"Thinking About Makin' It": Black Canadian Students' Beliefs Regarding Education and Academic Achievement

Andrea Smith,[1] Barry H. Schneider,[2] and Martin D. Ruck[3]

Black Canadians share many aspects of the historical experiences of African Americans, but there are also important differences. One similarity between these two groups is the persistent academic underachievement of Black adolescents. Although this is a subject of widespread concern in both countries, it has received little empirical scrutiny in Canada. We address this shortcoming by examining the academic and achievement-related beliefs of Black high school students in two Canadian cities, Toronto and Halifax. Despite significant regional differences most participants believed that schooling could lead to success for them. Females' attitudes and beliefs regarding education were more positive than those of males. Perceived parental values and support were strong predictors of participants' attitudes and school marks; socioeconomic status (SES) and perceived peer support were non-significant correlates of academic outcomes. We discuss the results in terms of the germane US research, and highlight the implications of the findings for understanding diversity among Black Canadian youth.

KEY WORDS: academic achievment; minority youth; immigration; diversity.

INTRODUCTION

The academic underachievement of Black students has been well documented: Numerous American studies show that African American children do not perform as well as other children on various indicators of school performance, including achievement test scores, grade point average, grade retention, school dropout rate, reports of disciplinary action, years of schooling completed, and rate of high school graduation (Ensminger *et al.*, 1996;

[1] School Psychologist, Psychological Services, Toronto District School Board, Toronto, Ontario. Received PhD from the University of Toronto. Areas of research include educational and psychological correlates of ethnic and racial identity in Black Canadians.

[2] Professor, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, Ontario. Received PhD from the University of Toronto. Research focuses on the cultural dimensions of friendship.

[3] Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Received PhD from the University of Toronto. Research interests include adolescent development, social justice, and children's rights-related thinking and knowledge. To whom correspondence should be addressed at the Department of Psychology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016–4309; e-mail: mruck@gc.cuny.edu.

Entwisle and Alexander, 1990; Ford and Harris, 1996; Irvine, 1990; McLoyd, 1998; Mickelson, 1990; Taylor *et al.*, 1994). A number of theoretical accounts have been put forth to explain the academic underachievement of Black students (for reviews see Murray and Fairchild, 1989; Slaughter-Defoe *et al.*, 1990). Genetic and cultural "deficit models" assume that limitations or deficiencies within the minority child either as a result of their genetic background or within their environment or life circumstances are responsible for underachievement and school failure (García Coll *et al.*, 1996; Murray and Fairchild, 1989). However, such explanations have been for the most part discredited on both conceptual and methodological grounds (Barbarin, 1999; Murray and Fairchild, 1989; Sue and Okazaki, 1990).

In contrast to genetic and cultural-deficit explanations, the cultural–ecological perspective explains the poor school performance of Black children in terms of the cultural context in which they function (Slaughter-Defoe *et al.*, 1990). One popular cultural–ecological explanation is based on the work of Ogbu *et al.* (Fordham, 1988; Ogbu, 1978, 1987, 1993). According to Ogbu (1987), African Americans, as a result of their

involuntary incorporation into American society and resulting caste-like status, have been denied assimilation into mainstream society. Therefore, social stratification mechanisms such as racial discrimination, prejudice and restricted economic opportunity serve to limit or block the academic achievement and motivation of African American students. As a result of these social forces, many minority students believe they will experience limited occupational opportunities, preventing them from receiving the rewards and benefits that correspond with their educational attainments (Mickelson, 1990). One result of this world view is that, although many African American students may hold positive views about school success and may endorse the tenets of the achievement ideology, they still do not work to their full potential in school, resulting in a "paradox of underachievement" (Ford and Harris, 1997; Mickelson, 1990; Steinberg *et al.*, 1992). Because of minority students' assumptions about the opportunity structure, it is sometimes believed that academic underachievement is an adaptive response to their restricted social and economic opportunities (Ford, 1993; Ogbu, 1987, 1993).

Ogbu's model also suggests that inequalities in the social and educational systems can also lead minority students to develop an oppositional social identity whereby academic achievement and related behaviors are viewed as associated with the dominant or White culture (e.g., Fordham, 1988; Ogbu, 1987, 1993). Hence, Black students may perceive schooling as a "subtractive process" in which African Americans must forfeit or lose some of their collective Black identity in order to achieve academic success (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).

However, despite the comprehensiveness of the cultural–ecological model in explaining minority school failure, there is a growing body of work that refutes and challenges Ogbu's framework. One weakness of the cultural ecological account is that it fails to address the within-group variability in the academic performance and achievement orientations of African American children (O'Connor, 2002; Foley, 1991). As O'Connor (2002) recently noted, a growing number of studies provide evidence that Black identity is not only compatible with academic success (e.g., Arroyo and Zigler, 1995; Marryshow and Boykin, 1992; Sellers *et al.*, 1998; Taylor, 1999; Taylor *et al.*, 1994, all cited in O'Connor, 2002) but may also serve to facilitate academic achievement (e.g., Gurin and Epps, 1975; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999, all cited in O'Connor, 2002).

The umbrella term "social capital" can be used in tracing the roots of educational achievement and underachievement. Social capital is a resource that is acquired in social relationships applied to the process of schooling

(Coleman, 1994). Hao and Bonstead-Bruns (1998) divide social capital into within-family social capital, which addresses mainly parent–child relationships, and between-family social capital, which refers to family–community relationships. In terms of within-family social capital, Hao and Bonstead-Bruns (1998) and Epstein (1987) delineate several modalities of parental influence on their children's orientation toward schooling, the most important of which are providing opportunities, encouragement, and becoming involved in their children's schooling. Much of the available research examining parental influences on African American students' school achievement has focused on specific sociodemographic factors, including parents' level of education, marital status, and family income (Ford and Harris, 1997). However, in and of themselves such sociodemographic variables do not fully account for the academic success or failure of minority students. For example, research shows that across socioeconomic groups, African American parents contribute substantially to their children's intellectual and educational development (Hidalgo *et al.*, 2000; Slaughter and Epps, 1987). In addition, studies examining African American parents' beliefs and orientations toward their children's school performance have revealed that when African American parents have positive views about the value of education and hold high academic expectations, their children often experience higher levels of academic achievement (Ford and Harris, 1997; Steinberg *et al.*, 1992; Stevenson *et al.*, 1990).

Peers are also a factor in school achievement and underachievement (e.g., Fuligni, 1997; Mounts and Steinberg, 1995). In a study examining ethnic differences in adolescent achievement, Steinberg and colleagues (Steinberg *et al.*, 1992) found that while peers are generally an important influence in terms of students' day-to-day behavior at school, there are also clear ethnic/racial group differences in the relative influence of peers on student achievement. They reported that African American peer groups tend to discourage academic achievement to such an extent that high-achieving African American students are often forced to associate with students from other ethnic groups. Ethnographic studies focussing on African American high school students also suggest that their peer group actively encourages negative attitudes toward school and academic achievement (Fordham, 1988; Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).

Ford (1992a,b) noted the lack of research examining the influence of gender on African American students' attitudes toward academic achievement. The available literature on academic achievement indicates that in general males are more likely than females to exhibit underachievement (e.g., McCall *et al.*, 1992). This

finding holds for African American students: African American females tend to perform somewhat better in school than their male counterparts (Arroyo and Zigler, 1995; Garibaldi, 1992; Irvine, 1990; Slaughter-Defoe *et al*., 1990; Stevenson *et al*., 1990). Ford (1992a,b) conducted one of the few studies exploring gender differences in African American students' (gifted and non-gifted) beliefs regarding the achievement ideology. They reported that while both African American males and females indicated support for the achievement ideology, males were more likely to report expending lower levels of effort on their school work. In addition, African American males were more likely than females to indicate agreement with beliefs that might discourage African American children from doing well in school and, hence, contribute to underachievement. Based on these findings, Ford and Harris (1997) suggest that low support for achievement and low effort may lead to diminished expectations by African American males, which in turn leads to low academic performance.

The present study was conducted with Black high school students from two Canadian cites, Toronto, Ontario and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Canada, like the United States, is a multi-racial and multi-ethnic North American country, and the academic problems of minority students in Canadian schools are hardly new (Henry *et al*., 2000; Spencer, 1970; Winks, 1997). Like their American counterparts, Black Canadian children constitute a disproportionate number of students showing poor school performance and failure (Alladin, 1996; Yau *et al*., 1993; RCOL, 1994; cited in Dei *et al*., 1997; Solomon, 1992). Census Canada figures indicate that in 1991 less than 30% of Black Nova Scotians between 20–24 years of age had completed high school. In addition, a report by the Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC, 1994) indicated that the majority (70%) of Black Nova Scotian high school students were enrolled in non-university preparatory programs. Similarly, a study by a board of education in Ontario (Toronto) reported that 45% of Black students were enrolled in low level vocational and occupational programs (i.e., non-university preparatory) compared to 28% of the entire student body enrolled in these programs (Yau *et al*., 1993, cited in Dei *et al*., 1997). The same study also found that 36% of Black students were at risk of dropping out due to failure to accumulate sufficient credits to graduate compared with 26% of White students and 18% of Asian students (Cheng, 1995; Brown *et al*., 1992, all cited in Dei *et al*., 1997). Thus, it is not surprising that the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning noted "a crisis among Black youth" with respect to "education and achievement" (RCOL, 1994, cited in Dei *et al*., 1997). Several documents indicate that Black Canadian high-school students are marginalized and alienated in Canadian schools (Alladin, 1996; Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994; Solomon, 1992).

One important distinction between the available American and Canadian data on this topic is that the latter are primarily descriptive or ethnographic in nature thus making it difficult to identify the factors that may predict Black Canadian students' academic outcomes. Therefore, our present knowledge of the potential influence of various factors on the educational experiences of Black Canadian students is based primarily on findings taken from empirical studies conducted in the United States (e.g., see Cheng and Soudack, 1994), which may not accurately represent the Canadian experience. We have considerable reason to expect that the US findings do not reflect the current socio-cultural context of Black Canadian youth. We also feel that the important regional differences in Canada may make it impossible to come up with a single summary statement about Black Canadian students' views of their educational experiences. Hence, quantitative examination of the underachievement of minority students in Canadian schools is clearly needed. The current study examines possible factors influencing academic performance and attitudes toward school achievement in Black Canadian students.[4]

As a group, Blacks represent about 2% of the population of Canada, however, the history of Blacks in this country dates back to the first half of the 17th century (Hill, 1992; Winks, 1997). The first Blacks arriving in Canada arrived as slaves and served primarily in a domestic capacity. Slavery in Canada continued into the 19th century and was finally abolished in the British Empire in 1834 (Pachai, 1993; Spencer, 1970). Blacks also arrived from the United States as Loyalists under the promise of free land during the American Revolution, as fugitives escaping slavery, and also as Black Refugees of the war of 1812, settling mainly in Ontario and in Nova Scotia (Hill, 1992). Winks (1997) noted that Blacks who settled in Nova Scotia lived in severe disadvantage and suffered even more than those who settled in other parts of Canada. Pachai (1990) noted of Nova Scotia that, "a pattern of irregular, interrupted and inferior education developed throughout the province where separate schools existed" (p. 80). In the latter part of the 19th century, Blacks were increasingly allowed access to the common schools. However, segregated schools continued well into the 20th century (Winks, 1997). In Nova Scotia, Black communities were

---

[4]In the present report, the term multi-generational Black Canadians is used to describe Black Canadians with a considerably longer historical presence in Canada and different cultural background than those of West Indian or Carribean origin.

especially destitute, lacking in even the basic amenities. Some communities, Winks (1997) noted, lacked adequate housing, and employment and educational opportunities for their residents were almost nonexistent. Contemporary sources (e.g., BLAC, 1994) indicate some improvement in the current situation of the Black community in Nova Scotia, although they still lag behind other Nova Scotians in terms of employment, income and education.

During the 1960s and 1970s West Indians constituted the next major group of Blacks entering Canada, arriving as a result of changes to Canada's immigration policy (Solomon, 1992). During the 1980s, many West Indian children immigrated to Canada in order to join their parents who had come before them (Coelho, 1988). The majority of West Indian immigrants settled primarily in provinces with large urban areas, such as Ontario. Like the Blacks who came before them, West Indians experienced widespread discrimination in housing, employment, and education. Many of the most recent Black immigrants to Canada came to escape political unrest in Africa.

Many of these new Canadians shared the expectations that typify the experience of immigration in general. Unlike caste-like minorities whose incorporation into society was involuntary, immigrant minorities exercised free will in choosing to migrate to a new society. The motivating force behind the migration of many immigrant minorities is the belief that greater opportunities for themselves and their children, educational, social, and economic, existed in their selected society than in their home country. It is sometimes thought that, because of their aspirations for economic improvement, immigrants constitute a select group different from their countrymen and countrywomen who remained at home (Buriel and Cardoza, 1988). Their expectations of a better future reflect an optimism not possessed by involuntary minorities given their generations long experiences with discrimination. They view education as a way of continuing the economic advancement that was the original goal of immigration (Caplan *et al*., 1991). However, this classic and ideal portrait of the immigrant experience does not apply to all immigrant groups.

The current study provides the opportunity to examine issues pertaining to within-group diversity, in terms of regional differences in Black Canadian students' attitudes and behaviors toward academic achievement. A comparison between multi-generational Black Canadian adolescents (Halifax sample) with those of West Indian or Caribbean ancestry (Toronto sample) is particularly valuable because, although these two groups have both endured the effects of intense discrimination and racism, they have distinct cultural and historical back-

grounds. Thus, our two regional samples provide a unique opportunity to compare these cultural effects while holding essentially constant the effects of current experiences of racism and mastery of the language of the host country, factors that often complicate comparisons of other immigrant groups.

We hypothesized, first of all, that participants from Halifax would display less favorable attitudes toward education, and be less confident in the possibility of their own academic success, than would their counterparts from Toronto. It was important to consider the possibility that any regional differences might be confounded by differences in SES; we hypothesized that attitudes toward schooling would be less positive among students from lower-SES homes. We also expected that males would display more negative attitudes toward schooling than would females. Based on the literature reviewed earlier, we expected that the participants' attitudes and beliefs about schooling, as well as their achievement, would relate to support, expectations, and pro-education beliefs of both their parents and peers.

METHOD

Participants

The participants were 430 Black high school students, 287 from Toronto and 143 from the Halifax Regional Municipality. The students ranged in age from 14 to 22, with the overwhelming majority falling between 15 and 18 years. They ranged in grade level from 9 to 12 in Halifax, and 9-Ontario Academic Credit (formerly grade 13) in Toronto. Of the participants, 221 were female and 209 were male. Participants were solicited through various religious, cultural, employment, educational, and recreational organizations. All participants read well enough to complete anonymous self-administered questionnaires.

The majority of students were born in Canada: 57.5% of those from Toronto and 90.8% of those from Halifax. A substantial percentage of the Toronto participants, 28.8%, was born in the West Indies as compared to only 2.1% of the Halifax students. Only 8.1% of the Toronto students and 4.2% of the Halifax students were born in Africa. Even though more than half of the Toronto participants were born in Canada, only approximately 5% ($n = 278$) had at least one parent who was born in Canada. In contrast, 89.4% ($n = 142$) of the Halifax participants had at least 1 parent who was born in Canada.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

This 22-item scale solicited information from participants about basic variables expected to influence their educational beliefs and outcomes such as parental educational level and parental occupation.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Parents' occupation was coded using the Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada (Blishen *et al.*, 1987). Each occupation was assigned an index value; the higher the value, the higher the occupational status. SES data from parents who were reported to be students and parents whose occupation was unclassifiable were removed from the occupational dataset. Retirees, homemakers, the unemployed, and those on government assistance were left in. We used continuous data in the multiple regression analyses reported below and as covariates in the MANOVAs. However, because the scores have no substantive meaning, Blishen and McRoberts (1976) grouped the occupational indexes into 7 class intervals to facilitate comparison of regions; the higher the class interval, the greater the occupational status.

The first class interval consisted of those out of the workforce (e.g., unemployed, homemaker, individuals on government assistance). The 2nd class interval included occupations such as food service industry, janitorial work, and taxi driver). Class interval 3 included employment as factory workers, plumbers, and bus drivers. The 4th class interval included electricians, mechanics, and supervisory positions. Class interval 5 included nurses, bookkeepers, and health inspectors. The 6th class interval included city planners, computer engineers, social workers and managerial positions. Finally, class interval 7 included employment as university professors, architects, and physicians.

The largest percentage of Toronto mothers was found to be in the 5th class interval (24.2%). A similar percentage of Toronto mothers was in the 1st (22.7%) and 3rd (22.2%) class intervals. The largest percentage of mothers in the Halifax sample was in class interval 1 (39.8%) and the 2nd largest was in category 5 (17.6%). Of the Toronto fathers, 27.0% were reported to be in interval 2 and the 2nd largest percentage was in category 4 (23.9%). In the Halifax sample, the largest proportion of fathers (39.4%) was in interval 2 and the 2nd largest (28.3%) was in interval 1. Of the 8 fathers in their highest occupational interval, 5 were from the Halifax sample and the remaining 3 were from Toronto. Of the 25 mothers in their highest occupational interval, 19 were from Toronto and 6 were from Halifax. Thus, the lower-SES occupations were represented more heavily in the Halifax sample. In the analysis reported below, the highest of either mothers' or fathers' occupational level was used as the indicator of socioeconomic status.

Parental Emphasis on Achievement (Brown *et al.*, 1993)

This 15-item scale assessed concrete parenting behavior as reported by participants, as well as participants' beliefs of how important certain academic behaviors were to their parents, for example, "How important is it to your parents or guardians that you work hard on your schoolwork?" Items were scored using a 5-point scale and participants' responses on the items were averaged to obtain a mean score with 1 being low and 5 being high. The internal consistency for this measure was $\alpha = 0.84$, with the reliability being almost identical for the Toronto (.85) and Halifax (.84) students.

Parents' Value of Academic Success (Fuligni, 1997)

This 6-item scale assessed students' perceptions of how strongly their parents valued academic success. Students rated statements like "Getting an 'A' on almost every test" on a 5-point scale according to how important they were to parents, with a value of 1 equal to "not important to my parents" and a value of 5 equal to "very important to my parents." The scale had good internal consistency: $\alpha = 0.89$ (.89 for Toronto students and .87 for Halifax students).

Parents' Educational Aspirations (Fuligni, 1997)

This 1-item measure was used to solicit students' perceptions of the educational height their parents desired for them. The choices ranged from *finish some high school* (1) to *graduate from law, medical, or graduate school* (5).

High Parental Expectations (Fuligni, 1997)

This scale measured students' perceptions of academic performance that their parents expected of them. It included items such as "I feel that my parents will be disappointed if I don't get very high grades." The 4 items on this measure were rated on a 5-point scale with 1 being

"almost never" and 5 being "almost always." Item 4, "My parents would not be satisfied if I received a B+ on a test," was deleted from the measure, which increased the internal consistency of the scale. The internal consistency was. 82 (.77 for Toronto participants and .84 for Halifax participants).

Peer Support for Academics (Fuligni, 1997)

The 4 items on this scale measured students' perceptions of how much help and encouragement they received from their peers for their academic undertakings and include items such as "Share class notes and materials." The frequency with which their peers engaged in such academic behaviors was rated from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*). Reliability analysis for the current sample revealed alpha to be .79 (.80 for Toronto students and .76 for Halifax students).

Achievement Ideology

This 9-item scale was adapted from Ford's (1991) Self-Perceptions of School Achievement Among Black Students Survey. It was used to examine the degree to which Black students believe in the "American achievement ideology," i.e., that hard work in school will result in upward mobility for all, regardless of race. We modified the scale to make it appropriate for a Canadian sample. For example, any references to the president of the United States were changed to the prime minister of Canada. The measure included statements like "Anyone can do well in school if he or she tries." Statements were rated on a 4-point scale ranging from *strongly agree* (4) to *strongly disagree* (1). The lower the score, the weaker was students' belief in the American achievement ideology. This scale had good internal consistency, $\alpha = 0.82$ (.83 for Toronto participants and .81 for Halifax participants).

Friend/Social Versus Academic Orientation

We used this 5-item scale, created for our study, to examine the degree to which students were oriented to academic achievement versus to peers and social activities. The items, e.g., "My friends are more important than my getting good grades in school," were rated from *don't agree* (1) to *very much agree* (5). The higher the score, the more oriented students were to non-academic pursuits rather than to academic activities. The internal consistency was good, $\alpha = 0.75$ (.76 for Toronto and .73 for Halifax participants).

Belief in the Possibility of Blacks Attaining Success

This 6-item scale, developed for the present study, contains statements focussing on students' beliefs about Blacks achieving success in Canadian society, e.g., "No matter how smart a Black person is, she/he will still not get a good job." The items were rated on a 5-point scale from *don't agree* (1) to *very much agree* (5). The higher the score, the greater the belief that success for Blacks will be elusive. The internal consistency was moderate, $\alpha = .72$ (.70 for the Toronto and .76 for the Halifax students).

Educational Expectations (Fuligni, 1997)

This scale solicited from students how far they expected to go in school. The choices ranged from 1 (*finish some high school*) to 5 (*graduate from law, medical or graduate school*).

Educational Aspirations (Fuligni, 1997)

This measure was identical to educational expectations with the exception that students were asked how far they wished to go with their education.

Value of Academic Success (Fuligni, 1997)

This scale includes the same 6 items as those on the parents' value of academic success scale with the difference that it was used to assess how strongly students themselves valued doing well and succeeding in school. This scale had good internal consistency, $\alpha = .87$ (.87 for Toronto and .85 for Halifax students).

Average Marks

Students indicated on a letter scale ranging from F to A+ the average grade received on their last report card. A numerical value of 1 was assigned to F and a value of 6 was assigned to A+ for the analysis.

Minor wording changes were made to almost all of the measures that were obtained from previous studies to make them suitable for the Canadian population.

RESULTS

Preliminary Procedures and Reduction of Data

Preliminary analyses indicated that the assumptions of normal distribution and of homogeneity of

Table I. Results of 2nd-Order Factor Analysis

Family of variables	Factor loadings
Cultural	
Friend/social versus academic orientation	.665
Achievement ideology	.645
Belief in the possibility of Blacks attaining success	.615
Total variance explained: 41.19%	
Parental support	
Parent's value of academic success	.811
High parental expectations	.643
Parent's educational aspirations	.493
Parental emphasis on achievement	.248
Total variance explained: 34.39%	
Achievement	
Educational expectations	.803
Educational aspirations	.747
Value of academic success	.592
Average marks	.333
Total variance explained: 41.59%	

variance–covariance matrices were violated for a number of the variables. Therefore, we performed arithmetical transformations on the following variables: Parents' value of academic success, students' value of academic success, ideology, friend/social versus academic orientation, and belief in the possibility of Blacks attaining success.

In an attempt to decrease the number of variables in the analyses, we conducted factor analysis on each family of outcome variables, i.e., parental, cultural, and academic outcome (this was not necessary for peer support, which was represented by only 1 variable). In each case, only 1 factor was extracted, as detailed in Table I. Therefore, in the interest of parsimony, we used composite scores in subsequent analyses: parental support, cultural beliefs, and academic outcome.

Gender and Regional Differences

A MANOVA was conducted to examine gender and regional differences in perceived parental and peer support, cultural beliefs, and educational outcomes. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table II. The analyses revealed that parental educational support, cultural beliefs, peer support, and educational outcomes were all significantly related to gender, $F(4, 423) = 11.09$, $p < .001$ and to region, $F(4, 423) = 13.35$, $p < .001$. The interactive effect of gender and region was non-significant.

Gender Differences

As indicated in the Table II, female students reported significantly greater parental support than did males, $F(1, 426) = 6.74$, $p = .01$. Females also reported more positive cultural beliefs than males, $F(1, 426) = 26.32$, $p < .001$. Educational outcomes also varied significantly by gender. As detailed in Table II, female students reported better academic outcomes than males, $F(1, 426) = 18.42$, $p < .001$. Finally, female students reported greater peer support for academics than did males, $F(1, 426) = 16.70$, $p < .001$.

Regional Differences

Details of region effects in the MANOVA also appear in Table II. The scores of the Toronto students were higher than those from Halifax for all 4 of these variables. We found significant regional differences for parental support, $F(1, 426) = 41.94$, $p < .001$. Toronto students also reported significantly more positive cultural beliefs than did the Halifax students, $F(1, 426) = 14.91$, $p < .001$. Toronto students reported significantly better academic outcomes than did the Halifax students, $F(1, 426) = 29.87$, $p < .001$. Finally, Toronto students reported greater peer support for

Table II. Descriptive Statistics for Academic Outcome Data by Gender and Region

Variables	Gender			Region		
	Males	Females	F for Gender	Toronto	Halifax	F for region
Parental support	−0.10 (0.69)	0.10 (0.67)	6.74*	0.15 (0.62)	−0.29 (0.71)	41.94***
Cultural beliefs	0.23 (0.82)	−0.22 (0.67)	26.32***	−0.10 (0.76)	0.21 (0.79)	14.91***
Educational outcome	−0.17 (0.73)	0.16 (0.7)	18.42***	0.13 (0.66)	−0.27 (0.79)	29.87***
Peer support	−0.24 (1.05)	0.22 (0.89)	16.70***	0.10 (0.98)	−0.21 (1.0)	8.70**

Note. Multivariate Region $F(4, 423) = 13.35^{***}$; Gender $F(4, 423) = 11.09^{***}$. There were no significant Gender X Region interactions. Standard deviations are listed in parentheses after the means.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table III. Zero-Order Correlations ($N = 351$) Between Variables in the Multiple-Regression Analysis

	Academic outcomes	SES	Region	Gender	Parental support	Peer support	Cultural beliefs
Academic outcomes	1.000						
SES	.098*	1.000					
Region	.294***	.179***	1.000				
Gender	−.244***	−.080	−.058	1.000			
Parental support	.623***	.210***	.373***	−.170**	1.000		
Peer support	.336***	.033	.179***	−.239***	.322***	1.000	
Cultural beliefs	−.272***	−.203***	−.185***	.288***	−.257***	−.251***	1.000

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

academics than did Halifax students, $F(1, 426) = 8.70$, $p < .01$.

Perceived Parental and Peer Correlates of Educational Outcome

We next computed a series of multiple regressions to test the hypotheses regarding possible perceived parent, cultural beliefs, and peer influence on the academic outcomes of Black Canadian adolescents, using a hierarchical-entry procedure. We first entered as a block 3 demographic variables that are known to affect academic outcome: gender (as documented in the analysis reported earlier), region (also documented in previous analyses) and SES. We next entered as a block the variables pertaining to the input of parents. Thus, the incremental contribution reported for the 2nd block represents the variance explained by parental input over and above the effects of gender, region, and SES. In similar fashion, the incremental contributions of the 3rd and 4th blocks represent the contributions of peer and cultural

beliefs variables over and above the contributions of parents.

We first performed the regression for the academic outcome variable. The amount of variance predicted by the set of variables was significant, $F(6, 344) = 43.44$, $p < .001$. Cumulative $R = 0.66$ and $R^2 = 0.43$. The zero-order correlations appear in Table III and the regression summary in Table IV. As shown, SES was not as strong a predictor as we expected; the variance explained by SES was in fact not significant. In contrast, the parental variable was a very significant predictor. However, the peer and cultural beliefs variables emerged as less significant predictors of academic outcome than we hypothesized. As already mentioned, the values indicated in the table for peer and attitudinal influences represent the variance over and above that explained by parental input. These effects are probably clearest when we look at the unique variance (sr^2) explained by each variable. Of the set of variables, the parental accounted for the greatest amount of variance, $F(1, 344) = 132.2$, $p < .001$, whereas that accounted for by the addition of the cultural variables was not significant, $F(1, 344) = 2.87$, $p > .05$.

Table IV. Multiple Regression Results: Predicting Academic Outcome From Demographic, Parent and Peer Variables

Predictor variables block	Variable entered	β	t	R	R^2 Change	Unique Variance Predicted (sr^2)
1	Region	0.28	5.45***			
	Gender	−0.23	−4.51***			
	SES	0.03	0.6 ns	.373	.139	
	Cum R/F equation	0.37/18.71***				0.015*
2	Parental Support	0.58	12.74***	.643	.275	
	Cum R/F equation/F change	0.64/61.12***/162.28***				0.219***
3	Peer Support	0.12	2.72**	.653	.012	
	Cum R/F equation/F change	0.65/51.28***/7.40**				0.01*
4	Cultural Belief	−0.08	−1.7 ns	.657	.005	
	Cum R/F equation/F change	0.66/43.44***/2.87 ns				0.005 ns

Note. The regression was also calculated using education instead of SES. $\beta = 0.10$, $t = 2.06$*.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table V. Descriptive Statistics by Country/Region of Birth

	Canadian/Canadian ($n = 142$)	Canadian/Caribbean ($n = 138$)	Caribbean/Caribbean ($n = 85$)	African/African ($n = 29$)	F (3, 390)
Academic outcome	−0.27a (0.78)	0.11a (0.66)	0.04a (0.70)	0.37b (0.54)	10.69***
Cultural beliefs	0.18a (0.79)	−0.12ab (0.73)	−0.06ab (0.82)	−0.25b (0.59)	4.98**
Parental support	−0.32a (0.7)	0.14b (0.61)	0.05b (0.66)	0.46c (0.46)	18.65***
Peer support	−0.22a (0.98)	0.04a (0.96)	0.16a (0.98)	0.67b (0.96)	7.71***

Note. Standard deviations are listed in parentheses after the means. Multivariate effect $F(12, 1024) = 5.69^{***}$. The means with different subscripts are significant different from each other ($p < .05$).

$^* p < .05$; $^{**} p < .01$; $^{***} p < .001$.

Country/Region of Birth Effects

To explore further for the effects of the recency of immigration and its source, we divided the participants into 4 groups: Canadian born with Canadian born parents (Canadian/Canadian) Canadian born with Caribbean born parents (Canadian/Caribbean), Caribbean born with Caribbean parents (Caribbean/Caribbean) and African born with African parents (African/African). Multivariate ANOVA revealed significant differences among these 4 groups, $F(12, 1024) = 5.69$, $p < .001$. We followed with post-hoc Tukey tests, with a criterion alpha of. 05 for interpreting differences between cells. As detailed in Table V, almost all of the findings were consistent with the immigration hypothesis: the Canadian/Canadian group and their parents were far less oriented to education than all other groups, whereas the African/African group was far more education-oriented.

We repeated these analyses using SES as a covariate. The multivariate effect of the covariate was significant, explained mostly by a significant univariate effect on 1 of the 4 variables included (i.e., culture). However, even after covariance adjustment, all main effects reported previously remained significant.

DISCUSSION

As expected, there are important regional differences in the views and beliefs of Black Canadian students regarding education and achievement. In addition, there appear to be marked differences between the present findings and those of most studies of the educational adjustment of Black students in the United States. The main findings are discussed in greater detail below along with the study's general conclusions and limitations.

Most of the participating students, regardless of gender and region, were quite positive about education, had high aspirations and expectations, and highly valued success. This was apparent from a visual inspection of the mean scores obtained on each scale. It was only relative to the females and Toronto students that males and Halifax students, respectively, reported lower support, and less positive outcomes and cultural attitudes and beliefs. The participants also appeared to be quite optimistic about their chances for success later on in life when armed with an education. Students, regardless of region in which they live and of gender, did not appear to have rejected education as would be expected given the results of previous research. Thus, although we have no data that permit direct statistical comparison of our results with the views of Black youth in the US, we suspect a difference between the countries in the relative levels of academic alienation. The fact that Black Canadian students underachieve despite the beliefs by many that achievement is possible serves to document the "paradox of underachievement" discussed earlier. Perhaps their beliefs are not to be translated into the daily behaviors that lead to academic success, or perhaps their attempts to achieve are thwarted by closed doors or other social inequalities.

Gender Differences

The gender disparities in favor of females found in the current study are in accordance with those found in American studies (Ford, 1992a,b). A number of explanations have been advanced to explain these gender differences in African American students including differential teacher perceptions and treatment (Alexander *et al.*, 1987; Cross and Slater, 2000; Stevenson *et al.*, 1990), lack of role models in schools for African American males due to preponderance of female teachers, especially at the elementary level (Cross and Slater, 2000; Hare and Castenell, 1985), greater negative effects of economic disadvantage on Black males as compared to Black females (Spencer *et al.*, 1988; cited in García Coll *et al.*, 1996). It is difficult to determine whether any of these explanations, based as they are on African Americans' experiences and not examined in present investigation, can account for the

gender differences in a Canadian context. However, the present finding is also consistent with the fact that male students regardless of race or ethnicity are more likely than female students to be at risk academically (Kleinfeld, 1999; McCall *et al*., 1992; McCall, Beach and Sing, 2000; Sommers, 2000).

Regional Differences

It appears that the basic tenet of Ogbu's cultural–ecological framework that a group's incorporation into society can influence its educational as well as general adaptation in society may be useful for making sense of the regional differences obtained in this study. The Nova Scotian multi-generational Black population has been in Canada for centuries and, thus, has a much longer history of dealing with systemic oppression than the Caribbean or African population in Toronto. The hopes and dreams, family dynamics, peer interaction, neighborhood and community supports, as it relates to education and other aspects of society, may all be related to their migration and settlement patterns in Canada as well as to their subsequent interactions with the dominant culture. Over time, it is possible that the 2 groups will become more similar as the Caribbean population loses their relatively greater optimism due to continuing encounters with systemic barriers in Canada. Waters (1994) observed from a study of 2nd-generation Caribbean Blacks in New York that the students adopted different identities depending on their perceptions of discrimination and the opportunities opened to them. Those who identified with their Caribbean cultural heritage internalized their parents' beliefs that hard work and perseverance would lead to success in the face of racism. In contrast, those who identified with Black Americans rejected such beliefs and adopted the subcultural oppositional stance taken by their Black American peers toward academics and school authority. Waters (1994) reported that, over time, Caribbean youth tended to think of themselves in more American terms. She noted that in time, there might be few distinctions between the Black Americans and the Black Caribbean immigrants to New York City. A similar type of assimilation may be emerging for Caribbean Blacks in Canada. Ornstein (2000) reported a "racialization" of identity as the children of visible minority immigrants are "Canadianized" and start to lose touch with their parents' distinct national identities" (p. 27). At the moment, however, the best explanation for the regional differences in our results may be the different proportions of immigrants and their children in the Toronto and Halifax samples. The strong pro-education stance of immigrants is not unique to Blacks or to Canada: Fuligni (1997)

found that achievement and pro-education beliefs were sharply stronger among 1st- and 2nd-generation Latino, East Asian, Filipino, and East-European immigrants to the US in comparison with 3rd and higher-generation children from the same ethnic communities. This could explain the very strong education orientation among the children of recent immigrants from Africa. A competing explanation is that this group is the most removed from the history of slavery and of oppression of Blacks in North America.

Possible Parent and Peer Influences

Perceived parental support was the most consistent predictor of students' educational outcomes. This contrasts with the results of a number of US studies, in which it has often been found that peer and neighborhood influences are more powerful predictors than parent variables of school success among African Americans (Dornbusch *et al*., 1991; Gonzales *et al*., 1996; Steinberg *et al*., 1992). One reason for this could be the fact that Canadian Blacks, although they continue to suffer from a certain degree of economic hardship (Fong, 1996), are less likely than African Americans to be constrained by abject poverty from facilitating their children's school lives. Furthermore, Canadian Blacks are less likely than African Americans to be segregated in large, impoverished neighborhoods (Fong, 1996) in which any efforts by the parents may be inconsequential in the face of the homogeneous impoverishment of the surrounding neighborhood. In any event, the family appears to play a crucial role in determining the orientation of Black Canadian adolescents toward the experience of schooling.

In the current study, neither parental education level nor socioeconomic status had a strong influence on students' educational outcomes. We assumed that parents with higher levels of education would possess the requisite skills to help their children negotiate the school system and that more highly educated parents would be able to assist their children with schoolwork and assignments, which would translate into more positive outcomes for children from such families. We expected that children from wealthier families would report more positive educational outcomes than children from poor families because the former can provide children with educational support in the form of tutoring, computers, books, etc., which the latter would have trouble providing. Some US researchers studying African American communities did find a direct influence of parental educational level on their children's academic outcomes (Wilson and Allen, 1987; Wilson and Wilson, 1992). However, in other studies, the influence of SES was found to depend on a number of mediating

factors, especially the parents' involvement in school and their relationships with their sons and daughters (e.g., Gutman and Eccles, 1999).

Surprisingly, perceived peer support did not seem as crucial as previous research led us to expect. In the literature both parents and peers have been identified as strong socializing agents, exerting tremendous influence on all aspects of children's lives. For example, a number of US studies have found that for Black students the pressures exerted by the peer group can often be negative and not conducive to academic success (see Fordham and Ogbu, 1986; Kunjufu, 1988; Mac an Ghaill, 1988; Steinberg *et al.*, 1992). However, recent studies have begun to suggest that previous research may have overemphasized the negative influence of peers as the primary force leading to African American students' underachievement and have also failed to take into account how the hegemonic power of schools function to marginalize and impact on the successful achievement of Black students (e.g., Ferguson, 2000; O'Connor, 2002). Although the present study did not examine how high schools treat or respond to the aspirations of Black Canadian students the findings do indicate that peer attitudes may not be potent enough to warrant the appellation of a "silent killer," which is often evoked in the US literature (Kunjufu, 1988). Nevertheless, future research could benefit by addressing the question of how school structures possibly contribute to academic underachievement in Black Canadian students.

Limitations of the Study

Our conclusions must be tempered by a number of limitations. First of all, we sampled from a variety of recreational, community, and cultural centers, not in schools. This could have resulted in a biased sample, even though a school sample would not have been unbiased either. That is, because alienated students are often truant, and because information about racial/ethnic identification is not normally elicited or available in Canadian schools. Second, this study was based solely on self-report data subsequently future studies in this area would benefit from employing data from a variety of sources. Third, we studied Black Canadian adolescents in 2 major urban centers only, although there are a substantial number of Blacks living in suburban and rural Canadian communities. Finally, our conclusions would inspire more confidence if they were bolstered by a longitudinal research design. Despite these limitations, the research reported in this article not only provides one of the few pictures of Black Canadian students attitudes and perceptions toward school, achievement and success, but also illustrates the heterogeneity

within that population and the ways in which that diversity is reflected in the adolescents' "thinking about makin' it."

REFERENCES

Alladin, I. (1996). *Racism in Canadian schools*. Harcourt Brace, Toronto.

Arroyo, C. G., and Zigler, E. (1995). Racial identity, academic achievement, and the psychological well-being of economically disadvantaged adolescents. *J. Person. Soc. Psychol.* 69: 903–914.

Barbarin, O. A. (1999). Social risks and psychological adjustment: A comparison of African American and South African children. *Child Dev.* 70: 1348–1359.

Black Learners Advisory Committee (1994). *BLAC report on education: Redressing Inequity—Empowering Black Learners* (Vol. 1, 2, and 3). Black Learners Advisory Committee (Nova Scotia), Halifax, Canada.

Blishen, B. R., Carroll, W. K., and Moore, C. (1987). The 1981 socioeconomic index for occupations in Canada. *Can. Rev. Sociol. Anthropol.* 24: 465–488.

Blishen, B. R., and McRoberts, H. A. (1976). A revised socioeconomic index for occupations in Canada. *Can. Rev. Sociol. Anthropol.* 13(1): 71–79.

Brown, B. B., Mounts, N., Lamborn, S. D., and Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting practices and peer group affiliation in adolescence. *Child Dev.* 64: 467–482.

Buriel, R., and Cardoza, D. (1988). Sociocultural correlates of achievement among three generations of Mexican American high school seniors. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* 25: 177–192.

Caplan, N., Choy, M. H., and Whitmore, J. K. (1991). *Children of the Boat People: A study of Educational Success*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Cheng, M., and Soudack, A. (1994). *Anti-Racist Education: A Literature Review*. Toronto Board of Education, Research Services, Toronto.

Coelho, E. (1988). *Caribbean Students in Canadian schools: Book 1*. Toronto: Carib-Can Publishers, Toronto.

Coleman, J. S. (1994). Social capital, human capital, and investment in youth. In Petersen, A. C., and Mortimer, J. T. (Eds.), *Youth Unemployment and Society* (pp. 34–50). Cambridge University Press, New York.

Cross, T., and Slater, R. B. (2000). The alarming decline in the academic performance of African American men. *J. Blacks Higher Educ.* 27, [On-line], 5 pages. Available: http://www.ingress.com/jbhe/alarming.htm.

Dei, G., Mazzuca, J., McIssac, E., and Zine, J. (1997). *Reconstructing "Drop-out": A Critical Ethnography of the Dynamics of Black Students' Disengagement From School*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Dornbusch, S. M., Ritter, P. L., and Steinberg, L. (1991). Community influences on the relation of family statuses to adolescent school performance: Differences between African Americans and non-Hispanic Whites. *Am. J. Educ.* 99: 543–567.

Ensminger, M. E., Lamkin, R. P., and Jacobson, N. (1996). School leaving: A Longitudinal perspective including neighborhood effects. *Child Dev.* 67: 2400–2416.

Entwisle, D. R., and Alexander, K. L. (1990). Beginning school math competence: Minority and majority comparisons. *Child Dev.* 61: 454–471.

Epstein, J. L. (1987). Toward a theory of family-school connections: Teacher practices and parent involvement. In Hurrelmann, K., Kaufmann, F., and Loesel, F. (Eds.), *Social Intervention: Potential and Constraints* W. De Gruyter, New York, pp. 121–136.

Ferguson, R. F. (2000). *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Foley, D. E. (1991). Reconsidering anthropological explanations of ethnic school failure. *Anthropol. Educ. Quart.* 22: 60–86.

Fong, E. (1996). A comparative perspective on racial residential segregation: American and Canadian experiences. *Sociologic. Quart.* 37: 199–226.

Ford, D. Y. (1991). Self-perceptions of social, psychological, and cultural determinants of achievement among gifted black students: A paradox of underachievement. Doctoral Dissertation, Cleveland State University, 1991. *Dissert. Abstracts Int.* (1992) 52: 2465.

Ford, D. Y. (1992a). The American achievement ideology and achievement differentials among preadolescent gifted and nongifted African American males and females. *J. Negro Educ.* 61: 45–64.

Ford, D. Y. (1992b). The American achievement ideology as perceived by urban African American students: Explorations by gender and academic program. *Urban Educ.* 27: 196–211.

Ford, D. Y. (1993). An investigation of the paradox of underachievement among gifted black students. *Roeper Rev.* 16: 78–84.

Ford, D. Y., and Harris, J. J. III (1996). Perceptions and attitudes of Black students toward school, achievement, and other educational variables. *Child Dev.* 67: 1141–1152.

Ford, D. Y., and Harris, J. J. III (1997). A study of the racial identity and achievement of Black males and females. *Roeper Rev.* 20: 105–110.

Fordham, S. (1988). Racelessness as a factor in Black students' school success: Pragmatic strategy or pyrrhic victory? *Harvard Educ. Rev.* 58: 54–84.

Fordham, S., and Ogbu, J. U. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of acting white." *Urban Rev.* 18: 176–206.

Fuligni, A. J. (1997). The academic achievement of adolescents from immigrant families: The roles of family background, attitudes, and behaviour. *Child Dev.* 68: 351–363.

García Coll, C., Lamberty, G., Jenkins, R., McAdoo, H. P., Crnic, K., Wasik, B. H., and Vázquez García, H. (1996). An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. *Child Dev.* 67(5): 1891–1914.

Garibaldi, A. M. (1992). Educating and motivating African American males to succeed. *J. Negro Educ.* 61: 4–11.

Gonzales, N. A., Cauce, A. M., Friedman, R. J., and Mason, C. A. (1996). Family, peer, and neighborhood influences on academic achievement among African American adolescents: One-year prospective effects. *Am. J. Commun. Psychol.* 24: 365–387.

Gutman, L. M., and Eccles, J. S. (1999). Financial strain, parenting behaviors, and adolescents' achievement: Testing model equivalence between African American and European American single- and two-parent families. *Child Dev.* 70: 1464–1476.

Hao, L., and Bonstead-Bruns, M. (1998). Parent–child differences in educational expectations and the academic achievement of immigrant and native students. *Sociol. Educ.* 71: 175–198.

Hare, B. R., and Castenell, L. A. Jr. (1985). No place to run, no place to hide: Comparative status and future prospects of black boys. In Spencer, M. B., Bodkins, G. K., and Allen, W. R. (Eds.), *Beginnings: The Social and Affective Development of Black Children*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 201–214.

Henry, F., Tator, C., Mattis, W., and Rees, T. (2000). *The colour of democracy: Racism in Canadian society* (2nd edn.). Harcourt, Toronto.

Hidalgo, N. M., Sui, S., Bright, J. A., Swap, S. M., and Epstein, J. L. (2000). Research on families, schools, and communities: A multicultural perspective. In Banks, J. A., and McGee Banks, C. A. (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*. Macmillan, New York, pp. 498–524.

Hill, D. G. (1992). *The Freedom Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada*. Stoddart Publishing, Toronto.

Irvine, J. J. (1990). *Black Students and School Failure: Policies, Practices, and Prescriptions*. Greenwood Press, New York.

Kleinfeld, J. (1999). Student performance: Males versus females. *Public Interest* 134: 3–20.

Kunjufu, J. (1988). *To Be Popular or Smart: The Black Peer Group*. African American Images, Chicago.

Macan Ghaill, M. (1988). *Young, gifted and black: Student–Teacher Relations in the Schooling of Black Youth*. Open University Press, Philadelphia.

McCall, R. B., Beach, S. R., and Sing, L. (2000). The nature and correlates of underachievement among elementary schoolchildren in Hong Kong. *Child Dev.* 71: 785–801.

McCall, R. B., Evahn, C., and Kratzer, L. (1992). *High School Underachievers: What Do They Achieve as Adults?* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

McLoyd, V. C. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *Am. Psychol.* 53: 185–204.

Mickelson, R. A. (1990). The attitude-achievement paradox among Black adolescents. *Sociol. Educ.* 63: 44–61.

Mounts, N. S., and Steinberg, L. (1995). An ecological analysis of peer influence on adolescent grade point average and drug use. *Dev. Psychol.* 31: 915–922.

Murray, C. B., and Fairchild, H. H. (1989). Models of Black adolescent academic underachievement. In Jones, R. L. (Ed.), *Black Adolescents*. Cobb & Henry Publishers, Berkeley, pp. 229–245.

O'Connor, C. (2002, August). *Being Black and Achieving in School: Exploring the Promise of Social Context, Black Heterogeneity, and the Multidimensionality of Racial Identity*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago, IL.

Ogbu, J. U. (1978). *Minority education and caste: The American system in cross-cultural perspective*. Academic Press, New York.

Ogbu, J. U. (1987). Variability in minority responses to schooling: Nonimmigrants vs. immigrants. In Spindler, G., and Spindler, L. (Eds.), *Interpretive Ethnography of Education: At Home and Abroad*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 255–278.

Ogbu, J. U. (1993). Differences in cultural frame of reference. *Int. J. Behav. Dev.* 16: 483–506.

Ornstein, M. (2000). *Ethno-Racial Inequality in the City of Toronto: An Analysis of the 1996 Census*. Access and Equity Unit, Strategic and Corporate Policy Division, Chief Administrator's Office, Toronto.

Pachai, B. (1990). *Beneath the clouds of the promised land: The survival of Nova Scotia's Blacks, Volume II: 1800–1989*. The Black Educators Association of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Canada.

Pachai, B. (1993). *People of the Maritimes: Blacks* (3rd edn.). Four East Publications, Tatallon, NS, Canada.

Slaughter, D. T., and Epps, E. G. (1987). The home environment and academic achievement of Black American children and youth: An overview. *J. Negro Educ.* 56: 3–20.

Slaughter-Defoe, D. T., Nakagawa, K., Takanishi, R., and Johnson, D. J. (1990). Toward cultural/ecological perspectives on schooling and achievement in African American and Asian American children. *Child Dev.* 61: 363–383.

Solomon, R. P. (1992). *Black resistance in High School: Forging a Separatist Culture*. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.

Sommers, C. H. (2000, May). The war against boys. *Atlantic Month* 59–74.

Spencer, H. H. (1970). *To Nestle in the Mane of the British Lion: A History of Canadian Black Education, 1820 to 1870*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Northwestern University.

Steinberg, L., Dornbusch, S. M., and Brown, B. B. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement: An ecological perspective. *Am. Psychol.* 47: 723–729.

Stevenson, H. W., Chen, C., and Uttal, D. H. (1990). Beliefs and achievement: A study of Black, White, and Hispanic children. *Child Dev.* 61: 508–523.

Sue, S., Okazaki, S. (1990). Asian-American educational achievements: A phenomenon in search of an explanation. *Am. Psychol.* 45: 913–920.

Taylor, R. D., Casten, R., Flickinger, S. M., Roberts, D., and Fulmore, C. D. (1994). Explaining the school performance of African-American adolescents. *J. Res. Adolesc.* 4: 21–44.

Waters, M. C. (1994). Ethnic and ra.cial identities of second-generation Black immigrants in New York City. *Int. Migrat. Rev.* 28: 795–820.

Wilson, K. R., and Allen, W. R. (1987). Explaining the educational attainment of young Black adults: Critical familial and extra-familial influences. *J. Negro Educ.* 56: 64–76.

Wilson, P. M., and Wilson, J. R. (1992). Environmental influences on adolescent educational aspirations: A logistic transform model. *Youth Soc.* 24: 52–70.

Winks, R. W. (1997). *The Blacks in Canada: A History*. (2nd edn.). McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal.

Yau, M., Cheng, M., and Zigler, S. (1993). *The 1991 Every secondary student survey. Part III: Program level and student achievement*. Research Services, Toronto Board of Education, Toronto.