Jamaican Males' Readings of Masculinities and the Relationship to Violence

Carl E. James

Professor, Faculty of Education, Graduate Programmes in Sociology and Social Work
York University, Toronto, Canada

Andrea Davis

Associate Professor, Department of Humanities
York University, Toronto, Canada

Abstract

Within a context in which violence seems to be one of the consequences of the violation of heterosexual masculine norms, this paper explores how young Black men between the ages of 18 and 24 residing in urban (Kingston) and rural (St. Mary) Jamaica come to experience, understand, and perform masculinity. Drawing on focus group interviews conducted in Jamaica in the summer of 2013, the study unearths the complexities involved in negotiating masculinities within a Jamaican context across differences of class, education and geographic locations. In relating their experiences, urban and rural youth participants agreed on the critical role of fathers as role models and breadwinners. They were also united in their critique of homosexuality and its transgression of "appropriate" gender behaviour. Perhaps most revealing of the study's findings, however, was the degree of fear of violence that rural youth experienced, contesting the commonly held belief that violence is less endemic in rural communities. This fear was reflected in rural youth's greater ambivalence

about, and unwillingness to, engage the image of the "bad man," as well as a greater sense of pessimism about their life chances. Urban youth were more likely to see themselves as role models, mentors and change agents and believed that a greater investment in education was critical to their success.

Key words: Masculinity, violence, Jamaica, youth, manhood, homophobia

Using data collected in the summer of 2013, this article seeks to understand Jamaican youth's perceptions, understandings and performances of masculinity and their relationship to violence. The young men who participated in the study were between the ages of 18 and 24 and resided in urban (Kingston) and rural (St. Mary) Jamaica. The focus groups on which the article draws were part of a larger cross-national study—"Youth and Community Development in Canada and Jamaica: A Transnational Approach to Youth Violence"[1]—that sought to compare Black Canadian and Jamaican youth's experiences with violence in their respective nations and communities.[2] This article uses the data gathered in 2013 to explore the specific experiences of Black male youth within their Jamaican communities and explores the following questions: How do young Black men in Jamaica think about what it means to be a man in the context of persistent and escalating violence in the country? What are the differences and similarities in perceptions and experiences between urban and rural Jamaican males? What do they see as the roots of violence in Jamaica and how is that related to maleness? And what do the youth think needs to be done to address the issues and circumstances that lead to violence?

The interviews for this paper were conducted at a time when news about the murder of a sixteen-year-old transgender youth in Montego Bay, Jamaica, was capturing headlines in the island nation and around the world. In Canada, on August 11, 2013, both the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail* published articles about the murder, with the headline of the former claiming, "Homophobia a way of life in Jamaica." Similarly in the United States, *The New York Post* referred to the incident as evidence of the "nation's 'rabid homophobia'" (Quinn 2013). These international news reports and *Time* magazine's earlier branding (Padgett 2006) of Jamaica as "the most homophobic place on earth" appear to be premised on a viewpoint that the violence in Jamaica related to homophobia is really a reflection of a "normative" masculinity that is framed by assumptions of hyper-aggression and hyper-sexuality (Davis 2006).

Generally speaking, violence in post-independence Jamaica has been a major concern for many decades and has in some respects continued to escalate since 2000. The homicide rates, for example, increased from 33/100,000 in 2000 to a high of 64/100,000 in 2005; the rate was 45/100,000 in 2013, with most of the victims being males between the ages of 15 and 29 (Gayle 2014). According to Gayle, whereas in most societies a high level of violence tends to be a temporary phenomenon, in Jamaica it has been prolonged and has become part of the fabric of   society so that Jamaicans have, in fact, adjusted "to living with [it]."[3] In addition, Gayle (see, also, Levy 2012) notes that violence is so prevalent in some communities that youth are forced to associate with gangs for protection, inspiration and resources (that is, to provide funds for their hungry families). Furthermore, because of governments' reactive approach to addressing or reducing violence in Jamaican communities, there are no long-term strategies. This is not to say that community violence goes unaddressed. The Peace Management Initiative and other organizations have been working to, as Levy (2012) explains, "head off and reduce community violence."

It is within this context of a collective and national awareness of and concern about the effects of violence that this paper explores young men's concept of their circumstances — social, familial, emotional and economic — in relation to violence, as well as the insights they offer for addressing their specific situations. In relating their experiences, Black Jamaican youth identified several critical factors — absent fathers, a lack of role models, hopelessness and fear — as playing a role in their construction of masculinity/ies and their engagement in or response to violence. In identifying solutions, the youth offered themselves as role models, mentors and change agents, with most of them believing that a greater investment in education was critical to their future success.

Theoretical Considerations

How men and boys live their lives and understand their gendered roles depends on the messages communicated to them about their positions in their local communities, as well as in their societies and the world. In other words, what they learn about masculinity — that is, the "appropriate" or "acceptable" ways of being a man — is embedded in the historical, political and social circumstances in which they grow up and live. Critical Masculinity Studies, which evolved from feminist theory in the 1980s, proffer that masculinities are social constructs that are framed, produced, reproduced and maintained by social, cultural, religious, educational, economic, and political (or governmental) institutions (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009). According to this theory, the performance of masculinities (individuals can, and often do, display different or multiple masculinities) comes from what one learns, or the roles into which one is socialized through these institutions, with the family having a primary *starting* role. As such, masculinities are diverse, complex and related to the social and cultural contexts through which males traverse and negotiate their sense of identities, self-worth, belonging and possibilities. Essentially, masculinities are dynamic processes that are mediated through social relations (Totten 2003). As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005, 836) contend, "Masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting."

In his work on masculinity, Connell (2005) also differentiates between hegemonic and subordinate masculinities. Hegemonic masculinities refer to the dominant social position of men over women and other men who occupy subordinate positions in the gendered and classed hierarchy of the patriarchal system in which a particular cultural definition of manhood is being produced, maintained and practiced throughout the life cycle. "Men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable," write Connell and Messerschmidt

(2005, 841), "but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. Consequently, 'masculinity' represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices." Subordinated masculinities exist in relation to the specific location of the group (that is, working-class men, rural men, Black and dark-skinned men, effeminate men, non-gender conforming men, gays, etc.) and in relation to the model of hegemonic masculinity—an ideal or "cultural prototype" to which many males aspire but only few manage to embody (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Groes-Green 2009). Notwithstanding the expectations, regulations and limitations placed on males, the gendered hierarchy of their patriarchal societies affords them power and privilege. Within a Jamaican context, this power might be further negotiated in relation to class, race, skin color and area of residence (rural or urban).

To the extent that "manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval," (Kimmel 1994, 128) males' performances of their masculine gender roles also tend to be heightened when they are in the company of their male peers. In these instances, males reject performances that might make them appear feminine, weak or unmanly. And since patriarchy, sexism and homophobia operate in tandem to frame males' performances of their heterosexual hegemonic masculinities, they will make every attempt to avoid labels such as "fag" or "sissy," since these perceived socially derogatory terms mark them as "failed males" (Thorne 1993, 115)[4]. So while children and youth, especially those in subordinated positions (in relation to class and/or sexuality), might contest the values, norms and practices of hegemonic masculinity as they mature, they are also pressured — indeed policed — to ultimately adhere and conform to what they have inherited as "legitimate" or honored ways of being "real" men. According to Gerke (2014, 23), "For boys, this means learning to develop what might be called a male habitus and to—quite literally—embody certain features of hegemonic masculinity," knowing that bodily features such as height, physical strength, hairstyle, clothes and even the way one moves influence the gendered lens of the binary social system though which one is

evaluated or judged. Since masculinity is, therefore, a "process of endless becoming" (Gerke 2014), it is something to be worked at and proved throughout one's lifetime.

Applying Connell's theorization to the construction and performance of masculinity within the specific context of Caribbean "macho" culture, Crichlow (2014, 31) further explains:

> For most young men in the Caribbean, the success and strength of their manhood to a large degree depends on how well they can perform "normative, straightjacket or dominant masculinity" to obfuscate any form of tenderness or effeminacy. Their hypermasculinity is an apparatus or sum total of collective surveillance and regulation of what is supposed to be male . . . To that end, most men police and deny expressions of tenderness in order to perform, instead, a certain cheerful obsequiousness, hypermasculinity and, by extension, heterosexualization.

This concept of an imposed, restrictive and scrutinized masculinity highlights the contradictory positions of social compliance and threat that Caribbean men are expected to embody and seamlessly navigate.

In reflecting on the performances of Jamaican and other Caribbean masculinities in Toronto, Andrea Davis in her essay, "Translating Narratives of Masculinity across Borders: A Jamaican Case Study," argues that the masculinities of Jamaican males must be understood in particular cultural terms. She challenges, like Crichlow, the uncritical "assumption of Jamaican masculinity as an over-valorization of physical strength and heterosexual normativity that often leads to expressions of violence against men and women," and argues that "this tendency toward hyper-masculinity needs to be thoughtfully reexamined and re-contested" (Davis 2006, 24). While Chevannes (2001), Parry (1996), and Gayle (2014) claim that the heterosexual imperative operates to define manhood among Jamaican males, Davis insists on the role

that homosexuality plays in shaping Jamaican national and cultural identity:

> …within Jamaican society the clearest embodiment of the difference that "corrupts" and "contaminates" national identity is the homosexual. Seen as antithetical to national development and disruptive of social harmony, the homosexual is seen as an accepted sign of external, western corruption—a result of Babylon's moral decay and degeneracy (Davis 2006, 25).

With reference to the Canadian context, James (2009, 61) challenges the hegemonic structure of the normalized white male heterosexual masculinity into which Black males are being socialized and are expected or forced to fit. Often premised on this discourse is the "common sense" notion that the plight of young Black men is rooted in the absence of Black male father figures and role models and mentors who can teach them how to be men and how to take advantage of the opportunities and possibilities in their societies (James 2012, 77). The promotion of role modeling and mentorship as a solution to the challenges faced by young Black men is a manifestation of liberalist individualism that places responsibility on the shoulders of youth, parents and communities rather than addressing the social and historical contexts in which these young men live. It is an approach that fails to take into account the legacy of colonialism, which "operates to obscure the obvious systemic or structural impediments facing young men and their parents, thereby leaving the status quo intact" (James 2012, 81).

Messerschmidt also suggests that there is a link between performances of hegemonic masculinities and violence. Masculinities, he argues, are dynamic social constructs that all exist in relation to hegemonic masculinities, which are premised on certain heterosexual norms: "competitive individualism, aggression and capacity for violence" (Messerschmidt 2000, 10). He continues to make the following point:

> Because of its connection to hegemonic masculinity, for many men

violence serves as a suitable resource for constructing masculinity. That is, individuals who occasionally turn to violence as a masculine resource have come to accept the hegemonic masculine notion of aggressiveness and capacity for violence. This acceptance of violence as a means of doing masculinity effectively predisposes such individuals toward violence, providing a resource for affirming a particular type of masculinity. (Messerschmidt 2000, 12)

In his ethnographic study of "violent practices among disenfranchised young men" in Maputo, Mozambique, Groes-Green (2009, 286) found that "massive unemployment caused by neo-liberal reforms" led a growing number of young men to base their sense of authority (vis-à-vis women) on their physical prowess "rather than on economic powers and social status." So while "young men from the city's growing middle class" were able to enact hegemonic masculinities — given the "breadwinner ideology" of the society — poor young men reacted to the "situation of unemployment and poverty by enacting masculinities that are subordinate vis-à-vis middle class peers, but which [found] expression through violence or sexual performance . . ." (see also Crichlow 2014). Using these various understandings of multiple and fluid masculinities, constructed both in compliance with and in defiance of social regulatory "norms," this paper seeks to demarcate Black Jamaican male youth's specific negotiation of their roles as emerging males within their communities and the country as a whole.

Focus Groups: Participants and Process

It has been well established that focus group interviews are among the most productive methods of conducting research with young people. They help researchers better understand youth's social worlds and experiences, and potentially offer a higher degree of immersion into the social worlds of participants than the standard interview format. Michel (1999, 36) has found, for example, that the use of focus groups is a "rich and productive way of gaining access to well-rehearsed 'public knowledge' and highlighting the way in which

social exchange reinforces such hierarchies." As Hughes and DuMont (1993, 776-777) also indicate, focus groups allow researchers to "explore the nuances of attitudes and experiences [and] observe the dynamic nature of the social interactions between participants," by operating as a combination of interviews and participant observations. Participants in this study brought to the interview process common, yet varied, experiences of their social and cultural worlds, and ways of understanding the issues under consideration — so much so that they were often able to complete each other's sentences; as such, it was important for us to capture their different and diverse experiences, ideas and meaning making.[5]

Although as researchers we could be identified as Black, Jamaican or Caribbean, the fact that we were coming from Canada and were conducting research that was funded by a major Canadian granting agency potentially posed a challenge around issues of trust. Differences in age, geographic, cultural and class locations could have potentially affected our ability to gather data, as well as the reliability of the data gathered. As a consequence, we spent time in the first two years of the project establishing trust with Jamaican community organizations and research colleagues at the University of the West Indies, Mona, with whom we collaborated. The community organizations were responsible for recruiting focus group members, as well as organizing and co-facilitating the focus group sessions. Youth participated actively in all discussions and, as far as we could determine, offered responses that were honest and representative of their specific experiences.

A total of 32 Black males between the ages of 18 and 24 participated in three focus groups conducted in August 2013: two in Kingston, in which 12 and 10 males, respectively, participated; and one in St. Mary, in which 10 males participated.[6] All participants, as explained above, were recruited through youth organizations in their respective communities. In Kingston, participants came to the University of the West Indies (Mona campus) accompanied by their youth leaders. Two sessions conducted by James were held concurrently with

males and females in adjoining student lounges on the university campus, while the other youth visited various sites on the campus. The St. Mary sessions were held in adjoining rooms at a local community center.

Each session took ninety minutes and began with questions to participants about their general perception and opinions of violence in their respective communities and the country generally. They were specifically asked to describe their experiences — if any — with violence. In these discussions, the youth identified those most likely to be the perpetrators of violence, the people in their communities who were most affected by violence, and their own roles and responsibilities either as perpetrators or as individuals attempting to address violence. As we talked, they repeatedly referenced what was at stake for them in becoming men. This was further encouraged by questions specifically meant to tease out their understanding of the construction of masculinity and how this related to them. Some of these questions were: What does masculinity mean to you? How do young men like you understand masculinity? How do you practice it? And, what does it mean for you to be a man growing up in Jamaica? The social context of the focus groups provided us as researchers and facilitators (again given that we were "outsiders" from Canada) the opportunity not only to obtain answers to questions like these, but also to observe the social dynamics of peer group interactions, as well as gain insight into the "gestural" and "visual" aspects of their lives (Wacquant 2004, 100).

Social and Cultural Context: "Fatherlessness" and the Role of Family

Seemingly well-schooled in the hegemonic notion of fathers as essential role models and the parent best able to socialize sons into the values, norms, customs and behaviors of masculinity, urban and rural youth who participated in the research maintained that the absence of a father or fatherlessness played a major contributing role in the difficult familial, social and financial situations in which they found themselves and were forced to navigate. They claimed that

fathers were important "role models" and that the absence of a father meant that they were missing the critical support of the most significant person from whom they could learn about life. As one young man declared, "Young men like we now, we need man-to-man talk."

Conversely, youth also cited the limitations of the mother-son relationship: "Say you have a man and woman problem, it looks weird to go to your mother with that. You want to talk to your father more, but him no deh-deh." They firmly believed that "you can't say, have the mother alone. Get it! Father and mother have to come together... The father's supposed to show him support." When asked if they thought they would be better off if their fathers were around, members of both urban and rural communities responded with a resounding "yes." Physical absence was not, however, the only problem they identified in their critique of their relationships with their fathers. Some youth also insisted on the need for emotional connection. As one of the participants stated, "Sometimes, your father is around, but he nah show you no attention." When asked if they were missing that father figure, the response was "Yeah, a lot."

Interestingly, while youth did admit to the limitations of fathers in their roles as engaged parents and role models, they nevertheless held on to the idea that fathers are the *moral architects* to whom they must look, and on whom they must rely to learn how to live as males in their society. That youth held on to this claim despite having done well in living out their maleness with single mothers (see James 2009; Tavares-Carter 2009) was further reflective of their belief in the hegemonic idealized malecentric notion of the supremacy of males, and the neoliberal ethos of individualism and personal or familial responsibility that sustains it. The irony these youth failed to recognize was that their fatherless situation was in large part a product of the very patriarchal practices of hegemonic masculinity by which they were striving to live. For example, Jamaican men have greater access than women to the privilege afforded by mobility (being able to leave home without question or societal sanctions) which helps to sustain fatherlessness. While male privilege is affected by class, men of

marginalized status (such as poor or rural men) also benefit from the privilege of mobility even if this privilege is not comparable to that enjoyed by middle-class men who can better perform the kind of hegemonic masculinity seen as a normative and acceptable "ideal" in a society that supports gender hierarchy (see Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Groes-Green 2009).

These participants from both urban and rural areas appeared to live by what Groes-Green (2009) refers to as the "breadwinner ideology," in that they believed that men bore the responsibility of supporting their families financially and emotionally and ensuring that all family members have the best quality of life. Participants reasoned that with inadequate parental role models, young men would inevitably resort to a life of crime for the sake of their own survival, and more especially to provide food for "their hungry mother and siblings — and possibly friends" (also, see Gayle 2014). As one participant suggested, if their "father can't get a job... now he broke, broke, broke. He can't pay the bills, so you turn a criminal." But even as they complained about the physical and/or psychological "absent presence" of "failed" fathers and were adamant that crime as an alternative means of obtaining financial support for the family was destructive, they accepted without question the hegemonic ideal of masculinity that demands the performance of the breadwinner role to which they aspired.

Along with their experiences of "fatherlessness" and single mothering, youth also struggled with other aspects of their evolving perception of Jamaican men and their own relationship to women. Some youth suggested, for example, that the failure of fathers to be present and provide for them was often caused by these men's involvement with women other than their mothers. They were particularly resentful of women whom they suspected were receiving financial or emotional support from their fathers, since these resources could have been used to support them. A hypothetical case offered to illustrate this was of a boy who might meet his father on the road with a woman, ask his father for money and be refused: "... Him [father] say, him bruck (have no money). How would that make you feel?" In this scenario, the woman is

constructed as a seductress who lures potentially good men away from their families and their parental responsibilities. Similarly, these youth seem to assume that fathers play only a minor role in such situations and again fail to see themselves and their fathers as casualties of the very male role they are striving to uphold.

These male youth also identified that in some instances when fathers left their families, mothers displayed various degrees of anger and guilt, which contributed to their sons' negative experiences of "fatherlessness." On this point, one participant invited us to consider the case in which a mother—expected to take on both the nurturing role of mother and the economic role of father—is unable to cope emotionally and, thus, projects her frustration on to her son:

> The mother is left to be the father. Out of anger and out of guilt, she might say, "You not going to be nothin'; you go be just like your poopa." Yeah, it's true, and some young men who are not strong enough will internalize this and eventually you start seeing yourself as inferior and marginalized.

The youth's analysis of the mother's failure in this instance not only troubles the commonly held idea that boys romanticize mothers who raise them without fathers, but also reveals the complexity involved in negotiating these gendered familial relationships.

In extending the discussion of "fatherlessness," Kingston youth with some post-secondary education commented more directly on its relationship to their socialization as young men. They argued that young men like themselves were not being "properly" socialized due to the absence of fathers, some of who migrate "overseas and leave their families behind." They went on to link the father's absence to a desire for alternative models of manhood and the propensity toward violence this may encourage among some youth. As a consequence of the absent father, they proffered, boys are encouraged to look elsewhere for support and role models, most often to community or area

"dons"[7] whose appeal is largely based on their perceived social power and lavish lifestyles. One Kingston youth expressed the implication of the absent father and the need for role models in the following way:

> [We are] not being socialized properly because, growing up ... if the father in the home is missing, the next best is to look into the community for the male figures to be role models. The chances are, the next best male figure in the community is the don. The don has power through money because of his violent behavior and stuff like that. He is now living a lavish lifestyle, so as a youth, not seeing your father, and you look and you find the don, you say all right. You know, I want to grow up and live like him because the don ah drive the big car. The don have the whole heap of woman dem. The don have the money and the big house.

Another youth commented more directly on the complex dual role of the don as both protector and enforcer: "They are really community police and any time badness ah gwan, a badness against a next community. That is one of the trends we see in the whole donmanship... It helps to keep order"[8]. This understanding of masculinity as complex interplay between power and paternalism, abuse and empathy, demonstrates some of the complexities involved in understanding how Jamaican boys and men perceive themselves in relation to those around them and within the specific socio-economic contexts in which they live.

In contrast to dons, who in some instances might be considered to embody "oppositional masculinity" (see Messerschmidt 2000), participants also discussed the role of male elders who they insisted had less positive influence in their communities:

> The elders, as in the older men in the community, have nothing to do. They have no work to do, and they are smoking, cursing bad words... gambling, and the younger ones now see them and take it upon themselves to follow them, to start gambling... They are following them in a negative way.

Members of government and the justice system — law enforcers especially — were also summarily dismissed on the basis that they lacked the moral integrity to be role models and community leaders. The government was perceived to be corrupt, and police officers were thought to be unqualified and unable to protect young people and/or maintain law and order in poor communities, something that gang leaders or dons had stepped in to do (see Levy 2012). Speaking of the police, one youth declared: "The police dem certified to fight crime or whatever they supposed to do, but the police and other people on the street know wha ah gwan." Another participant further claimed that the police would "lock we up, 'cause dem a feel say we are little boy with nothin' fi go do." In this context in which youth felt that their age and social class combined to make them vulnerable to attack from the police, it is understandable that many of them would have very little respect for the police, and hence would dismiss the advice they received from police as hypocritical.

Emotional Impact of Violence and Coping Strategies

One of the most revealing components of our conversation with participants was about their coping strategies. Particularly poignant were rural youth's accounts of their fear of violence and the strategies of avoidance they subsequently employed. One strategy they routinely used was that of not attending school in adjacent communities where they experienced violence. In addition, on occasions when they directly encountered aggressive and/or violent situations they protected themselves by running away. When they were unable to escape, they explained that the safest response was to concede to their aggressors' demands, which they did out of fear of not only being beaten

or robbed, but possibly even killed. Below is an exchange with rural youth that describes quite powerfully the many ways in which violence might be initiated and the self-protection strategies, such as avoidance and compliance, they are forced to employ:

> *Participant 1*: Yeah, dem things made me 'fraid to go school man . . . Me is a man. Me can't take the talking you know. Me will take a big stone, and [then] as they say, the war will start. And they will chop up, and stab up, and dat me ah go run from. The killing and the violence, me just avoid them cause me afraid fe it.

> *Facilitator*: Would you say that all you guys are very afraid then? *Participants* (about 4 of 6): Yes.

> *Participant 2*: Everybody has a fear inside of them, fear of everything. So right now people will just take up a gun to protect themselves as well or just to protect their family. That's why lots of guns are in here and it turning out to be crime and pure killing and everything.

> *Participant 1*: If you even bounce on a man... he want to kill you... If you look on a man too hard he want to kill you...

> *Participant 3*: If you step on a man toe he want to go to war... ask you what you ah do...

> *Participant 2*: Majority of the time in school, we ah go walk out because me no wan' fight. Me just walk out because badness don't pay... badness nah pay.

> *Participant 1*: This is the case, I am saying that if you really stand up and talk nice and agree to what they say... they might leave you standing alive, but if you give them talk, when you no give dem what they want, they go shoot you...

The rural youth participating in the study, thus challenged the perception that they were more protected from violence because they resided in small villages. They not only recounted their experiences with violence, but they also expressed a greater degree of fear of violence than urban youth did. The fact that urban youth did not discuss their fear of violence does not, however, deny the harsh realities of violence many of them face on a daily basis.

The urban youth employed similar and other coping strategies. In addition to walking away or running from violent situations, they employed other covert strategies of avoidance, such as pretending not to see or hear violence. One youth described this as the ability to perform "coolness": "We have a culture to just stay cool, a stay cool culture. That's our culture. You see something ah gwan and you…keep your cool." The ability to stay cool was not merely a performance of masculinity, but was linked self-consciously to a dual strategy of avoidance and protection. One participant explained this best by evoking a local Jamaican saying to comment on what was at stake if one did otherwise: "See and blind; hear and dead."[9]   And, in words that revealed the irony of their participation in our research, one youth further declared: "We have this thing in Jamaica where we never see violence. So if you ask the questions a hundred times, I doubt you go get one of us here who will say we have seen violence because we never see violence."

Participants also identified the ways in which inadequate levels of education might be linked to decreased self-confidence and may encourage participation in violence. For instance, many of the participants — especially those living in rural areas — pointed out that in families where "parents cannot afford to send [them] to school," children grow up lacking education. The effect of this limitation was further identified by urban youth, not so much in economic terms, but in terms of leadership and self-confidence: "It is through educating someone that

you uplift his or her consciousness and thinking," thereby providing him with the ability to "reason" with the "bad man" about his "violent behavior." Participants insisted, therefore, that education provides youth with the ability to change their circumstances on a number of levels: not only economically and socially, but also emotionally and psychologically. And, as if to remind us of the colonial legacy of Jamaica's education system (James 2013), one Kingston youth explained: "The inner city is a good place to live. The only problem is we are not trained sufficiently in dispute resolution and stuff like that."

> The youth in Kingston also believed that many of their peers in urban communities had become desensitized to violence because of their over-exposure to violence through the media and in their everyday encounters—encounters that often traumatized them. The following is one example of a young man who had seen someone murdered: Seeing someone get shot in front of you is completely different (than on the media). It jerks you up a whole heap, whole heap . . . Let me tell you, the night I went home after that, every time me close mi eyes, me see the man brains come out. Me couldn't sleep. Me couldn't even function in school. Me couldn't even function in training.

This sense of recurring trauma was linked to a ubiquitous sense of pessimism and hopelessness among both urban and rural youth. One youth described the pessimism among community peers: "We talked about Jamaica and the violence, and we tried to find a solution. People were, like, it's not going to change and not going to be sunny. Well, the system's corrupt." Another participant, in a critical intervention, offered a sarcastic commentary on the role of "culture":

> I think the problem with Jamaican people on the whole is that they too lazy. They want ready done, and they make it

easy for somebody to manipulate and use them. They will always be oppressed and suppressed until they change and get over this stupid culture of being lazy and want ready done things.

In responding to the overarching sense of pessimism among youth, this participant suggested that the youth's ability to change their circumstances might depend on their own ability to craft strategic personal and psychological responses that could empower them to take ownership of and responsibility for their futures.

Other participants responded to criticisms of their perceived passivity or "laziness" by theorizing that the causes of violence in the country were complex and had to do with a lack of economic resources and jobs, political party tactics, and young people's evolving sense of how to live as men in their communities. "In town now," as one Kingston youth proffered, the "majority of the youth violence is related to political or gang violence [and] senseless killing to see who is the baddest." Relating the actions of youth to government's lack of commitment to helping them, another participant interjected:

> It's the will-power [of the government]. If you have a country and you are not providing sufficient resources and jobs for young people coming up, they are going to turn to something else. Nuff young people no want to sit around and laze about.

The youth also measured their own sense of power or powerlessness in relation to the wider power structure within the society and discussed how this might influence their responses to violence. They indicated that they had little to no faith or "trust in the justice system," and that police officers did not have the ability or skills to address the violence in their communities. Some even attributed the rise in violence directly to the

incompetence of police officers whose inability or refusal to apprehend criminals fuels offenders' sense of power "because of their money and influence." As a result, criminals come to believe that they are "untouchable" and can escape the system and so continue their violent activities. This situation, some urban participants argued, contributed to many youth having "no sense of consciousness as to the consequences of their actions." In this regard, many urban youth observed, a culture of retributive violence that was due in part to familial kinships and a strong sense of community alliances drove some individuals to take matters into their own hands. In the words of one participant: "If a man kill mi brother; definitely know the law can't tell me, me nah fi go fi him..."

Constructs of Masculinities

Participants articulated constructs of masculinity in relation to "badness," "toughness," "aggression" and leadership — all of which were fueled by social expectations. However, there were notable differences between rural and urban participants' understanding of themselves as men. While insisting that they understood the need to live up to the "tough" guy image, rural youth were more reticent and ambivalent about doing so. They tended to have a fight or flee mindset, in that they were willing to fight and be aggressive when necessary, but only if the odds were not overwhelmingly against them. As one youth put it, "Run, run... if me alone." This is contrary, they admitted, to the romanticized notion of male's infallibility as evidenced by the considerable laughter in response to one youth's statement: "a man supposed to be tough and capable of withstanding a gunshot." In fact, as Crichlow (2014, 31) writes, the dominant culture of the Caribbean "demands physical responses from boys and makes toughness the hallmark of the real male."

The urban youth, on the other hand, understood aggression as a means of garnering respect. According to one participant, "if you're not aggressive, if

you're not dominant, and you're not demanding respect from others, then persons don't respect you. Then you are not a man." Another youth suggested that failing to earn respect could, in fact, precipitate violence

> …fueled by the misconception of masculinity, of who a man is... If you disrespect me in front of him [referring to a group member], me ah go feel a way [i.e. offended], 'cause him ah go say, him just dis me, so me ah no big man... So it's always a power struggle to show who is more manly than who.

In reinforcing this point, another youth added the following:

> You know say that him not hundred per cent man, cause me can dis him certain way. He is going to go on the defensive now and say, alright, me have to prove say me a man.' And proving that you are a man... mean that you have to be violent. You can't portray your point in an intellectual way. If you nah dis a man, chop a man, shot a man, you not a bad man. So then it goes back to the power struggle... to maintain and fuel [your] masculinity and self-worth.

While all the urban youth agreed that this kind of demand for respect is based on "ignorance," they held that some youth felt they had no alternatives, an attitude made worse by the fact that "the only thing some youths like us believe is dat badness is wha dem a carry on the forehead to make everybody know they are bad man, so therefore they use it." This claim is consistent with Kimmel's (1994) argument that young men's performance of manhood is, in large part, to gain recognition and acceptance from peers.

University-educated urban participants, on the other hand, tended to identify leadership as a fundamental aspect of their own identification as males. Essentially, they saw themselves as leaders, future leaders, or individuals who can drive social change. In this regard, they identified two types of leaders: the first represented a form of dictatorship personified by dons, and the second

represented "the full dynamics of" masculinity as seen in someone who influences, helps and motivates others. In the words of one participant, "For me being a man you have to be a leader not a follower. You have to be responsible, guide your own way, make your own path." And ever conscious of the influence of dons on many youth, another participant added:

> I must be a leader, so if the don... tell me to do this; tell me to do that; that is going to affect my masculinity... I-man going to say alright me ah go lead you now. And now you have fi start put in him consciousness that you are a leader too.

Ultimately, dominance remained an important component of both types of leadership.

For many of these youth, the performance of masculinity also meant dressing and carrying themselves according to particular social and cultural norms. In an indirect reference to the recent murder of the transgender youth in Montego Bay, they argued that deviating from such norms — wearing clothing that might signal femininity, like dressing in "tights and high heels, and [having] weaves in his hair and [polished] finger nails" — was perceived as contrary to what it means to be a man and was, therefore, offensive. As one urban youth put it, "If you don't dress a particular way, you are not a man." So on the basis of dress and mannerisms alone, some males would be deemed to be homosexuals and transgressors of the social norm.

Rural youth were particularly adamant that "non-conforming males" (McCready 2010) should be gotten "rid of," since "Jamaica hate, hate those nastiness." For most urban and rural participants, homosexuality was, in fact, not only contrary to their understandings of masculinity, but was also contrary to biblical teachings and Jamaican national culture (see Crichlow 2014). These youth relied on their understanding of the Bible and its privileging of heteronormativity to support their claims:

> *Participant*: The Bible tell you, you know, that if a man should lie down with another man he shall be put to death.
> *Participant*: Even the Bible say two persons can't reproduce.
> Two males same sex, deh can't reproduce.

Kingston youth were equally adamant in their critique of homosexuality. They too believed that homosexuality was contrary to Jamaican cultural practice, identified it is as a sin, and supported the claim that homosexuals deserved to be humiliated, ridiculed and punished. One youth referenced a scene he witnessed to illustrate the perceptions of and behavior toward gay men:

> I see this man with his gun in a next man's mouth, saying, 'Suck it off,' laughing with his friends around him. Him tell de man say, 'suck off him gun'... Me nah go turn back, cause if you turn back, they go find you suspicious. . . At the end of the day the man never did. Me assume ah joke dem a make, cause him deh-deh, and his friend dem deh-deh; and everybody ah laugh wid the man wid the gun in his mouth. Nutting came out of it.

While this incident might have been a joke, or was framed as such, it represents the frightening treatment of those who are, or are suspected to be, homosexuals and the policing of sexuality.[10]

How do we explain these youth's uncompromising and conservative stance on homosexuality and their claims that it violates Jamaican cultural norms, codes and mores?[11] What accounts for the differences between urban and rural youth's negation of sexual diversity and "non-conforming gender expressions" (McCready 2010; see also Crichlow 2014)? It is likely that the attitudes of the participants have to do with a number of intersecting factors: their lack of exposure to diverse sexualities; the power and centrality of the church and religious elders in their communities; their level of education; and a

lack of socialization to question established "truths." Indeed, there are contradictions, complexities and fluidities at play in constructions of masculinity even within a Jamaican context and these must be understood within specific historical, social and cultural contexts.

For the most part, these young men believed that the construction of their masculinities cumulatively involved gaining respect and social credibility through struggles for power, assertions of dominance over others, ability to confront adversities and dangers, observations of "male" standards of dress and behavior, and effective negotiation of superior/subordinate relationships. The process of demanding respect and recognition was, in fact, believed to be a necessity in building and maintaining self-worth and confidence. As one Kingston youth stated, "My view is that being masculine, you dominate your social life... [and] you supposed to live up to the standard."

Approaches to Reducing Violence

Despite their expressions of hopelessness and fear, many of the youth — especially those from urban areas — were still confident that they could become agents of change and role models. This confidence in their ability to exercise agency was related to their belief in the value and power of education as a critical medium of building "self-esteem" and cultivating new social networks that could ensure not only a promising future for them and their peers, but also for Jamaican society as a whole. In their conversations, many of the youth reflected on their own educational attainment (a number of them were in university or aspired to attend university). According to one youth, "I think a greater level of education means lesser levels of violence." "People," another participant continued, "need to realize education is the only thing that can bring you further in life; you can't depend on the don or depend on somebody to provide you with money."

Many of the urban youth also believed that if they were to become change agents they would have to distance themselves from "bad company," choosing instead to associate with more socially conscious, supportive and trustworthy people. "I distance myself" from the community, said one youth, "because me being there regular, [it] is going to influence me to do something that I don't want to do. I find myself around [people] now who want to work for what they need; the legal way, right! I don't linger around corners or alleys with bad men; dem ah preach gun and violence." This participant, a law student, also went on to talk about what he had learned from his experiences of living in both "inner city" and "uptown" communities as a university student:

> One other thing in terms of moving up the social ladder, as I have said before, I am able to compare living in an uptown community with very affluent people as opposed to living in the inner city. What you would realize, having come to university doing law school now, I am able to make a comparison or distinction between what happens in Jerk Lane and what happens uptown. The links you make, the networking, is what works for you. So at this point, I am able to call lawyers, doctors, politicians. I have all of them to call on... so you are able to move up. [When there is an opening for a job] the first person they will be able to call is you because you are in that circle.

It is not surprising that those youth in Kingston with postsecondary education perceived themselves to be role models and future leaders who would be able to drive social change. The following statement further encapsulates this sentiment:

> I know I have the right and the freedom... to portray myself as a man to the society and the environment around me. [My status] now is like a hook: you throw it with bait to an impressionable young man, or a vulnerable young man, [who] will look around my

community now and say, "Chev live right here, and he carry himself a certain way. Chev deh a university now and do this and do that. I can be like Chev." I am now throwing myself out there indirectly to be a role model. Also [I demonstrate] how we are supposed to behave, to carry ourselves, what are the kinds of activities you have to be doing — not hanging out on the street doing things, not being idle and stuff like that...The second I become a role model, it will benefit at least one person, and that person in turn will do the same. And you know, you have a cycle and soon you will start seeing changes.

These youth's construction of themselves as leaders and potential leaders is again not surprising, given that leadership constitutes "a peculiar ideal for Jamaican hegemonic masculinity" (Shepherd 2007, 275). The fact that, in youth's discussion, this tendency toward leadership was clearly linked to education is also significant. According to Shepherd (2007), Jamaican boys' view of themselves as emerging men is not only shaped by their families and their peers, but also by school curricula, particularly history education. The curriculum, by "sending out clues about the preferred masculinity that young males should adopt," she argues, "contributes to the perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity," which has implications for national development (Shepherd 2007, 275-276). While youth's identification of their roles as leaders may be perceived as a positive strategy of change, this strategy itself does not challenge notions of "ideal" masculinity at play in Jamaican society, but rather builds on a sense of masculine power and self-confidence embedded in different social institutions and socially sanctioned by the middle and upper classes. Male leadership, therefore, appears to be a distinct class strategy more readily available to youth with greater access to education and social mobility. This may account for the greater level of optimism among the urban, university-educated youth as compared to the rural youth who participated in the study.

Sold on the neoliberal promise of education as an equalizer that enables social mobility, as well as being a means to promote a more socially and

politically conscious and responsible population, it is understandable that these "role models" and "change agents" will offer their own charges or mentees the same strategy of education that they see as their pathway to success. They indicated that they intended to offer education as the remedy for the ills that beset youth, their communities, and the society as a whole. As one youth illustrated, "So most of the time my brethren, me try to encourage him and say, 'Go back to school to do something; me don't like that thing de' [not having completed school]. Because he don't understand how he nah go get rich if he don't go back to school to get his education." Again, the assumption of wealth and middle-/upper-class status as essential to "ideal" masculinity went unchallenged and importantly framed youth's developing sense of themselves in relation to the wider society.

These youth also insisted that they were not just about talk: they were about action. Ultimately, they and others must have a willingness to change their lives: "When it comes to action, people will always talk, you know. When it comes to action, you see me, it's all about willingness. I take upon myself to try and influence persons in the right directions."

When reflecting on what it would take for essential societal change, the participants were, however, cynical of the politicians and government—in short the political structures — that they saw as problematic. They seemed to believe that needed changes were a long way off or would never materialize. This was evidenced in the rhetorical question one Kingston youth simultaneously posed and answered:

> Why don't you get them people out of power?... Well someone else ah go take dem place... Nobody is willing to go there and be the change. That's the whole problem. Everyone saying it nah go change, like there is no hope for the country. People need to get that idea out of them head.

In rejecting the source of change as something external to him, this youth, like his peers, prioritized his own agency as the most critical transformative influence he had over his individual life chances and something that he could also leverage to alter the social context in which he lived.

Conclusion

This paper has examined a group of Black Jamaican male youth's construction of their masculinities and the pressures they feel to live up to the masculine "norms" of their communities. The study revealed the many complexities involved in negotiating masculinities within a Jamaican context across boundaries of class, education and geographic locations. While urban and rural youth participants agreed on many critical aspects of their evolving understanding of themselves as men, there were also some striking differences. Youth unanimously agreed on the role of fathers as necessary role models and prioritized the male as breadwinner. They were also united in their critique of homosexuality, which for them ran counter to, and threatened, the heteronormative values enshrined within Jamaican practices of appropriate and accepted gender behavior.

Perhaps most revealing of the study's findings, however, was the degree of fear of violence that rural youth lived with, challenging the idea that violence is less pervasive in rural communities. This fear was further reflected in rural youth's greater ambivalence about and unwillingness to live up to the image of the "bad man," as well as a greater sense of pessimism about their life chances. While urban youth also struggled with some issues of fear that often encouraged strategies of silence, over-exposure to violence seemed to lead to greater desensitization. They were more likely to measure their masculinity, for example, in relation to dominant male figures in their communities, particularly dons. Urban youth with some post-secondary education, however, also saw themselves as role models and change agents and were more willing to

challenge existing hierarchies of male power, including dons, in order to articulate new spheres of male influence. While urban youth were able to describe more graphic experiences with violence than rural youth, encouraged by their belief in the power of education they seemed better able to articulate pathways to social change and individual and social transformation.

These findings across urban and rural communities — showing both similarities and differences — demonstrate the various ways in which Jamaican youth respond to the violence in their respective communities and the society generally. Their understandings of themselves as emerging men have to do with their complex and often shifting readings, enactments and/or performances of their masculinities, as well as the social, economic and political circumstances in which they find themselves. Participants' discussions of their experiences with violence, and of their resulting fears, revealed the deep emotional damage with which they lived on a daily basis. As males, who are socialized into physical and emotional toughness, they demonstrated that regardless of where they lived, they had little or no available resources for discussing or even admitting their vulnerabilities. It is in response to this growing need created by the emotional impact of violence on the wellbeing of Jamaican boys and men that this study seeks to make its contribution.

---

[1] This three-year partnership (March 2011–March 2014) brought together researchers from five Canadian universities and the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus), as well as youth and youth activists from community organizations in Canada and Jamaica. Andrea Davis was the partnership's principal investigator, and Carl James was responsible for the sociology and social work research cluster. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) funded the project.

[2] The decision to study Black Jamaican youth is not a reflection of lack of awareness of the racial and ethnic complexity of Jamaican society, but was instead guided by the goals of the larger transnational partnership program in which we sought to respond to a public discourse in which violent crimes in Toronto, Canada, are not only portrayed in the media as constituting a Black youth crisis, but a "Jamaicanized" one (Davis 2014). By specifically examining and comparing Black youth's experiences with violence in Canada and Jamaica, the study has sought to determine both the extent to which young Black men's understanding of themselves in Toronto might be framed by uncritical assumptions of a perceived normative Jamaican hypermasculinity, and how a more accurate understanding of Jamaican society might help these youth disrupt stereotypes of blackness that circulate in large Canadian cities. The goal of the program was not to reproduce the Canadian tendency to reduce questions of Jamaicanness to *de facto* questions of blackness, but to use the data gathered to unearth the discrete experiences of Black male youth within their Jamaican communities.

[3] Gayle (2014) also suggests that a call for a reduction in violence is usually "one of the most critical election demands," a period when there tends to be an increase in violence. Horace Levy (2012) suggests further that violence in Jamaica has long been part of political party rivalry, and that through the aid of garrisons, the upper classes — made up of "largely brown and white" people — "have used the Black poorer classes to win elections and maintain themselves in power."

[4] Examples of hegemonic masculinities include "cool guys" and "jocks," while subordinated masculinities are read onto the bodies of those who are (or are perceived to be) gay, "wimps," or "nerds." Oppositional masculinities—that is, those who explicitly resist and challenge hegemonic forms of masculinity — are seen as freaks and [tough guys THIS IS CORRECT, I ASSUME?](Messerschmidt 2000, 10; see, also, Crichlow, 2014).

[5] In fact, despite the homogeneity—in terms of gender, age, class, color, race, community — of the focus groups we conducted, we were conscious that any of these factors could have operated to bring about differences, marginalization and silences in the group (see Bischoping and Dykema 1999; Michel 1999). Fortunately, we do not believe that this happened in any of the focus groups.

[6] A similar number of focus groups were conducted with female participants in both Kingston and St. Mary. However, these findings are not discussed in this paper.

[7] A don is the leader of an urban garrison community who differs from a mere gangster by his uncontested power and wealth. In the dual role of protector/provider and fearsome gang leader, dons deploy their power both to protect their communities and repress their enemies and use their wealth to finance a local welfare system. They benefit from the organized support of their communities and well-established security structures, and often have deep political connections and protection (Charles 2002, 41).

[8] In referring to the dominant, forceful and aggressive roles of dons in communities, one participant stated that they "demand respect" and they carry out their leadership role "with an iron fist… fueled by their ignorance and arrogance." Another added: "In the inner city, as dem [residents] love to use the word rifle. Dem men have rifle, you're a powerful man of the community, you know. This is your sense of power and authority. This is how you intimidate people; and this is how you crop your niche in the rest of the society. So in your little corner that is how you enforce your power and authority on the rest of the persons in the community; so of course they will be fearful of you."

[9] Another participant went on to say that if someone tries to stop a crime by reporting it, violence would result.

[10] What are also at play in this incident are the "risky" movements Jamaican men make across sexual boundaries even while being adamant about the "evils" of homosexuality. These movements or shifts toward a "feminized aesthetic" (Hope 2010) occur particularly within the cultural space of the dancehall where "the most hardened ghetto youth" might dress in effeminate pastel shades, sport intricate hairstyles and fashioned eyebrows, and have bleached skin (Hope 2010, 125).

[11] Again, we think here of those Jamaican men (outside of the dancehall) who regularly treat themselves to pedicures and skin bleaching — practices that have long been associated with females. How are we to understand their version of masculinity?

References

Bischoping, Katherine and Jennifer Dykema. 1999. Toward a social psychological programme for improving focus group methods of developing questionnaires. *Journal of Official Statistics,* Vol.15, No. 4, pp.495-516.

Charles, Christopher. 2002. Garrison communities as counter societies: The case of the 1998 ZZeek's riot in Jamaica. *Ideaz,* Vol.1, pp.29–43.

Chevannes, Barry. 2001. *Learning to be a man: Culture, socialization, and gender identity in five Caribbean Communities*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press.

Connell, Raewyn W. 2005. *Masculinities.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Connell, Raewyn and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society,* Vol.19, No.6, pp.829-859.

Crichlow, Wesley. 2014. Hyperheterosexualization and hypermasculinity: Challenges for HIV/AIDS intervention in the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology,* Vol.6, No.1, pp.28-41.

Davis, Andrea. 2014. Jamaican as synecdoche for Black identification: How 'Jamaican' comes to represent the Black Canadian body. Paper presented at congress on *El significado de la negritude/El significado de ser negro.* Universidad de Costa Rica, San Pedro, Costa Rica, February 3-6.

——. 2006. Translating narratives of masculinity across borders: A Jamaican case study. *Caribbean Quarterly,* Vol.52, Nos.2-3, pp.22-38.

Gayle, Herbert. 2014. Youth violence, family transition, and survival in Jamaica. Keynoteaddress at the symposium on *Youth Experiences with Violence in Jamaica and Canada,* Institute of Caribbean Studies, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

Gerke, Markus. 2014. *The second sex of tomorrow? Constructions of masculinity in the moral panic about boys' education. A content analysis of Canadian news media*. MA Thesis, Graduate Program in Sociology, York University, Toronto.

Groes-Green, Christian. 2009. Hegemonic and subordinated masculinities: Class, violence and sexual performance among young Mozambican men. *Nordic Journal of African Studies,*Vol.18, No.4, pp.286–304.

Hope, Donna P. 2010. *Man vibes: Masculinities in the Jamaican dancehall*. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers.

Hughes, Diane and Kimberly DuMont. 1993. Using focus groups to facilitate culturally anchored research. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* Vol.21. No.6, pp.775-   806.

James, Carl E. 2013. Education (The role of religion in the schooling and education of English-speaking peoples). In *Encyclopaedia of Caribbean religions,* ed. Patrick Taylor and Fred Case, 259-270. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

——. 2012. Troubling role models: Seeing racialization in the discourse relating to   'corrective agents' for Black males. In *Troubled masculinities: Re-imagining urban men*,   ed. Ken Moffat, 77-92. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

——. 2009. Masculinity, racialization and schooling: The making of marginalized   men. In *The

problem with boys' education: Beyond the backlash, ed. Wayne Martino, Michel D. Kehler and Marcus Weaver-Hightower, 102-123. New York: Routledge.

Kimmel, Michael. 1994. Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In *Theorizing masculinities*, ed. Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, 119-141. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Levy, Horace. 2012. A community approach to community and youth violence in Jamaica. Keynote address presented at *Being Proactive Forum*, York Centre for Education & Community, York University, Toronto, February 6.

Messerschmidt, James W. 2000. *Nine lives: Adolescent masculinities, the body, and violence*. Boulder, CO.: Westview Press.

McCready, Lance. 2010. *Making space for diverse masculinities: Difference, intersectionality, and engagement in an urban high school*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Michel, Lynn 1999. Combining focus groups and interviews: Telling how it is, telling how it feels. In *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory, and practice*, ed. Rosaline Barbour and Jenny Kitzinger, 36-46. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Padgett, Tim. 2006. The most homophobic place on earth? *Time*, April 12. Accessed April 12, 2006. http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1182991,00.html.

Parry, Odette. 1996. In one ear and out the other: Unmasking masculinities in the Caribbean classroom. *Sociological Research Online,* Vol.1, No.2. Accessed March 20, 2013. http://www.socresonline.org.uk/1/2/2.html.

Post Staff Report. 2013. Transgender teen killed by mob in Jamaica after wearing dress to party —casts light on nation's 'rabid homophobia.' *The New York Post*, August 11. Accessed August 11, 2013. http://nypost.com/2013/08/11/transgender-teen-killed-by-mob-in-jamaica-after-wearing-dress-to-party-casts-light-on-nations-rabid-homophobia.

Quinn, Jennifer. 2013. Homophobia a way of life in Jamaica. *The Toronto Star*, August 11. Accessed August 11, 2013. http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2013/0.

Schrock, Douglas and Michael Schwalbe. 2009. Men, masculinity, and manhood acts. *Annual Review of Sociology,* Vol.35, pp.277-295.

Shepherd, Verene A. 2007. *I want to disturb my neighbor: Lectures on slavery, emancipation and postcolonial Jamaica.* Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers.

Tavares-Carter, Kimberley. 2009. *The dearth of Black male educators in the secondary panel*. Unpublished Master's thesis, York University, Toronto, Ontario.

Thorne, Barrie. 1993. *Gender play: Girls and boys in school*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Totten, Mark. 2003. Girlfriend abuse as a form of masculinity construction among violent, marginal male youth. *Men and Masculinities,* Vol.6, No.1, pp.70-92.

Wacquant, Loic. 2004. *Body & soul: Notebooks of an apprentice boxer*. New York: Oxford University Press.

CARIBBEAN REVIEW OF GENDER STUDIES
A Journal of Caribbean Perspectives on Gender and Feminism

http://sta.uwi.edu/crgs/index.asp