ANGER AND HATE GROUPS: THE IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENT RESEARCH

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Abstract

This paper explores the connections between social structural inequality, emotions, and social movement participation. The activities and ideologies of a diverse family of hate groups are treated as a social movement. The interplay between the structural, cultural, and emotional origins of this movement is spelled out. The central emotions shared by these groups are anger and hate, which stem from the perception that whites occupy subordinate positions in society relative to a growing number of undeserving "nonwhites." This theme recurs in hate group discourse and forms a fundamental part of the movement's ideology but it also regenerates the emotional dynamics that seed discontent and mobilization. This study joins a growing body of research that incorporates emotions into theoretical models of social movements.

Key words: hate groups, racism, social movements, sociology of emotions, and social inequality.

THE SOCIAL ORIGINS OF EMOTION

People's feelings have never been in the foreground of sociological discourse. In fact, a systematic sociological study of emotions did not emerge until the 1970s (Kemper 1978; 1990). Since that time sociologists have increasingly been paying attention to the social embryo of emotion. These scholars argue that cognitions and emotions are interdependent modes of psychological experience. Furthermore, sociologists of emotion have identified important social forces that influence human affect. Recently, Douglas Massey (2002) in a Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association, urged sociologists to incorporate the study of emotion into their paradigms. This paper, then, seeks to make a contribution to this growing body of work by examining the impact of social structural inequality on emotion, particularly on the eruption of *anger* and its transformation into *hate*. First, the two major paradigms (social structuralism and social constructionism) that currently guide the study of emotions will be spelled out. Then Theodore Kemper's (1990) social structural model of emotion will be used to interpret the contemporary hate movement in America in order to identify some of the social conditions that generate anger and hatred. This investigation of a social movement sheds light on the relationship between structural inequality, subjective appraisals of feeling rules, and emotional outcomes. In the process it will become clear that Kemper's (1990) model offers social scientists a holistic approach to the study of emotions.

Social movements and emotions

Most sociologists who study social movements have been reluctant to treat emotion as a legitimate variable (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). For most of the twentieth century sociologists have depicted emotion as a manifestation of an irrational or dangerous impulse (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). Most theoretical accounts of social movements assume that people somehow automatically understand their group's interests by simply occupying a particular structural location (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). More recently, some new theoretical currents have tried to correct the overemphasis on rationality and cognition in the study of movement dynamics by incorporating an appreciation of the emotional foundations of collective behavior (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). The call to pay attention to the emotions of protestors is, in part, a reaction against the resource mobilization perspective and other paradigms that have dominated the field for several decades (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). These models have excluded social psychological components such as consciousness and identity from the terrain of acceptable topics of inquiry (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). Many researchers now acknowledge the importance of emotion in the formation of collective identities, the construction of grievances and framing strategies, and in the mobilization of participants (Goodwin and Polletta 2001). Jasper asserts "It is almost impossible to imagine mobilization in the absence of strong emotions" (1998:414).

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTIONS

Currently, sociologists interpret the emotional dynamics of social life with the aid of two theoretical models (Kemper 1981). Social constructionism and social structuralism both attempt to capture the social dynamics that produce feelings. Social constructionists explore feeling rules, which are essentially normative pressures to emote in culturally prescribed ways (Kemper 1981; Hochschild 1979; 1983). Individuals interpret the meaning of the prevailing standards of proper affect. An emotion is felt when a cognitive label is assigned to a generic physiological arousal (Kemper 1981). A person experiences "fear", "anger" or "happiness" after cognitive filters process a culturally constructed label which forges an emotion out of an amorphous soup of central nervous system stimulation. Initially, emotions are shaped during the socialization process. However, learned responses do not necessarily become fixed (Kemper 1981). They may recur or be transformed in different contexts where emergent rules are interpreted or reinterpreted. Constructionists insist that we negotiate our emotions by diagnosing the meaning of discourse, symbols, customs, rituals, and body language across shifting contexts (Kemper 1981). The cultural climate of a particular social environment supplies the resources for and sets the parameters of "emotion work" or the effort to manage a generic arousal and transform it into an acceptable feeling. Constructionists reject any assumption about a fixed number of discrete emotions (Kemper 1981). Feelings are constructed from subjective, fluctuating interpretations of culturally created but often transient or ambiguous norms (Kemper 1981). This image lacks any template of basic emotions (Kemper 1981). For constructionists, emotional states are pliant and endlessly susceptible to situational arbitration (Kemper 1981).

There are several problems inherent in constructionist accounts of emotion (Kemper 1981; Lyons 1998). First, the origin of emotion remains unclear. These accounts fail to explain how a constellation of social relationships and cultural climates *actually produces* an emotion. Somehow feelings emerge from subjective interpretations of culturally assigned feeling rules. Additionally, constructionists have a difficult time explaining why people often do not feel the "appropriate" affect. In other words, many emotional reactions are not culturally sanctioned. But, how is this possible? If norms determine our emotions then why do our feel-

ings sometimes violate the rules? Why do we often fail to feel the way we are *supposed* to feel? Often a feeling is denied, suppressed, or channeled in an effort to construct a more acceptable variant. We often display one emotional mask while concealing other prohibited faces. Constructionists need to develop the interplay between contradictory emotions. Another central conundrum of their position is the failure to pay attention to the impact of social relationships on the production of emotion. Instead, they conclude that the idiosyncratic interpretation of feeling rules is the spark (Kemper 1981). There really can be no other answer since constructionist discourse is so disconnected from any biological foundation. Constructionists are afflicted with an "ideational bias" which assumes that emotions emerge primarily from psychological deliberations of cultural symbols beyond the pale of the social structures that prop them up (Lyons 1998). Constructionism often fails to explore the critical role played by social structure in the genesis of emotion as well as in the creation of the cultural norms, codes, symbols, and discourse used as grist for the interpretive mill (Lyons 1998).

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF EMOTION

Kemper's (1990) theory, on the other hand, interrogates the impact of structural forces upon emotion formation while honoring the power of human interpretation. His model is more sensitive to the pressures imposed by the structural organization of the social field. Kemper's (1990) search for the etiology of emotion takes him into the microlevel world of face-to-face encounters situated within the boundaries of social structure. Interpersonal relations are constrained and enabled by configurations of rules, the distribution of resources, and the arrangement of power, status, and privilege. Every person occupies many social positions that are hierarchically ordered according to power and status regulations. The system of inequality explored by Kemper (1990) includes the division of labor embedded in a class structure of exploitive relationships overlapping hierarchies of racial and sexual privilege and authority. Power and status divisions establish the contours of the social locations where human relationships are consummated. Kemper (1990) wants researchers and theorists to focus their gaze upon the emotional interplay taking place in contexts shaped by the asymmetrical distribution of economic, political, and status resources.

For Kemper (1991), then, emotion is born in interpersonal encounters. "The fundamental theorem of the power-status approach to emotions is that a very large class of human emotions results from real, anticipated, imagined, or recollected outcomes of social relations" (1991:333). However, social relationships are constrained by power and status divisions (Kemper 1990; 1991). Power is expressed through coercion, manipulation, punishment, and domination (Kemper 1990). Status resources are displayed in voluntary conferrals of prestige, honor, deference, respect, or esteem that help cement the bonds of love, friendship, and community solidarity within but not necessarily between groups (Kemper 1990). Of course, there is a strong association between status and power. Those who hold positions of high status often have the means to wield power. So, if status rewards are commensurate with normative commitments and the operation of power is not abusive, then positive emotions (happiness, pride) are more likely to flow. Social structure coordinates the patterns of interaction within and across power and status boundaries which determine how much social support (status) a person receives and to what extent he or she will be victimized by power inequities (Kemper 1990; 1991).

Every person's emotional repertoire is formed within structurally organized social encounters. Specific emotions are generated by the particular dynamics of interaction between different social segments. For Kemper (1987; 1990), the physiological component of emotion is triggered by the outcome of an interpersonal engagement. However, Kemper (1987; 1990) posits two levels of emotion: primary and secondary.[1] Primary emotions (fear, satisfaction, anger, pride, and depression/sadness) are rooted in physiological substrates in the brain. The secondary emotions (guilt, shame, and hate) are primary ones redirected into socially conditioned (acceptable) feeling states. Cultural pressures in the guise of feeling rules (emotionology) fabricate a secondary emotion from a primary one. Primary feelings such as fear, anger, depression, or satisfaction are instigated by power and status relationships. Recoding a primary emotion into a secondary one requires some deliberation of cultural codes. Each person searches a culturally constructed cognitive map for the proper conduit into which a primary emotion can be legitimately funneled. Primary emotions, then, are channeled into secondary emotions such as guilt, shame, and hate that vary across contexts according to changing cultural proscriptions. A primary feeling is further clarified after the cause of it has been attributed to something the person did (an internal attribution) or to something that was done to that person by another (external attribution) or to some hybrid of both accounts. Designating the source of a primary emotion is a crucial feature of the construction of secondary feeling states (Kemper 1987; 1990).

Kemper (1987; 1990) urges sociologists to look more closely at how secondary emotions mask the primaries. The sociologist must penetrate the cultural discourse (standards, feeling rules) about emotions and uncover the provocative social relations involved in the generation of primary feelings. This task would force sociologists to stay attuned to the structural mechanics of power and status systems.

Primary and secondary emotions are correlated with status and power relations and attributions of causality (Kemper 1987; 1990). For Kemper (1987; 1990), fear (anxiety) tends to occur when a person loses power or someone else gains it. Satisfaction (happiness, security) usually follows a boost in power or status by the self or the loss of power or status by another. Anger erupts after a person loses status and blames someone else (or some group). Pride accompanies a status gain attributed to one's own abilities. Depression (sadness, despair) is induced by a loss of status accompanied by attributions of fatalism. Shame is manifested when a person's behavior is inconsistent with his/her status and the self is charged with claiming too much respect. Shame can also emerge when customary status is not granted and inadequacies of the self are blamed for the deficit. Guilt invades a person when excessive power has been used against someone else and the wielder blames his/her self. A desire for expiation typically accompanies the sense of responsibility for the misuse of power. However, the responsibility for the abuse of power may be assigned to the injured party in which case "blaming the victim" becomes a characteristic display. Hatred of the dominator evolves in victims who blame another person or group for their subjection (status and power loss). Additional permutations of the primary emotions can be refashioned with varying cultural interpretations and attributions. Obviously, certain emotions may emerge together. For example, if fear and anger are triggered simultaneously, hate and jealousy (longing for lost or unattainable status) may be countenanced as the channeled (sec-

ondary) emotions (Kemper 1987; 1990).

The power and status dimensions of human relationships are often vividly displayed in the behavioral obligations encoded in social roles (Franks 1989). Therefore, sociologists of emotion search the lattice of social roles for the imprint of structural imbalances. Although behavioral scripts do not completely determine role comportment, they do establish a frame of legitimate thinking, behaving, and feeling. Teachers, husbands, wives, lawyers, artists, kings, aunts, fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, supervisors, students, bureaucrats, and carpenters play out roles rarely constructed solely by their own praxis. Dominant groups possess and display symbols of respect like education, knowledge, credentials, sophistication, political connections, and other manifestations of cultural capital. They also control property, economic activities, political machinery, the manufacture of ideologies, and the work process. Roles of power and prestige tend to generate feelings of confidence, arrogance, pride, and contentment. The roles taken on by subordinates usually prevent them from making claims for respect or controlling material resources. They are often pressured to offer up deference to superiors, lower their expectations, listen to and grapple with dominant ideologies, suppress anger, deny desire, and fake satisfaction. Consequently, they are more likely to encounter emotionally deflating or frustrating social conditions that foster anger, fear, shame, depression, and resentment (Franks 1989). Anger, in particular, is an important primary emotion. The hierarchical arrangements of power and status systems are, to some extent, dependent upon its control (Barbalet 1998; Beck 1999).

SEARCHING FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL ROOTS OF ANGER

Anger is a very potent emotion that can empower or impair individuals, families, and communities (Reiser 1999). Demonstrations of anger often foster constructive conflict resolution by invigorating the efforts of agents to raise awareness of and to redress an injustice or grievance. Anger can also lead to destructive forms of abuse and violence if it is not routed into innocuous or productive endeavors (Reiser 1999; Beck 1999). Angry workers, angry mobs, angry spouses, and angry subordinates of all stripes have posed serious threats to the stability of social relations in America. Stearns and Stearns (1986) have shown that institutional efforts to control an-

ger reach back to the seventeenth century. Various cultural strategies dealing with this recurring emotion have been introduced in different historical periods (Stearns and Stearns 1986).

During the Victorian Era, anger norms emphasized control, repression, and inhibition (Stearns and Stearns 1986). These codes idealized the family as a refuge from the conflict, competition, and stress associated with the work world. Self-control was promoted as a strategy for keeping the social relations in both arenas harmonious. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, channeling replaced repression as the sanctioned cultural practice. Channeling involved first corralling and then redirecting anger into productive pursuits such as sports, competitive work engagements, and moral crusades. Anger, it was contended, could energize workers, consumers, and moral crusaders. The goal of channeling, like inhibition, was to direct anger away from the home (Stearns and Stearns 1986).

Since the middle of the twentieth century, a managerial style of conflict resolution has sanctioned anger reduction through interpersonal mediation strategies (Stearns and Stearns 1986). These contemporary feeling rules place great stress on the psychological origins of anger. The proscription for anger resolution, accordingly, is some kind of interpersonal mediation or psychotherapy. The primary goal of this currently fashionable emotional style is the maintenance of cool, friendly atmospheres that promote the control of unpleasant and possibly destructive feelings in order to buttress the social relationships that form the backbone of contemporary corporate capitalism (Stearns 1994; Hochschild 1983). Apparently, the eruption of anger remains a very serious concern in the current era of corporate downsizing, falling wages, wealth and income polarization, declining union power, and strained social welfare programs (Gordon 1997; Schwarz 1997; Palley 1998; Blau 1999; Stearns and Stearns 1986; Reiser 1999; Beck 1999). Most political and economic power still resides in a small elite that profits immensely from the class arrangements that drive consumer capitalism. Furthermore, the domination of the workplace by professionals and managers inevitably recreates social divisions (of class, race, age, and gender) which pit subordinates against the "experts" (McDermott 1991; Wright 1998). The emphasis on psychological solutions to anger control often nullifies critical investigations of the structural

roots of workplace, racial, and domestic anger.

The growth of the service economy, too, creates even greater demands for smooth interpersonal relations that keep the daily rituals of order-taking and order-giving flowing in the office, over the phone, at the grocery store, and in countless commercial and bureaucratic locales (Stearns 1994). Consequently, the need for a corporate-friendly personality has shaped child-rearing practices, especially in middle class families. The workplace and the family now share common feeling rules that try to fashion cool parents, cool kids, and, ultimately, cool workers (Stearns 1994).

One of the most significant studies of emotion in the service sector is Arlie Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* (1983). Hochschild's (1983) study of flight attendants revealed the existence of problematic emotional struggles stemming from the feeling rules that guide their work roles. Hochschild (1983) argues that many service workers are obligated to perform emotional labor, which she defines as a form of emotional control sanctioned by employers. The goal of emotional labor is to create a particular emotion (satisfaction, contentment, happiness) in a customer by denying one's own authentic emotions, which often include anger, hostility, and resentment, while at the same time generating and publicly communicating verbally and nonverbally, pleasant feelings (Hochschild 1983). The artificial positive feelings, in turn, become commodities that service workers sell to an employer (Hochschild 1983). Furthermore, emotional labor demands that workers deny or ablate their feelings and is thus implicated in the production of their alienation and emotional strain (Hochschild 1983). Consequently, emotional labor as currently practiced in many work settings enables management to augment their control over the emotional lives of their workers (Hochschild 1983). Social scientists have been building up a body of research that explores emotional labor in various settings. A recent edition of *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* (Steinberg and Figart 1999) was devoted entirely to investigating the effects of emotional labor on workers in the service sector. One recurring theme in this literature is that jobs with limited work autonomy tend to produce the most dissatisfaction among workers (Steinberg and Figart 1999). The research on emotional labor is consistent with Kemper's (1990) claim that the loss of status or power generates distressful feelings.

For Kemper (1990), anger is a primary response to a loss or denial of status. Cultural norms play a key part in determining who is to blame for the feeling (whether to make internal or external attributions) which, in turn, generates a secondary emotional response. From a social structuralist vantage point, however, the various efforts to constrain, channel, and mediate anger reflect attempts to manage the emotional fallout of living in overlapping social hierarchies coordinated in shifting but interdependent systems of race, gender, and class inequality *where anger perpetually incubates.* Inequality is, thus, a powerful force in the seeding of anger (Kemper 1978; 1987; 1990; Stearns and Stearns 1986).

Furthermore, our culture favors attributions of personal causality, which create opportunities for "experts" to sanction ideological strategies that urge the regulation of the self but not necessarily the democratization of social hierarchies. Many emotion codes try to thwart politically threatening feelings by making internal attributions of their origin. But the reproduction of class, status, and power divisions is a guarantee that they will recur.

One example of a contemporary social problem that derives from and feeds off of anger is racism. In some parts of the world "ethnic cleansing" and other forms of genocide are still practiced. In America today, racial prejudice and discrimination continue to mar social relations (Feagin 2000; Feagin, Vera, Batur 2001; Aguirre and Turner 2001). The consequences of ghettoization, segregation, bigotry and police brutality still weigh heavily on minority populations. The discontent and frustration over existing social conditions are sometimes manifested in public demonstrations or insurrections. Media analysts, pundits, and politicians, who seem to be chronically caught off guard by such collective expressions of anger, usually depict these displays as "riots." In April 2001, another "racial disturbance" unfolded in Cincinnati, Ohio. A familiar story line was played out on the nightly news as a frustrated African American community searched for answers to police misconduct and other forms of discrimination.

Yet, another type of anger seethes in many white people who feel that they have been denied access to their piece of the pie or have attained only a very small piece because they have to share it with inferior or undeserving minority populations. Many white people believe that they are the real "victims" of "reverse" discrimination. They, too, are angry.

The remainder of this study will examine the social structural conditions and cultural attributions that give rise to the anger and hatred manifested in contemporary racist organizations.

CASE STUDY: THE HATE MOVEMENT

Kemper's (1990) stress on power and status inequality helps to illuminate the social origins of problematic emotions. One way to substantiate Kemper's (1990) claims is to find empirical links between social structural inequality and the manifestation of emotion. The hate movement[2] is a good illustration of the interplay between structural inequality, feeling rules (cultural attributions), and primary and secondary emotions, especially anger and hatred.

Researchers appraise the membership of hate groups in America at around 25,000 with perhaps 150,000 "armchair" supporters who endorse the ideology but do not actually join (Perry, 2000). Between the1970s and the1990s, America witnessed a resurgence of older racist organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazi's as well as the birth of new hybrids such as the skinheads, Posse Comatitus, the Patriot movement, Christian Identity, and various racist militias (Perry 2000). The common thread binding these disparate groups together is an intense, often violent, hatred of minorities and the federal government. These groups have received a great deal of attention after Timothy McVeigh blew up the Alfred P. Murrah office building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1994 in retaliation for the federal assault on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas the year before (Hamm 1997). In addition to its perceived grievous behavior and policies, the government is seen as protecting and promoting the interests of minorities, especially through affirmative action programs, over and against the interests of whites. Therefore, tracking the source of hate group anger will shed light on the sociological origins of emotion.

HATE GROUPS AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: KEEPING EMOTIONS FOCUSED

Betty Dobratz and Stephanie Shanks-Meile (1997) view the activities of hate groups (their designation is "white separatists") as a social movement. Despite diverse agendas and ideologies, hate groups utilize legitimate and illegitimate means to bring about social change (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Recently, researchers have turned their attention to the impact of social psychological factors (i.e., emotions) and social structural inequality on the birth and development of social movements (Morris and Mueller 1992; Taylor and Whittier 1994; Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001; Kemper 2001). The three important components of social movements that are focused on in this paper are framing, collective identity, and structural inequality. Frames articulate the cause(s) of an existing problem or inequity and also identify the appropriate remedies (Snow and Benford 1988). Most oppositional movements also produce an injustice frame or ideology that challenges the status quo by locating the source of an injustice, expressing disapproval of the unequal arrangements that produced it, and invoking a victim status for the aggrieved group (Gamson 1992; Ferber and Kimmel 2000; Berbrier 2000). Frames are successful when they evoke, corral, and channel the emotional energies that will increase the likelihood of mobilization (Jasper 2001; Kemper 2001; Collins 2001). Effective frames must resonate emotionally in order to energize and sustain collective action.

Collective identity refers to the fact that individuals come to share, through frequent negotiation, the definitions, values, meanings, and emotions that characterize a social movement (Polletta and Jaspers 2001). A collective identity helps to motivate people to join and stay in a movement. A collective identity is made up of the symbols, discourse, values, and emotions from various frames (Polletta and Jaspers 2001). Collective identities also need to be renewed through ritual activities in order to help sustain the perceptions, negotiations, and emotions that mark the meaning of movement participation (Collins 2001).

Kemper (2001) stresses the role of social structural inequality in triggering painful feelings that shape injustice frames. Structural inequality is strongly implicated in the generation of a great deal of discontent that eventually helps to give form to a social movement (Kemper 2001). The central emotion in many social movements is anger (Kemper 2001). A successful social movement must bring to light the unequal social arrangements that deny one group some reward or resource (status) at the expense of another more powerful group. Anger is a good indicator of the problematic social relationships that generate pools of potential recruits (Kemper 2001). Yet, people who occupy subordinate social locations are not automatically conscious of their own exploitation and group interest (Kemper 2001).

The consciousness raising efforts of movement activists are aimed at helping subordinates make connections between their low status and their discontent. If Kemper (2001) is correct, the emotional experiences of subordinates are essential features of the social movement recruitment process. Recruiters must get people to focus their blame for current inequities on a target, such as the state or big business, for the purpose of changing unjust social conditions (Kemper 2001). Structurally induced emotions make up one of the basic ingredients of social movement dynamics.

All social movements must recruit and try to hold on to new members. In order to accomplish this task, hate groups try to raise awareness of a particular type of injustice, and at the same time wed these cognitive appeals to powerful emotions (Groves 1995; Yang 2000; Benford 1997; Jasper 1998; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Hate groups effectively orchestrate the interplay between cognitive and emotional spheres in their discourse. First they identify the existence of an injustice and then cultivate the anger associated with it. Next, they attribute the cause(s) of the problem to minorities and then channel the anger into hatred of these targeted groups. Hate, in turn, often spurs people on to take violent action against the source of their status loss (Beck 1999).

Hate groups use several resources in their pursuit of members. First of all, hate groups benefit from the fact that America continues to manifest deep racial/ethnic divisions, especially between African Americans and whites, when it comes to perceptions about the prevalence of discrimination. Most whites tend to blame African Americans themselves rather than structural inequality or institutional discrimination as the cause of problems like poverty, crime, and unemployment (Feagin 2001; Feagin, Vera, and Batur 2000; Schuman and Krysan 1999). Furthermore, a strong anti-government sentiment forms another social current that hate groups use to their advantage (Boggs 2000; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Corruption, scandals, and the impact of high profile special interest groups have elevated the levels of political alienation and cynicism (Boggs 2000; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Consequently, many Americans have become suspicious of federal efforts to ameliorate social problems. Even politicians themselves, along with many media pundits, frequently trumpet the notion of reverse racism, which suggests that blacks now have access to federally pro-

tected privileges and resources at the expense of white people (Feagin 2001; Feagin, Vera, and Batur 2000). Public criticisms of welfare, drug problems, and crime are often couched in discourse laden with racial code words and other forms of symbolic racism. Additionally, racist jokes continue to permeate the culture. It is acceptable to publicly express distrust, dislike, or even contempt for certain minorities. This rhetoric helps to fuel tensions and prop up a volatile environment surrounding interpersonal race relations (Feagin 2000; Feagin, Vera, and Batur 2000). The prevalence of this kind of discourse creates a niche for the cultural tolerance of racial bigotry in subtle, mild, latent, and sometimes not so latent forms that can be channeled into more extreme manifestations of hatred and contempt (Feagin 2000; Feagin, Vera and Batur 2001; Beck 1999).

Hate groups also have used the cultural resources available to most other social movements. They organize protests, rallies, and gun shows where new recruits and established members can meet (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997). They have established over 300 web sites, which provide easy, immediate access to information about the various groups' ideology, announcements concerning literature, meetings, speakers, and rallies (Burris, Emery, and Strahm 2000). The Internet is playing an increasingly important role in recruitment as well as in sustaining a sense of solidarity among the disparate factions, many of which are essentially leaderless groups acting on their own but guided by a common agenda and worldview. Finally, hate messages are also available in musical form. Since the 1980s, a new brand of hard rock and punk music has been spreading the message of white supremacy (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997). Many of these social practices function as rituals that help to sustain the movement by recharging important emotional energies (Collins 2001).

ANGER INTO HATE: CONSTRUCTING ATTRIBUTIONS
Hate groups are in the business of turning anger into hate. Kemper (1990) argues that hate is a socialized secondary emotion related to anger and fear. Hate is focused anger and fear that has become locked in on a target designated as the cause or source of a person or group's loss of status (anger) and power (fear) (Kemper 1990). This study does not focus on fear because anger is the prominent emotion in the hate subculture, although a great deal of

the discourse contains an implicit fear of losing power as well as status to minorities. Hate groups have become adept at constructing discourse that channels anger into resentment and hatred of the agents responsible for their subjugation, namely, minorities, the government, and an economic system that has betrayed white people (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Daniels 1997; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998). Hate discourse attributes blame for the real or imagined cause of white peoples' relative deprivation to the oppression imposed upon them by programs like affirmative action and the "reverse discrimination" it institutionalizes, an exploitative economic system, and gender equality which has spoiled the "natural" hierarchy between women and men. Thus, whites are portrayed as the real victims of reverse racism, an unfair set of practices, policies, and values that have restricted their status and mobility. There is no equal opportunity, they argue, because societal institutions promote racial diversity which, by definition, excludes and punishes whites in order to make room for minorities. Furthermore, white men now suffer at the hands of economic elites who try to rip them off by pitting them against nonwhite workers here and abroad (Daniels 1997; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Finally, the feminist promotion of gender equality has essentially emasculated many of these men, and in the process, spurred on interracial sexuality (Daniels 1997; Ferber 1998). Hate group advocates insist that they are only guilty of taking up the struggle for whites' rights, which have been severely curtailed in an era of multiculturalism, falling wages, and affirmative action. Their cause seeks to redress the injustices and to promote pride in the white race. These attributions enable hate groups to portray themselves as soldiers defending the white race against multiple threats and enemies.

"WHITE WORKERS UNITE!" CLASS INEQUALITY AND THE RACIST RIGHT: CONSTRUCTING A VICTIM IDEOLOGY

The first step in conducting a social structural analysis of hate groups is to identify the social inequities that lead to the disenfranchisement, whether real or imagined, of this particular subculture of whites. The literature on hate groups has focused on many of the social biases that produce a collective sense of disaffection (Berbrier 2000). This essay will focus on two themes: class inequality, and the perceived threat posed by interracial sexuality.

A disproportionate number of hate group members belongs to the working class or lower middle class (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Daniels 1997; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998). While the perception that many whites have not benefited very much from existing economic arrangements is accurate, it is very difficult to argue that whites overall have been or are about to be displaced in the economy or in political institutions by people of color. Although minorities have made great social gains since the 1960s, so too have many whites and the latter still enjoy tremendous power, prestige, and privilege relative to nonwhites. But hate group members appear to have limited educational attainment or access to educational opportunities, are constrained economically, tend to be working and lower middle class, and feel marginalized from mainstream institutions (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998; Weinberg 1993; Daniels 1997; Zellner 1995). From a social structural perspective, these locations can foster alienation, relative deprivation and frustration. "As persons in the same social situation will share a common awareness of their situation, other things being equal *mutatis mutandis* they will have a common emotional or evaluative reaction to it" (Barbalet 1998:71). Hate groups manufacture a cultural and emotional climate that attributes the cause of difficult economic circumstances to the abandonment of white people by mainstream institutions. A collective emotional reaction to some kind of social injustice is a critical ingredient of social movement participation (Barbalet 1998; Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001).

However, the correlation between class and membership in hate groups should not be overstated. There is a significant representation of middle class participants and some evidence of an invisible or secret involvement (i.e. financial support) of the upper class (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997; Aho 1990; Weinberg 1993). Additionally, the leadership wing of most of these groups tends to come from a higher-class location. Nevertheless, even many well-off members of society resent having to share wealth and power with minorities, and construct economic grievances that blame their middle class status insecurity, fears of downward mobility, or frustration about a stagnant economic plight on those minorities (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Resentment and anger are kindred emotions in Kemper's (1991)

model. They both indicate a loss of status. Economic developments over the last thirty years have certainly created a large pool of insecure and frustrated workers from across the class structure. Some of these critical changes include: the progressive concentration of wealth in the top 10% of the class structure; stagnant or falling wages, a particularly painful affliction for the working and lower middle classes; federal and state cutbacks in social services; and distressingly high poverty rates, which have come down a bit recently but remain high relative to other industrialized nations; and, of course, downsizing and globalization which have spread job insecurity and diminished expectations across a wide swath of the class structure (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998; Weinberg 1993; Daniels 1997). These class factors nurture fertile ground for recruitment into hate groups and leaders of the movement are very much aware of how powerfully the message of class injustice resonates with many lower class whites. The hate group intelligentsia promulgates class warfare by condemning the excesses of capitalism, especially moving good jobs overseas where nonwhites work for low wages, giving jobs to minorities instead of whites back home, and creating a general social misery in pursuit of profits. The right sounds like the left when it analyzes contemporary class relations this way. Of course, hate groups argue that the real culprits behind class inequality are nonwhites, especially the Jews, who have set up a system of class inequality in order to exploit white people. In one sense, the extreme right sees class conflict as one manifestation of a broader racial conflict. The key point is that the hate movement portrays itself as a group(s) that represents a subordinate class, made up of white people, who have been systematically displaced from their rightful, dominant place in the social hierarchy (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998; Weinberg 1993). The central argument is that whites have become order takers at the hands of race traitors and biologically inferior groups of nonwhites. Hate groups very consciously depict their members and many white nonmembers as occupants of a subordinate social class rank. Trying to attain a higher status ranking while butting up against blocked pathways tends to produce anger (Kemper 1990). The reason whites ended up at the low end is attributed to the gains made

by nonwhites at the expense of whites, a zero sum calculus that redirects anger into hate.

These rationalizations appear to be elements of a right-wing populist ideology. According to Berlet and Lyons (2000), most hate groups can be categorized as various branches of right-wing populist movements in America. Right-wing populism typically scapegoats low status groups as threats to the social order as well as the class interests and mobility aspirations of white people; populists, however, also target the exploitative practices of the dominant economic classes (Berlet and Lyons 2000). Both of these groups (economic elites and poor minorities) are portrayed as threats to the white middle and working classes and have been met with great contempt by right-wing populist movements (Berlet and Lyons 2000).

Bonnie Berry (1999) has also noted the potential for structural inequality to produce destructive emotions. Berry (1999) posits the notion of social rage, a sociologically induced, public expression of anger, hate, incivility, intolerance, prejudice, discrimination, and violence that exacerbates the divisions between racial/ethnic groups, men and women, social classes, and in general, dominant and subordinate groups. This type of behavior is evident in many different guises such as road rage, crime, political policies, and public displays of contempt promoted by media pundits and politicians who lead and foment crusades against feminists, welfare mothers, minorities, unions, and homosexuals (Berry 1999). The ultimate source of the rage stems from the inability of a group to attain or preserve an advantageous social position. Real or imagined economic insecurity, in particular, can produce tremendous resentment aimed at scapegoats who reside in the lower echelons of the social hierarchies (Berry 1999).

The injustice frames in hate group discourse construct an image of social relations in which whites are victimized by minorities through social programs that favor minorities and the well-off but neglect the needs of the white majority, especially those who do not have access to the opportunities for upward social mobility. The tone of the hate movement's injustice discourse is one of frustration and resentment about being left behind in the struggle to obtain valuable resources. Hate group victim ideologies blames minorities and complicit whites for creating a system that disadvantages a significant percentage of whites. Their injustice discourse reflects a collective rage directed at class and race inequality. Relative

deprivation can generate anger in any social class, although the lower middle and working classes undergo a more direct experience of class inequality. The middle class may be just as angry about giving up resources to undeserving groups or about being blocked from improving their social status.

The symbols of hate group victim ideology depict whites as a group that is egregiously and consistently harmed by minorities. Thus, minorities are defined as a threat to the economic opportunities of the white race. If a minority group can be characterized as a threat to the dominant group, then that minority group is more likely to encounter institutional discrimination and other systemic and cultural barriers (Aguirre and Turner 2000; Perry 2001). These perceived threats to the social status of the dominant group promote the notion that the social position of whites has been compromised. The loss of status sparks anger in Kemper's (1990) model. In fact, anger is an important component of hate group consciousness raising efforts and is actively and enthusiastically cultivated because it supposedly helps to awaken the white race to its own subjugation (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2000; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998; Weinberg 1993). Anger is the emotion on center stage in the hate movement. It is the fuel of the "white revolution," and sustainer of perpetual resistance.

The theme of social inequality permeates the injustice frames in hate group discourse. Manifestos, pamphlets, newspapers, websites, cartoons, and books highlight the diminishing availability of status, privilege, and resources for white people. Populist themes are very prevalent throughout the literature. For example, many groups blame corporate capitalism as much as the government for intruding into social life and disrupting the natural racial hierarchy, which should privilege whites. Tom Metzger, the head of White Aryan Resistance (WAR) and former leader of the Ku Klux Klan of California, has helped to forge a new brand of fascism called the Third Position. This hybrid rejects both capitalism and communism while calling for the creation of separate nation-states partitioned by race (Berlet and Lyons 2000). The Third Position promotes political views that align with the left on issues concerning labor unions, military intervention, free trade, feminism, and the environment. After all, they contend that the Jews are in control of the forces (monopoly capitalism and the government) that destroy good jobs in the U.S. while exporting capital across the borders in order to maximize profits by paying low wages to nonwhites. Tom Metzger made the following statements while speaking to the Aryan Nations Congress in 1987:

> WAR is dedicated to the White working people, the farmers, the White poor… This is a working class movement…Our problem is with monopoly capitalism. The Jews first went with Capitalism and then created their Marxist game. You go for the throat of the Capitalist. You must go for the throat of the corporates! (quoted in Berlet and Lyons 2000:269)

The sentiments expressed in this excerpt are anti-Semitic but also reveal a strong class-consciousness. The Jews are the enemies but the economic system they have constructed, even though whites dominate that system, is unjust. The government, too, is viewed as too centralized, stifling, bureaucratic, bent on social engineering, and repressive (Berlet and Lyons 2000). However, most groups do not envision a totalitarian state replacing the current one. Furthermore, many groups do not endorse the Third Position but still seek to set up a system that does not abuse white people. Many hate groups promote some version of National Socialism which allows private property to be owned by individuals but at the same time proposes regulation of big business in order to prevent the exploitation of the white worker (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). David Lane, of The Order, penned "88 Precepts" which has become a white power manifesto for many groups. The following precepts indicate contempt for the practices of high finance capitalism:

> 73. Materialism leads men to seek artificial status through wealth or property. True social status comes from service to Family, Race, and Nation.
> 74. Materialism ultimately leads to conspicuous, unnecessary consumption which in turn leads to the rape of Nature and the destruction of the environment. It is unnatural…
> 76. The only lawful functions of money are as a medium of exchange and a store value. Usury/interest, in particular, at any percent, is a high crime which cannot be tolerated.
> 77. A Nation with an aristocracy of money, lawyers, or merchants will become a tyranny (Lane, N.d., in Kaplan 2000:500-501).

These precepts show sensitivity to economic injustice and condemn any system that takes advantage of whites. The theme of status loss provoking anger is chronically rehearsed in the literature and recurs throughout the discourse. A *WAR* editorial argues:

> Under U.S. law, state bodies can and do favor women, blacks and Hispanics over white males; all in the name of remedying past discrimination. It is this above all that has put the "angry" into angry white men. Across America White males complain of losing out to less qualified rivals, squeezed out by PC quotas (1995a:10).

White males are "losing out" and this, the author points out, makes them angry. Affirmative action policies constrain white workers' chances for economic success and to this extent reflects class concerns. In fact, the cartoon that accompanies the article shows a picture of Superman on whose chest the phrase "Angry White Male" beams forth in place of a large "S."

The working classes will have to be the carriers of a white revolution, according to one *WAR* contributor who writes:

> First, the elite of this System are the maggots who created this mess...Our homeland is screwed up because the people in power wish it to be so. Who is in power? Whites own almost all of the wealth in the West...I don't believe the White working-class and poor people are more moral than the upper-classes, but they are less satisfied with the system and more likely to listen to our message and act than are people who are happy with the way things are (1995b: 4).

According to this writer, the working class is more discontented than the middle classes and is more likely to initiate radical change. This is an additional indication that some groups believe that class inequality is an important factor in sparking and regenerating the mobilization that is necessary for an effective social movement to evolve. According to recent studies, the belief that white workers are denied good jobs, decent wages, or hard earned promotions because of unfair affirmative action practices is common among many white workers (Rubin 1994; Fine and Weis 1998; Lamont 2000).

FEAR AND LOATHING: INTERRACIAL SEXUALITY AND THE RACIST RIGHT

An intense dread of interracial sexuality also characterizes the racist worldview fostered by hate groups (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000). Sexual activity between blacks and whites, in this view, leads to the obliteration of racial differences. Once the races "mix" and produce mongrels, the white race is on its way to extinction. All policies, programs, and social movements that call for or enforce democratic treatment of racial groups are viewed as threats to the purity and survival of whites. Affirmative action, they contend, not only improves the economic opportunities of minorities at the expense of whites but also encourages interracial contact and ultimately sexual unions. The following sample from a white supremacist publication illustrates this concern:

> ...integration is just a code word for racemixing. Civil rights for Black men do not really mean equal opportunities; they mean equal enjoyment opportunities with White women...."(*National Vanguard*, 1979:11, quoted in Ferber 1998: 90)

Interracial sexuality is portrayed as a violation of an innate attraction to one's own race (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000).

Most hate groups also link the increase in this kind of sexual behavior to a weakening of traditional gender roles and, especially, to the "feminization" of men (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000). Feminists are accused of minimizing the natural differences between men and women through their efforts to institutionalize gender equality.

> Men are constrained from expressing their maleness in any of the ways which were natural in the past. One of the most important of those ways was protecting a mate...One way in which Western women have responded to the perceived demasculinization of their men has been to turn toward non-White males, who are perceived as more masculine...[a woman will] run through a long succession of Black lovers in her fruitless, instinctual search for a man who would not only love her but also master her (*National Vanguard*, January, 1983:17, quoted in Ferber 1998:95)

Men have been transformed the most, according to this logic, in so far as they have become more and more effeminate and unable to defend their women against the sexual affronts of minorities. Changes in child rearing practices have turned men into wimps. Hate group advocates argue that few men today would ever dream of protecting their women against minorities because they fear being seen as "racist." This reasoning forms one part of the broader ideological justification of the violence aimed at minorities (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000).

The emotional dynamics of this contempt for gender equality and interracial sexuality are very apparent (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000 Blazak 2001). Hate group accounts of interracial sex reveal tremendous anxiety about changing status relations. White racist men in these groups believe that gender equality, like racial equality, diminishes their status in society. Equality between men and women, in their view, is no more possible than it is between whites and nonwhites. All efforts aimed at bringing this equality about only destroy the "natural" order of society. Thus, men are angry and they blame feminists, minorities, politicians, and liberals who are upsetting the hierarchy and in the process unleashing a tidal wave of social ills on society. These men see themselves situated below or in the same rank as those who are "naturally" inferior to them and this makes them angry (Ferber 1998; Ferber and Kimmel 2000; Blazak 2001). Their discourse further directs blame for these aberrant social conditions and, in the process, generates hate by targeting their anger.

THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION: BUILDING COLLECTIVE IDENTITY BY BOOSTING MEMBERS PRIDE

There is a very evident emotional struggle in hate group discourse that shapes the collective identity of the movement. Members often report a new sense of pride and love of white culture that works as an antidote to the shame and humiliation they once were taught to feel as members of a race that has committed brutal acts of discrimination (Dobratz and Shanks-Meiele 1997; Blazak 2001; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kaplan and Bjorgo 1998; 1993; Blee 2002). The sense of pride is part of a strategy of presenting themselves as an ethnic group like many others who are struggling for respect and power. Kathleen Blee writes "Not only do racist groups promise a sense of personal identity and a collective culture, but they also

afford their members a sense of control over the circumstances of life, a feeling of self-empowerment, and an expectation that they have authority over others" (2002:163). Race consciousness and group solidarity for haters *build* self-esteem in the face of a society that, in their eyes, increasingly caters to the economic, cultural, and political needs of nonwhites. If the first step in hate group consciousness raising is channeling anger and frustration, the next step is to instill in people a sense of their own worth as members of a group that is under attack from many more powerful institutions. Hate rhetoric is laden with emotional appeals that center on the need for whites to resist the humiliating experience of occupying a social standing below Jews, blacks, and homosexuals. This discourse also helps hate groups to fashion a collective identity that characterizes racial relations in extremely polarized terms (Snow and Benford 1988; Anheier, Neidhardt, Vortkamp 1998). Hate movement activists attempt to shape a dualistic racial identity by encouraging whites to band together and stave off the detrimental effects of interacting with biologically and culturally impaired stocks of people. Society is depicted as a battleground occupied by two armies: whites and nonwhites. Promoting pride in being white is a defining ideological strategy that carries with it an intense emotional drama. Hate group members feel better about themselves because they gain a self-esteem boost by joining the movement.

The hate movement secures two important emotional rewards for its followers. The first payoff is an outlet and direction for their anger. The second provision is the experience of communal solidarity that generates feelings of respect, worth, dignity and a sense of importance as carriers of a revolutionary movement that will eradicate social injustice and create a world where whites can live together in harmony.

CONCLUSION

Hate groups carry different ideologies and political agendas, yet, share a common anger directed at minorities. This anger is couched in a discourse that portrays whites as victims of social and economic injustices perpetrated by minorities and their race traitor allies in politics, academia, big business, and the media. Part of this mythology is the romantic portrayal of a pristine historical epoch before the Civil War when the social order sanctified the "natural" inequalities between men and women and minorities and whites. In this

Golden Age, white men ruled other groups, local political bodies governed their communities, bureaucracies were nonexistent, federal power was not invasive, and social life was structured according to a strict ascetic, Protestantism. The most important aspect of this glorification of a racialized version of the "good old days" is the idea that everyone knew his or her station in society, which means dominant groups and subordinate groups were firmly anchored in place. The social changes that followed the end of the Civil War, hate groups contend, disrupted this "natural" balance with devastating consequences for whites.

This essay contends that a social structural approach to the study of emotions is an indispensable tool for understanding human affect. This examination of hate groups offers evidence in favor of the contention that systems of structural inequality *along with* cultural systems of feeling rules and attributions of causality, tend to produce fairly predictable emotional conditions in individuals and groups. The advantages of applying Kemper's (1990) theory is its synthesis of both structural *and* constructionist claims. The need to search for the social forces initiating subaltern primary emotions as well as the more obvious culturally manufactured and publicized secondary emotions is critical. The emotions produced by social inequality play a key part in instigating and regenerating the collective energies of social movement participants domestically as well as abroad.

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ENDNOTE

[1] Recent developments in the fields of psychology and biology suggest the existence of discrete emotions linked to differentiated brain regions and neurotransmitters. These studies provide evidence in favor of the postulate of basic or primary emotions (Damasio 1999; Franks and Smith 1999; Turner 2000; Sloman and Gilbert 1998; Panskepp 1998; Brandstatter and Eliasz 2001; Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone 2001). However, constructionists still make powerful arguments in favor of their position. See Lewis and Haviland-Jones (2000) for an overview of this ongoing exchange.

[2] In this study the designations "hate groups" and "hate movement" are used interchangeably; both terms signify the following groups: the Ku Klux Klan, skinheads, Nazis and neo-Nazis, white supremacists, Christian Identity groups, and the racist militia branches and the Patriot movement. I would like to thank the Political Research Associates for providing me with excerpts from *White Aryan Resistance (WAR)*.