

## Family and Religious Antecedents of Civic Involvement In Middle Class African American Late Adolescents

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We examined family and religious/spiritual antecedents and correlates of current and intended civic involvement in 76 middle class African American late adolescents ( $M = 18.43$  years) who had been followed longitudinally for 3 years. Adolescents' spirituality/religiosity and mothers' current involvement influenced the overall ratings and more specifically, current church and community (but not political) involvement, as assessed on a 14-item measure expanded from Youniss et al. (1997). In addition, greater family income, earlier spirituality, and less receptivity to mothers in observed dyadic interactions led to more community involvement in late adolescence. Intended civic involvement was predicted by greater spirituality and mothers' (and in exploratory analyses, fathers') observed positive communication (but not mothers' warmth and prosocial behavior) in dyadic interactions 3 years earlier; the effect of middle adolescents' spirituality on late adolescents' ratings of future civic involvement was fully mediated by adolescents' current spirituality/religiosity.

Developmental psychologists have become increasingly interested in the development of civic involvement in adolescence, because civic engagement is seen as promoting the development of social responsibility, moral commitment, tolerance, and compassion for others (Youniss & Yates, 1997). For instance, involvement in community service during high school has been linked to increased compassion and greater interdependence

(Yates & Youniss, 1996), and involvement in school-sponsored and religious activities has been seen to reflect adolescents' positive integration into normative adult society (Youniss, Bales, Christmas-Best, Diversi, McLaughlin, & Silbereisen, 2002; Youniss et al., 1997; Youniss, Yates, & Sue, 1997).

However, the family and religious correlates and antecedents of late adolescents' civic participation have not been well explored, particularly in African American youth. Indeed, there has been little research examining civic engagement in minority youth (Connell & Aber, 1996), although previous research has found that ethnic minority adolescents feel more disengaged from civic participation than other youth (Torney-Purta, 1990). Previous research has shown that parental involvement in political and social causes is associated with children's greater participation, although the mechanisms are not well understood (Youniss et al., 2002). One pathway is that parents may model civic behavior through their own involvement. For instance, research has shown that adolescent community service is greater in families where at least one parent volunteers (Nolin, Chaney, & Chapman, 1997). Pancer and Pratt (1999) have hypothesized that there are several ways in which parents may influence children's civic engagement. Parents may serve as altruistic models, provide their children with opportunities to volunteer, and support them throughout their volunteering experience. However, little research has examined these different routes to civic involvement or identified the processes through which parental influence is effective. Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer, and Alisat (2003) hypothesized that greater value similarity between parents and adolescents is associated with more community involvement, but their concurrent analyses did not support this hypothesis. Rather, they found that greater community involvement led to greater value similarity. Parental discussion and engagement have been assumed to lead to greater civic involvement and service, but it is unclear whether this is because of the affective climate of family interactions, parents' modeling of prosocial behaviors, parents' ability to communicate their values and ideals clearly, or the specific attitudes and values that are discussed in the home.

Other research has shown that parenting is a reciprocal, transactive process (Kuczynski, 2003). Accordingly, Grusec and Goodnow (1994) have proposed that researchers interested in values internalization also need to focus on how parental messages are received or understood and adolescents' receptivity to parental messages. Likewise, adolescents' love and trust for significant others such as parents may be related to one's ability to feel compassion for the well-being of others. Adolescents who feel more connected to parents may come to feel more connected to the

community, leading to greater civic involvement. For instance, Flanagan and Faison (2002) have reported that adolescents' notions of social trust and the greater social order are related to adolescent volunteerism, but research has not specifically examined the role of warm, supportive adolescent-parent relationships in promoting civic involvement.

Furthermore, service to others and involvement in the community may also be linked to notions of justice and tolerance. Prejudice and discrimination are pervasive in the lives of African American youth (Boyd-Franklin & Franklin, 2000; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Garcia Coll, Lamberty, Jenkins, McAdoo, Crnic, Wasik, & Garcia, 1996; Spencer & Dupree, 1996), and experiences of social inequality may account for the finding that minority adolescents are often disengaged from civic participation (Torney-Purta, 1990). How adolescents come to think about issues of social equality and inequality may stem from parents' attitudes, as well as their own experiences with racism and discrimination. African American parents must decide whether to expose children to racial prejudice or to prepare children for an environment where race is not significant (Cose, 1993). Previous research has examined African American parents' ethnic socialization, or their reports of how they socialize their adolescents to black culture and the mainstream culture and how they teach children to handle prejudice and discrimination (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Phinney & Chavira, 1995) in relation to adolescents' ethnic identity. Parental ethnic socialization that focuses on the need for equal rights and fair treatment or that advocates tolerance may be an important route to African American adolescents' civic engagement and involvement in the broader society. Adolescents whose parents espouse values of equality, tolerance, and fair treatment in the face of prejudice and discrimination may feel that they have more of a stake in society and thus be more likely to become engaged in political and community activism and service with the aim of helping others.

Finally, the church is an extremely important source of strength and resilience in the African-American community (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990; Winfield, 1995), and has traditionally played an important role in African American's political, social, and community involvement. The black church provides an important source of social support and a potent force for social reform; it also serves to preserve African American cultural heritage (Billingsley, 1992; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Winfield, 1995). Religiosity has been associated with African American adults' community involvement (Mattis, Jagers, Hatcher, Lawhon, Murphy, & Murray, 2000; Taylor & Chatters, 1991), and with service work among European American adolescents (Bachman, Johnston, & O'Malley, 1993; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1999). Moreover, in a large-scale study of

5th through 9th graders, adolescents who had a more intrinsic religious orientation were more likely to volunteer (Benson, Dehority, Garman, Hanson, Hochschwender, Lebold, Rohr, & Sullivan, 1980). However, the role of religiosity in influencing civic engagement among African American youth has received far less attention.

Previous research using a nationally representative sample of African American families has distinguished among three inter-related, public and private aspects of religiosity (Levin, Taylor, & Chatters, 1995). *Organizational religiosity* refers to more public forms of religious involvement, such as attending church, while *nonorganizational religiosity* refers to more private and informal types of religious involvement, including private religious behaviors (such as engaging in prayer, or watching religious TV programs), and *subjective religious attitudes* (like stressing the importance for black parents to send or take their children to religious services). Levin et al. (1995) found that these three dimensions of religiosity are empirically distinct and are differentially associated with life satisfaction and physical health. Furthermore, distinctions have been made between religiosity and spirituality, which pertains to individuals' subjective experience of the sacred in their lives (for instance, their beliefs in God or a higher power; Seidlitz, Abernethy, Duberstein, Evinger, Lewis, & Chang, 2002). Although Seidlitz et al. (2002) found strong associations among the different measures of religiosity and spiritual transcendence, they also found that spirituality and religiosity were differentially associated with adjustment. African American culture places a high value on spirituality (Billingsley, 1992; Parke & Buriel, 1998), and the black church serves as the vehicle for its expression. However, the influence of spirituality and religiosity on African American adolescents' civic engagement has not been examined in previous research.

The aim of the present study was to examine family, religious, and spiritual antecedents and correlates of civic involvement for middle class African American adolescents. Based on Pancer and Pratt (1999), we examined the influence of different aspects of parenting on late adolescents' civic involvement. More specifically, we tested the influence of four different routes through which parents might influence adolescents' civic involvement. We tested the proposition that parents serve as altruistic models (Pancer & Pratt, 1999) by examining whether mothers' warmth and prosocial behavior in the context of family interactions influence African American late adolescents' civic involvement. As part of Pancer and Pratt's (1999) modeling hypothesis, we also examined whether parents' own civic involvement was associated with civic engagement in late adolescence. Because parents with better communication skills may more effectively communicate their values and engage in more meaningful

discussions with their children, we investigated whether parents' more positive communication, as observed in dyadic interactions, would influence later civic engagement. Based on Grusec and Goodnow (1994), we also examined whether African American middle adolescents' observed receptivity to parents in those same interactions predicted later civic engagement. In addition, we examined the influence of maternal ethnic socialization focusing on justice, tolerance, and fair treatment on African American late adolescents' civic engagement.

We also examined the influence of adolescents' spirituality and religiosity on their current and intended civic involvement. To minimize confounds between institutional forms of religious involvement (for instance, going to church or participating in church-related activities) and civic involvement, which may be channeled through church-related activities (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990), we focused here on the unique influences of spirituality as well as subjective and nonorganizational aspects of religiosity on civic engagement. In addition, research has shown that higher socioeconomic status is associated with adolescents' greater civic involvement along different dimensions, from volunteering to club membership (Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998), perhaps because higher socioeconomic status adolescents have more varied opportunities for civic engagement. In the present study, we also examined and controlled for the influence of family socioeconomic status on current and intended civic engagement.

Along with others (Pancer, Pratt, & Hunsberger, 1998), our research has demonstrated that there are different forms of civic engagement, including political, church, and community involvement (Metzger & Smetana, 2004). Principal components analyses have revealed that these are distinct dimensions of both current and intended involvement (Metzger & Smetana, 2004). In the present study, we examined civic involvement as a single dimension, but we also explored whether family processes, parental ethnic socialization regarding equality and tolerance, and religiosity and spirituality had differential effects on these three forms of civic involvement.

## METHODS

### Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 76 middle class African Americans late adolescents ( $M$  age = 18.43 years,  $SD$  = 1.39), evenly divided between males and females, and their parents (76 mothers and 44 fathers), who had been followed longitudinally for 5 years (Smetana, 2000; Smetana & Gaines, 1999; Smetana, Metzger, & Campione-Barr, 2004). The original sample consisted of 95 middle class African American early adolescents

( $M$  age = 13.10 years,  $SD = 1.29$ ) and their parents (93 mothers and 57 fathers). The Wave 2 assessment occurred 2 years after Wave 1; attrition was 10%, resulting in a Wave 2 sample of 85 middle adolescents ( $M$  age = 15.05 years,  $SD = 1.28$ ) and their parents (83 mothers and 52 fathers). The sample was assessed again 3 years later. Attrition was 17% over the 5 years of study. The present study focused on Wave 2 (referred to hereafter as Time 1) and Wave 3 (referred to hereafter as Time 2). Families lost to attrition between Time 1 and Time 2 did not differ significantly in demographic background, except that adolescents who were retained were more likely to come from two-parent biological families than were adolescents lost to attrition,  $\chi^2$  ( $df = 1$ ) = 10.63,  $p < .01$ .

In all participating families, both parents were black, and nearly all were African American, as described by self-reports. Mothers and fathers were, on average, 40.49 and 44.71 years of age ( $SD$ 's = 6.48, 7.34 years), respectively, when the study originated and had, on average, 14.88 ( $SD = 2.27$ ) and 14.46 ( $SD = 2.61$ ) years of formal education. Marital status remained stable over the course of the study for 80% of the sample, with the remaining 20% experiencing changes in marital status (both family dissolution and family reformation). The frequency of boys and girls living in stable versus changing family structures did not differ significantly. Approximately half (51%) of the families were stably married families with two biological parents, 10% were stable, step-parent families, and 20% were stable, single-parent households (either divorced or never married).

At the conclusion of the study (Time 2 in the present analyses), when civic involvement was assessed, 33% of the adolescents were still in high school, 58% were in transition to or attending college (most in a 4-year colleges or universities and the majority in transition to college; see Smetana et al., 2004), and 11% were working full-time or in the Armed Services. The proportion of adolescents in high school, working, or in 2- or 4-year colleges did not differ by gender. Nearly all (99%) reported being single, unmarried, and not cohabitating.

### Questionnaire Measures

**Civic involvement.** Adolescents, mothers, and fathers completed a checklist assessing the frequency of current involvement and the likelihood of future involvement in 14 political and community activities, including volunteering or doing community service, voting, demonstrating publicly for a cause, signing a petition for a cause, or boycotting a product. The items were adapted from Youniss et al. (1997);

two items assessing church-sponsored activities (“participate in church community service activities” and “participate in church social activities”) and two items assessing participation in African American social groups (“join an African American social group, like Links” or “join an African American community or political organization”) were added to Youniss et al.’s (1997) measure. Current involvement was assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “not at all involved” (1) to “all the time” (5); intended involvement was assessed on a five-point scale ranging from “no chance of future involvement” (1) to “will be involved” (5). Cronbach  $\alpha$ ’s were .82, .86, and .88 for adolescents’, mothers’ and fathers’ current involvement, respectively, and .88 for adolescents’ intended future involvement.

Principal components analyses performed separately on adolescents’ current and intended civic involvement yielded three factors with factor loadings greater than .40 (see Metzger & Smetana, 2004 for more details): *political involvement* (five items, such as demonstrate publicly for a cause, boycott a product or service, or sign a petition for a cause), *church involvement* (three items, including participate in church community service activities and participate in church social activities), and *community involvement* (four items, including join a civic organization like YMCA or Rotary, join an African American community or political organization, and volunteer or do community service).  $\alpha$ ’s for the current community, church, and political involvement subscales were .71, .90, and .69, respectively, and .82, .90, and .79 for intended community, church, and political involvement, respectively. Current community and church involvement were not significantly associated,  $r(76) = .19$ , NS, but current political involvement was significantly but moderately associated with both church and community involvement,  $r$ ’s(76) = .23, .42 (here and elsewhere, all  $p$ ’s < .05). A similar pattern was evident for future involvement, although all the correlations were significant,  $r$ ’s(76) = .27, .41, .52, respectively.

### Spirituality and Religiosity

At Time 1, adolescents rated 25 items from the Spiritual Transcendence Index (STI; Seidlitz et al., 2002), which assesses the spiritual dimensions of spirituality and religious involvement (e.g., “My spirituality gives me a feeling of fulfillment,” “I maintain an inner awareness of God’s presence in my life”). At Time 2, they completed a shortened 8-item version of the STI, as well as the three-item Subjective and four-item Nonorganizational Aspects of Religiosity Scales (Levin et al., 1995), which were developed specifically to examine religiosity in African American samples. All items

were rated on 6-point scales of agreement, which ranged from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (6). The STI had an  $\alpha$  of .84 at Time 1 and .94 at Time 2.  $\alpha$ 's for the Subjective and Nonorganizational Aspects of Religiosity Scale were .76 and .73. The latter two scales were highly intercorrelated,  $r(76) = .61$ , and they were also highly associated with Time 2 scores on the STI,  $r$ 's(76) = .73, .75. Given the strong intercorrelations (and problems with multicollinearity in examining their unique influences), the scores were combined to obtain a single scale of adolescents' spirituality/religiosity at Time 2.

### Interview Measures

**Parental ethnic socialization.** At Time 1, mothers (but not fathers) were interviewed for approximately 20 minutes using a modified version of Phinney and Chavira's (1995) Ethnic Socialization Interview (ESI), which probes parents' views of how they socialize children around issues of ethnicity, prejudice, and discrimination. The questions elicited open-ended responses regarding the types of issues or problems that parents believe their children will need to deal with in getting along as a black or African American in this society and the qualities they need and how parents try to teach their son or daughter to get along in mainstream American culture. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. The present study used responses to one question, “Do you believe that young people need to be taught how to deal with problems in our society like prejudice and discrimination?”

Responses were coded into nine categories: (1) *Equality*: the need for equality or equal treatment; (2) *Interpersonal*: the need to learn to live with others and get along; (3) *Tolerance*: the need to learn tolerance and understand its origins; (4) *Psychological preparation*: the need to be psychologically equipped to handle the harmful effects of racism and prejudice; (5) *Psychological harm*: the need to avoid psychological harm as a consequence of experiencing racism and prejudice; (6) *Pragmatic*: the need to accept that prejudice and discrimination are part of current society; (7) *Knowledge*: the importance of knowledge or preparation for racism; (8) *Denial*: The belief that racism is exaggerated, does not exist, or does not have ill effects; and (9) *Other*. The coding categories were first generated using a random subset (25%) of the responses, and then two coders coded another 25% of responses (also randomly chosen) to obtain inter-rater reliability. Reliability (calculated as  $\kappa$ ) was .79. In the present study, we focused on mothers' concerns with tolerance, equality, and getting along, as assessed by responses in the Equality, Tolerance, and Interpersonal categories.

To control for variation in the number of responses, we calculated the proportion of responses in those categories relative to the overall number of responses; proportionate responses in these three categories were summed.

### Observational Coding of Family Interactions

*Parental communication and adolescent receptivity.* Videotapes of mother–adolescent and father–adolescent dyadic interactions in a semi-structured interaction task, which focused on adolescents’ and parents’ attempts to resolve a self-selected conflict or disagreement through discussion, were coded using a revised version of the Smetana, Yau, Restrepo, and Braeges (1991) Global Coding System. This coding system was originally developed to code the interactions of European American middle-class families with adolescents (Smetana et al., 1991), but was adapted to be culturally sensitive to the interactions and cultural values of middle class African American families. Trained African American coders rated adolescents and mothers (and for father–adolescent interactions, adolescents, and fathers) on 18 separate 5-point Likert scales assessing individual communication and family-level interaction styles, conflict, and affect, and separately rated mothers on 11 scales assessing parenting, individuation, and control.

Coded mother–adolescent interactions were subjected to principal components analyses with varimax rotation to reduce the scales into composite variables (see Smetana, Abernethy, & Harris, 2000), and four factors (Mother and Teen Positive Communication, Mother Supports/Validates Teen, and Teen Receptive to Mother) with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 and high  $\alpha$ 's were extracted. As described elsewhere (Smetana et al., 2000), given the small number of fathers, factor analyses were not performed on the father–adolescent dyadic interactions; rather, the variables that emerged from the analyses of mother–adolescent interactions were applied to the father–adolescent interactions. Parent (Mother/Father) Positive Communication, and Teen Receptive to Parent were used in the present analyses to assess each parent’s communicative clarity and adolescents’ receptivity to the parent.

Mother (Father) Positive Communication included twelve variables that loaded greater than .50 on the factor and did not cross-load highly on other factors. The variables were coded in reference to mothers’ (or father’s) behavior (Time 1 factor loadings for mother–adolescent interactions are in parentheses): Structures Task (.85), Self-Confident (.89), Demands Maturity (.87), Confident in Stating Opinions (.71), Attempts to

Resolve Conflict (.65), Comfortable in the Interaction (.79), Provides Explanations for Positions (.75), Involved in Task (.66), Expresses Thoughts and Ideas Clearly (.62), Connected to Family (.67), Powerful (.67), and Requests Input from Teen (.58).

Teen Receptive to Mother (Father) included five observed variables with high factor loadings (greater than .50) and no high cross-loadings on other factors. The variables, coded in reference to adolescents' behavior, were: Tolerates Differences and Disagreements (.85), Receptive to Parent's Statements (.83), Supportive (.83), Listens to Parent (.69), and Pressures Parent to Agree (–.62). Factor composite variables were created by obtaining mean scores for each variable loading on the factor.

Prior to coding, reliability in coding family interactions was obtained among four trained African American coders, and then one coder coded the interactions. Inter-rater reliability (intra-class correlations) ranged from .88 to .97 prior to coding. Coding reliability between two coders was verified periodically throughout coding, and high inter-rater reliability was maintained. The final intra-class coefficients ranged from .80 to .95.

**Warmth and prosocial behavior.** Because the Global Ratings did not adequately assess the affective quality of relationships, additional coding of the Time 1 mother–adolescent dyadic interactions was conducted for the present study to assess mothers' and adolescents' compassion, warmth, trust, and prosocial behavior. Videotapes were coded for three dimensions from the Iowa Family Interaction Rating Scales (Melby, Conger, Book, Rueter, Lucy, Repinski, Rogers, Rogers, & Scaramella, 1998): *Warmth/Support*, which includes verbal and nonverbal expressions of caring, affection, affirmation, supportiveness, and positive emotional responsiveness toward the other; *Reciprocate Warmth/Support*, which includes the degree to which the target responds to the other's warmth and supportive behaviors; and *Prosocial Behaviors*, including relating to others in a cooperative, sensitive, and helpful fashion and complying with the other's wishes. Both adolescents' and mothers' behavior were coded on 5-point Likert scales. Inter-rater reliability (intraclass coefficients) on 20% of the tapes, assessed prior to coding, ranged from .83 to .90 for the six codes (overall coefficient = .87).

Observer ratings of adolescents' warmth/support and reciprocated warmth and support were highly correlated,  $r(76) = .75$ , and both of these ratings were significantly correlated with ratings of prosocial behavior,  $r's(76) = .64, .50$ , respectively. Similarly, ratings of mothers' warmth/support and reciprocated warmth and support were highly correlated,  $r(76) = .66$ , and warmth/support and reciprocated warmth/support were strongly and positively associated with prosocial behavior,  $r's(76) = .57$ ,

.43. Accordingly, ratings for adolescents and mothers were each combined into a single measure of Warmth/Support. Ratings of mothers' and adolescents' warmth/support were highly correlated,  $r(76) = .56$ . Because we were interested in the influence of parents' prosocial behavior on adolescent civic engagement, only ratings of mothers' warmth/support were used in the present analyses.

## Procedures

To obtain a primarily middle-class sample of African American families with early adolescents, family income (minimum of \$25,000/year in 1995), race/ethnicity (both parents had to be black or African American), and adolescent age (between 11 and 14 years) were used as the criteria for participation. Families were initially recruited through African American churches and social groups, as described in more detail elsewhere (Smetana, 2000; Smetana & Gaines, 1999).

At the first two waves, participating families were visited in their homes (or for a smaller number of families, based on their preference, in the lab) by two African American interviewers. Interviewers explained the research to the participating family members and obtained informed consent from parents and assent from adolescents. Family members completed questionnaires in separate parts of the house, and mothers were individually administered the Racial Socialization Interview as part of a longer interview (both parents were interviewed in the first wave). Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Families then participated in a series of 10 minute, semi-structured family interaction tasks, which were developed in previous research (Smetana et al., 1991). Mothers and fathers participated in separate dyadic interactions with their adolescents. Mothers (or fathers) and adolescents first spent 3 minutes selecting and agreeing on an issue of conflict to discuss and then spent 7 minutes discussing the issue and working toward resolution. Interviewers described the task, turned on the video camera, and left the room so that the interactions took place without the interviewers being present.

At the third wave, when civic involvement was assessed, parents were re-contacted and invited to participate. As in Wave 2, we attempted to locate and retain all families, including those who had moved out of town or out of state. All adolescents were contacted by phone separately from their parents to solicit their participation. Adolescents and parents were mailed a packet of questionnaires, including the civic involvement, spirituality, and religiosity measures. A return envelope was included, and honoraria were sent to both adolescents and parents upon completion.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for study variables are included in Table 1. As can be seen, for both mothers and fathers, observed positive parental communication and adolescents' observed receptivity to that parent were not significantly associated, but mothers' positive communication was significantly but moderately correlated with observed warmth/prosocial behavior. Adolescents' Time 1 spirituality was moderately correlated with their observed receptivity to parents, and there was strong stability in spirituality over time.

### Influence of Mothers' Interactions and Spirituality on Adolescents' Civic Engagement

The next analyses focused on predicting African American late adolescents' current and intended civic involvement at Time 2 from family, religious, and spiritual correlates and antecedents. The analyses described in this section focus on mothers' influence; exploratory analyses focusing on fathers' influence are described in the following section. We used hierarchical regressions to examine the hypothesis that mothers' greater observed warmth and prosocial behavior and more positive communication in dyadic interactions, mothers' racial socialization messages focusing on tolerance and equal treatment, mothers' own current civic involvement, adolescents' greater observed receptivity to mothers in dyadic interactions, and adolescents' greater spirituality all would have unique influences on late adolescents' current civic engagement. As the bivariate correlations in Table 1 indicated, both maternal warmth/prosocial behavior and mothers' racial socialization measures were not significantly correlated with either current or intended civic engagement, and preliminary analyses indicated that neither variable contributed significantly to their prediction. Given the number of variables in the analyses relative to the sample size, these variables were omitted from the final analyses of the overall measure.

The dependent variables for the analyses were adolescents' current and intended civic involvement. In the first step of the analyses, we controlled for the effects of adolescents' sex (with girls coded as 1 and boys coded as 0) and family income, as a measure of socioeconomic status. Then, mothers' observed positive communication, adolescents' observed receptivity to mothers, and adolescents' ratings of spirituality at Time 1 were added in the second step. The final step added the concurrent measures of

TABLE 1  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables

| Variables                  | M    | SD   | 1.               | 2.   | 3.               | 4.    | 5.    | 6.                | 7.   | 8.    | 9.   | 10.    | 11.              | 12.   |
|----------------------------|------|------|------------------|------|------------------|-------|-------|-------------------|------|-------|------|--------|------------------|-------|
| 1. Sex (Female)            | .50  | 1.00 |                  | .01  | .11              | -.02  | -.28* | -.17              | -.05 | .19   | -.03 | .29*   | .12              | .17   |
| 2. Family Income           | 5.04 | 1.96 | 1.00             |      | .21 <sup>+</sup> | .21   | .10   | -.26 <sup>+</sup> | -.05 | -.01  | .12  | .15    | .19              | .08   |
| 3. T1 M Communication      | 4.37 | .52  | 1.00             | 1.00 |                  | .42** | .20   | .22               | .24* | .11   | -.08 | .27**  | .21 <sup>+</sup> | .33*  |
| 4. T1 F Communication      | 4.42 | .52  |                  | 1.00 | 1.00             |       | .08   | .24 <sup>+</sup>  | .10  | .12   | .08  | .06    | .09              | .33*  |
| 5. T1 A Receptive → M      | 2.92 | .24  |                  |      | 1.00             |       | 1.00  | .43**             | -.00 | .25*  | .04  | -.07   | -.12             | .04   |
| 6. T1 A Receptive → F      | 3.20 | .37  |                  |      |                  | 1.00  |       | 1.00              | .13  | .21   | .23  | -.04   | -.09             | -.17  |
| 7. T1 M Warmth/Prosocial   | 2.93 | .95  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   | 1.00 | .07   | -.14 | .09    | .06              | .06   |
| 8. T1 A Spirituality       | 4.33 | .67  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      | 1.00  | -.14 | .56*** | -.13             | .27   |
| 9. T1 Equality/Tolerance   | .34  | .44  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      |       | 1.00 | .02    | -.14             | -.05  |
| 10. T2 A Spirituality      | 4.26 | .97  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      |       |      | 1.00   | -.01             | .12   |
| 11. T2 M Current Involve   | 3.18 | .81  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      |       |      |        | 1.00             | .43** |
| 12. T2 F Current Involve   | 3.02 | .82  |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      |       |      |        |                  | 1.00  |
| <i>Dependent variables</i> |      |      |                  |      |                  |       |       |                   |      |       |      |        |                  |       |
| T Current Involvement      | 2.19 | .69  | .21 <sup>+</sup> | .23* | .07              | -.07  | -.27* | -.18              | .05  | .15   | .07  | .32**  | .36**            | .19   |
| T Intended Involvement     | 3.54 | .68  | .29**            | .10  | .43**            | .19   | -.12  | -.09              | .13  | .34** | .06  | .61*** | .13              | .18   |

Note. T1, Time 1; T2, Time 2; M, Mother; F, Father; A, Adolescent; Prosocial, Prosocial. Adolescents' sex was coded as 0, male; 1, female.  
<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

adolescents' spirituality/religiosity, mothers' current civic involvement, and, in the analysis of intended civic involvement, adolescents' current involvement.

We also explored whether these same family and religious/spiritual processes had differential effects on church, community, and political involvement. These analyses were run using the same independent variables as in the previous analyses, except that we also included mothers' racial socialization regarding tolerance, fair treatment, and equality to determine whether mothers' moral messages significantly influenced particular forms of civic involvement. We also matched adolescents' (current and intended) involvement in church, community, or political activities with mothers' current involvement in the same activities.

**Current civic involvement (total scale).** The results of the analysis of the total scale of current involvement are presented in Table 2. In this analysis, both family income and adolescents' sex were significant at Step 1, indicating that African American girls and adolescents from higher income families were more involved in civic activities than boys and adolescents from less well-off African American middle class families. Family income remained significant at Step 2, and in addition, at this step, adolescents' observed receptivity to mothers entered the equation significantly. Contrary to expectations, the analysis revealed that middle

TABLE 2  
Hierarchical Regression of Late Adolescents' Current Civic Involvement

|                          | $\Delta F$ | $R^2$ | Step 1<br>$\beta$ 's | Step 2<br>$\beta$ 's | Final<br>$\beta$ 's |
|--------------------------|------------|-------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Step 1—Background</i> | 4.56*      | .11   |                      |                      |                     |
| Sex (Female)             |            |       | .23*                 | .11                  | .06                 |
| Family Income            |            |       | .24*                 | .26*                 | .17                 |
| <i>Step 2—Time 1</i>     | 2.74*      | .20   |                      |                      |                     |
| T1 M Communicate         |            |       |                      | .07                  | -.06                |
| T1 A Receptivity         |            |       |                      | -.31*                | -.20 <sup>+</sup>   |
| T1 A Spirituality        |            |       |                      | .21 <sup>+</sup>     | .09                 |
| <i>Step 3—Time 2</i>     | 6.59**     | .33   |                      |                      |                     |
| T2 A Spirituality        |            |       |                      |                      | .29*                |
| T2 M Current Involve     |            |       |                      |                      | .32**               |

Note. T1, Time 1; T2, Time 2; M, Mother; A, Adolescent; Communicate, Positive Communication; Involve, Involvement.

<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

adolescents who were less receptive to mothers in dyadic interactions reported more current civic involvement in late adolescence. However, this effect (as well as the effect for family income) became nonsignificant when the Step 3 variables were added to the regression equation. At the final step, mothers' current civic involvement and adolescents' concurrently rated spirituality and religiosity were associated with current civic involvement.

**Dimensions of current civic involvement.** Table 3 presents the results of the regression analyses of the different dimensions of current civic involvement. Reflecting the analysis of the overall measure, mothers' current involvement in each of the different dimensions was significantly associated (or for political involvement, marginally associated,  $p = .065$ ) with adolescents' involvement in those same activities. African American adolescents' Time 1 spirituality influenced later community involvement, but only Time 2 religiosity/spirituality was associated with current church involvement, and neither predicted current political involvement.

In addition, family income, adolescents' receptivity to mothers, and mothers' ethnic socialization focusing on tolerance and fair treatment also

TABLE 3  
Hierarchical Regressions of Different Dimensions of Late Adolescents' Current Civic Involvement

|                          | Community         |       |            | Church            |       |            | Political  |       |                  |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------|------------|-------------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|------------------|
|                          | $\Delta F$        | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's | $\Delta F$        | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's | $\Delta F$ | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's       |
| <i>Step 1—Background</i> | 2.85 <sup>+</sup> | .07   |            | 4.78*             | .12   |            | .98        | .03   |                  |
| Sex (Female)             |                   |       | -.08       |                   |       | .13        |            |       | .06              |
| Family Income            |                   |       | .23*       |                   |       | .15        |            |       | .06              |
| <i>Step 2—Time 1</i>     | 4.40**            | .26   |            | 2.19 <sup>+</sup> | .22   |            | .70        | .06   |                  |
| T1 M Communicate         |                   |       | .08        |                   |       | -.10       |            |       | -.14             |
| T1 A Receptivity         |                   |       | -.31**     |                   |       | -.02       |            |       | -.12             |
| T1 A Spirituality        |                   |       | .28*       |                   |       | -.01       |            |       | -.07             |
| T1 M Reasoning           |                   |       | -.23*      |                   |       | -.05       |            |       | .05              |
| <i>Step 3—Time 2</i>     | 8.66***           | .41   |            | 14.27***          | .45   |            | 2.12       | .12   |                  |
| T2 A Spirituality        |                   |       | -.05       |                   |       | .48***     |            |       | .14              |
| T2 M Involve             |                   |       | .40***     |                   |       | .33***     |            |       | .23 <sup>+</sup> |

Note. T1, Time 1; T2, Time 2; M, Mother; A, Adolescent; Communicate, Positive Communication; Involve, Current Involvement on the matching dimension of mothers' responses.

<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

significantly influenced current community involvement (but not current church and political involvement). As expected, higher family income was associated with greater community involvement in late adolescence. Unexpectedly, however, less receptivity to mothers in the observed dyadic interaction task and less maternal focus on fair treatment and equality in middle adolescence led to greater community involvement in late adolescence. The variables accounted for 41% of the variance in current community involvement and 45% of the variance in church involvement, but only 12% of the variance in current political involvement.

**Intended civic involvement (total scale).** The results of the analysis for the total scale of intended civic involvement are presented in Table 4. Although girls reported a greater intention to be involved in civic activities in the future than boys, this effect did not remain significant when antecedent (Time 1) variables were entered in the regression equation. Mothers' observed positive communication, adolescents' observed receptivity to mothers, and adolescents' ratings of their spirituality all were significant at Step 2 and together, accounted for 26% of the variance in ratings of intended civic involvement. Again, the effect for adolescents' receptivity was contrary to that expected; middle adolescents' lower observed receptivity to mothers led to more intended civic involvement

TABLE 4  
Hierarchical Regression on Late Adolescents' Future Civic Involvement

|                          | $\Delta F$ | $R^2$ | Step 1<br>$\beta$ 's | Step 2<br>$\beta$ 's | Step 3<br>$\beta$ 's |
|--------------------------|------------|-------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Step 1—Background</i> |            |       |                      |                      |                      |
| Sex (Female)             |            |       | .28**                | .15                  | .05                  |
| Family Income            |            |       | .11                  | .07                  | -.09                 |
| <i>Step 2—Time 1</i>     |            |       |                      |                      |                      |
| T1 M Communicate         | 9.37***    | .35   |                      | .40***               | .31***               |
| T1 A Receptivity         |            |       |                      | -.25*                | -.03                 |
| T1 A Spirituality        |            |       |                      | .34***               | .02                  |
| <i>Step 3—Time 2</i>     |            |       |                      |                      |                      |
| T2 A Spirituality        | 19.81***   | .66   |                      |                      | .38***               |
| T2 M Current Involve     |            |       |                      |                      | -.11                 |
| T2 A Current Involve     |            |       |                      |                      | .48***               |

Note. T1, Time 1; T2, Time 2; M, Mother; A, Adolescent; Communicate, Positive Communication; Involve, Involvement.

\* $p < .10$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

3 years later. In addition, as hypothesized, mothers' more positive communication in dyadic interactions and middle adolescents' greater spirituality both predicted greater intentions to be involved 3 years later. At the final step, the effects for mothers' observed positive communication remained significant, but the effects for adolescents' spirituality and adolescents' receptivity did not. Instead, adolescents' concurrent spirituality and their current civic involvement significantly influenced ratings of intended civic involvement. Together, these variables accounted for an additional 31% of the variance in African American adolescents' future civic involvement (total  $R^2 = .66$ ).

The results suggested that the effects of spirituality at Time 1 were mediated by adolescents' Time 2 spirituality. Thus, we used Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria to test for mediation. The regression indicated that: (a) Time 1 spirituality had a direct relationship with Time 2 intended civic involvement,  $\beta = .34$ ,  $F(3, 70) = 11.09$ , and when controlling for Time 1, Time 2 spirituality was significantly related to Time 2 future civic involvement,  $\beta = .38$ ,  $F(3, 69) = 14.72$ . (b) There was a direct relationship between Time 1 and Time 2 spirituality,  $\beta = .55$ ,  $F(1, 70) = 5.62$ , and (c) adolescents' Time 1 ratings of spirituality were reduced to nonsignificance when adolescents' Time 2 ratings of spirituality/religiosity were entered in the regression equations,  $\beta = .09$ , NS. Thus, the results meet Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for mediation and demonstrate that the effects of adolescents' spirituality at Time 1 on Time 2 ratings of intended civic involvement were fully mediated by spirituality and religiosity at Time 2.

*Dimensions of intended future civic involvement.* Table 5 presents the results of the separate hierarchical regression analyses for the different dimensions of intended civic involvement. As can be seen, the results were not strongly differentiated across the three dimensions. Family income significantly predicted adolescents' intended political (but not the other forms of) involvement; lower income was associated with stronger intentions to be politically involved in the future. Mothers' more positive communication in the earlier dyadic interaction task significantly predicted intended church and political involvement and approached significance for intended community involvement ( $p = .08$ ). Mothers' current church involvement was associated with adolescents' future church involvement, but not other forms of involvement. Adolescents' current involvement was significantly and positively associated with intentions to be involved in those same activities in the future.

Finally, adolescents' Time 2 spirituality and religiosity were significantly associated with all three forms of intended involvement, but mediated

TABLE 5  
 Hierarchical Regressions on Different Forms of Late Adolescents' Intended Future Civic Involvement

|                          | <i>Community</i> |       |                  | <i>Church</i> |       |                   | <i>Political</i> |       |            |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------|------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|------------------|-------|------------|
|                          | $\Delta F$       | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's       | $\Delta F$    | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's        | $\Delta F$       | $R^2$ | $\beta$ 's |
| <i>Step 1—Background</i> | 1.74             | .05   |                  | 2.48          | .06   |                   | 4.04*            | .10   |            |
| Sex (Female)             |                  |       | .03              |               |       | -.13 <sup>+</sup> |                  |       | .14        |
| Family Income            |                  |       | -.09             |               |       | -.01              |                  |       | -.19*      |
| <i>Step 2—Time 1</i>     | 4.29**           | .24   |                  | 5.83***       | .30   |                   | 3.11*            | .24   |            |
| T1 M Communicate         |                  |       | .15 <sup>+</sup> |               |       | .22**             |                  |       | .27**      |
| T1 A Receptivity         |                  |       | .15              |               |       | -.17*             |                  |       | .01        |
| T1 A Spirituality        |                  |       | .06              |               |       | -.05              |                  |       | -.04       |
| T1 M Reasoning           |                  |       | .16 <sup>+</sup> |               |       | .05               |                  |       | -.03       |
| <i>Step 3—Time 2</i>     | 4.91**           | .59   |                  | 33.12***      | .72   |                   | 13.24***         | .52   |            |
| T2 A Spirituality        |                  |       | .24*             |               |       | .47***            |                  |       | .41**      |
| T2 T Involvement         |                  |       | .66***           |               |       | .50***            |                  |       | .43***     |
| T2 M Involvement         |                  |       | .05              |               |       | -.16*             |                  |       | .02        |

Note. T1, Time 1; T2, Time 2; M, Mother; A, Adolescent; Communicate, Positive Communication; Current Involvement is assessed on the matching dimension of adolescents' and mothers' responses.

<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

relationships were found only for community and church involvement. That is, (a) Time 1 spirituality had a direct relationship with Time 2 intended community and church involvement,  $\beta$ 's = .33, .34,  $F(4, 69) = 8.58, 9.85$  (but not intended political involvement,  $\beta = .18, p = .11$ ). When controlling for Time 1, Time 2 spirituality was significantly related to Time 2 future community and church involvement,  $\beta$ 's = .24, .47,  $F(3, 66) = 4.91, 23.22$ . (b) There was a direct relationship between Time 1 and Time 2 spirituality,  $\beta = .55, F(1, 70) = 5.62$ , and (c) adolescents' Time 1 ratings of spirituality were reduced to nonsignificance when Time 2 ratings of spirituality/religiosity were entered in the regression equations,  $\beta$ 's = .06, .05, NS.

### Influence of Father Interactions on Adolescents' Civic Engagement

We conducted exploratory analyses of the influence of father-adolescent dyadic interactions and fathers' current civic involvement on African American late adolescents' current and intended civic involvement at Time 2. Given the smaller number of fathers than mothers included in the

study (because of the number of single-family households) and the need to maintain a reasonable subject-to-variable ratio, we focused on the effects of fathers' observed positive communication and adolescents' observed receptivity to fathers in the dyadic interaction task at Time 1, as well as fathers' current civic involvement. Family income was controlled in the analyses, and we also included adolescents' current involvement in the analysis of intended civic involvement.

As found in the analyses of mother-adolescent interactions, fathers' observed positive communication and adolescents' receptivity to fathers did not significantly influence African American late adolescents' current civic involvement ( $\beta$ 's =  $-.25$ ,  $-.09$ , respectively). Unlike the analyses for mothers, however, fathers' current civic involvement also did not significantly influence current involvement ( $\beta = .20$ ). Family income had a significant effect when all the variables were included in the analysis,  $\beta = .37$ ,  $F(2, 36) = 5.26$ . The variables accounted for 22% of the variance in current involvement.

Also paralleling the results of the previous analyses, fathers' positive communication in the dyadic interaction task and adolescents' current involvement,  $\beta$ 's =  $.36$ ,  $.66$ ,  $F(2, 34) = 4.77$ , and  $F(2, 36) = 19.09$ , respectively, had unique influences on adolescents' intended civic involvement, but family income, adolescents' receptivity to fathers, and fathers' current involvement did not ( $\beta$ 's =  $-.17$ ,  $-.10$ ,  $-.18$ , NS).

## DISCUSSION

The present study examined family and religious/spiritual antecedents and correlates of civic involvement in a sample of middle class African American late adolescents using a multi-method, multi-informant, 3-year longitudinal design. We examined the influence of different parenting processes and the role of spirituality and religiosity in late adolescents' current and intended civic involvement.

Previous research on adolescents' civic involvement has shown that higher socioeconomic status is associated with adolescents' greater involvement, as assessed on a variety of measures of service and involvement (Hart et al., 1998). It has been hypothesized that more advantaged youth have greater access to the social organizations that promote civic behavior than do less advantaged youth, where social capital is more limited. Effects for family income did not remain significant when current civic involvement was examined in the overall analysis of mother-adolescent interactions. Consistent with Hart et al. (1998), however, family income did have a significant effect on current community involvement.

The community involvement dimension included one item assessing membership in exclusively upper middle-class African American social groups (LINKS and Jack-and-Jill), which may have contributed to this finding, but more generally, it is likely that higher family income is associated with greater opportunities to participate in community organizations.

Previous research has also found that girls volunteer more than boys (Keith, Nelson, Schlanbach, & Thompson, 1991). Consistent with this research (but not with other large-scale studies, which have found no gender effects in adolescents' civic involvement; e.g., Bachman et al., 1993), we found that African American females rated themselves as more involved, both currently and in terms of the future civic involvement, than boys. Again, however, these effects did not remain significant when other psychological variables were considered in the analyses.

Our results indicated that the influence of parenting varied for current and intended civic involvement and for different dimensions of current involvement. African American late adolescents' current, and in particular, their community involvement, was associated with their mothers' (but not with fathers') ratings of current involvement. These findings are consistent with Pancer and Pratt's (1999) assertion that parents may influence children's civic involvement by serving as altruistic models, but they also refine this hypothesis by demonstrating that at least in African American middle class families, mothers' involvement appears to be more influential than fathers' involvement. It is possible that the effects for fathers did not attain significance because of the small number of fathers in the sample. It may also be that mothers are more involved in organizing the everyday details of their children's lives than are fathers, and thus may be more likely to schedule and include adolescents in their own activities. Because ratings of civic involvement were assessed concurrently, however, we cannot ascertain whether mothers' involvement led adolescents to be more involved in their communities or vice versa. Longitudinal research would be needed to determine the direction of influence.

Mothers' ratings of current involvement also influenced adolescents' ratings of their intended involvement in their communities in the future, but not other forms of civic involvement. Adolescents' intended involvement in different types of future activities was robustly predicted by both mothers' and fathers' more positive communication, observed 3 years earlier in separate dyadic interaction tasks that entailed attempted resolution of an actual disagreement. Our hypothesis was that parents who communicate more positively and with greater clarity may be more effective in communicating their values and ideals and in engaging their adolescents in values discussion; the present results provide some

preliminary evidence in support of this proposition, although the specific processes that underlie these findings remain to be elucidated. It is interesting, however, that mothers' more positive communication had a significant influence on intended civic involvement but not on current behavior—either overall or in terms of specific dimensions. It is possible that the lack of effects was because many of the late adolescents included in the present study were not old enough to engage in some of the behaviors assessed on the checklist, such as voting, signing a petition for a cause, or joining African American social groups. However, it should also be noted that behavioral intentions are sometimes poor predictors of future behavior, and thus, further research needs to determine whether more effective parental communication has more of an effect on civic involvement in young adulthood.

Based on Pancer and Pratt (1999), we also examined whether mothers' greater warmth, support, reciprocity, and prosocial behavior, as observed in dyadic interactions in middle adolescence, led to more civic involvement in late adolescence, but no significant relationships were obtained. It is possible that the context of the observed mother–adolescent interactions, which entailed discussion of a disagreement or conflict, may have constrained the extent of prosocial behavior and warmth observed and that significant influences would have been obtained if mother–adolescent interactions had been observed in a more neutral or even positive interaction context. However, we did obtain significant variations in prosocial responses, and ratings of warmth and support, prosocial behavior, and reciprocated warmth were moderately correlated with more positive maternal communication, providing support for the validity of the coding and the usefulness of the task context. It is also possible that significant findings were not obtained because prosocial behaviors were coded by European American coders, while maternal positive communication (and adolescent receptivity) were rated by African American coders, perhaps leading to cultural biases in the coding of prosocial responses. Again, however, the significant associations obtained between the two sets of observations provide some support for the validity of the warmth/prosocial behavior coding. Nevertheless, in future research, it would be worthwhile to examine the influence of parents' warmth and prosocial behavior on later civic involvement as assessed using a broader set of tasks, including those that "pull" for more prosocial responses. It would also be useful to examine these behaviors as coded by African American coders and to examine whether fathers' warmth or prosocial behavior influences adolescents' civic involvement.

We also examined whether mothers' greater focus on the importance of tolerance and equality in the context of racial socialization around issues

of prejudice and discrimination would influence later current or intended civic involvement, and found limited evidence for its influence. Compared with other minority groups, African Americans report being more separated from mainstream society (Phinney, DuPont, Espinosa, Revill, & Sanders, 1994). Because African Americans are members of an "excluded" group whose historical attempts to become members of the greater civic culture have been consistently rejected, Sanchez-Jankowski (2003) has proposed that civic involvement among ethnic minorities may be influenced by their historical responses to prejudice and discrimination. He has also asserted that African Americans' civic involvement is more likely to involve informal institutions such as the family and church than broader political involvement. This line of reasoning suggests that parents who focus more on social justice and emphasize the importance of tolerance, equality, and fair treatment might be more influential in fostering a feeling of political enfranchisement, which in turn might lead to greater political and social involvement. However, we found no support for this hypothesis here. Instead, contrary to expectations, middle adolescents whose mothers reasoned less about tolerance, equality, and fair treatment reported greater involvement in their communities. It is possible that African American youth who received fewer moral messages about the importance of social equality and fairness were more likely to turn to their communities, and in particular, the African American community than the broader society for support and involvement. As the items on the community involvement factor were split between items assessing involvement in explicitly African American groups and other groups, however, this hypothesis would need further investigation in future research. It is also possible that our assessment of mothers' messages about equality and fair treatment in the context of the parental ethnic socialization interviews did not adequately tap their beliefs about this issue and that more direct measures would be needed. Another possibility is that adolescents' own experiences with racism and prejudice are more important influences on their desires to become involved in their churches, communities, and the broader society than are parents' socialization messages. Additionally, social trust (Flanagan & Faison, 2002) may mediate the relationship between parental ethnic socialization and adolescent civic involvement.

Although more positive communication has been hypothesized to lead to children's greater willingness to listen to and be socialized by parents (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994), adolescents do not necessarily interpret parents' messages in the manner intended. They may have different goals than their parents in the situation, their social-cognitive abilities may place constraints on their understanding, or they may be unreceptive to parental messages (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Thus, future research

should include adolescents' (and not just parents') reasoning about fairness and equality in the context of societal systems. A great deal of research from the social-cognitive domain perspective (Smetana, 1995; Smetana & Turiel, 2003; Turiel, 1998) has indicated that children's and adolescents' concepts of morality (including concepts of justice, fairness, and equitable treatment) and their understanding of society (including the ways in which society is structured and organized) are separate but potentially intertwined aspects of adolescents' developing social knowledge, and how adolescents conceptualize these issues, as well as their understanding of tolerance (Wainryb, Shaw, & Maianu, 1998) in the context of societal injustices and inequalities are likely to influence their civic participation.

In addition to these different sources of parental influence on adolescents' civic involvement, we also examined African American adolescents' receptivity to parents, as assessed in separate parent-adolescent dyadic interaction tasks 3 years earlier. Adolescents' receptivity did not have unique influences on current or intended civic involvement when involvement was assessed globally, although adolescents' observed receptivity to mothers was significant in earlier steps of the analyses and in the analysis of adolescents' current community involvement. Surprisingly, however, the effects were opposite to what was hypothesized; adolescents who were less receptive to mothers demonstrated greater civic (and particularly community) involvement. It is possible that less receptivity to mothers indexed greater individuation and hence, more independent thinking, but this hypothesis deserves further attention in future research.

Finally, the analyses indicated that middle class African American adolescents' spirituality and religiosity had a significant influence on their civic involvement. These results are consistent with previous research, which has shown that religiosity is associated with African-American adults' community involvement (Mattis et al., 2000; Taylor & Chatters, 1991) and with European American adolescents' greater involvement in service (Bachman et al., 1993, Benson et al., 1980; Youniss et al., 1999), but our results extend the findings to middle class African American adolescents. We obtained late adolescents' ratings of their subjective and non-organizational religiosity on measures designed specifically for African Americans, as well as their ratings of spiritual transcendence on a well-validated measure. Although Levin et al. (1995) found robust support for a three-dimensional model of religiosity for African Americans, our results are consistent with the previous research in showing strong intercorrelations among these measures (Levin et al., 1995; Seidlitz et al., 2002). These associations are not surprising, as all three measures of spirituality and religiosity assessed adolescents' private (and thus perhaps more

deeply held) religious and spiritual beliefs and practices, rather than their public, organizationally based religious behavior. Both church attendance (Youniss et al., 1999) and more intrinsic religious orientations (Benson et al., 1980) have been associated with service and community involvement. Thus, in future research, it would be interesting to examine the differential influence of various dimensions of institutional versus nonorganizational religiosity and spirituality on different forms of civic involvement in diverse samples of adolescents.

Our results indicate that middle adolescents' spirituality had a significant longitudinal influence on current community involvement, as rated 3 years later in late adolescence, while religiosity and spirituality were concurrently associated with church involvement. These latter findings raise the possibility that African American adolescents are encouraged to become involved in church activities through their mothers' participation and that their involvement in church-sponsored activities and service then leads to greater religiosity and spirituality. Further research would be needed, however, to untangle the causal directions of these findings. The African American church provides an important source of strength and resilience in the African American community (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990; Winfield, 1995), and has a long history of facilitating social reform through political and social involvement. Thus, it was surprising that neither spirituality nor religiosity influenced adolescents' current political involvement. Indeed, while the variables included in the present study accounted for a large proportion of the variance in current community and church involvement, they were relatively poor predictors of African American adolescents' reported political involvement.

Furthermore, the effect of earlier spirituality on later intended (church and community) involvement was fully mediated by late adolescents' ratings of their current religiosity and spirituality. Thus, the results of the present study indicate the importance of religiosity and spirituality in influencing African American late adolescents' current and future civic involvement. Although these results are quite robust, it would be profitable in future research to examine the components of spirituality and religiosity that facilitate greater involvement.

Some limitations of the current study should be noted. First, our analyses of parents' influences focused on both mothers' and fathers' behaviors in separate dyadic interaction tasks and their own civic involvement. However, the smaller number of fathers than mothers in the sample precluded analyses examining the full set of study variables for fathers. Furthermore, while the inclusion of fathers is a strength of the present study, as fathers have been ignored in a great deal of

developmental research and have been particularly absent in research on African American families (Parke & Buriel, 1998), it would be useful in future research to more directly test fathers' versus mothers' influence on adolescents' civic engagement. In addition, although a strength of our study was that it was longitudinal, it is possible that the seeds of adolescents' civic involvement are sown much earlier than middle adolescence and that the types of influence that are effective change as children grow older. Thus, research needs to examine the influence of parents during middle childhood and the transition to adolescence. Also, our sample size was relatively small, and thus more research with larger samples is needed to replicate the present findings. Finally, more research is needed on the processes by which parents and religion influence African American adolescents to become invested in their communities and the broader society and to engage in service on behalf of the well-being of others.

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