counter to current school practices. He conducted a two-year ethnographic study in a predominantly minority middle school and found that the discipline of girls took the form of surveilling the comportment of Black girls. Well meaning teachers were particularly concerned with reforming behavior that made the

girls appear as if they were questioning authority, being loud, sexually precocious or otherwise unladylike. Girls participated in their own surveillance through their activity in the “Proper Ladies” club. While the club offered the girls an opportunity to perform community service and go on college tours, it also sponsored a week-long event in which the girls could not speak unless spoken to.

How do we account for this difference? A number of ethnographies have attempted to address this question as it relates to the race gap in discipline between Black and White boys (Ferguson, 2001), but the question of why this gap occurs for Black girls remains open.

Therefore there are two significant clinical/educational concerns – relational aggression and school discipline problems – involving Black girls about which there is limited knowledge. Current approaches to these problems attempt to change behavior through punitive measures or via character development programs (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Leff et al., 2009). I suggest that one of the difficulties with addressing these concerns lies in the lack of normative developmental knowledge regarding Black girls’ understanding of their social world and moral reasoning. When we understand the meaning Black girls make of their social encounters, their responses to conflict and their interpretation of the adult world, we are more likely to construct developmentally informed interventions. By starting with Black girls’ normative development, interventions may draw upon Black girls’ capacities, integrate significant adults, focus on relevant issues and anticipate challenges and barriers. In so doing I respond to cultural psychologist Jerome Bruner’s insistence that “we be conscious of how we come to our

knowledge and as conscious as we can be about the values that lead us to our perspectives...for how and what we know. But it does not insist that there is only one way of constructing meaning” (Bruner, 1990, p. 30). In a multicultural society, wherein children position their activity in both universal concerns and local meaning, this study fills a gap in this research area by providing both a foundation for how Black girls reason about morality and how they form and interpret their social worlds. The following questions frame this research study:

1. To what extent is the underlying social theory in constructive literature is appropriate for the study of Black girls’ moral development?
2. How do changes in the social milieu, such as the experience of belonging and/or alienation, affect Black girls’ reasoning?
3. To what extent does the presence of a peer influence Black girls’ moral reasoning?
4. What is the relationship between Black girls’ responses to moral dilemmas and those of their mothers?

In the next section I review of the theory relevant to these goals and describe how they result in the study’s questions. In so doing I conduct this review in four parts by focusing on liberal and communitarian approaches in moral development, the influence of belonging and alienation on moral reasoning, language as a mediator in moral reasoning and the role of socialization in moral reasoning.

Liberal and Communitarian Orientations in Moral Development

There is an on-going debate in moral psychology between liberal and communitarian perspectives (Haidt & Graham, 2009; Haste, 1996; Young & Sneddon, 2010). Though both perspectives derive from constructivist developmental theories; that is, they recognize the necessity of a child's interactions with the environment in building a mental framework for reasoning and decision making, they also contain some notable differences. Liberalism prioritizes a pre-social, autonomous individual (Rawls, 2005), an idea of freedom that is focused on negative liberty – or the absence of constraint (Berlin, 1990) a notion of fairness that is based upon equal distribution of and access to goods regardless of the identity or status of the persons involved and an autonomous rational, objective, decontextualized thinking (Kant, 1787/2008). A communitarian perspective refers to a socially constructed, historically situated self (Sandel, 1982), public sphere that is based on notions of an ethic of care for the other (Held, 2007), community endorsed virtues (MacIntyre, 1988) or contextualized justifications for behavior.

Proponents of both liberal and communitarian perspectives advocate that their view of moral development best describes developmental processes and provides the best vision for moral education. Thus the concerns are both descriptive (an empirical consideration of how things are) and normative (a consideration of how things ought to be). The link between the descriptive and normative is realized in moral education programs that both seek to proactively influence children's conduct and intervene in problematic behavior. The tendency in the literature has been to propose that one of the two perspectives is superior to the other. However, recent literature in social theory

suggests that moral psychology should seek a third space that recognizes the ways in which both liberal and communitarian perspectives appear in moral development as well as the respective contribution each could make to moral education.

Frazer and Lacey (1993) suggest that in order to move beyond this polarizing perspective, we must engage in “sociologically informed and critical study of human practices... and have the conceptual tools to illuminate the relationship of subjects to social structures” (p. 198). Therefore, with regard to the problems of Black girls’ conduct I outlined in the introduction, a theory of moral development that both describes their processes of development and indicates a vision for moral education, must develop from the concrete situation of Black girls’ everyday lives. In this section I will review constructivist moral development theorists in order to trace how the liberal and communitarian themes have manifested in conceptual frameworks. I will also both discuss how each of the theorists can contribute to our understanding of Black girls’ moral reasoning and identify their limitations.

Piaget

Piaget’s seminal work, *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (1965/2008) introduced the rational constructivist model of moral development. He initiated his study of moral development by observing 12 year old European Caucasian boys playing marbles and interviewing them about their understanding of the rules of the game. Piaget was not concerned with the moral *behavior* of the child, but with *his* moral *judgment* or how the mind comes to respect the rules. This investigation established moral development as a concern about consciousness derived from a European male discourse.

Piaget approached this endeavor in three parts: an analysis of how children understand respect for rules; an examination of a child's understanding of the moral duties imposed upon them by adults (adult constraint); and an investigation of children's relations to one another (cooperation). Adult constraint represents a form of *heteronomous* morality and cooperation represented a form of *autonomous* morality. A shift from the first to the second characterized moral development. In other words, an egocentric child enters the system of moral development via a sacred respect for adults and older children. As they gain autonomy and enter into a broader social context, they use their experiences of cooperation to develop their reasoning about moral issues. In line with Piaget's general project of genetic epistemology, a child's capacity to reason about social experiences, increases as they develop logical thinking. Intellectual development, however, is not sufficient for moral development. Rather, particular types of social experiences – those with moral import – are necessary.

Piaget viewed rule-based game playing as the primary site for children have such experience. He reasoned that they are microcosms of society in that the rules of games are passed on from one generation to another and they only exist if children agree to participate in them. Because children must subordinate some aspect of their individual desire, they gain a respect for the rules which is akin to gaining a respect for the law. Herein the rules of the game are constitutive of the conditions of cooperation necessary for moral development.

Kohlberg

Lawrence Kohlberg revisited Piaget's model in his 1958 dissertation, *The development of modes of moral thinking and choice in the years 10 to 16*. He asks the question, "How does man become moral?" and asserts that the question "How does the child learn his culture?" Puka (1994) cannot elucidate our understanding of the former question. Like Piaget, Kohlberg grounds his theory in a liberal – justice centered – orientation. He postulates that one can distinguish a judgment as *moral* as it has characteristics that are motivational (the idea that one ought to perform an act even in the face of competing values and personal preference and that one will achieve a positive self-evaluation as a result), and cognitive (the underlying principle of the act is one that is universal and objective). In other words an individual is moved by the goal of "doing the right thing" and is rewarded with positive self-regard.

Kohlberg conducted cross sectional interviews with Caucasian American boys aged 10-16 using story dilemmas and derived a six-stage model of moral development following Piaget's architecture of cognitive development. At the first level children are concerned with both the material consequences of their actions as well as pursuing their desires. In the second, their increased cognitive and emotional development as well as their enhanced social experience enables them to consider the thoughts and feelings of others and integrate social conventions into their judgments. The final level draws upon formal operations as adolescents begin using abstract principles in their moral judgment.

Like Piaget, Kohlberg viewed peer interaction as an essential site for children's moral development and asserted that parents had a minimal role in the moral

development of their children. He believed that children needed a social milieu wherein they can negotiate, compromise and the unilateral nature of the parent child relationship did not meet this requirement. Both the focus on peer relationships and suspicion of parent contribution inform the third and fourth question in this review. Therefore, I will revisit this topic in those sections.

Having presented the central ideas in Piaget and Kohlberg's theories we can delineate the ways in which their architecture relies on liberal theory. Within liberal theory, the greatest achievement of reasoning is that it enables us to achieve universal law making. So, as within Piaget's epistemology, the ability to reason about abstract principles of morality signals positive development. The autonomous liberal agent uses the outcomes of this reasoning to exercise free choice within conditions of liberty. In other words, choices are only free if they are made without compulsion or coercion. For Piaget and Kohlberg this meant that children must make choice within a community of peers.

We can now ask how applicable Piaget and Kohlberg's liberal theories are to the moral concerns of Black girls. The primary empirical problem with their theories is with their samples. Each of their samples was comprised exclusively of European males yet they used their findings to make normative statements about the processes of moral development. Though Piaget made a cursory attempt to study the play of girls, he failed to integrate these observations into his construct. He studied the game of hopscotch and asserted that the rules of the game were so polymorphous (i.e., multiformed) that there

was not an opportunity for codification or social order. Upon reflecting on his observations he noted that:

The most superficial observation is sufficient to show that in the main the legal sense is far less developed in little girls than in boys. We did not succeed in finding a single collective game played by girls in which there were as many rules and, above all, as fine and consistent an organization and codification of these rules as in the game of marbles.... (Piaget, 1965/2008, p. 69)

In this passage Piaget both dismisses the experience of the particular girls he observes and suggests that, in general, girls' activity can not contribute to the development of normative theory. Therefore we can't assume that his theory is appropriate for Black girls in particular or girls in general.

The primary conceptual problem with their theories lies in their liberal assumptions – especially negative freedoms and an autonomous abstract individual. Negative freedom describes a freedom from interference. Both of the theories employ a negative conception of freedom, which emphasizes a free choosing individual unencumbered by constraints from other individuals. However, as many feminist social theorists have identified (see especially Jaggar, 2002), this vision of liberty does not account for the positive conditions (e.g., education, resources, cultural capital, group membership) necessary for an individual achieving this agency. These structural issues affect any morally reasoning agent. However, Black girls are more likely to have this negative freedom, or ability to act without constraint, impeded by the manifestations of racism and gender discrimination. While Piaget accounted for the effects of adult constraint, he neither considered the discourses of race/gender nor their limiting effects.

Therefore it is unlikely that Piaget's idea of freedom can be applied to Black girls' moral choices.

Likewise, Kohlberg's characterization of a problem as "moral" when its underlying principle is universal and objective presents a problem. Namely, it places persons "outside of and above the situation about which ... she reasons, with no stake in it..." (Young, 1990, p. 60). If we are going to understand how Black girls' reasoning is derivative of both universal principles and their unique social and historic positioning, then theories of moral development must incorporate models of situated reasoning. Following Falmagne (2003), I focus on the ways in which situated reasoning enables us to understand how the concrete situation in which a girl is embedded informs the justification of the knowledge produced. Carol Gilligan's research represents an attempt to integrate this form of reasoning.

Gilligan

Carol Gilligan's (1993) research challenges the unity of Kohlberg's theory from the perspective of gender. As many consider her construct to be the most significant contribution to girls' moral development, it bears significant consideration for this review. Gilligan questioned the universality of Kohlberg's scale given that it was normed exclusively on males. *In a Different Voice* represents a critique of 'psychological processes and theory, particularly theories in which men's experience [stood] for all of human experience... eclipsed the lives of women and shut out women's voices' (p. xiii). Her primary developmental concern is a critique of Kohlberg's theory of moral development. She asserts that, because his findings are derivative of his predominately

male subjects, it should come as no surprise that girls are seen as less morally developed within his theoretical structure.

In order to research the unique experience of girls, Gilligan (1993) pulls data from three qualitative interview studies to ask questions "...about conceptions of self and morality...[and]... about experiences of conflict and choice" (p. 2). The participants in the study ranged in age from 6-33. Her findings resulted in a revised stage theory for a female that is based on an *ethic of care*. She locates the emergence of morality within a female child's survival based moral behavior and ends it with a principle for non-violence. Whereas Kohlberg's stages progress from subjectivity to objectivity, Gilligan's progress from a concern for self to a concern for others and eventually culminate in a balance of the two. Within a girls' trajectory, there are two crises that signal the transition to a new stage. The first comes at the culmination of stage one when a girls' behavior is criticized as being selfish. The unselfish extreme of caring for others in stage two results in an 'exclusion of herself' and 'gives rise to problems in relationships, creating disequilibrium that initiates the second transition' (p. 74). According to Gilligan, men, on the other hand, operate with an ethic of justice that acknowledges basic universal rights, which one must respect. An ethic that derives from this approach centers on communal ties and personal relations.

Scholarly critiques of Gilligan have successfully challenged her distinction between care and justice ethics on conceptual and empirical bases (Okin, 1991, 2002). Gilligan's use of interviews provides thick descriptions of her participant's perspectives, but they do not facilitate the generalizability that her model attempts. Her sample is

exclusively White American, but she does not restrict her findings to statements about this demographic. Both Naomi Weisstein (1993) and Sara Ruddick (1995) offered the critique that, though her notion of gender is not biologically based, it still results in an essentialist view of girls and women. Within an essentialist perspective, girls have a set of immutable attributes that are necessary to their existence and prior to social influences. So, as with Piaget and Kohlberg, we are left to wonder how her theory might stand up to empirical scrutiny with a sample of Black American girls.

Jaffe and Hyde (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of 70 published papers and 43 dissertations that addressed gender differences in moral orientation. Their goal was to ascertain if there were statistically significant differences in moral orientation based upon gender. They also investigated if potential differences were moderated by variables other than gender. Jaffe and Hyde found that the orientations are not significantly differentiated. However, their consideration of non-gender moderators suggest that moral reasoning is ‘highly sensitive to the context and content of the dilemma.’

Gilligan’s insight regarding moral reasoning’s sensitivity to context represents her major contributions and points us to the communitarian influences in her theory. Communitarianism’s primary departure from liberal theory is in its view of the self as socially constructed. For Gilligan’s moral development this relational ontology means that the self is implicated in a moral dilemma’s ends and the dichotomy between abstract reasoning and affective engagement collapses (Frazer & Lacey, 1993). As such we can neither assume that the boys in Piaget and Kohlberg’s studies were autonomous impartial

actors nor should we expect Black girls to reason about unfamiliar events in which they are unable to place themselves.

Shweder

While the theorists reviewed thus far promote one side or the other of the liberal/communitarian dichotomy, Richard Shweder's (1996) empirical work led him to the conclusion that the cultural scripts of a given community influences which orientation will be in predominate use. Rather than liberal/communitarian, Shweder uses the terms autonomy/community and adds to these a domain of divinity. Like liberalism, the autonomy domain includes concerns about freedom of choice and individual rights while community is concerned about the self within the community and virtues of duty, sacrifice, loyalty and respect. The divinity domain adds to these by considering another non-rational aspect of many communities. Within it, a deed is evaluated as right or wrong based upon the degree to which it accords with purity and sacred order and avoids sin.

Shweder's domains get us closer to a framework for studying the morality of Black girls in that it does not impose a liberal or communitarian prescriptive norm and recommends looking to the cultural context for normative guidance. The central problem with the domains is that they are applied to whole cultures and thus communities are treated as homogenous. Within such a framework dominant group members tend to guide norms and marginalized members' interests are not represented (Okin, 1991, 2002; Ortner, 2006). For Black girls the intersecting discourses of race and gender have the

potential for suppressing their contribution to moral community characterized by race or gender narratives.

I have reviewed the dominant liberal influenced and communitarian influenced theories of moral development and discussed the degree to which each is relevant to the study of Black girls. I have also noted that normative theories of moral development either tend to privilege one orientation or apply them whole cloth to a given community. The goal of this study is to gain greater insight into Black girls' moral reasoning and given the critique of the conceptual problems with existing theories, a direct application of any of these theories is not warranted.

It is problematic to take the liberal position that an advance in moral reasoning capacity is characterized by abstract principles divorced from a person's context as it does not recognize the role of relationships and community values in developing persons and influencing the process and outcome of reasoning. However, the communitarian position is equally disconcerting to conceptualize moral reasoning as being essential to a particular identity or social location. In so doing it denies the ways in which cultural communities interact, individuals act outside of communal virtues and are members of disparate groups. Recognizing the complexity of Black girls' social interactions transforms places wherein services are provided to children into children's spaces. Moss and Petrie describe children's spaces as

a *cultural* space, where values, rights and cultures are created; and a *discursive* space for differing perspectives and forms of expression, where there is room for dialogue, confrontation...deliberation and critical thinking, where children and others can speak and be heard. In this sense, the concept of 'children's space' implies possibilities for children and

adults to contest understandings, values, practices and knowledges....
(Moss & Petrie, 2010, p. 9, emphasis in original)

Understanding the moral dilemmas Black girls' experience and the means by which they resolve them expands our understanding of their space. In order to address this study's concern about Black girls' moral reasoning within children's spaces, that both embody universal goals and particular experience in a multi-cultural society, I pose the following question: *How do liberal and communitarian orientations appear in Black girls' moral reasoning?*

In addition to being sites that embody diverse value systems, children's spaces provide a landscape for children to explore the emerging relational capacities. Killen and Rutland (2011) suggest that the experiences of inclusion and exclusion that occur therein are essential to our understanding of moral development. In the next section I will discuss their relevance to this study.

Theories of Alienation and Belonging and Their Relevance to the **Study of Black Girls' Moral Development**

The middle childhood literature acknowledges this period as a time when children are working to create a satisfying place for themselves among groups and developing friendships that are based on mutual interests, conflict resolution skills, and clear communication (Lightfoot, Cole & Cole, 2009). Killen and Rutland (2001) suggest that, through these experiences children learn about social inclusion and exclusion as pervasive aspects of social life that they must navigate as one way of learning about themselves and others. They further suggest that the instances of inclusion and exclusion – especially as they relate to social prejudice and group identity – constitute a special

challenge to children's moral orientation. Namely, a child's group identity could be so powerful, that it becomes difficult for the child to commit morally sound acts and thereby "exclude children who do not belong to their group or threaten the value or norms of their group" (Killen & Rutland, 2011, p. 59). In this case the emphasis put on strengthening ingroup results in the discrimination of those not like them. Therefore, the particular social positioning that occurs within ingroup/outgroup processes are germane to this study's concerns. I have chosen to use the terms alienation and belonging, which incorporate the social psychological concepts of inclusion/exclusion, but also enable me to connect the study to language used in a broader set of disciplines.

The concept of alienation has both psychological and sociological relevance to the study of Black girls' moral development. Therefore, it is important to consider how they might be developed conceptually. Devorah Kalekin-Fishman (1998) suggests that "the term alienation refers to objective conditions, subjective feelings and to orientations that discourage participation" (p. 6). In a subsequent publication, she elaborates on this definition by referring to Seeman's (1959) articulation of a set of dispositions that provide the architecture for alienation:

- powerlessness – conditions in which people do not have the power to carry out their projects;
 - meaninglessness – conditions in which people are unable to predict the outcome of their actions;
 - normlessness – situations in which people are unable to identify which norms are applicable to the current circumstances;
 - social isolation – segregation from normative society; or
 - self-estrangement – acting against one's self interest or beliefs.
- (Kalekin-Fishman, 2008)

Thus alienation may stem from disruptions in the interpersonal field or as effects of social formations.

Franz Fanon (1968/2005) developed a concept of alienation that explained how the social formation of racism influenced the psychological experience of alienation for Black people. His theoretical lens is located within the tradition of African thought in that it addresses “the geographical, historical, socio-political, and cultural differences and complexities that have defined and continue to define the realities of life of the many persons and peoples identified as “African” and “of African descent” in many locales throughout the world” (Outlaw, 2010). Fanon (1968/2005) stated that racism is a denial of humanity in that it relies on a misrecognition within social relationships. The misrecognition occurs when a Black person is not seen as who they are individually or as a member of their preferred culture. Instead they are seen in terms of what they are not (e.g., – they are not white) or the function they serve in a racially stratified system (e.g., – they are a servant). This systematic negation of the other forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question: “In reality, who am I?” (p. 250). Therefore racism structures a set of social relationships that alienate oppressed people from themselves and from their culture.

Though Fanon developed his thesis 45 years ago, given the ongoing perniciousness of structural inequalities in our current society, his thinking is still relevant. His analysis of racism and alienation enables us to add a more comprehensive frame to Black girls’ everyday experiences in middle childhood and consider how these alienating experiences affect their moral reasoning. In addition to the events that may

leave children and particularly Black girls disconnected from peer groups, themselves and the means to affect their daily lives, they also participate in activity that promotes a sense of belonging.

There are two contradictory ways in which we can attach a ‘sense of belonging’ to moral development. Nietzsche’s genealogy of morality shows that within our current understanding of morality there exists an historical meaning of ‘the good’. Prior to referring to virtues, ‘the good’ designated the noble class. One was not good because of their practices. Instead practices were good because someone who belonged to this group performed them. Within a secular framework, the codes that identify moral superiority would be defined by the conditions of the ruling class. There are at least two critical aspects to this sense of belonging as it concerns Black girls’ moral development. One is that a girl belongs to ‘the good’ by virtue of her membership in a group with rigid and sometimes impermeable symbolic boundaries such as class, race, popularity, appearance and citizenship status. The second is that the designation of ‘the good’ relies on ‘the bad’ to support its maintenance – ‘we are good because we are not you’. The mobility between these groups is affected by the terms of dominant discourses, the degree to which ‘the bad’ resists and transform social borders and shifts in broader narratives – such as nation. Herein belonging and moral acts are tethered ideologically in order to maintain superiority between groups.

In a contrasting narrative moral reasoning can perform a generative function within groups. All constructivist conceptualizations of moral development rely on children being social beings. Peer groups (Piaget, 1965/2008; Puka, 1994) enable

children to confront moral conflicts that demand resolution, family life presents children with adult constraint, guidance and the early affective relationships necessary for learning about emotions and conflictual relationships (Dunn, 1990; Ross, 2006) and from membership in community children derive an understanding of preferred virtues (Shweder, 1990; Tappan, 1997). Within these social structures moral reasoning is related to belonging interpersonally.

A person's *sense* of belonging within this group, however, can fluctuate even as they retain actual membership. Haggerty, Williams, Coyne and Early (1996) state that the sense of belonging concept has two defining attributes – the experiences of being valued, needed or important within a group and the experience of fitting in or being congruent. Nicki Crick and her colleagues (2007) found that the need to feel important and gain status within a group was correlated with relational aggression among a multi-racial group of sixth-grade girls. In this instance the threat of losing group membership or one's importance in the group results in committing moral harm.

While alienation and belonging are central aspects of children's social life in middle childhood, studies on moral reasoning have not sufficiently address how this particular condition affects their reasoning. In order to understand how Black girls' experiences of alienation and belonging contribute to a more comprehensive theory of moral development, I will pursue the following question: *2. How do subject positions of alienation and belonging affect Black girls' reasoning about morality?*

Language is one of the primary means by which practices of alienation and belonging are expressed, or can be more clearly observed. In the next section I will review literature relevant to moral reasoning and language.

Language and Moral Development

Developmental psychologist Erica Burman (2007) critiques the discipline's engagement with language by asserting that its primary focus on ontogenesis prevents it from investigating the ways in which language functions as a "constitutive medium for the rest of development" (p. 182). In order to expand the discipline's focus, she promotes the development of theories and studies that investigate how "language... encodes structural meanings about the world they (will) inhabit" (p. 214). Because this investigation concerns the degree to which Black girls' everyday lives influence their moral reasoning as it is expressed in talk, Burman's insight is relevant to this discussion.

Developmental psychologist, Mark Tappan's (1997) theoretical approach is an example of type of frame to which Burman refers. He employs a Vygotskian approach to consider how the transformation of language practices mediates the ontogenesis and ongoing trajectory of moral development. He defines development as the emergence and transformation of forms of mediation, and language is posited as the 'social medium par excellence' (p. 83). The progression of speech from communication to egocentricity and eventually to inner speech enables a child to engage in an inner moral dialogue that interprets and transforms activity. Herein, morality is not constituted by theorems or codes,

but by the performance of speech and other activities from which one might elicit general principles that a given sociocultural context comes to understand as moral.

From a Vygotskian perspective, therefore, moral development is necessarily shaped by social, cultural, historical, and institutional forces, because the various forms of interpsychological functioning that give rise to intrapsychological processes of moral functioning/activity are mediated by words, language, and forms of discourse that are similarly shaped and situated. Thus the words that a young child uses to help her understand that her actions are “right” or “wrong”, “good” or “bad”, come out of a specific social, cultural, and linguistic milieu. (Tappan, 1997, p. 92)

Though one could derive a code from various speech acts, it would cease to exist outside of the on-going linguistic activity.

Psychologist Helen Haste (2008) expands upon Tappan’s engagement of Vygotsky by integrating the work of philosopher and semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin into a theory of moral development. She uses both Bakhtin’s work on dialogism as well as his work on power and stratification to complement Tappan’s theoretical framework. According to Haste (2008), while “Vygotsky emphasized the developmental functions of dialogue...Bakhtin [shows] how dialogue functions as the core of social negotiation of meaning” (p. 380). Its role in negotiation makes it especially pertinent to a study on moral development.

Research by Corsaro (2011) and others focuses on providing conceptual frameworks and descriptive analysis for the unique peer cultures that are formed through these negotiations. Corsaro and Eder (1996) define peer culture as “a ...set of activities or routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that children produce and share in interaction with peers” (p. 199).

They further advocate an “interpretist reproduction” wherein a child and the adult culture with which she interacts are recursively related. In other words structure does not determine the outcome of an individual nor does the individual act independent of structural influences. Rather “children become a part of adult culture and contribute to its reproduction through their negotiations...and production...of peer cultures (Corsaro & Eder, 1996, p. 201). The distinction between appropriation – or taking possession of adult culture – and interpretation – or making meaning of adult culture is crucial to this theory of peer culture. Though Burman, Tappan and Haste all acknowledge that a child’s particular culture influences their interpretation of adult culture, they don’t provide an approach specific to Black girls.

Researchers who have studied children’s use of language in Black communities illustrate the latter. As I will discuss, this interdisciplinary research shows that language is a ‘constitutive feature of social action’ (Harness Goodwin, 1991) that transmits intergenerational rules about social engagement and resists taken for granted roles. I will focus on Meier’s (2007) framing of “Black communication” as it is useful to the study of Black girls’ moral development.

Terry Meier (2007) describes ‘Black communication’ (BC) as a whole communication system in which “speakers use language in ways that are inextricably linked to culture” (p. 12) – in this case the historical experiences of Black Americans. As a whole system, BC is not only concerned about grammar, vocabulary and phonology. It includes uses of language, such as style, performance, moral teachings and speech acts that both extend and intervene in the course of social processes. Therefore the concept of

Black communication enables us to view the range of children's communicative acts as significant aspects of peer culture.

Labov (1972) demonstrated the significance of a same culture peer in a child's talk in his study of African-American children's use of nonstandard English, Labov found that "the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior and that an adult must enter into the right social relation with a child if he (sic) wants to find out what a child can do" (p. 236). For Labov "the right social situation" included: offering participants potato chips, bringing along the participant's best friend, reducing the height imbalance between the researcher and the participants and introducing taboo words and topics. Subsequent to these methodological interventions Labov's participants not only increased their verbosity, but they also used more folk language and explored more taboo subjects. Given Labov's findings, I expect that I am more likely to see more examples of Black communication when the girls are responding to dilemmas with a peer.

In this section I have discussed the ways in which language use, dialogism and "Black communication" influence moral reasoning. Despite the significance of these social processes, constructivist theorists who use moral dilemmas present them to individual children. As such, we do not know if dialogue affects their responses to dilemmas. In order to explore this issue, I will pursue the following question: *3. Does the addition of a peer affect the amount of talk in which Black girls engage or their use of Black communication?*

In addition to peers, children interact with adults in their cultural communities. In the next section, I will discuss these interactions as they occur in the process of socialization and influence moral reasoning.

Socialization and Moral Development

One of the distinguishing factors of Piaget's two stage model is his differentiation between heteronomous and autonomous morality. He used heteronomous morality to describe children's tendency to determine what was right or wrong based upon externally imposed sanctions and objective concerns. For example, it is worse to accidentally break 12 cups than to purposefully break six cups because you've broken more cups. Intentionality is not considered. Likewise, it would be wrong to hit your little brother because your mother would get cross. The child does not make an internal evaluation of the act being right or wrong. However, as a child matures and has more independent interactions with peers they enter into autonomous morality wherein they are arriving at freely chosen moral perspectives through processes of deliberation (Lightfoot, Cole & Cole, 2009). In this case the role of adults is to instill in a child an understanding of socially preferred notions of right and wrong. Initially children act within these boundaries in order to avoid angering or disappointing an adult. As they develop, they use their internalized understanding as they reason about the moral problems they encounter outside of the home. However, Piaget made a distinction between the ongoing process of socialization, in which a child acquires the values and knowledge of their culture, and the process of moral deliberation. He viewed the latter as a more autonomous act that transcended the influence of culture and parental influence.

By including a Vygotskian notion of socialization, in which a child's deliberation reflects their internalization of culture, we can explore other aspects of adult influence. For Vygotsky children are active participants in socialization as they transform the cultural artifacts and language of their culture through interactions and everyday practices to facilitate their understanding of social life. As such, in addition to adults providing children with a sense of constraint, they engage in a process of socialization that equips them with an understanding of community virtues (Vygotsky, 1978).

For Black parents this apprenticeship often includes an intentional ethnic or racial socialization wherein messages about ethnicity and race are communicated. The intentionality in this process stems from a caregiver's desire to prepare their children for a world that may devalue them because of their race, gender or other identifying characteristic. Parents accomplish this by instilling cultural pride in their children, preparing them for the biases they will meet, promoting a mistrust of majority culture and emphasizing notions of equality (Hughes & Chen, 1999). In this case, acquiring knowledge about society focuses on helping children understand and prepare for the disjuncture between their family and community's positive regard of them and the potential discriminatory perceptions they may encounter.

The potential for these encounters increases during middle childhood wherein there is a shift in children's socialization patterns. As children spend more time with each other and non-parental adults during this period, parents rely on a child's internalization of the values and knowledge they acquired during earlier stages to guide their children's behavior, and share increasing amount of control with children

themselves via coregulation (MacCoby, 1984). Parents believe their children ought to be more responsible and are more likely to use reasoning to guide deviant behavior (Lightfoot, Cole & Cole, 2009). Though children begin to spend more time with their peer group during this period, parents still influence this activity by regulating where and with whom children interact and by providing working models that children use and transform when they are away from mothers. The interaction of parental influence and a child's interaction with diverse contexts generate multiple pathways for development in middle childhood (Cooper, Garcia-Coll, Bartko, Davis, & Chatman, 2005). In order to investigate one aspect of this complex social confluence, I ask how Black girls' integrate adult themes into their moral reasoning by posing the following question: *4. How is mothers' thinking reflected in girls' responses to moral dilemmas?*

Summary

The increased incidents of relational aggression and the rising instances of school disciplinary infractions amongst Black girls are beginning to register as a concern amongst clinicians and educators. As school personnel begin to develop program-based interventions to this growing problem, it is important that they do so with an understanding of the meaning of Black girls' behavior. In this study, I focus on moral reasoning as means to understand how a group of Black girls resolve the moral conflicts they encounter as they navigate social life in middle childhood. The study's guiding questions will expand our knowledge about, their engagement of universal and particular approaches to reasoning, the influence of alienation and belonging on their moral reasoning, the affects of participating in moral problem solving with a peer on the process

of their moral reasoning and the influence of mothers on their reasoning. The findings of this study will contribute to the development of intervention programs in that it will expand our knowledge of Black girls' normative approaches to moral conflicts. Because conceptualization of problems starts with an understanding of normative processes the development of this knowledge represents a necessary step.

In addition to this introductory chapter, this dissertation contains five additional chapters: Chapter II surveys relevant empirical data; Chapter III describes the methods by which the study's questions were investigated; Chapter IV contains the study's results and emerging theory; Chapter V contains a discussion of the findings and existing literature; and Chapter VI discusses the implications of this study to the child development field.

CHAPTER II

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the findings of researchers who have investigated girls' play and moral development in order to update Piaget's research which excluded girls. A review of this literature will show that Black girls are using liberal *and* communitarian themes in their play and justify the study's first question. I will then discuss the empirical literature on girls' peer culture in order to illustrate the presence of alienation and belonging themes therein. This discussion will explain the inclusion of question number two in which I ask how positions of alienation and belonging affect the participants' moral reasoning. Finally, I will present empirical literature on peer socialization and the socialization of Black children in order to show that both peers and mothers are strong influences on a child's development during middle childhood. A review of this literature points to the inclusion of questions three and four in that they show that both peer and adult relationships are relevant to understanding the relational context in which girls conduct moral reasoning. Because there is so little literature available on the normative development of Black girls of any age group, I have had to piece together literatures, which collectively address the disparate themes presented in the study's questions. Some of these present data on older children, some on both boys and girls and some on mixed-ethnic groups of girls.

Girls' Play and Moral Development

While Piaget's foundational study contributes to our understanding of how moral development is constructed in children's play, his portrayal of girls' interactions as lacking form and logic excluded them from theoretical consideration. Anthropologist Marjorie Harness Goodwin's research (1995) provides an opportunity to integrate girls' play into theories of moral development. She conducted a series of studies with third, fourth and fifth grade girls' hopscotch play and found that the 'rules of the game' were not just transmitted through talk, but also through uses of the body and the construction of the hopscotch grid. She demonstrates that girls are neither polymorphous nor, as has been more recently been asserted, essentially cooperative in their game playing. By focusing on the performance of the game, rather than its form or structure, Harness Goodwin studies how girls play with the constitutive framework of rules to explore the boundaries of appropriate behavior. She finds that the players are constantly engaged in finding creative ways to aid their advancement through the hopscotch matrix and that the peer referee plays a crucial role in maintaining the constitutive rules of the game while allowing for elaborations. The importance of maintaining a set of governing rules that do not change with other vacillations in the game represents an orientation towards a liberal universal. The rules transcend any differences or desire among the girls and provide a means to organize their activity. However, they also allow for some flexibility provided it doesn't violate the game's constitutive rules.

The children in Harness Goodwin's study (1995) use a combination of words, intonation, gestures, physical prowess, spatial orientation and gaze to negotiate the moral

boundaries of their playing field. The use of these non-spoken forms of communication relies on a degree of shared cultural understanding that the girls used in interpreting one another's morally regulating acts. The relational aspect of this cultural knowledge contributes to a communitarian perspective that is more complex than rational deliberation under cooperative circumstances as Piaget's liberal perspective suggests.

Developmental psychologists Larry Nucci and Elliot Turiel also believe that moral development is more complex than Piaget and Kohlberg's theories suggest. They both administered moral dilemmas and observed children's videotaped play from 3 to 10 years of age in order to identify the forms of reasoning they used during conflictual situations. They found that children employed three types of reasoning – psychological, social-conventional and moral. Psychological reasoning consisted of concerns about personal choice [e.g., – “it's a personal choice who to be with” (Killen & Rutland, 2011, p. 93)] and autonomy [e.g., – “it's her life and she can do what she wants” (p. 93)]. Social-convention reasoning consisted of concern about traditions [e.g., – “It's always been that way, and it should stay the same” (p. 93)] and conventions [e.g., – “The game is for boys and they know how to play it...so it's okay to tell her she can't join” (p. 93)]. Moral reasoning consisted of principles of how one ought to treat another according to concerns about fairness [e.g., – “It's not fair to exclude others for that type of reason” (p. 93)] and equal treatment [e.g., – “They are not being treated equally because girls and boys are the same and both should get to try out for the music club” (p. 93)]. They identify these three types of reasoning as domains and assert that rather than progress from the conventional to the moral as Kohlberg believed, children progress within each

of these domains throughout childhood. They refer to this approach as Social Domain Theory. The progression within the domains is characterized by more abstract thought and an increased ability to coordinate multiple issues (Turiel, 1983).

Nucci and Turiel's insights suggest that liberal notions of an autonomous individual self, and notions of universal principles are relevant to children's moral reasoning. They also show that children's reasoning reflects communitarian concerns about customs and group regulations. The division of these into domains, wherein one category is considered moral has been the subject of criticism by those who believe they don't acknowledge the moral nature of conventional concerns (see Shweder, 2006). However, this research is still useful for demonstrating the presence of both liberal and communitarian concerns in children's reasoning.

These findings lend support to the study's first research question. The studies in this section suggest that including girls' activity in studies of moral development will develop our understanding the ways in which both liberal and communitarian themes are active in Black girls' moral development.

Girls' Peer Culture and Themes of Alienation and Belonging

Ethnographic studies on girls' peer culture both reveal the means by which girls construct their unique cultures and the ways in which experiences of alienation of belonging influence this process. Within the scant literature available on Black girls' peer culture, positions of alienation and belonging are informed by interpersonal activity as well as by discourses of race, gender and class. In this section I review literature that

demonstrates both ways in which Black girls participate in and are objects of inclusion and exclusion practices that result in experiences of alienation and belonging.

Both Harness Goodwin (1991, 1995) and Scott's (2002) ethnographic studies of Black girls' play activities provide greater insight into these themes. In Harness Goodwin's studies girls (9-14) developed moral codes for appropriate talk that precluded them from having conflict over boys and disallowed talking behind each other's back. In so doing, they provided a means by which to control membership and ensure group harmony. Scott's study of Black girls' play on a mixed gender, mixed race playground highlights the ways in which the girls responded to and enacted moral codes in order to maintain a sense of belonging to the "club" or "crew". Many of their practices were directed toward the goal of maintaining "girls only" spaces. Their practices included chasing boys off, enacting rules that limited boys' access and designating themselves as the only ones who could change rules. Girls who did not take on these values were treated as the odd girl out.

In a study conducted between 1964-1968 in the St. Louis Pruitt-Igoe housing project Joyce Ladner (1971/1995) investigated the expectations and goals of Black girls between the ages of 6 and 18 as well as their feelings about parents and boyfriends, marriage, pregnancy, and child-rearing. One salient theme within the girls' peer culture was a concern for developing a sense of the women they ought to become in order to be a productive member of their community. Their practices were influenced by their observations of older siblings and mothers, through intergenerational tropes transmitted through stories and lessons as well as by the conditions of poverty, racism and violence in

which they lived. Ladner found that girls' activity proscribed a childhood that appeared emotionally precocious relative to mainstream and typically White American notions of childhood. For example 10 year old Kim was often "...chased into the buildings by the police after curfew, played house, the dirty dozens, cursed and imitated sex play with her 12 year old boyfriend" (p. 56). In addition to engaging in these practices with her same age peers, girls in middle childhood spent time with girls younger and older than themselves.

The girls in Ladner's study (1971/1995) develop a sense of belonging to their peer culture and ultimately to the larger community by practicing becoming a woman. She uses the girls' narratives to produce four categories of women to which the girls aspired. Across these categories, the girls expect that women should be nurturing, independent and strong. However, the categories are differentiated by the ways in which they respond to issues of race, class and gender. Themes of alienation are also present in the girls' narratives as they discuss the consequences of racism and poverty. They are keenly aware of the ways in which their status as poor Black girls limits both their ability to be seen as upstanding by the larger society as well as their opportunities for upward mobility.

In her 1984 study of working class, first grade Black girls, Grant also finds that girls' sense of belonging is influenced by the expectation of girls as nurturers. Teachers engaged in the structuring of this role by giving praise for social skills and helping behavior (as opposed to their cognitive skills) thereby acting with the girls to develop a field of practice that cultivated a caretaker. The role of 'go-between girl', in which the

student served as a relational bridge between students of disparate racial categories and between teacher and students, is an example of the type of social role available within this particular classroom. It is important to note that this role circumscribed the Black girls' relationship with the teacher around functional interactions that were focused on other students. When teachers made attempts to step out of this practice and praise Black girls for their cognitive skills, working class White boys in the classroom made racist remarks meant to put the girls in their place and confined them to a narrow sphere of action. Herein the alienating practices of the White boys served to confine girls' roles to that of caretaker and limit their ability to realize their full intellectual identity. In this case, the practices of the peer culture were so dramatic that they served to outweigh the influence of the adult authority.

The theme of alienation as invisibility is salient in Rollock's (2007) ethnography. In a study of pupils in a London high school Rollock describes Black girls as maintaining a subject position of non-being. She found that because the teachers thought of good students as (White) girls and bad students as (Black) boys, Black female students inhabited a space of invisibility. A symbolic space that was outside of any recognized peer culture within the school.

Rosalyn George's (2007) study of a multi-racial group of British girls transitioning from primary (year 6) to middle school (year 7) highlights the role moral codes play within a friendship group's formation and maintenance. Her findings suggest that, though a moral code is a necessary component of a friendship group, the method by which the code is established reveals the vacillations in moral production according to

girls' strategic ordering of status. The girls used friendship to construct peer culture and sometimes compromised their moral code to gain higher status or maintain their membership in the group. African descent girls in the study engaged a form of "racelessness" and moral resistance to maintain a sense of place within the school while preventing alienation of self. George uses Signithia Fordham's (1995) term "racelessness" to conceptualize the ways in which the girls in her study commit to the values and norms of the school. In so doing, they appear raceless to teachers even as they engage in racially/ethnically centered activity within their African-Caribbean community. Other African descent girls in the study maintained their role of good students, but enacted dialogical styles consistent with an ethnic style of "speaking one's mind." This strategy highlights a subtlety in the girls' moral code. They accept the norms of academic achievement in order to remain consistent with theirs and their families' pro-education expectation, but reject expected norms of communication.

In summary, these studies suggest that themes of alienation and belonging are central to moral reasoning. They both motivate individual girls' moral decision making and are foundational to the development of group codes of conduct. These findings lend support to the studies second question, which selects these themes for consideration in Black girls' moral reasoning.

Socialization and Moral Development

In addition to having experiences of alienation and belonging within peer groups, children are also socialized by their peers in addition to the ongoing influence of parents. In this section I will review empirical literature relevant to the socialization of children

and especially of Black children in order to establish it as lens for understanding Black girls' moral reasoning. It is important to note that given liberal orientation's preference for universals that transcend context, studies on socialization of particular children are less like to elicit liberal themes.

William Corsaro's (2011) empirical investigations of peer culture lend support to his conceptualization of children's interpretation of adult culture. In a study of Italian preschool children, he showed how each group integrated language practices from adult culture in order to engage in conflictual conversations. For Italian children, they engaged in a speech acts that engaged the Italian style of discussion to debate aspects of their social world that were confusing to them. Discussion is a predictable, stylized form of speech seen in Italian culture which involves making claims and counter claims in a dramatic fashion. In one scene the children debate the choice of play activity and the quality of the objects they built out of Legos. In the process of this discussion, they draw upon shared knowledge about popular culture, language practices and toys in order to map the boundaries of their peer culture. This process not only interprets adult culture in order to delineate a peer social landscape, it prepares them for future adult participation by enabling them to practice discussion. Within this study we see the influence of both adults and children as the preschoolers attempt to resolve their conflicts. The interpretive aspect of Corsaro's study is of particular significance to this study as I am not concerned with what Black girls have learned didactically, but with how they use their knowledge in the course of moral reasoning. While Corsaro's focus is on children's interpretation of

the culture of the adult controlled classroom, Haight (2002) focuses on the milieu of Sunday school.

Haight's (2002) study of interactions between African-American adults and children between the ages of 3-15 years in Sunday school develops the concept of "hypothetical talk" to describe how adults use moral/spiritual teachings to promote their reasoning about concrete dilemmas. This talk would place children in fictitious situations in which they might encounter Jesus or a Biblical situation and be asked to act in accordance with the day's lesson. This dialogue both enabled the teacher to assess and build comprehension and extend the lesson through application. Following is an example of a child posing a hypothetical.

Javon: What if you don't go to church and you don't believe –

SJ: Ummm. Keep talking...

Javon: What if ...you don't even go to church and you don't even know.

SJ: Ummm! Now, that's interesting. Will God touch the unsaved?

(Haight, 2002, p. 99)

Haight describes this dialogue as meaning making. However, from the perspective of moral development, the response that follows Javon's question largely influences the degree to which it is useful to a child's growth. If the goal of the conversation is to use hypothetical talk to teach moral lessons, then the child is less involved in constructing meaning. However, if the field of meaning is open such that Javon is able to use the lesson to generate his moral perspective, then from a constructivist perspective, there are greater implications for development. Haight adds to Corsaro's (2011) findings by providing an example of children interpreting adult spiritual values. The following theorists are concerned with how Black children interpret larger community values.

Both Humphries, Parker and Jagers (2000) and Janie Ward (1991) developed empirical projects that specifically explore Black children's moral development. Humphries was concerned about moral reasoning among African American fifth and eighth graders while Janie Ward explored the themes of care and justice in African American narratives.

In a paper and pencil measure, Humphries et al. (2000) tested the degree to which gender, empathy and cultural orientation (specifically communalism vs. individualism) influenced moral judgment. The researchers believed that, given their greater cognitive abilities and increased experience, eighth graders would have greater empathy than fifth graders. Citing literature that found late childhood and early adolescent girls to have greater empathy than boys, they expected the girls to have greater moral maturity. Greater degrees of empathy and communalism were expected to yield higher levels of moral reasoning. In previous studies Boykin and Toms (1985) showed that Black children were more likely to adopt a communal orientation. A communal orientation is one in which "individuals view themselves as being inextricably linked with others in their social milieu. There exists an emphasis on social bonds and mutual interdependence such that the good of the individual is closely intertwined with the good of the group" (Boykin, Jagers, Ellison & Albury, 1997). Students were asked to complete a Gibbs (1992) sociomoral reflection measure. Participants used a three-point scale to rate the importance of a statement such as 'How important is it for a person to save the life of a stranger?' After scoring the statement, they used an open-ended format to explain their answers.

The Davis Empathy Scale was used to assess the emotional and cognitive empathy responses of children and vignettes measured the degree to which students were oriented toward competitive individualism or communalism. Humphries et al. (2000) found that while girls may resonate more with a communal orientation, the presence of such an orientation is more closely linked to prosocial functioning with boys. However, greater competitive individualism did not have an impact on moral judgment. As the group expected, older children were at a higher stage of moral development than their younger counterpart. The group found no gender differences in moral reasoning.

Janie Ward (1991) suggests that this communal orientation facilitated the development of a morality of care amongst African American youth. She explores African-Americans' narratives of inter-racial conflict using Brown and Gilligan's (1992) method of story analysis. The paper is based upon a larger study that was investigating the intergenerational process of racial socialization in African-American families. The paper seeks to identify the 'race related morals and values imbedded in the racial socialization process. However, her preemptive naming of race related moral values confounds Ward's investigative attempt. She asserts that the ability to analyze relational power differentials and the development of effective healthy resistance are 'inherent' in the political aspect of racial socialization. The study also 'reads' for care (receptivity and responsiveness) and justice (a concern that everyone is treated fairly) orientations in the participants' narratives. It is not clear how Ward links political socialization to moral themes or if she views moral development as a process separate from socialization.

Ward (1991) analyzes six narratives (1 Black adult male, 3 Black adult females and 2 Black adolescent females) from the larger study, and sought to explore the context in which their moral judgment regarding racial difference is formed. The method involves multiple readings of each transcript that enable the investigator to bracket their reactions, identify the “I” or the person interviewed and identify evidence of ethics of care and justice. Ward’s readings of the narratives describe the variety of ways in which her participants employ care and ethics as they negotiate racially informed conflicts. Ward’s analysis of the narratives suggests that the developmental arc is influenced by “racial socialization.” Thornton (1997) describes racial socialization as an intentional process in which Black parents prepare their children for the experience of being Black in America. In one instance of Ward’s study, an adolescent girl resigns herself to being profiled by a store owner rather than stand up for her rights. Ward (1991) suggests that this represents a failure in the racial socialization of this Black child.

While Ward’s assertion might resonate for many Black Americans, it only illuminates one strategy for racial socialization. Psychologists, Wade Boykin and Forest Toms (1985) examined the socializing practices of parents regarding race/ethnicity and identified three parenting perspectives that can characterize racial socialization – mainstream, minority and cultural expression. The mainstream perspective emphasizes personal character and life skills over messages regarding race. The minority perspective emphasizes responsiveness to experiences of racism and other forms of oppression and the cultural expression perspective insulates the experience of race in America with an emphasis on pride in African cultural heritage. While many Black parents integrate these

perspectives, most demonstrate a preference for one (Thornton, 1997). Ward's (1991) analysis introduces a form of socialization that emphasizes an activist dimension to those identified by Boykin and Toms (1985). In so doing, she suggests that for Black girls and their mothers there is an outstanding moral issue that asks 'how *ought* one socialize a child toward race'.

In summary, the theorists in this section challenge Piaget's initial claim that we can understand moral development by studying processes of socialization in European males. Collectively, they direct our understanding of the moral development of Black children toward the learning of community – endorsed virtues, the political aspects of racial socialization and the tendency toward a communal orientation. They begin with the assumption that there is something unique about the moral development of Black children, and that, uniqueness is related to both their experience of living in a racially stratified society and participating in an ethnic community.

However, they endorse a romantic notion of community that glosses over power differentials between actors and leave open the question of relationships between communities. Both of these are relevant to the study of Black girls' development. Since within a community identified by race, girls may find themselves subordinated by discourses of gender. Furthermore, these studies appear to employ a theory of socialization aligned with social learning theory. As such, unlike a Vygotskian approach they don't provide space for Black girls' agency. This discussion on adult contribution to children's moral development lends support to the study's fourth question by suggesting

that the positioning of girls within a given set of socialization goals influences their moral reasoning.

Summary

The study is designed to address the following research questions:

1. How do liberal and communitarian orientations appear in Black girls' moral reasoning?
2. How do subject positions of alienation and belonging affect Black girls' reasoning about morality?
3. Does the addition of a peer affect the amount and type of talk in which girls engage or their use of Black communication?
4. How is mothers' thinking reflected in girls' responses to moral dilemmas?

These questions followed the conclusions of the literature review, which suggested that a shift in the social context of the protagonist in a moral dilemma affects their moral reasoning.

Question one explored two main themes in the constructivist moral development literature – liberalism and communitarianism approaches in moral reasoning. The liberal orientation draws on Piaget and Kohlberg and assumes a public sphere that prioritizes individual rights, a notion of fairness that is based upon equal distribution of and access to goods, autonomous rational thinking, universal principles and the individual being in conflict with a governing structure (e.g., school, laws or family). The communitarian orientation draws on Gilligan, Shweder, Tappan and other culturalists and considers a public sphere that is based on notions of an ethic care for the other, community endorsed

virtues or contextualized justifications for behavior. Question one asks how these themes appear in Black girls' moral problem solving.

I am particularly interested in the social and relational contexts in which Black girls use each orientation. Gilligan's research has suggests that, in general, (White) girls are more likely to employ a communitarian orientation, in contrast to boys' tendency to operate in a justice domain. Subsequent studies left these results in question and suggested that boys and girls reason and act within both domains (see especially Jaffee & Hyde, 2000). By looking at the context in which girls used each orientation (or ways in which they combine them), I hoped to develop a deeper understanding of how the Black girls in this study shifted between these orientations as they responded to moral dilemmas.

The second question explores how a particular change in social context affects moral reasoning – namely that of a person's experiences of alienation and belonging. These shifts affect the ways in which Black girls find themselves located between positions of the internal experiences of affect, perception, thought and desire, and those of society, family and institutional formations (e.g., community, school, race/gender). I chose the constructs of alienation and belonging because they are perennial concerns in social/emotional and Africana thought and scholarship. These literatures converge in their concern about how an actor's affective, political and hierarchical place within a given social structure affects their practices and development. By asking the participants to respond to dilemmas in which the protagonist was situated in a subject position of

alienation or belonging, I expected to identify how their reasoning shifted in the context of this change.

The third question draws upon research on the children's use of language. Though this literature suggests that children's responses to dilemmas will vary when they are able to draw upon each other's language use, this condition has not yet been tested.

The final question explores an aspect of the familial influence – that of the primary female mother in the child's life. Both constructivist and culturalists and peer culture researchers address the issue of adults' role in moral development albeit from different perspectives (Corsaro & Eder, 1996; Piaget, 1965/2008; Shweder, 1996). In this study, I follow the peer culture and constructivist literature by asking if and how mothers' influences were present in the girls' talk and what forms of adult constraint were enacted in their reasoning.

Having developed the questions that frame this study, I now turn to the identification of a method that is appropriate to responding to them. There are typically three methodological approaches to the study of moral development. They include ethnographic/grounded theory, the presentation and discussion of moral dilemmas, administration, and psychometric tests. Though Piaget's investigation did not formally identify a method, his approach is similar to ethnographic and grounded theory methods in that he observed European Caucasian boy's play and used his extensive background knowledge to interpret their actions and develop a theory of moral development. Subsequent researchers (Evaldsson, 2004; Harness Goodwin, 1991) formalized the use of

ethnography in their investigations in order to understand how moral development occurs as part of the construction of social life across a diverse range of gender and ethnicity.

While Piaget and subsequent ethnographers observed play, Kohlberg initiated the use of dilemmas to present White American boys with a conflict concerning the rightness or wrongness of an action. Kohlberg was less interested in the choice they made than he was in the process of their reasoning. He administered the dilemmas to a cross-sectional sample, identified commonalities amongst and differences between the groups and used the results to develop his stage theory of moral development.

The investigation of the questions in this study requires a methodology that will enable me to understand the process of Black girls' moral reasoning from their point of view and integrate me into the investigation as an informed participant/observer and interpreter. I have chosen to combine ethnography and grounded theory approaches with the presentation and discussion of moral dilemmas as a means to achieve this goal.

Ethnography is an empirical approach developed in anthropology to study cultural phenomena. The findings of ethnographic approaches reflect the meaning systems and folk knowledge of participants' everyday lives. Ethnographic data collection emphasizes participation in naturally occurring settings wherein investigators can study up close personal experience in an effort to better inform interpretations of data collected (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). As I will discuss in the next chapter, this study uses a data collection method that is common to studies of moral reasoning – dilemma administration. However, because this study aims to understand Black girls' reasoning as it is situated in their everyday lives, it became important design dilemmas that were

ethnographically informed. In other words, though, the participants were responding to concerns about hypothetical others, they were also confronting moral problems that were common within their own experience. In the next chapter, I detail how my participation within their youth group enabled me to gain the knowledge I needed to develop these ethnographically-informed moral dilemmas.

Grounded Theory is also concerned with using participants' direct experience as a means of discovery. The approach was innovated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a systematic means to generate theory and provide an alternative to prevailing positivist approaches that through scientific methods demonstrated a belief in the absolute objectivity of the investigator from social reality. Glaser and Strauss criticized positivism's belief that sensory experience was the only means of arriving at scientific truths and suggested that it precluded investigators from understanding the meaning actors made of their world.

The goal of Grounded Theory is to identify basic social process by explaining participants' main concerns about the world and how they resolve them (Jones & Alony, 2011). Its aims are to understand the multiple ways in which participants address the phenomenon under concern.

The variability amongst the population emerges as themes are developed that explain the actors' multiple approaches. This framework holds that the investigator assumes an objective role as she discovers a theory about a world outside of her direct experience. The literature refers to this approach as classic grounded theory (Oneal, 2011). Subsequent iterations of Grounded Theory have critiqued the idea of investigator

objectivity. Instead, they assume that because the researcher brings her own set of experiences and thoughts as she participates in both the collection and analysis of the data, she is implicated in the construction of the resulting theory (Charmaz, 2006). This study endorses the aforementioned constructionist approach and seeks to develop a theory in which I as the researcher interact with the data in order to develop the resulting theory or set of explanations for how Black girls use moral reasoning to organize their social world. The transparency of my role as investigator represents one important operating principle within grounded theory with which I will operate in this study. Because I am interested in investigating moral problem solving within the context of Black girls everyday life, I also circumscribe this research project within grounded theory's operating principle of understanding the interpretations that social actions have for the participants within their historical period. This commitment enables the investigation to derive a set of norms, values and symbols that are particular to the participants in this study.

In the following chapter I provide details regarding the systematic approach of arriving at the Grounded Theory. For the purposes of this discussion it is important to note the relevance of this method to the study's aims. Grounded Theory is a useful method for gaining insight into phenomena that are relatively unknown. Though there is literature on the various pieces of what constitutes Black girls' use of moral reasoning (e.g., – research on Black children, Black boys, White girls, older Black girls), there is little research that draws upon the everyday experience of Black girls. Everyday experience both recognizes those moral conflicts that are more apparent and available for

scrutiny, and those that are hidden and reflective of larger social structures. Through the use of ethnographically derived dilemmas and theoretical explanations grounded in the participants' moral reasoning, this study seeks to contribute to this gap. In the next chapter, I provide a detailed accounting of my use of these approaches in the context of this study's design.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This chapter details the methods used to investigate the research questions emerging from the review of literature. After explicating the study's tool development, recruitment and data collection/analysis methods issues of validity and reliability are discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion of ethical considerations that informed the design.

Participants

Study Setting

The study to be described was conducted in primarily Black neighborhoods in a large Midwestern city. The youth group, from which I collected data, was sponsored by a local church. The church serves a predominately Black working/middle-class population. However, the participants in the youth group do not need to be members of the church. The mission of the youth group was focused on Afrocentric-Christian character development and the production of responsible citizenship. The American born, English-speaking girls in the group were between the ages of 5 and 18. For this study I drew from the 8-11 year old group. I will provide further demographic detail in the study sample section.

I cultivated a relationship with this field site that would enable me to collect data from participants and answer my research questions. My ongoing presence at the site

enabled the girls to develop greater comfort with me and provided me with some understanding of their social practices. As a youth group volunteer, I was in the field site 12 months prior to beginning the study. Once I received IRB approval, I recruited the sample as described below. I invited every girl and mother in the study's 8-11 year age range to participate in the study. The final study included a sample of 20 girls and 18 mothers. There were two sets of sisters in the child group; therefore there were two fewer mothers in the final sample than I had anticipated. The age of mothers was not relevant to this project; therefore there was no age requirement for their participation.

Study Sample

This study recruited 20 child and 18 mother participants. The goal of this research was to identify themes and gain persuasiveness at the conceptual level. Put differently, the strength of the study's finding will be determined in part by the degree to which I can represent the complexity of the girls' moral reasoning in logical themes. Therefore I selected a sample size that was small enough to facilitate an intensive investigation of the phenomena (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). The qualitative method literature suggests a sample size of 20 or less in order to achieve this goal (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Using a larger sample size would have diminished my ability to extract theoretical knowledge. Three mothers completed the screening but neither they nor their children participated in the study. All of the children and mothers who participated in the first interview study completed every task.

Because the study was focused on the issue of moral development, I collected a non-probabilistic, purposive sample (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of girls in the 8-11 year

age group. A non-probabilistic sample indicates that the selection was not random and therefore cannot rely on probability theory. Therefore I am not able to generalize the study's results to a larger population. A purposive sample is one that has a specific plan in mind. In the case of this study, the plan was to recruit Black girls who were in middle childhood in order to capture a period in which they would be mutually influenced by peers and adults.

Alderson (2005) suggests that the ethical sampling of child participants should ensure that participants are selected fairly with regard to age, race and other demographic factors, and that participants are not unduly over or under involved in the research. As members of the youth group, all of the girls in the specified age range were eligible for participation in the study. In order to meet the full criteria, they needed to have a mother who was also willing to participate.

Because the study employed an English-only interview format all participants had to be fluent in English. Using translators for children who do not speak English would have added a layer of complexity to the data that was beyond the scope of this study. This exclusion did not represent a significant barrier as the youth organization's activities took place in English and all of the girls and mothers were fluent in English. All participants were able to read at a fourth grade level as confirmed by their parent during the screening process.

All of the participants lived in predominately Black communities in either Chicago or Indiana. All but one of the participants lived in single family homes on which

their parents were paying mortgages. The remaining participant lived in a subsidized housing complex. Tables 1 and 2 provide the participants' demographic details.

Table 1. Child Demographics (N=20)

Race-Ethnicity	100 % Black American
Age	<i>M</i> =10 years <i>Range</i> =8-11
Grade child entering in Fall	5% Third grade 35% Fourth grade 55% Fifth grade 5% Sixth grade
Religious Affiliation	100 % Christian
Marital Status of Parents	6% Separated 22% Single 72% Married

Table 2. Mother Demographics (N=18)

Race-Ethnicity	100% Black-American
Age	<i>M</i> =41 <i>Range</i> =33-53
Education Level	16% High School 6% Associates 50% Bachelors 28% Graduate
Marital Status	6% Separated 22% Single 72% Married
Hollingshead Four Factor Index of Socioeconomic Status	Sample Average = Minor professional Lower-Middle Class

Process of Consent

The process of consent involved three phases – consent of the supporting organization, consent of the mother and assent of the child.

Supporting organization. I developed a relationship with the supporting site in order to use it as a potential recruitment site. I approached the sponsoring organization, explained my research goals, visited their multiple youth programs, and then decided that a particular youth group was most appropriate for my study. At that point I began participating in their youth meetings as a volunteer. This involvement enabled me to develop my knowledge of the group and allowed the girls and their mothers to become more familiar with me. I attended a volunteer training with the sponsoring organization prior to participating. At the time I began volunteering, the site understood that my project required Loyola University's Internal Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) approval before it commenced. I provided full descriptions of my proposed process of recruitment, and my study design. The organization signed a letter of organizational cooperation (see Appendix A), which I included in my IRB application.

Mother. After I received Loyola University IRB approval, the youth organization sent an E-mail of introduction and invitation to the mothers of potential participants on my behalf (see Appendix B). The potential participants were mother/daughter dyads in which the daughter was between the ages of 8-11. I invited them to consent to both their own and their daughter's participation. The E-mail asked parents to indicate if they were willing to receive a follow-up phone call from me. I followed up

the E-mail with a phone call to parents who had indicated an interest in the study. After the mother expressed an interest, I conducted a screening to assess whether the child met the study's criteria of being a Black, English speaker between the ages of 8-11 and able to read at a fourth grade level. I also confirmed that there would be a custodial female caregiver available for the study. Though custodial female caregiver could have included mothers, aunts, grandmothers, etc., the final study sample only included mothers (see Appendix C).

After the screening deemed the girls appropriate for the study I scheduled a time to go over the consent form (see Appendix D) in person. I addressed potential concerns with parents by:

- sharing sample dilemmas with them;
- identifying the categories of experience that the data collection covered and ensured them that they did not cover sex, drugs, illegal behavior or physical violence;
- informing them that, though the child interviews and surveys were confidential, I would inform them if an issue of abuse arose or if their daughter disclosed that she was currently engaging in illegal or self-harming behavior;
- giving them examples of times that they might choose to withdraw their consent for participation; and reassured them that I will conduct the interview at a venue of their choosing.

Child. I reviewed the assent form (see Appendix E) with the child at the same meeting at which I reviewed the consent form with the mother. The assent review took place in the mother's presence. In order to be certain that the child understood the type of questions she would be answering and the voluntary nature of assent, I:

- described the study in language that a child with a 4th grade literacy level could understand;
- after reviewing the assent form I read them examples of the types of questions I might ask;
- I gave them examples of times when a girl might consider withdrawing consent and reiterated that there is no penalty for such action; and

- I monitored their assent throughout the study by reminding them before each interview that they could decide not to participate.

Tool Development and Pilot Study

Concurrent to recruitment for the main study, I developed data collection tools and piloted them with a small sample of 9-11 year old Black girls. Throughout the main study I used two tools – a pre-interview schedule and moral dilemma interview.

Pre-interview Protocol

The goals of the pre-interview questions were to learn both about how they circumscribed their significant friendships and familial relationships, and how they defined and experienced alienation and belonging within these relationships. This data was used to provide a rich description of the study sample and demonstrate their similarity to the girls in the dilemmas. I also asked participants to provide definitions of “fitting in” and to tell stories of times when it was hard to fit in. From these responses I learned about their social landscape and derived their emic concept of alienation and belonging.

During the pilot study, I asked the questions informally and did not ask consistent questions. As it became clear that I wanted to target specific categories, I developed the questions in the pre-interview so that I could learn about (1) their significant friendships; (2) their significant familial relationships; (3) their definitions of alienation and belonging (4) their experience with alienation and belonging. Rather than use the concepts of alienation and belonging, which would likely be too advanced for their age, I asked the girls to talk about “fitting in” and “not fitting in.” Finally, I asked the girls to define fairness and talk about a time when something was unfair to them. I did not use the pre-

interview questions to respond to the study's questions. Rather, I used them to describe the study sample and demonstrate the ethnographic fit between the girls in the dilemmas and the study participants.

Moral Dilemma Interview

While Kohlberg's dilemmas were designed to assess the form of reasoning his participants used in an attempt to establish universal stages, the dilemmas in this study were intended to examine the ways in which changes in the social context affect the moral reasoning of Black middle school girls. In order to design dilemmas that were familiar to participants, I used the knowledge I gained about them through my volunteer activity to construct scenarios that included people, places and concerns that were representative of their experience. Each dilemma was followed by a series of follow-up questions related to the study's themes.

The scenario's protagonist's sense of alienation and belonging were the significant changes in the dilemmas' social context. Literature on girls' friendships (Fine, 1981; George, 2007; Harness Goodwin, 1995) suggests that moral decisions are heavily influenced by a girl's subject position within a particular social arena. In order to examine how this group of girls' reasoning shifted according to subject position, I first constructed the Belonging/Alienation matrix (see Figure 1).

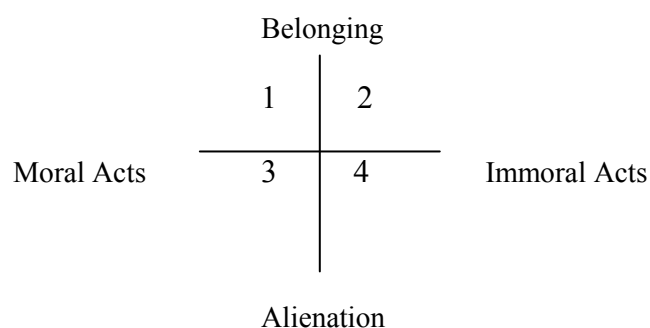


Figure 1. Belonging Alienation Matrix

The matrix identified four types of girls: (1) those that engage in *moral* acts and feel a sense of *belonging* (Belonging/Moral), (2) those that engage in *immoral* acts and feel a sense of *belonging* (Belonging/Immoral), (3) those that engage in *moral* acts and feel *alienated* (Alienation/Moral), and (4) those that engage in *immoral* acts and feel *alienated* (Alienated/Immoral). Within this matrix, I defined belonging according to Haggerty, Williams, Coyne and Early's (1996) *sense of belonging concept* as "valued involvement and fit." I defined alienation as "estrangement from self, one's social network or from social norms." After identifying the characteristics of each dimension of the matrix, I developed 12 scenarios that both reflected these characteristics and used terms familiar to the girls. I did not develop scenarios for matrix four (Alienated/Immoral) because by definition, they would present the participants with potentially harmful material.

Belonging/moral dilemmas. The four dilemmas in this category portrayed a group of Black girls who are friends, typically engage in prosocial behavior and encounter a situation that involves a moral conflict. I asked participants to decide how the girls in the scenario should respond to the problem. The follow-up questions asked

the participants to discuss if the girls should choose doing what is morally sanctioned even if it meant damaging their relationships.

Belonging/immoral acts. The four dilemmas in this category portrayed a group of Black girls who are friends and often find themselves engaged in wrong acts. These girls encounter a moral conflict and I asked participants to decide how the girls in the scenario should respond to the problem. The follow-up questions asked the participants to discuss if the girls should follow the moral codes of their group as opposed to those of an institution or larger society.

Alienation/moral acts. The four dilemmas in this category portrayed an individual Black girl who is alienated from a group. She encounters a moral conflict that involves doing the right thing on behalf of the group that has alienated her. I asked the participants to decide how the girl in the scenario should respond to the problem. The follow-up questions asked the participants to discuss if the girl should do right by the group that has alienated her, or choose not to act on their behalf because they had alienated her.

After I develop the dilemmas, I gave them to an artist who had experience developing art for children's studies. She worked with me to design pictures that corresponded with the scenarios in a storybook fashion. Though the inclusion of pictures is not typical protocol in dilemma administration, I made a decision to include them in order to scaffold the girls' memory and to reinforce the fact that the girls in the scenario looked like them. Table 3 contains sample dilemmas. The remainder of the dilemmas can be found in Appendix F.

Table 3. Sample Dilemmas

Belonging/Moral Acts

Kim, Paula and Dionne are best friends. They have spent the whole summer together playing at the park and having sleepovers at each others' houses. One day they are outside jumping double-dutch. Dionne turns to the other girls and says that there is a new girl on the block named Shirelle. In the fall, she is going to be in their classroom. Dionne says that they should invite her to play with them. If they didn't, they wouldn't be 'good neighbors', which is something they learned about at school. Kim and Paula aren't sure about inviting Shirelle to play with them, because they are having a lot of fun with just the three of them.

Belonging/Immoral Acts

Jordan, Dawn and Shamla are three Black girls and best friends. They are sick and tired of their gym teacher Miss Jenkins. She says mean things to the students. One day Miss Jenkins told the class that they need to run 10 laps around the gym before they could have free time. Jordan had some difficulty completing the 10 laps because she wasn't very athletic. Miss. Jenkins sees Jordan running slowly and says "Jordan, I'm tired of seeing you crawl around my gym". Shamla wants to defend her friend and says to Miss Jenkins "I'm tired of seeing your weave". Dawn also wants to defend her friend but knows that talking back to Miss Jenkins is wrong.

Alienation/Immoral Acts

Yvonne is an eight year-old Black girl. She participates in an after school group where they do activities. There are a group of girls in the program who tease Yvonne about her weight and it hurts her feelings. Sometime the director of the after school program – Miss Jackson – teases Yvonne. One day Miss Jackson called her a pig. Next week is Miss Jackson's birthday. The kids in the program are all making cards for her. Yvonne has been hurt by the other kids and by Miss Jackson and is not sure if she should make a card.

Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study prior to completing the main study's final design in order to assess the appropriateness of the dilemmas. I particularly wanted to determine whether the dilemmas were age appropriate reflected the general experience of the girls and would yield the intended data. I also wanted to administer the questions and

dilemmas in order to gauge the amount of time it might take for the average pre-interview protocol and dilemma interview.

I recruited a convenience sample of six 9-11 year old Black girls from friends and associates. The pilot sample included four 10 year old girls and two 9 year old girls. The girls were middle class and from two parent homes. Four of the six girls regularly attended church. I asked the participants all of the pre-interview questions and selected three dilemmas (one from each category) to administer. Each girl received a ten dollar gift card and cookies for her participation. I did not pilot the pairs or mother interviews.

From the pilot study, I learned that all of the girls comprehended the vocabulary and intention of the questions. I followed each dilemma with follow up probes that were relevant to the study's questions. After reviewing the pilot study transcripts I determined that, while some of the pilot's follow-up questions elicited useful data, many did not. Given this result, I developed follow-up probes for the main study that would enable me to ask consistent questions directed at belonging, alienation, liberalism and communitarianism. Following the administration of the pre-interview and dilemma questions, I asked each girl to give me examples of instances in their own lives that were similar to those of the girls in the study. Their responses suggested that the moral problems encountered by the girls in the study were similar to those encountered by pilot study participants.

Data Collection

As investigator, I carried out all of the data collection tasks. Because ethnography suggests that the context of the interviewer/interviewee relationship is a critical issue for

methodological consideration in gathering data (Madison, 2005), I include here a discussion of my professional training and my relationship with the participants.

My professional training as a licensed clinical social worker includes a master's degree in Social Work from Jane Addams School of Social Work, post-graduate training in child and family therapy at the University of Chicago Center for Family Health and doctoral coursework in child development. My professional experience includes working as a child and family therapist, administrator of clinical and mental health consultation and trainer on subjects related to mental health, child development and issues related to race and children. Together this training and experience provided me with the capacity for empathic child observation and developmentally informed child interviewing.

In this study, I was positioned as a youth group volunteer who was affiliated with the church. The participants distinguished me as different from the other adults because I didn't have a child in the youth group. During one meeting a girl, who was trying to figure out who I was, turned to me and asked, "Whose mother are you"? I explained to her and those around her that I don't have children but am a volunteer from the church. I was not part of the network of mothers that run the youth group so they didn't know me through my child. I referred to my affiliation with the church because I wanted them to be able to place me in a familiar category.

In my role as a volunteer I was able to interact with the girls in structured group activities as well as in informal casual conversations. In order to lessen my role as an adult and reduce the power difference between us, I ignored their occasional use of swear words and participated in activities when other adults sat out. In this regard, the children

continued to see me as an adult, but as one more akin to an aunt or mentor. I also expressed interest in their ideas and demonstrated an interest in learning from them. For example, during one meeting, I sat with a group of girls who were making blankets and chatting about television shows. When one girl described a television character as “sassy”, I asked her to explain to me what that meant. This question prompted the group to enter into a discussion about the meaning of this word and offer examples of a girl being sassy. They indulged my follow-up questions when I asked for clarification and playfully pointed out some of the contradictions in their definitions.

Therefore, the research protocol was consistent with the girls’ and my relationship as they were accustomed to my interest in their opinions and thoughts. I anticipated that they would respond favorably to my request to participate in the study and enjoy the interview process.

Like the participants in the study, I am a Black female. These similarities do not represent the totality of my identity or theirs; however they were factors relevant to the study’s questions. The issue of the ethnicity-of-interviewer effects is an ongoing debate in North American methodological literature (see for example, Ochieng, 2010; Rhodes, 1994). Drawing on conceptual innovations and empirical research on the study of ethnicity and race, Yasmin Gunaratnam (2003) suggests that rather than assume that there is one racialized or gendered truth that can be told, interviewers should remain cognizant of the complex workings of race regardless of their own racial/gender identification. I adopted this perspective as it avoided essentializing race/gender as a social category and prioritizing it above others. Throughout the data collection and

analysis, I kept notes on my personal reactions to the interviews in order to differentiate my beliefs from those represented in the data. For example, as I visited the participants' homes for interviews, I became keenly aware of the middle-class values (college aspiration, home ownership, bicultural speech) of my participants. At one point in my notes I wrote that it would be easy for me to take this more middle-class perspective of Blackness as "the norm" given the sample and given that my own background and values are similar to those of the participants. Instead, I need to recognize, that like the foundational theorists I criticize, my findings cannot be blindly generalized to Black children with significantly different social-historical locations.

The dialogical nature of the interviews was maximized by my ability to engage in a reciprocal exchange and ask open-ended questions (Conquergood, 1991) thereby enabling participants to explain their thinking which I used to develop theory. I expected that my experience as a clinical social worker with children as well as my experience teaching interview skills would facilitate this process.

Finally, I considered the degree to which the social situation of the interview affected the interviewing process and content. As I set out in a previous section Labov's (1972) findings suggest that the social conditions in which I present the dilemmas may affect the degree to which the participants engage in talk that is reflective of that which they use in their everyday interactions with peers. Given Labov's insight, I include a dyadic (adult with one girl) and triadic (adult with two girls) interview in order to test the ways in which the addition of a peer affected their talk. Prior studies using moral dilemmas have only used the dyadic condition. I expected that in addition to girls using

more words in the triadic situation they would also use slang and reference concrete social situations.

The data collection for this study used three tasks and took place over a period of three months as outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. Data Collection

Protocol	Frequency of Administration	Protocol Used	Administration Timeframe
Pre-Interview Questions	Individual girl <i>N</i> = 20	Pre-interview Questions	First month of study. <i>Range</i> : 10-15 minutes/girl.
Individual Dilemmas	Individual girl <i>N</i> = 20	Dilemmas: 1, 5, 9	First month of study. <i>Range</i> : 30-43 minutes/girl.
Pair Dilemmas	Two girls <i>N</i> = 10 pairs	Dilemmas: 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12	Second month of study or upon completion of individual dilemmas. <i>Range</i> : 57-116 minutes/pair.
Mother Interviews	Mothers <i>N</i> = 18	Dilemmas: 4, 12	Upon completion of the pair dilemmas. <i>Range</i> : 46-101 minutes/mother

I used the pre-interview and moral dilemmas to facilitate the data collection in each of the three tasks. The interviews took place in participant homes at kitchen tables, on living room couches and on family room floors. In general, the girls took the interviews seriously and seemed to appreciate being asked what they thought. Most of them had not been audio-recorded before and delighted in hearing a digital representation of their voice. The use of the pictures during the interview seemed to engage the

participants without distracting them from responding to the dilemmas. In fact, they often referred to the picture frame that represented the moral problem they were solving. Thus the pictures seemed to function as a useful tool for helping the girls remember the storyline of the dilemma. During the assent process, I informed the girls that I would maintain confidentiality in their interviews. However, I thought it was likely that those who had already participated would talk to each other about the content of their responses. Additionally, those who had not responded might receive or seek coaching from those who had already participated in their interview. However, there was no indication that this had occurred. The data collection occurred over the summer months which meant that the girls had less contact with one another and less opportunity to discuss their participation.

After some deliberation I made the decision to randomly assign the girls to pairs. The other methods I considered, such as developing a set of criteria with which to pair the girls, introduced new variables to the study. I was interested in how having a peer present (as opposed to talking exclusively to an adult) will affect the participants' reasoning. Though I believed that the nature of the relationship the participant had with that peer would likely affect the dialogue, controlling for this test condition was beyond the scope of this study's questions.

While the focus of this study was children's moral reasoning, I was also interested in the ways in which mothers' parenting goals are present in the girls' reasoning. Because they are members of cultural communities, I assumed that general themes in the girls' data would be reflected in the mothers' general themes as well. Because this study

was designed to derive a theory about the study sample as a whole, I did not pursue a matched-pairs design. Previous interviews with mothers (George, 2007) found that interviewing mothers about their daughters' behavior in relationships yielded 'romantic' responses that were not useful to the research question. Parents were unwilling to proud of their children and were therefore unwilling to portray them in any but a positive light. They insisted that their daughters would always act in a prosocial manner (e.g., standing up to bullies, inviting children into the group) and were reluctant to discuss potential problems. Though I understood that the mothers in this study might also provide 'romantic' answers, I believed that their data would still be useful in understanding the construction of the girls' moral problem solving.

In order to avoid some of the romanticizing described above, I conducted the mothers' interviews from different angles. I asked them to say what they would want their daughter to do, what they think they would do, and how they prepare them for the given situation through their parenting practices.

Data Analysis

Table 5 summarizes the research questions I investigated in this study, and the data I gathered to address them. In this section I describe how I analyzed the data.

Transcription of Dilemma Interviews

The interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriptionist who signed a confidentiality agreement. The transcriptionist provided word for word transcripts. Inaudible sections were marked [inaudible], and she did not include small talk that occurred prior to the interview. Upon receiving the completed transcripts I read them and

added contextual information from my notes. Additional information included body language and significant changes in tone.

Table 5. Data Analysis

Question	Data Source	Total Responses from Sample	Analysis Method
1. How do liberal and communitarian orientations appear in Black girls' moral reasoning?	Individual Dilemmas	60	Grounded Theory
	Pairs Dilemmas	60	
2. How do subject positions of alienation and belonging affect Black girls' reasoning about morality?	Individual Dilemmas	60	Grounded Theory
	Pairs Dilemmas	60	
3. Does the addition of a peer affect the amount of talk in which Black girls engage or their use of Black communication?	Individual Dilemmas	60	Duration of interview in minutes Grounded Theory
	Pairs Dilemmas	60	
4. How is mothers' thinking reflected in girls' responses to moral dilemmas?	Mother Dilemmas	36	Grounded Theory

Data Analysis Overview

In order to frame my discussion of the grounded theory used, I will first clarify how I distinguished between this study's method and methodology. I identified methods as a set of procedures or tools that are used to investigate a study's questions. I

understood the term methodology to refer to the rationales and epistemological assumptions that informed the study's methods. The methods of Grounded Theory use systematic analysis to develop theory out of the everyday experience of participants. It is epistemologically influenced by symbolic interactionism's belief that the meaning individuals ascribe to action structures knowledge, and pragmatism's belief that social knowledge is constructed best when we understand people in relation to their experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007). Grounded theory's methods and methodological concerns rendered it appropriate for this study's goals of deriving a theory of Black girls' approach to situated moral reasoning.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) identify the following parameters as guiding the development of findings:

- (1) simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis;
- (2) creation of codes and categories from the data, not from preconceived hypothesis;
- (3) the intermediary step of memo-making to bridge codes with theories; and
- (4) collecting data that checks and refines emerging theories (also known as "theoretical sampling").

The short time frame and educational nature of this study necessitated a modified use of the grounded theory method. The codes I used were tools for analysis that initially enabled me to describe the data. I then used focused coding to build categories that informed the study's themes. However due to the constraints of the study's timeframe, I did not conduct theoretical sampling in the traditional way. Theoretical sampling

provides a check whereby the researcher gathers further data with the express intent of testing emerging theories. In this study, it would have meant going back to participants after I had interviewed them and asking further questions to test the validity of the emerging theory. Instead, as a theory began to emerge, I would ask questions to subsequent participants that enabled me to test its validity. The final theoretical formulation is represented as assertions or summaries and claims made about the participants.

I also double coded portions of the data (see section on reliability and validity) in order to address observer influence. Grounded theory instructs that the write-up of findings should include samplings of data that enable readers to trace the investigator's meaning-making process and discern the degree to which they find them valid. The results section (see Chapter VI) of this study includes a sampling of data that enables the reader to evaluate my analysis and compare my interpretation to reasonable alternative explanations. In order to ensure that the final theory represented the central tendency of participants, I only developed codes that represented the data of at least 16 participants. For the children, that is 80% of the sample and for adults it is 89% of the sample.

Qualitative methodologists Miles and Huberman (1994) describe the rules for theory development within grounded theory. The researcher begins with an identification of key terms or codes in the text and develops a description of their occurrence. The description enables one to know how often and in what context they occur. The investigator then reduces the number of codes by clustering them into categories that enable her to develop initial themes. The themes represent propositions about the

phenomena in question and provide the material for subsequent memoing. Memos are “minitheories” (p. 89) that use the study’s data, researcher’s knowledge and observations and relevant literature to develop an explanation for the stated proposition. The memos are then integrated to form the final explanation or theory that addresses the study’s concerns. This process of “immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships... then confirming” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 362) is referred to as analytic induction.

My data analysis was facilitated by the use of NVivo 9 qualitative data analysis software. It enabled me to upload completed transcripts, code data, create visuals that contextualized word use, perform queries at the level of word and phrase, create charts, and, develop memos.

Data Analysis Procedure

I mapped out a logical course for the study’s analysis using Charmaz’s (1995) method of analysis for grounded theory. Grounded theory uses the actual everyday experiences of participants to generate theories that explain actions and beliefs of social groups. The analysis of this data used grounded theory to analyze the girls’ reasoning. The goals of the analysis were to make sense of the girls’ and mothers’ responses to dilemmas and uncover themes that occurred across their responses. Ultimately, I used them to help me generate reasonable assertions about this group of Black girls’ moral reasoning.

Charmaz (1995) articulates four steps for analyzing data: (1) line-by-line coding; (2) focused coding; (3) memo writing; and (4) development of theory. In the following section I will detail this process and provide examples from the study's data.

Line-by-line coding. The first step in grounded theory coding is establishing a link between the raw data and the emerging themes. Emerging themes derive from identifying descriptive codes. These codes can be behaviors, events, relationship or other phenomena that explicate the study's questions. Descriptive codes used in line-by-line coding forces the researcher to find ways of thinking about the data that may differ from the participants or the disciplinary perspective. I used five *a priori* representational codes: (1) communitarian orientation; (2) liberal orientation; (3) alienation; (4) belonging; and (5) Black communication (see Appendix K for a full explanation of the codes). I developed these codes based upon both relevant literature and the study's research questions.

I also coded the transcripts for *grounded* codes that were relevant to the study's research questions. These included – *friendship, adult authority, harm, and competence*. All of the study's codes were outlined in the codebook I developed following MacQueen et al.'s (1998) guidelines (see Appendix K).

Focused coding. Focused coding uses descriptive codes that occur with the greatest frequency or that are the most analytically useful in order to produce conceptual codes. I engaged in the process of focused coding in order to synthesize large amounts of data and further develop the study's theory.

The analysis of the data focused on aggregating the interviews in order to build a theory that represented common themes. As such I did not include some of the interesting detail contained in individual, pairs and mother interviews that was unique to the individual participant but did not inform the broader themes. The inclusion of such detail would have been more appropriate for a study that was attempting to develop and compare individual profiles. The unit of analysis was primarily at the level of clause and sentence in order to focus on the thought that supported the participants' recommended action. For example, if a participant stated that "Lisa should not share her video game because a person is not obligated to share when someone has mistreated them," the clause "because a person...mistreated them" contains the moral reasoning that is the object of this study.

Table 6 uses excerpts from this study's data to illustrate line-by-line codes. Text from the study's interviews is on the left column of the table. The codes for that data are on the right column. In excerpt one I assign the code communitarian to the data as the participant is using the concept of virtues "it's a nice thing to do" to explain her actions." She goes on to discuss a concept of equitable distribution that relies on everyone getting the same amount of bubble gum. This approach reflects a liberal concern for fairness resulting in persons receiving equal treatment.

In the second excerpt the codes reflect the ways in which the participant reasons about actions within conditions of alienation. The coding suggests that the participant has two approaches to being alienated from a group – ignoring the behavior and reaching out to those who have harmed you. The final code indicates that she is unwilling to

endorse retaliation just because the girls harmed Tammy. The final excerpt indicates that the participant's reasoning reflects a concern for belonging.

Table 6. Pilot Data Excerpts

Interview Data	Code
<p>Excerpt One Girl: like...fair...not...it's like...ummm [pause] ...I don't know how to explain it but it like it would be like a nice thing to do...so that's what I think about fair. So it's like everyone gets an equal chance. There are 12 kids in a class and she has only like 12 bubble gums. It's not like she doesn't give someone 2 pieces of gum and then the other person won't get any. So that's what I think about fair.</p>	<p>→→→ communitarian; virtues →→→ equitable distribution →→→ liberal orientation</p>
<p>Excerpt Two Interviewer: So what if April and Anita aren't willing to include Tammy? Girl: umm...she would just try to ignore them or try to be really really nice to them to see if they'll give her a chance. Interviewer: Is there any way in which if April and Anita are really really mean that it's okay for Tammy to throw stuff on her dress? Girl: No.</p>	<p>→→→ ignoring bad behavior →→→ reaching out to enemies →→→ not making exceptions</p>
<p>Excerpt three Girl: well maybe if she is really nice to the girls they will accept her into the group.</p>	<p>→→→ belonging</p>

Memo writing. Memos enable the researcher to go beyond individual cases to define patterns, and are the step between coding and the first draft of the grounded theory. Both Charmaz (2006) and Saldana (2009) recommend that researchers allow themselves to write freely and explore ideas while using verbatim raw data to ground the abstract analysis. Memo topics included: "friendship," "competence," and "adults." Producing memos provided a means to link categories to each other, the literature and my impressions and begin to develop a theory about the participants' moral reasoning. I

included data relevant to the emerging theory within the memo in order to keep the theory close to the data.

Theory development. In the final analysis I used the memos to develop a conceptual analysis. Each memo contained an explication of a theoretical category relevant to the research questions. I used these memos to develop a theoretical response to the questions. Finally, I consulted the literature relevant to topics revealed in the data in order to compare how and where the project's results fit, what gaps it addressed and what new questions it generated.

Validity and Inter-rater Reliability

Validity. My primary goal was not to produce outcomes that are generalizable to a larger sample. Rather, it was to produce illustrative thick descriptions of a local sample that would enable me to generate reasonable assertions that respond to the study's questions. Following Stake (1995), I defined assertions as "a researcher's summaries of interpretations and claims" (p. 169). The use of inductive analysis in grounded theory instructs that the investigator develop assertions throughout analysis of the data. These assertions are considered provisional until the analysis is complete. Throughout the analysis, the researcher is looking for instances that confirm or disconfirm the provisional assertions. Thus, the final assertions are consistent with the internal logic of the data and are valid from an 'emic' point of view (Stake, 1995). The final assertions in this study follow this process and can be evaluated against the data I present.

Reliability. According to Yin (2003), "the goal of reliability is to minimize the error and bias in the study" (p. 37). He therefore recommends operationalizing the

study's design so that a new investigator can easily replicate it. The protocols in this study (see Appendices H, I and J) were designed to achieve this goal and to ensure that dilemmas were administered in the same way with each participant.

While the subjectivity of investigators enables the interpretive capacity of qualitative research and theory development, it can also cast suspicion on the reliability of data analysis. In order to address this concern I sought inter-rater reliability (Stake, 1995). I asked an informed outside investigator to code representative samples of the data using the study's codebook. I identified someone who was familiar with the concepts in the codebook and had experience interpreting qualitative data. Hehtner, Schmidt and Csikszentmihalyi (2006) recommend double coding 10 percent of the data. For this study 10 percent represented three interviews. Because 96 percent of the interviews coded were consistent with my interpretation, I did not double code additional interviews.

Ethical Considerations

As I pursued the study's design I reflected on the ethical considerations one should take in conducting research with children. This section details this process as it affected all phases of the research design. I frame the concerns according to both the ethical parameters of doing research with children in general and issues I anticipated arising from this particular youth group. These measures appeared to be comprehensive as no ethical issues arose in the course of the study.

Research with children carries special concerns. As in all research involving human subjects, it was important that the hoped for benefits of the research outweighed

the risk to child participants. Ann Farrell (2005) suggests four guidelines for assessing the ethics of engaging children as research participants. Research should ask: (1) is the research important to the health and well-being of children; (2) are children's participation in this research indispensable; (3) is the method appropriate for children; and (4) are the research conditions safe? I used these guidelines to address the ethics of this study and added to them Morrow's (2005) questions: (5) what happens when things go wrong; and (6) how do I report back to participants?

Was the research important to the health and well-being of children?

Categories of health and well-being are established based upon normative expectations. While this study endorses the idea that there are multiple 'normal childhoods' it also acknowledges that the dearth of knowledge about Black girls limits our ability to speak intelligently of any of these childhoods. Increased concern about understanding the relationship between context and development as well as an upsurge in the level of relational violence amongst girls necessitates a broader and deeper analysis of Black girls' moral developmental trajectories and devices. In so doing, it will become clearer when a child's behavior is informed by normative childhood processes and when they may be entering into a clinical range of concern. Hence, the question regarding the importance of this study to children's health and well-being is answered affirmatively

Was the participation of children indispensable?

Observing the activity of children is essential to and has long been the preferred method for establishing normative developmental knowledge. Alternatives to involving children as participants, such as retrospective studies, foreclosed opportunities to observe

activity as it unfolded and gain access to children's first hand accounts of their experience. Therefore, the participation of children was essential to answering this study's questions. Great care was taken to insure that their participation was age appropriate and that the researcher acted ethically.

Were the methods child appropriate?

The scenes in the dilemmas were everyday child environments with which the girls were familiar and had some affinity. I developed the tasks with an understanding of children's interest in creativity and desire to share their perspective of the world. The time frames for the tasks were kept to a minimum in keeping with the girls' anticipated cognitive ability to attend. All research methods were piloted to assess their appropriateness for child participants. The study confirmed that the methods were appropriate for the study sample.

What types of interactions did I have with parents about their daughter's participation?

I interacted with all parents regarding consent. Subsequent to this interaction, my communication with parents about their daughter's participation was limited to scheduling data collection. I did not share nor did mothers ask me to share research data specific to their child. Likewise, I did not disclose to girl participants the content of their mother's interview.

Were the research conditions safe?

Because the study took place in an everyday setting, the only additional safety consideration was that of potential psychological harm. The research design of the study

anticipated the potential for harm and included measures to minimize it. The task protocols included measures for addressing unexpected trauma responses.

What happened when things went wrong?

While it was impossible to anticipate all of the events that could go wrong in a qualitative study, my research design attempted to address those that I could reasonably imagine. As a licensed clinical social worker, I am a mandated reporter and would have been legally compelled to report any suspected cases of abuse to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). The sponsoring church conducted an eight-hour training for all of its youth volunteers. I attended this training as a condition for participating in the youth group. The training included: (1) how to communicate with Black youth; (2) maintaining appropriate boundaries with youth; (3) recognizing signs of abuse and neglect; and (4) the church's policy on mandatory reporting. No instances of harm or potential harm arose in the course of the study.

How did I report back to participants?

Morrow (2005) suggests that children – due to their socially vulnerable status – are particularly at risk of being poorly represented in research findings. In order to minimize this risk, she advises reporting findings back to children. I invited girls and mothers to a two hour lunch where I shared initial analysis and asked girls and mothers to share their experience of the study. I reported feedback to the participants by giving the findings of a dilemma in each of the three categories, then describing the broad themes in each question. One child participant stated that she thinks I am trying to understand how girls deal with bullying and further stated that adults don't listen to child solutions. Her

comment framed the children's discussion. The girls used the dilemmas to discuss their own experiences with moral problem solving – especially as it related to navigating friendships and peer groups. When I asked the girls what they thought would help them when they are not sure what the right thing is, they suggested that they would like to use adults as resources, but solve their own problems.

The mothers were quiet while the daughter talked and when I turned to them to get their feedback, one mother commented that participating in the study helped her think about the kinds of things she needs to be talking about with her daughter. Another mom shared that perspective and also reported that the social scenarios the school gives her daughter to help her with her social development are unrealistic. She wanted her to have more that reflected her own experience.

One mother raised the issue of “using voice” and said that this is something that is very important to her, so she was glad that it was one of the themes. Other mothers were nodding, so I asked them to talk more about this issue. Much of what they said echoed their responses in the study. I reported to the mothers that the scant literature on Black girls suggests that this issue of using voice sometimes gets Black girls in trouble because it can be misinterpreted as being rude or sassy. One mom discussed the differences between being “mouthy” and “speaking up.” A girl is speaking up when she believes in something and says it to an adult in a respectful manner. She doesn't talk outside of her role as a child. A child is “mouthy” when she is not speaking from a place of conviction and is using language that is not appropriate for an adult to use with a child. I asked the

mothers to elaborate on the non-verbal distinctions between the two actions. In general, being mouthy crossed a line because a girl might “get in an adult’s face” or start yelling.

I pointed out that one of my findings was that the mothers used dialogue to facilitate their daughters’ moral development, but I heard the daughters saying that they want adults to listen to them more. I asked all of the participants to comment on this contradiction. Some mothers reported that they are sometimes to “teachy” because they are nervous about what is going to happen to their girls when they are not with them. One of the girl participants reported that she “likes talking to her mom, she just wants to help solve problems more.”

I closed by asking participants to comment on the degree to which the findings were consistent with their expectations. Both girl and adult participants reported that the findings were consistent. Two participants reported that the concept of co-regulation was unfamiliar to them, but when I explained what it meant, it seemed like what they were doing with their daughters.

This chapter provided detailed discussion for the study’s design and analysis. Having completed this task the next chapter moves to an analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Data collection for the study was such that I was able to collect and analyze data simultaneously. As I will discuss in further detail, this enabled me to use insights gained from the initial interviews to guide subsequent data collection. My first interview was with an eight year-old girl. After interviewing her, I had some concerns about the brevity of her responses and her reaction to my probing questions. I listened to the tape and did not think that responses such as hers that were short and did not elaborate would give me the data I needed to develop the grounded theory. I also noted that when I probed for more detail and depth, she showed signs of agitation (her brow furrowed, her voice pitch increased and her speech was forced), and would say “I don’t know.” I suspected that, though the characteristics of her participation could be attributed to her personality, it likely had something to do with her age. During my pilot study I did not have any eight year-old girls; the youngest was nine. At this point I decided that given both the lack of pilot data to support the use of the instrument with an eight year-old and the experience with this initial participant, I would not recruit any further eight year-old girls. I did find her interviews substantial enough to include her data in the final analysis.

During each interview I took notes in the form of short jottings about problematic question formats or particular responses that I wanted to revisit during analysis. For example, after four interviews, the follow-up question in dilemma four had consistently

confused three girls. Therefore, I changed the questions so that it had more sentences. I also deleted one of the demonstrative adjectives so that I was naming the object as opposed to referring to it with the word “this”.

In this next example, I will use a jotting to explain how it progressed from an observation to its place within the architecture of the final theory. During the fifth interview, I noted that the girls seemed to be using the phrase “just because” in the process of explaining their moral problem solving. I wrote down this phrase in my notes so that I could revisit it in the next phase of analysis. My recognition of the phrase’s frequency represents the first phase of analysis, which used my observation and close listening to note significant language, concepts, and ideas as they occurred during collection. Upon receiving the final transcripts, and uploading them to my data analysis software, NVivo 9, I was able to use the query function to search for instances of the girls using the focused code “just because” in the individual and pairs interviews. The summary section of the query told me that this code had been used 47 times across 23 (of 30) interviews. The word tree function of the software places the designated word or phrase in the middle of a diagram and shows the disparate ways in which respondents used the phrase. I then used the memo function to develop an explanation for how the girls used this phrase.

My first step in writing the memo was to construct categories for how the girls used the phrase. By grouping the responses into categories, I was able to show that the girls used the phrase when they were noting that a conflict between friends does not mean the end of a friendship, being alienated by a group doesn’t provide an excuse for someone

to engage in bad acts, and having a close affiliation with one person (e.g., a teacher) doesn't mean you can't have an affiliation with another person or peer group. I titled this memo "logic of differentiation," as it represented a set of conclusions wherein the participants delineate a given moral act when the social situation might anticipate another, thus they were differentiating themselves from the expected response. There was instance of using the phrase "just because" that did not fit into any of the specified categories. I set this data aside for consideration in other coding schemes. I developed the categories within the memo into three separate themes that appear in the final results – friendship, maintaining self, and using voice – by combining them with related memos and asking the question "what is going on here and what is this a case of?"

I developed some codes in my initial review of the transcripts for which I did not write memos or develop into themes as they did not occur with enough frequency to indicate relevance across the study sample. For example, I developed the code "ladylike" in response to two participants' responses. However, there were no further instances of this code in the data. I also developed the code "intersectional parenting" to describe the challenge of raising a Black girl in environments that marginalize one aspect of her identity in favor of another.

I used the alienation/belonging matrix to guide the coding of question two. I used the a priori codes "alienation" and "belonging" to locate instances wherein the respective social location influenced the participant's reasoning. In 24 of the individual and pairs transcripts there were 51 codes for belonging and in 22 of the individual and pairs

transcripts there were 43 codes for alienation. I categorized the codes into Table 7 to align with the belonging/alienation matrix.

Table 7. Alienation and Belonging Data

<p>Category One – Belonging/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should positively influence the group • Girls should act to avoid harming others • Friendships are valuable and should be prioritized • Moral activity should be directed toward maintaining friendships • Friends can repair problems and continue friendship 	<p>Category Two – Belonging Immoral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should risk not belonging to the group in order to do what they believe is right • One should only use their “voice” to improve a situation or improve themselves • It is okay to be mean to someone who has harmed you • Friends don’t always have your best interest in mind • You should act to avoid being further harmed by those who have harmed you. • Friendships are a protective factor during difficult times • Friends can have conflict and repair their relationships
<p>Category Three – Alienation/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should choose actions that lead to a positive self-evaluation • Girls should use their voice to restore fair conditions • Girls should act in a way that avoids further harm to themselves • Unless exclusionary practices change further harm will ensue • Girls should act in a way that prevents them from becoming like those who bullied them • An alienated girl can use good acts to promote friendship with those who have excluded her 	

I then used the content of the categories to develop the following statements, which represents the participants’ beliefs regarding the influence of belonging and alienation.

1. Immoral acts can threaten belonging.
2. Genuine belonging brings with it the possibility of directing reasoning toward relationship repair.

3. Voice serves the function of restoring conditions of inclusion and fairness following alienation.
4. Self-respect and respect are necessary components of right conduct and belonging.
5. An alienated girl still has the ability to change relational conditions.
6. Harm is an alienating act that shifts the focus from evaluating the immoral acts of others to self-protection.

I then used these statements to develop memos and themes for the final analysis.

In grounded theory the literature review typically occurs simultaneous to the analysis in order to assist in the abstraction of data and to locate the emerging theory within a broader body of established thought. This study modified this process, in order to fit it into the expectations of a dissertation project, by conducting a literature review prior to data collection. However some themes emerged that were not anticipated by the initial review. For these themes, I consulted the literature appropriate to their explication and included that in the discussion.

The Emerging Theory

An analysis of the study's data indicates that the Black girls in this study have an established moral sense that is both rooted in their particular experiences and influenced by universal codes. In this case I employ the term "universal" to describe principles that appear with such regularity across contexts that we can designate them as universals. Within the emerging theory, moral reasoning functions as a mediating tool which enables the Black girls in this study to develop and maintain interpersonal relations, integrate themselves into legal structures, assert demands for equality, and delineate the conditions

under which it is permissible to refrain from pro-social acts. These disparate connections combine to create an explanation for how these Black girls use moral reasoning as a mediator to assemble their social worlds. As a mediator moral reasoning enables the girls to both transform an unclear moral experience to one that is understood, and develop a deeper explanation of how the solution instantiates their relationship with themselves, others and institutions. The results of the study's four questions elaborate the means by which moral reason performs this function. Following the presentation of these results, I explain how they shape a theory of Black girls' moral reasoning.

Results

Question One: How do liberal and communitarian orientations appear in Black girls' moral reasoning?

Participants used a liberal approach:

- When they reasoned that context was not relevant to the outcome of their moral reasoning about stealing and in some cases cheating.
- When they reasoned that they should receive respect and acknowledgment as members of a moral community by virtue of their personhood.
- When they employed a notion of fairness that favored equal distribution without consideration of special status.

Participants used a communitarian approach when they reasoned that the circumstances of the actors merited consideration, or when the actor was beholden to a community virtue. Such occasions included:

- Fulfilling care responsibilities and interpersonal contracts

- Acting within the framework of Christianity

Both the Black children and girls' moral development literature suggest that participants will favor communitarian approaches. However, culturalists such as Shweder predict that being embedded in an autonomous western culture will influence their use of liberal orientations. Rather than focus on which orientation Black girls used, this question explored the situations in which the respective responses appear. In so doing the priority shifts from *which* orientations are preeminent in their reasoning to *how* they integrate these approaches in everyday situations. This shift in focus enables us to gain a deeper understanding of how participants use reasoning to assemble their social world. Participants used a combination of minimal adherence to liberal themes and a broader array of communitarian approaches as they worked out the moral problems presented in the dilemmas.

Liberal Themes

Universality. Liberalism strongly relies on the idea that there are universal moral laws upon which we should base our moral reasoning and subsequent action. One should adhere to these laws without need of motivation or consideration of the consequences of one's action. Rather, their duty to what is right (under all circumstances) should govern their thought and action. These liberal ideas form the foundation of Piaget and Kohlberg's moral theories. Participants endorsed this concept when I asked them how girls should respond to finding money in Dilemma One. They reason that the girls should act based upon their understanding of universally accepted moral codes. Jennifer provides a universal definition when she states that:

...stealing is taking something that isn't yours and not returning it...
(Jennifer, age 10)

Kara's (age, 10) assertion that the girls "know that's the right thing to do" suggests that one can assume that a child this age is expected to understand Jennifer's definition.

The participants reason similarly when addressing Samara's dilemma about cheating on a test (Dilemma 5). Dina (age, 9) and Jordan (age, 9) state that the girls shouldn't copy because it would be cheating, which is simply wrong.

However, though they reasoned that there is an inherent violation to stealing and cheating, they also ground the right thing in special circumstances. In so doing, they suggest that duty is not the only factor driving moral activity in this case. This reasoning is represented by conditional if/then statements, wherein special circumstances determine the moral good. Though all participants believed that the girls should return the money to its rightful owner, some among them reasoned that their duty ended if there was no apparent owner. Asia's response is illustrative of this reasoning.

Um I would think it would be because they *everybody* says that *if* you don't know who it is or if you didn't see somebody who took it *then* it's not really called stealing but if you did see who it was it is stealing, so I guess it's not. (Asia, age 10)

In addition to introducing the "no owner" exception Asia appeals to the beliefs of an anonymous "everybody" in order to develop a distinction between stealing and a morally appropriate act. It is not just her or even only her friends who abide by this exception. It is a universal everybody.

Similarly, Teeny (age, 8) and Janet (age, 10) reason that while cheating is wrong, it is also a violation of school rules and reason for receiving punishment. In discussing stealing Katrina adds a motivational factor to that of duty.

She should um return it because that's not the right thing to do and like if if the owner gets it back they may get a reward. (Katrina, age 9)

Therefore, though the participants did appeal to universal rules in their responses, the context of a school setting and the absence of an obvious owner add another condition to that of duty. In the former they integrate the restraint of school rules into their reasoning suggesting that the fear of punishment is as important as the wrongness of cheating. The lack of identification does not change the fact that there is an owner for the purse and, according to their definition, that it would constitute stealing. Nonetheless, some participants reasoned that this change in the situation meant that the girls were no longer obligated to the anonymous other who had lost the purse. In the next section I move to the participants' use of a concept closely allied with universality – fairness.

Equal distribution. In keeping with a liberal orientation, many of the participants conceptualized fairness as equality, regardless of circumstances. Fair conditions were characterized by people having an equal share of goods or “stuff” (Andrea, age 10) an equal voice (Angie, age 10) and equal treatment under similar circumstances (Kara, age 10). Both Susan and Teeny prioritize equal access to needs procurement and enjoyment when discussing fairness.

Fair? Um that means that it's equal, everybody gets to be treated the same way, gets the same stuff. Okay if you go to the bathroom okay let's say if I aks to go to the bathroom and the teacher told me no, she if somebody else asked her she would tell them no too. Cause if I couldn't go then they couldn't go and that'll have to be fair. (Susan, age 10)

Like if the teacher lets you get a drink of water and something's fair like if she let's this kid play a game and then you ask can you play one, that's fair because both kids get to play a game and it's fair because if it wasn't fair, it would be one kid playing a game and you can't. (Teeny, age 8)

These excerpts illustrate the role adults can play in participants' notion of fairness. Both girls believe that adults can use their social power to establish a fair environment and are obligated to do so.

They apply the notion of fairness as equality in dilemma five when they consider what Susan (who was unable to study due to her babysitting responsibilities) should do in response to her friends' invitation to copy off of them on a math test. I followed up this question by asking participants if it was fair that Susan had to take the test given her circumstances. Some reasoned that, because the teacher should treat everyone the same, she should not take Susan's special circumstances into consideration. Katrina and Jennifer add that there are other children who had obligations at home but "somehow they studied too" (Katrina, age 9) and "are not complaining" (Jennifer, age 10). Jennifer goes on to state that:

If like she knew she had to babysit the day before she should have just practiced that test the day before she had to babysit. (Jennifer, age 10)

Therefore, the onus is on Susan to overcome her special circumstances in order to ready herself for the school's expectations. These participants' responses to dilemma five suggest that a responsibility to equality should be maintained even when individuals have different circumstances.

Likewise in dilemma three, the participants emphasize the importance of the girls receiving equal compensation (in the form of cookies) for the work they've done in the after school program.

Um like it's since I'm kind of one of the younger girls I would be very sad and disappointed I mean we're the one's downstairs working hard while they're trying to figure out whether they can have two cookies and then we get nothing for our hard work. I mean they work hard too, but we all need...it's kind of like equal rights, we all have equal rights and we all need to share... (Mara, age 9)

Because they should still share because they shouldn't um um what is it called? They shouldn't be mean to the younger girls, because they're younger it's kind of being ageist, like racist like ageist and they worked just as hard. (Janet, age 10)

Janet (age, 10), Whitney (age, 10) Katrina (age, 9) and Teeny (age, 8) echo this belief when they emphasize that the younger girls would want to get rewarded for their hard work and may not feel they are important if they don't.

It is interesting that these participants all interpreted the cookies as compensation. The dilemma clearly states that Miss Taylor was offering them the cookies because she had baked the cookies for the church bake sale and had some left over. Therefore they are unrelated to the group's volunteer work. However, it seems that the question of how the cookies ought to be distributed signaled the participants to integrate adult concepts of compensation into their reasoning and advocate for a practice that divides the cookies equally amongst those who worked.

Participants also used the notion of equity to remediate injustices when, in dilemma 12, Jodi is excluded from the group because of her race. Another participant gives a similar response when Lisa is teased by a group of girls in dilemma 10.

Okay that's not fair to Black people, cause this is not segregation no more, this ain't like no 1920's. It's about 2012 now and so what they not got skin like you, you got get along with other people skin and everybody get the same. (Ruth, age 9)

...even though she might be Black doesn't mean you should treat her any less because people have rights and people should be treated equally... (Jordan, age 9)

They should respect her as a person as a equal human being. Just because she's a teachers pet she doesn't like to play around on the playground in the morning or in the afternoon, doesn't mean um they should treat her any less than they treat their own friends. (Fawn, age 9)

In this case participants invoke the notion of equity to ensure that everyone had equal access or equal treatment. In so doing they suggest that fairness can serve as a corrective to unjust social conditions.

There are two instances in which participants endorsed an exception to equal distribution – age and ownership. Angie believed that the older girls in dilemma three have a higher moral obligation to share due to their age.

they're older they're supposed to show that they can be responsible... (Angie, age 10)

Mara uses an example from her own life to illustrate her point. She describes a situation in which her aunt told her she had to clean up after her younger cousins.

Mara: ...I thought it was unfair because we had to clean up what they did... my aunt told me to just calm down, I just want you to do this because they're not old enough or mature enough to know what to do and what's right and what's wrong...

Tonya: Did it seem fair after that?

Mara: Yeah, after I thought about...[it].

These responses suggest that age is a component in the expectation of fairness. Once Mara came to believe that her cousins were not old enough to clean up their mess she

reasoned that it was fair for her to do more work. Angie reasoned that the obligation to share was not equally distributed amongst the older and younger girls. Instead the older girls had a greater moral burden because of their age. Therefore in addition to sharing they should provide a model for the younger girls' future action.

Kathy's response exemplifies the participants' other exception to equal distribution – ownership. When I asked her if there is ever a time when it is okay for things not to be divided evenly she responds:

Um I was gonna say about something like if like they make cookies themselves and they don't want to share them that would be okay so then they could eat all the cookies for themselves. (Kathy, age 9)

Lisa (age, 10) and Asia share this belief when they reason that if you bought it with your money or made it yourself it is okay not to share.

When you made it yourself and you don't want anyone to have any it's okay not to share. (Lisa, age 10)

If you bought it for yourself, if you bought it with your own money, you don't have to share. (Asia, age 10)

Therefore, their concept of fairness is grounded in equality until ownership is introduced. At this point having worked for something or procured it with one's own currency creates an exception to the expectation of sameness.

The participants' use of liberal themes employs reasoning that minimally appeals to a set of universal rules – especially regarding stealing and cheating – that direct moral action. However, even as they use these rules, they build in exceptions grounded in: concerns about punishment, motivation for reward, the responsibilities of age and the privileges of ownership. These exceptions anticipate communitarian approaches in

which the participants are less concerned about universal rules and more focused on the particulars of a given moral problem.

Communitarian Themes

Communitarians challenge the universal assumptions of liberalism and instead favor notions of the good that are founded in local tradition and the interpretive framework of a particular social landscape and cultural milieu. Additionally, communitarian thought questions the idea of an autonomous thinker – an individual making rational choices without the influences of her relationships and other contextual factors. One participant illustrates this perspective when she is discussing Chiarra's deliberation (Dilemma 4) regarding saving a seat for a friend.

Because you can't just decide something on your own and that was the right decision to do this to let um Leslie sit with them and then tomorrow maybe she could discuss with her friends what they could do. (Kara, age 10)

Rather than endorse the idea that Chiarra could come to an appropriate decision via an internal autonomous thought process, she asserts that she can only decide on the right action through a dialogical process which includes the affected parties.

Participants' responses were characterized by the following communitarian themes: (1) considering consequences and special circumstances to determine fairness and right conduct; (2) honoring interpersonal contracts; and (3) the use of secular and Christian virtues.

Considering the consequences. Contrary to those who believed that the teacher should treat Samara the same regardless of her circumstances, some participants were unwilling to apply a universal rule regarding the fairness of Samara having to take a test

when she had to babysit the night before (Dilemma 5). Instead some believed that the teacher should consider her special circumstances.

Well.....like if the teacher knows and it if that Samara has to babysit and she know well...it's not fair because Samara have to babysit someone, and she couldn't really study because the baby would start cryin' and it would just be difficult to study for the test, so it's not even fair. (Andrea, age 10)

Um she shouldn't because she had to babysit and nobody else can babysit for her. She's her sister. (Janet, age 10)

In addition to Andrea recognizing how difficult it would be to study and babysit, Janet suggests a lack of fungibility in the caregiving role. Therefore, Samara has a special care obligation to her sister that could not easily be fulfilled by a substitute.

Participants go on to suggest that, though Samara should not cheat, her teacher and friends are obligated to find another way to help her. Chanel (age, 10) states that because Samara is the girls' best friend, they should not let her fail. Jessie also addresses the quality of the friendship when she reasons that "...if they really care for each other...she would've tried to help her study..." (Jessie, age 11). In the following excerpt, Jordan suggests that Samara's friend could work with the teacher to help her.

She should go to the teacher and tell her that she'll be helping her friend and by not cheating and doing the right thing by going up to the teacher and tell can you talk to my friend because she had to babysit and she didn't really get a chance to study because she had to babysit a baby and it's hard to babysit a baby because it's a baby and it cries when it wants to, it goes to sleep when it wants to. (Jordan, age 9)

Jordan reasons that the girl should appeal to the teacher on Samara's behalf and explain her special circumstances. In so doing Jordan assumes that the teacher has a desire and/or obligation to compensate for this difference.

In the above examples participants suggest that the girls' and teacher's relationship with Samara obligate them to help her. However, the obligation appears to be contingent upon friendship and especially on being treated well. In the following examples the participants reason that Lisa (Dilemma 10) is *not* obligated to share – despite a school rule – because the other kids had treated her poorly. In fact, their reasoning suggests that if someone treats you poorly you have the right not to share with them and shouldn't do so. Fawn (age, 9), Asia (age, 10) and Mara (age, 9) all express that Lisa “shouldn't” share with people who are being mean to her, while Susan (age, 9) asserts that she has “the right” not to share under such circumstances. Finally, Jessie (age, 11) states that, “you can't share with people who be like nasty.” Their reasoning suggests that Lisa's integrity is at-risk if she were to share under circumstances of mistreatment.

Dina and Jennifer follow the same line of reasoning when they discussed whether or not Jodi should help Susie learn a new swim stroke after she had made racist remarks toward Jodi.

Well the Black girl, Jodi, um Jodi should not help her because the girl that was talking about her saying that um she's a brown girl and she can't swim with us, like that's so mean so if if she can't swim with them well if the White girl needs help swimming them Jodi shouldn't help her because that was being really mean to her. (Dina, age 9)

Well, that's kind of a hard question cause you should help her because that's the great thing to do, it's a great thing to help people and so the girl's being nice to a person, but well if you don't help her then that's kind of a little mean, but I think uh well I think she should not help her because the White girl was being really mean to her saying that you couldn't swim with us so why would you help her anyways. (Jennifer, age 10)

While Jennifer acknowledges the virtue of helping, she ultimately decides that the relational conditions within the dilemma lessen the virtuousness of the act.

In addition to considering how past action affects the determination of what is right, participants discussed how doing what is right could affect future outcomes for themselves and others. In dilemmas 1, 3 and 5 the participants consider the effects of stealing, not sharing, and cheating. Karan (age, 10) and Whitney (age, 10) reason that if the girls don't return the purse someone could lose something of personal value that is "precious to them" (Karan). Susan (age, 10), Andrea (age, 10) and Angie (age, 10) reason that the girls should consider the consequences of their actions.

Okay they should first think about who really needed that money. They should think about what would come out of them taking it and what would come out of them not taking it. (Susan, age 10)

No. I think it's never okay for someone to not have a fair share cause then someone be mad and be upset and say well that's not fair then it will end up to a conflict and then people will say people would end friendships and sometimes things happen over if something is not equally fair. (Andrea, age 10)

So she shouldn't cheat because that's a bad thing to do and she's not really hurting nobody else she's hurting herself because after that test she's gonna really need things that she just learned and she won't know it cause she copied it and that's affecting herself and what she has to do with her life. (Angie, age 10)

In these three examples the participants reason that taking the wrong moral action could result in resources not going to the person with the greatest need, a friendship being jeopardized or damaging one's learning opportunities. Participants are concerned with how moral activity affects their integrity as well as the well-being of others. Whereas

universal approaches insist that one does the right thing regardless of consequences, they reason that the consequences are germane to identifying right action.

Secular virtues. Some participants use specific virtues or qualities with moral import to guide their reasoning. Herein, a self-fashioning that seeks being virtuous guides the girls' actions. The participants reason that keeping a promise, following through on a commitment and being honest should motivate the activity of the girls. Consider the following responses to dilemmas four and nine.

I mean she made a promise that it's like a family tradition, she promised them you should always keep your promises no matter who like if she wants to sit with the boy and the girls then she should move to a different and bigger table. (Kara, age 10)

They have a com, first of all they have a commitment to the dance team that they would go and if they were going to miss it they would have to have a reason, nobody wants them to come and join and not come for no reason. Second they're not supposed to tell a lie. (Angie, age 10)

Unlike the duty one finds in a liberal orientation, these virtues arise from the goals of a given social milieu rather than abstract principles. Kara compares a promise to a family tradition suggesting that its value is similar to those found in maintaining kinship ties.

Christian virtues. Some participants grounded their reasoning in spiritual virtues. In so doing they explain the special obligations of people of Christian faith. Participants reasoned that the girls should act according to Christian values when deciding what to do with the purse they found. Dina (age, 10), Kathy (age, 9) and Fawn (age, 9) all reason that the girls learned lessons in church that should guide their moral problem solving. Ruth refers to specific spiritual guidelines.

Since she go to church, you cannot steal from people when they have money inside it because *that's one of the Ten Commandments from the*

Bible, yeah I go to church, and that's one of the Ten Commandments and you cannot steal or lie so I don't think she's supposed to steal or lie because that's not her stuff and she should return it back to somebody, she can't keep it all. (Ruth, age 9)

Jessie also looks to church lessons to decide how Dee Dee and her friends (Dilemma 7) should respond to the girls who had been teasing them.

Even though they be mean to you, even though they talk about you, but if you pray for them they will change, they ain't gonna be like that forever but if you don't pray for them they gonna be like that you know they grown and that's worser, worser than they was little girls, worse. I know this hard but even though some people that you don't like, you still gotta you don't have to be friends with them, but you still gotta like treat em the same way you want to be treated cause they ain't gonna be like that forever, they gonna change if you pray with them, if you pray. (Jessie, age 11)

In addition to insisting that the girls employ Christian values, Jessie suggests that prayer is a tool for moral transformation. She also claims that a person of faith is obligated to use this tool on someone's behalf even if it personally challenges them.

For some participants, when activity that takes place within a church setting or a relationship with a pastor one should utilize a greater degree of moral consciousness. Jennifer (age, 11), Fawn (age, 9) and Mara (age, 9) reason that when a group of girls are considering skipping praise dance practice (Dilemma 8) they should consider their relationship with God and the spiritual space of the church. Jennifer asserts that the commitment they made to God is a special one, while Fawn believes that doing something wrong in the "holy place" of the church is special kind of sin. Finally, Mara believes that if you lie in church "you are lying to God" and falling out of His favor. Within these responses they provide the framework for a developmental niche (Super & Harkness, 1995) wherein the physical setting of a church, Christian beliefs and moral

practices are mutually constitutive. Faith driven morality is reinforced by their relationship with a spiritual leader within a space all view as sacred.

Participants also reason that this niche provides an opportunity for the girls to demonstrate their competence. In these instances, their moral problem solving indicates that the girls should make a choice that enables them to positively contribute to the church community. When they stated that the girls shouldn't skip practice in order to see a Rhianna concert (Dilemma 8) they reason that it is wrong because then the girls "won't know what to do" (Teeny, age 8) when it is time to perform in church on Sunday. As such they need to attend practice so that they can be "ready and good" (Mara, age 9).

Jordan and Jennifer elaborate on the consequences of incompetence.

Cause I if they're gonna be a friend of everybody and then they don't like know the song or what they're gonna dance to and they don't know the dance moves then they just go up there and they embarrass themselves plus the pastor or the bishop. What do you think the bishop gonna think?
(Jordan, age 9)

Um I think attending practice because Rhianna might be the inspiration, but you don't need her to go on with your life. Just because you won't be able to see Rhianna does that mean you're going to stop praise dancing? So you should probably go to practice so you can um be better at praise dancing and perform um before people who really want to see you do this dance. (Jennifer, age 10)

These responses suggest that doing the right thing has value beyond its universal moral content. Rather, it ensures the girls' learning, avoids embarrassment and enables them to function within their congregation while being a friend to everyone.

However, spiritual values did not always direct the participants toward prosocial behavior. Participants also reasoned that they would feel justified in keeping money they

found (Dilemma 1) or getting revenge on girls (Dilemma 9) who had been mean to them if it was consistent with God's wishes.

Yeah, I would what I would do is that I would like have a guardian come with me and see who's purse it is or did they find it. If no one claims it I would just be like hey God blessed me with the money, cause then that's the right thing to do. (Katrina, age 9)

Chanel: Right. Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. I would just say that and then I'll say hey, why are you being mean to me so I would just be like that's not fair because if I want to get revenge back at them, I would say I won't handle it, like I would just say like what would God do? And if he tells me the answer either just let it go, he'll get them back or or he'll say "get em" and I'll just get them.

Tonya: So God might give you permission to get revenge?

Chanel: Cause I don't want to be doing nothing against His word.

In these instances, Katrina and Chanel reason that actions that might otherwise be considered morally problematic are permissible because they are ordained by God.

Christian virtues figure significantly in the participants' reasoning. Their membership in a church community influences their moral problem solving by providing lessons that direct their moral problem solving, provides a developmental niche in which relationships, beliefs and activity reinforce one another and provides a space in which children can practice competence. Membership in a school community also had a distinct influence on the participants' reasoning.

Schools: Embodying Liberal and Communitarian Themes

The participants' treatment of schools represented a special circumstance in which their depictions of the institutions integrated liberal and communitarian themes. The participants viewed schools as institutions that embody just rules that the girls should respect, and they also saw them as places that are obligated to consider the circumstances

of rule abidance or infraction. Janet (age, 10), Kara (age, 10), Teeny (age, 8) and Susan (age, 10) all reason that the school has rules that need to be respected and trump any rules the girls may have for organizing their social group. Below Whitney (age, 10) suggests that any reasonable institution would not expect a child to follow a rule when there are mitigating circumstances.

Whitney: The school wouldn't agree with her having to share that if they knew they were talking about Lisa.

Tonya: Why wouldn't the school agree with that?

Whitney: Because if they talk about you you shouldn't share with them and the principal she should actually she should actually um she should also be outside with the playground monitor and she should see all the actions and responses or languages that the students give to each other. Because she might think that all her students are just hey they're nice, they don't talk about anyone, maybe they get in trouble once in awhile, but not really, but they should the principal should also be outside and then when she sees, if she sees ooh you got a bug in your hair, if she sees um her, if she sees her talking about them then she then she should take action and she should say, you know what, you all need to stop talking about anyone, nobody's here to talk about anyone, we just want to make friends, share and everything.

Whitney establishes the principal as an active leader who develops informed rules based on her knowledge of the students. Observing the "actions, response and language" of the students forms the bases of being informed. Whitney's final statement suggests that the principal is also responsible for establishing the school's general moral tone. Thus, participants view schools as structures that organize social order through rules and roles. However, they also view them as caring institutions whose social purpose is to contribute to their growth and development.

Question Two: How do positions of alienation and belonging affect Black girls' reasoning about morality?

Our understanding of development in middle childhood tells us that girls' friendships and peer groups are significant sites for moral thought and action. The findings of ethnographic child development literature suggest that issues of group membership, group harmony, ethnic hierarchies and ideal models of Black femininity will influence participants' responses as they go about solving moral problems. This question selects the duality of alienation and belonging as a common theme in the aforementioned categories in order to explore it as it occurs in Black girls' reasoning. The dilemmas were developed so that participants were responding to social situations derived from the three categories in the belonging/alienation matrix – (1) belonging/moral acts; (2) belonging/immoral acts; and (3) alienation/moral acts. Overall, their responses suggest that they viewed the first category as most desirable. Their reasoning in the second and third categories promoted actions that attempted to reestablish the social/moral milieu found in the first. Three dominant themes emerged as participants reasoned about situations of alienation and belonging – (1) maintaining the self; (2) harm; and (3) friendship. These themes form the relational architecture for what girls in the dilemmas must negotiate in order to return to the desired condition of committing moral acts under situations of belonging. Within each of the themes I have divided the data by category in order to differentiate the participants' responses according to the alienation/belonging matrix.

Maintaining the Self

The participants' reasoning contained two broad themes with regard to maintaining the self – doing the right thing in the face of negative peer influence and using one's voice. These themes show a concern that the self not be diminished and morality not be compromised by alienating experiences or the potential for alienation. They also demonstrated the participants' thoughts regarding girls separating themselves from the pack by behaving in a pro-social manner despite their friends' invitation to do otherwise. The themes are summarized in Table 8 and detailed in the results that follow.

Table 8. Maintaining the Self

<p>Category One – Belonging/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should positively influence the group
<p>Category Two – Belonging Immoral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should risk not belonging to the group in order to do what they believe is right • One should only use their “voice” to improve a situation or improve themselves • Girls should act in a way that prevents them from becoming like those who bullied them
<p>Category Three – Alienation/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls should choose actions that lead to a positive self-evaluation • Alienation does not permit one to commit bad act. You still have to do what you believe is right • A girl is not obligated to (and should not) commit good acts if she has been alienated

Doing the right thing despite the influence of others.

Belonging/immoral acts. In this category the participants were asked to reason about girls who experience a sense of belonging but sometimes commit immoral acts. The participants reason that the girl should risk being alienated from the group in order to do the right thing. Susan states that Samara (Dilemma 5) should not cheat on a test.

Instead she should “stand up for what she believes in” (Susan, age 10) and risk losing her two friends. Kathy agrees with Samara’s choice and also reasons that the other two girls are also making a choice for which she is not responsible when she states “...if they don’t want to be my friend I’ll just say like hey, it’s not my fault that you want to cheat” (Kathy, age 9) .

The participants continue this reasoning as they discuss the possibility of Donna (Dilemma 7) going back to say something to the girls who have made fun of her and her friends; and Sarah (Dilemma 8) considering skipping praise dancer practice in order to see a concert. Jennifer (age, 10) and Lisa (age, 10) both reason that Donna is “her own person” and as such should act according to what she believes is right even though it means going against her friends. Whitney (age, 10) concurs with their reasoning and elaborates that you should “never let anybody” get in the way of sticking with yourself just because they are not nice to you. Jennifer adds that Donna should also be motivated by the desire to maintain a positive self-evaluation when she claims that Donna “does not want to see herself as a bully” and therefore should not respond with aggressive acts. Likewise, Dina and Renee believe that Sara doesn’t have to follow Renee and instead should go to practice because “it is important to her and she know it is the right thing” (Dina, age 10).

However, Lisa’s reasoning suggests that there is time when it is permissible to follow others. Namely, when a girl does not know what to do.

In some cases you don’t want to be a follower if you never tried something or you’re not sure what to do you should be a follower, but if you’re sure that you don’t want to do it, be a leader and tell them not to go back and go back walking home. You shouldn’t go back period. (Lisa, age 10)

Therefore, when there is a lack of moral confidence a girl should seek guidance from those around her. Lisa does not describe the qualifications for the peers that a girl would follow. As such a girl could be following someone who is certain in their beliefs, but either immoral or moral in their actions.

Alienation/moral acts. In this category the participants reason about a girl who has been alienated by the group but is still asked to behave in a pro-social way toward them. The participants focus on the importance of choosing an action that will enable the girl to maintain a positive self-evaluation. Their reasoning can be summarized as a prohibition against committing bad acts against someone just because they have alienated you and an obligation to prioritize maintaining one's integrity over being virtuous toward someone who has alienated you. In the first excerpt Janet reasons that Jodi (Dilemma 12) shouldn't follow the coach's request or embrace the virtue of helping Susie with a swim stroke if doing so would alienate her from herself.

...because um you're supposed to listen to adults, but they make you do something you're uncomfortable with or you not sure if you should do it then you should talk to the adult and tell them that you're not comfortable doing it. (Janet, age 9)

Janet's reasoning presents competing moral priorities. She acknowledges the importance of listening to adults, but also notes that it is reasonable for a child to negotiate with an adult when they feel compromised.

When Katrina discusses whether or not Lisa (Dilemma 10) should share her video game with a group of girls that refused to play with her, she also weights the value of disparate moral goals.

Because if they don't show respect then she wouldn't feel good and if she shares it with them, soon they'll be using her for her grades since she's good at um school. (Katrina, age 9)

Katrina's reasoning suggests that, though sharing would typically be seen as virtue, in this case, where Lisa does not have the respect of her peers, it would lead to further exploitation. In the next section I explore participants' injunction against bad acts.

When Asia (age, 10) responds to Dilemma 9 she reasons that having been wronged by the other dance contestants does not justify Tammy spilling juice on their dress. She still "has to be herself." She goes on to state that the goal of winning doesn't condone the behavior as it is "just a dance." Ruth (age, 9) reasons that though it may be nice to win, Tammy would not gain positive self-regard.

Cause just because other people do it doesn't mean you have to do it just to win. I mean there's a lot of things that she could win, it it doesn't make sense to sabotage something just so you could win something, it really doesn't affect you. If you do it you'll feel bad about yourself. I mean it might give you some good things to do but it won't make a difference in how you feel about you. (Ruth, age 9)

Ruth connects moral acts with a person's ability to positively evaluate themselves and argues that it is more potent than the gratification or material rewards of winning. In the next section I discuss the ways in which participants advocated using voice as a means of self-maintenance.

Using one's voice. The participants reasoned that girls should use their voice in their efforts to do the right thing. I applied the term "use of voice" to instances wherein participants suggest that a girl should "speak up" in order to affect her social conditions.

They were very specific about prescribing the appropriate goal for using voice.

According to participants, the girls should use voice when they are trying to get respect or

maintain self-respect or when they are trying to ameliorate a situation wherein they have been harmed. They prohibit using voice if it will worsen a contentious situation.

Belonging/moral acts. In this category the participants are reasoning about girls who are committing moral acts within conditions of belonging. The dominant theme in their responses is that when you are a member of a group that has a history of good acts; one should use their voice to maintain that tradition. Asia (age, 10) reasons that Darlene's friends (Dilemma 1) are obligated to help her understand the right thing to do by telling her how someone would be affected by losing their purse.

Belonging/immoral acts. Angie (age, 10) reasons that the girls should use their voice to promote pro-social activity even when they have a history of bad acts. Rather than go along with her friends' plan to cheat (Dilemma 5) Asia states that Tasia should "speak up because she knows the right thing to do... and she should be truthful and try to convince her friends." In this dilemma, one act is clearly identified as right (not cheating) or wrong (cheating) and voice is used in a straightforward manner to advocate for what is deemed right. However, the girls also discuss instances in which using voice could have a positive or negative effect.

In Dilemma 7 the participants reason that Dee Dee and her friends should only go back and say something to the girls who teased them if it would have constructive ends. Jessie's response frames these conditions.

It depends on how she calls herself telling them about themselves because she wants to go there and be like, hey don't talk about us we're no different from you we're good and you shouldn't do that then they should go back. If they want to go over there and explain their selves, tell em they're no different, they should be treated equally then they should go

back and stand up for themselves, but otherwise they shouldn't. (Jessie, age 11)

She endorsed going back when the girls are going back to establish themselves as being just as worthy and deserving of equal treatment as the girls who were teasing. In the absence of these conditions, Jessie does not believe that the girls should go back. A number of participants echoed Jessie's reasoning. Katrina (age, 9), Whitney (age, 10), Mara (age, 9) Ruth, (age, 9) and Teeny (age, 8) all reasoned that Dee Dee and her girls should go back and say something to the teasers if they want to stand up to them, tell them that they hurt you or stop bullying behavior.

Participants reason that while voice is powerful moral tool, it can also be problematic. Mara's discussion of the Dee Dee and her friends going back to talk to the girls who had teased them illustrates one concern.

But she's doesn't want go over there and be like no, blah, blah, blah you dis, she's that, your momma this, your momma that, they shouldn't go back cause that'll just cause problems. (Mara, age 9)

Kara (age, 10), Dina (age, 9), Susan (age, 10), Jordan (age, 9) and Kathy (age, 9) also reason that it would be unsafe for the girls to go back if they do so with ill intentions. They reason that the girls would get beat up, be outnumbered, or that things would simply get worse.

Alienation/moral acts. In this category the use of voice is directed toward gaining respect as the girls attempt to act in a way that restores fair conditions and positive self-regard prior to committing good acts. In Dilemma 12 the participants have to decide if Jodi should help a girl who has made racist comments and in Dilemma 10 they have to decide if Lisa should share with girls who had socially isolated her. Chanel

(age 10) and Fawn (age, 9) reason that their mistreatment gives her the right to speak up to the principal and tell her that she won't share. Karan (age, 10) and Jordan (age, 9) reason that Lisa could share with the other girls but only after she has told them that she won't tolerate mistreatment.

Well see you should compromise with them and say you know what I'm not here to talk about anyone, I'm just here to get good grades, stay out of trouble, and make friends. Just because I get good grades doesn't mean that I can also be a child and play with you and be your friend. (Karan, age 10)

In addition to making clear to the girls that she expects to be treated well, Karan asserts that she should not have to compromise her accomplishments as a good student to be their friend.

Angie reasons similarly when she discusses the possibility of Jodi helping Susie.

She is willing to help, but only after she has delivered the following speech.

I don't want you I don't want you to get mad at me because of my color. I just want to help you, I want to be friends with you, but if you're gonna keep talking about me I I could let the teacher help you or you could just learn it by yourself because I'm not trying to be talked about just because of my color. It does not matter what color I am, we are all people. (Angie, age 10)

Janet shares Angie's strategy for using voice when she reasons that "if Jody helps Susie then she'll lose all respect for herself...she needs to tell them that it was racist and get her respect." While Karan and Angie both leave open the possibility of Jodie helping Susie once they have clarified the relational conditions, it is not clear if Janet is open to this possibility.

Karan (age, 10), Katrina (age, 9) and Mara (age, 9) suggest that if Lisa and Jodie don't first establish conditions of respect, then further exploitation is likely. Karan

reasons that if Lisa's friends could borrow her game and never give it back. Katrina states that they could pretend to be friends but make her do mean tricks that get her trouble or as Mara states they could break her game on purpose. The actual acts that they predict are less important than the connection they make between respect and virtuous behavior. According to their reasoning, a behavior is not virtuous in and of itself. Rather, it obtains its virtuosity within a mutually respectful relational field.

Participant responses suggest that maintaining the self and making a positive self-evaluation are priorities within their moral problem solving. They accomplish these goals by differentiating self even at the risk of alienation from the group and using their voice to speak up. In the next session I discuss findings with regard to the self in the context of a particular type of relationship – friendship.

Friendship. The participants' moral problem solving contains their thoughts on the virtues of friendship, the moral means of maintaining the relationship and the expectation of repair following conflict. In some cases their reasoning regarding the rightness of the girl's act was contingent upon how the behavior would affect existing friendships. In others the participants are concerned with how alienating acts could affect the possibility for friendship. In one situation the right thing to do might be that which enables a girl to gain acceptance into the group. In a contrasting perspective the right thing might be for the alienated girl to first get her respect. Only then, would the possibility for friendship exist. Table 9 presents a summary of the participants reasoning regarding friendship. It is followed by the detailed results.

Table 9. Friendship

<p>Category One – Belonging/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships are valuable and should be prioritized • Moral activity should be directed toward maintaining friendships – sometimes this means doing something that is considered prosocial and other times it means doing something that is considered wrong • Friends can repair problems and continue friendship
<p>Category Two – Belonging/Immoral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships are a protective factor during difficult times • Friends should continue to support one another even if they make moral choices with which one doesn't agree •
<p>Category Three – Alienation/Moral Acts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alienated girl can use good acts to promote friendship with those who have excluded her

Virtues and obligations of friendship.

Belonging/moral acts. As participants responded to dilemmas a set of friendship obligations and virtues emerged in their reasoning. Katrina (age, 9) and Asia (age, 10) identify loyalty as an essential characteristic in friendships reporting that the girls in the lunchroom (Dilemma 4) should stick together no matter what. Chiarra should not be swayed by the fact that she likes Kenny. Asia (age, 10) and Mara (age, 9) add that Chiarra should value her friends more than Kenny because friends “support you more than a boy you like” (Asia). She goes on to say that once girls become *best* friends “they won’t do anything to each other they just stay together and won’t break apart.” Angie (age, 10) discusses the uniqueness of particular friends. Susan (age, 10) reasons that if Chiarra does not make the right decision “she might not be able to find another best friend” (Susan). Jennifer’s response suggests that the practice of sitting together is part of maintaining their friendships.

Well it's nice to invite Kenny to sit but if this is a regular thing that they do um the other girl would probably be upset would say, well you know this isn't fair, I always save a seat for you, you always save a seat for me and we save seats for each other, this is what we do every day. I thought you were my best friend you should help me out like this. (Jennifer, age 10)

Jennifer reasons that if Chiarra were to break from tradition by changing their lunchroom practices, her friends would be hurt and confused and find her actions fundamentally unfair given the nature of their relationship.

Belonging/immoral acts. In this category, participants discuss the ways in which friendships are protective and insulate girls from stressful circumstances. Dina (age, 9) and Angie's (age, 10) reasoning present contrasting perspectives on this theme. When discussing whether or not Dee Dee (Dilemma 7) should go back to the girls who were teasing her and her friends Dina responds:

If your friends don't want to stand up to 'em you gotta say you gotta help them stand up for themselves, because you can't have no weak friends, your friends gotta be strong, they can't be like weak and like shut down. They gotta be strong cause your friends are your backup they help you like I'm your friend I'll get your back. (Dina, age 9)

She advocates for practices wherein girls maintain their friendships by being bold and being prepared to engage in aggressive acts in order to help each other stand up for themselves. Conversely, Angie suggests that, because Dee Dee has her friends, she has no need to go back to the mean girls.

Those three girls that were um gossiping about her, they don't mean anything to her, they aren't her friends, they aren't her family, those girls don't matter to her. She can just forget about it because she has two friends who really care about her. (Angie, age 10)

While Dina emphasizes protection, Angie focuses on the insulating role of friends. Dee and her friends can dismiss the girls' disparaging comments because they are not important to them. Furthermore, they can draw comfort from the care they provide for each other.

The participants direct the girls' moral action toward the virtues of an ideal friendship. Within this ideal girls consider each other's feelings and support each other's achievement. They stick together – especially when boys are involved as they make less of a relational offering and, from the perspective of some participants, friends never break apart. Friendships are unique relationships that provide emotional insulation during difficult times. When a girl has strong friends, she does not have to face a bully alone and when she has caring friends she can be held by their comfort and acceptance.

Reasoning directed at developing or maintaining friendship. Some participants reason both that the right thing should be grounded in the preservation of friendship and that the girls' bad acts might be guided by a desire to maintain friendships.

Belonging/moral acts. Chanel (age, 10), Dina (age, 9) and Kara (age, 10) reason that the loss of friendship, that would result from not sharing (Dilemma 3), should guide the older girls to share the cookies. Chanel represents the perspective of the younger girls when she predicts that they may quit the after-school group if they feel slighted. Dina imagines the concerns the older girls might have when they are deliberating about sharing.

Well they'll worry about like like will they will ever talk to me again and will they ever will they ever do stuff for me again because you really need to share. (Dina, age 9)

According to Dina, as the older girls are solving the dilemma they will be thinking both about how it will affect their friendships and how it will affect the opportunity of receiving favors from the younger girls. Kara (age, 10) makes a more general statement linking sharing to friendship.

No. I think it's never okay for someone to not have a fair share cause then someone be mad and be upset and say well that's not fair then it will end up to a conflict and then people will say people would end friendships and sometimes things happen over if something is not equally fair. (Kara, age 10)

Kara links sharing with fairness, which she designates as an essential characteristic of friendship. The absence of it would likely result in a friendship ending.

Up to this point, the participants have described participating in moral acts in order to preserve friendships. However, in her discussion of finding a purse (Dilemma 1) Mara suggests that it is justifiable to keep the money if it will save a friendship.

Um she should hmmm I guess keep the money so she can keep her friendship with her two friends. Because if they aren't friends no more it wouldn't be fun for her to just be sittin in the house and them outside playin' with chalk and jumpin rope and all. (Mara, age 9)

Here, Mara is more concerned about the potential loss of fun activities and the possibility of isolation than she is about the immorality of keeping the money.

Though they are all advocating acting in order to maintain friendship, most of the participants do so by promoting a potentially prosocial act. Mara alone reasons that they should commit a bad act – stealing – in order to continue her friendships. In the following example Andrea applies this same logic to Tasia's (Dilemma 5) discomfort with cheating.

Belonging/immoral acts. Oh she should let her peek, because since they're friends if they break up they won't be able to hang out with each other and she'll just be left behind from one of the friends and the other friend can be mad or is gonna be mad because she wants to hang out with both of em. (Andrea, age 10)

Andrea and Mara present a contrasting view. Rather than seeing friendship as a virtue that is developed and maintained through moral acts, they consider an act acceptable or right if it results in the maintenance of friendship.

Alienation/moral acts. This category casts the protagonists as a loner alienated from the friendship groups in her respective dilemma. For some participants Jodie (Dilemma 12) has the ability to promote friendship by engaging in positive acts with the girls who made the racist comment. Teeny (age, 8), Janet (age, 11), Fawn (age, 9), Lisa (age, 10) and Ruth (age, 9) all reason that if Jodie helps Susie with the stroke and if they win the citywide tournament then it could lead to friendship. Janet and Teeny believe that Susie will either take back or get past what she has said once she realizes that Jodie is a nice and helpful person. Fawn believes that Susie would experience moral transformation when she sees Jodie differently, apologizes and says "thank you for your helping me."

Karan and Kathy focus on the group of White girls rather than Susie as an individual. They believe that the other White girls may not share Susie's opinion of Jodie. They may just be acting in order to preserve their place in the group.

It seems like she's (*pointing to Susie*) the leader of all the White girls, like they might not want to bully Jodie, they might just be doing that because her she don't they don't want to lose their best friend. If Jodi helps they might see that she is nice and stop following Susie. (Karan, age 10)

Susie's being mean and now they're following her because they don't want to be called anything or else they'll fight or else they want to stay friends with her because they look happy and they look like they could be friends with Jodi if she reaches out to them. (Kathy, age 10)

Karan and Kathy offer two explanations for why the other White girls might follow Susie. They posit that they might be concerned about losing her friendship and that they may be afraid of Susie mistreating them. For these participants being in an alienated position does not foreclose Jodi's ability to affect social arrangements. They believe that if Jodi rises above the comments made and decides to help Susie the girls will either feel less obliged to follow Susie's lead or see that Jodi is not the person they thought she was. In the next session the participants' reasoning reveals the ways that friends negotiate conflict in their moral problem solving.

Rupture/repair. Participants reason that conflict need not lead to the end of the girls' friendship. This theme was most prevalent in category one when the participants are discussing the moral problem solving of girls who experienced of sense of belonging and committed moral acts.

Belonging/moral acts. Lisa (age, 10) and Kara (age, 10) reasons that Lakeisha and Karen should turn the money in even though it may anger Darlene because they will probably make up and friends are bound to make mistakes. Jessie elaborates on this belief.

I mean just because they get into a fight because they don't disagree doesn't mean they're not always gonna be friends, cause sometimes me and my friends have some kinds of fights, I mean it's nothing compared to that but and at the end um they should make the choice and try to forgive each other. (Jessie, age 11)

Jessie identifies the inevitability of conflict and the pivotal role of forgiveness in repairing relationships. Angie (age, 10) also holds up forgiveness as a virtue when she asks “what the point of being friends if you can’t forgive?” (Angie)

Belonging/immoral acts. Jennifer’s response suggests that repair is still possible amongst girls who commit immoral acts. In this excerpt she reasons that Chiarra can both do the right thing and maintain her friendships.

Because when she don’t cheat they she gonna be still their friends no matter what, they’re just saying that so she can do the bad things wrong, but even though she don’t cheat on a test you could still be friends with them also...she shouldn’t do it at all they will still love her. (Jennifer, age 10)

Here the participants suggest that an ideal friendship is one in which an individual can make moral decision that depart from others without fear of losing their support.

Therefore, an additional obligation of friendship is that friends support each other’s moral differentiation even if you are accustomed to getting into mischief with one another.

Question Three: Does the addition of a peer affect the amount of talk in which Black girls engage or their use of Black communication?

- For nine of the ten pairs did not generate more talk; rather they generated slightly less. This finding suggests that to achieve the desired outcome, the girls would both need to be more unaccustomed to having a deliberative dialogue with me and have a more intimate relationship with each other.
- In one pair’s interview, the participants generated greater talk and used increased forms of Black communication as expected.

It has been the tradition in child development research to administer moral dilemmas to individual children, which emphasizes the idea of an autonomous rational individual. This question explores how a dialogical process, in which the dilemmas are administered to two children, might affect both the participants' volume of talk and the degree to which they use Black communication. Meier (2007) develops the concept of Black communication as a comprehensive system of which language is a part but also includes, dramaturgical approach, physicality, culturally derived themes and symbols and rules governing the proper etiquette for addressing various members of the community. Ethnographic work investigating Black children's forms of thought and learning found that their process was likely to include Black communication and especially did so when they were working with a peer (see especially, Haas Dyson, 2003; Harness Goodwin, 1991; Labov, 1972). Given these results and the outcome of pilot pair interviews, it was expected that the pairs interview would yield significantly different results than the individual interview.

This study did not achieve the expected result for most participants. In the next section I will describe the results and explore some possible explanations for the outcome. Following this discussion I will present the lone pairs interview in which the participants did engage in more dialogue and Black communication. Though it is an outlier this interview serves as a case study for the ideal conditions of future pairs interview administration.

The individual interviews asked the participants to reply to three dilemmas and lasted an average of 36 minutes. The pairs interviews asked participants to respond to six

dilemmas and lasted an average of 64 minutes. Thus, overall the amount of talk was actually less in the pairs interviews. I now turn to two qualities of that talk – the person to whom the participant directed their dialogue and their apparent desire to be in agreement – in order to explore two possible explanations for this unexpected result.

Ideally the pairs interview conversational patterns would have been structured such that the participants would have been in dialogue with me the interviewer and with each other. Instead, for nine of the ten interviews, the structure resembled two simultaneously occurring dyadic interviews. Participants were reluctant to address each other's ideas and instead preferred to direct their talk to me, the interviewer, even when I encouraged them to respond to something the other said. Consider these examples from Kara and Andrea's interview. They were reacting to Miss Taylor (Dilemma 3) giving the older girls permission to keep all of the cookies for themselves.

Kara: Well if she tells them its okay then its okay, but then I don't at least one of them knows it's the right thing to do, to share with the other girls and so everyone would be happy and everyone would be content with the cookie.

Tonya: What do you think Andrea?

Andrea: Well, well then that is Miss Taylor idea because she is the older one of all of them and if she says she just want to let the older girls have the cookies all to themselves, then that's what she says then.

Tonya: So one of you thinks it more important that the girls do the right thing and one of you thinks it is more important that you listen to the adult because she is older. Andrea, would it be okay to not follow Miss Taylor's directions if, as Kara says, they know sharing is the right thing to do? *(Kara shrugs and diverts gaze)*

Given the reasoning capacity Kara displayed in other responses it is likely that she could have developed a thoughtful response to my question, however she seemed unwilling to

speak to Andrea's reasoning. A similar pattern occurs later in the interview when they are reacting to Tenisha's dilemma about saving a seat for her friend (Dilemma 4).

Tonya: Okay and let's say that Tenisha, Chiarra is saving this chair for Tenisha, let's say Tenisha had been mean to Chiarra earlier that day, would she still need to save the seat if Tenisha had been mean to her?

Andrea: That's a hard question, because sometimes if I want to do something for my friend and I know that they've been mean the past days or earlier that day, I would say well I would I would be like hesitant and so in my opinion I think maybe she should let Kenny sit because if Tenisha had been mean to her, best friends are not mean to each other and so maybe if she recruits Kenny as her best friend um maybe Kenny will be nicer and Tenisha will really realize what she has and shouldn't be mean to Chiarra anymore.

Kara: Well she should let Kenny sit, or the other girl. Chiarra should she should let, she should save the seat for Tenisha because that's still her friend and sometimes um friends sometimes, they sometimes be mean to each other. They sometimes make mistakes you could just get over it and just let her sit um in the seat.

Tonya: Kara you said that friends are sometimes mean to each other. Do you think it makes a difference if they are best friends like Andrea said?

Kara: I don't know.

As in the previous excerpt, Kara seems reluctant to respond to Andrea's thoughts. It could be that they simply were not interested in exploring the differences in their perspectives. However, another trend in the pairs interviews suggests that they may have been reluctant to emphasize their disagreement.

"Same thing," "same as her," "the same," and "what she said" were common responses across nine of the ten pairs interviews. In these instances, rather than provide a response themselves, the participants made a simple statement of agreement in support of their peer and were often unable or unwilling to articulate the reason for their agreement.

Dina: They should share because it wouldn't be fair to the other girls. Because they would have two of them and the other girls would have none.

Tonya: Okay, what do you think, Mara?

Mara: What she said.

Tonya: What do like about what Dina said?

Mara: I don't know. Her answer I guess.

Chanel: She should do something else because uh friendship should come before others.

Jordan: Same thing.

Tonya: Jordan can you tell my why you agree with Jordan?

Jordan: I think the same.

It is possible that the participants' common use of the various supportive statements were simply genuine statements of agreement. However, their consistent inability to provide an explanation for why they agreed suggests that an alternative explanation is needed. I advance two possible explanations for this agreement trend. Firstly, social comparison is a concept used to describe the tendency for children in middle childhood to use their capacity for understanding other's points of view and their increased time with peers to make more complex evaluations of themselves and each other (Lightfoot, Cole & Cole, 2009). In the case of the interviews social comparison may act to prohibit participants from offering a perspective that they believe either their peer or I might find inferior to theirs. Secondly, the girls may not have felt that their relationship with the interview partner was one wherein they could openly disagree. All of the participants knew each other from their participation in out of school group activities, but they were not necessarily friends. Therefore it may be necessary to have a particular type of peer relationship in order to obtain the expected outcome. The analysis of Angie and Whitney's pairs interview serves as an illustration of what a different type of relationship might yield.

The case of Angie and Whitney. Angie and Whitney have been friends since attending the same preschool. Though they subsequently attended different schools they kept in touch and their mothers also developed a friendship. In their individual interviews they both referred to each other as a best friend when I asked them to tell me about the people in their lives. They explained to me that they would like to be attending the same school but their mothers had chosen different schools and they had been unsuccessful in changing their minds. I interviewed them at Whitney's dining room table. Prior to the interview they had been lying on her living room floor together looking at videos on an iPad.

Angie and Whitney stand out as an exception to this question's general findings. Unlike their peers they were dialogical and engaged in more Black communication than they had in their individual interview. The amount of talk they engaged in during the pairs interview exceeded that of both of their individual interviews. Their individual interviews were 41 and 43 minutes while their pairs interview was 116 minutes.

In presenting their case I will develop three themes in Black communication – (1) narrativizing and stylizing; (2) themes from the Black community; and (3) collaborative reasoning.

Narrativizing and Stylizing

Narrativizing is a form of storytelling that a speaker uses to make their point within a larger conversation. The story supplements direct argumentative statements and strengthens the speaker's persuasiveness (Meier, 2007). In the following excerpts Angie

and Whitney draw upon their shared friendship experiences to support their reasoning about the girls in the dilemma.

The whole thing is about sharing, me and Whitney always share when we go out sometimes well when we do and like if we forget our money we always buy each other something because we um and then when someone has something that other doesn't we still share, like I have a DS and it's not a two player game unless you have two DS's, but we still figure out a way to share the DS even though it's mine and I could just have it the whole time or even if something is hers we could still split it. (Angie, age 10)

Friends are supposed to stick together like me and Angie, we don't see each other a lot but we've been friends for seven years. I've only seen her for three-quarters for that school year and we're still friends, because friends stick together always. (Whitney, age 10)

In addition to drawing on their relationship as a tool for moral reasoning, they demonstrate "narrativizing." Both Angie and Whitney follow the narrativizing pattern in that they begin by making a statement, "The whole thing is about sharing..." "Friends are supposed to stick together" then follow that with a personal story that illustrates their point.

In the next excerpts the participants narrativize about relationships with family members. Whitney explains why the older girls should share cookies with the younger girls at the after school program (Dilemma 3) and Angie reasons that if the girls skip praise dance practice to attend the Rhianna concert (Dilemma 8) they could be putting themselves in danger.

It's about being nice or caring for others like my little cousins, they don't really listen to me all the time, but they listen to me sometimes and they try to be good children, but they're only three and six so I have to I also have to respect that like say I was an adult, well you're an adult and like I have to respect you so that means they would have to respect me, but I still have to respect them because I am a child and I need and like when we

were talking about before I need to stay in a child's place. So they need to share and be respectful. (Whitney, age 10)

First of all they made a commitment... second they're not supposed to lie...third of all if something happens the parents don't know where they are because they think they are at praise dance practice and that's not right anything can happen so they should either go to it after or not go at all. Like I was supposed to do my math work then my mom said I was watching TV and I was watching uh this movie that I really wanted to see and my mom said turn it off and go downstairs and watch TV. *(pause then with voice rising)* Now it's a whole bunch a ways that I could've done anything wrong but I didn't *(pause looking at interviewer)* because I know it was wrong so I was mad at first because I really wanted to see it, but I knew I had to obey my mother so I obeyed my mother. Now they said they were goin to praise dance and but its basically it's not responsible, anything could happen to them, that's all I gotta say. (Angie, age 10)

Angie's use of dramatic pauses and rising intonation add dramatic effect to her narrativizing and enable her to emphasize important aspects of her story for the listener. Her statement at the end of the story "that's all I gotta say" underscores that she has fully developed her three point argument. Meier (2007) finds the origins of these Black communication styles in traditional Black sermons and suggests that children's exposure to the ritual space of Black churches promotes their use of these stylistic features.

Black Community Themes

Angie and Whitney reference other themes from Black culture as they develop their reasoning. In the following excerpt Angie references a lesson she learned in her out of school group for Black girls to explain why Dee Dee (Dilemma 7) and her friends shouldn't go back.

And the two girls that want to go fighting back down. How are two girls supposed to go against four people, four people that's like two for each one? Even if she went its still four of them, they need an adult or like um we it was I take EYL, it's emerging...its Success for Emerging Young Leaders and we're learning about, excuse me, anti-bullying and we were

talking about the movie *Bully* and like the principal thinks that ooh they're such sweet angels they never do anything so like um they shouldn't go.
(Angie, age 10)

The success for emerging young leaders club from which Angie draws upon for reasoning is part of a longstanding tradition within Black America. The EYL is sponsored by a Black sorority, which along with Black women's clubs, have sought to provide educational, political and moral leadership in the name of racial uplift to young Black American girls (Ross, 2000). Angie's referencing of the club suggests that it does indeed serve as a site for moral production.

However, Whitney and Angie's comments on exclusionary practices point to a complication in the moral goal of racial uplift. She reasons that there are many reasons the girls could have excluded Jodi (Dilemma 12) from their group.

Angie: I can see the situation she's in because no matter what color you are even if they were all Black, she could've been real, real dark and everybody else was like, hey she couldn't have even if she wasn't it's just like pickin on somebody. Or they could've picked on her because she wasn't smart or they could've picked on her because she was the best and they weren't, they could've been jealous like that last one, they could have been jealous of that girl.

Whitney: Remember when my dad he came to my birthday party when I was seven, well he's really dark, so when he was little he got he used to get teased because he was really dark.

The participants refer to the concept of colorism which denotes a process whereby social meaning and status is attached to a person's skin color (Walker, 1982). Within the logic of this construct lighter skin has greater status than dark skin. This practice finds its origins in the development of racism and Angie and Whitney refer to the particular way that it has manifested among Black Americans' intra-group relations. Though they seemed to be attempting to develop an argument that race is not the only reason for

exclusionary practices, their example illustrates Black American exclusionary practices that impede the racial uplift sought by EYL.

Whitney again draws from a theme in the Black community when she is discussing the damage that bullies can inflict.

Cause then it's like a whole bunch of them and it's only her and they might beat her up or something. You know police are bullies. You know why I say that? Because one time um me and my mother we were walking well not walking, we were driving and the police were chasing down this young man and he was Black and so he didn't even do anything and they didn't find anything on him and they were just they were just um they were just trying to do that to manipulate him and the same thing happened to my auntie because she was in a mental health group, she's in a mental health group and they were trying to fight for this mental health center and so um the police choose the only Black there and the police took her out of everybody and then they just stood her in the middle of the floor and then *(Whitney stands and begins to act out what she is saying)* like okay say I'm so I'm like right here and then there's a line of policemen right here with their guns *(Whitney stand with her legs spread and fashions her hand into a gun)* and the police, there was three policemen, one man and these two other men were one man was holding her hand, the other her leg and then a policeman he told her to open her legs and he pressed down in her private part *(Whitney takes her seat)* and I saw and I saw that same thing happen to that young man, a White policeman did that to my auntie and a White policeman did that to the other boy, he she he actually opened his pants and went down into his drawers and saw what he had in there and its just a shame. (Whitney, age 10)

A number of things occur in this extended passage. Whitney's references the Black community's often contentious relationship with police and suggests that Black males and Black people engaged in protest are especially vulnerable to police bullying. Her delivery of the story serves as another example of the dramatized form of storytelling encouraged in Black communication. Finally, she ends her story by saying "its just a shame." Her use of the word "shame" casts an evaluative gaze on the acts she described and frames them as morally problematic.

Collaborative Reasoning

Meier (2007) posits joint storytelling as an especially valued form of communication in the Black community that enables children to learn from each other in the process of co-construction. In joint storytelling there is typically a lead speaker who is aided in the construction of her story by other participants who ask questions, makes affirmative statements and pose challenges. In this section I show how Whitney and Angie collaborate to produce moral reasoning that does not belong to either of them but instead is distributed in the dialogical space between them. In this first excerpt they develop a moral solution to the problem of the older girls sharing cookies (Dilemma 3).

Angie: Because sharing and fair they're not too far apart, I mean they're not that different, but they're still different. Sharing it's just like the model, sharing/caring it's basically fair so they're older they're supposed to show that they can be responsible....

Whitney: Yeah then they should you know like teach them and have to be nice and how to share.

Tonya: They should teach the younger girls?

Whitney: I think that would be the right thing.

Angie: And instead of being stingy, mean and etc.

Angie begins by talking about the similarities of sharing and caring and introducing the concept of modeling. Whitney extends the reasoning by interrupting Angie and talking about the specific things the older girls should teach and to the younger ones. I participate in the collaboration by asking a question followed by Whitney's affirmation. Angie then adds a negative example that illustrates alternative immoral virtues.

In the following excerpt they decide that Tenisha should save a seat for her friend even though her friend has been mean to her.

Tonya: Okay so let's say that Tenisha had been mean to Chiarra; does she still need to save a seat for her?

Angie: She still does because....

Whitney: That's her friend.

Angie: She just because....

Whitney: Your friend is mean to you....

Angie: Just because they got in a fight or just because um she got mad at her um she should forgive her I mean what's the point of being friends if you can't forgive?

Whitney: Sometimes, one time we argued...Like me and but we got back together we found a solution to get back together.

Angie: Everyone fights every once in a while.

Here they participate in a process of taking turns to produce the thought that fighting is a normal part of friendships and should not preclude Tenisha from acting as a friend.

In this final excerpt Angie and Whitney tell a joint story that extends their reasoning about Jodi's (Dilemma 12) exclusion. Angie had suggested that, though Susie might have had ill-intentions, the other girls might just be following along. This reasoning prompts Whitney to tell a story from her birthday party that Angie had also attended.

Whitney: Do you know Jordan at my party? They talked about me actually at my party and they they um a girl that they said um a girl um that um her name is Dasia she um....

Angie: Was she even invited to the party? Was one of those girls wasn't even invited to the party.

Whitney: Jordan wasn't the one who was invited.

Angie: *(To the interviewer)* She came with her friends.

Whitney: *(To the interviewer)* She came with one of her friends and I know Jordan, but I didn't invite her.

Angie: And um at her party it was like these girls at it was about three and they um said do you want to have a dance contest? The only reason they said did you want to have a dance contest is because they knew me and Whitney couldn't dance and then Whitney tried to change the subject and say why don't we have a singing contest, because every all the girls there could sing, they might not have been perfect, but they could sing cause I heard them sing, they're not that bad of a singer.

Whitney: Right, but they tried to bring me down for no reason, but they seem like they were popular girls and then when we were in line they were like pushing each other, they said, no you know I was in front of you and then I was like why are you guys doing that? I mean it's just the line in the place and they're like, girl we just playin, we just playin but that's not good anybody could get hurt and then it could get real serious. Another girl I want to say, do you know Alyssa she was playing with us before?

Angie: I don't know that name.

Whitney: Well she was playing with us before before her posse came and the leader posse came and when her friends came she said bye-bye I'm going to sit with the posse. And I'm like okay don't you want to spend time with me because you're cause I'm the birthday girl?

Angie: They weren't nice at first.

Whitney: So maybe those girls weren't nice to Jodi at first because they were trying to follow Susie.

The participants draw on shared meanings to tell their illustrative story. Whitney begins the story as a result of Angie's reasoning about the dilemma. Once the story was underway they reference a shared experience and use it as a means to illustrate the ways in which Dasia, Jordan and Alyssa were similar to Susie and Jodie. As they tell the story, they ask each other questions ("Do you know Jordan," "Was she invited") and make statements ("I don't know that name") that result in the other making a clarifying statement. Neither of them is called upon to remember all of the details of the story or to have totally shared the experience. Instead they are able to combine their individual impressions and form a joint moral tale.

Whitney and Angie also demonstrated the ability to collaborate by extending each other's thoughts and disagreeing with the other's reasoning. In the first excerpt Whitney extends Angie's thinking on the connection between equal rights and peace amongst the girls in the after school group (Dilemma 3).

Angie: I mean they work hard too, but we all need...it's kind of like equal rights, we all have equal rights and we all need to share. It's like becoming peaceful.

Whitney: Um all about when I was talking about being peaceful I mean like what she was saying, it could start violence with the children and they could make a change in their friendship.

Initially, Whitney is confused about whose thought it was, but then differentiates herself from Angie and explains what could happen if there wasn't peace.

In the next excerpt they offer two possible outcomes to Susie's (Dilemma 12) racist behavior.

Angie: Um well I would help her too, but I would also tell her, please don't don't talk about me and don't be racist because sometimes when you're little it actually gives you feedback as how you're going be when you're older. Sometimes you can look through them and see them and see how they will be when they're when they're older see she I can see how she's gonna be when she's older.

Whitney: Now I don't completely agree because see she and she could change the way she acts cause when she learns that she doesn't have to do all that racist stuff then she might change because some people change of what happens in the past, not always what they want because she still, she still has time to grow up and get mature and learn new things.

In this instance, rather than producing a shared perspective their dialogue opens the field of possibility by imagining two different trajectories for Susie's attitudes on race. Angie believes that Susie's behavior now is representative of whom and how she will be as an adult, while Whitney is open to the possibility that she could grow if she learns from her experiences. Angie's initial statement provides an opportunity that gives Whitney something to which she can react and produce a different outcome.

Angie and Whitney's interview contain rich examples of Black communication and collaboration. It enables us to consider moral reasoning as other than something that is the product of an autonomous person engaged in a purely rational process. Instead, we

have examples of the reasoning being distributed across their relationship. The stories they tell and themes upon which they draw serve as textual tools that aid in their moral problem solving and embed their practice in a particular cultural context.

Question Four: How are mothers' responses to dilemmas reflected in girls' responses?

This question assumes that adult relationships in general and maternal influence in particular are relevant to the study of Black girls' moral reasoning in middle childhood. I will first present the results that describe three ways in which adult relationships are relevant.

- Adults were among the people to whom the participants believed the girls should go for help as part of moral problem solving;
- Participants' moral deliberations were influenced by their concern about adult sanctions
- However, questioning adult authority was also a part of the girls' moral deliberation.

I will then describe how the mothers' thinking is reflected in the girls' moral reasoning through the following similar themes:

1. friendship
2. using voice
3. getting and giving respect and
4. living as a Christian

The study's final question assumes that as children have increased activity in social systems their moral reasoning reflects, interprets and discards some of the system's organizing customs.

Children use their interactions with a mature social medium (Fesmire, 2003) or the guidance of a more skilled partner (Rogoff, 1990) as a means to develop the capacities necessary for participation in their respective cultural milieus. Participants' moral reasoning is not seen as autonomous and isolated, but as the product of cultural activity. This question asks how mothers' reasoning is reflected in the participants' responses. The analysis of mothers' data will demonstrate the similarity in the mothers' responses and give some indication of the developmental devices they use to achieve moral development goals for their daughters. It represents themes across the mothers' data. I make no attempt to compare an individual mother's response to that of her daughter. Before I present the mother's data, I will review the ways in which the participants included adults in their moral problem solving.

Child participants inclusion of adults. Adults entered into the participants' reasoning in three significant ways: (1) adults were among the people to whom the participants believed the girls should go for help as part of moral problem solving, (2) adult constraint was a factor in delineating the range of moral action, and (3) questioning adult authority was a part of the girls' moral deliberation. In the following excerpt, Angie (age, 10) discusses the importance of calling upon an adult to help her develop or carry out a moral solution.

...if somebody was a bully with me, I wouldn't want to share with them so first of all I would tell an adult like what should I do because I would need their advice. (Angie, age10)

Angie recognizes that the dilemma (Dilemma 10) is asking her to choose between the virtue of sharing and maintaining her sense of worth. However, she is not sure how to work out the moral tension and decides to enlist the help of an adult. Kathy (age, 9) pursues a similar route when she is developing a solution for the girls who find a purse (Dilemma 1). She reports that "they should give it to a guardian and say what should we do." Therefore, Kathy and Angie view adults as a more informed partner in moral problem solving and call upon them as a resource. Andrea calls upon adults when she is describing an experience of teasing she endured.

A time at...I think at school like one time I didn't know...well I didn't know like like when people was talking about me callin me like "retarded, stupid, ugly" I didn't know well I didn't know what to say back, but I did kinda like sometimes I used to call them back names, I used to call them back. But I don't wanna do that cause that's that's being mean and it's not right to do that. You should just tell the teacher. (Andrea, age 10)

Andrea suggests engaging an adult to act on her behalf when she is being harmed. She states that "she didn't know what to say" and resorted to behavior that she knew was wrong. By enlisting the help of an adult she could both stop the harm and act within her sense of right and wrong. In the next section participants move from discussing adults as resources for moral problem solving to positioning them as agents of constraint.

While the participants depict the girls as moral agents capable of making good decisions, they also recognize the constraints of age hierarchies. In the following excerpt, Lisa explains the limitations of children's rules.

Lisa: Because children's rules don't really count. I mean if children's rules count if a child told you to jump off the bridge you wouldn't do it would you?

Tonya: I don't know.

Lisa: You shouldn't.

Tonya: Children's rules don't count? I don't understand that.

Lisa: Like you would understand if somebody's in charge and they're old enough, but you shouldn't make your own rules if you have rules to obey from adults and you shouldn't disobey those rules.

Lisa (age, 10) concedes that there are children who are old enough to be in charge, but adult rules would still eclipse their authority. Kara (age, 10) acknowledges this hierarchy when she reasons about the girls who are thinking about cheating on a test (Dilemma 3). She states that the girls need to follow the rules of the classroom because "the principals make rules about the teachers, so actually the principals are boss of the teachers and the teachers are boss of the children." Katrina (age, 9) elaborates on this hierarchy by restating it and adding that "the teachers are in charge and the parents let them do it." Dina (age, 9) and Ruth (age, 9) both explain that the consequences of breaking these rules are greater than the consequences of losing a friend. They reason that if the girls were to break the school rules they could be in big trouble from their parents. Mara (age, 9) and Janet (age, 10) provide an additional reason for adult authority. They both state that listening to adults has a Biblical basis. Mara explains that "the Ten Commandments says honor your father and mother" and if they go against adult wishing they are not doing so. The participants identify a hierarchy within various institutions (school, church and family) and suggest that adults are entitled as adults and through Biblical dictate to act as delineators of moral parameters.

In this final section, participants challenge the authority of adults and suggest that while there are limits to children's ability to develop their own rules, there are also limits to adult authority. In this excerpt, Chanel explains why she does not have to listen to church music all of the time even though the pastor does not like secular music (Dilemma 8).

Cause like in church then I'll listen to church music, but like if I'm at home then I already listened to the church music why do I have to listen to it again? Sometimes I just get tired of it. I just want to listen to my regular music. I don't think I have to follow the pastor. (Chanel, age 10)

Asia (age, 10) agrees that she has the right to listen to secular music at home and Jessie (age, 11) states that listening to it does not mean that she is disrespecting the pastor. She believes that the pastor is wrong and lays out a sound argument for her reasoning.

There's things like jazz and other things that are really nice music and so I think that the pastor is wrong because the music, all music that is good isn't just church music. There's a whole bunch of different styles of music that are good, just as good as church music. (Jessie, age 11)

In this case, Jessie suggests that sound reasoning takes priority over the God given authority of the pastor.

Jennifer (age, 10) and Jordan (age, 9) limit adult authority when the adult is asking girls to do something that compromises their integrity. Jennifer reasons that it is okay to say no to the coach (Dilemma 12) if the coach is asking Jodi to do something that would embarrass her further. Likewise, Jordan declares that the principal is not the boss of her when she explains why Lisa (Dilemma 10) would not have to share her toy with girls who had excluded her.

Therefore, participants suggest that the girls can evaluate adult expectation of right conduct against their own and determine that they are not obligated to comply. Collectively the children's data show that adults do influence participants' moral reasoning. They are engaged as partners, invoked as guardians of moral parameters but also challenged as participants gain confidence in their ability to solve moral problems.

Mothers' moral priorities and developmental devices. The mothers' data suggests that they are indeed mindful of their influence on their daughters' moral development. I will first address the themes that emerged as moral priorities in their reasoning and then discuss their use of dialogue and co-regulation as developmental devices. The presentation of the data includes both the mothers' reasoning in response to the study's dilemmas, and their responses to my follow up questions about their parenting practices and goals. Though I was interviewing the mothers in reference to the focal daughter whom I had already interviewed, some of the mothers refer to their practices with all of their daughters. I did not attempt to redirect them on this matter as it seemed the most natural way for mothers to talk about their parenting practices. I gathered the mothers' data by conducting eighteen individual interviews. This section represents only a small portion of the data collected in order to maintain a focus on the girl participants.

What they promoted. There were four dominant themes in the mothers' goals for their daughters' moral development: (1) friendship, (2) using voice, (3) getting and giving respect, and (4) living as a Christian. Together these themes develop a framework for the ethical interactions the mothers encourage as their daughters participate in activity outside of their home.

Friendship

In their discussion of the girls saving a seat in the lunchroom (Dilemma 4), the mothers talked about the qualities they viewed as ideal in a friendship. They described talking to their daughters about loyalty, longevity, accepting a person as they are and making your own choices within friendship. Marsha, Linda, Michelle and Johnnie all stated that they encourage their daughters to be loyal to their friends and take up for them when necessary. Johnnie goes on to state that her daughter sees her having long-term friendships and is therefore able to see how friends are “with you over the years and over time.” The idea of adults modeling longevity in friendships was shared by Margaret, Rochelle and Elizabeth. Rochelle compares “true friendship” to relationships with family and God and states that her daughter knows that she has been with her true friends for “20 plus years.” In the following excerpt, she provides a description of a true friend’s behavior.

when I talk to them I let them know stuff like, a true friend is always gonna look out for you never gonna talk about you, never gonna be in a circle and listening to someone else talkin’ about you even though that group of people is not your friends but that one girl is your friend. If that group of people is talking about you with a girlfriend and if that girlfriend either does not tell them to stop or walk away from it, then you might need to question her friendship. I just give em different scenarios like that.
(Rochelle)

Rochelle believes that standing up for a friend when others are maligning them is essential to true friendship. Cynthia states that these true friends are hard to find and so the girls should prioritize them. Elizabeth adds that she tells her daughter that her best friends are those who accept her as she is. Tracy echoes the importance of acceptance

but acknowledges how hard that standard can be for girls who have bought into a certain beauty standard.

I did start off trying to have natural hair with Barbara cause she was the first that I had to experience this with. For the longest time, well, I would say your friends just have to accept you for who you are, we're not gonna change your hair like that. We'll send you to the hairdresser, but we're not gonna get added hair and we're not gonna get this and that you know colors and all that and then slowly it became a thing of um it was easier to maintain personally for her to get braids and so it was able we were able to do like a double dip type thing. It was easier to maintain it for her goin to school every day and then it also increased her appearance so she became more acceptable in the group, but at first it was we tried to say they need to accept you for who you are. (Tracy)

The convenience of adding hair with braids notwithstanding, Tracy's story illustrates her dilemma in wanting to promote the idea of acceptance, but also wanting her daughter to have an appearance that increased her access to a desired social group. In contrast, Elizabeth and Anna reported that when their daughter encountered the choice of doing the right thing or belonging to the group they encouraged them to "think about what they want, get comfortable with a decision and stick with it" (Anna) and know that "sometimes in life you have to walk alone" (Elizabeth).

Some mothers described repair as an alternative to walking alone when there is conflict in a relationship. Rhonda, Doreen and Martha state that because growing pains are inevitable in any relationship they encourage their daughter to find ways to resolve the conflict and maintain the friendship at the end of the day. Doreen adds that "if they are friends, they should be able to talk about it.

True friendship, belonging and the inevitability of conflict figured significantly in both the mothers' and daughter's reasoning. Like their daughters, the mothers

characterize the formation of quality friendships as a moral act and friendship as a virtue. Tracy's response suggests that at least some mothers are in competition with the pressure of peer groups and beauty standards as they pursue their parenting goals. In her case, when her daughter's friends did not accept her as she was, she made the decision to alter her daughter appearance to make her more acceptable by the group. In addition to promoting loyalty, the mothers reflect the importance of relationship repair in quality friendships. The mothers' reasoning also paralleled their daughters in that, like their daughters, the mothers viewed the use of voice as an important device in developing and maintaining these relationships.

Using Voice

In the first set of excerpts, the mothers explained that engaging in dialogue and processes of deliberation are essential to Tenisha (Dilemma 4) resolving her dilemma with her friends. Claire and Martha both reason that if one of the girls wants to do something differently, they would need to discuss it with her friends. In the absence of this dialogue, they would be violating the tradition or dynamic of the group. Johnnie depicts such a dialogue as the "democratic and civil thing to do" and believes that the girl should be able to "open up her mouth and explain the situation" as part of being in a good friendship. Kara (age, 10) pursued this same reasoning when she explained that the Tenisha could not just solve this moral problem on her own. Rather, she would need to discuss it with her friends and decide what to do.

Rochelle elaborates on using voice to develop friendship as she recalls a discussion with her daughter. Herein she encourages her daughter to speak up in order to positively influence her friends' conduct.

If one decides they wanna do something wrong, figure out how to talk her out of it, even if you know it's the wrong thing that she's trying to go off with this boy...I want her to in that standpoint to be a leader and say, no or even if that is going on you can't convince her immediately get on your phone and start saying okay this is what's happening and start making the calls so an adult can intervene. I you know I want her to be true to her friends. (Rochelle)

Rochelle suggests that it is not enough for her daughter to do the right thing. She also has to be a true friend, speak up and encourage her friends to do the right thing.

“Speaking up” was thematic in other mothers' responses. Cheryl stated that she tells her daughter that you have to “step up and say something because the worse thing we do is we don't speak up”. Michelle and Elizabeth reason that if their daughters don't learn how to speak up, then people will think they can do anything to them or believe that they can make a fool out of them. Joan places the issue of speaking up in an historical context when she describes talking to her daughters about Black history.

Sometimes you don't want to ruffle any feathers but based on what our people just as a culture have been through, you just gotta speak up... There were times when we as a people were afraid to say something or we saw something and we looked the other way or when we actually tried to speak up we would be maimed for it, but then when people like Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, saw their fate, knew that what I'm doing may very well cost me my life I I'm still willing to lay down my life so that other people after me will not be afraid to speak up with the atrocities that's going on with our people. So I talk to them a lot too about standing up for what they believe in speaking up for what's right because those are the rights that we have in this country as a free nation. (Joan)

Rochelle depicts speaking up as a responsibility her daughter bears as consequence of the sacrifices others have made on her behalf and as a condition for maintaining on-going freedoms.

Martha and Toby also see speaking up as a responsibility, but explain that the act is essential to both being comfortable with yourself and avoiding the harms of internalizing issues. In discussing the importance of speaking up, both mothers shared personal stories of times when they learned to speak up to people who had hurt their feelings or said something that was racist. Below Margaret describes a similar personal growth experience.

I had to learn how to tell myself that my feelings mean something, my thoughts mean something, the way I'm treated means something. I'm not supposed to just be quiet, even if I have to do it and do it scared, I have a voice. I'm a person. I need to be heard you know? That's the same thing I teach my girls. (Margaret)

Along with Martha and Toby, Margaret demonstrates the ways in which the mothers link their personal growth to their desire to raise daughters that believe in their worth and have the capacity to speak up even in difficult circumstances. Margaret's excerpt provides a framework for thinking about a moral person. It is someone who's feelings and thoughts count and who should be treated with positive regard. In the absence of such treatment, this person has the right to speak up and others are obligated to listen.

Overall, the mothers report that they have come to value voice as part of their personal growth and experiences with racism. They believe that using voice will enable their daughters to achieve mental health, speak back to racism and draw upon the benefits of activists that preceded them. Their comments also suggest that using voice is integral

to achieving self-respect and getting respect from others. The following section directly addresses this theme.

Self-respect and Respect

The mothers' responses reflect Tommie Shelby's characterization of self/respect as a critical component of the ethics of the oppressed. Like their daughters, the mothers reasoned that respect is critical to maintaining one's moral status. Cynthia illustrates this perspective.

We're teaching them this make believe world that if you treat people nice, if you talk to 'em a certain way, if you share these things, that they're going to give you the same respect. That's not the reality and that's just not the world we're living in. That's not the reality I don't have to be your friend if you're not treating me with respect and that's what I teach her now. (Cynthia)

Cynthia points to, what she believes are contradictions in children's moral socialization and describes the way she corrects for them in her parenting. Rhonda, Claire, and Barbara share Cynthia's view that respect is a condition of friendship. Barbara believes that respect should not be given as a result of a girl doing nice things for her friends, but should be extended because the person is a human being. Claire reports that she wants her daughter to know what she is worth and being respected by her friends is essential to that. Anna describes the special challenge her daughter might face with being respected as a Black girl.

As a rule when we wake up in the morning and turn on the TV it's White, we turn on the radio it's White, we walk outside our door it's White so we are taught about life and how to respect them, but they are not taught about us and how to respect us. (Anna)

Anna suggests that in order for her daughter to maintain her moral status, she will need to insist upon being respected in the face of racism. Like Cynthia she believes that as a parent of a Black girl, she has to correct for messages that her daughter is getting from her larger social milieu. Tracy, Elizabeth and Michelle discussed their practice of instilling racial pride in their daughters as a means of providing their daughters with a foundation for meeting this challenge when they inevitably encounter it. Tracy tells her daughter to be proud because “there’s no way as long as we live that we’re ever gonna be able to change our skin color so instead of drowning in it, embrace it.” Joan is concerned about racism outside of the Black community and also recognizes that her daughter could experience racism within her community due to her dark skin. In order to prepare her for that reality, she teaches her “not to compromise who she is regardless of how her world changes in front of her.”

Many of the mothers believed that their daughters had not encountered racism because they live and attend school and church in predominately Black communities. However, because they had goals for their daughters going away to school and eventually living and working in a diverse community, they were preparing them for how to deal with racism.

So that as she get older if she ever and or is approached or if something is said to her it won’t be such a surprise. You know it’s something maybe she’ll be able to remember oh my mom did say this and you know sometimes people may not like you because you are another race. (Cheryl)

Cheryl hopes that her daughter will internalize her voice and the lessons that she has taught her as she goes out in the world. Similarly, Linda prepares her daughter by telling her that there are going to be people who just aren’t comfortable with Black people, but

that she wants her daughter to know who she is and those people don't know really know her liked her family does.

The mothers anticipate that their daughter's moral status could be challenged by racism, gender oppression and interpersonal harm. They promote the expectation of respect and suggest that in the absence of receiving it, their daughter does not have the same relational or moral obligation. The mothers indicate that they want their daughters to both take pride in their race and understand that others may see them as inferior because of it. Both of these goals are reflective of the expectation of respect and cast the other as committing a moral failure when they withhold it with racist intentions. I now turn to the final theme in which the mothers explain the role of Christianity in providing a moral foundation for their daughters.

Living as a Christian

All of the mothers identified Christianity as a key influence on their daughter's moral development. Margaret and Cynthia describe God as a source of unconditional love that provides a sense of worth in the presence of marginalizing forces. Margaret believes that knowing one's history as a Black person makes her daughter closer to God and helps her realize that she is not a mistake in the universe. This knowledge will give her the confidence she needs as she moves out into a diverse world. Cynthia wants her daughter to be strong and assertive as she goes out into the "cruel world." She believes that if her daughter understands that everyone is loved equally in God's eyes, she will know that no one is better than her even if someone tries to convince her otherwise.

The mothers relied heavily upon their daughters' attendance at church as a means to nurture these messages. Rhonda reported that God was prevalent in her daughter's life and proudly told a story of her daughter making an independent decision to join the church. In her view, church is "where right and wrong start." Doreen, Rochelle and Barbara all describe their daughters' participation in a church community as pivotal to their moral development. The lessons they learn in Sunday school, Catholic school and participation in service are all foundational to their moral formation. When her daughter is trying to decide what is right and wrong, Rochelle reminds her daughter that "in the Bible, the first rule that God expects us is to love, and if we're loving, that's where we stop."

Claire is particularly concerned that her daughter mature spiritually so that when she is not around, her daughter will know the right thing to do. Below she describes how moral maturity will enable her daughter to do the right thing even when she desires to do wrong.

I you know try to teach her if I'm not around you still need to be doing the right thing. Then you still supposed to treat people right despite and regardless of the fact of how they treat us. But you really have to be spiritual to do that though. You have to really and I'm when I say spiritual I don't talkin about I'm not talkin about the person that said, oh I love God, but do everything against what God say do. I'm talking about a person that really love God, do what they supposed to do, don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal, I mean you have to live the principles in order for that that power that comes from being a Godly person to overrule your feelings. (Claire)

Claire suggests that there is a developmental arch to her daughter's participation in a Christian community and distinguishes between those who grow in their relationship with God and those who simply inhabit the physical space of Church and use Christian

rhetoric. Right conduct is essential to demonstrating a love of God and thereby experiencing spiritual growth. Her descriptions position doing the right thing and intimacy with God in a mutually reinforcing relationship. The more one does the right thing, the more spiritually developed they become, which increases one's likelihood to live God's principles. Johnnie also believes that her daughter's ability to draw upon God in her moral problem solving will increase as she spiritually develops. She describes a process wherein her daughter's ability to discern God's wisdom would increase as she has moral experiences that challenge her to choose between following God's word and following her own impulses. Both Claire and Johnnie depict the impulse to do wrong as a human trait that is tempered through a relationship with God.

However, participating in a church community also brings contradictions that place mothers and daughters in the position of choosing between moral priorities. In the next excerpt a mother describes how her goal of her children being Christ-like conflicts with her ideas about her girls as leaders.

Martha: The biggest thing is it's Christ-based. Right and wrong is based on the basic principles outlined in the Bible. We make a joke. The rules don't change. More of it is based on Bible school and Sunday school. They know John 3:16. They have a good idea of the Ten Commandments and Bible stories and the lessons that the parables teach. We go to a Bible based church that is pretty legalistic. It's a lot of Bible teaching. Our church has more strict interpretation of the Bible than my husband and I do. For example in our church, and this is something I struggle with, at our church women are not allowed to instruct men. It's pretty legalistic. Granted that's from the Bible but I still struggle with it.

Tonya: That's interesting because earlier you were talking about the importance of your daughters being comfortable in leadership roles because they're girls.

Martha: Yeah, but I studied the Bible. I read it up down and every which way trying to see that it doesn't really mean that. But that is what it says

and I said okay the Lord is workin' on me. I accept it but it's not in my heart.

Earlier in this interview, Martha tells a story about a time when a boy was present at her daughter's all girls after school group and took over the social activity. She was being disappointed that it happened because it undermined the goal of the girls experiencing themselves as leaders. Martha frames her struggle as one where she is committed to her daughters being in a church community in which they get a strong moral foundation and cultivating their daughters ability to function as leaders. Ultimately, she decides that, despite her personal conviction, she must follow the Biblical scripture.

In a contrasting view, Elizabeth describes a Christian/secular hybrid of determining right and wrong.

Um I've never told her "what would Jesus do". I just assume because she knows um she knows so much about just so much about Jesus and God um I just assume that she's gonna do the right thing because she's a thinker and she's not a follower and I have talked to her about being a follower and explained to her I don't want you to be a follower especially being a little girl. (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth expects her daughter to use her knowledge of God in her moral problem solving but also wants her to use her own good sense. Like Martha, she believes that, as a girl, it is especially important that she develop an independent voice that doesn't simply follow others. Her assumption that her daughter is going to do the right thing suggests that she is confident in her daughter's moral preparation and comfortable with her making moral decisions when she is away from home.

Similarly to their daughters, the mothers incorporate Christian beliefs and relationship with God into their moral reasoning. They provide both a foundation for

guiding action and understanding experience as well as sense of human worth. Having discussed the mothers' moral themes I will now take up the matter of the mothers' use of developmental devices.

Dialogue. The mothers often referred to occasions wherein they and their daughter would engage in a dialogue about the moral problems the children encountered. Their description of these conversations suggests they view them as important devices in meeting their moral development goals. Tracy and Doreen share that dialogue is especially important to them as they grew up in homes wherein they could not talk to their mothers. They want their daughters to have a different experience and know that they can talk to them about anything so that they don't have to learn it on the streets or on their own.

I don't care what you come in here and say, I think I want to do drugs, I think I might be gay, I think I want to have sex for the first time, I don't care what it is talk to me, talk to me cause you're get misinformed out there in them streets. Come to me I don't care what it is I don't care what you think it is that I'm gonna be mad, I'm gonna be disappointed, I need to have my kids to be able to be comfortable with me to talk to me about anything. It's so crucial to me it's it's crucial. (Tracy)

Tracy's heartfelt conviction reveals her willingness to talk about a broad range of topic with her daughters and expresses her fear that they might get misinformed if they seek guidance elsewhere.

Rhonda, Anna, Cheryl, and Barbara also value having an open dialogue with their daughters, and work at understanding and respecting their daughters' perspective within the conversation. Anna described a situation in which her daughter was being teased at school. She wanted her daughter to ignore it and view the other kids as insignificant.

However, after her daughter stressed that she was hurt and couldn't simply ignore it, Anna validated her experience. She further stated that in subsequent conversations, she tried not to make the same mistake of offering a solution without acknowledging the impact on her daughter and considering alternatives to ignoring. Cheryl had a similar experience when she was talking with her daughter. Cheryl told her daughter that the words of a girl at school should not hurt and her daughter replies:

Mama you always say words don't hurt, but I'm a little girl words do hurt, you know words do words do hurt me you know and so I'll say okay well you're right but you have got to learn that people are always going to talk about you. (Cheryl)

Cheryl demonstrates a desire to recognize her daughter's point of view, but maintains her goal of preparing her for relational harm. Other mothers employed this bifurcated approach. Within it, they would provide support and validation for the feelings their daughters had, but also encourage the girls to develop an emotional shield for when they are outside of the home. These mothers invite their daughters into dialogue and are open to the daughter's contribution, challenge and feedback. In addition to their own influence, the mothers exposed their daughters to people and places that would help guide their daughters' moral development goals. I discuss this issue in the next section.

Co-regulation. Mothers were purposeful about where they allowed their daughters to go and with whom they allowed them to associate. In previous sections I discussed how they used the model of their own friendships and their trust in church community as a means to prepare their daughter for environments outside of their home. The mothers also described using tests and internalizing important people in order to extend caregiver influence. Michelle reports that the biggest challenge she has is coming

up with tests that help her understand that her daughter knows what to do when she is not there. She describes one such test when she gives her daughter scenarios based on her own experience then asks her what she should do. In her effort to prepare her daughter for life away from home, Johnnie encourages her daughter to internalize significant relationships.

Maybe you're sending this picture on your cell phone, if your Grandma picked up this cell phone and found it, would she have a moral issue with this? Would you be like oh Grandma, yeah sure you could or would you be oh no Grandma you can't see that? So if it's oh Grandma you can't see that, you probably shouldn't have it on your phone. You just gotta trust that you been putting in all these ingredients and when the timer goes off and the cake should be baked, it's gonna be baked the right way you know and so you just gotta trust that they're gonna hear, oh man if my momma see this, mmmmm delete, it's the only other way I know to put it.
(Johnnie)

Even when her mother and grandmother aren't there, Johnnie wants her daughter to integrate them into her moral problem solving by considering how they would react to her actions. Like Elizabeth, Johnnie uses these discussions to build her confidence in her daughter's ability to do the right thing when she is in new environments.

In addition to internalizing significant relationships, the mothers are selective about the people and places that they allow their daughters to enter. In the following excerpt Linda discusses the process in which she engages.

We try and, we like it when their friends have like-minded parents. You get to know the parents and don't want to discriminate but I prefer that the places they go to spend the night, the families are Christian, that their parents think the same way. Their parents will let them watch the same things on TV. and take them the same sorts of places. They are not so different from us and they won't be exposed to something we don't approve of. The first few times they go to places I sit around on the sidelines and see what the environment is about. (Martha)

Martha associates with people that have similar values and engage in similar practices in order to ensure that her daughter is in an appropriate milieu. While Martha is willing to let her daughter be in a new place after she has seen it from the sidelines, Toby reports that she only lets her daughter have extended time away from her with a few relatives and a good friend. She explains that she doesn't know other people well enough to trust them, and that she is "not one of those parents that want to push their child off on someone or in a hurry and anxious to get rid of her."

Margaret offers a different perspective when she describes wanting to expose her daughter to as many different aspects of the world as possible. She believes that by exposing her to a diverse world, going to cultural events at church and attending programs that have multi-ethnic children, she will expand her character and moral development. She goes on to explain that in order for her to engage in moral problem solving she has to build friendships and tend to the social part of her.

Though the mothers differ in the degree to which they allow their daughters to participate in activity outside of their direct influence, they share a goal of equipping them with the tools to make effective moral decisions in these new environments. They continue to influence their daughters' moral development by evaluating their decision making, encouraging them to internalize caregivers, and distributing their parenting goals to other trustworthy adults.

Summary

In this chapter I set out an analysis of the data according to the study's guiding questions. I show that the Black girls in this study do integrate liberal and moral

approaches as they go about moral problem solving. They favored liberal approaches when deliberating about moral problems that approximated the law, prioritizing respect for all persons and valuing equal distribution. They reasoned within a communitarian approach when they focused on care responsibilities, interpersonal contracts and when they were grounding their moral problem solving within a Christian framework.

The participants demonstrated a preference for a moral community within which girls experienced a sense of belonging and committed moral acts. Their moral problem solving within the other categories of the Belonging/Alienation matrix sought to restore the social conditions of the dilemma to this preferred category. I explored three themes – maintaining the self, harm and friendship – that emerged in the process of these deliberations.

Though I did not achieve the expected results in the majority of the study's pairs interview, I present a case study of an outlier. I suggest that the nature of the girls' relationship with one another facilitated their collaborative moral reasoning that both generated greater amounts of talk, and was more grounded in Black communication.

Finally, I present data that shows the thematic similarities between the mothers' responses and those of the child participants. I also identify co-regulation and dialogue as means by which mothers develop and maintain their influence on their daughters' moral problem solving. The 8-11 year old sample in this study occupies the latter half of the 6-12 year old period defined as middle childhood. They use the basic social knowledge of self, others, community and institutions gained in the first half to inform their moral reasoning. This process enables them to develop a more complex

understanding of social life that is marked by race/gender based exclusion, dual loyalties and obligations to personal convictions and community virtues. Having presented these data, I now move to the next chapter wherein I discuss the results in light of the agenda set forth in the study's initial chapter.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In Chapter I, I reviewed a growing empirical literature that shows Black girls are the recipients of increasing incidents of school discipline. At least some of this literature suggests that adult interpretations of Black girls' behavior may be influenced by both problematic assumptions about Black girls' sense of right and wrong and their pathologizing of Black girls' communication styles. Furthermore, when practitioners draw upon moral development knowledge in order to address disciplinary problems, they are drawing upon a resource that may not be inclusive of Black girls' experience. I propose that, in order to facilitate improved adult/child interactions and develop effective supports and programmatic interventions, we need to understand moral problem solving from Black girls' points of view.

In this study I found that while the Black female participants' moral reasoning was consistent with our current understanding of moral knowledge, it also has some unique characteristics that should inform our approach to working with them in a variety of settings. In this chapter, I will discuss how this study contributes to the aforementioned goal by responding to a set of questions related to the agenda I set forth in chapter one. First, I will discuss this study's use of grounded theory then situate this study's findings in both the constructivist moral development and middle childhood literature. Throughout, I address the relevance of these findings to the children's spaces that Black girls inhabit, moral development theory and ongoing research.

Grounded Theory Method

This study integrates ethnographic and grounded theory approaches with a Kohlbergian dilemma response method. This design draws upon Kohlberg's idea that deliberating about moral material reveals the structure of a child's reasoning. It also shifts the focus away from moral development being optimized by an increase in abstracted reasoning achieved by an isolated individual. Instead it takes seriously Piaget's assertion that social interaction is a necessary element of moral development and asks how the meaning and intentions of the actor reveal the particularities and complexities of Black girls' social life. One can accept that a child's capacity for complex reasoning about moral issues will develop as their cognitive skill increases without taking on the belief that greater abstraction is synonymous with greater moral development. Ethnography and grounded theory enable us to both get closer to a view from the inside of the participants' meaning structures and ask what a given community prioritizes as aims for moral development.

In this study we find that participants embrace moral aims that one could term universal in that they are found across multiple community contexts. We also find multiple examples of how the participants' uniquely situated circumstances of living shape a particular set of goals. Their aims of preparing children for fulfilling friendships, integrating children into the rule of law and differentiating oneself as morally good reflect continuities across communities. Their aims of providing a vision of moral worth that Black girls can hold as they encounter instances of disrespect and integrating Black girls into community values reflect developmental goals born of Black experience.

Contrary to the indictment that ethnographic methods and grounded theory create isolated points of view, its use helps us understand the ways in which the participants (and their community) relate to a broader social milieu. In the remainder of this section I will discuss the role of ethnographic methods in constructing this internal view.

This approach was especially beneficial to the development of the study's dilemmas, the inclusion of a pairs interview and the facilitation of the child and adult interviews. I developed the dilemmas after observing the potential participants for nine months in an out-of-school setting, reviewing the fiction they read and interacting with them as a youth group leader. After the pilot study I asked participants to give me examples of times they faced similar issues in order to ensure that the problems were reflective of the participants' everyday lives. This process appeared important to engaging the participants' interest and increasing their investment in the fate of the girls in the dilemmas. Their practice of referencing their own experience of similar events when deciding what the dilemma girls ought to do suggested that they were drawing on their former knowledge during moral problem solving.

Piaget posited that the ability to draw upon previous moral activity was essential to developing moral consciousness. Though it is often assumed that moral thought precedes moral activity as a plan of action, he outlines a developmental arc in which moral consciousness is the realization of rational reflection on moral activity. Therefore, the participants' referencing of their own experience maximized their ability to verbalize their moral reasoning in a way that discussing unfamiliar content may not have. In this

regard, the grounded method confirms Piaget's thinking on the relationship between moral thought and moral action.

My inclusion of a pairs interview was meant to further increase the ethnographic specificity of the participants' moral reasoning. By putting the participants in conversation with one another, I wanted to decrease adult constraint and encourage findings that were reflective of their peer culture. From the case study I presented in chapter four, we can see the potential pairs interviews offer for understanding the role of Black communication and community based texts in Black girls' moral reasoning.

Investigators of Black children's literacy practices have demonstrated that Black children draw upon texts or cultural symbols (football, cultural icons, play practices) when they are bridging home and school settings (Haas Dyson, 2003; Meier, 2007). Therefore teachers who have cultural knowledge of their students are more prepared for scaffolding their learning. The exceptional interview with Whitney and Angie suggests that these connections are also relevant to understating how Black girls go about moral problem solving. Their inclusion of narratives, dramatizations and collaborative reasoning is illustrative of the style of interaction one might find between Black girls in a peer setting.

Angie and Whitney's comfort with each other appeared to lessen my presence as an adult and facilitated the broader conversation I described above. They described their relationship as one wherein emotional closeness had increased over the years even as they were separated by changes in their school placements. The experience of their relationship as well as their ability to engage in metacognition about it seemed to both

cultivate the conditions for dialogue within the dilemma interview and make the relationship experience available for use in moral problem solving.

My inclusion of the pairs interview was inspired by Labov's (1972) interview methods with 8-year old Black males in which he tried to reduce the adult/child asymmetry by changing the social situation. I diverged from his method in two ways that were likely significant to my results. Labov brought along the child's *best* friend in order to increase their collective agency and comfort and he introduced taboo subjects and words to the interview. I did not make either of these interventions. The fact that I only achieved these results with this pair suggests that in order to develop emic knowledge, the pairs need to be established in a manner that matches participants with relational intimates. I did not include taboo subjects/words in the study (e.g., sexuality, swear words, violence) as I believed it would have isolated the mothers in the study and prohibited participation. My initial relationship building process with the girls/mothers was as a youth volunteer and positive role model. Introducing taboo content might have been confusing or experienced as a betrayal by participants. I therefore thought that it would be unethical and impractical under the circumstances. Future studies might be able to include taboo material with a different population if it is relevant and appropriate. A researcher might also be able to include such content if they enlist the mothers' informed consent throughout the development of the dilemmas. Despite the infrequency of the expected result, Angie and Whitney's interview points to the possibility pair interviews offer when a researcher is seeking moral reasoning that is in the style of the children being interviewed.

My efforts to develop a relationship with potential participants prior to their enrollment in the study did appear to facilitate the mothers' comfort with having me in their home, interviewing their daughters out of their presence and sharing their parenting practices and concerns. The mothers elaborated their responses to my questions with their personal experiences and parenting challenges. In three cases a mother articulated that the questions I posed made them think about issues they should be discussing with their daughter. I believe that their knowledge of me as someone who was engaged positively with their child enabled such disclosures.

As important as these ethnographic considerations were to developing a grounded theory of Black girls, it also presented challenges to the scope of the study. A combined ethnographic and developmental approach is at its best when an investigator is able to develop a theory that illuminates the specificity of a given community while documenting individuals' continuities and change across time and according to a given set of developmental aims. These dual goals are ideally met by pursuing a cross-sectional or longitudinal study design. Such a design would facilitate a lifespan approach to moral development. Piaget, Kohlberg and Gilligan each developed stage models wherein the goal was to develop grand theories that provide taxonomies of qualitative shifts in development. A lifespan approach would not exclude stages, but would have the goal of understanding changes in Black girls' moral problem solving within the complexity of social historic shifts, disparate life conditions and individual psychology. I initially developed a cross-sectional design for this study in order to meet the developmental standard I describe above. However, the realities of taking an ethnographic approach

with two different samples rendered the design untenable for the study's time frame and resources. Though the study is limited to a portrait of Black girls' in middle childhood, the following discussion of the study in relation to constructivist theories of moral development and middle childhood arises out of results that are situated in the everyday experience of the Black girls and mothers that participated in this study.

Moral Development Literature: The Universal and the Particular

As I discussed in Chapter I, Piaget (1965/2008) and Kohlberg (1958) provide the theoretical and empirical foundation to which subsequent constructivist moral development researchers have reacted. Gilligan (1993) innovated Kohlberg's work by demonstrating an additional care domain and suggesting that advanced moral development could include a concern for relational context. Humphries et al. (2000), Tappan (1997), Shweder (1996) and Ward (1991) developed projects that integrate the role of community, spirituality and racial socialization in moral development. The progression of these investigations follows a trajectory of greater specificity in which researchers amend Piaget's initial theory by pursuing questions of how moral development is related to particular social contexts. To varying degrees, they question Piaget and Kohlberg's prioritization of universality and autonomy.

The Black girls in this study do use universal principles when approaching moral problems, but also grounded their reasoning in community and family virtues. Like the European boys in Piaget's initial study, the participants had internalized a legal sense that transcended individual desire. For example, when the participants reason that the girls should not steal because it is the wrong thing to do, they reflect Piaget's concept of

respecting a constitutive rule. A constitutive rule sets the conditions for cooperation and is meant to be constant across contexts. They use these universal rules to direct moral action when they believe the contextual circumstances are of little or no relevance to solving the moral problem. All participants upheld the sanctity of private property when they insisted that the girls should turn in the purse. This is also the only dilemma in which the girls suggest that police should be involved in resolving the dilemma. Notably, when ownership of the purse was ambiguous participants were less likely to insist on returning the purse.

Most participants also stated that Samara should not cheat on her test. However, while some reasoned that it was simply wrong – and therefore a violation of a universal prohibition – others stated that she shouldn't cheat because she would incur a negative consequence from an authority figure such as the teacher or principal. Their feeling of obligation toward a respected adult within a socially endorsed institution represents movement toward autonomous thinking that characterizes Piaget's rule codification stage. The contrast between the externally influenced injunction against cheating and their internalized prohibition against stealing mirrors the shift that occurred for Piaget's boys in this age group as they move away from heteronomy toward autonomy. In this case, we can see the establishment of the legal sense as the participants internalize a social prohibition that enables them to participate in larger society.

Both Piaget and Kohlberg also characterized autonomy as including thinking that is characterized by principled thinking that transcends culture and socialization. In fact, Piaget described an adult's respect for community elders as being “analogous to...the

mind of a child” (Piaget, 1965/2008, p. 340) and both thinkers insisted that in studying moral judgment, one would need to distinguish it from a child’s social learning. The latter, they believed, was but another manifestation of adult constraint. Within this perspective children will transcend spirituality, community endorsed virtues and family tradition as they proceed along the pathway of moral development.

Contra Piaget and Kohlberg, I included communitarian orientations along with the universal in order to develop a more comprehensive view of development that includes community and family influence as ongoing and normative aspects of the participants’ development. The participants’ integration of Christianity into their reasoning reflects Shweder’s (1996) morality of divinity, and Haight’s (2002) ethnography of African-American children at church. The findings of these investigators predicted that a cognitive-rational moral reasoning approach would be insufficient to explain the processes of the Black girls in this study. The morality of divinity stresses social life ordered by abstaining from sinful behavior, purification and a relationship with God. Haight describes an African-American theology that emerges from the social historic conditions of slavery and functions as a source of moral guidance and resilience as Black children negotiate the challenges of living in a racist society.

Indeed, some participants did ground their reasoning within these frameworks. Participants integrated divinity/theological approaches into their reasoning in four situations: (1) when the connection was made in the scenario (as in dilemma one wherein the girls find the purse subsequent to learning about stealing at church), (2) when they are asserting the importance of acting in order to fulfill their role within the church

community (as in the spirit dancer scenario), (3) when they describe the church as being a place of special moral consideration, and (4) when they go to God in conversation in order to obtain assistance in their moral problem solving. These instances do not depict an appeal to religion in all circumstances as Shweder's (1996) typology of moral community would suggest. However, they may justify the inclusion of a spiritual realm in the architecture of a moral theory that addresses the experience of Black girls.

The inclusion of the spiritual in moral explanations has a long history in Africana thought. For the purposes of this study, the Christian traditions of Black liberation (Cone, 1969/2010; Felder, 1991) and Womanist (Mitchem, 2002) theologies are most relevant. Black liberation theology uses scripture to sanction a demand for justice and interrogates the racism with mainstream Christian ideology and practice. Womanist theology places Black females at the center of this concern and asks how Christianity ought to address the dual oppressions of gender and race marginalization. It further charges that some formulations of Black liberation theology excluded or present oppressive views of women.

These theologies have both inward and outward looking dimensions that make them relevant to Black girls' attempts to establish themselves within a moral community. The outward looking dimension provides a means to critically engage moral contradictions and externalize the problem to injustices in the environment. The inward looking dimension provides an opportunity to celebrate culture, find comfort and develop ethical responses to the dilemmas one encounters. Thus the spiritual, may significantly contribute to a Black girls' moral development.

It is not incumbent upon public schools or other service providing organizations to adopt a Christian or faith-based perspective in order to incorporate this tradition into their approach to moral development. However, if done correctly, inviting a Black girls' practice of Christianity should not infringe upon another child's faith practice or lack thereof. If a Black girl were to introduce Christianity into her moral reasoning – as did the participants – then a teacher and other adults could engage that child (or group of children) within this belief system without adopting it herself or encouraging other children to do so.

It is important to note that the relevance of Black Christianity may be limited to this sample and ask if it would be an important perspective for a differently situated group. For example, if we were to consider categories of religious affiliation, we would find those that are non-religious, those that are Jewish or Islamic and those that practice within a non-Abrahamic religion (i.e., a religion other than Judaism, Islam or Christianity). Non-religious, Jewish and Islamic Black girls may find the inclusion of a Christian perspective alienating in that they are not represented. However, given the hegemony of Christianity in North America and in secular ethical thought, it may be a familiar perspective. For those who operate within a non-Abrahamic religion (especially those who are new to the United States), a Christian perspective could be quite confusing. The emphasis on a singular transcendental deity, the ethics of choosing between good and evil and the idea of texts or prophets guiding good conduct are common aspects of Abrahamic religions that are incongruent with many world religions. Therefore, future

research would need to address the multiple opportunities for the inclusion of the spiritual realm in moral development theory.

Similarly, the concept of marginalization could be expanded in the dilemma construction in order to develop a more inclusive theory of moral development. It is an unfortunate (though not inevitable) fact of modern society that children could potentially have marginalizing experiences around an increasing range of issues. The more inclusive investigations of moral development are of these experiences, the more we can begin to think of the ensuing theories as explaining a broad range of developmental trajectories. In the next section I explore further the affects of marginalization on moral reasoning by extending Piaget's concept of cooperation.

Moral Development Literature: Cooperation and Inequality

In Piaget's initial study he sets forth a question that guides his investigation of boys' marble playing in Geneva and Neuchatel schools. He asks if a child is aware of his autonomy as he exercises moral judgment or if he subscribes to externally or divinely imposed law. In his elaboration of this question he positions a free reasoning subject as the ideal and identifies age hierarchies and social authority as constraints on the ideal. As he develops his framework for a child's moral development, he posits a maturation wherein a child moves away from constraint and toward principled, individualized rational thought. However, the social plays a role in a child's development since "Autonomy is a power... that can find scope only inside a scheme of cooperation" (Piaget, 1965/2008, p. 375). In other words, the individual child encounters the social through cooperation and engages moral reasoning to distinguish right from wrong. From

this emerges an autonomous person whose moral judgment transcends the influence of adults, history and tradition. Though this inner consciousness has social origins, it is the inner goal of reaching a moral ideal that characterizes the developmental aim.

Piaget acknowledges that his is an ideal theory. Said differently, in reality cooperation is a method of social exchange that is always infected with coercive relations that lessen the potential for true mutuality as Piaget defines it. As such his theory of moral development is predicated on conditions that admittedly do not exist in society. In this research project, I revisit his theory and find that non-ideal circumstances of racism, gender discrimination and interpersonal power differentials develop an alternative concept of cooperation that is more conducive to Black girls' moral problem solving.

The Black girls in this study contribute to our understanding of moral development by providing greater description of the asymmetrical relations that are always present in cooperation and by offering a means to establish more mutual conditions. The participants' notions of fairness reflect an ideal of cooperation, in which everyone is treated the same, has an equal share of goods and has equal access to opportunities. However, when the girls were marginalized by race – as in the case of Jodi (Dilemma 12) – or social isolation – as in the case of Lisa (Dilemma 10) – they suggested that the absence of fair conditions changed the girls' moral obligation. Because there is a presumption of equal standing of moral subjects within both Piaget and Kohlberg's moral theories they are not useful in helping us make sense of the unfair conditions from which Lisa and Jodi are acting. The participants' reasoning suggests that a more comprehensive

theory that includes the experience of Black girls ought to have a means of addressing the moral reasoning of the marginalized actor.

The participants suggest that getting respect is one way of addressing this marginalization. The issue of respect has long been germane to our understanding of moral reasoning. Beginning with Immanuel Kant's (1787/1996) claim that all persons are owed respect simply because they are persons, moral theories have claimed that an action can be evaluated as right when it expresses respect for a person and wrong when it fails to recognize their worth (Rawls, 2005). In "Ethics of the Oppressed," Tommie Shelby (2012) claims that gaining self-respect is an essential component to acting from marginalized and alienated positions. Herein an act is evaluated as morally right if a person insists on just treatment and believes that their moral status entitles them to such treatment. An act is evaluated as morally wrong if a person accepts servile treatment without complaint or protest and thus fails to value their moral worth.

The participants' reasoning echo's Shelby's ethics when they make a number of claims regarding the importance of getting respect before they can perform a virtuous act such as sharing or helping. They assert that one is not obligated to help when they have been harmed. In fact, they may be committing a moral wrong or at least contributing to an ethical imbalance if they help/share under such conditions.

Participants also employ "the use of voice" as a common strategy for addressing marginalization. When social conditions are no longer conducive to mutual respect, participants reason that using one's voice opens up the possibilities for restoring more ideal conditions. They reason that Tasia (Dilemma 3) ought to speak up in order to

differentiate herself from her friends' decision to cheat. Dee Dee (Dilemma 7) and her friends should use voice to speak back to bullies and Lisa (Dilemma 10) and Jodi (Dilemma 12) should use voice to gain respect from girls who excluded them.

The concept of voice is prevalent in Black girls' literature. In her interviews with urban adolescent girls, Way (1995) found that, unlike their White counterparts, Black and Latina girls spoke their minds with friends, parent and teachers. They spoke out in conflict, love, anger and loyalty. They were not only comfortable with speaking out, they believed that it enhanced their relationships. Way's findings, as well as those in this study, contrast with studies that have focused on White middle class girls. In these studies (Eichenbaum & Orbach, 1988; Gilligan, 1993) investigators found that their participants were reluctant to speak their mind as it would either threaten their relationships or their image as a perfect girl. This silencing has figured strongly in feminist theories of moral development, in that the more advanced stages represent an ability to use one's voice. Gilligan frames this issue as a girl/woman's ability to both develop her ability to assert herself, and her recognition that she should in order to be responsive to herself and to others. The differences between the studies' findings suggest that, though the issue of voice appears to be relevant to these Black girls' moral reasoning, rather than view it as something to be achieved, it is often already present for and serves an adaptive function in their moral problem solving. Future studies might investigate if Black girls continue to use this resource as they encounter moral problems that involve romantic relationships with boys and other girls. Having outlined the

findings' relevance to the constructivist moral development literature I now move to a discussion that places them within the participants' developmental period.

Moral Development and Middle Childhood

Something very special happens during middle childhood that makes it an ideal period for the study of moral reasoning. Though latency is less prominent within Freud's psychosexual model, Erikson's psychosocial model highlights a child's attempts to develop a self, pursue talents, and demonstrate skill as they pursue an existential goal of making it in the world. As a child enters into non-familial milieus, increases their cognitive capacities and experience social emotional growth, they integrate diverse social worlds and develop a greater differentiation of self. The composite of these tasks is qualitatively unique and provides a developmental platform for their movement into adolescence. Thus we can say that middle childhood provides a developmental bridge between the capacities they develop in early childhood and those of adolescence. As such, it becomes important to recognize the critical nature of this period in children's lives. The findings in this study contributes to our understanding of middle childhood in at least three ways: (1) by elaborating on our understanding of the complexity of children's moral reasoning; (2) by illustrating the means by which mothers maintain an influence on their daughters' everyday lives and; (3) by extending our understanding of the relationship between moral development and friendship.

As children begin to emerge into the larger world, they need to develop a capacity to participate in the larger social order. Participating in rule-based games provides one means of developing these skills. Through them, children develop a sense of both the

agreed upon standards of conduct that structures society as well as the conditions that allow for flexibility and innovation. This type of play requires a cognitive complexity that is not present in young children's thinking. Through children's increased understanding of and control over their thought and action, they are able to hold multiple categories, consider the opinion of others and use rules to regulate their interactions with one another.

The participants in this study demonstrate this complexity in their explication of the contingencies that determine right action. In dilemma seven they articulate a rule that only allows the girls to go back to the bullies and "tell them about themselves" if it mitigates the conflict. In developing this rule, the participants engage an understanding of the role of rules in creating social cohesion, consider the affect of the girls' behavior on others and recognize the potential of dialogue between peers.

Their moral problem solving in dilemma nine further demonstrates their internalization of rules as a regulatory device. Even though Tammy's dance competitors were mean to her, the participants believed that the rules of fair play disallowed her from ruining their costumes. In this regard, their engagement of the rule guides the desired action as opposed to an adult who is more present in early childhood.

These instances of rule adjudication provide opportunities for children in middle childhood to become more self-governing, develop more complex friendships and a deeper sense of self. Friendships are a special kind of relationship that enables children to develop social and emotional capacities during middle childhood. Participants also use moral problem solving to navigate the negotiation of self and other. These data challenge

views of girls' moral development that suggest their reasoning is primarily focused on preserving harmony, avoiding conflict and caring for self at the expense of other. Instead we see a more nuanced view of relationships. In it they value friendship, and employ a complex set of moral strategies to promote them. At the same time they give attention to the importance of differentiating a highly regardable moral self. Their emic views of friendships are consistent with those outlined by Selman and expected by their activity in middle childhood. Rather than being something that occurs within friendships, moral reasoning is constitutive of friendship in middle childhood.

From his investigation of children Robert Selman (2007) identified three spheres that influence friendships in middle childhood. Selman's first influence – "friendship understanding" refers to a child's knowledge of relationship. This includes their theories about how to make and sustain friendships. He reports that in middle childhood children demonstrate an increased interpersonal understanding that enables them to balance personal autonomy and intimacy. The second influence is "friendship skills" and it refers to the strategies children use to maintain their relationships. In middle childhood children are more likely to use complex compromise oriented approaches. Selman's third influence is "friendship valuing." Here he is referring to a child's personal investment and emotional commitment to friendship as it manifests in their ability to take responsibility for their contribution and consider the consequences of their actions.

In the participants' reasoning about category one dilemmas (belonging/moral acts), we can see that they view friendships as a valuable relationship that should be maintained through moral acts. Genuine belonging within friendships invites girls to

both act so as not to harm their friends and to positively influence the moral behavior of one another. They also reason that in a quality friendship, choosing an act that is different from the group need not be the end of the relationship. Forgiveness, sticking together, supporting each other and providing emotional insulation are moral capacities that act as social repair mechanisms when the girls are in conflict with one another.

In contrast, the participants reasoning displayed some skepticism about friendships when belonging was paired with immoral acts (Category 2). They suggested that it may be important for girls to forego belonging in order to do what they believe and that friends may not have your best interest in mind. Harm also took on a significant role in this category. Herein participants reasoned that a girl should act in order to avoid being harmed. In these instances the right thing to do is that which provides the greatest degree of self-protection. While this strategy is understandable, it doesn't seem desirable as a moral end as the immoral act that established the unjust conditions remains unchallenged. In an alternative perspective the experience of alienation that comes with the girls' exclusion (Category 3) does not keep the participants from reasoning that the girls could still develop friendships. Instead, some participants reason that the excluded girl is agentic and capable of shifting the relational terrain by reaching out to the girls who mistreated her.

The decreased presence of adult caregivers – and especially parents – represents another hallmark of middle childhood. Though the mothers in this study are less physically present in their children's lives, they maintain an influence on their children's behavior through storytelling, dialogue and co-regulation. Though both Piaget and

Kohlberg minimized the role of parental influence on moral development, subsequent researchers have challenged their assertions. These studies suggest that Socratic dialogue, democratic practices and authoritative parenting tend to encourage moral maturity (see Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer & Alisat, 2003; Walker, 2007). The ways in which the mothers use dialogue typify the democratic practices to which these researchers refer. The dialogues offer a place for their daughters where they know that their feelings will be taken seriously and their thinking advanced. In addition to listening, the mothers offer perspective and developmental guidance. Their questions encourage their daughters to think about the moral problem from a given perspective and the daughters' responses help the mothers understand which issues they need to clarify or reconsider.

Within these dialogues, the mothers' use of storytelling includes both personal stories and what Meier (2008) refers to as "cultural stories." Cultural stories are more than a retelling of what happened but "also a means of both ascribing meaning to that experience and of deriving precepts and lesson for how to conduct one's life in the present" (p. 34). The mothers share stories about their friendships in order to provide relational guidance for their daughters. These stories, along with the example of the ongoing relationship enable their daughters to develop both an understanding of friendship as a virtue and the importance of ethical interactions within friendship. In so doing they establish moral development as a primary aspect of forming friendships. The mothers' describe using cultural stories both in their attempts to emphasize the use of voice and to prepare their daughters for encounters with racism. They do not just cast "speaking up"

as something that one would do to voice their individual opinion or gather personal power. As one mother put it, it is part of a tradition of people like Malcolm X and Gandhi who spoke up against injustice so that we can speak up when we feel the need.

They also describe using historical figures to instill racial pride, externalize the problem of racism to those who don't appreciate you and thereby insulate their daughters from the experiences of racism they anticipate they will experience. Though most of the mothers said that their daughters had not yet experienced racism, they believed that they would as they moved into more diverse settings. If, as Shelby's (2012) ethics of the oppressed suggests, race and gender oppression threatens one's moral status, then racial and gender socialization may be critical components to a framework for Black girls' moral development.

Their strategies revealed a bifurcated approach that socialized their daughters to develop moral solutions for both the marginalized world in which they live and the transformed one in which they hope for them to live. This dual intention is apparent as both the daughters and mothers struggle to identify the right thing to do when a child has been the victim of a racist act. Is the caring thing to provide help and hope that the act will change the inequities in the social milieu, or would such an act sacrifice the care of oneself?

Given its centrality in caregivers' interviews, the findings support Ward's (1991) assertion that racial socialization is a critical aspect of Black children's moral development. However, their gender socialization goals were less obvious. When I asked the mothers about exposing their daughters to people and places that would help them

meet their moral development goals, many of them referenced putting their daughters in “girls only” spaces. One of them articulated that they made this choice so that their girls could develop their leadership capacities. However, most mothers were not able to articulate a reason for this choice. When I asked them about preparing their daughters for life as a female, their responses centered on the potential for violent male/female relations. Martha’s discussion of her church’s beliefs about gender illustrates a challenge that may be present for other mothers as well. Future research would need to ask how mothers prepare their daughters for the experience of race *and* gender oppression in environments that privileges one over the other thereby committing one of the forms of oppression? In other words, as Black girls venture into the world and begin forming a sense of self, they encounter a societal contradiction that often makes at least one aspect of their identity morally tenuous.

Racial socialization and the developmental devices emerge in this study as relevant aspects of motherhood in the study of moral development. However, we need to know more. If our pursuit of further knowledge is to lead to increased understanding of normative processes, then we cannot enter into projects with the assumption of deficient parenting that has plagued much of our research on Black motherhood. The secondary role mothers played in this research project limited the degree to which I explored the normative literature on Black motherhood and used it to frame the study’s investigation. These constraints notwithstanding, the results of this study invite a number of questions related to the normative practices of Black mothers. For example, in this study the mothers tended to focus on cultural pride, preparation for bias and egalitarianism as they

prepared their children to claim their moral worth. We could ask if the use of these strategies is consistent with mothers situated in a different class category or in a more ethnically diverse community. We could also ask if mothers used the same types of strategies with boys that they used with girls and explore their motivations for any divergence.

This study focused on mothers' influences as the girls spent increased amounts of time with peers and other influential adults. Future studies could explore other developmental transitions. Do mothers continue to use narratives to influence their daughters' moral development as they enter adolescence and how do their daughters' characterize maternal influence? These sets of questions will help us explore the tension between adult constraint and parental influence. Namely, it can help us ask if and how the ongoing influence of mothers on a child's moral development contributes to and supports the development of a morally developed adult or is it always an impediment.

The result of speaking up stood out as a significant difference between the Black girls in this study and that of White girls depicted in the feminist moral development literature. The results also suggested that there was an intention amongst mothers to develop this use of voice as an adaptation to marginalization and as a means to productively deal with conflict. Future research on motherhood could explore how the intentions of mothers in other ethnic groups relate to the difference in these findings. For example, are White mothers concerned about their daughters establishing themselves as morally worthy? How do they go about preparing their daughters for such a task? Are

there differences between White immigrants – e.g., Polish – who have just entered the country and those who are citizens?

A more fine-grained understanding of the differences in Black girls' socialization regarding their use of voice may help us distinguish between assertion and aggression. In a psychoanalytic/philosophical inquiry into this distinction, Nissim-Sabat (2013) defines assertion as putting “oneself forward in joyous self-affirmation” (p. 12). This movement is made with the expectation that their thoughts, desires and emotions are received and considered by others. Assertive acts are not only the expected instances of avoiding exploitation, but also freely chosen acts of generosity and care. Given this definition, an ability to assert oneself is not simply the result of a person's internal capacity to speak up, but also an accumulation of their experience in an environment or society wherein they are unable to achieve recognition or be valued by others. Aggression becomes one consequence to this failure.

This distinction provides an alternative explanation to the reportedly higher incidences of aggression. It would suggest that there are at least two ways to reduce incidents of aggressive behavior. The first would be to ask if what adults see as Black girls' acts of aggression are actually attempts at assertion then explore why the environment fails to recognize the difference. Secondly, it would be helpful to expand the opportunity for Black girls to engage in performances of collaborative moral problem solving as they encounter dilemmas in everyday setting. This opportunity to assert themselves amongst their peers may correlate with lower incidences of aggression. In the next section I consider how the theoretical, practical and research implications discussed

in this chapter can contribute to development of *children's spaces* that facilitate a Black girl's ability to forge a fulfilling pathway through the critical developmental period of middle childhood.

From Child Serving Organizations to Children's Spaces

This study's findings add to constructivist theories of moral development by situating it in the particular circumstances of a group of Black girls in middle childhood. I have discussed how their moral reasoning both supports the presence of some universal moral codes and endorse conduct grounded in the local virtues and spiritual beliefs. I have also provided an elaboration of barriers to cooperation as Piaget conceived it. Finally I have positioned the findings in the little studied period of middle childhood. In this section, I revisit Moss and Petrie's (2010) concept of *children's spaces* in order to imagine how the results might influence a different experience for Black girls in schools and out-of-school settings.

Moss and Petrie (2010) describe children's spaces as places wherein children and adult's work together to create a cultural that welcomes deliberation, diverse forms of expressivity, an investigative stance and dialogical inquiry. Such a space is justice seeking in that children are able question the congruence of practices with an institution's stated values and speak up when they find inconsistencies. The findings from this study suggest that these Black girls would come to the development of a children's space with critical capacities. Their experience of dialogue, expectation of institutions being fair and caring, direct approach to conflict and potential aptitude for collaborative inquiry would be adaptive within such a space.

In contrast, we can recall the study I introduced in Chapter I in which Morris (2007) conducted a two-year ethnographic study of teachers' discipline practices with Black girls we find that well-meaning teachers were particularly concerned with reforming behavior that made the girls appear as if they were questioning authority, being loud, sexually precocious or otherwise unladylike. Within such an environment both the style and form of expressivity encouraged in Black communication would likely be punished. One could further assume that the idea of encouraging Black girls to engage in investigations of moral dilemmas would not be a welcomed practice in this setting wherein their silence is valued. What would be an adaptive capacity within a children's space, becomes inhibiting within the school in which Morris is embedded.

The study's findings point to another way in which schools can transform in order to become children's spaces. They could need to integrate Black community themes into moral education which would mean welcoming topics that are typically marginalized from classroom discussion. Whitney and Angie present two themes that would make for an interesting moral dilemma in a classroom setting. Angie references Black sororities when she shares that she is participating in one of their children's programs. One of the goals of this program is to seek racial uplift through promoting moral integrity. However, Whitney then introduces the concept of colorism when she references the teasing her dark-skinned father endured. One could create an age appropriate moral dilemma in which the practice of colorism is embedded in a scene of racial uplift and ask Black girls to respond to it. In so doing it would enable them to engage in moral reasoning about contradictions that are critical to their positive self-formation.

Whitney's stories about police bullying offers another discussion point not typically found in formal education settings. Her example also departs from the study's dilemma in a significant way. The study uses dilemmas that reflect moral problems that occur between and among groups of individual who know one another. Thus they can be characterized as interpersonal. However, Whitney's example reflects a problem between a marginalized community and an institutionalized oppressive force. Her association suggests that in order to address the moral concerns of Black girls, moral development programs might need to include moral problems that occur at the community level.

We don't know to what extent the findings from this investigation would contribute to the development of children's spaces that included children different from those in this study. The sample in this study was comprised of a lower middle-class/middle-class group of church-going Black girls. Most of them live in two-parent homes with parents who aspire for their daughters to attend college. These demographics place them within a particular social location and developmental niche that influences the context of their moral reasoning. The findings of this study suggest that a change in either of these may result in different forms and content of moral reasoning. For example, we can ask how a group of Black girls who experienced greater economic marginalization, affluence or who participated in more diverse social settings might approach moral reasoning. We could expand the sample to include Black *children* in order to learn more about boys' approach to moral problem solving. The large number of possible sample groups illustrates the major limitation of the study's grounded theory approach – that of generalizability. As we gather more information about particularly

situated groups of children, we can develop larger-scale designs that test the generalizability of these findings.

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF ORGANIZATIONAL COOPERATION

January 29, 2012

Erin N. Tracey
 Compliance Assistant
 Office of Research Services
 Granada Center Suite 400
 6439 N. Sheridan Rd.
 Chicago, IL 60626

Dear Ms. Tracey:

This letter is to inform you of Trinity United Church of Christ's youth group's willingness to cooperate with the research project Tonya Bibbs is conducting titled *Speaking of Right and Wrong: Black Girls and Moral Development*.

I understand the following:

Purpose of Study

The investigator is conducting research in order to better understand how Black girls use language to shape moral development. The investigator intends on using this research to further the study Black girls normative development.

Recruitment

The researcher will be asking members of the youth group to participate as well as their primary female mother

Data Collection

The girls will be asked to participate in 4 activities:

- Participate in an individual moral dilemma interview in the setting of the mother's choosing
- Participate in a paired moral dilemma interview (2 girls) in the setting of the mother's choosing

The adults will be asked to participate in 1 activity:

- Participate in a group moral dilemma interview wherein they are asked what they would want their daughter to do and why.

Confidentiality

Proper names of participants, organizational affiliation, towns of residence and any other identifying information will be given pseudonyms in the transcripts. The transcripts will be generated by the researcher and stored in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office during the study and for seven years subsequent to the completion of the study.

The review of data will be limited to the primary investigator, and the dissertation committee. The audio tape used for this study will be stored in a locked cabinet for the duration of the study and destroyed subsequent to the generation of transcripts.

Risks/Benefits

The risk to participants is minimum. There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. There are no direct benefits to participants in this study. However, the data generated will enhance our understanding of Black girls' development

My signature below indicates that I understand the conditions of the research Tonya Bibbs is conducting on *Speaking of Right and Wrong: Black Girls and Moral Development* and expresses our church's willingness to partner with Ms. Bibbs as she recruits mothers and daughters for Trinity United Church of Christ's youth group.

Camille Tunstall

APPENDIX B
EMAIL OF INVITATION TO MOTHERS

Dear Mother or Guardian:

I am writing to you to introduce you to one of our “Youth Group” volunteers and invite mothers and their daughters to participate in a study she is conducting for her doctoral dissertation.

Tonya Bibbs is a licensed clinical social worker working toward a doctorate degree in Child Development at Loyola University/Erikson Institute. The focus of her doctoral work is on how Black girls between the ages of 8-11 develop a sense of right and wrong and how they incorporate their mother’s language into this development. In order to pursue this question she is inviting mothers and daughters to participate in her study. Your daughter’s participation in the study would involve participating in two interviews where she will respond to short stories that involve moral problems. As a mother she will also ask you to participate in one interview. While she will be conducting the study over a period of 4 months, yours and your daughter’s participation would take a total of 4 hours. The findings of the study would benefit our understanding of how Black girls develop. This understanding is important because there is very little knowledge in the child development literature about Black girls’ normal development and how they make decisions when faced with a problem of right and wrong.

Tonya has been volunteering with the “Youth Group” for 9 months and understands the goals and objectives of our community. She participated in Trinity’s youth volunteer training and has interacted with the girls during regular meetings.

Tonya will be giving participants \$60 in gift cards (20 dollars at three points in the study) to express her appreciation for your participation.

Tonya would like to follow up this e-mail with a phone call to parents that are interested in learning more about this research opportunity. Please click return on your e-mail browser and respond to the statements below.

Yes, I would be interested in receiving a follow up phone call. Tonya may contact me at the following number . The best time to reach me is .

No, I would not be interested in receiving a follow up phone call.

There is no penalty to you or your daughter for declining a follow up phone call.

Best,
“Youth Group Leader”

APPENDIX C
PARTICIPANT SCREENING

Recruiting Script

My name is Tonya Bibbs and I am a volunteer with Trinity's youth group. I am conducting a study, which explores how Black girls develop an understanding of right and wrong. This area of study is known as moral development. I am conducting this study as part of my requirements for a doctoral dissertation. I am recruiting both Black girls between the ages of 8-11 along with their mothers. I will be asking girls to participate in one (1) individual interview, (1) group interview. I will be asking mothers to participate in one interview.

Participant Screening

I am conducting a study, which explores how Black girls develop an understanding of right and wrong. For this study I will need 20 participants. A participant must be a black girl between the ages of 8-11.

Do you have any questions you want to ask me about this study? [PAUSE FOR MOTHER'S RESPONSE. ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS.]

I am looking for Black girls between the ages of 8-11. Is your daughter between the ages of 8-11? If "no", "thank you for your time and willingness to answer these questions. Because I am recruiting girls between a certain age range, your daughter will not be able to participate in this study". If yes, "what is your daughter's date of birth? _____". Continue.

Children often think of themselves in many ways. They may think of themselves as a religious person, a girl, an American or as a member of an ethnic or racial group. I am interested in the last issue – ethnicity and race. Among the many things with which your daughter may identify, does your daughter identify as either Black or African-American? Because I am recruiting girls who identify as Black or African American, your daughter will not be able to participate in this study". If "no", "thank you for your time and willingness to answer these questions. If yes, continue.

Parts of this study requires girls to respond to questions or short stories. In order to participate a girl needs to be able to read at a fourth grade level. Does your daughter read at 'at least' a fourth grade level? If "no", "thank you for your time and willingness to answer these questions. Because I am recruiting girls who read at a fourth grade level, your daughter will not be able to participate in this study". If yes, then continue.

"You and your daughter are candidates for this study. If you are still interested, I would like to tell you more about the study and schedule some times for us to meet"

APPENDIX D
CONSENT FORM

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Speaking of Right and Wrong: Black Girls and Moral Development

Researcher(s): *Tonya D. Bibbs*

Faculty Sponsor: Aisha Ray, Ph.D.

Introduction:

The investigator is conducting research in order to better understand how Black girls use language to construct moral development. You and your child are being asked to take part in a research study being conducted by Tonya Bibbs for a *dissertation project* under the supervision of *Dr. Aisha Ray* at Loyola University of Chicago. You and your child are being invited to voluntarily participate because she is a Black girl between the ages of 8-11 years old. In order to participate both you and your child must consent/assent.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to give consent for you and your child's participation in the study. You have three options:

1. Accept and participate in the study: If you feel you understand the project and want you and your daughter to participate in the study inform the researcher.
2. Reject and do not participate in the study: If neither you nor your child consent/assent to participate, inform the researcher. There is no penalty to you or your daughter for declining to participate.
3. Maybe, questions remain about the study: If you are not sure whether you want to accept or reject this offer or if you have any questions about the project that need to be answered before you decide inform the researcher. The researcher will respond to your questions until you feel that you are able to make an informed decision regarding participation.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how Black girls use language to construct their moral development.

Procedures:

If you agree to allow your child to be in the study, she will be asked to:

- At the beginning of the study I will ask your daughter to participate in a moral dilemma interview at a place of your choosing. The total time of this activity will be sixty (60) minutes. It may take two (2) meetings to complete. It will occur at a location of your choosing.

- One month after the individual interview I will ask your daughter to participate in a group moral dilemma interview (2 girls) at a location of your choosing. The group interview will last sixty (60) minutes. The researcher and the two girls will be present during this interview.

If you agree to participate in the study you will be asked to:

- Participate in a group interview with other mothers wherein you are asked how you would expect your daughter to respond to moral dilemmas and why. You will be with 9 other female mothers from the youth group and the interview will take 90 minutes.

Risks/Benefits:

The level of risk to participants of this study is minimum. There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. I will be asking you and your child questions that may arise in her everyday experience. None of these questions are meant to evoke traumatic experience. However, should I as a licensed clinical social worker see you or your child display any signs of distress, I will stop the interview and remind you or her of your right to withdraw consent/assent.

There are no direct benefits to participants in this study however the data generated will enhance our understanding of Black girls' development.

Confidentiality:

Proper names of participants, organizational affiliation, towns of residence and any other identifying information will be given pseudonyms in the transcripts. The transcripts will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office during the study and subsequent to the completion of the study. The review of data will be limited to the primary investigator, and the dissertation committee. While the investigator will maintain complete confidentiality with regards to the contents of the group interview, given the nature of the group setting the investigator can not guarantee that participants maintain the confidentiality of the group. The investigator will, though, stress the importance of participants maintaining confidentiality when orienting participants to the group interview. While this study does not anticipate exploring issues of abuse; as a parent you should know that the researcher is mandated to report any suspected cases of current child abuse to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

The audio tape used for this study will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office for the duration of the study and destroyed subsequent to the generation of transcripts. Transcripts of the study will be kept in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want you and your child to be in this study, they do not have to participate. Even if you decide, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

Cost to You:

There is no cost associated with your participation in this study. Your family will receive \$60 (sixty dollar) in gift cards (\$20.00 given at three different times) to acknowledge your sacrifice of time.

Contacts and Questions:

If you wish to contact the primary investigator you may call Tonya Bibbs at (312) 420-8837 or her professor/faculty sponsor Dr. Aisha Ray at (312) 755-2250.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Statement of Consent:

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to **your child's** participation in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Participant's Signature
Date

Researcher's Signature
Date

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to **YOUR** participation in this research study.

Participant's Signature
Date

Researcher's Signature
Date

APPENDIX E
ASSENT FORM

CHILD ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Speaking of Right and Wrong: Black Girls and Moral Development

Researcher(s): *Tonya D. Bibbs*

Faculty Sponsor: Aisha Ray, Ph.D.

Introduction:

My name is Tonya Bibbs and I am doing a study on how Black girls talk about right and wrong. For example, I am interested in knowing what Black girls think about cheating on a test. I am inviting you to be in his study because you are a Black girl between the ages of 8-11 years old. I am also inviting your mother to participate. In order for you to participate your mom must participate too.

I am going to read this form carefully and want you to ask me any questions you might have before you decide if you want to be in the study. You will have three choices:

1. Accept and participate in the study: If you feel you understand the project and want to participate in the study then you can say yes.

2. Reject and do not participate in the study: If you do not wish to participate you can say no. Your mom can say no too. It is ok for you and your mother to say no and neither of you will get a consequence if you decide you don't want to be in the study.

3. Maybe, questions remain about the study: If you are not sure if you want to say yes or no, then you can ask me more questions. I will respond to your questions until you feel you can make a choice. You can also ask your parents questions.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how Black girls talk about right and wrong.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to:

- First I will ask you to participate in a conversation with me and answer some questions. The total time of this activity will be sixty (60) minutes. It may take two (2) meetings to complete.
- One month after this conversation I will ask you participate in a group talk at a youth group meeting. I will read you stories and ask you to respond to some questions. The group talk will last sixty (60) minutes. Me and one other girl will be present during this interview.

If your mother agrees to participate I will be asking her to:

- Participate in a group conversation with me. I will ask her to tell me how she would expect you to respond to the stories I told you. Remember, I will not be sharing your responses with her. I will also not be sharing her responses with you.

Risks/Benefits:

I don't believe that this study will cause any harm to the girls that decide to participate. The potential for harm is minimum or very low. I am what is called a *licensed clinical social worker*. I am, therefore trained to notice when someone is having a hard time. If I see that happening, I will stop the interview and remind you that you can stop any time you want.

There are no direct benefits to the girls in this study however the information I gather will help us understand Black girls better. I believe that this increase in knowledge will help people like teachers, after school programs and other youth groups.

Confidentiality:

I will never share the real names of the girls who participate in this study. No one besides me will know what you have said during your interviews. The only times I would tell someone what you have said, is if you tell me that someone is abusing you or you tell me about something you are doing that is illegal – like shoplifting. I will make recordings of our conversations. I will keep the audio-tape used for this study in a stored in a locked cabinet while I am using them. I will listen to the tapes and write down what people are saying. The paper I write is called a transcript. The transcripts of the study will be kept in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office. The reading of the transcript will be limited to me, and my teachers. During the group interview other girl will hear what you say. I will, make sure that the other girl in the group understands that she should not share the group conversation with others.

Voluntary Participation:

If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time. There is no consequence for stopping. Simply tell me that you want to stop.

Your parent has given consent for you to participate

Contacts and Questions:

If you wish to contact me you may call Tonya Bibbs at 312.420.8837 or my teacher Dr. Aisha Ray at 312.755.2250. You may also want to talk to your mother.

If you have questions about your rights as someone in this study, you may contact my school (Loyola University) at 773.508.2689. This is the office of Research Services. Ask for the compliance manager.

Statement of Assent:

If you sign below, then you are saying that (initial each)

____ you understand what I have read to you

____ you asked all of the questions you wanted to ask

____ you agree to participate in the study

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX F
MORAL DILEMMA INTERVIEW

Pre-interview Questions

1. Who are your best friends? How do you know them?
2. What are the names of your family members?
3. Can you tell the names of the places where you spend time?
4. What are the places you like the most? What do you like about them?
5. Where do you fit in the most?
6. Can you tell me a story about a time when it was hard to fit in?
7. You mentioned that you spend time at _____. (reference a place from question #3) Can you tell me a story about a time when you were at _____ and you weren't sure what the right thing to do was? (They only need to tell one story. Ask this question for each place they mention until they can generate a story.)
8. You mentioned that you spend time with _____. (reference a social group from questions 1-4) Can you tell me a story about a time when you were with them and you thought something was unfair to you? (They only need to tell one story. Ask this question for each group they mention until they can generate a story.)

Dilemmas

Category One – Sense of Belonging and Moral Acts

1. Karen, Lakeisha and Darlene are best friends. They are Black girls who all live on the same block and are in the same 5th grade class. One day they are walking home from school and they find a purse with some money in it. They have to decide what to do with it. Lakeisha reminds the girls that they had just learned at church about the importance of not stealing. The girls want to do the right thing but aren't sure if keeping the money would be stealing.
 1. What should they do?
 2. Lakeisha and Karen decide to turn in the purse. Darlene says that she is going to keep the money so that they can't. They say they will no longer be her friends if she keeps the money. What should Darlene do? Alienation
 3. Let's say that Darlene convinces the girls that it is not stealing because they found the purse. Is it now okay for them to keep the money? Why or why not?
Communitarian

4. It turns out that Karen really didn't think that it was okay to keep the money, but she didn't want to go against her friends. What should she do? Liberal
2. Kim, Paula and Dionne are best friends. They have spent the whole summer together playing at the park and having sleepovers at each others' houses. One day they are outside jumping double-dutch. Dionne turns to the other girls and says that there is a new girl on the block named Shirelle. In the fall, she is going to be in their classroom. Dionne says that they should invite her to play with them. If they didn't, they wouldn't be 'good neighbors', which is something they learned about at school. Kim and Paula aren't sure about inviting Shirelle to play with them, because they are having a lot of fun with just the three of them.
 1. What should they do?
 2. What is more important – Helping the new girl fit in, or continuing to enjoy their time together? Why? Communitarian
 3. Paula tells the girls that they only have to invite Shirelle once she is a member of their classroom. Until then they can play without her? Is she right? Why or why not? Alienation
 4. Kim says that it is not fair for them to have to interrupt their fun just to include her. It is summer, they should be able to play. Is she right? Why or why not? Liberal
 3. Miss Taylor runs a girls group after school. The group is for Black girls who want to do volunteer work in the community. They have been in this group together for almost a year and have become best friends. One day they are doing a volunteer job for Miss Brown – a woman who lives near the school. Six of the girls – the younger ones – are in the basement working and the other six – the older one – are upstairs. Miss Taylor goes to the girls upstairs and says "I baked some cookies for the church bake sale and have 12 left, would you girls like to have them"? The girls know that they should share with the girls downstairs, but would really like to keep all of the cookies so that they could each have two.
 1. What should they do?
 2. What if Miss Taylor tells them that it is okay for them to eat all of the cookies themselves because they are older, then is it okay for them not share? Communitarian
 3. Let's say that they decide not to share. How do you think that it would affect the younger girls? Alienation
 4. Are there times when it is okay for things not be divided equally? If no, why not? If yes, can you give me an example? Liberal
 4. Chiarra, Tenisha and Leslie are three Black girls and are best friends. They are in fifth grade and even though they are in different classes they always eat lunch together. Whomever gets to the lunch table first saves a seat for the other two. They have been doing this for the entire school year. One day Chiarra is the first one to get to the table. She is about to save the two seats as she always does, but then she sees Kenny. He is a

boy that she likes. She would like to invite Kenny to sit at the table, but there are only two seats left. If he sits down then either Tenisha or Leslie won't have a seat.

1. What should she do?
2. Even though Chiarra thought it would have been okay to let Kenny sit down just once she decided not to because she knew Tenisha and Leslie would be mad at her. Is this a good way for Chiarra to make decisions? Why or why not?
Alienation
3. If Tenisha had been mean to Chiarra earlier in the day would it be okay to give her seat away? Why or why not? Communitarian vs. Liberal

Category Two – Sense of Belonging and Immoral Acts

5. Tasia, Samara and Angie are best friends and hang out together at school. They are Black and in fourth grade. They enjoy each others company a lot but tend to get in trouble when they are hanging out. One day they had to take a test in math class. Tasia and Angie knew that Samara didn't study because she had to watch her baby sister the night before. Tasia and Angie tell Samara that they will write with big letters so that they can help her.

1. What should Samara do?
2. Is it fair that Samara has to take the test when she had to babysit the night before?
Liberal
3. Tasia is confused. She thinks that it is wrong to cheat but also thinks that it is wrong to abandon her friend Samara. What should she do? Alienation
4. Angie says that it doesn't matter what the school says. They have their own rules as friends and those are more important. Is she right? Why or why not?
Communitarian

6. Jordan, Dawn and Shamla are three Black girls and best friends. They are sick and tired of their gym teacher Miss Jenkins. She says mean things to the students. One day Miss Jenkins told the class that they need to run 10 laps around the gym before they could have free time. Jordan had some difficulty completing the 10 laps because she wasn't very athletic. Miss. Jenkins sees Jordan running slowly and says "Jordan, I'm tired of seeing you crawl around my gym". Shamla wants to defend her friend and says to Miss Jenkins "I'm tired of seeing your weave". Dawn also wants to defend her friend but knows that talking back to Miss Jenkins is wrong.

1. What should Dawn do?
2. Is it fair that girls who are not athletic have to run laps? Why or why not?
Liberal
3. Is it more important that Jordan doesn't feel abandoned by her group or that the girls respect their teacher? Alienation and Communitarian

7. Dee Dee, Latrice and Donna are walking home from school. They walk home from school together everyday and take the same route. There is a group of popular girls who hang out on one of the corners. They think they are better than Dee Dee, Latrice and

Donna and always talk about them when they walk by. One day they walk past the group of girls and they say “hey Latrice, you and your girls look like you have on homemade clothes”. The girls keep walking then Dee Dee says, “we should go back there and tell them about themselves”. Latrice and Donna aren’t sure if they should go back.

1. What should they do?
 2. Latrice and Donna decide not to go back. Dee Dee says that she thinks that is important to take a stand is going to go back on her own. Is she right to go by herself? Why or why not? Liberal
 3. Latrice and Donna tell Dee Dee that it is more important to stay with their group’s belief that you support all members of a community. Are they right? Why or why not? Communitarian
 4. Dee Dee and Latrice decide to go back. Donna goes too even though she thinks its wrong. Did Donna do the right thing? Why or why not? Alienation
8. Felicia, Renee and Sarah have been in a dance group together at church for four years. The dance group is for Black girls who want to learn praise dancing. They have practices every Saturday and perform in church on Sundays. One day Renee comes to them and says that they should tell their parents that they are going to practice but go to the mall instead so that they can see Rihanna and Justin Bieber. They are only going to be there one day and they won’t have another opportunity. Felicia is willing to skip practice, but Sarah is not sure.
1. What should she do?
 2. Felicia understands that it is wrong to skip practice and she also knows that Rihanna is her inspiration and reason for being a performer. Which is more important attending practice or seeing her idol? Why? Liberal and Alienation
 3. Sarah says that she wants to go to see Rihanna and wouldn’t mind skipping but knows that her pastor does not agree with them listening to non-church music. What should she do? Communitarian

Category Three – Alienation and Moral Acts

9. April, Anita and Tammy are three 10 year-old Black girls. They are competing on the tv show “So You Think You Can Dance”. April and Anita are friends and have an act together and Tammy has an act by herself. April and Anita don’t like Tammy – even though she is a nice person who has done nothing to them – and so don’t include her in activities. In fact, they rarely talk to her. One day Tammy is backstage and sees April and Anita’s costumes hanging in a closet. She knows that if she spills something on the dresses they won’t be able to compete and she will win.

1. What should she do?
2. Do you think Tammy would behave this way toward her competition if they had been nicer to her and made her feel like part of the group? Why or why not? Belonging
3. Is it more important that Tammy get revenge for their mean behavior or that everyone has a fair chance of winning? Why? Liberal

4. Tammy knows that during dance competitions people do whatever they have to in order to win. Therefore, she tells herself that it is okay to spill on the dress. Is she right? Communitarian
10. Lisa is a nine year-old Black girl. She gets good grades and stays out of trouble at school. At recess she doesn't have anyone to play with. She usually sits on the steps and talks to the playground monitor. One day she is sitting outside the lunchroom and she hears some of the other girls talking. They say that they don't like to play with her because she is a teacher's pet. Lisa has a popular new video game to play with at recess. After hearing her classmates talk about her, she is not sure if she should share it with them.
1. What should she do?
 2. Can Lisa be the teacher's pet and one of the gang with the other girls? Why or why not? Belonging
 3. Lisa knows that her school talks about the importance of sharing and at the same time she thinks that her classmates should respect her as an individual. Which is more important in this case? Liberal vs. Communitarian
11. Yvonne is an eight year-old Black girl. She participates in an after school group where they do activities. There are a group of girls in the program who tease Yvonne about her weight and it hurts her feelings. Sometime the director of the after school program – Miss Jackson – teases Yvonne. One day Miss Jackson called her a pig. Next week is Miss Jackson's birthday. The kids in the program are all making cards for her. Yvonne has been hurt by the other kids and by Miss Jackson and is not sure if she should make a card.
1. What should she do?
 2. One of the ideas in the after-school program is "all for one and one for all". One of the girls (Lisa) tells Yvonne that this slogan means she should put the group ahead of her feelings. Is Lisa correct? Why or why not? Communitarian vs. Liberal
 3. The girls tell Yvonne that they are sorry and they really mean it. She finally feels like one of the group (even though she is still hurt by Miss Jackson). Should she now make the card? Why or why not? Belonging
12. Jodi is a 10 year-old Black girl in a swim program at the YMCA. She is the only Black girl in the program – all of the other children are White. She sometimes feels like the other girls don't want to swim with her even though she is one of the best swimmers in the program. In fact, when they were forming teams one of the girls – Susie – said to Jodi "no brown girls on our team" and laughed. One day she is in the pool and sees Susie trying to learn a new swim stroke. Jodi knows that she can help her improve her swimming, but remembers the comment Susie made.
1. What should she do?

2. The swim coach also knows that Jodi can help Susie. She is not sure, though, if she should make Jodi help her or let Jodi make the decision herself? What should the coach do? Liberal
3. Jodi knows that if she helps Susie then that would improve the team's chances of winning the city of Chicago swim championship. Should she help her now? Communitarian
4. Jodi has been very hurt by these girls. However, she believes that if she helps Susie they might accept her. Is it more important to be accepted or recognize her hurt feelings? Belonging/Alienation

APPENDIX G
MOTHER INTERVIEW

I will ask mothers the following questions for two of the dilemmas in Appendix G. I will choose the dilemmas that elicited the most talk from the girls.

1. How would you expect your daughter to respond to this dilemma?
2. Are there any specific “lessons” you have taught your daughter that correspond to your expected response?
3. What types of places and people do you expose your daughter to in order to develop your expected response?

APPENDIX H
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Researcher: As I mentioned before the purpose of this study is to learn about how Black girls think about right and wrong. Today we will have an individual interview so that I can learn a bit about you and what you think about these stories. An interview is a type of conversation. Remember that only we know what we talk about here. You may choose to stop the interview now or at any time in our conversation. I am giving each participant a gift card to thank you for your time [give participant a \$20 gift card]. Before we talk about the stories, I'd like to know a little about the important people and places in your life. Are you ready to start ? [wait for the participant to say yes]

[Ask the following questions]

1. Who are your best friends? How do you know them?
2. What are the names of your family members?
3. Where do you usually spend your days and evenings during the school week? Where do you spend time on the weekends.
4. Where do you like to spend time the most? Why?

Researcher: Now I'd like to hear a few stories about what happens in these places.

5. Where do you fit in the most? By fit in I mean a place where you feel like you belong.
6. Can you tell me a story about a time when it was hard to fit in?
7. You mentioned that you spend time at _____. [reference a place from question #3] Can you tell me a story about a time when you were at _____ and you weren't sure what the right thing to do was?
8. You mentioned that you spend time with _____. [reference a social group from questions 1-4] Can you tell me a story about a time when you were with them and you thought something was unfair to you?

Researcher: Now let's talk about the stories of some other girls.

[Present dilemmas 1, 5 and 9]

I don't have any additional questions. We are done with the individual interview. In the next interview you will talk about more stories with one of your peers. Do you have any questions or concerns that you want to share with me [wait for an answer. If yes, address concerns, if no then say the following] If you have questions or concerns later you can tell your parent and they can contact me.

APPENDIX I
PAIRS INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Researcher: The last time we met we did an individual interview. Today we are going to talk about different stories and instead of just talking to me you will talk with one of your peers. Remember that only we will know what we talk about here. So, it is important that you not tell what your peer has said. You may also choose to stop the interview now or at any point in our conversation. I am giving each participant a gift card to thank you for your time [give each participant a \$20 gift card]. Are you ready to start? [wait for the participant to say yes]

[Present dilemmas 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 and 12]

Researcher: I don't have any additional questions. We are done with this interview. We will not be meeting again for this study. If, later on you have any questions or concerns you should tell your parent. Once I have finished my study I will be inviting you and your parents to come to a lunch and hear what I have learned.

APPENDIX J
MOTHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interviewer: The purpose of this study is to learn about how Black girls think about right/wrong. So far I have conducted individual and paired interviews with your daughters. Today I would like to talk to you. As the primary female in the girls' lives you have a great deal influence on how the girls think about right/wrong. As I would like to explore similarities/differences in your themes and theirs.

I am going to read the stories to you just as I did with the girls and ask you to tell me how you expect your daughter to respond. You are free to stop participating now or at any point in our conversation. I am giving you a gift card to thank you for your time [give participant a \$20 gift card]. Do you have any questions? [Wait for a response]. If yes, answer questions. If no, say the following.] Okay let's start with the first dilemma.

[Administer the appropriate two dilemmas. Follow each dilemma with the questions below.]

1. How would you expect your daughter to respond to this dilemma?
2. Are there any specific "lessons" you have taught your daughter that correspond to your expected response?
3. What types of places and people do you expose your daughter to in order to develop your expected response?

I don't have any additional questions. We have completed this interview and this is the last activity of my study's data collection. Once I have completed the analysis of the data I will invite you and the girls to a lunch so that I can share what I have learned. This lunch is not a part of the study but is my way of expressing my appreciation and giving you feedback.

APPENDIX K
CODEBOOK

I. A Priori Codes (Codes derived from literature and research questions)

I.i Sense of Belonging (S.O.B.)

Definition: This code refers to affiliation or membership to a group, organization or institution. At the phenomenological level it refers to the experience of fitting in or feeling valued.

When to Use: Use this code anytime a participant refers to fitting in or feeling/being valued by a group, making a decision that facilitates fitting in or reasoning that is based on someone fitting in or feeling/being valued.

Example: “maybe if she is really nice to the girls they will accept her into the group”

I.ii Alienation

Definition: This code refers to being outside of a group, organization or institution. It also refers to being/feeling estranged from one’s self or social norms. At the phenomenological level it refers to the experience of someone being/feeling estranged from a group, themselves or social norms.

When to Use: Use this code anytime a participant refers to feeling alienated or refers to the alienating actions of others.

Example: “If you’re not mean to me anymore and not judge me by my color then maybe I can help you and you might be as good as a swimmer as me.”

I.iii Liberal Orientation

Definition: Reasoning that is based on individual rights, a notion of fairness that is based upon equal distribution/access autonomous rational thinking or the individual being in conflict with a governing structure such as a school or parents.

When to Use: Use this code anytime a participant uses this orientation to explain their practices or those of another actor.

Example: “There are 12 kids in a class and she has only like 12 bubble gums. It’s not like she doesn’t give someone 2 pieces of gum and then the other person won’t get any.”

I.iv Communitarian Orientation

Definition: Reasoning that is based on notions of care of the other, community endorsed virtues or contextualized justifications for behavior.

When to Use: Use this code anytime a participant uses this orientation to explain their practices or those of another actor.

Example: “I don’t know how to explain it but it, like it would be like a nice thing to do...so that’s what I think about fair.”

I.v. Black Communication

Definition: Language that reflects an aspect of the girls’ individual or shared Black cultural experience.

When to Use: Use this code when a participant uses language that references an aspect of Black culture or that uses colloquialisms.

Example: “If you don’t finish school you’ll be like one of those guys at the train stop that say “loose squares, loose squares””.

II. Grounded Codes (Codes arising from the data)

ii. Adult Authority

Definition: An adult who has a formal or informal role in a girls’ life and who exercises authority over the girls’ action.

When to Use: When a girl directly references an authority figure.

Example: “The playground attendant told us that we had to share the ball with the boys.”

iii. School discipline programs

Definition: A formal or informal system used to structure and guide the behavior of girls within a classroom or within the whole school.

When to Use: When a girl references the program directly by naming it, or when she refers to the affect of this program on her behavior.

Example: “At the beginning of the school year I was on level yellow and at the end of the school year I was on level green”.

iii. Ideas about friendship

Definition: The values and beliefs a girl has about friendship.

When to Use: When a girl refers to either her or someone else’s beliefs and values about friendship.

Example: “If they are friends they should save the seat for each other and not the boy.”

iv. Non-linguistic ways of communicating

Definition: Ways of communicating or dimensions of language that are outside of spoken word or written text.

When to Use: When a girl uses or refers to affect, uses of the body or another non-linguistic mode of communicating.

Example: “I think they should put their fingers in their face and tell them about themselves.”

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VITA

Tonya Bibbs was raised in Milan, Illinois. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she worked for 10 years as a clinical social worker throughout Chicago. She earned her Master of Social Work degree in 1997 from the Jane Addams School of Social Work at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Her Bachelor of Arts in Literature, Science and the Arts is from the University of Iowa.

While at Loyola, Bibbs served on the social justice committee, taught courses in applied child development and worked on several research projects. She served as a director on a statewide mental health consultation project, consulted with the City Colleges of Chicago in their early childhood department and coordinated the research for an early education and care systems building project in one of Chicago's neighborhoods.

Currently, Bibbs continues to teach courses in applied child development and develop research projects that explore minority children's normative development and issues related to the achievement gap. She lives in Chicago, Illinois.

