Culture of Honor and Defensive Violence in the American South

by

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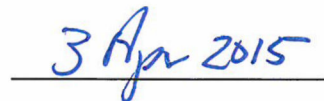Thesis Advisor

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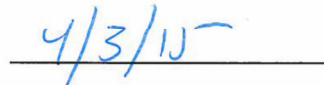
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Abstract

The Southern region of the United States has experienced historically high rates of violent crime, especially homicide. The current study focuses on cultural explanations of Southern violence. The culture of honor is often conceptualized as a set of values related to protecting one's honor. This study moves beyond this framework and conceptualizes culture as a toolkit that provides individuals with strategies of action. Quantitative data obtained from an online survey of participant responses to vignettes concerning potential conflict situations are analyzed to explore to whom and when violence is an acceptable action. The common perception is that cultural values in the South encourage violence. Findings from this study demonstrate that specific cultural resources, which are unbound by region, are likely to be associated with support for defensive violence.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my family, friends, and colleagues.

"The best advice I ever got was that knowledge is power and to keep reading." – David

Bailey

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There are many people whom I would like to take the opportunity to thank for their help in completing this project. First, I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Nicole Hendrix, who served as my mentor throughout my graduate career. Secondly, the members of my committee, Dr. Isaac Van Patten and Dr. Lori Elis, deserve much appreciation, as their guidance was also extremely helpful. Next, I would like to thank the members of my cohort, Danielle Fenimore, Cheryl Johnson, and Alisha Wilson; their assistance was extremely influential during my studies.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The Southern region of the United States has long shown higher rates of violence, and in particular, lethal violence, compared to other regions. However, violence in the South is not a new phenomenon and can be traced back to the late 1700s (Hackney, 1969; Gastil, 1971). Despite the longstanding awareness of this regional pattern of violence, only since the 1960s have scholars begun to empirically examine the phenomenon. These scholars often analyze regional violence by focusing on disproportionately high rates of homicide in the South (Hackney, 1969; Gastil, 1971; Loftin & Hill, 1974; Erlanger, 1976; Blau & Blau, 1982; Reed, 1982; Messner, 1983; Huff-Corzine, Corzine & Moore, 1986; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Huff-Corzine, Corzine, & Moore, 1989; Parker, 1989; Ellison, 1991; Nisbett, 1993; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003; Hayes, 2006; Lee, Hayes, & Thomas, 2008).

By observing regional homicide rates, prior research has provided evidence that Southern violence is, in fact, unique. Erlanger (1976) indicates that in 1958, the Southern homicide rate was roughly three times higher than the national average. In 1972, the homicide rate in the South was 12.6 per 100,000 compared to the national average of 7.3 per 100,000. The homicide rate in the South from 1976 to 2003 never trailed any other regions and has been as high as 1.5 times greater than the national average (Hayes, 2006). According to the Uniform Crime Report (UCR), from 2003 to 2012, the differences between regional homicide rates have become narrower, but the South still leads every major geographical region.

In 2012, the South logged the highest overall violent crime rate with 423.7 violent crimes per 100,000. In addition to homicide, the South had the highest rate of aggravated assault, and the third highest rates of forcible rape and robbery (FBI, 2012). This accounted

for 40.9% of all violent crimes in the United States. The fact that the South persistently exhibits higher homicide rates has led to the accumulation of more than a decade of research. Despite this extensive volume of research, no strong conclusions have been drawn as to why the South experiences such high rates of violence. Instead, research has become dichotomous and the center of a theoretical debate. Some theorists contend that the high rates of violence are due to regional differences in poverty or other indicators of structural disadvantages (Loftin & Hill, 1974, Smith & Parker, 1980). Some of these measures of structural disadvantage include: percentage of Black individuals, infant mortality rates, the percentage of persons over 25 with less than five years of education, and percentage of families annually earning less than $1000.

Cultural theorists suggest that the South operates under a distinctive cultural system that endorses the use of violence (Hackney, 1969; Gastil, 1971; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Cultural advocates propose that a particular set of values play a causal link to violence. Lee and Ousey (2010) indicate that cultural theories of violence, also called values models, explain violent behaviors within an exclusive subgroup in a particular geographical context (p.901). Cultural models generally hold that Southern violence persists because Southerners are more likely to hold certain values that define violence as a legitimate action in certain situations.

The enduring theoretical dispute between cultural and structural causes of Southern violence has created a "this theory or that theory" type of theoretical duel (Lee & Ousey, 2010, p. 900). Rather than choosing to indulge in this theoretical contest, this study acknowledges that both structural and cultural factors influence Southern violence. Whereas evidence has been more supportive of structural factors (e.g. Loftin & Hill, 1974; Smith &

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Parker, 1980; Huff-Corzine, Corzine & Moore, 1986; Parker, 1989; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003), cultural evidence has been marginally conclusive. According to Copes, Kovandzic, Miller, and Williams (2009), cultural theories' marginal conclusiveness was caused by a decline in cultural theory popularity during the 1970s. During that time, cultural theories were replaced by critical and control theories, which were portrayed as being less conservative and restricted (Copes et al., 2009, p.4).

The current study centers on reexamining cultural influences of Southern violence. This study will examine the relationship between Southern culture and violence, while expanding on existing theoretical models. To accomplish these goals, the proposed research study will use cultural measures and conceptual strategies that stem from prior literature. The current study will examine values and behaviors to identify patterns in Southern culture. Through this proposed analysis, cultural attitudes and behaviors will be used to shed light on why and how violence is persistent in the South. This study will attempt to better understand the relationship between culture and violence in the South by reopening the cultural paradigm.

The chapters of this proposal will follow the preceding agenda. Chapter II provides a review of the literature and the theoretical framework for this study. The literature review relies on the Nisbett and Cohen's (1996) Southern culture of honor thesis. The Southern culture of honor theory emphasizes the Scots-Irish introduction of the "code of honor" and ethic of violence into Southern culture upon migrating to the United States (Fischer, 1989; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). The literature also contains previous studies which suggest that, to this day, the culture of honor values, such as protection of one's honor, are still an important part of Southern culture (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, & Schwarz,

1996). This may cause Southerners to have an increased propensity to use violence in defensive situations (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991).

The theoretical framework of the current study focuses on Swidler's (1986) culture as a strategies of action model. The strategies of action model argues that culture performs a complex role in the decision to use violence than earlier values models (e.g. the Southern culture of honor theory) indicate (Sampson & Bean, 2006). Culture is an intersubjective repertoire of different strategies that individuals can invest into particular life circumstances. Under the strategies of action model, violence is disproportionally high in the South because Southern culture contains numerous cultural resources that legitimize violence in defensive situations. These cultural resources include rural living, conservation Protestantism, Republicanism, gun ownership, and support for the death penalty, which prior research has found prevalent in the South (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003; Hayes & Lee, 2005; Lee, Hayes, & Thomas, 2008; Lee, Thomas, & Ousey, 2009; Lee & Ousey, 2010).

Chapter III describes the data and methodology utilized in this study. The degree to which individuals legitimized violence in defensive situations was the primary dependent variable for this study. Individual propensity to support defensive violence was captured using an online survey containing three different vignettes. Each vignette was rated by respondents using an acceptability of violence scale. An overall defensive violence scale was also created using the sum of scores from the three measures of defensive violence described above.

A total of five hundred and twenty six responses were collected through the use of the Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). For the purpose of this study, respondents who were

born in the South and had lived there for six or more years or have currently lived in the South for six or more years were categorized as being "Southern". The same conceptual technique was employed on rural dwellers to test the effects of being socialized in a rural area. In order to collect the other independent variables, the survey also included measures concerning the respondent's religious and political affiliations, gun ownership, and degree of support for the death penalty. The control variables consisted of the respondent's age, gender, race, relationship status, educational attainment, and perceived income.

The methodology chapter also includes the analytical strategy for this study. The analytical strategy includes the four outcome variables, Protection, Affront, Abuse, and the Defensive Violence Scale. Each of these outcome variables and the predictor and control variables were examined using a series of univariate statistics. A bivariate analysis was then executed to examine any relationships between the independent, dependent, and control variables. Finally, ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regression was used to analyze which, if any, independent variables were significant predictors of support for defensive violence.

Chapter IV provides the results of this study. In situations of protection, individuals who support the death penalty and own firearms are more likely to support the use of defensive violence. Next, individuals who support the death penalty and frequently attend religious services are more likely to support the use of defensive violence in scenarios involving affront. Males are also more likely to support the use of defensive violence in both situations of protection and affront.

Individuals who support the death penalty and individuals who are socialized in rural areas are more likely to support the use of defensive violence in situations containing abuse. Whites are also significantly more likely to support the use of defensive violence in the abuse

scenarios. Finally, in the overall Defensive Violence Scale, support for the death penalty, gun ownership, and rural socialization are all significant predictors for support of defensive violence. Males are also more likely to support the use of defensive violence in the Defensive Violence Scale. Support for defensive violence in the affront and abuse scenarios, and in the Defensive Violence Scale had a significant, but inverse relationship with age.

The totality of results in Chapter IV suggests that individuals who identify with specific cultural values, behaviors, rituals, or symbols are likely to support the use of defensive violence. These specific cultural resources, such as rural socialization or gun ownership, tend to be dependent on the situational context of a violent scenario. More specifically, a relationship seems to exist between protection and gun ownership, affront and religious attendance, and abuse and rural socialization. Support for the death penalty was the only cultural resource found to support defensive violence in all four scenarios. When the situational context is removed, the Defensive Violence Scale indicates that the most influential cultural resources are rural socialization, gun ownership, and support for the death penalty. Males and younger individuals also were more likely to support the use of defensive violence compared to other respondents. The South had no effect on an individual's decision to support defensive violence.

Lastly, Chapter V includes the implications and limitations of this study, and directions for future research will be explored. The models employed in this study indicate that there are specific cultural resources that are likely to legitimize defensive violence, but these predictors are not limited to the South. This indicates that the relationship between culture and violence is highly complex. Future research should consider using qualitative interviews to collect in-depth information regarding the decision to use violence. Future

research should also examine the relationship between defensive violence, gun ownership, and substance abuse. It is likely that gun owners are not only more willing to support defensive violence, but also use defensive violence when substance abuse is prevalent, especially in rural areas. In terms of policy considerations, the findings in this study indicate that police departments in rural areas should create or invest in policies that combat defensive violence. This may include attempting to enhance police response times and increasing their visibility in the community.

Chapter II: Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

"The South is an heir to their culture" – Richard Nisbett

Origins of Violence in the South

Southern violence can be traced back to historical folklore and stories in the South (Hayes, 2006; Moser, 2012). Narratives and writings describing the South and its people indicate that the South became a "violent world" during the period between 1717 and 1775 (Wyatt-Brown, 1982; Fischer, 1989). During this time, Scots-Irish herders from the British Isles settled in the South and introduced ideas of justice and honor (Fischer, 1989; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Prior to settling in the South, it was normative for the Scots-Irish settlers to live in the rough and rugged British Isles for long periods of time. Scots-Irish herders were frequently at risk of theft of livestock and property from ambuscades and border raids (Reed, 1982; Fischer, 1989; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). In order to combat these threats, the Scots-Irish developed an ethic of violence (Fischer, 1989).

The Scots-Irish arrival in the South was met with little to no infrastructure or formal authority. The comparable conditions between the South and the lawless British Isles allowed the Scots-Irish to continue their way of life and their ideas about violence. The principles of *lex talonis,* or the rule of retaliation, superseded formal laws (Wyatt-Brown, 1982; Fischer, 1989). The Scots-Irish imported the idea that revenge is a necessary and expected response when an individual is wronged (Fischer, 1989). Moser (2012) indicates that life was cheap and property was expensive in the South.

The Establishment of Research on Southern Violence

Research focused on Southern violence began in the late 1960s. Prior to this time, cultural theories' popularity was declining due to ideological shifts in academia and larger

society to an egalitarian model. This causes cultural theories to be heavily criticized and seen as having a restrictive, inadequate theoretical scope (Copes et al., 2009). In the later 1960s, however, Marvin Wolfgang and Franco Ferracuti (1967) revived the cultural paradigm through the development of the culture of violence theory. Using Sutherland's (1947) differential association and social learning theory to study violence between inner-city African Americans, Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) found that pro-violent attitudes are formed in cultures that experience high rates of violence.

In violent cultures, violence is an anticipated and appropriate social norm that is reinforced through social interaction. Violence is especially important for individuals attempting to protect or improve their social status and honor. Individuals who do not use violence in a situation that warrants violence are likely to experience a negative reaction from other community members (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967). The theoretical principles of Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1967) research were imperative to the advancement of cultural theories and research. In fact, many cultural theories can be traced back to the culture of violence thesis (Copes et al., 2009).

Sheldon Hackney (1969) was the first to study Southern violence using the culture of violence thesis. Hackney (1969) examined homicide and suicide rates between different regions and races. More specifically, Hackney (1969) explored the difference in homicide and suicide victimization rates between the South and non-South using a dummy-coded South variable. Hackney (1969) also examined the difference between Whites and non-Whites. Despite using several structural control variables such as age, income, education level, urbanization, unemployment, and wealth, Hackney found that the dummy-coded South variable remained a significant predictor of the homicide rate for Whites (p.915). Hackney

(1969) contends that violence is a consequence of the socialization process of "profuse hospitality and intense hostility" in the South (p.925).

Raymond Gastil (1971) also tested homicide rates to analyze Southern violence. Instead of employing a dummy-coded South variable, Gastil created what is known as the "Southern index"[1]. In simplest terms, Gastil's index gave the highest "Southern" score of 30 to traditional Southern states like: West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia (pg. 420). The lowest "Southern" scores of 5 were given to states in the Northeast (Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut) and Midwest regions (North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin). Gastil controlled for indicators of social disadvantage, such as poverty, education, hospital beds, and physicians per 1000 people. Despite these control measures, Gastil (1971) found that there was positive correlation between "Southern" scores and homicide rates of particular states.

The pioneering research from Hackney (1969) and Gastil (1971) were the first to empirically test the root cause of Southern violence. The authors found that it is reasonable to conclude that cultural factors provide a better explanation of Southern homicide compared to structural factors. Despite the momentum created by their work, their findings have seen heavy criticism. Typically, Hackney and Gastil are criticized for employing an inadequate set of structural control measures. These criticisms have had a direct and indirect effect on the study of Southern violence. The most direct effect is that these criticisms spearheaded research on Southern violence. However, these criticisms also indirectly created the cultural versus structural theoretical dispute over the cause of Southern violence.

Structural Explanations of Violence in the South

The purpose of this section is to examine how structural research has shaped the study of Southern violence. Structural theorists suggest that economic and ecological factors perpetuate violence in the South. Structural theorists have incorporated strain and social disorganization theory to contend that Southern violence is a product of social discontinuity (Luckenbill & Doyle, 1989, p.420). Self-perceptions of resource inequality, or relative deprivation, encourage definitions favorable to crime in the South (Luckenbill & Doyle, 1989, p.420; Messner & Tardiff, 1986, p.299). The common running theme among structural explanations is that poverty plays a critical role to Southern violence.

Loftin and Hill (1974) were one of the first to directly criticize the methodology and findings of Hackney and Gastil. Loftin and Hill's research argued that region alone did not provide adequate evidence that Southern culture dominates structural factors (p.717). Loftin and Hill (1974) created a structural poverty index (SPI) that included several different measures of economic and collective disadvantage (p.717-719). Loftin and Hill (1974) found that homicide was highly correlated to socioeconomic and situational factors rather than regional or cultural elements. Loftin and Hill's study argued that the SPI variable was much more of an adequate predictor of Southern violence compared to the dummy-coded South variable.

Blau and Blau (1982) employed data from the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) and the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) census to study Southern violence. Blau and Blau (1982) analyzed regional patterns of violent crime using the cities in the SMSA data set. The researchers hypothesized that cities with higher amounts of socioeconomic inequality would also have high rates of violent crime. Using a dummy-coded South variable and several structural variables to account for socioeconomic inequality, the results indicated that

the dummy-coded South was not a significant predictor of total violent crime, nor a significant predictor of three out of four violent crimes (rape, robbery, assault). However, the South did remain a significant predictor of homicide. Blau and Blau (1982) concluded that the conditions promoting violence in the South were due to regional patterns of racial and income inequality. The theory of Southern violence did not fare better than a simple theory of poverty in trying to explain violent crime (p.122).

Messner (1983) and Golden and Blau (1986) used similar data to Blau and Blau to examine Southern violence. Messner (1983) employed a dummy-coded South variable in relation to Gastil's "Southern index" to capture the effect of the South, while controlling for Loftin and Hill's SPI scale (p.999-1000). Messner's (1983) findings indicated that two variables, the South and the relative size of the Black population, had the greatest effect on homicide rates (p.1006). Messner (1983) suggests that previous findings' contention that Southern homicide is best explained by structural variables alone is incorrect. Golden and Blau (1986) conceptualized the South by employing the percentage of individuals in each SMSA who were born in the South. Golden and Blau (1986) found that the effect of the South variable on homicide rates was not reduced by structural influences.

Parker (1989), unlike prior studies, only included the central city of each SMSA and excluded the surrounds counties for analysis. Parker (1989) contends that there are two crucial problems in previous studies that use SMSA data to examine Southern violence. First, the differences in suburban SMSA areas in the South versus non-South are vastly dissimilar and incomparable. Also, Southern and non-Southern urban cities are comparable and likely to reflect any differences that may be causing violence (p.997). Second, SMSA census data often includes homicide statistics for the urban center and the counties surrounding the

central city. This makes it difficult to gauge the actual homicide rate in each city. To solve this problem, Parker (1989) took 299 central city homicide rates from the SMSA data.

Parker's (1989) study found that, while controlling for structural indicators similar to Loftin and Hill and Messner, the South was not a significant predictor of urban homicide. Parker contends that improved measures of the Southern culture of violence are needed to adequately represent and test cultural influences. Rather than a structural versus cultural debate, Parker suggests that new in-depth measures, such as inmate-victim relationship or type of weapon, could improve cultural explanations of violence. For instance, if homicides by handguns were prevalent in the South, it could possibly serve as evidence supporting the relationship between firearms and Southern culture (p. 1001).

Huff-Corzine, Corzine, and Moore (1986; 1991) attempted to examine Southern violence by using two different approaches. Huff-Corzine and colleagues (1986) examined regional homicide rates between Whites and non-Whites while controlling for select aspects of Loftin and Hill's SPI. They found that race, not region, predicted lethal violence, but also that the effects seen in the South could not be "explained away" by simply including structural variables. Huff-Corzine and colleagues (1991) followed up their original article and attempted to explain the Southern phenomenon of high rates of homicide, yet low rates of suicide (p.725). Rather than employing a dummy-coded regional variable, Huff-Corzine and colleagues (1991) used the percentage of people born in the South to capture whether behaviors and values were uniquely socialized in the South. Huff-Corzine and colleagues' (1991) results indicate that being born in the South has no direct relationship to the number of homicides or suicides for Whites or Blacks. Structural effects have a stronger influence on violence.

In sum, structural theorists have long attempted to explain Southern violence. The problem is that, although structural causes of Southern violence have amassed substantial empirical evidence, several studies (see Hackney, 1969; Gastil; 1971; Messner, 1983; Blau and Golden, 1986) have found inconsistencies regarding the effect of Southern culture on violence. Perhaps these inconsistencies are a consequence of the numerous variations in how the South is measured. Parker (1989) suggests that the most widely employed measure, the use of a dummy-coded South, is an inadequate measure of Southern culture. While this may be true, Hayes (2006) contends that the inconsistency shown in the dummy-coded South may also mean that there is an unmeasured, possibly culturally-related, concept. Although culture cannot be assumed to be the culprit, the possibility of an untapped cultural measure has spearheaded cultural explanations of Southern violence.

Cultural Explanations of Violence in the South

The culture of violence paradigm asserts that an individual's propensity to use violence is increased by heightened exposure to violent norms and values. Cultural theorists have applied this idea to the South and examined Southerner attitudes related to violence. The idea is that Southerners are likely to approve of and use violence because they are exposed to more violent values compared to individuals in other regions.

Using General Social Survey (GSS) data from four separate years, Dixon and Lizotte (1987) analyzed Southern attitudes when faced with violent and defensive situations. Violent attitudes indicated support for aggression against protesters, drunks, and police officer aggression against people who swear at them and a murder suspect. Defensive attitudes indicate an individual's support for the use of violence to protect family, children, or property. To test these attitudinal differences, select scenarios involving violence and

aggression, such as, "Would you approve of a man punching an adult man if the adult man stranger had broken into the man's house," were employed. Respondents were asked to rate how approving they were of the use of violence in each scenario. Violent scenarios employed a one to nine scale, while defensive scenarios used a one to seven scale (p.396).

To measure the South, Dixon and Lizotte (1987) included three separate dummy-coded South variables that reflect regional migration patterns. Out-migrant Southerners were those socialized in the South and currently living in another region. In-migrant Southerners were individuals socialized in another region and currently living in the South. Non-Southerners were those socialized in another region and currently living in another region. The structural control variables included age, education, race, income, religion, and urbanity. The results found no significant difference in violent attitudes between regions. However, the results did find that persons raised or currently living in the South are likely to support violence in defensive situations. Dixon and Lizotte (1987) contend that firearms may serve a fundamental purpose in the relationship between Southerners and defensive violence. "The direct effect of defensive attitudes on gun ownership and the indirect effect on it of defensive attitudes via regions suggest that gun ownership may center on defensiveness" (p.400) .

Ellison (1991) tested regional attitudes towards violence by employing a similar methodological strategy to Dixon and Lizotte (1987). Using GSS data, Ellison examined individual attitudes towards situational violence. To capture Southern culture, Ellison (1991) coded for whether the respondent was a native Southerner (South to South), in-migrant Southerners (non-South to South), or out-migrant Southerner (South to non-South). Ellison (1991) employed similar control variables as Dixon and Lizotte (1987), but also included measures for informal social control, formal social control, childhood and adult exposure to

violence, and authoritative views of God. Ellison's (1991) results found that native

Southerners and Whites were increasingly likely to support violence in defensive situations

compared to any other respondents. In addition, there was a positive correlation between a

native Southerner's age and support for violence in defensive situations. Ellison (1991)

attributes this relationship to the unique biopsychosocial developmental process of

socialization and living in the South. Ellison (1991) also found that individuals who held

conservative religious principles were more likely to endorse defensive violence. It is

possible that Southern religious principles such as strict religious attendance and belief in an

authoritative God are conducive to defensive attitudes.

Both Dixon and Lizotte (1987) and Ellison (1991) helped to advance the

understanding of the relationship between Southern culture and violence in criminological

literature. Their work highlighted the importance of distinguishing Southern violence from

acts of random violence. Southerners do not excessively support random acts of violence, but

are likely to support the use of violence in defensive situations (e.g. affront, protection). The

new idea of Southern acceptance for defensive violence began to shift theoretical cultural

explanations. This shift moved away from the culture of violence theory and the idea that

Southern support for offensive violence caused high rates of violence in the South, and

towards the idea of a culture of honor theoretical paradigm.

The Southern Culture of Honor

Nisbett and Cohen's (1996) Southern culture of honor theory focuses on violence as it

relates to a specific subpopulation in the South. This subpopulation largely concentrates on

Southern White males living in rural areas (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Nisbett and Cohen's

justification for emphasizing Southern White males derives from an ethnographic analysis of

the South in the early 18th century. During this time, the first wave of Scots-Irish settlers migrated from the British Isles to the remote, mountainous South.

When the Scots-Irish arrived in the South, the wide-open, rugged, and remote landscape was ideal for the settlers to continue their herding lifestyle. The problem was that the settlers also had to face the lack of formal, dependable authority in the South (Webb, 2004). Insufficient formal authority was detrimental to the Scots-Irish herding economy. Without formal authority, livestock and property were vulnerable and often easily stolen (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994).

To combat the problems of living in the frontier South, the Scots-Irish often relied on violence as an effective social control, especially during disputes. Scots-Irish herders developed values of toughness, particularly when required to protect their reputation, family, or property (Nisbett, 1993; Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Cohen, 1996). Values concerning toughness and masculinity were especially important for White males in the South. At a young age, boys were taught the importance of self-reliance and the ability to defend their honor (Fischer, 1989; Nisbett, 1993; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Even during the most trivial affairs, it was important for men not to display vulnerability (Vandello & Cohen, 1999). Vulnerability was directly linked to a man's honor and masculinity. Showing strength meant that a man had the utmost courage and honor. Seeming vulnerable meant that a man was weak and cowardly (Cohen et al., 1996; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). The hierarchy of a man's social status depended on his ability to defend himself, his honor, and his family (Fischer, 1989).

Wyatt-Brown (1982) suggests that insults or attacks against female family members were also considered extremely offensive. Insult or harm to one's mother, sister, or wife was

like attacking the man himself. More often than not, if the White male did not respond to this type of insult, there would be a great deal of shame visited on him, ultimately demeaning his honor. If a woman insults her husband's honor, cultural values to protect his honor were vital. Even formal laws in the South have shown the importance that the culture of honor places on retributive justice (Cohen and Nisbett, 1994). Up until the 1960s, two traditionally Southern states, Texas and Georgia, held statues that allowed a husband to kill his wife's lover (Taylor, 1986, cited in Cohen and Nisbett, 1994). If a man was done any wrong, retaliation was crucial in order to exact justice and reestablish honor (Fischer, 1989).

Several researchers contend that the high rate of argument-related homicide in the South is evidence that values concerning honor and protection are still prominent in Southern culture (Nisbett, 1993; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, & Schwarz, 1996; Cohen, 1998). High rates of lovers' quarrels and brawl-related homicide are possible indicators that cultural values legitimize violence in particular, retributive situations (Reed, 1982; Nisbett, 1993; Nisbett et al., 1996; Cohen, 1998). For instance, the Southern culture of honor often requires violence even in a trivial matter (e.g., an offensive comment). Typically, these situations would not warrant a violent response, but to a Southerner, violence is a necessary action because of the importance of upholding one's honor (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Cohen, Nisbett Bowdle, & Schwarz, 1996; Cohen, 1998).

The Southern culture of honor theory asserts that high rates of violence in the South are a consequence of Southern White males holding values that legitimize violence in specific situations. These violent values are traced back to when Scots-Irish herders migrated to the South (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). The frontier conditions of the South were highly conducive to the Scots-Irish herding lifestyle, which also meant that violence in order to

protect one's honor, property, and family became a fundamental part of Southern life. Intergenerational transmission of norms and values has allowed violence to become entrenched in the contemporary South. High rates of lovers quarrels, arguments, and brawl-related homicides provide evidence that Southern culture continues to operate under the culture of honor.

Prior research has focused on identifying conceptual support for the relationship between the Southern culture of honor values and violence in the South. Researchers have used an array of methodologies, such as attitudinal measures, homicide rates, and laboratory experiments to test the relationship between culture and violence (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Cohen et al., 1996; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Cohen & Nisbett, 1997; Cao, Adams, Jensen, 1997; Hayes & Lee, 2005). The long-running theme is that a version of the culture of honor persists in the South. The current version of the Southern culture of honor has become functionally autonomous and extends past the necessity to use violence because of frontier-herding conditions. Cohen and colleagues (1996) suggest that cultural norms and values are embedded in the social roles, expectations, and definition of masculinity in the South (p. 24). The following provides a more in-depth analysis of studies related to these conclusions.

Cohen and Nisbett (1994) tested the relationship between self-protection and attitudes towards violence in the South. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) contend that Southern White males value violence as a means of self-protection because of the culture of honor influence in the South. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) rely on three different surveys to test this hypothesis.

The first study used survey data collect from Blumenthal, Kahn, Andrews, and Head (1972). In the original study by Blumenthal and colleagues (1972), data was collected from males, ages 16 to 64, regarding basic cultural values and attitudes towards violence.

Blumenthal and colleagues (1972) found that cultural values, especially related to retribution and self-defense, were important in respondents' attitudes towards the use of violence. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) extended this conclusion and examined regional differences concerning whether, and when, the use of violence was appropriate. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) employed different statements to test three different types of violence. General violence included abstract statements involving violence such as, "Many people only learn through violence" or "Violence deserves violence." Violence for protection involved situations pertaining to violence in order to defend one's self, family, and the property. Lastly, violence in the face of an insult involved situations where a police officer used force after being insulted. The results of the study found that support for general violence was not significantly different between Southern White males and non-Southern White males. Instead, Southern White males were more likely to support the use of violence as a means of self-protection, to restore social control, or in the face of an insult (p.554).

In Cohen and Nisbett's (1994) second study, General Social Survey (GSS) data from the National Opinion Research Center (1972-1990) was employed. The researchers sought to examine regional differences in issues of general violence and violence in the face of affront (p. 557). General violence involved the acceptance of an adult male or police officer punching another adult male stranger. Violence in the face of affront used the same questions except the circumstances in the situations greatly differed. For example, violence in the face of affront would ask, "Would you approve of an adult man punching another adult male if the other male was beating a woman, or breaking into a house?." Likewise, the police officer scenarios involved situations in which the police officer used force against murder suspects or escapees. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) hypothesized that regionally different violent attitudes

would become greater as the situational context changed from general to defensive violence. Cohen and Nisbett's (1994) findings support this hypothesis. Southern White males were more likely than non-Southern White males to approve of violence in situations of affront involving a man punching another man for protesting against his view, being drunk and bumping into his wife on the street, hitting the man's child, and a police officer hitting a person that said vulgar things to him. The results also found a minimal difference between Southern White males and non-Southern White males concerning violence relative to self-protection. Cohen and Nisbett (1996) suggest that this non-significant difference is likely due to the ceiling effect or that these situations included commonly accepted uses of violence regardless of region. The relationship between Southerners and self-protection was revised in the third study.

Cohen and Nisbett's (1994) third study employed telephone interviews of Midwestern and Southern White males, ages 16 and up. Each interview inquired about the respondent demographics and attitude concerning violence, firearms, and corporal punishment. To measure violent attitudes, several questions concerning the appropriateness of violence in certain situations were employed. The results from the third study found that Southern White males were more likely to approve of violence in defense of their honor or to socialize children compared to Midwestern White males (p. 564). Violence as a socialization technique included the use of spanking or a similar physical reprimand. Cohen and Nisbett (1994) also found support for the relationship between Southerners and attitudes of self-protection. Contrary to the second study, the results found that Southern White males were more likely to own, carry, and view a firearm as an instrument of protection. Cohen and

Nisbett (1994) conclude that firearms' role as a means of self-protection in the South is consistent with the culture of honor theory.

Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, and Schwarz (1996) employed a set of laboratory experiments on White male students at a large public university. Cohen and colleagues (1996) tested the cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal differences between Northern and Southern White males. The first experiment examined students' emotional reaction through the use of different tasks. These tasks included a word-completion task, a face-rating task, and a neutral scenario- completion task. The word-completion task required respondents to fill in missing letters in a string of words (e.g. _ight or _un). The face-rating task had respondents try to guess the emotion of a series of facial expressions. Finally, the neutral scenario- completion task required that participants fill in the beginning or end of a story. Cohen and colleagues (1996) found no significant difference between Northerner and Southerner students in the word-completion or face-rating task. However, in the neutral scenario- completion task, Southern students were more likely to end scenarios with violence than Northern students.

The second experiment measured psychological, cognitive, and behavioral changes in Southern students. To measure these changes, four variables, including stress, preparedness for future aggression, desire to demonstrate toughness, and interpretation of ambiguous stimuli were measured. Stress and aggression were measured by taking each subject's saliva, before and after being bumped into and called an "asshole" by a confederate student. The cortisol level measured stress, while the testosterone level measured aggression. Toughness was measured by the respondent's pain tolerance to electric shock completed in front of two confederate students and privately. Cohen and colleagues (1996) hypothesized that

Southerners would be more willing to take high levels of pain because the culture of honor demanded the ability to display toughness. Finally, ambiguous stimulus was measured by having different situations (public or private) in which the subject was bumped into. The idea is that Southerners would express toughness and react to stimulus greater in a public rather than private setting.

The results contend that Southern student stress and aggression significantly increased after being insulted. The electric shock yielded no evidence suggesting Southern students were likely to demonstrate toughness. Cohen and colleagues (1996) argue that using the electric shock was an inadequate measure of toughness because being shocked was very foreign to the participants. The results also found no significant difference in ambiguous situations between Northerners and Southerners. Again, Cohen and colleagues (1996) suggest that the ambiguous scenarios were inadequate because they did not have a clear intent and better triggers of hostility were needed.

Cohen and colleagues' (1996) third experiment analyzed domineering and aggressive behaviors in Southern students. The experiment consisted of a confederate student bumping into the subject in a hallway. Cohen and his colleagues would then explore the confrontation effects on the subject's masculinity, aggressive behavior, and dominance behavior. To examine masculinity, the subject was required to guess what an outside observer of the confrontation perceived of them after the bump. Cohen and colleagues (1996) hypothesized that Southern students would be more likely to guess that the observer viewed them as being less masculine or tough after the incident compared to students. . Aggressive behavior was measured by placing the subject in a subsequent game of "chicken". After the initial bump, a second confederate rounded the corner and proceeded to walk directly in the same path as the

subject. It should be mentioned that the hallway was lined with tables, so that there was only enough room for one person to walk. Cohen and colleagues (1996) theorized that Southern students would be less likely to move for the confederate or "chicken out" because the culture of honor emphasizes seeming tough. After the game of "chicken", the subject was required to have a face-to-face meeting with another confederate. During this interaction, the confederate examines any dominance behavior that the subject might have by filling out a 7-point scale measuring items such as firmness of handshake, eye contact, and other potentially domineering behaviors. The subject also filled out a questionnaire that captured traditional "macho" behavior, such as, how many pushups the subject can do or how much alcohol they can consume.

The results found a significant difference between Northern and Southern students concerning their perceived reputation after being bumped by the confederate. For instance, Southerners were more likely to perceive themselves as being less masculine than Northern students. Insulted Southerners were also significantly more likely than confederate Southerners to go further in the dominance test. Insulted Southerners were significantly more likely than confederate Southerners to give a firm handshake and make domineering eye contact with the evaluator. The insult caused no significant difference between experimental and confederate Northern students.

The results of Cohen and colleagues' (1996) experiments indicate that Southerners experience high levels of stress and aggression, perceive themselves as less masculine, and behave in a domineering way after being insulted. Cohen and colleagues (1996) suggest that these findings support the notion that a version of the culture of honor thrives in the South. The results also indicate that insults play a central role in the culture of honor. After being

insulted, Southerners experience physiological changes that make them primed for aggression. Also, Southerners tend to view the use of aggressive or domineering behavior as a legitimate means of reestablishing one's honor, masculinity, and toughness (Cohen et al.,1996).

Cohen and Nisbett (1997) employed two field experiments to analyze the perpetuation of cultural norms in the South. The first experiment involved sending letters of interest to potential employers throughout the United States. To test the culture of honor theory, one of the letters contained an employment inquiry from a 27-year-old male who had previously committed an honor-related homicide. More specifically, the 27-year-old male killed another male because that male was having an affair with his fiancée and mocked him about it. Another set of letters was also sent out involving a 27-year-old male who had committed a theft. Cohen and Nisbett (1997) hypothesized that potential employers in the South would favor or inquire further about the male in the homicide letter compared to employers in the North. This is because the Southern culture of honor legitimizes violence in defense of one's honor.

The results found that employers in the South and North were significantly different in terms of their compliance and tone when responding to the letter involving homicide. Compliance measured the number of requested items returned to the applicant (e.g. application, business card), while tone measured the employer's encouragement, understanding, personal nature, and appreciation of applicant's truthfulness in the return letter. Employers in the South were more likely to respond to the letter and do so in a positive way than employers in other regions. There were no significant differences between the North and South concerning the employer's indication of current job availability. Cohen

and Nisbett (1997) suggest that this non-significant result is a reflection of economic reality. There were no significant differences found between how employers in the North and South responded to the letter involving theft.

In the second experiment, Cohen and Nisbett (1997) sent letters to college newspapers throughout the United States. Included in each letter was a brief news story involving one of two homicides. The first news story contained an honor-related homicide, in which a stabbing occurred due to a family insult. The second news story consisted of a felony-related homicide. To test the culture of honor theory, the researchers analyzed the justification, blameworthiness, and sympathy of the homicide as described in each college newspaper. Cohen and Nisbett (1997) found that colleges in the South and West regions were more likely to positively frame the honor-related homicide compared to colleges in the North. This involved colleges in the South and West suggesting the honor-related homicide was justified and partly due to the victim. There were no significant differences between regions concerning the felony-related homicide.

Cohen and Nisbett's (1997) study demonstrates the relationship between the culture of honor and certain social institutions in the South. Businesses and media in the South support the culture of honor by reinforcing cultural values. These findings provide additional support for prior research that highlights the relationship between the culture of honor and social laws and policies in the South (Cohen, 1996). Similar to Cohen and Nisbett (1997), Cohen (1996) asserts that the culture of honor is reflected in Southern laws and policies. For instance, loose gun laws that encourage self-protection and support for retributive justice, such as the use of the death penalty, serve as examples of how cultural values underline formal laws and policies in the South (Cohen, 1996).

The Southern culture of honor posits that high rates of violence in the South are a consequence of Southerners, particularly White males, having a higher acceptance of violence in particular situations. This is because the South is rooted in cultural values that legitimize violence. These cultural values are centered on the notion that violence is necessary to protect one's self, family, property, and honor. While Nisbett and Cohen have seen an abundance of empirical support, the Southern culture of honor theory is not invulnerable. Several key issues linger when discussing the Southern culture of honor theory. The remaining literature review will address these issues and provide new conceptual strategies to the culture of honor.

Shortcomings of Past Research

Since the development of Nisbett and Cohen's Southern culture of honor theory, research has become somewhat problematic. One of the most fundamental problems is that research has become quite repetitious. According to Pridemore and Freilich (2006), studies examining the interaction between culture and violence in the South have focused too narrowly on a single region, race, and gender typology, specifically, Southern White males. This narrow focus has neglected findings that suggest White males are not the only group that approve of violence in the South. Numerous studies contend that Blacks and women in the South are affected by cultural norms and contribute to excessive amounts of Southern violence (Huff-Corzine, Corzine, & Moore, 1986; Parker & Pruitt, 2000; Vandal, 2000; D'Antonio-Del Rio, Doucet, & Chauvin, 2010; Doucet, D'Antonio-Del Rio, & Chauvin, 2014). Social scholars have also indicated that the emphasis on White male violence has overshadowed the effect of social class on violence in the South (Lee & Ousey, 2010).

Another highly emphasized topic is the relationship between social institutions and the culture of honor in the South. Prior research has regularly focused on the role of religion in sustaining the culture of honor. Studies have shown that the religious environment in the South, especially evangelical Protestantism, reinforces values and norms in the culture of honor (Ellison, 1991; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003). The problem is that, similar to the White male typology, studies examining the relationship between Protestantism and violence in the South have become repetitive. Previous research has continued to rely on the variables over and over without introducing any new explanatory factors, which undermines the ability to investigate new claims (Pridemore & Freilich, 2006).

The current study explores the relationship between religion and violence and steers it in a new direction. This involves taking into account the nature of politics in the South as a new concept within the religion, culture of honor, and violence nexus. The hope is that by adding this new concept, the interaction between social institutions and the culture of honor can be enhanced within the literature.

According to Shackelford (2005), the reliance on the notion that the culture of honor has adaptively acquired a life of its own in the South is problematic. The culture of honor is a complex cultural system, derived from the necessity to use violence as a survival mechanism. Therefore, a more adequate explanation of how the culture of honor has persisted, or developed a life of its own, in the South is needed. Shackelford (2005) suggests that it is possible to examine how the culture of honor persisted by exploring the adaptation of its psychological mechanisms. These mechanisms developed around the Scots-Irish need to use violence in the remote and rugged South. The frontier South presented certain dangers, such as risk of theft, due to the lack of formal authority and infrastructure. Shackelford (2005)

proposes that forms of these dangers are present in the contemporary South. The problem is in finding how these problems have adapted and underline the current culture of honor.

More often than not, cultural theorists have studied Southern violence by analyzing violence at the interpersonal level (i.e. homicide). The problem is that, by focusing on interpersonal violence, the scope of the effects of Southern culture on violence is limited. For instance, prior research asserts that cultural values may influence individual perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes towards violence beyond the interpersonal level (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997). The current study contends that analyzing specific social behaviors and cultural attitudes can reevaluate the boundaries or scope of violence in the South. By doing so, the true nature of effect of the culture of honor on Southerners can be examined.

Finally, prior research has become all too comfortable with values models. This refers to the bulk of literature that has become comfortable with accepting that values (i.e. honor) act as the critical link to violence (Lee and Ousey, 2010). Sampson and Bean (2006) suggest that cultural research has all too often trusted these "culture as values" models such as, the Southern culture of honor thesis. This trust has led to the notion that culture is an independent, causal force (Sampson & Bean, 2006, p. 19). However, culture is not an independent cause of violence, nor is it dependent on structural conditions. Instead, culture is a strategy of action (Swidler, 1986; Sampson & Bean, 2006). The strategies of action model suggests that culture acts as a "toolkit", from which individuals select a strategy to effectively handle a situation. The theoretical framework employs the strategies of action model to examine the relationship between culture and violence in the South. Despite transitioning away from the traditional "culture as values" approach, the new theoretical

framework emphasizes the role cultural values play in decision making. The hope is that by using the new theoretical frame, the study of Southern violence can receive a necessary update within contemporary criminological literature.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is systematically organized and aims at accomplishing several goals. The theoretical framework's first goal is to introduce the strategies of action model. After doing so, the subsequent sections are employed to build on the strategies of action model and address the shortcomings of previous research. The second goal is to examine relevant literature that suggests the Southern culture of honor influences Blacks and females in the South. The third goal is to explore any potential adaptions that are similar to the problems that originally developed the culture of honor and produce violent behavioral outputs in the South. The fourth goal is to explore the interaction between politics, religion, and culture in the South. The final goal is to examine gun ownership and capital punishment in order to evaluate the scope of violence in the Southern culture of honor theory.

Culture as a Southern Toolkit

"Culture directs action" (Swidler, 1986).

Sampson and Bean (2006) indicate that three positions are prevalent within cultural literature: (1) culture doesn't matter; (2) culture is a malleable adaptation to particular structural conditions; and (3) culture is a causal force, independent from structural roots (p.22-23). When categorizing Southern violence literature, Sampson and Bean (2006) argue that culture is frequently defined as an independent causal force. These "values models" imply that violence is driven by an independent and autonomous set of sets values in the South that require violence whenever these values become vulnerable. The particular set of

values in the culture of honor defines violent acts as a normative means to an end goal (Lee & Ousey, 2010). However, this interpretation of culture is problematic because when cultural values are threatened, violence is not always the end result. Culture serves a much more complex role in peoples' decision-making process, especially concerning violence.

Instead of cultural values, symbols, behaviors, or rituals acting as a "be all, end all" motivation towards action, cultural resources act interdependently as a cultural "toolkit" (Swidler, 1986). Culture is not a rigid set of personal values, but an intersubjective repertoire of different strategies that individuals can invest into particular life circumstances (Swidler, 1986). Culture is used to direct the best course of action during social interactions (Sampson & Bean, 2006).

The emerging definition of culture derives from Swidler's (1986) strategies of action model. The strategies of action model deny the notion that violence is a consequence of a rigidly determined set of values in the South. Instead, individual decision-making processes, be they violent or nonviolent, are influenced by the interactional setting and social context of a situation. Violence is put into action when it is perceived to be the most legitimate and effective for a specific situation (Lee & Ousey, 2010). Culture does not constrain violence, but rather structures it (Sampson & Bean, 2006).

Contrary to the strategies of action model, values models rely on the assumptions that actions are values-rationalized and world viewing (Sampson & Bean, 2006). These assumptions imply that every decision or action is either cultural or non-cultural. When culture directs ones' actions, it is used to rationally construct the means and ends of that action (Sampson & Bean, 2006). All too often, values models argue that people know "what is" and "what should be" in their socially-constructed world (Young, 1999). However, this

assertion is static and falsely dichotomizes social structure and culture (Sampson & Bean, 2006). In place of the values-rational and world view assumptions, the strategies of action model views culture as affective-cognitive and world making. Rather than being a rationalized decision based on a riding set of goals, violence is viewed as a cognitive decision based on an individual culture toolkit. Sampson and Bean (2006) suggest that, if life is a game, culture provides individuals with a social sense and reveals how to play the game (p.26). In a situation where a male stranger insults another male Southerner, the world view approach asserts that violence is necessary because it is the "right" response under the culture of honor. The world making approach would suggest that violence may or may not be the "right decision." It depends on the situational context and the Southern male cultural toolkit.

Culture is also used to identify in-group and out-group members (Bourdieu, 1984). The relational nature of culture gives people the ability to use culture as a means of positioning themselves in broader society. Once inside a specific social network, groups use cultural themes and ideas to reinforce boundaries and mobilize towards collective action (Tilly, 2004). In the context of the Southern culture of honor theory, it is possible that symbolic forms of violence define and reinforce culture. Gun ownership and support for the death penalty act as concrete embodiments of cultural values.

The strategies of action model is a unique separation for the traditional values-driven model. In the strategies of action paradigm, violence flourishes not because a specific group holds particular values, but because "residents from all walks of life are *relatively more likely* to have violent dispute resolution strategies in their cultural tool kits and are more likely to choose them for the job at hand" (Lee & Ousey, 2010, p.922). In the South, violence is a

unique cultural feature that has persisted because Southern culture is continuously embedded with cultural resources that define violence as a viable strategy of action.

One common running theme is that centuries of racial isolation and patriarchal norms caused the culture of honor values to be strictly transmitted to White males. According to Doucet, D'Antonio-Del Rio, & Chauvin (2014), this excessively agreed upon argument is problematic because it implies that cultural norms are selectively transmitted. Instead of the fallacy of selectively transmitted values, recent literature reveals that cultural values in the South cut across race and gender (Lee Thomas, & Ousey, 2009; Lee & Ousey, 2010; Doucet et al., 2014)

Cultural theorists, more often than not, suggest that in the Antebellum era, when slavery peaked in the South, there was limited meaningful contact and opportunity for cultural diffusion between Blacks and Whites (Lee, Thomas, & Ousey, 2009). The culture of honor, which was prevalent among Whites, was never fully introduced to Blacks in the South. According to Tindall (1976) the idea that Blacks and Whites did not share a common culture is simply incorrect. Berlin (1980) notes that slaves and slave owners actually spent a great deal of time together on small and mid-sized plantations.

In the modern era, enormous social changes have caused Blacks and Whites to become less racially isolated, especially in the South. In fact, there is presently less racial homogeneity in the South than in the North. This means that cultural values have become essential to the relationship between Blacks and Whites (Frey & Meyer, 2005). Sowell (2005) contends that for years Blacks have been immersed in White "cracker" culture in the South. Black socialization into "crack" culture is supported by recent accounts that indicate

high rates of honor-related homicide by Blacks in the South (Phillips, 2003; Miethe & Regoeczi, 2004).

Studies have also indicated a relationship between cultural values and females in the South. DeWees and Parker (2003) found female homicide offending to be higher in the South compared to the non-South. Lee and Stevenson (2006) found that the South was a strong predictor of female offending when analyzing rural female homicide rates. Despite these findings, cultural explanations of Southern violence heavily emphasize the culture of honor as it relates to males. The idea is that male- and female-perpetuated violence are inherently different. Male-perpetuated violence is often felony or honor-related, while female-perpetuated homicide is frequently related to spousal abuse (Ogle, Maier- Katkin, & Bernard, 1995; Felson & Messner, 1998; Cohen, 1998; Swatt & He, 2006).

The idea that high rates of violence, especially intimate partner homicide, provides little to no evidence that a relationship exists between the culture of honor and females in the South is a form of theoretical partiality. This type of bias endorses the fallacy of selectively transmitted norms and values. Doucet and colleagues (2014) argue that values concerning violence are not gender specific and are socialized at an early age by both males and females in the South. Research has supported this claim and found that the acceptability of violence in specific situations is an intrinsic value of Southern males and females (Elision, 1991). The relationship between violence and females in the South has likely evolved due to sociocultural shifts to traditionally gendered roles and patriarchal norms in the South. For instance, the culture of honor was developed in the South during a time when patriarchal norms ruled communities and males were viewed as the sole leader and protector of family and home. Since then, Doucet and colleagues (2014) indicates that there are an increased

number of female-headed households. This means that there are more females that "rely on those (violent) values in their reaction to confrontational situations" (p.818). The absence of a male increases the necessity of females to be able to rely on their cultural values and protect themselves, their family, and their property.

Culture is neither exclusive nor selective and is shared among individuals from all walks of life (Lee & Ousey, 2010). Nevertheless, there is no intention to demean the importance of the interaction between violence, race, and gender. It is likely that Southern White males are more apt to legitimize violence compared to Southern Black males or Southern White females. Instead of focusing on race and gender, the current study emphasizes the number of cultural tools an individual has acquired. These specific cultural resources are the most powerful influence on the decision to use violence.

Adaptation and Maintenance of the Southern Culture of Honor

The objective of the following section is to examine the mechanisms that underline the culture of honor in the South. The focus is to explore how rural life, evangelical Protestantism, and Republicanism reinforce the culture of honor. Each of these mechanisms is highly concentrated in the South. The effects of rural living and Protestantism have also been well documented in prior cultural literature. This study intends to reveal how each of these concepts endorses values consistent with the culture of honor.

The culture of honor was developed around two central features of the rural South: (1) that a person's belongings could be easily thieved and (2) that formal governmental authority was weak. However, these conditions are all but completely gone, and the culture of honor remains. Shackelford (2005) suggests that the culture of honor survival centers on its ability to evolve. The culture of honor has evolved around similar conditions that created

the original culture of honor. The difficulty is in discovering the specific conditions that are similar enough to the conditions that developed the culture of honor, yet continue to produce violence in the contemporary South.

Research examining Southern culture indicates that the culture of honor values are most prevalent in rural areas (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Hayes & Lee, 2005; Lee, Hayes, & Thomas, 2008; Lee Thomas, & Ousey, 2009; Lee & Ousey, 2010). It is possible that the relationship between the culture of honor and rural areas suggests that life in the rural South is an adaptive cultural mechanism. This is because the nature of living in the rural South is highly comparable to the conditions that developed the original culture of honor. For instance, Lee and Ousey (2010) found that Southerners living in rural areas often legitimize violence in certain situations because they feel vulnerable. These same Southerners cite having to take into account slow police response times and the necessity to protect themselves and their family when deciding to use violence.

In the past and present South, increased vulnerability is a recurring issue in rural areas. Individuals prioritize self-reliance and self-protection in the rural South because of the general lack of formal authority. When a dispute arises, individuals in rural areas often take matters into their own hands because law enforcement is often immediately unavailable. Violence is the only acceptable social control in rural communities (Black, 1983).

In the context of the strategies of action model, ruralness is a powerful cultural tool. Rural living often spearheads the decision to use violence because individuals tend to feel vulnerable and perceive the need to take matters into their own hands in the rural South. When analyzing the cultural tools hierarchy, this study expects that ruralness will be one of the principle factors in an individual's decision to use violence.

Social Institutions and the Culture of Honor

In comparison to ruralness, the relationship between social institutions and the culture of honor in the South is much more established within the literature. The idea is that regionally different social systems and institutions cause those living in or raised in the South to have different ideas of when and where violence is acceptable (Cohen & Vandello, 1998). Values models have been particularly interested in exploring religion as a dominant social institution in the South (Ellison, 1991; Borg, 1997; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003). Recent studies have also discovered that, outside of religion, the politics in the South underline the culture of honor (Layman, 2001; Green, Roswell, & Wilcox, 2003; McDaniel & Ellison, 2008). The following analysis examines religion and politics in the South and their relationship with the culture of honor values.

Southern Religion

Perhaps one of the most influential explanations relevant to the culture of honor theory is the Conservative Protestant Thesis (Ellison, 1991; Borg, 1997; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003). The Conservative Protestant Thesis contends that the key features of conservative Protestantism, such as the belief that deviance and crime reflect an individual moral failing, serve to support and reinforce violent values consistent with the culture of honor. The Conservative Protestant Thesis highlights the authority and strength of conservative Protestantism in the Southern United States. The Conservative Protestant Thesis also emphasizes the similarities between Southern Protestant principles and the values of the culture of honor. These similarities may endorse violent values and encouraged the culture of honor to thrive.

Support for the relationship between conservative Protestantism and the culture of honor in the South is well-defined in the literature (Ellison, 1991; Borg, 1997; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003; Berthelot, Blanchard, & Brown, 2008; Lee & Ousey, 2010; Doucet, D'Antonio-Del Rio, & Chauvin, 2014). The most widely accepted argument traces the establishment of Protestantism in the South to the time when the Scots-Irish began to settle the Appalachian region. The Scots-Irish were mostly Presbyterian before they arrived in the South (Lee et al., 2009). Presbyterianism was conducive to the Scots-Irish herding lifestyle because it cherished values of self-reliance and the warrior ethic. The problem was that in the British Isles, Presbyterianism was marginalized due to the supremacy of Irish Catholicism and Anglican Episcopalianism (p.67).

The Scots-Irish were introduced to Baptist and Methodist sects upon arrival in the southern United States. These Protestant sects preached principles of anti-authoritarianism, which was similar to Presbyterianism and favorable to the Scots-Irish culture (Webb, 2005). This caused many Scots-Irish to adopt Baptist and Methodist forms of Protestantism. Religion and religious services became a central part of Scots-Irish life in the South. Religious services became a place of worship and a time for community gathering and socialization (McWhiney, 1988). Since then, conservative Protestantism denominations have controlled the religious landscape in the South (Boles, 1985, Doucet et al., 2014).

Religion acts as a "pillar of life" in the South (Ellison, 1991, p.1226). Religion is also deeply rooted in the foundations of Southern culture. This is because conservative Protestantism is favorable and endorses the Southern culture of honor. The key principles and beliefs of conservative Protestant sects support the culture of honor values because of the likenesses between the two. For instance, the culture of honor emphasis on the legitimacy of

retributive violence is a central feature in conservative Protestant principles such as "an eye for an eye" (Ellison, 1991). Several studies also note that Protestant convictions related to literal biblical interpretations, an authoritative and vengeful God, and the idea that humans are inherently sinful reinforce the culture of honor's unique set of attitudes towards violence (Ellison, 1991; Ellison et al., 2003). Conservative Protestantism and the culture of honor are more likely to define violence as a legitimate means to an end.

Bruce (1979) argues that even the most pious conservative Protestants view violence as an acceptable means to settle disputes. Recent research has found additional support for the relationship between conservative Protestant and Southern violence (Ellison, 1991; Ellison & Musick, 1993; Borg, 1997; Ellison et al., 2003, Lee, 2006; Desmond, Kikuchi, and Morgan, 2010). Ellison (1991) found that the Southerners with conservative Protestant values were more likely to support violence in defensive situations. Conservative Protestant principles were measured by regular church attendance and having hierarchical views of God. Borg (1997) suggests that religious fundamentalists, or conservative Protestants in the South, are more likely to favor punitive measures against lawbreakers.

Ellison and colleagues (2003) found a positive relationship between the percentage of conservative Protestants and homicide rates in urban cities in the South. This effect was not significant in urban cities in the non-South. Ellison and colleagues (2003) contend that the relationship between the percentage of conservative Protestants and homicide rates in the South is due to Southerners having unique attitudes towards when violence is appropriate. Several others authors have found a similar relationship between high rates of violent crime and areas with large concentrations of conservative Protestants (Lee, 2006; Desmond, Kikuchi, and Morgan, 2010).

In sum, conservative Protestant beliefs have been absorbed by the Southern culture of honor due to their compatibility and overlap. The Protestant belief system supports the idea that using violence is appropriate in certain, primarily defensive, circumstances (Ellison, 1991). Protestant doctrine emphasizes an authoritative and punitive God and principles, such as "an eye for an eye," which ultimately legitimize retributive violence (Bruce, 1979, Ellison, 1991; Ellison et al., 2003). The intention is not to suggest that Protestantism is violent, nor that Protestants are inherently criminal, but instead to argue that Protestantism and its beliefs are an influential cultural resource that is likely to legitimize violence in certain situations.

The current study also proposes that the relationship between social institutions and the culture of honor extends beyond the traditional emphasis on Protestantism. The proposed relationship focuses on the role of politics in the nexus between social institutions and the culture of honor. Support for this relationship derives from recent findings that suggest Protestantism and the culture of honor values are heavily embedded in and influence politics, laws, and social policies in the South (Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997; Cohen & Vandello, 1998; Steensland, Park, Regnerus, Robinson, Wilcox, & D. Woodberry, 2000, Layman & Hussey, 2004, Patrikios, 2008). For example, the culture of honor significance on self-protection can be seen in the "true man" rule, which allows individuals to stand fast, face their attacker, and kill them if necessary (Mischke, 1981; Copes et al., 2009). The culture of honor's emphasis on retributive justice is revealed in high rates of support and use of capital punishment in southern states (Cohen, 1996).

The foundation of the Southern politics, religion, and culture of honor nexus relies on the relationship between evangelical Protestantism and the Republican Party that developed in the late 20th century. During this time, the heavily conservative Christian Right became

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politically mobilized and united with the Republican Party. According to Patrikios (2008), political party membership gives individuals a greater social identity and influence in the decision-making process. Conservative Christian sects view the Republican Party as a means of identifying and connecting with like-minded individuals. A political party stance on social and economic issues became a way of defining themselves and referencing in-group members. The Republican Party commonly used this tactic because it motivated theologically conservative individuals (Patrikios, 2008).

An alliance with the Republican Party was viewed as the most effective method of pushing favorable polices for conservative Protestant groups. For instance, during the Republican National Convention of 1992, Republicans echoed the idea of a hypothetical "cultural war". This "cultural war" included issues consistent with conservative Protestantism and the culture of honor, such as firearms, privacy, and punishment. Secular party members were often unaware of the religious nuances within the party policies. This allowed religious themes to infiltrate and became a normative part of the Republican Party, and politics in general (Layman & Hussey, 2004). According to McDaniel and Ellison (2008), a trend has emerged in the last few years of individuals who hold strong conservative religious beliefs consistently siding with the Republican Party. For this reason, the strategies of action model views identifying with the Republican Party as an additional cultural tool increasingly likely to legitimize violence. This is because the Republican Party provides a platform for Protestant beliefs and the culture of honor values.

Cultural Values and Social Behaviors

The final section in the literature review attempts to gain a greater understanding of violence by exploring the relationship between culture and social behaviors in the South.

Prior research has indicated that Southerners are likely to legitimize violence in the face of affront or protection of one's honor, family, or property (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991; Nisbett & Cohen, 1994; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Nisbett et al., 1996; Cohen & Nisbett, 1997; Cao et al., 1997; Hayes & Lee, 2005). Vandello and Cohen (2004) argue that prior research provides evidence that a particular pattern of behavior is likely internalized in the South even after significant ecological, economic, or cultural changes. The following analysis attempts to examine possible behaviors that are a reflection of culture values in the South.

Firearms and Southern Culture. It is well documented that firearms are densely concentrated in the South, and to a slightly lesser extent, the West (Wright & Matston, 1975; Cook & Ludwig, 1996; Cook & Ludwig, 1997; Azrael, Cook, & Miller, 2004; Kleck, 2005; Hepburg, Miller, Azrael, & Hemenway, 2007). One of the leading explanations for high rates of gun ownership centers on the gun culture in the South. According to Dixon and Lizotte (1987), Southern gun culture developed around distinctive cultural patterns, such as high rates of hunting and sports shooting. These cultural patterns resulted in high rates of gun ownership because of the heighten importance on activities where firearms are essential. Hunting, gun collecting, and sport shooting, particularly in the rural areas, are often ways to actively socialize, encourage, and foster the role of firearms in the South (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991; Cao, Cullen, & Link, 1997).

Several authors suggest that the gun culture in the South has led to disproportionate amounts of Southern violence (Hackney, 1969; Gastil, 1971; Reed, 1971; Harries, 1974; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Cao, Cullen, & Link, 1997). For example, Reed (1971) notes that guns are readily availability in the South. Southerners, especially in rural areas, have an

increased propensity to turn arguments into deadly confrontations because of the number of guns "just lying around" (p.433). Harries (1974) notes that the lethal violence in the South is disproportionately high because of the use of firearms during arguments.

Prior research indicates that there is a relationship between the culture of honor and the motivation to own a firearm in the South. For instance, Cohen and Nisbett (1994) indicate that White males in the South are more likely to own a firearm for self-protection compared to White males in the Midwest. This is likely because gun owners in the South are more likely to hold retributive and protective values (Cao, Cullen, & Link, 1997; Glaser & Glendon, 1998). Felson and Pare (2010) contend that Southerners favor carrying firearms over other types of weapons (e.g., knives) for protection. Felson and Pare (2010) conclude that Southern reluctance to carry knives or mace is evidence that the culture of honor is no longer relevant in the South. Contrary to this conclusion, the current study proposes that Southerners' unwillingness to carry anything other than a firearm bolsters the idea that firearms are an essential part of Southern culture.

The problem with focusing on protection-minded gun ownership is that individuals' motivations for owning firearms often overlap. More specifically, prior studies have revealed that general and protection-minded gun ownership is strongly related to an individual's socialization into hunting and sports shooting culture (Lizotte, Bordua, & White, 1981; Cao et al., 1997). Lizotte and colleagues (1981) argue that the specific motivation for owning a firearm in the South is difficult to determine, even if a gun owner cites protection as their primary motivation. This is because the significance of hunting and sports shooting in the South makes it unclear if Southerners own firearms for protection from other people or from animals.

Firearms are a prevalent and imperative part of living in the South despite the particular motivation for owning a gun. The gun culture in the South endorses owning and using a firearm to be self-reliant through hunting and sports shooting. In turn, the Southern culture of honor also suggests that owing a firearm is a useful and effective means of enforcing cultural values, such as protecting one's self, family, and property. Gun ownership in the South is the physical embodiment of an individual adherence to social norms regarding the gun culture and the willingness and ability to uphold cultural values of the gun culture. In a situation that involves the decision to use violence, the availability of a firearm is a powerful cultural tool. This is because of a firearm's ability to protect and carry out deadly violence.

Honor and the Death Penalty. The relationship between the Southern culture of honor and violence has been frequently analyzed by examining high rates of interpersonal violence in the South (Hackney, 1969; Gastil, 1971; Loftin & Hill, 1974; Huff-Corzine, Corzine & Moore, 1986; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Corzine & Huff-Corzine, 1989; Ellison, 1991; Nisbett et al., 1996; Hayes, 2006; Lee, Hayes, & Thomas, 2008). A less distinguished body of literature has also explored the Southern culture of honor outside of the interpersonal level. The argument is that the degree to which culture influences decisions can be viewed in Southerners' overall attitude towards punishment (Borg, 1997). More specifically, Southerners' punitive attitudes towards lawbreakers suggest that the culture of honor contains boundaries that extend past personal decisions and into the public domain (Borg, 1997). Southerners legitimize violence during personal conflicts and in situations where the larger community was wronged.

To illustrate differences in regional attitudes towards punitiveness, scholars have frequently explored the relationship between the South and the death penalty (Young, 1992; Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997, Stack, 2003). The death penalty is considered the ultimate form of justice in the United States legal system, and in recent years, the majority of executions and inmates on death row have occurred in Southern states (Zimring, 2003; Unnever & Cullen, 2005). Despite the disproportionate use of the death penalty in the South, public opinion polls do not reflect the common belief that Southerners strongly support the death penalty. Using Gallup Poll data from 2001, Zimring (2003) reveals that only 59% of individuals living in the South support the death penalty compared to 60% of individuals living in the West and 72% of individuals living in the Midwest and in the East (p. 11).

Findings that suggest the South is not regionally different in terms of public support for the death penalty are not surprising. This is because support for the death penalty is fairly consistent across regions and crude measures, such as the GSS, do not truly tap into any cultural indicators (Borg, 1997). In an attempt to tap into culture, several authors have noted the importance of analyzing specific cultural factors in the South. Support for the death penalty has little connection with actual crime rates or prevention, but rather, is a representation of certain cultural values (Tyler & Weber, 1982).

In the strategies of action model, two cultural resources recur when analyzing correlates with support for the death penalty (Barkan & Cohn, 2010). First, Southern Republicans are highly supportive of the death penalty. This is because political conservatism is densely populated in the South and strongly associated with stronger support for the death penalty (Young, 1992). In recent years, this relationship has become stronger as regional politics have become more polarized around social issues (Mellow, 2008). Second,

conservative Protestants in the South are highly supportive of the death penalty. This is due to previous findings that suggest religious fundamentalism is associated with stronger support for the death penalty (Young, 1992; Grasmick, Cochran, Bursik, & Kimpel, 1993; Unnever & Cullen, 2006). Together, these series of mechanisms that undermine cultural values buttress the relationship between the culture of honor and support for the death penalty (Tyler & Weber, 1982; Borg, 1997; Stack, 2003; McCann, 2008).

The Southern culture of honor theory posits that Southerners are more likely to approve of violence in defensive situations. Support for the death penalty is merely an extension of these cultural values, beyond the interpersonal level (Borg, 1997). Through the support of powerful cultural resources, the death penalty acts as the ultimate reflection of cultural values concerning retributive justice and "an eye for eye". The general idea is that support for the death penalty is an additional cultural tool in the decision to use violence. This is because the cultural mechanisms that reinforce the death penalty also underline the Southern culture of honor and legitimize interpersonal violence.

Statement of Hypotheses

The current study will test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Individuals socialized in the South will have a greater acceptance of defensive violence.

Hypothesis 2: Individuals socialized in rural areas will have a greater acceptance of defensive violence.

Hypothesis 3: Individuals identifying as evangelical Protestant will have a greater acceptance of defensive violence.

Hypothesis 4: Individuals who identify with the Republican Party will have a greater tolerance of defensive violence.

Hypothesis 5: Individuals who own firearms will have a greater acceptance of defensive violence.

Hypothesis 6: Individuals who support the death penalty will have a greater acceptance of defensive violence.

When taken together, these hypotheses offer a comprehensive analysis of the interaction between Southern culture and violence. Each hypothesis intends to test the power of a cultural resource and its ability to influence the decision to use violence in defensive situations. More specifically, Hypothesis 1 tests the effects of being socialized in the South as a powerful cultural resource. Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 test the underlying mechanisms of the Southern culture of honor, and their effect as cultural resources. Hypotheses 5 and 6 test specific social behaviors and their influence on the decision to use violence. As expected, the most powerful cultural tool should be being socialized into Southern culture. Each additional cultural resource that a Southerner has at their disposal is then expected to increase their acceptance towards the use of defensive violence. A person is likely to define violence as a viable action as their cultural definitions related to honor become larger. Southern violence is a consequence of a conglomeration of cultural resources that define violence as a viable strategy of action.

Theoretical Model

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│              Southern               │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
│   Rural         Protestant          Republican     │    │ Age          │
│   Gun Owner         Support for the Death Penalty   │    │ White        │
│                                                     │    │ Male         │
└───────────────────────────────────────────────────┘    │ Married      │
                  │                                        │ Education    │
                  ▼                                        │ Income       │
┌───────────────────────────────────────┐                └──────────────┘
│   Support for the use of Defensive     │
│                Violence                │
└───────────────────────────────────────┘
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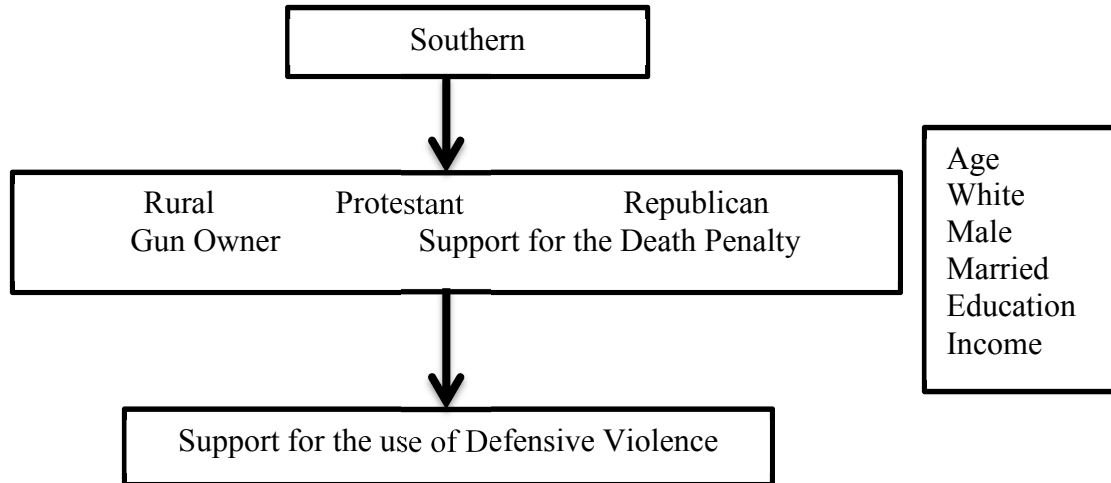
Figure 1. The Theoretical Model

The theoretical model (Figure 1) argues that Southern culture has the most influential effect on the decision to support defensive violence. Largely, this is because each of the other cultural tools is embedded in Southern culture. Socialization in rural areas stems from Southern culture and directly effects gun ownership for several reasons. The primary reason is because there is an abundance of literature that suggests the Southern culture of honor is strongest in rural areas (Black, 1983; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Hayes & Lee, 2005; Lee, Hayes, & Thomas, 2008; Lee, Thomas, & Ousey, 2009; Lee & Ousey, 2010). Furthermore, several social scholars have noted the prevalence of firearms in the rural South and the importance guns have as a socialization tool (Harries, 1974; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Cao, Cullen, & Link, 1997; Copes et al., 2009; Felson & Pare, 2010). Rural Southerners own firearms as a means of enforcing their cultural values, especially concerning defensive violence.

Presented on the other half of the theoretical model is the relationship between Protestantism, Republicanism, and the death penalty in the South. Research has shown that Protestantism is the dominant religious preference in the South (Ellison, 1991; Borg, 1998;

Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003). Research has also shown that the laws and social policies in the South are often consistent with values related to the culture of honor and Protestantism and supported by the Republican Party (Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997; Cohen & Vandello, 1998; Steensland, Park, Regnerus, Robinson, Wilcox, & D. Woodberry, 2000, Layman & Hussey, 2004, Patrikios, 2008). To illustrate this point, research has explored the death penalty (Borg, 1998). The high rates of use of the death penalty in the South endorse the notion that retributive, defensive violence is acceptable.

The theoretical model, as a whole, represents the idea that exposure to each cultural resource makes an individual more likely to legitimize defensive violence. Each cultural tool is a powerful influence in the decision to use violence. Violence is viewed as a viable strategy as an individual obtains more cultural definitions conducive to violence.

Chapter III: Research Design and Methodology

The current study examines the relationship between culture and violence in the South using the strategies of action paradigm. The research question in this study is, "What impact does culture have in explaining disproportionately high rates of violent crime in the South?" In particular, which cultural resources endorse the use of violence in defensive situations? Previous research has employed the General Social Survey (GSS) and other closed-ended survey techniques to examine the relationship between culture and defensive violence in the South (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991; Borg, 1997, Cao et al., 1997). The challenge is that the use of closed-ended surveys did not provide sufficient situational context in questions that pertained to violence. These questions were often ambiguous and did not weigh the importance of the interaction between the specific situational and cultural nature of a situation. The current study explores Southern violence in the strategies of action paradigm, while focusing on the cultural content of violent scenarios. Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and several vignettes containing violent scenarios were employed in order to examine the relationship between culture and violence in the South.

Amazon's Mechanical Turk

MTurk is an innovative online marketplace that boasts nearly 100,000 users from over 100 countries (Pontin, 2007). When using MTurk, potential members register under two select categories. Depending on the category, the user can then perform several different functions, including data collection, labor recruitment, and task creation (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). The first category users can register under is called "requestor". MTurk permits requestors the ability to create tasks or Human Intelligence Tasks, also called

a "HIT". A HIT can consist of any task (e.g. survey, experiments, writings) that can be completed on a computer.

The second category users can register under is called "users". Users typically browse and select any available HIT they wish to complete. Most of the time, users choose to complete a HIT based on the amount of compensation (i.e. penny, nickel, dime) that the requestor has awarded for the completion of that HIT. MTurk, however, also gives the requestor the ability to refuse payment to users for inadequate work. If a user is proven to have completed subpar work, MTurk also reduces the user's creditability score, limiting the types of HITs the user can complete (Buhrmester et al., 2011). For users that adequately complete the HIT, any compensation derives from the requestor's account. Each requestor deposits money into their account through the use of a credit card. The only other financial transaction that occurs outside of the requestor-to-user relations is a 10% commission collected by the host site, Amazon (Buhrmester et al., 2011).

Several scholars have noted that there are significant benefits of using MTurk compared to other major online data collection sites. The first benefit is that MTurk samples are far more demographically diverse compared to Internet or traditional college student samples used frequently by social scientists (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). The second advantage is that data collection through MTurk is often quick and inexpensive (Buhrmester et al., 2011). For example, Buhrmester and colleagues (2011) employed a two question HIT on MTurk for one-cent compensation. During a 33-hour timeframe, 500 respondents, or about 15 subjects per hour completed the two question HIT. Additional findings suggest that the participation rate of each HIT is strongly related to the difficulty of the task and the expected compensation. During a 5-hour timeframe, only 25 respondents

completed a 30-minute long HIT for a compensation of two cents. When increasing the

compensation to fifty cents, the same number of respondents completed the HIT in just under

a 2-hour timeframe (Buhrmester et al., 2011).

The final benefit is that using MTurk offers enhanced reliability and consistency

(Buhrmester et al., 2011; Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2012; Holden, Dennie, & Hicks,

2013). Social science scholars have often criticized the use of Internet surveys due to their

lack of consistency. Despite these criticisms, Holden and colleagues (2003) found that

MTurk users have a high degree of reliability when completing simple tasks and in longer

surveys.

Through the use of MTurk, the current study collected a total of five hundred and

twenty six responses (N=526) (see Table 1) over a weeklong period. Respondents were

recruited by offering a monetary compensation of twenty-five cents. By employing MTurk,

this study was able to gather a large convenience sample in a quick and cost efficient manner.

The Present Study

The current study methodology utilizes a cross sectional design to measure the

relationship between Southern culture and attitudes towards violence. Data collection was

ensured through a survey instrument that included demographic and attitudinal questions, and

several vignettes (see Appendix). Each vignette contained a scenario involving the use of

defensive violence. After reading each scenario, respondents were required to rate their

personal evaluation regarding the use of defensive violence.

The data analysis presented in this study includes descriptive, univariate, and

bivariate statistics and the use of an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression modeling. The

utilization of multiple analytical techniques is employed to adequately test the relationship

between the strategies of action paradigm and violence in the South. The theoretical framework contends that Southerners' willingness to legitimize violence in defensive situations derives from the array of cultural resources that endorse defensive violence in the South. Therefore, Southerners are more likely to approve of defensive violence than individuals in other regions. The propensity to legitimize defensive violence only becomes stronger as a Southerners obtain more cultural resources that define violence as a viable strategy of action. The statistical analysis used in this study reflects the idea that a Southerner's number of cultural resources mediates their acceptance of defensive violence.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable for this study is individual's acceptance for the use of violence in defensive situations. In order to test the acceptability of defensive violence, three different vignettes containing scenarios involving the use of defensive violence were utilized to test respondent's acceptance of defensive violence (see Appendix). By definition, the use of defensive violence is situational violence in the face of affront or to protect children, women, or property from an assailant (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Cohen & Nisbett, 1996). Consistent with this definition, Vignette One involves the use of violence for self-protection and the protection of one's family and property. Vignette Two contains the use of violence in the face of affront, specifically towards one's significant other. Vignette Three includes the use of violence towards affront and what appears to be child abuse. Finally, each vignette was framed in third person using universal names for both males and females to ensure sensitivity and avoid any disputes.

After reading each vignette, respondents were required to rate their personal evaluation of the acceptability of the use of violence on a zero to ten scale. A score of zero

meant that the use of violence was unacceptable. A score of ten meant that the use of violence was unconditionally acceptable. Results from the acceptability of violence scales were then compared to the independent variables to see the relationship between cultural resources and the acceptability of defensive violence.

Independent Variables

Defining the South. From a theoretical standpoint, the most powerful cultural resource is to have been socialized in the South. The problem is that geographically defining the South, and what constitutes being socialized in the South, is inconsistent in existing literature. One popular method is to use the regional definitions provided by the United States census to define the South (Messner, 1983; Parker, 1989; Ellison, 1991). The drawback with this definition is that is includes traditionally non-Southern states with Southern states. For example, the census definition suggests that Delaware is a Southern state and possibly shared the same cultural features as Alabama, Mississippi, or South Carolina.

Gastil (1971) defined the South through the use of a Southern index, which traced cultural migration patterns prior to the 1960s. The major problem with the Southern index is that Gastil concealed information about the creation of the index. It is, therefore, impossible to update and recreate the Southern index. Despite these concerns, Gastil's index is continuously acknowledged as a well-respected measure of the South. In Gastil's original index, the most Southern states were given a score of 30 out of 30. A total of eleven states, including the Border South states (*West Virginia, Kentucky,* and *Tennessee*) and the Deep South states (*Virginia, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina,* and *Georgia*) received a score of 30. The current study also utilized these eleven states to conceptualize the South.

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The Effect of Southern Culture. The theoretical framework for this study focuses

on cultural values and resources in the context of the strategies of action model. Therefore,

being "Southern" is the most influential cultural resource. The term Southern, more often

than not, refers to an individual having been socialized in Southern culture. The problem is

that what constitutes as being socialized in the South has varied in previous literature. Due to

the nature of GSS data, one of the more popular methods of defining "Southern" is to look at

the specific age at which an individual lived in the South (Dixon and Lizotte, 1987, Ellison,

1991). The general idea is that the area in which an individual lived at age 16 represents the

area in which that person was likely born and raised. However, this is a highly problematic

measure because 16 years is more than enough time for a family to have relocated one or

more times, and become socialized into different regional norms and values.

An alternative method of defining "Southern" is by using the length of time an

individual lived in the South. Cohen and colleagues (1996) categorized Southerners as

individuals who lived in the South for at least six years. According to Phinney, Ong, and

Madden (2000) the length of time in a culture is important, but not the only factor to consider

when examining cultural socialization. Phinney and colleagues (2000) suggest that an

individual's place of birth and age of migration are also significant factors.

In order to define "Southern", the current study utilizes two specific measures to

emphasis when and how long an individual lived in the South. The first measure focuses on

the respondent's birth state and how long they lived there. The second measure highlights the

respondent's current state of residence and how long they have resided there. In order to be

considered as being socialized in the South (i.e. Southerner), the respondent must have been

born in the South and lived there for at least six years or currently be living in the South for at least six years.

The Effect of Rural Living. In order to examine the effects of rural living, an ordinal level scale rating the urbanity of the respondent's birth and current state were employed. More specifically, respondents selected from five response options (urban, suburban, large rural, small rural, and geographically isolated) to capture the nature of the environment they were born in and currently live in. Similar to being defined as socialized in the South, the effects of rural living will emphasize when and how long an individual lived in a rural location. It should be noted that after respondents indicated the amount of time they lived in a particular area, they were asked to describe the nature of that area. This captured the nature and time spent in a specific environment. Individuals socialized in a rural area must have been born in a large rural, small rural, or geographically isolated area and lived there for at least six years or currently be living in a large rural, small rural, or geographically isolated area for at least six years.

Protestantism and Republicanism. Protestantism was measured on a nominal level scale that included numerous types of religious orientations, including: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, other, and no religious preference. The strength of the respondent's religious convictions was also measured by exploring the frequency in which the respondent attended religious services. The response options included: never, less than once a month, once a month, a few times a month, once a week, a few times a week, and daily. According to Ellison (1991), church attendance has a positive relationship with supporting defensive violence because frequent churchgoers are more likely to adhere to Protestant principles.

Republicanism was captured through a 7-item ordinal level political ideology scale. The political ideology scale included: strong Democrat, Democrat, lean Democrat, independent, lean Republican, Republican, and Strong Republican.

Gun Ownership. Gun ownership was collected through a binary measure related to whether or not respondents had a gun in the home. This question was deemed most appropriate due to the sensitivity that goes along with collecting data about personal firearm ownership.

Capital Punishment. Support for capital punishment was measured by examining respondent's attitudes towards the use of the death penalty. More specifically, an ordinal level scale testing the respondent's degree of agreement with the use of the death penalty for a convicted murder was utilized. The response options on this particular scale were strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Control Variables

Control variables for this study include race, age, gender, income, educational attainment, and marital status. Race was captured using a generic nominal level measure consisting of several different races (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Asian American, Black or African American, American Hispanic or Latino, Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White/Non-Hispanic). The race variable was then dummy-coded for Whites and non-Whites. It should be noted that the race variable was dummy-coded because of the traditional values model's assertion that Whites are increasingly likely to use or support defensive violence. Age was captured on a continuous, open-ended scale. Gender was measured on a binary, male or female scale. Income was collected by asking respondents to rate how they perceived their income compared to others in their area. An ordinal level

scale allowed respondents to rate their income as being well above average, above average, average, below average, and well below average. By not defining an "average income," the income measurement was relative to respondents' immediate social environment and not a specific number.

Education was measured on an ordinal level scale ranging from never attended school to advanced degree. Marital status was measured on a nominal level scale containing six possible relationship categories including: married, divorced, widowed, separated, never been married, and a member of an unmarried group (i.e. domestic partnership, civil union). Marital status was also dummy-coded for respondents who were married versus all others. Marital status was recoded because of the assumption that individuals, specifically males, who are married are more likely to use or support defensive violence.

These measures control for demographic and structural variables. The strategies of action model is not specific to a group, but rather applies to individuals from all walks of life (Lee & Ousey, 2010). However, the relationship between structural conditions and violence cannot be simply ignored. The use of these control variables is designed to include structural and demographical components into the relationship between cultural resources and the use of violence.

Analytical Strategy

The current research employed a multivariate modeling strategy to test the relationship between culture and violence in the South. This multivariate modeling strategy begins with a descriptive statistical analysis. Examining the descriptive statistics is an important step in assuring the normality of the data due to the ordinal level nature of the dependent variable. The analysis includes a frequency distribution, as well as examinations

of the mode and frequency distributions. These initial descriptive statistics help to describe the dependent variables using measures of central tendency and dispersion. Next, a visual data analysis, which included histograms with a normal curve and Q-Q plots, allowed the ability to check the distribution of the data and any noticeable outliers A Shapiro-Wilk test was then utilized to check the distribution of the sample compared to a normally distributed sample. If the p-value on the Shapiro-Wilk test is below the alpha level of 0.05, there is a strong likelihood that the data is different from normal. If the p-value exceeds the alpha level of 0.05, there is a strong likelihood that the data is normally distributed.

Although the primary focus of the descriptive analysis involved the dependent variable, descriptive statistics were also employed on the independent variables. However, because no variables are greater than an ordinal level measurement, the univariate analysis of independent variables was less extensive. The descriptive statistics consisted of checking each independent variable's frequency distributions and mode.

A bivariate correlation analysis was subsequently implemented to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables in the model. To accomplish this, a Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was employed. The Spearman's Rho correlation analysis provides a correlation coefficient between two co-variants. The correlation coefficient outputs a -1 through 0 to +1 measure, which can be used to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. A -1 output means that the two variables have a perfect negative relationship. A score of 0 means that the variables have no relationship, while a score of +1 means the variables have a perfect positive relationship.

The Spearman's Rho correlation test also provides a p-value. The p-value is used to support the alternative hypothesis, or the probability that there is a relationship between two

variables. Consistent with a majority of social science, the alpha level will be set at a .05 threshold. The use of the p-value and correlation coefficient together will provide additional evidence of any possible relationship between variables. During this stage of analysis, the relationships of most interest are between the independent and dependent variables. The Spearman's Rho tests will primarily analyze the relationship between cultural resources and defensive violence.

The final step of the analytical strategy is to model the acceptance of defensive violence. This was accomplished using four specific models through an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis. The first model predicts which cultural resources legitimize violence in situations where one's self, family, and property are threatened. The second model predicts which cultural resources legitimize violence where an individual faces affront. The third model predicts which cultural resources legitimize violence in a situation where a person witnesses what is perceived to be child abuse and then is insulted. The final model predicts which cultural resources legitimize violence using a defensive violence scale. The defensive violence ranges from zero to thirty and combines scores from the first three measures of defensive violence.

The specific cultural resources used in each model included: Southern socialized, rural socialization, Protestant, religious attendance, Republican, gun ownership, and support for capital punishment. These independent variables were placed in the OLS models using a forced entry technique. In other words, all of the variables in the model were entered into the regression in one step, contrary to stepwise or other techniques. In addition to the explanatory variables, the control variables, age, gender, educational attainment, income, and marital status were also included. The idea is that the combination of independent and control

variables help gain a better understanding of the influence Southern culture has on defensive violence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the objective of this study is to test how cultural tools influence the use of defensive violence. The argument is that Southern culture endorses violence. This statement has largely only been examined through values models. This study steps away from the generic notion that 'values cause violence'. The new approach to Southern violence involves Swidler's (1986) culture as a strategy of action model. The idea is that culture is a toolkit, to which people relate when deciding to use action. The more cultural tools an individual has, the increased likelihood they are to perceive violence as a viable action. This study intends to test the relationship between the Southern culture of honor and the acceptability of defensive violence. The expectation is that Southerners are more likely to accept defensive violence because of the cultural tools at their disposal.

Chapter IV: Analytical Results

The Southern culture of honor theory, in combination with the strategies of action model, suggests that Southern violence is a consequence of specific cultural resources that legitimize defensive uses of violence. The current study explores the relationship between these specific cultural resources and the willingness to approve of defensive violence through a series of univariate and bivariate statistics, and a set of ordinary least squared (OLS) regression models. More likely than not, individuals having obtained more of these cultural resources will have the highest propensity to legitimize defensive violence.

Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables

Variable	N	Min	Max	$\overline{x}$	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Protection	526	0.00	10.00	6.45	3.03	0.13
Affront	526	0.00	10.00	5.11	3.12	0.14
Abuse	526	0.00	10.00	4.86	3.40	0.15
Defensive Violence Scale	526	0.00	30.00	16.41	7.09	0.31

The first stage of this analysis will present the descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables for the full sample. Table 1 displays the four different measures of defensive violence utilized in this study. The first measure of defensive violence, Protection, focuses on the use of violence for protection of one's self, family, and property. The second measure of defensive violence, Affront, examines the use of violence in the face of affront, particularly against one's significant other. Abuse is the third measure of defensive violence and emphasizes the use of violence against what can be perceived as child abuse and affront. Each of the first three measures had a range of ten, which means that a score of zero implied that the respondent considered the use of violence absolutely

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illegitimate, while a score of ten meant that the use of violence was absolutely necessary and legitimate.

The final measure of defensive violence, the Defensive Violence Scale, combines the scores from the first three measures. The Defensive Violence Scale, therefore, ranges from zero to thirty. The combination of scores provided by the Defensive Violence Scale offers an enhanced overall measure of defensive violence compared to the first three measures and their situational nature.

Table 1 shows that, of the first three measures, the Protection scenario received the highest average defensive violence score, $\overline{x} = 6.45$, meaning that, on average, respondents were more likely to legitimize situations where violence is a necessary means for protection compared to any other violent circumstance. The Protection scenario also had the lowest amount of variability, SD = 3.03, SE = 0.13, with a majority of respondents, 68%, scoring between a 3.42 and 9.47 on the acceptability of violence scale. The second highest average acceptability of violence score, $\overline{x} = 5.11$, was captured in the scenario involving affront. This suggests that respondents were more willing to approve of violence during situations of affront compared to situations of perceived abuse. The measure of affront also had the second highest amount of variability, SD = 3.12, SE = 0.14, with 68% of scores falling between 1.99 and 8.23. The lowest average defensive violence score was collected in the measure of abuse, $\overline{x} = 4.86$. Perhaps this low score is due to the ambiguity surrounding the abuse within the scenario. The scenario was framed in a way in which it is not absolutely clear whether or not the child is a victim of abuse. It is therefore likely that this may have caused some reluctance in respondents' willingness to approve of violence, even after being

insulted. The situation involving abuse, consequently, had the highest amount of variability, SD = 3.40, SE = 0.15, with 68% of respondents scoring between a 1.46 and 8.26.

The Defensive Violence Scale combined the scores from the first three measures creating a thirty-point defensive violence scale. On average, $\bar{x}$ = 16.41, respondents perceived violence as more acceptable than not on the Defensive Violence Scale. The Defensive Violence Scale had a moderate amount of variability, SD = 7.09, SE = 0.31 with 68% of respondents scoring between 9.32 and 23.5 on the Defensive Violence Scale.

After exploring the descriptive statistics, the next step was to examine the assumption of normality for the dependent variables. Analyzing the assumptions of normality was accomplished through the use of a Shapiro-Wilk test of normality, α = 0.05, and a visual data analysis including Q-Q plots.

Figure 2. Protection Histogram

Figure 3. Protection Q-Q Plot

Figure 2 displays a histogram with a normal distribution curve for the defensive

violence scores in the Protection measure. Figure 2 reveals that the Protection measure had a

mode of 10, indicating that most respondents were highly supportive of the use of violence in

this scenario. The high degree of scores tailed at the far left-end of Figure 2 is suggestive of

a negatively skewed distribution. In fact, the Protection measure had a medium amount of

negative skewness, skew = -0.52, and a relatively high amount of negative kurtosis. Figure 3

displays a Q-Q plot for the defensive violence scores in the Protection measure. Figure 3

reveals that the Protection measure does not include any significant outliers, but most scores

fall near the theoretical mean. The visual data analysis suggests that the Protection measure

includes a distribution that may not be significantly different from normal. A Shapiro-Wilk

test of normality was then run on the Protection measure. The Shapiro-Wilk test, W= .909, p

< 0.001, indicates that the distribution is significantly different from normal. It is important

to note, however, that the Shapiro-Wilk test is an overly sensitive test and tends to find small

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differences in larger samples. Therefore, the Protection measure can be considered normal following the visual data analysis.

Figure 4. Affront Histogram
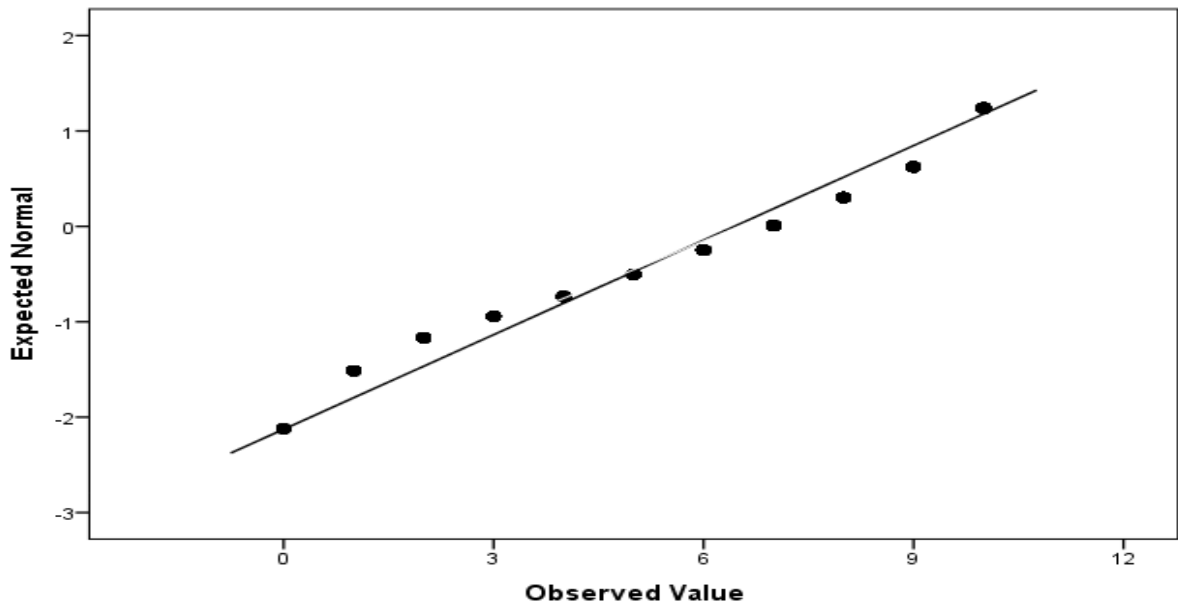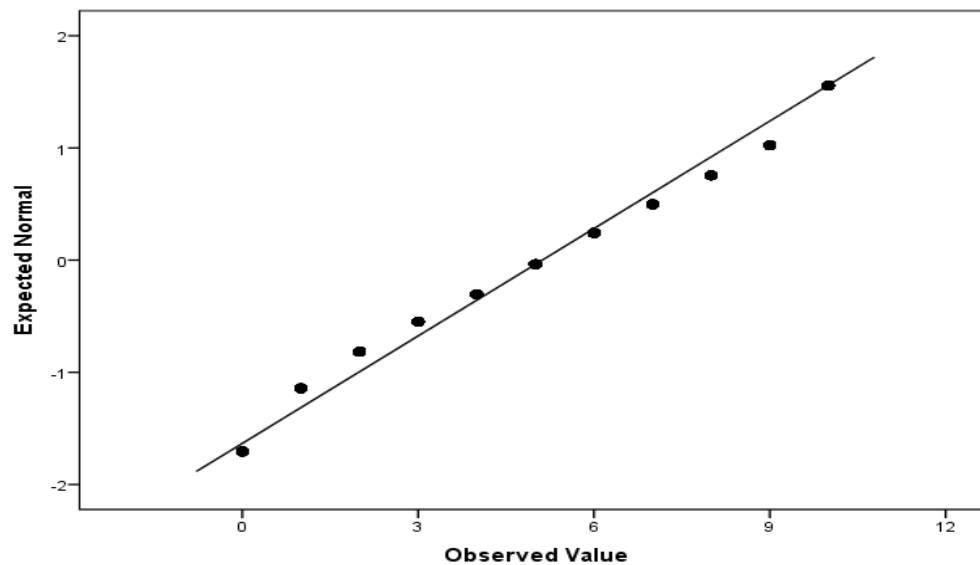

Figure 5. Affront Q-Q Plot

Figure 4 displays a histogram with a normal distribution curve for the defensive violence scores in the measure of Affront. Figure 4 reveals that the mode for the Affront

measure was 5. This suggests that most respondents had a neutral attitude concerning

whether or not affront warrants violence. The most interesting piece of information on Figure

4 concerns the overall distribution of scores. If the most extreme acceptability of violence

score of 10 was taken out, the distribution is similar to unimodal, normal distribution. The

problem is that a large portion of respondents gave the Affront measure a score of 10, likely

skewing the overall data. In fact, the Affront measure had a very low level of negative

skewness, skew = -0.01 and a very high degree of kurtosis, kurt = 1.11. Figure 5 displays a

Q-Q plot for the defensive violence scores in the Affront measure. There appear to be no

significant outliers in Figure 5 and most scores fall near the theoretical mean. The visual data

analysis does not provide any definite evidence that the distribution is significantly different

than normal. A Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was then run on the Affront measure. The

Shapiro-Wilk test, $W = .944$, $p < 0.001$, suggests that the data is significantly different from

normal. Again, it is important to note that the Shapiro-Wilk test is overly sensitive with

larger samples. Thus, the Affront measure is considered approximately normal based on the

visual data analysis.

Figure 6. Abuse Histogram
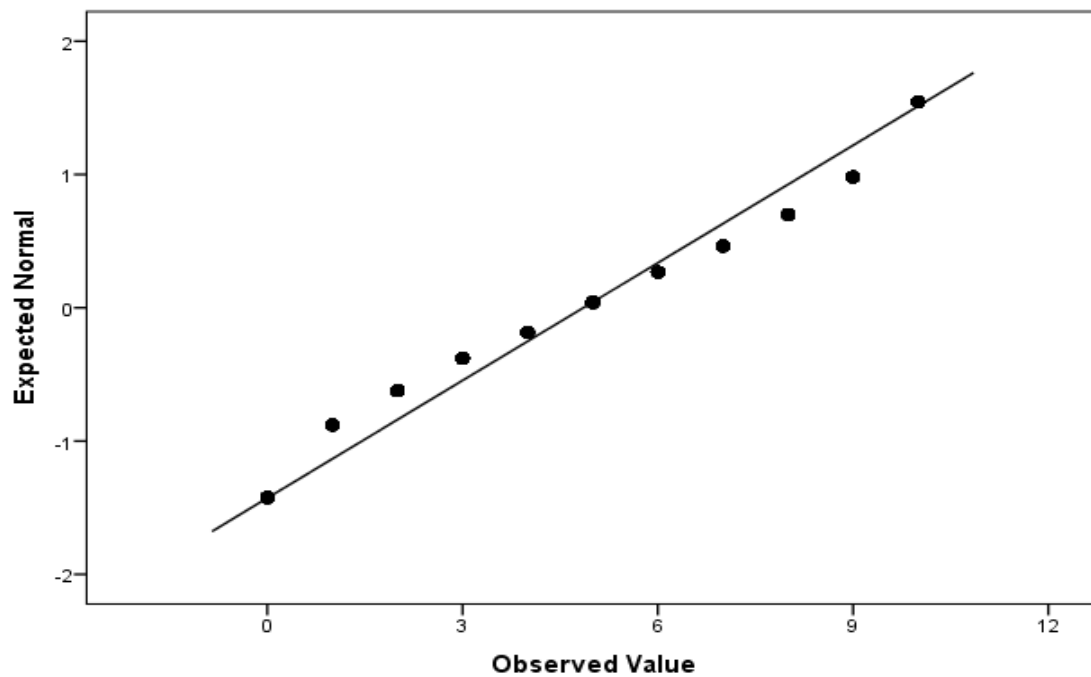
Figure 7. Abuse Q-Q Plot

Figure 6 depicts a histogram including a normal distribution curve for the Abuse

measure. The most frequent defensive violence score received in the Abuse measure was 0.

This indicates that a large degree of subjects perceived violence as being an absolutely illegitimate act in this scenario. The clustered scores towards the middle and far end of Figure 6 shows that many respondents either perceived the violence as being somewhat or completely legitimate. This trimodality depicted in Figure 6 is highly problematic. Figure 7 displays a Q-Q plot for the defensive violence scores in the Abuse measure. Similar to the previous measure of defensive violence, there appear to be no significant outliers in Figure 7 and most scores fall to both sides of the theoretical mean. The Abuse measure scores had very little skewness, skew = 0.39 and a very large amount of kurtosis, kurt = 1.31. After the visual data analysis, a Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was then run on the Abuse measure. The Shapiro-Wilk test, W = .920, p < 0.001, confirms that the data is significantly different from normal. As previously noted, the Shapiro-Wilk test can be overly sensitive with large samples. This is not the case for the Abuse measure, as the visual data analysis indicates several problems. However, because the Protection and Affront measures are approximately normal, the Abuse measure was treated as if it were normally distributed.
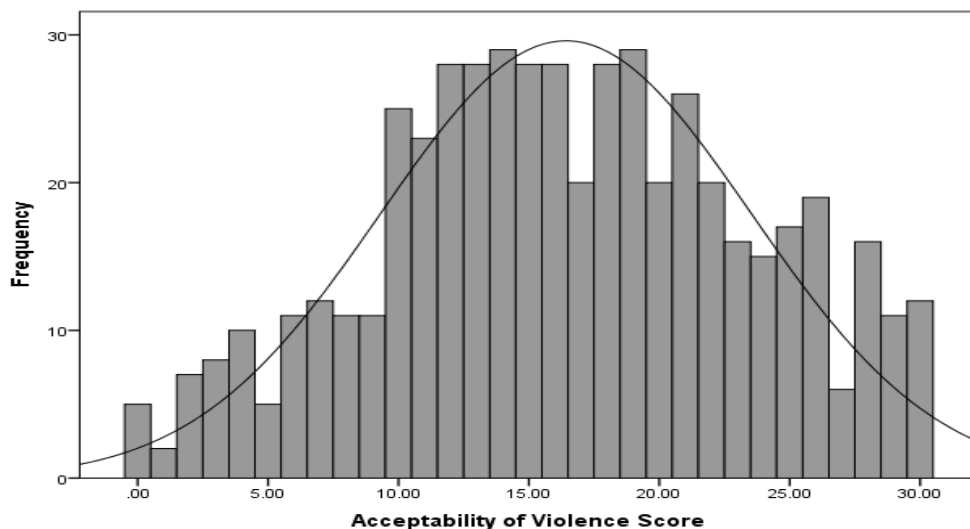
Figure 8. Defensive Violence Scale Histogram
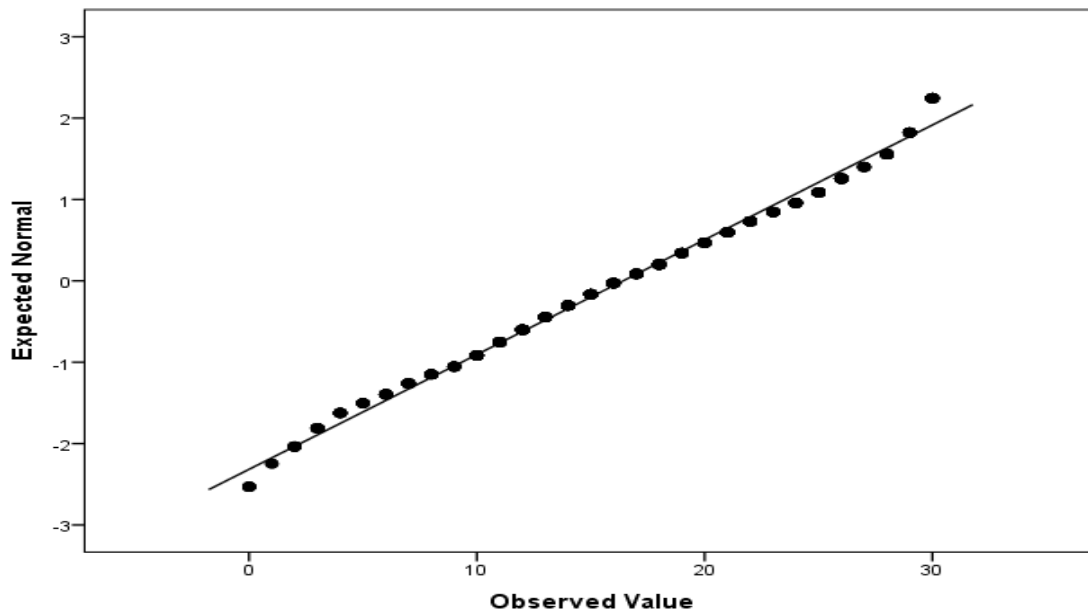
Figure 9. Defensive Violence Scale Q-Q Plot

Figure 8 represents a histogram with a normal distribution curve for the final measure of defensive violence, the Defensive Violence Scale. Figure 8 shows that the two most frequent defensive violence scores are 14 and 19. These scores and the basic nature of Figure 8 suggest an overall dichotomous split between how defensive violence was perceived in each scenario. The score of 14 reflects the respondents that generally did not approve of violence, while the score of 19 suggests that another group was slightly more supportive of defensive violence. Figure 8 also shows that the Defensive Violence Scale scores were nearly unimodal and reflective of a normal distribution. Finally, Figure 9 displays a Q-Q plot for the Defensive Violence Scale scores. The data points towards either end of the theoretical mean within the Q-Q plot suggest that some values may significantly deviate from the mean. However, a majority of the points are on or close to the theoretical mean line. The Defensive Violence Scale scores had very little negative skewness, skew = -0.07 and a moderate amount of negative kurtosis, kurt = -0.60. A Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was then run, W = .985, p < 0.001, and suggests that the Defensive Violence Scale scores are significantly

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different from normal. As previously noted in the three previous measures, the Shapiro-Wilk test tends to be overly sensitive with larger samples. This is definitely the case for the Defensive Violence Scale measure. The visual data analysis indicates the Defensive Violence Scale is an approximately normal distribution.

In totality, the visual data analysis and Shapiro-Wilk test results suggest two different outcomes concerning the normality of the data. Outside of the Abuse measure, the visual data analysis indicates that the data is approximately normal. On the other hand, the Shapiro-Wilk test suggests that all four measures are significantly different from normal. The problem is that the Shapiro-Wilk test is sensitive with large samples, such as the one in this study. Therefore, it is best to consider the visual data analysis as being a more appropriate measure of normality in this study. Thus, the distribution of the dependent variables is approximately normal and the assumption of normality is not violated.

Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Independent Variables

Variable	Total N	N	%
Socialized South	522	103	19.73%
Socialized Rural	527	157	29.79%
Protestant	526	135	25.67%
Religious Attendance	528		
Never		263	49.81%
Less than once a month		127	24.05%
Once a month		30	5.68%
Couple times a month		24	4.55%
Once a week		66	12.50%
Couple times a week		13	2.46%
Daily		5	0.95%
Political Preference	528		

Strong Democrat		54	10.23%
Democrat		105	19.89%
Lean Democrat		71	13.45%
Independent		170	32.20%
Lean Republican		58	10.98%
Republican		51	9.66%
Strong Republican		19	3.60%
Gun Ownership	528	167	31.63%
Support for the DP	528		
Strongly Disagree		87	16.48%
Disagree		78	14.77%
Neither Agree/Disagree		85	16.10%
Agree		165	31.25%
Strongly Agree		113	21.40%

Table 2 explores the descriptive statistics for the main independent variables in this study. Table 2 shows that, of the seven independent variables, four variables are dummy-coded and three variables are ordinal level. A majority of the sample, 80.27%, was not socialized in the South compared to the 19.73% that were socialized in the South. Similarly, slightly less than one-third or 29.79% of the sample, was socialized in a rural area compared to the 70.21% that was not socialized in a rural area. The relatively low percentage of individuals socialized in the South or in rural areas is, more or less, due to the conceptual definition of socialization. It should be noted that the total sample used in this study came from a variety of states and environments.

In terms of religiosity, only about one-fourth or 25.67% of respondents identified as being Protestant. The number of Protestants found in this study is far lower than the national average. More specifically, recent polls suggest that nearly half of Americans identify as being Protestant (Newport, 2014). Nearly half of the respondents, 49.81%, indicated that they

never attended religious services. When combining the frequencies from respondents, 73.86% of the sample attended religious services less than once a month or never. At the same time, only 15.91% of the sample attended religious services once a week, a couple times a week, or daily. The current sample attends religious services less than the national average. A recent Gallup Poll indicates that 53% of Americans attend religious services at least monthly, while 41% attend almost every week (Newport, 2014). Perhaps the scarcity in religious attendance observed in this sample is due to the inverse relationship between higher education and religious attendance (Albrecht & Heaton, 1984). Table 3, shown below, indicates that the sample has much higher levels of educational attainment compared to the general population.

When examining the political preference of respondents, a majority of the sample, 32.20%, identified politically as an independent. When clustering the frequencies, 43.56% of respondents identified somehow as being Democrat (lean Democrat– strong Democrat), while only 24.24% of respondents identified somehow as being Republican (lean Republican – strong Republican). A recent Gallup Poll suggests that the sample is not much different from the national average with approximately 42% of Americans identifying as independent, 31% as a Democrat, and 25% as a Republican (Jones, 2014). The high number of self-identifying Democrats in this sample is likely due to the increased educational attainment of respondents. Prior research has discovered a positive relationship between educational attainment and liberal political ideologies (Weiner & Eckland, 1979).

One of the more interesting findings in Table 2 is that nearly one-third, 31.63%, of respondents acknowledged that they had a gun in the home. Recent findings from the 2012 General Social Survey suggest that the number of household gun owners found in this study

is on par with the national average, which is around 33% (Logan & Hendrix, 2013).

However, other studies indicate that the household gun ownership rate fluctuates anywhere

from 45-55% (Kleck, 2005; Siegel, Michael, Craig S. Ross & Charles King III, 2013).

Finally, Table 2 indicates that a majority of respondents, 52.65%, agreed or strongly

agreed with the death penalty, while only 31.25% of the sample disagreed or strongly

disagreed with the use of the death penalty. Surprisingly, the general public is very similar to

the sample in terms of attitudes towards the death penalty. A recent Gallup Poll indicates that

60% of Americans favor, while 35% do not favor, the death penalty (Jones, 2013).

Descriptive Statistics of Control Variables

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Control Variables

Variable	N	%
White	419	79.36%
Male	253	47.92%
Married	218	41.29%
Education		
No High School	0	0.00%
Some High School	7	1.33%
High School Graduate/GED	69	13.07%
Some College/Technical School	201	38.07%
College Graduate	178	33.71%
Advanced Degree	82	15.53%
Income		
Well Below Average	53	10.04%
Below Average	120	23.08%
Average	263	49.81%
Above Average	83	15.72%
Well Above Average	9	1.70%

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	x̄	SD
Age	36.46	13.29%

Table 3 displays the control variables for the full sample. In the control variables, there are three dichotomous, two ordinal, and one continuous level of measurement. The first variable, age, is the sole continuous control variable in this study. Table 3 shows that the average age of the full sample is approximately 36 years old. The youngest respondent in this study was 18 years old and the oldest respondent was 75 years old. A majority of respondents in the sample were from 23 to 49 years of age. White is a dummy-coded measure between respondents that identified as White versus all other races. A majority of the sample, 79.36%, was White, while 20.64% of the sample identified as another race. The racial makeup of the sample was similar to the national average. According to the United States Census (2013), 77.7% of Americans were White, while 22.3% of Americans were from other races.

The next control, Male, was also dummy-coded. Slightly less than half, 47.92%, of the sample was male, while the other 52.08% was female. Compared to the national average, females are slightly overrepresented and males are underrepresented in the sample. According to the United States Census (2011), 50.8% of the American population is female and 49.2% is male. The final dummy-coded measure is the Married variable. Approximately one-fourth, 41.29%, of the sample is married compared to the 58.71% of respondents that are a part of a different relationship category. According to the Pew Research Center around 51% of Americans are currently married (D'Vera, Passel, Wang, & Livingston, 2011). Therefore, marriage is slightly underrepresented in this sample.

The final two variables in Table 3 are ordinal level measures. The first measure, Education, captures the educational attainment of each respondent. Nearly one-third, 33.71%,

of respondents earned bachelor's degrees, while 15.53% of respondents went on to earn a doctoral or professional degree. This means that nearly half, 49.24%, of the sample acquired a Bachelors or higher degree (M.A., Ph.D.). A small minority of the sample, 13.07%, earned up to a high school diploma. No one in the sample did not go to high school, while only 1.33% went to high school, but did not earn a diploma. Using recent U.S. Census data, Ewert and Kominski (2014) suggest that only about 18.36% of Americans have obtained a bachelor's degree, while 10.52% have earned an advanced degree. A majority of Americans, 32.35%, have earned up to a high school diploma, while 10.56% have less than a high school diploma. Compared to the national average, the sample collected in this study is much more highly educated.

Income is the final control measure used in this study. A majority of respondents, 48.81%, felt as though their income was average compared to others. Approximately one-third of respondents, 33.12%, felt as though their income was below or well below average, while 17.42% felt as though their income was above or well above average. The term "average income" was left undefined in this study rather than having respondents compare their income to some subjective number. This is because the sample was collected on a national level and an "average income" may not be the same in different locations.

Table 2 and Table 3 provide a basic overview of the descriptive statistics for the full sample. In terms of demographics, a majority of the sample is White, female, highly educated, around 30 years of age, perceives to earn an average income, and currently a part of a relationship status that is not married. The full sample is also very likely to be socialized in a location other than the South or a rural area. Only a quarter of the full sample identified as Protestant and approximately half of the full sample never attends religious services. Most

respondents identify politically as being independent. There are also slightly more Democrats than Republicans in the remaining sample. Finally, around one-third of the full sample has a firearm in their house and a little over half of respondents support the death penalty.

When comparing the full sample to the national average, several issues are apparent. The most overarching problem is the educational attainment of the sample. The sample is more highly educated compared to the national average, which tends to affect the political identification and religiosity of the sample. For example, the increased educational attainment of the sample likely explains why there are higher numbers of individuals who identify as being a Democrat. Likewise, the increased levels of educational attainment help explain why religious attendance is exceptionally low in the sample. The sample's race, gender, age, and levels of gun ownership and support for the death penalty were on par with the national average.

Bivariate Correlation Analysis

Bivariate statistical analyses were conducted between the independent, dependent, and control variables. To accomplish this, Table 4 displays a nonparametric correlation analysis utilizing Spearman's rank-order correlations coefficients, more commonly known as Spearman's Rho. Table 4 shows that each of the dependent variables is significantly correlated. It should be noted that the nominal level variables were dummy-coded so that they could be test using the Spearman's Rho correlation analysis.

Table 4. Spearman's Rho Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Protection[1]	--																
Affront[2]	.32**	--															
Abuse[3]	.23**	.44**	--														
Defensive Violence Scale[4]	.65**	.78**	.77**	--													
Socialized South[5]	.10*	-.01	.05	.05	--												
Socialized Rural[6]	-.08*	.08	.14**	.14**	.13**	--											
Protestant[7]	.04	.04	-.03	0.02	.20**	.21**	--										
Religious Attendance[8]	.01	.12**	.03	0.08	.08	.07	.38**	--									
Political Party[9]	.20**	.09*	.10*	.17**	.05	.13**	.27**	.22**	--								
Gun Owner[10]	.25**	.14**	.17**	.24**	.04	.20**	.05	.07	.22**	--							
Support DP[11]	.37**	.32**	.33**	.44**	.04	.16**	.14**	.15**	.33**	.25**	--						
Age[12]	-0.01	-.13**	-.17**	-.14**	.04	.14**	.22**	.09*	.08	-0.02	.02	--					
White[13]	.04	.00	.09*	.07	.02	.13**	.08	-.06	.12**	.13**	.04	.10*	--				
Male[14]	.17**	-.14**	.11*	.19**	-.01	-.09*	-.02	0.00	.12**	.13**	.04	.12**	.00	--			
Married[15]	.09*	-.01	.06	.07	.08	.11**	.14**	.19**	.12**	.13**	.12**	.37**	.09*	-.02	--		
Education[16]	-.10*	-.09*	-.13**	-.13**	.00	-.10*	-.02	.09*	-.04	-.13**	-.24**	.13**	.00	-.02	.12**	--	
Income[17]	.05	.01	.07	.05	.03	-.04	-.04	.08	.08	.08*	-.01	-.01	-.05	.08	.26**	.19**	--

The strongest correlation between these variables is .78, between the Defensive Violence Scale variable and Affront vignette variable. This suggests that individuals who scored highly on the Affront measure were also more likely to score highly on the combination of all three measures. However, excluding the other dependent variables, the strongest correlation with the Protection measure was with support for the death penalty measure at .37. Although this relationship is relatively weak, it indicates that respondents who gave a higher acceptability of violence score for the protection scenario were significantly more likely to support the death penalty. The Protection variable also had a significant positive relationship with the Socialized South variable, r = .10, and Socialized Rural variable, r = .08. Although these effect sizes are weak, they do indicate that

individuals socialized in the South or rural areas are more likely to legitimize defensive violence in situations of protection. The final independent variables that were significantly correlated with the Protection measure were the Political Party variable, $r = .20$, and Gun Ownership variable, $r = .25$. These effect sizes are slightly higher and indicate that respondents who identified as Republican or had a gun in the home were significantly more likely to support defensive violence in the protection scenario. In the control variables, respondents who were male, $r = .17$ or married, $r = .09$, were significantly more likely to support defensive violence, while respondents with higher educational attainment, $r = -.09$, were significantly less likely to support defensive violence in situations of protection.

The strongest correlation with the Affront measure was with the death penalty opinion measure at $.32$. Again this relationship is relatively weak, but suggests that respondents who gave a higher acceptability of violence score for the affront scenario were significantly more likely to support the death penalty. The Affront measure was not significantly correlated to the South, Rural, or Protestant variables. In fact, the Affront variable had a negative relationship with the South variable, $r = -.01$, although it was not significant. The Affront variable was, however, significantly positively correlated with the Religious Attendance measure, $r = .12$, Political Party measure, $r = .09$, and Gun Ownership measure, $r = .14$. These correlations are weak, but indicate that respondents who frequently attended religious services, identified as Republican, and had a gun in the home were more likely to legitimize violence in the situations involving affront. Of the control variables, males, $r = .14$, were significantly more likely to support defensive violence. The respondent's age, $r = -.17$, and educational attainment, $r = -.13$, were significantly negatively correlated with support for defensive violence in situations of affront.

Similar to the first two dependent variables, the strongest correlation with the Abuse measure was the support for the death penalty measure at .33. The South variable and Protestant variable continued to not be significantly related to defensive violence. The Socialized Rural measure, $r = .14$, Political Party measure, $r = .10$, and Gun Ownership measure, $r = .17$, were shown to have weak but significant correlations with the measure of affront. This indicates that support for the death penalty, Republicanism, and gun ownership are the only independent variables that have remained significant with the first three dependent measures. Of the control variables, Whites, $r = .09$, and males, $r = .11$, were significantly more likely to support defensive violence in the situation of affront. Age, $r = -.17$, and education, $r = -.13$, had significant negative correlations with the Affront measure. The control variables, sex and education, have had significant relationships with the first three dependent variables. Males and individuals with lower levels of educational attainment were more likely to support defensive violence.

The strongest correlation with the final dependent variable, the Defensive Violence Scale, was with support for the death penalty at .44. The Defensive Violence Scale measure was also significantly correlated with the Socialized Rural variable, $r = .14$, the Political Party variable, $r = .17$, and the Gun Ownership variable, $r = .24$. Due to the nature of the Defensive Violence Scale, this confirms that there is likely a significant positive relationship between these four variables (rural living, Republicanism, gun ownership, and support for the death penalty) and the use of defensive violence. Age, $r = -.14$, and Education, $r = -.13$, had significant negative correlations with the Defensive Violence Scale. Finally, the males, $r = .19$, were significantly more likely to support defensive violence.

In sum, Table 4 indicates that several relationships exist. Three predictor variables, including support for the death penalty, Political Party, and Gun Ownership, were significantly related to each measure of defensive violence. Of those three predictor variables, support for the death penalty had the strongest relationship across all four measures of defensive violence. The Socialized Rural variable was significantly related to three of the four measures of defensive violence, including the Defensive violence scale. The only control measures that were consistently significantly related to the dependent variables were the Male and Education variables. The Age variable was significant for three of the four defensive violence measures. Table 4 provides primary evidence that the decision to use defensive violence is much more complex than initially considered. Being socialized in the South and Protestantism seem to be a weak indicator in supporting defensive violence. At the same time, being socialized in rural areas, identifying as Republican, owning a gun, and supporting the death penalty are strong indicators in supporting defensive violence. Consistent with the strategies of action model, race is a non-significant factor in the decision to use violence. However, patriarchal norms within the gun culture continue to show significance, as being male is strongly related to the decision to support the use of defensive violence.

Ordinary Least Squares Regression Models

The final stage of the statistical analysis is to employ a set of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models on the defensive violence measure. There are four models in Table 5 through Table 9, which depict each of the four measures of defensive violence used in this study. In each table, a base model and a full theoretical model were employed. The base model consists of the six control variables used in this study. The full theoretical model

includes the six control variables and eight predictor variables. An analysis of variance was

then utilized to determine whether the full theoretical model was a significant improvement

over the base model. It should be noted that the coefficients presented in each table depict the

standardized coefficients. The

Table 5. Ordinary Least Squares Regression (DV=Protection)

Variables	Base Model		Full Model	
	B	SE	B	SE
Age	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01
White	0.193	0.0323	-0.079	0.314
Male	0.920**	0.261	.779*	0.253
Married	0.630*	0.289	0.26	0.283
Education	-0.334*	0.142	-0.002	0.141
Income	0.174	0.153	0.131	0.147
Socialized South			0.577	0.317
Socialized Rural			0.069	0.287
Protestant			0.131	0.323
Religious Attendance			-0.152	0.086
Republican			0.082	0.088
Gun Ownership			.891*	0.285
Support for DP			.632**	0.101
Constant	7.11**	0.842	3.55**	0.919
	Model R2	**F**	**Model R2**	**F**
	0.049	4.48**	.179	8.42**
	AIC	**BIC**	**AIC**	**BIC**
	2605.74	2639.73	2546.04	2609.76

standardized coefficients, also called beta coefficients, allow the ability to compare each

variable's relative contribution to the overall model.

The Protection model was the first model examined and measured the acceptability of

defensive violence in situations of protection. Table 5 indicates that the base model was

significant, F= 4.48, P < 0.001, but only accounts for 4.9% of the variance in the

acceptability of violence score. The most powerful variable in the Protection model was

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Male, B = .920, P < 0.001. Married, B = .603, p < 0.05, was also significant in the Protection model. Education, B = -0.334, p < 0.05, had a significant but inverse relationship with defensive violence in the Protection model. Age and Income were not significant predictors of support for defensive violence.

The full theoretical model was also significant, F = 8.43, p < 0.001. The Protection model also accounts for 17.9% of the overall variance in the acceptability of defensive violence scores. This means that the full theoretical model explained more of the variance in acceptability of violence score compared to the base model. The most powerful variable in the Protection model was Gun Ownership B = .891, p < 0.05. This is likely because the protection scenario involved the use of a firearm and is a situation about which gun owners feel strongly. The only other significant variable in the Protection model was support for the death penalty, B = .632, p < 0.001. Being socialized in the South was not significantly related to defensive violence in situations of protection, B = .577, p = .07, nor was being socialized in rural areas, B = .069, p = .812.

Table 5 also shows that neither the Protestant variable, B = .131, p = .69, nor the Republican variable, B = 0.88, p = 0.35, were significant within the model. In fact, the strength of the respondent's religious convictions, as seen in Religious Attendance, had a negative relationship within the Protection model, B = -.152, p = 0.08. When examining the control variables, Married and Education, which were significant in the base model, were not significant in the full theoretical model. Male, B = .779, p < 0.05, was the only variable that was significant in the base model and the full theoretical model. Thus, males were more likely to support defensive violence in situations of protection. Age and Income were not significant in the full theoretical model.

An analysis of variance test (ANOVA), F = 11.01, P < 0.001, indicates that the full

theoretical model is a significant improvement over the base model. Table 5 also shows that

the base model acquired an Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) score of 605.74 and a

Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) score of 2639.73, while the full model obtained an

AIC score of 2546.06 and a BIC score of 2609.76. The lower AIC and BIC scores suggest

that the full model has more explanatory power and is a better fit for the data compared to the

base model. Each variable in the full model obtained a VIF of less than 5 meaning there were

no issues of multicollinearity between variables. The Protection model also obtained a

Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.96, which is between 1 and 3, suggesting that the data is

independent in the model.

Table 6 displays the ordinary least squares regression run on the Affront variable.

Table 6 indicates that the base model was significant, F = 3.810, p < 0.001 and explains 4.2%

of the overall variance in the acceptability of violence scores. The strongest variable in the

base model was Male, B = 0.799, p < 0.001. The only other significant variable in the base

model was Age, B = -0.031, p < 0.001. White, Married, Age, and Income were not

significant predictors of defensive violence in the base model.

Table 6. Ordinary Least Squares Regression (DV=Affront)

Variables	Base Model		Full Model	
	B	SE	B	SE
Age	-0.031**	0.011	-.031*	0.011
White	0.06	0.335	0.06	0.327
Male	0.799**	0.271	.734*	0.263
Married	0.272	0.299	-0.261	0.294
Education	-0.25	0.147	0.035	0.147
Income	-0.009	0.159	0.005	0.153
Socialized South			-0.231	0.33
Socialized Rural			0.445	0.299
Protestant			0.01	0.337
Religious Attendance			0.229*	0.09
Republican			-0.068	0.092
Gun Ownership			0.288	0.297
Support for DP			.689**	0.105
Constant	6.85**	0.866	3.06**	0.958
	Model R2	**F**	**Model R2**	**F**
	0.042	3.810**	0.157	7.23**
	AIC	**BIC**	**AIC**	**BIC**
	2637.22	2671.20	2588.41	2652.13

Table 6 indicates that the full theoretical model is significant, F = 7.23, p < 0.001, and explains 15.7% of the variance in the acceptability of violence scores. The full theoretical model accounts for nearly 10% more variance compared to the base model. The strongest independent variable in the full model was support for the death penalty, B = .689, p < 0.001. The Religious Attendance measure was the only other significant independent variable in the Affront model, B = .229, p < 0.05, meaning that individuals who attended religious services more frequently were significantly more likely to support defensive violence in the affront scenario. Despite Religious Attendance being significant, the Protestant variable was not significant and very weak within the model, B = .010, p = .997.

Being socialized in the South was not significant in the full model, $B = 0.231$, $p = .486$. The Socialized Rural measure, $B = .445$, $p = .137$, Republican measure, $B = -.068$, $p = .458$, and Gun Ownership measure, $B = .288$, $p = .333$ were also non-significant within the full model. Of the control variables, the Male variable was shown again to be a very strong predictor of defensive violence, $B = .734$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, males are more likely to support defensive violence in situations of protection and affront. The Age measure also was a significant control variable, but maintained a negative relationship in the model, $B = -0.31$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, older respondents were significantly less likely to support defensive violence compared to younger respondents. The White, Married, Education, and Income variables were all non-significant in the full model.

When comparing the models, an analysis of variance test (ANOVA), $F = 9.28$, $p < 0.001$, indicates that the full model is a significant improvement over the base model. Also, the base model acquired an AIC score of 2637.22 and a BIC score of 2671.20, while the full model obtained an AIC score of 2588.41 and a BIC score of 2652.13. The lower AIC and BIC scores suggest that the full model has more explanatory power and is a better overall fit for the data compared to the base model. Each variable in the full model obtained a VIF of less than 5 meaning there were no issues of multicollinearity between variables. The full model also obtained a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.96, which is between 1 and 3 suggesting that the data is independent in the model.

The third model, displayed in Table 7, is the regression model for the Abuse variables. Table 7 shows that the base model, $F = 7.98$, $p < 0.001$, is significant and explains 8.3% of the variance in the acceptability of violence scores. The most influential variable in the base model was White, $B = .906$, $p < 0.05$, followed by Married, $B = .745$, $p < 0.05$, and

Male, B = .579, p < 0.05. Age, B = -.051, p < 0.001, and Education, B = -.503, were also

significant, yet inverse in the base model. Income was the only non-significant variable in the

base model.

Table 7. Ordinary Least Squares Regression (DV=Abuse)

Variables	Base Model		Full Model	
	B	SE	B	SE
Age	-0.051**	0.011	-0.047**	0.011
White	0.906*	0.355	0.773*	0.35
Male	0.579*	0.287	0.533	0.282
Married	0.745*	0.318	0.324	0.314
Education	-0.503**	0.156	-0.184	0.158
Income	0.242	0.168	0.242	0.164
Socialized South			0.298	0.354
Socialized Rural			.823*	0.32
Protestant			-0.546	0.36
Religious Attendance			0.033	0.096
Republican			-0.007	0.098
Gun Ownership			0.323	0.318
Support for DP			.677**	0.112
Constant	7.01**	0.919	3.17*	1.025
	Model R2	**F**	**Model R2**	**F**
	0.083	7.82**	0.179	8.47**
	AIC	**BIC**	**AIC**	**BIC**
	2700.42	2734.41	2660.03	2723.75

Table 7 shows that the full theoretical model was significant, F = 8.486, p < 0.001

and accounted for 17.9% of the variance in the acceptability of violence scores. The strongest

predictor variable in the full model was the Socialized Rural measure, B = 8.23, p < 0.05.

Thus, individuals socialized in rural areas were significantly more likely to support defensive

violence in situations of abuse. The only other predictor variable that remained significant

was support for the death penalty, B = .677, p < 0.001, which was also powerful within the

full model. Therefore, individuals who support the death penalty were also significantly more likely to support defensive violence.

Similar to the two models before, the Socialized South, $B = .298$, $p = .400$, Protestant, $B = -.546$, $p = .130$, and Republican, $B = -.007$, $p = .947$ variables were non-significant predictors in the full model. The Religious Attendance measure, $B = .003$, $p = .733$ and Gun Ownership measure, $B = .323$, $p = .309$ were also non-significant in the full model. Of the control variables, the White variable was a very strong predictor of defensive violence in the full model, $B = .773$, $p < 0.05$. So, Whites were much more likely to support defensive violence in situations of abuse. The Age variable was also a significant, yet negative predictor of defensive violence in the Abuse model, $B = -0.047$, $p < 0.001$. Therefore older respondents were less likely to support defensive violence. The Male variable fell slightly outside of the 0.05 threshold for significance, $B = .533$, $p = 0.59$. The Married, Education, and Income variables were all non-significant control variables in the full model.

An analysis of variance test (ANOVA), $F = 7.972$, $p < 0.001$, indicates that the full theoretical model is a significant improvement over the base model. Furthermore, the base model obtained an AIC score of 2700.42 and a BIC score of 2734.41, while the full model acquired an AIC score of 2660.03 and a BIC score of 2723.75. The lower AIC and BIC scores suggest that the full model has more explanatory power and is a better overall fit for the data compared to the base model. Each variable in the full model obtained a VIF of less than 5, meaning there were no issues of multicollinearity between variables. The full model also obtained a Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.01, which is between 1 and 3, suggesting that the data is independent in the model.

The final, and perhaps most important, model is the Defensive Violence Scale model. Instead of being a situational measure of defensive violence, the Defensive Violence Scale analyzes the totality of defensive violence scores. The use of the Defensive Violence Scale gives a better gauge of what cultural resources predict defensive violence as a whole. Table 8 indicates that the base model, $F = 9.22$, $p < 0.001$, is significant and explains 9.6% of the variance in the acceptability of violence scores.

Table 8. Ordinary Least Squares Regression (DV=DVS)

Variables	Base Model		Full Model	
	B	SE	B	SE
Age	-0.099**	0.024	-.0910**	0.022
White	1.29	0.738	0.846	0.69
Male	2.372**	0.596	2.085**	0.554
Married	1.755*	0.66	0.411	0.62
Education	-1.040**	0.325	-0.137	0.31
Income	0.373	0.35	0.347	0.323
Socialized South			0.661	0.695
Socialized Rural			1.261*	0.63
Protestant			-0.393	0.708
Religious Attendance			0.112	0.19
Republican			0.03	0.194
Gun Ownership			1.516*	0.624
Support for DP			1.961**	0.221
Constant	20.801**	1.908	9.825**	2.015
	Model R2	**F**	**Model R2**	**F**
	0.096	9.22**	0.275	14.68**
	AIC	**BIC**	**AIC**	**BIC**
	3456.68	3490.66	3358.25	3421.97

The most influential variables in the base model were Male, $B = 2.372$, $p < 0.001$ and Married, $B = 1.755$, $p < 0.05$. Age, $B = -.099$, $p < 0.001$, and Education, $B = -1.040$, $p < 0.001$, were also significant, yet inverse in the base model. White and Income were non-significant in the base model.

Table 8 also indicates that the full theoretical model is significant, $F = 14.687$, $p < 0.001$, and explains 27.5% of the overall variance in the acceptability of violence scores. Three independent variables were significant and powerful in the full model. The most powerful of the three measures was support for the death penalty, $B = 1.961$, $p < 0.001$, followed by the Gun Ownership measure, $B = 1.516$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, individuals who support the death penalty and own firearms are significantly more likely to support defensive violence. The final significant predictor in the full model was the Socialized Rural measure, $B = 1.1261$, $p < 0.05$, meaning individuals socialized in rural areas were significantly more likely to support defensive violence.

The Socialized South variable was non-significant, $B = .661$, $p =. 342$. The Protestant variable was non-significant and held a negative relationship in the model, $B = -.393$, $p = .579$. The Religious Attendance variable, $B = .112$, $p = .555$, and Republican variable, $B = .030$, $p = .875$ were also non-significant in the full model. Of the control variables, the Male variable was very strong in predicting defensive violence, $B = 2.085$, $p < 0.001$. The Age measure was also a significant control variable, but much weaker than any of the other significant variables, $B = -0.91$, $p < 0.001$. The White, Married, Education, and Income variables were all non-significant in the full model.

An analysis of variance test (ANOVA), $F = 17.456$, $p < 0.001$, indicates that the full model is a significant improvement over the base model. Further, the base model obtained an AIC score of 3456.68 and a BIC score of 3490.66, while the full model acquired an AIC score of 3358.25 and a BIC score of 3421.27. The lower AIC and BIC scores suggest that the full model has more explanatory power and is a better overall fit for the data compared to the base model. Each variable in the Defensive Violence Scale model obtained a VIF of less than

5, meaning there were no issues of multicollinearity between variables. The Defensive Violence Scale model also obtained a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.94, which is between 1 and 3, suggesting that the data is independent in the model.

In conclusion, the Socialized South or Protestant variables were not significant predictors in any of the four models. The strongest predictor variable is the support for the death penalty measure, which remained significant in all four models. The next most powerful predictor variable was gun ownership, which was significant in two models, one of which was the Defensive Violence Scale model. Finally, being socialized in a rural area was also significant in two models including the Defensive Violence Scale model, suggesting it is the last important predictor variable. Of the control variables, the Male and Age variables were significant in three of the four models including the Defensive Violence Scale.

The totality of results displayed in Table 6 suggest that support for defensive violence is more complex than what the Southern culture of honor theory suggests. It is apparent that younger individuals and males are more likely to support violence. However, the results also indicate that there may be aspects of rural life and violence-endorsing behaviors, such as gun ownership, that endorse the use of defensive violence. The discussion section goes into further detail concerning these findings.
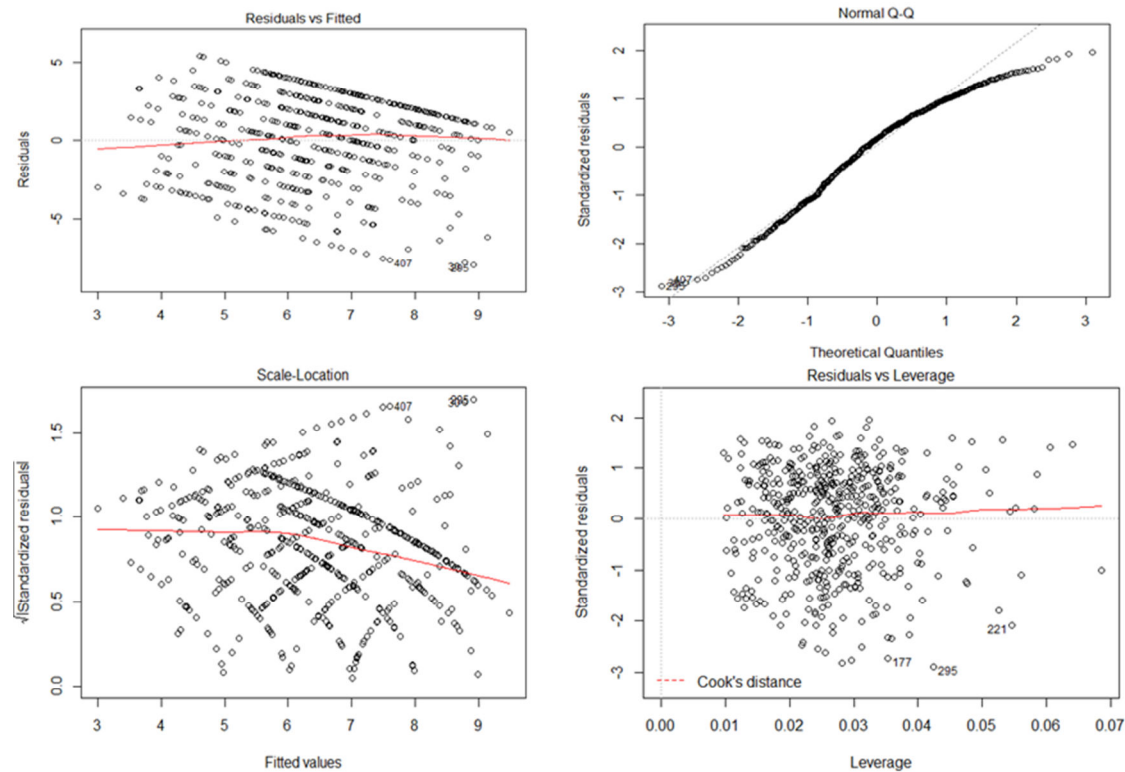
Residual Diagnostics

Figure 10. Protection Model Diagnostics

The four plots displayed in Figure 10 display the residual diagnostics for the full theoretical model for the Protection measure. The upper left plot shows the residual errors plotted against their fitted values. In this plot, it is ideal to have the residuals randomly distributed and no trends should appear. Figure 10 shows that the residuals in the Protection model are randomly distributed with a small clustering of points towards the upper portion. However, this does not seem problematic. The upper right plot shows the standard Q-Q plot. While the residuals seem to curve off towards the top end, a majority of residuals follow the theoretical mean. Thus, the residuals are normally distributed. The bottom left plot displays the square root of the standardized residuals. There should be no obvious trends in the plot and the points should be randomly distributed. Figure 9 shows that there are not any obvious trends and only a minor cluster of residuals towards the middle. Finally, the bottom right plot

shows leverage for each point. Any point larger than one for the Cook's distance is problematic and suggests the presence of a poor model. Figure 10 shows that no residuals are greater than one. Therefore, it is safe to assume the full theoretical model is a good fit for the Protection measure.
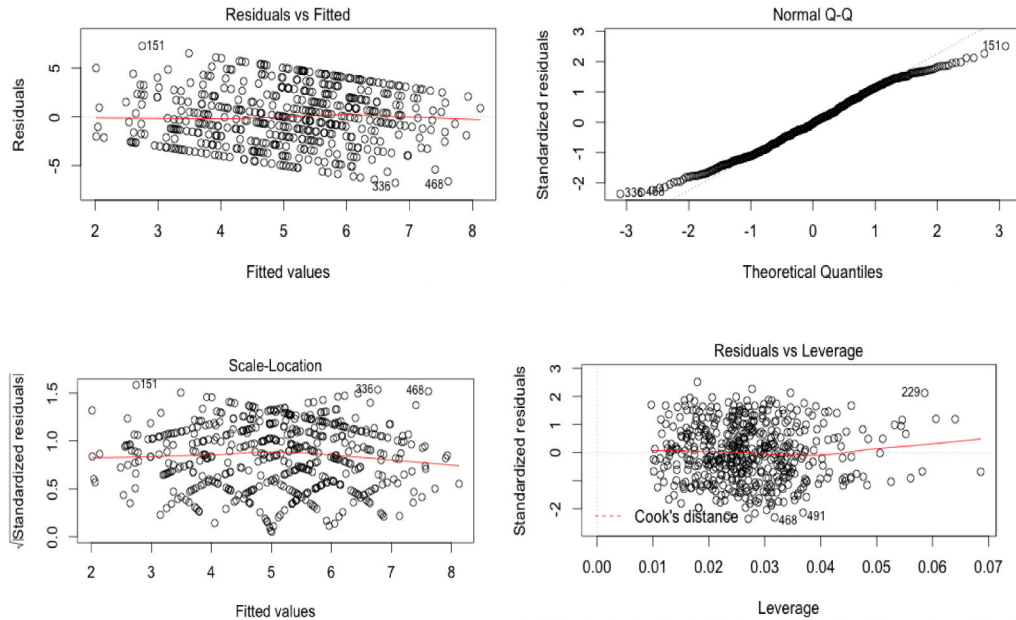

Figure 11. Affront Model Diagnostics

The four plots displayed in Figure 11 display the residual diagnostics for the full theoretical model for the Affront measure. The upper left plot shows the residual errors plotted against their fitted values. In this plot, it is ideal to have the residuals randomly distributed and no trends should appear. Figure 11 shows that the residuals in the Affront model are randomly distributed. The upper right plot shows the standard Q-Q plot. While the residuals seem to curve off towards the top end, a majority of residuals follow the theoretical mean. Thus, the residuals are normally distributed. The bottom left plot displays the square root of the standardized residuals. There should be no obvious trends in the plot and the points should be randomly distributed. Figure 11 shows that there are not any obvious trends

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of clustered residuals. Finally, the bottom right plot shows each point's leverage. Any point larger than one for the Cook's distance is problematic and suggests the presence of a poor model. Figure 10 shows that no residuals are greater than one. Therefore, it is safe to assume the full theoretical model is a good fit for the Affront measure.
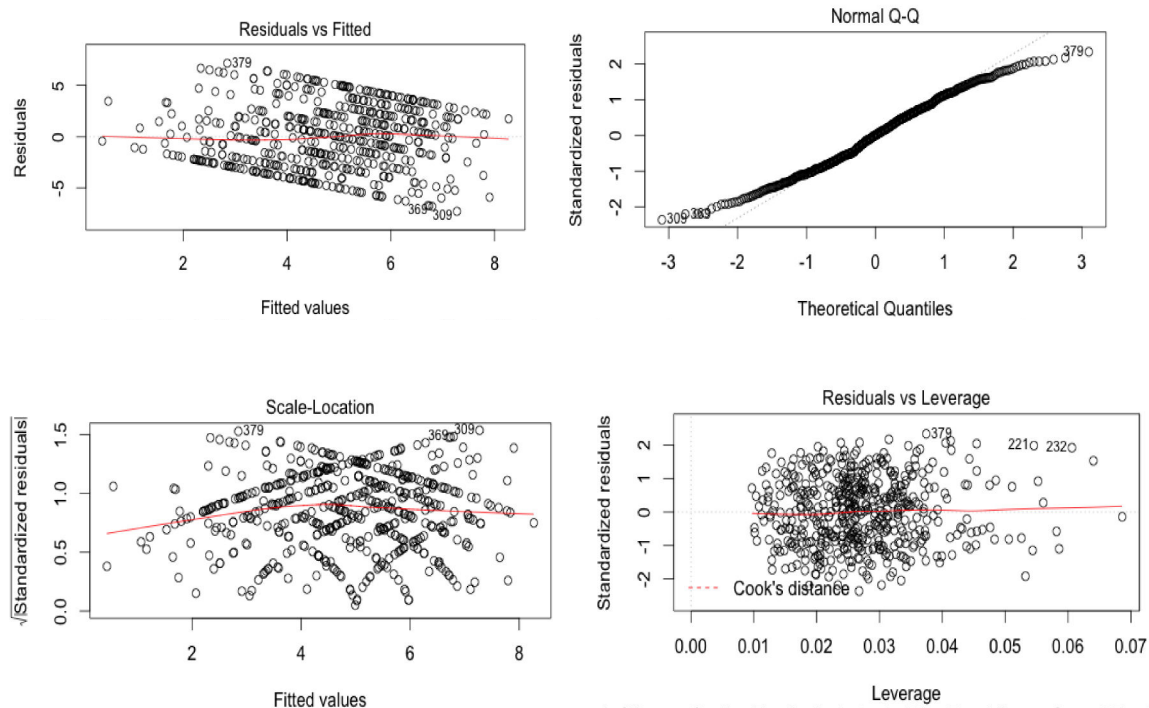

Figure 12. Abuse Model Diagnostics

The four plots displayed in Figure 12 display the residual diagnostics for the full theoretical model for the Abuse measure. The upper left plot shows the residual errors plotted against their fitted values. In this plot, it is ideal to have the residuals randomly distributed and no trends should appear. Figure 12 shows that the residuals in the Abuse model are mostly randomly distributed with a small clustering toward the lower end of residual points. The upper right plot shows the standard Q-Q plot. While the residuals seem to curve off towards the bottom and top ends, a majority of residuals follow the theoretical mean. Thus, the residuals are approximately normally distributed. The bottom left plot displays the square

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root of the standardized residuals. There should be no obvious trends in the plot and the points should be randomly distributed. Figure 12 shows that there are not any obvious trends of clustered residuals. Finally, the bottom right plot shows each point's leverage. Any point larger than one for the Cook's distance is problematic and suggests the presence of a poor model. Figure 12 shows that no residuals are greater than one. Therefore, it is safe to assume the full theoretical model is a good fit for the Abuse measure.
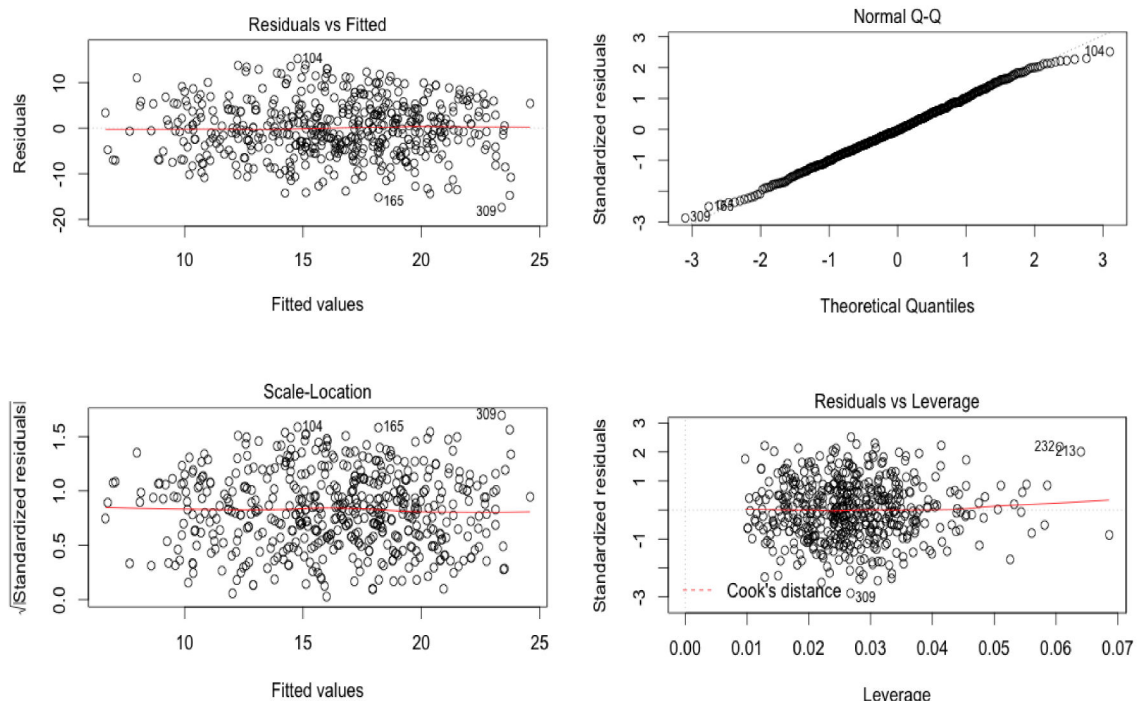
Figure 13. Defensive Violence Scale Model Diagnostics

The four plots displayed in Figure 13 display the residual diagnostics for the full theoretical model for the Defensive Violence Scale measure. The upper left plot shows the residual errors plotted against their fitted values. In this plot, it is ideal to have the residuals randomly distributed and no trends should appear. Figure 13 shows that the residuals in the Defensive Violence Scale model are mostly randomly distributed. The upper right plot shows the standard Q-Q plot. While the residuals seem to curve off towards the top end, a majority

of residuals follow the theoretical mean. Thus, the residuals are approximately normally distributed. The bottom left plot displays the square root of the standardized residuals. There should be no obvious trends in the plot and the points should be randomly distributed. Figure 13 shows that the residuals are randomly distributed. Finally, the bottom right plot shows each point's leverage. Any point larger than one for the Cook's distance is problematic and suggests the presence of a poor model. Figure 13 shows that no residuals are greater than one. Therefore, it is safe to assume the full theoretical model is a good fit for the Defensive Violence Scale measure.

In sum, the residual diagnostic plots indicate that there are no major problems in any of the four models utilized in this study. Furthermore, the residual diagnostic plots confirm that no major issues occurred and the distribution of the data is approximately normal.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusions, Implications, and Future Research

According to UCR data for 2012, the South logged the highest overall violent crimes rate with 423.7 violent crimes per 100,000. The South also had the highest rates of homicide and aggravated assault (FBI, 2012). In order to examine this issue, the current study analyzed the relationship between culture and violence in the South. Previous studies have suggested that Southerners are not more supportive of general acts of violence, but rather, are more likely to legitimize defensive uses of violence compared to individuals of other regions (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991). Furthermore, previous studies have indicated that there are specific cultural resources in the South that endorse defensive violence, including socialization in rural areas, Protestantism, Republicanism, gun ownership, and support of the death penalty (Fischer, 1989; Cohen et al, 1996; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Borg, 1997; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003; McDaniel & Ellison, 2008; Copes et al., 2009; Lee & Ousey, 2010). The current study relies on data collected via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to examine responses to several vignettes involving defensive uses of violence. The findings from this study indicate there is a relationship between specific cultural resources and the situational context of each violent scenario. More specifically, a cultural resource that endorses defensive violence in one scenario may not support defensive violence in another situation. When the situational context is removed, rural socialization, gun ownership, and support for the death penalty were found to significantly influence an individual's support for the use of defensive violence.

Discussion

The analysis section of this study indicates that the traditional predictor variables were not significant predictors of defensive violence. More specifically, being socialized in

the South was only significantly related to support of defensive violence in situations of protection. This relationship, however, was extremely weak at the bivariate level and the South variable was not a significant predictor of defensive violence in any of the four multivariate models. Protestantism is the other traditional predictor of defensive violence. Unlike the South variable, Protestantism was not significantly related to any measure of defensive violence. Protestantism was also not a significant predictor of defensive violence in any of the four multivariate models. These findings are inconsistent with the theoretical foundation presented in this study and the wealth of prior literature that focuses on the relationship between the South, Protestantism, and defensive violence (Ellison, 1991; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 2003).

The correlation analysis also suggests that Republicanism is significantly related to the measures of defensive violence. Thus, the more an individual identified with the Republican Party, the more likely they were to support defensive uses of violence. Republicanism was, however, not a significant predictor of defensive violence in any of the four models. This suggests that the relationship is spurious and when other factors are taken into account, Republicanism is not a significant predictor of support for defensive violence.

The best approach to examining which cultural resources were significant predictors of defensive violence is through examining each individual model. This is because the first three models, Protection, Affront, and Abuse, represent situational applications of defensive violence, while the Defensive Violence Scale is an overall measure of defensive violence.

Protection and Defensive Violence. The protection scenario involved an adult male shooting another adult male for breaking into his home at night. This scenario was employed to test the values of culture of honor related to protection one's self, family, and property.

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The analysis found that owning a gun, supporting the death penalty, and being male were significant predictors of support for defensive violence in the protection scenario. Gun owners and supporters of the death penalty are more likely to support violence in the face of protection because the cultural scripts value retributive and protective violence (Cao, Cullen, & Link, 1997; Borg, 1997; Glaser & Glendon, 1998). This relationship suggests that cultural values continue to underlie gun ownership and support for the death penalty, although it is not limited to the Southern culture. The idea that males are more likely to support defensive violence in protection situations is likely related to universal patriarchal norms. Males are more likely to think it is their duty to protect their family and property.

  Affront and Defensive Violence. The affront scenario consisted of an adult male punching an adult male stranger for saying sexually suggestive remarks to the man's wife. The affront scenario was utilized to test cultural values concerning insults, specifically to one's significant other. Individuals who attended religious services regularly, death penalty supporters, and males reported significantly higher levels of support for defensive violence in situations of affront. Age had a significant, but inverse relationship in the affront scenario. The relationship between religious attendance and defensive violence is founded on the notion that Southern theology encourages moral judgments and punishment (Ellsion, 1991). However, the South was not significant in this model, which challenges the idea that religious convictions concerning violence are regionally concentrated. Protestantism was also not significant in the model, indicating that beliefs about violence are not specific to Protestants. It is possible that the relationship between religious attendance and support for defensive violence is built on the notion that religions, as a whole, encourage gender norms.

Thus, individuals who attend religious services more frequently are more likely to internalize these norms and support the use of violence by a male to protect his significant other.

Support for the death penalty was a significant predictor of violence in situations of affront, which again suggests that support of the death penalty is related to values of retribution. Similar to the scenario involving protection, males were more likely to support violence due to the nature of the situations (i.e. male protecting female). Finally, the inverse relationship between age and support for defensive violence is a reflection of general patterns related to crime and violence. More specifically, older individuals are less likely to involve themselves in violent situations. Younger individuals are more likely ready and willing to involve themselves in situations where their honor is threatened.

Abuse and Defensive Violence. The abuse scenario contained an adult male punching another adult male stranger for what is perceived to be the abuse of a child and confrontational remarks. The situation of abuse was designed to test several facets of the culture of honor including values related to protection of children and affront. The interesting element of the abuse scenario was that the abuse was highly subjective. Respondents may have felt as if the punching the adult stranger was not justified because they should not have been concerned in the stranger's affairs. Other respondents may have felt that the use of violence was warranted because the stranger abused a child and was highly confrontational. In this scenario, being socialized in rural areas, supporting the death penalty, and being White were significant predictors of support for defensive violence. Again, age was also significant, but had an inverse relationship with defensive violence.

The unique predictor in the abuse scenario was rural socialization. This suggests that individuals socialized in rural areas are more likely to support defensive violence. Following

Lee and Ousey (2010), individuals socialized in rural areas are more likely to support or use violence because they feel more vulnerable and are more attached to the community. In terms of vulnerability, rural dwellers are more likely to feel as though police response time is inadequate, thus they must take the situation into their own hands. These individuals are also more likely to feel attached to their community. When they see a child in danger, they are more willing to step in and combat the situation.

Support for the death penalty was also significant. This again reflects the relationship between the death penalty and retributive values. The abuse scenario was the only defensive violence measure where race was significant and gender was not. More specifically, Whites were more likely to support defensive violence is the face of abuse. The non-significant finding between males and females is likely because females are equally as likely to stand up for a child as males are in a situation of abuse.

Defensive Violence Scale. Finally, the Defensive Violence Scale combined the results from the first three models to create an enhanced overall measure of defensive violence. Being socialized in a rural area, gun ownership, supporting the death penalty, and being male were significant predictors in the Defensive Violence Scale. Age was significant, yet inverse in the Defensive Violence Scale.

The Defensive Violence Scale suggests that social behaviors and socialization in rural areas are the strongest predictors of support for defensive violence. The death penalty and firearms, more likely than not, act as symbols of violence. In other words, firearms and the death penalty are forms of violence that endorse the idea that violence is an acceptable action. Therefore, individuals who own firearms or support the death penalty are more likely to approve of the use of defensive violence. Individuals socialized in rural areas are also

more likely to support defensive violence. Perhaps this is because police presence is slower and vulnerability is higher in rural areas. This ultimately makes individuals in rural areas more likely to have to use violence for protection.

Age and sex were significant control variables in the Defensive Violence Scale model. Again, this indicates that patriarchal norms and the idea that males, not females, should support or use violence in defensive situations may continue to prevail. Age had an inverse relationship with support for defensive violence. More likely than not, this is because younger individuals are more prone to feeling as if their honor needs to be defended at all times.

Cultural Resources and Defensive Violence. The results of this study provide some interesting insight into the relationship between cultural resources and defensive violence. More specifically, the decision to support defensive uses of violence is bound to specific cultural resources that are triggered by the context of particular situations. For instance, gun ownership is a cultural resource that endorses defensive violence in situations of protections, but not in situations of affront or abuse. More likely than not, this is because gun owners have made the personal decision that lethal violence is only appropriate to use in certain situations.

Religious attendance is a cultural resource that encourages defensive violence in situations of affront. This is likely because religious convictions are embedded with gendered social norms. Therefore, individuals who frequently attended religious services are more likely to have patriarchal values. In the affront scenario, where a male's significant other was verbally insulted, religious attendance was a cultural tool that supported the use of violence. In the abuse scenario, rural socialization endorsed the use of defensive violence. More likely

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than not, rural life is characterized by increased vulnerability and attachment to one's community. When individuals socialized in rural areas perceived that a child was being abused, they likely felt that violence was a necessary action. Rural dwellers were likely to feel that it is their duty to protect individuals in their community and that calling the police would be ineffective because of slow response times in rural areas.

The Defensive Violence Scale indicates that there are certain cultural resources that endorse support for defensive violence when taken out of a situational context. Two of these cultural resources were gun ownership and rural socialization. Support for the death penalty was the third significant predictor of support for defensive violence, was significant in all four situations of defensive violence. Death penalty support was the strongest predictor of support in each of the four models. This is likely because the nature of the death penalty encourages retributive justice. The death penalty is a larger cultural symbol towards the idea that violence is often a legitimate and necessary action. Individuals who support the death penalty also support retributive justice and legitimate violence. Therefore, in all three scenarios involving defensive violence, death penalty supporters were more likely to approve of the use of defensive violence.

Finally, there tend to be two demographical components that make an individual more likely to support defensive violence. The first is an individual's gender. Males are much more likely to support defensive violence than females. This is probably because gender norms are still active in society. Thus, males believe it is their duty to use violence in defensive situations. A person's age is the second demographical factor. The younger an individual is, the more likely they are to support defensive violence. As previously mentioned, this is probably because younger individuals may not see themselves as being as

well-established as older individuals. The consequence is that younger individuals may feel an increased need to defend their honor in situations that older individuals deem unnecessary.

Limitations of the Current Study

There are several limitations that are necessary to discuss as a larger part of this research study. The first limitation involves the use of MTurk for data collection. Previous studies contend that MTurk is a new and exciting online data collection tool (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). This research found that, while this may be true, data collection with MTurk was slightly problematic. The most overarching problem was the generalizability of the MTurk sample. More specifically, the sample found in this study was skewed in terms of educational attainment, political party, religious preference, and religious attendance. It is likely that some of the sampling issues stem from the skewed educational attainment found in this study. In other words, educational attainment seemed to have an effect on measures of religiosity and political party. Similar to the findings of this study, previous research has noted that highly educated individuals are less likely to be involved in religious services (Albrecht & Heaton, 1984). Furthermore, highly educated individuals tend to have more liberal values, and therefore, identify as being a Democrat. Perhaps, this is why a majority of the individuals in the sample were non-religious and overwhelmingly Democrats.

Wright (2005) suggests that the sampling issues found in the study are common in online surveys. However, MTurk is unique in that the survey is not administered to a true convenience sample, such as a college class. Rather, when surveys are placed on MTurk, the respondents choose whether or not they want to take the survey. Therefore, the survey has limited accessibility. One of the major problems is that MTurk is known more widely in

academia compared to the general public. Therefore, individuals within higher education are more likely to take MTurk surveys.

The second limitation concerns the different conceptual and operational strategies used with several variables. The current study utilized highly situational vignettes in order to study defensive violence. The specific context of these frames may have caused individuals to consider the use of violence in a different way compared to the use of abstract statements about violence. Respondents that had a gun in the home were conceptualized as gun owners. This strategy was selected because of the difficulties with measuring gun ownership, but may not represent personal gun ownership.

Future Research

The major challenge when attempting to test the relationship between culture and violence is the difficultly in maintaining generalizability and methodological sensitivity. This sensitivity revolves around the general lack of prior methods, the importance of cultural context, and the difficulty of observing interpersonal violence (Lee & Ousey, 2010). In order to enhance methodological sensitivity, future studies should consider using qualitative interviews to study defensive violence in a cultural context. It is likely that the effects of region and urbanity can be better measured by having respondents openly interpret how they would respond to violent situations.

Future research should also consider utilizing a wider variety of defensive violence scenarios and demographical variables. This study was limited to one instance of protection, affront, and abuse. The use of additional vignettes could enhance the understanding of which situations and cultural scripts endorse violence. In addition, more in-depth demographical

variables could examine the different attitudes concerning violence between genders and races.

Future research might consider the relationship between region and violence on a larger scale. Rather than focusing on the South, future research could examine the exact difference between regions. By finding which region is most likely to support defensive violence, future studies could begin an exploration of any culture within that region.

Finally, future research should consider testing different ways of measuring Southern culture. More specifically, this study found that the South was not a significant predictor of defensive violence, which runs counter to prior research. The non-significant finding in this study may be caused by the operationalization of Southern culture. Future studies could examine the different conceptual and operational strategies used in prior literature, then assess which strategies are most likely to find significant relationships with various outcome variables (i.e. violence, gun ownership,).

Policy Implications

Policy initiatives should consider the relationship between ruralness and defensive violence. With this understanding, policies need to be designed around ways to diffuse and intervene in violent situations in rural communities. This is a daunting task and may require an intervention at the community level. Policy strategies should take particular interest in the challenges that face rural police departments. Perhaps the best way to diffuse violent situations is to make rural communities manageable. This includes training law enforcement officials to form positive relationships within rural communities and ways to recognize violent relationships and situations.

Proper education is also vital when attempting to reduce violence. Policies should concern using mass media outlets to combat violence. For example, "edutainment" is the idea that cultural norms can change by increasing the public's knowledge about a specific issue through popular media. Rural communities and firearms organizations can employ positive role models that properly diffuse violent situations without violence through visual and print media. It may also be beneficial for local legislative bodies to consider abolishing or "taking a tougher stance" on corporal punishment. This way, children are not socialized into violence at an early age.

On a larger scale, it may be reasonable for state-level governmental agencies to consider not implementing the use of the death penalty. The death penalty is a symbol by which individuals internalize that retributive justice and violence are acceptable. Individuals may think that because the government uses violence in order to punish, they can too. Abolishing the death penalty would send a strong message to the general public that violence is an unacceptable way to handle any situation.

Finally, state and local governments should also consider policies that identify individuals who are likely to use firearms and lethal violence in a situation. This may be accomplished through intensive screenings for individuals buying a firearm. Another idea is to revoke the gun rights of individuals who have been convicted of using violence (assault, domestic violence) in the past.

Conclusion

The traditional view in criminological literature is that Southern culture is inherently violent, and therefore, the South is a violent region. This research project reveals that Southerners are not fundamentally violent, even towards acts of defensive violence. Instead,

the decision to use violence in defensive situations is encouraged by several distinct cultural scripts. These cultural scripts include: ruralness, attitudes towards the death penalty, and gun ownership. This study also reveals that younger individuals and males are likely to support defensive violence. Contrary to prior research, the findings from this study suggest that the culture of honor is thriving, but it is not concentrated in the South. In fact, the culture of honor is developed in the culture of rural areas and reflected in individuals' social behaviors. Further research is needed to examine the relationship between rural life, gun ownership, the death penalty, and violence. Perhaps the values and behaviors in the culture of honor have endured and aid in the understanding of violence. However, the impact of the culture of honor is not concentrated in the South and extends to other regions.

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Appendix

Erik is married and the father of two children. He wakes up in the middle of the night because he hears a noise downstairs. When he goes downstairs, he locks the door to the upstairs where his family is sleeping behind him. He then goes to the living room, where he sees an adult male burglar. The burglar does not see Erik. Erik pulls his pistol out of a nearby drawer and shoots the burglar, before calling police.

On the scale, please rate how acceptable you find Erik's actions?

Not Acceptable								Very Acceptable		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

One evening, Jared, his wife, and another married couple are walking to their cars after dinner. On the way to their cars, an adult male stranger in the parking lot makes numerous sexually suggestive remarks to Jared's wife. Jared approaches the man, before punching him with a closed fist.

On the scale, please rate how acceptable you find Jared's actions?

Not Acceptable								Very Acceptable		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

After getting off of work, Michael is walking to his car. In the parking garage, Michael sees an adult male stranger yelling at and physically striking a child. When the adult male stranger sees Michael, he says, "What are you looking at, punk" and "Is there a problem". Michael then approaches the man, and punches the man in the face.

On the scale, please rate how acceptable you find Michael's actions?

Not Acceptable								Very Acceptable		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10