

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

George A. Hendrix for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education presented on June 1, 2004.

Title: A Voice: Lived Experiences of Selected African American Community College Trustees.

Abstract approved _____

Redacted for Privacy _____

The focus of this study is a search for the voice of African American community college trustees as they work to impact the changes community colleges must make over the next quarter century. It examined the lived experiences and perceptions that selected African American community college trustees have of their roles as trustees and the impact they think they are having on the setting of priorities in the governance of their respective colleges. This topic is significant since, arguably, community colleges are the quintessential democratic institutions in society; their doors are open to everyone. In various ways, community colleges are dynamically responding to the demographic changes that are occurring in American society. Among those changes are an increasing number of African American students entering college, especially community colleges, and an increasing number of African Americans becoming community college trustees.

This study found that the elected African American community college trustees who participated in this study are fully integrated into the governance processes of their colleges, but do not think of themselves as being assimilated into

the culture of their boards. They believe that they bring a double consciousness to their roles as trustees and that it allows them to perceive governance issues from the perspectives of insiders who are comfortable with the status quo and from the perspective of outsiders who have been traditionally removed from the locus of institutional power. Participants see themselves as representatives of the interests of their colleges as well as representatives of the interests of groups and individuals who have little or no voice in the affairs of their colleges. Participants are long-time community leaders whose influence extends beyond their colleges into their communities; they see themselves as servant leaders dedicated to working for change in society.

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A Voice: Lived Experiences of Selected African American Community College
Trustees

by
George A. Hendrix

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of

Doctor of Education

Completed June 1, 2004
Commencement June 2005

Doctor of Education dissertation of George A. Hendrix presented on June 1, 2004.

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorized release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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George A. Hendrix, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would never have been undertaken and completed were it not for the love, encouragement, and support of my wife, Odessa, and the guidance, challenging, and patience of my major professor, George Copa. I appreciate and thank both of you for being there for me; I could not have completed this project without your presence.

I also thank the members of my committee, Sam Stern, Mildred Ollee, Calvin Henry, and David Gobeli. Your patience gave me the freedom I needed to stay focused without undue stress. Additionally, I am indebted to Betty Duvall, Director, Community College Leadership Program (CCLP), for accepting me into the CCLP and to the other CCLP instructors and advisors for providing me an enjoyable and worthwhile educational experience.

I salute my fellow students in Cohort 9; you were a delight and inspiration to be around. Of course, this project could not have happened were it not for the graciousness and generosity of the anonymous participants who shared their experiences with me. To them, I extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation project is dedicated to my parents the late George W. Hendrix and Lucy L. Hendrix, my godmother Esther Thompson, my wife Odessa, and my children Reginald, Sonja, and Terence. My parents and godmother taught me to love myself and my family, to believe in God's grace, and to find dignity and fulfillment in the pursuit of knowledge; my wife and children give me the privilege, support, and inspiration to embrace and enjoy life as I experience it without regrets.

A Voice: Lived Experiences of Selected African American Community College Trustees

CHAPTER I -- INTRODUCTION

The governance of public community colleges is a critical public service in America. Over 6500 individuals serve as community college trustees (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001; Smith, Piland, & Boggs, 2001). It is my opinion that community colleges are steadily and surely emerging as the quintessential public institution in America. They annually enroll over 10.4 million students and are promoted by some state and local governments as engines of economic recovery and development (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Community colleges are part of the higher education community in every state except one, and are, in some states, an extension of K-12 and non-academic professional and technical education systems. There are over 1100 public community colleges in America (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Forty-four percent of undergraduate students in America attend community colleges (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001). Community colleges are a primary source of higher education for economically disadvantaged and minority students. They enroll 43% of all African American students in higher education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002).

Community colleges offer a rich selection of education programs ranging from basic literacy to advanced courses in technology, business, and science. In addition to academic programs, they provide professional, technical, retraining, second language, developmental, contract training for business and industry, and hobby and life enrichment programs. Community college programs overlap, supplement, and go beyond what is available at the K-12 and four-year college levels.

As demographics in society are changing, the demographics of students, faculty, administrators, and trustees at community colleges are changing as well. Women and minorities are an ever-increasing presence at community colleges. Attention to diversity and pluralism are high on the agendas of most college leaders, government agencies, and social activist. Approximately 11% of community college students are African Americans and 8%, approximately 520, of the 6500 community college trustees are African Americans (Weisman & Vaughan, 1997).

Discrimination based on race is an enduring presence in American society (Fix & Turner, 1999). Nevertheless, during the past few decades, as the results of political appointments and won elections, the presence of African Americans in trustee roles at community colleges has been on the rise (Vaughan & Weisman, 1997). And, like virtually all newcomers or minority group representatives in an organization, they struggle to have their voices heard. They are outsiders within similar to Collins's "black women with academic credentials who seek to exert the authority [their] status grants" (Collins, 1990, p. 204). Collins (1998) uses the term

“outsider-within to describe social locations or border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power.” (p. 5) Therefore, it would be instructive to community college trustees, college presidents, faculty leaders, students, politicians, social activist, researchers, and constituents of communities served by African American trustees to know more about the perceptions African American trustees have of their lived experiences in their roles as community college trustees.

Focus of Study

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into and understanding of the lived experiences and perceptions of selected African American community college trustees as they work to impact the priorities of their respective colleges. In this study, African American refers to persons who are descendants of enslaved Africans in North America and to persons who grew up in America and identify themselves as African American. Three primary questions were used to guide this study. The questions are: 1) What is the voice of African American community college trustees? 2) How distinct is the voice of African American community college trustees? 3) Do African American community college trustees perceive that their voices are heard? These questions were broadly interpreted to encompass as many nuances of participants’ perceptions as possible. Participants’ perceptions were placed into context as they were revealed and clarified with prompts to enrich the information provided by the respondents.

Voice

Voice is constructively defined as the extent to which persons perceive themselves to be privileged, silenced, muted, or empowered in their roles as

community college trustees (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999, p. 533). For purpose of this study, “voice” is defined as the expressed perceptions, ideas, actions, values, and expectations of the participants in this study speaking as community college trustees. In essence, voice manifests itself as the expressions of feelings, attitudes, and intentions of the participants rather than the literal words used to describe events or situations.

To address the question, what is the voice of African American community college trustees, selected African American trustees were asked to describe their experiences as community college trustees. Particular attention was given to what they thought, said, and did in their roles as trustees. They were encouraged to highlight proposals and initiatives that they had taken to affect the governance and direction of their respective community colleges. Particular attention was paid to how they perceived that their actions are extra-ordinary.

To find the distinct voice of African American community college trustees, the perceptions and experiences of selected trustees were analyzed in terms of prevailing data in the literature about how college trustees do their jobs. Attention was directed toward identifying areas in which the perceptions and actions of the selected African American trustees appear to differ in either degree or kind from the perceptions and actions of their colleagues. To determine whether African American trustees perceive that their voices are heard, they were asked to discuss the influence they have on their boards and to provide examples of how their initiatives are received and responded to by their colleagues, the presidents of their colleges, political and community leaders, students, and others who have an

interest in their colleges. They were also asked to reflect on and describe factors or conditions that help or hinder them from being heard in their roles as trustees.

Personal Disclosure

The distribution and exercise of power, whether political, positional, economic, intellectual, moral or any other form of power, has long been of interest to me. I am continuously amazed at how individuals protect their power and use it to pursue ends they perceive to be important. I find the exercise of power or influence in groups of nominal equals who conduct their affairs within the constraints of democratic principles quite fascinating, especially if the group is subject to public scrutiny. I am equally intrigued by the way outsiders such as women, African Americans, Asians, Latinas and Latinos, and Native Americans negotiate the power dynamics of a group when they are in a distinct minority.

I am an African American male who grew up in California and witnessed profound social changes occur in America and the world after 1960. My formal education is in public administration, business administration, and education administration. Most of my work-life has been spent as a middle manager in a government agency where I drafted and interpreted the subtleties of management policies and as a small business owner where I made or approved all critical decisions. My work experience in education has been as an instructor of supervisory and management courses at a community college.

Over the years, I have served on a number of church, nonprofit, and community organization boards as well as on professional society and association committees and civic committees, commissions, and task forces. In most of these

situations, I have been the sole African American on the board, committee, or commission. At times, I have struggled to be heard or to have my ideas or opinions taken seriously.

On occasions, I have observed ideas proffered by “outsiders” initially rejected by a body only to be restated and overwhelmingly adopted by that same body after being presented by a member of the dominant group with no credit given to the originator of the idea. In other instances, I have seen a work group appear to embrace the initial idea of an outsider, then, subvert the substance of the idea leaving only its form. Therefore, my personal experiences and observations have led me to believe that the lived experiences of individuals who are not part of the dominant group, though in a nominally equal role, is distinctively different in kind and degree than the experiences of the dominant group.

Until quite recently, I was totally comfortable with a Cartesian reductionist view of things. However, my perceptions of reality have evolved and my personal epistemology best fits within an interpretivist framework. I have adopted the constructs of phenomenology to help me understand my own lived experiences as well as the lived experiences of others as they are shared with me. I approached this study within the epistemological paradigm of an interpretivist and applied the principles of phenomenological research to the data gathering, analysis, and synthesis processes.

I chose a phenomenological approach to this study because it permitted me to gather data without being bound by theories and preconceived notions of what I

would find. A phenomenological methodology supports an investigation and description of phenomena as perceived by individuals from their individual perspectives.

Significance of the Study

Community college governance is critical to the health and prosperity of American society. However, little is known about community college trustees as a whole and virtually nothing is known about African American trustees. Therefore, as community college demographics, like those of society in general, become more diverse and the number of African American trustees increase, bringing their cultural experiences into the community college governance community, it is important that more becomes known about the perspectives of African American trustees. This study adds to the limited existing literature pertaining to community college trustees and specifically contributes to filling the literature gap pertaining to African American trustees.

Arguably, community colleges have emerged as the most significant secular, social institution in society. They are profoundly impacting the lives of more adults than any other social institution, especially members of minority groups. As college attendance rises, the numbers of minorities attending college also rises. Approximately half of all minorities attending college attend community colleges (U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

The 2000 U.S. census indicates that the demographics of America are rapidly changing. African Americans and other minority groups are increasingly becoming a larger proportion of the population. Individuals from minority groups

are also increasingly moving into leadership roles in society. African Americans are visible as presidents, trustees, and state level administrators in community college governance; however, the overall number of African Americans involved in governance is relatively small. Nevertheless, their presence is quite significant when viewed from a historical perspective and consideration is given to demographic implications for the future.

The current presence of African Americans along with increasing numbers of women and other minorities on college boards of trustees reflects major changes occurring in both higher education and society in general. Changes in the composition of boards are occurring at a time when state and local political governments are recognizing the importance of community colleges, the democratization of higher education is becoming more of a reality, and community colleges are moving to establish new working relationships with businesses and other institutions.

As the presence of African Americans students, faculty, and administrators become more and more an important part of the fabric of community colleges and governing boards become more assertive participants in the governance of community colleges, the need for cultural understanding and appreciation emerges as an important factor in the community college governance process. African American trustees have the potential to bring a diverse and dynamic perspective to the process of setting priorities, developing plans to meet priorities, and giving overall governance to their colleges. This is particularly important when one takes

into account how the demographic, technological, fiscal, and political landscapes are changing regarding higher education.

Smith, Piland, and Boggs (2001) found that trustees believe that their two main constituents are the communities they serve and the students attending their colleges. There is no evidence that African American trustees do not share these perspectives regarding who their principal constituents are. However, because they bring the experience of an African American, an outsider, to their trustee role, they also bring a perspective that redefines the meanings of community and students to include those who have not always been fully considered in actions taken by their colleges. Community not only means everyone in the district, but those who feel that their interests are not always considered; students mean both traditional students who are fully prepared to enter programs in higher education as well as current and potential students who need special accommodations for them to enter higher education and be successful. This expanded perspective of constituent is a significant influence on the way participants in this study see their responsibilities.

CHAPTER II -- REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of studies have been conducted to determine the demographic profiles and perceptions of community college trustees on various aspects of community college governance (Chait, Holland, & Taylor, 1993; Petty, 1985; Smith et al., 2001; Vaughan & Weisman, 1997; Whitmore, 1987). These studies reveal that the demographic characteristics of community college trustees are changing. Vaughan and Weisman (1997) report that 33% of trustees are women and 13% are minorities (8% are African Americans). Existing studies provide information about who serves on community college boards, what their priorities are, and how they go about doing their jobs. However, none of them speak to the differentiated presence of African American trustees. For example, in 2001, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) published a study conducted by Smith, Piland, and Boggs (2001) that surveyed all ACCT members. The study looked at the political aspects of community college trusteeship arrayed around factors of age, gender, political affiliation, and whether the trustees were appointed or elected to their positions. This study, like most studies pertaining to community college trustees, was silent on race. Therefore, one can assume that the values and attitudes of African American trustees are not material when profiling trustees, that an oversight occurred, or that the study had to be limited in its scope. The literature review for this study revealed virtually no published information about African Americans in community college governance.

The focus of the literature review was in the areas of community college boards, African Americans leadership, cultural dissonance of African Americans in society, and non-profit boards. General leadership, feminist, and African American history literature were also examined. Most literature pertaining to community colleges is prescriptive or speculative about how boards ought to conduct their affairs or relate to the college chief executive officer or others with a stake in the college. Empirical studies of how community college trustee boards actually operate or the involvement of African Americans in the affairs of community college boards are missing.

I examined available literature that dealt with four-year and community college trustee boards. This literature provided an overview of the nature of governing boards in higher education. It described how community college governing boards are authorized, configured, and constituted. I looked at who serves as community college trustees, what they do, and the many ways they can go about doing what they do. Particular attention was given to the way trustees participate in the process of setting the agenda for their colleges and how they relate to their colleges' constituents, especially minority constituents.

Literature pertaining to African Americans in community college governance is not available. Information about African Americans in community college governance consists primarily of biographic sketches and news releases about individuals. These biographic sketches and news releases provide limited insight into the backgrounds and general orientations of African American community college trustees. They do not provide information about the

experiences of African Americans as trustees or how their presence on their boards has impacted their colleges or their communities. Information about African American trustees at four-year colleges and universities is also too insufficient to be of much help in understanding what it is like to be a governor in higher education.

I read both popular and professional literature to get a sense of the currently prevailing attitudes and perspectives shared by African Americans on issues under general discussion or study in society today. This literature reveals that in general, African Americans feel a distinct separation from mainstream culture. This separation is best illustrated in the choice or rejection of popular entertainment programs by African Americans in contrast to non-African Americans and in attitudes about political and judicial decisions that allocate resources or criminalize behavior. This literature provided insight into the cultural dissonance of African Americans in society today and lent strength to my ability to understand and appreciate nuances in some of the comments made by participants in this study. This literature brought me closer to the epistemological uniqueness of African Americans and the current and historical dynamics of society that effects the relationships between African Americans and non-African Americans when dealing with substantive matters.

Non-profit board leadership, general leadership, African American leadership, and feminist literature helped me understand the many dimensions associated with being an African American community college trustee. Participants in this study serve on non-profit organization board, are leaders as

opposed to managers or administrators, are African American leaders both on and off their boards, and share the status of outsider similar to that of women in leadership roles. Standpoint theory (Neilsen, 1990) used in examining feminist issues, especially power related issues, helped me appreciate where participants in this study are located in their roles as trustees. Standpoint theory is characterized as:

...standpoint epistemology begins with the idea that less powerful members of society have the potential for a more complete view of social reality than others, precisely because of their disadvantaged positions. That is, in order to survive (socially and sometimes even physically), subordinate persons are attuned to or attentive to the perspective of the dominant class (for example, white, male, wealthy) as well as their own. This awareness gives them the potential for what Annas (1978) called "double vision" or double consciousness-knowledge, awareness of and sensitivity to both the dominant world view of the society and their own minority (for example female, black, poor) perspective. (p. 11)

Community College Boards

The governance of institutions of higher education has not always been in the hands of governing boards. During the emerging years of colleges and universities in the United States, faculty and clergy governed colleges and universities. Not until the Supreme Court ruled in 1819, in the Dartmouth College case, that higher education institutions could function as private corporations did lay boards of governors begin to come into being (Vaughan & Weisman, 1997). The governing boards of private colleges and universities differ from the boards of public institutions in the way they are organized and tenured; generally, private institution boards fill their own vacancies whereas vacant positions on governing boards of public institutions are filled by political appointment or election to

public office (Smith et al., 2001). The configuration of community college governing boards is different in every state (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Smith, 2000; Vaughn & Weisman, 1997).

Community college trustee boards hold in trust the assets of their institutions, establish policies for their institutions, select the chief executive officer of their institutions, and perform any other duties required by their colleges' charters or laws. Smith (2000) states that effective trustee boards:

[A]ct as a unit; represent the common good; set policy direction; employ, support, and evaluate the chief executive officer; monitor institutional performance; create a positive climate; support and advocate the interests of the institution; and lead as thoughtful, educated team. (p. 17)

Based on the above outline of trustee responsibilities, their focus is the institution. However, Vaughn and Weisman (1997) found that every trustee that they interviewed stated that he or she works for and are responsible to the people of their districts. Trustees are committed to advancing the mission of their colleges on behalf of the constituents of their districts, including students.

Piland reported in Cohen (1994) that Drake (1977) had found that the demographics of community college boards of trustees were changing, but not much, and that 5% of trustees were black (Cohen, 1994). In 1997, Whitmore reported that 7% of trustees were black and by 1997, Vaughn and Weisman reported that the percentage of Black trustees had reached 7.9% of all community college trustees (Weisman & Vaughan, 1997; Whitmore, 1987).

In recent years the issue of diversity among community college trustees has entered debate concerning the best characteristics that should be found among

trustees. Historically, community college trustees have been mostly white males drawn from the business and professional classes. Piland reports that in a study conducted in 1967, the Educational Testing Service found that the profile of trustees was male, 50-65 years of age, white, well educated, financially well off, moderate Republican, and business executive or professional (Piland, 1994). Smith et al. (2001) reported the following profile for community college trustees: if appointed they are 68% male, 64% over 55 years of age, 73% on a board less than 10 years, 47% Democrat, and 39% politically moderate; if elected to their position they are 65% male, 66% over 55 years of age, 64% less than 10 years on a board, 52% Republican, and 38% politically moderate.

The Political Nature of Community College Trusteeship prepared by Smith et al., (2001) and published by the Association of Community College Trustees was designed to investigate the political aspects of community college trusteeship. The study examined differences between trustees who were appointed to their positions and trustees who were elected to their positions. The following six research questions guided the study:

1. What political factors and influences motivate trustees to seek election or appointment?
2. What political support did trustees need and use to get elected or appointed?
3. How do trustees communicate and advocate with politicians and governmental officials on community college issues?
4. What are the political backgrounds and ambitions of the trustees?

5. What are the attitudes about the use of political influence?
6. Are there differences based on trustee characteristics and between elected and appointed trustees?

This study built on the work of Petty and Piland (1985), Whitmore (1987), Stevens and Piland (1997), and Vaughn and Weisman (1997). It provides an up-to-date demographic profile of community college trustees. All community college trustees that were members of the Association of Community College Trustees as well as trustees who were not members were included as respondents in the study. Age and gender were used as denominating factors; race and ethnicity were not. Therefore, nothing was discretely revealed about the 13% minority trustees.

The introduction to this study cites changing fiscal and state government control as factors having the greatest impact on the governance of community colleges today, both external factors. Neither this study, nor any other studies of community college trustees actually connect trustees to social actions, trends, and changes that are occurring in society, such as immigration, urbanization, and integration. The study is not helpful in providing insight into what trustees think.

The researchers found that there were differences across sub-groups and within sub-groups on the principal questions that guided the study, but that the respondents in each group were more alike than different. They looked at differences along age and gender lines, but not along ethnic, racial, urban, or rural lines.

African Americans in Community College Governance

Literature is virtually silent on African American community college trustees. Besides knowing that they constitute approximately 8% of all trustees, very little else is known about them (Vaughn & Weisman, 1997). The president of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) said (private conversation with Taylor, Seattle, WA, April, 2002) that data pertaining to the race or ethnicity of community college trustees is only voluntarily collected by the ACCT. Therefore, precise information is difficult to obtain. Information about African American trustees at four-year colleges and universities is equally scarce. Therefore, proxy information about African American leaders in other fields and about women and minorities in leadership positions was instructive.

Cultural Dissonance of African Americans in Society

It is my observation that despite the integral involvement of African Americans in the shaping of American's institutions and culture the past 400 years, as a community, they are marginalized to the periphery of the mainstream social, economic, and political order. In America's multicultural-multiracial society, African Americans stand out as a distinctly distinguishable minority group that has not been assimilated into the mainstream. Their perceptions about social, judicial, and political phenomena are often at odds with those of white Americans, such as affirmative action, the verdict of the O. J. Simpson trial, and the political party of choice. Due to their together-but-different historical experiences, African Americans view and react to many issues differently than white Americans.

In an unpublished dissertation study of African American women in leadership positions entitled: *The Leadership of American Women: Constructing Realities, Shifting Paradigms* (1996), Gostnell found that African American women bring a unique perspective to their jobs. They experience and perceive themselves as “outsiders” and circumspectly act to transcend the gulfs between themselves and those with whom they relate. This study captures lived experiences of African American women institutional leaders in different situations. In a limited way, their experiences as African American leaders may be used as a proxy for an assumed cultural dissonance of African American community college trustees.

Gostnell crystallizes and highlights factors that help African American women cope with being “outsiders within.” She found, among the African American women included in her study, that resilience, supportive adults and communities, healthy construction of self, having mentors, friends, and a spiritual life are keys to their success (Gostnell, 1996).

Whether elected or appointed, trustees of public community colleges are political leaders. West (1993), a scholar in African American studies at Princeton University, states that African American political leaders fall into three categories: race-effacing managerial leaders, race-identifying protest leaders, and race-transcending prophetic leaders. He states that the race-effacing managerial leader, “...survives on sheer political savvy and thrives on personal diplomacy” (p. 59). If this is true, African American community college trustees are likely to be adept at finding seams of consensus to promote their agendas.

In the preface of her book on feminism, hooks (1984) sets the stage by describing how African Americans she knew in a small town in Kentucky saw things in their segregated community. She stated that: "We looked both from the outside in and from the inside out. We focused our attention on the center as well as on the margin. We understood both " (p. i). This characterization of African Americans in a small town may well apply to African Americans in nominal positions of power where they are in a distinct minority. hooks (1984) states that: "To be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body " (p. i).

Collins (1990) states that, "Black women with academic credentials who seek to exert the authority that our status grants us to propose new knowledge claims about African-American women face pressures to use our authority to help legitimate a system that devalues and excludes the majority of Black women" (p. 204). Of course she is talking about African American female academics, but presumably, the same kind of conflicting pressures are experienced by African Americans in other leadership roles, including that of college trustee. Collins (1998) explains this predicament by saying:

...I chose the term outsider within to describe the location of people who no longer belong to any one group. Initially, I used the term to describe individuals who found themselves in marginal locations between groups of varying power. ...More recently, I have deployed the term outsider-within to describe social locations or border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power. (p. 5)

Conventional wisdom suggests that the relative socio-economic status of African Americans in society would put them at a disadvantage when serving in most institutional leadership positions. However, such a view point does not take

into account the established protocols for operating in the institution, changes in laws and attitudes regarding African Americans in recent years, or the background and power base of the African American in a leadership position. African Americans in leadership roles occupy a unique position in society and they govern themselves accordingly.

Summary of Related Literature

The Smith, Piland and Boggs (2001) study was a good and useful contribution to the literature in the area of community college governance. It establishes a baseline for assessing and analyzing the behavior of community college boards of trustees. It also provides a framework for further study of the culture and behavior of community college trustees as individuals and as sub-groups. This study included gender and age as factors, but did not include race. Considering the significance of race as a differentiating factor in American culture, it is instructive to know as much as possible about how the attitudes and behaviors of African American trustees are distinctive. This dissertation study serves as a starting point for the exploration and understanding of African American community college trustees' perceptions.

A survey was used to gather data from respondents in the Smith, et. al. (2001) survey. Whereas good macro data was obtained about trustees, it failed to connect on a personal level with respondents. One only learns about characteristics such as age, profession, gender and how they feel about specific issues; one does not learn much about who trustees are and how they feel about what they do. So, my study was designed to gather data directly from selected trustees through

personal interviews. Specific information about the participating trustees was gathered directly from them and used as the basis for getting to know who they are and what they feel. Findings of my study can be used to augment the demographic data obtained from the Smith study.

Little literature pertaining to African American community college trustees was found. I had to make deductions and interpolations from literature about community college trustees in general in order to frame this study of African American community college trustees.

Gostnell's (1996) study highlighted the fact that conventional perspectives of reality do not fully include the thinking and motivations of "outsiders" and that the more one understands what others know and believe, the more likely constructive relationships can be forged. This study underscores the importance of sensitivity and connectedness between researcher and respondent. It provides background for interpreting and understanding data that is provided by subjects in my study. It illustrates how one can go about obtaining and analyzing interview data. My study, like the Gostnell study, was designed to generate insights and understanding of a selected group of "outsiders within" who perceived themselves to have obligations, responsibilities, and priorities that go beyond those of their fellow trustees.

The Gostnell (1996) study underscored the importance of grounding myself in literature that related to the epistemology of the participants in this study, so that I could capture and appreciate the nuances of the information they provided and, in turn, be able to accurately and authentically convey them in my reporting. Because

the design of my study took me into direct contact with my subjects, I, like Gostnell, took care to make myself comfortably and confidently acceptable to the participants in my study. In part, this was done by learning as much as possible about the participants and their colleges before contacting them to participate in the study and by becoming acquainted with the participants before engaging them in the data gathering interviews.

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into and understanding of the voices of selected African American community college trustees as they work to impact the governance process of their respective colleges. A collateral purpose was to add to the literature pertaining to community college governance. This study was designed to capture, crystallize, and analyze the lived experiences and perceptions of selected African American community college trustees as those experiences and perceptions are understood by the participants in their roles as community colleges trustees.

This will be a qualitative study within the phenomenological tradition. Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that reality is constructed by individuals in the form of meanings and interpretations, and that these constructions are transitory and situational (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999). In contrast to quantitative research, which tends to have an external, experimental, empirical, and statistical focus, qualitative research tends to take an inner perspective, looks for understanding, describes multiple realities, and presents itself narratively rather than with numbers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

Van Manen (1990) characterizes phenomenological research as:

- The study of lived experience.
- The explication of phenomena as they present themselves to consciousness.
- The study of essences.
- The description of the experiential meaning we live as we live them.

- The human scientific study of phenomena.
- The attentive practice of thoughtfulness.
- A search for what it means to be human.
- A poetizing activity.

Essentially, phenomenology is a philosophy articulated by Husserl that provides a cognitive construct that is juxtaposed to the Cartesian paradigm of empirical reality (Hammond, Howarth, & Keat, 1991). Phenomenology provides a paradigm for understanding how reality is experienced and provides a framework for cataloging and analyzing lived experiences (Sokolowski, 2000). According to Schwandt (1997):

...phenomenology is a complex, multifaceted philosophy that: includes the transcendental phenomenology of Edmund Husserl (1908-1961), the existential forms of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), and the hermeneutic phenomenology of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Existential phenomenology is “orientated toward describing the experience of everyday life as it is internalized in the subjective consciousness of individuals” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 115).

This was a phenomenological study. Key concepts associated with phenomenological inquiry are lived experience, bracketing, understanding, subjectivity, intentionality, parts and wholes, manifolds, voice, and presence and absence (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Phenomenology provides a framework for searching for meaning in the normal thoughts and actions of individuals and groups. Participants were encouraged to recall, describe in depth, and reflect on their experiences as community college trustees. Principal questions addressed in this study are:

1. What is the voice of African American community college trustees?

2. How distinct is the voice of African American community college trustees?
3. Do African American community college trustees perceive that their voices are heard?

Voice is constructively defined as the extent to which African American trustees perceive themselves to be privileged, silenced, muted, or empowered in their roles as community college trustees (Gall et al., p. 533).

Assumptions

The principal assumptions associated with this study are:

- Participants have a catalog of memories that are unique and worth sharing.
- The memories of participants can be translated into reality for others to share and learn from.
- I will be able to capture the reality of the participants and present it with rational meaning.
- Decisions and actions taken by community college boards of trustees are among the most critical actions taken at a community college.
- There are differences of perspective based on their lived experiences between Black Americans and non-Black Americans.
- Phenomenology provides a philosophical and methodological framework for examining and reporting on lived experiences.
- Participants in this study will honestly share information about their experiences as community college trustees.

Data Needed

Data needed to complete this study consist of first person accounts from respondents of their experiences and perceptions as community college trustees and demographic and life experience information about each study participant. Additionally, due to the complexity and non-standardized way community college governance manifests itself, data about the community college governance process was also assembled as a reference for analyzing and interpreting data gathered from participants.

The governance system of community colleges in America is unique to each state (Smith et al., 2001). Minimal or standardized qualification criteria do not exist for community college trustees. The 6500 members of community college governing boards are a diverse group; however, most are white, male, business and professional leaders in their communities. Eight percent of community college trustees are African Americans (Vaughn & Weisman, 1997). Trustees are either elected or appointed to their positions. The scope of authority and responsibility of community college governing boards varies from state to state. In some states, local community college governing boards are limited to implementing budgetary and administrative policies set by state-level-community college governing boards. In other states, local community college governing boards have full responsibility and authority for establishing budgetary, administrative, and operations policies for their institutions (Smith, 2000). Individuals appointed or elected to a community college governing board, whether at the state or local level, are considered community college trustees.

Official service as a community college trustee is a periodic-endavor; it occurs only when the governing board on which one serves is in session or when the governing board directs a trustee to act in her or his capacity as a trustee, such as on a committee or as a representative of the board. Therefore, trustees selected to participate in this study were contacted and interviewed at locations away from their institutions and outside the scope of their official duties. Initial, in-depth, private, face to face interviews were conducted in locations chosen by participants; follow-up interviews were conducted by telephone.

Study Participants

Five African American community college trustees were selected to participate in this study. Participants were identified from information obtained from individuals who know African American community college trustees and could make recommendations as to who would be good prospects for the study, a review of public information about African American trustees, and personal contacts with potential participants at American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) conventions. Participants were selected based on their experience as a community college trustee, the size and organizational structure of their college, the geographical location of their college, and their willingness and availability to participate in the study. Potential selectees were informally asked whether they were willing and available to participate in the study before they were formally invited to participate. Final selectees were experienced African American trustees who also had extensive leadership backgrounds in other organizations and were

distinguished enough in the African American community college trustee community to be recommended by people who know them to participate in this kind of study.

Before participants were identified and selected, I acquainted myself with information about the potential participants and the governance frameworks of the community colleges in which they serve. To better acquaint myself with the pool of African American trustees, I informed myself about community college trustees in general by reviewing literature about community college trustees and by attending community college board meetings, and a regional conference of the ACCT where I met and talked to community college trustees from throughout the country.

Data Collection Procedures

I was the primary instrument used in this study; I collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data. I used a semi-structured, open-ended questioning process to interview participants. I met face to face with each participant for an initial in-depth interview and used a telephone follow-up to authenticate the data I had recorded and personally transcribed. Prior to the initial interview, each participant was provided a set of questions to stimulate their thinking about their experience as a trustee and to help them prepare for the interview. To facilitate the in-depth interview process within the phenomenology tradition, I encouraged participants to talk as broadly and in as much depth as they chose on aspects of their trustee experience that they thought was important. The questions in Appendix A were used to stimulate reflection and to help me make sure they covered areas of

concern to me. I collected personal demographic data about participants in an incidental way throughout the interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

Each initial in-depth interview was tape-recorded; follow-up telephone contacts were not recorded. I made notes during all the interviews, immediately following the interviews, and while transcribing the tapes of the in-depth interviews. Participants were asked, but not required to provide me or refer me to written comments or other material that they thought would supplement the interviews. I personally transcribed the interview tapes as a means of re-experiencing the interviews and to make sure that the nuances of the statements made by the participants were not lost, especially what participants did not say within a particular context. I sorted similar participant comments into the same categories. The content of each category was analyzed for individual meaning and interrelationships and sorted into concrete thematic categories. Data from the concrete thematic categories were synthesized into a few dominant thematic categories that reveal the participants perceptions of their lived experiences as community college trustees.

This research was designed to capture the voices of a select group of African American community college trustees; therefore, the findings of this study serve only as an example of the voices of African American trustees. However, these findings can serve as a building block in the development of a body of knowledge that pertains directly to the perceptions, intentions, attitudes, and decision-making motivations of African American community college trustees.

Trustworthiness

Various methods can be used to establish the trustworthiness of findings in a qualitative research study. Trustworthiness answers the question, "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audience that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p.301) Trustworthiness satisfies the concerns of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The principal method used to determine trustworthiness of data in this study was member checking; triangulation was also employed in a limited way.

Member checking is the process of having study participants verify and interpret the data that they provide (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Follow-up telephone interview contacts were made with participants to verify the accuracy of data collected during the initial interview and to clarify nuances of that data if necessary. Unlike quantitative inquiry that depends on external validation, qualitative inquiry is case-context and case-dynamic sensitive and depends on thick description to make it transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Triangulation is the process of obtaining and analyzing data from different sources or in different ways (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) in order to authenticate findings. In addition to obtaining data in the same areas from the participants in this study, I also talked to individuals who are acquainted with the participants professionally and personally to get a deeper sense of the participants' character

and veracity. Data gathered from sources other than the participants helped me understand the contexts in which participants operate and who the participants are. It confirmed the perception that the participants are leaders among their colleagues and in their communities and are dedicated to promoting change at their colleges.

To address the transferability concern, thick description of the participants' were used. Thick description is characterized as the presentation of research findings in such a way that others looking at similar cases can make inductive comparative judgments about her or his findings relative to what has been found in similar cases (Patton, 1990). By working with participants to individually authenticate the data that he or she provided and by finding similar patterns in the data across the group of participants, I was able to identify themes that reflect common perceptions of the participants. These themes are presented in chapter four.

Strategies for Protection of Human Subjects

Prior to interviewing participants in the study, I explained to each participant, verbally and in writing, the objective and scope of the study, the timetable for the study, the expected commitment of the participant, and the data collection and authentication process. Participants executed the Oregon State University Informed Consent Document before the formal research process began and agreed to fully cooperate in providing the necessary data (see Appendix B).

Period of Study

The data gathering process began in March 2003 with phone calls to participants to reconfirm their willingness and availability to participate in the

study, to advise them of the requirement that they must sign an informed consent form prior to the actual interviews commencing, and to schedule mutually agreed upon times to meet for the interviews. Participants were provided the informed consent form and the questions contained in Appendix A, *Interview Questions* with the explanation that the questions represented the general areas to be explored during the initial interview. The data gathering process concluded in July 2003. The data analysis process began concurrent with the first interview and lasted throughout the write-up of the findings.

CHAPTER IV -- PRESENTATION OF FINDING

This chapter presents the distilled reflections of participants in this study around issues that provide insight into their lived experiences, feelings, and perceptions associated with being African American elected community college trustees. This chapter is organized into three sections. Section one, serves as an introduction and does the following: (1) gives an overview of findings, (2) defines voice for the purpose of this study, (3) describes the data gathering process, (4) locates participants in a historical context, (5) profiles the participants, (6) presents a framework for analysis and understanding, and (8) ends with a section summary. Section two, Findings, has two subsections: (1) response to principal research questions, and (2) description of overarching themes. The subsection, principal research questions, has four parts: (1) What is the voice of African American trustees? (2) How distinctive is the voice of African American community college trustees? (3) Do African American community college trustees perceive that their voices are heard? and (4) subsection summary. The subsection, overarching themes, is divided into five parts, each relating to one of the themes: (1) integrated, but not assimilated, (2) bringing a double consciousness, (3) representing the marginalized, (4) leadership and service, and (5) subsection summary. Section three is the chapter summary.

Overview of Findings

As experienced community leaders and civic activist, participants in this study believe that they impact the governance dynamics of their respective college

districts and bring a transformative presence to the state and national community college organizations that they also serve. Their presence on community college boards, an atypical and recent phenomenon, symbolizes the racial integration of American institutions at the highest level and represents multi-cultural, policy level leadership in higher education. Participants' involvement at the governance level of community colleges reinforces the perception of the community college as a higher education institution that accommodates people of all races, cultures, social classes, and economic statuses and gives testimony to the democratic and equalitarian ideals of America. Participants feel that their presence on community college trustee boards provides representation for African Americans and others who think that they are marginalized and without voice in the affairs of their community college. Participants symbolize an evolving and transforming society in which the needs and aspirations of everyone is represented, protected, and promoted. They believe that their leadership perspectives and insights challenge traditions and the status quo at their institutions and opens dialogue among all stakeholders, leading to institutional change.

Voice Restated

For purposes of this study, "voice" is defined as the expressed perceptions, ideas, actions, values, and expectations of the participants in this study speaking as community college trustees. In essence, voice manifests itself as the expressions of feelings, attitudes, and intentions of the participants rather than the literal verbiage used to describe events or situations. Participants' voices originate within and emanate from the African American primary reference group,

descendants of enslaved Africans in North America, which encumbers participants with a double consciousness, the capacity to sense issues from the perspective of an outsider as well as from the perspective of an insider –the sense of experiencing two conflicting forces or realities that manifest themselves incompatibly at times, when perceiving and acting upon issues. Due to unique social, legal, and economic historical circumstances, the internal socialization of African Americans is different than that of Americans whose collective memory does not include the legacy of slavery and racial segregation. African Americans fully share, think, and act out of the normative values and beliefs that deeply permeate the norms of American culture, such as freedom, justice, equality, and merit.

Collecting Data

In this study, I set out to hear, record, and understand the voice of African American community college trustees by listening to five of them share their lived experiences through interviews. Consistent with a phenomenological research approach, I sought to obtain their reflections on their experiences as trustees. van Manen (1990, p. 62) states that the objective of phenomenological research is to “borrow” other people’s experiences. I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with each of the study participants. The interviews were guided by a set of open-ended questions (see Appendix A) designed to help participants reflect on and share their thoughts, feeling, and memories associated with being African American community college trustees and to call attention to matters that they think are important when viewed from the vantage point of being a community college trustee elected from a marginalized group in society. This approach

maximized the freedom participants had to reflect on their experiences and afforded me flexibility in managing the interviews (Merriam (1998). "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning that they made of that experience" (Seidman, 1998, p. 3). I initially interviewed each participant face-to-face; these interviews lasted from one-and-a half to almost three hours and were audio tape recorded. The face-to-face interviews were follow-up by telephone conversations. I interviewed one participant in my hotel room, one in his home, one in a restaurant, and two in their offices. During and immediately following the interviews and while transcribing the interview tapes, I made notes to help me recall the context of particular comments, including the nuances of the language and gestures used by participants when they said certain things, and my contemporaneous reaction to or understanding of what they said or left un-said. During second contacts, accuracy of data was verified with participants. To help me be more comfortable in my interpretation of the attitudes of the participants and the data they shared with me, I informally talked to persons acquainted with each participant to get their perceptions of the participants' personalities and general behaviors.

To protect the identities of participants and to maintain confidentiality, the pseudonyms Carol, Peter, Betty, Henry, and Steve are used to refer to the participants. The names of districts, cities, states, unique programs, and other factors that are uniquely linked to a participant have also been changed.

Insuring Soundness

The data for this study was obtained through direct, in-depth, face-to-face interviews with participants, followed by phone interviews. Prior to conducting the interviews, I obtained a great deal of information about the individual participants and their colleges and communities. I also established a rapport with the participants before interviewing them through informal conversations and the identification of mutual interests or acquaintances. I relied on my experience and training as an interviewer to listen carefully to what participants had to say during our encounters. I tape recorded the in-depth interviews and permitted participants to authenticate the transcriptions where there was ambiguity or insufficient data for an interpretation. These steps were taken to assure accurate representation of participants' perceptions and comments and to make sure that the data was trustworthy.

I used a set of questions that participants were permitted to review before we began the in-depth interviews. They were advised that we were going to talk about their perceptions of their experiences as trustees and that the questions were designed to touch on general areas. By semi-structuring the interview process, but giving participants freedom to discuss items of interest and concern to them, I was able to obtain a rich set of data that was generated from each participants frame of reference. Credibility of the data lies in the fact that it came directly from the participants; I only organized it so that it could be understood and interpreted by others. I confirmed the data by transcribing the tapes of the interviews, comparing the transcriptions with my notes, and getting clarification as necessary from

participants. The member checking process was used to establish the trustworthiness of data. The data is rendered in rich description to minimize room for misinterpretation.

By bringing participants into the process of authenticating the data, I learned that participants' perceptions are time and place sensitive. When participants reflect on and relate their experiences as trustees, they look at discrete experiences that sometimes serve as a metaphor for a set of generally related experiences or perceptions. In interpreting and understanding their comments, I had to learn to appreciate their overall attitudes and shorthand ways of making a point.

Gaining Perspective

The presence of African Americans on community college governing boards or on any institutional governing board is a relatively anomalous situation. Therefore, it is important that a contextual framework be provided to facilitate understanding of the findings of this research. Historically, African Americans are a marginalized group in American society (Myrdal, 1944, 1962). Following the Compromise of 1877 that marked the end to the Reconstruction era, African Americans were virtually excluded from elected and appointed office (Walters & Smith, 1999, p. 22). There is no record of African Americans being elected or appointed to community college trustee boards prior to the mid 1970s. This is noteworthy because African Americans have been a significant, albeit marginalized, part of American society since before the founding of the republic. Their status precluded their involvement in institutional leadership roles.

Some statuses, in our society as in others, override all other statuses and have a certain priority. Race is one of those. Members in the Negro race, as socially defined, will override most other status considerations in most other situations; the fact that one is a physician or middle-class or female will not protect one from being treated as a Negro first and any of these other things second. (Becker, 1963, p. 33)

I began this study with the belief that because of the historical social status of African Americans in society and their relatively recent inclusion among the ranks of community college trustees, African American community college trustees would perceive themselves to be outsiders among the ranks of community college trustees, and their fellow trustees would likewise treat them like outsiders, thereby creating a working environment rife with race related tension and profound frustration among African American trustees. I also began this study believing that insights into and understanding of the perceptions, feelings, and contextual realities that underlie the actions of African American trustees as they fulfill their responsibilities as trustees would enhance trust and communications between African American trustees and other trustees and between African American trustees and chief executive officers, community constituents, and special interest groups, such as minorities and labor organizations. I expected to find that African American trustees would be struggling inordinately hard to be heard and to be effective in their districts just because they are African Americans.

I discovered that participants in this study have to struggle to have an impact on their districts, and that they believe that they bring to their boards a perspective and an understanding of issues that are often missing among their fellow trustees, but that they do not see themselves as outsiders whose greatest

challenge is being African American. They think of themselves as well integrated, influential members, even leaders, of their boards. This perspective is significant because it is only since passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that leadership positions in public institutions became open, in a meaningful way, especially elected positions, to African Americans. The small number of African Americans in institutional leadership positions suggests that full integration is still a ways off. African Americans in leadership positions in public institutions, including institutions of higher education, are more often than not the first and only African American to hold that position, rank, or status in that institution. This is particularly true of the position of community college trustee.

It is not clear exactly when the first African American was elected or appointed to a community college board of trustees; however, the earliest account of an African American becoming a trustee of a public higher education institution is in 1975 when Earl Neal was elected president of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. His election made him the first ever African American trustee in the United States (thehistorymakers.com, 2003). This was 75 years after the first public community college was established in 1901 and well after an African American had been elected to the U.S. Senate in modern times, 1966, selected to the President's cabinet, 1966, and appointed to serve as a U. S. Supreme Court Justice, 1967. For sake of perspective, one must appreciate the fact that the first election of an African American community college trustee did not occur until two decades after the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* that desegregated public education in the country,

and a decade after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Civil Rights Act of 1964, document Number; PI 88-352, date; 02Jul64, 88th Congress H.R. 7152) that opened the doors to an integrated American society. By any measure, the presence of African Americans in community college governance positions is a recent phenomenon. So recent, in fact, that three of the five participants in this study are the first African Americans to serve on their boards. They are all part of a newly emerged corps of first generation African American institutional leaders.

Profiles of Participants

Five elected African American community college trustees participated in this study, two women and three men. All five are self-confident, assertative individuals who are readily recognizable as African Americans. When they spoke about themselves, their communities, issues, events, and people, they left no doubt that they identify themselves as African Americans and that their perspectives are rooted in and influenced by their African American experience. Their primary reference group is African American; however, they are totally acculturated and socialized as Americans. Peter said, *"When I took courses at [university], many times, I was the only African American in my courses."* In identifying as an African American, Henry expressed a bit of chagrin when he said, *"The thing that gets me most as an African American trustee is, I don't see enough people who are African American taking advantage of the many opportunities community colleges have to offer."* The other participants were just as unequivocal in making it clear that they identified themselves as African Americans.

Participants were drawn from different college districts in the western United States. They represent single campus and multi-campus districts. They were selected to participate in this study because they are elected to their positions; are experienced community college trustees; come from districts of varying sizes and organizational structures; and represent districts that contrast geographically, demographically, culturally, and economically. To identify study participants, I consulted with a number of attendees at a national convention of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and a regional convention of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT); personal acquaintances; community college administrators; and professional staff at the ACCT.

Additionally, I reviewed literature and information taken from the internet about African American community college trustees and considered recommendations from individuals who knew potential candidates for the study. The final factor was the availability and willingness of an individual to participate in the study.

Collectively, participants represent over 80 years of community college trustee experience. All of them have been elected at least twice to serve on a community college board of trustees. They are all over 50 years of age and all have lived in their communities over 30 years; only one did not grow-up and attend high school in the community college district that he represents. Three of the participants are community college graduates, all attended graduate school, and one has an earned Ph.D. Their careers have been primarily in the public sector; however two of them spent several years managing their own businesses. Public sector positions included university administrator, K-12 administrator, executive

assistant to an elected county official, program administrator in state government reporting to the governor, and supervisor in a county human services agency.

Three served as elected members of elementary school boards before becoming community college trustees. Four have degrees in education and three worked as education administrators. All five are registered Democrats, but made it clear that they do not always support or vote for Democrat candidates. One made a point of lauding a Republican U.S. Senator with whom he has worked by saying, *"I found him to be more caring, more sensitive than others whom you would automatically think would be [caring]."* (Henry) Another said, *"I happen to be a Democrat who has also supported Republicans, so I have a very positive relationship in those circles."* (Steve) He went on to talk about his relationship with a fellow trustee who is a Republican.

Once I got on the board, along with Fox, it turned out that Fox and I became very good friends, life long friends. Fox is a Republican, a hard conservative; I am a Democrat, less conservative. We have become outstanding friends because we don't have any need to have definitions of our communications or relationship. (Steve)

Education at all levels and in all forms has always been high on their personal agendas and the agendas they have for their communities. In reflecting on his attitude about education when in high school, Peter said:

Even when we [he and his siblings] grew up, in high school, our whole goal was to, many guys would get a job, then they would quit school ..., but to us, the job was just a means to an end. The end was getting the college degree. (Peter)

Carol is quite proud of the fact that she attended college even though her parents did not. She believes that education is important. She said:

I have always been very education minded. I've spent a lot of time, energy, and investment with my own daughter as it relates to education, to see to it that she had a real good education. So education is extremely important to me. (Carol)

They aggressively promote the community college both as a social construct that speaks to the equalitarian ideals of American society and as a concrete institution that provides a vital community service. They made it clear that they think community colleges are perhaps the most important educational institution in America today.

I have always had a strong belief in education; and I believe as a community college trustee that community colleges are the door. I have said this on many occasions. I think the community colleges are the Ellis Island of education because we say bring everybody; the door is open to everyone. We really don't care. I think that because of that belief, when we talk in terms of education, in terms of what we do to help make our society better, community colleges are the institutions that do that. (Betty)

Prior to and after becoming community college trustees, participants served in leadership capacities in various community service organizations, such as the Lions Club, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Chamber of Commerce. They feel that their participation in service organizations is an obligation that they have to their communities because they have skills and knowledge that can be put into service for others. They appear to subscribe to the dictum: those who can do, must do. Steve said, *"I think we all feel some kind of responsibility to up the level of enhancement of African Americans, regardless. We all carry that little burden."*

Four of the participants are first generation university graduates who grew up knowing that they would attend college despite the fact that their families had

to struggled financially and that they lived in a society with restricted opportunities for them. Betty said: *"I know what it means to be poor financially, but I was never spiritually poor or needing for love. My grandfather told me, as a girl, get an education so you won't have to worry about anybody having to take care of you."* Peter reflected on how important the goal of college was to him when he was still in high school; he supported himself through high school after being orphaned.

I got a full time night job at the hospital as a janitor while I was going to high school. I also participated in high school football and basketball thinking that I would be able to get a scholarship to the university; I never did, so I had to keep working the job.

Within the African American community, all of the participants had high community profiles before they became community college trustees. They think of themselves as extensions of the African American community and consider their election to community college boards of trustees as both a personal accomplishment and an advancement of the African American community. Participants believe that they bring a duality of perspective to their roles as trustees and that they represent both the interest of their institutions and the aspirations of African Americans. Steve stated, *"I think the most profound difference [between himself and white trustees] is the fact that when I go in as an African American, into a setting, I represent African Americans as well as the institution."* This sentiment was echoed by Betty, she said, *"We have to go above and beyond; we have to make sure more than other people, the dominant culture, that we do things right."*

A summary of the profiles of participants reveals that they are quite similar educationally and generationally. The participants, two women and three men are:

1. Carol, age 50, female, BA degree, trustee six years, three campuses, 30 years community leadership;
2. Peter, age 69, male, PhD degree, trustee 21 years, several campuses, 50 years community leader;
3. Betty, age 58, female, MA degree, trustee 23 years, two campuses, 35 years community leadership;
4. Henry, age 61, male, master's degree, trustee 13 years, three campuses, 35 years community leadership;
5. Steve, age 70, male, 3 master's degrees, trustee 20 years, one campus, 30 years community leadership.

In the personal profiles that follow, some details have been blurred or changed to preserve the anonymity of the participants; however, the substance of the details are accurate as they pertain to an individual.

Carol

Carol is an attractive, mature woman with the voice and manner of a highly independent person. She has been a trustee since 1998, and serves on a seven-member board comprised of four women and three men; two women are African American. The three men are African Americans. She is in her second elected term. This is her first and only elected position; however, she has been active in politics over 30 years. Carol has owned and managed her own business, served as an executive assistant to an elected official, and worked as a executive in the private sector. Her civil rights, political, and community activism extends back to the 1960's when Black consciousness was emerging as a political force. Before

becoming a community college trustee, she was widely known in her community as an involved person.

I am very active in the community. I have 30 plus years as a community political activist. I have a strong orientation toward social justice work. Always, my greatest concern is equity for African Americans. I belong to a number of professional organizations. Currently, I am a member of about five sanctioned democratic clubs. I am on the board of a development corporation in My-City providing developmental opportunities around housing for the more marginalized communities in My-City. I am a member of the Women's League of Voters; I am a member of a number of female groups, NOW, just a number of organizations. I am affiliated with well over 20 different kinds of organizations. I have lived in this area all of my life. (Carol)

A chancellor oversees her four-campus, urban district that is highly diverse racially, ethnically, culturally, and economically.

Peter

Peter is a retired university administrator and former elementary school board member. He has a doctorate in higher education administration. Peter grew up and attended community college and university in his district. He has been a community college trustee for 21 years; the first and only African American to serve on his district's five-person board. He is a member of a prominent family in his district and has been involved professionally and culturally in the community virtually all of his life, often being the first or only African American to hold a position in or to participate in previously closed institutional and community activities. For example, he said, *"I was the first [African American] person to get into the His-State Air National Guard."* In addition to being a former elementary school board member, Peter has served on the Executive Council of the Boy Scouts, the Executive Board of the NAACP, and the boards of other local service

organizations. His community college trustee board oversees a large multi-campus district that is headed by a chancellor. The district includes urban, suburban, and rural communities. The population of the district is racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse. Minorities comprise a significant portion of the district's population, but few are African American.

Betty

Betty currently serves as chairperson of her seven-member board of trustees, a position she has held several times during her 23 years as a trustee. She became a community college trustee after serving eight years as an elected elementary school board member. Betty is now the longest serving member on her board; she is one of two African Americans on her board. And until the last election in her district, Betty had been the sole female on her board. She works as an administrator in the local K-12 system. Betty grew up and attended college in her district and is highly regarded for her years of dedicated efforts to improve the educational opportunities of needy students.

It has always been in me to do community service, even as a little girl. I would go around and do things for senior citizens; I would read to them. I have always been community minded. And as a teenager, growing up in the rural area of Her-District, I represented my community because I was a talker.... I was always doing something. (Betty)

A person that knows Betty well told me that she is considered to be a good-hearted person who is genuinely concerned about the welfare of the poor and disadvantaged people in her district regardless of who they are. A commitment to service came through quite strong during my interviews with her. She is passionate about the importance of the community college as an institution and feels that it is

the best hope of disadvantaged people. A chancellor oversees her two-campus district that serves both rural and urban communities. The district is racially and ethnically diverse with a high percentage of minorities in it.

Henry

Henry is a businessman, former high-ranking state government manager, and former university center director. He attended high school and college in his district and has a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in administration. He first came on his board to complete the un-expired term of the first African American elected as a trustee after she resigned and moved away. Henry has been elected to the board three times since 1990. He brought to the board a long history of participation in community, civic, and business organizations in addition to several years of senior level work in state government. He described the scope of his community service by saying:

I chair the African American Coalition of Black Men. I have been involved in all kinds of community organizations, the Urban League, the NAACP, you name it in this community. Currently, I chair the African American Chamber of Commerce and I serve on the My-County Soil and Water Conservation District Commission. (Henry)

Henry serves on a seven-member trustee board of a large, three-campus, urban-suburban district that is led by a president. Few minorities live in the district and the African American population is smaller than either the Asian or Hispanic populations.

Steve

Steve is a retired military officer who is also retired from a second career as an administrator in a county human services agency. He has three master's

degrees. Before being elected to serve as a community college trustee in 1982, Steve served two four-year terms on an elementary school board. He did not grow up and go to college in his district, but has lived in his community over 40 years and participates extensively in the civic and business organizations in his district. He is also active in community college associations, veteran's organizations, and professional organizations associated with his second career in human services.

As far as being active in the community is concerned, I suppose I have served in just about every place you can serve. I am currently with the Lions Club. I chair the LFP which is the meals on wheels program; I have been the chair forever. I was previously a member of the community action board. I am with the NAACP; I have service with the League of Women Voters; I am a member of the chamber of commerce, and I have served as commissioner of recreation with the city. Of course I belong to all of the professional organizations that have to do with the military, American Legion, VFW, Disabled Veterans, Near-By Museum, all of these, so I am pretty much spread out all over the community. I have a rather imposing list of current and previous positions in all of those [organizations].

Since I have become a member of the board of trustees, I have also somewhat moved up the ladder with the state and the national [community college] associations. (Steve)

Steve is the longest tenured member of his board and the only, ever, African American member of an eight person board that includes a student trustee. He has served as board chairperson several times. His rural, single campus, community college district is headed by a president and serves a diverse population of Caucasians, Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans. Only a few African Americans live in his district and many of the people in his district have low incomes.

Framework for Analysis and Understanding

The framework for analysis and understanding of the findings of this study are the principal research questions that guided this study and the overarching themes that became evident from participants' reflections. Consistent with a qualitative research approach, the research questions framed the study, but did not delimit it; and the overarching themes provide a more in-depth understanding of the findings. The data reflects the organized perceptions of the participants.

Principal Research Questions

The three principal research questions that guided this study emerged in response to the virtual absence of any information about African Americans involved in institutional governance, particularly governance of community colleges. During the past twenty-five years, the ranks of community college trustees have opened to include African Americans while also increasing the number of women and other minorities who serve as trustees. Information is not available to indicate whether the inclusion of African Americans among the ranks of community college trustees, a relatively recent phenomenon, is making any difference. The principal questions guiding this study are designed to lead to a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of African American community college trustees as they bring their culturally sensitive perspectives into the traditional community college governance paradigm. The questions are:

1. What is the voice of African American community college trustees?
2. How distinct is the voice of African American community college trustees?

3. Do African American community college trustees perceive that their voices are heard?

These questions provided a framework for examining and understanding the experiences of selected African American community college trustees, including how influential and well integrated they are into the governance paradigm of their institutions. These questions served as a framework for getting to know the participants, what they think, and how they see themselves contributing to the governance of their institutions and serving their communities.

Overarching Themes

On deeper analysis of the data, there were four themes that overarched the research questions. These themes provided a second framework for understanding the experiences of African American trustees in this study. The themes speak to the perceptions that participants have of themselves and the conditional milieus that cause them to think and act as they do in their roles as community college trustees.

Participants in this study expressed themselves in similar ways on several issues. This may, in part, be due to a number of similarities in their educational and professional backgrounds and in their personal experiences as community college trustees. Like their fellow elected trustees, they are motivated by a call to service and do so at the pleasure of an electorate. Participants are integrated, but not fully assimilated into the governance processes of their districts and are quite content with their roles as trustees; they express no ambition to serve in a higher elective office. Participants bring a double consciousness to their governance roles

and represent the marginalized. Participants' leadership presence extends beyond their institutions into community college trustee associations and other organizations concerned with community colleges and their communities.

The four overarching themes that emerged from the findings of this study are:

1. *Integrated, but not Assimilated* -- Participants perceive themselves to be fully integrated, including being respected and sharing leadership roles with their fellow trustees, but they do not see themselves as fully assimilated into the normative cultures of their boards. They feel that in some ways they bring a different perspective to their role as a trustee and that their fellow trustees have expectations of them that they do not have of non-African American trustees.
2. *Bringing a Double Consciousness* -- Participants are cognizant of being from a primary reference group culture that is different than that of most of their fellow trustees and that they bring a double consciousness, a sensing of issues from the perspective of an outsider as well as from the perspective of an insider -- experiencing two conflicting forces or realities that manifest themselves incompatibly at times, to their roles as trustees.

[We have] experiences that we have to overcome that trustees who are not of African American decent can't even imagine. So our whole existence, the essence of who we are is predicate on us happening to be born African American so we see the world differently. (Betty)

3. *Representing the Marginalized* -- Participants think of themselves as the representative of the interest of their institutions as well as the representative of the sometimes-disparate interests of African Americans and others presumed by them to be marginalized – operating at the fringe of the locus of power.
4. *Leadership and Service* -- Participants view their service as community college trustees as just one more form of public leadership and service that they feel obligated to render in pursuit of the ideals of democracy, justice, inclusion, and transformation.

The above four themes emerged as most overarching among the findings of this study. They are complex and, in some ways, interrelated. However, it is clear that the experiences and perceptions of the participants are similar and fall easily into these categories. In the next section, I will go into depth in addressing the principal research questions and the overarching themes using comments from the participants.

Findings

This section presents the perceptions of participants in this study as expressed in their own words and organized by me, as well as my interpretation of their perceptions. This section is organized into two frameworks and a section summary. The first framework contains the research questions and participants' responses; the second framework contains the overarching themes and provides deeper insight into the lived experiences of the participants as community college

trustees as reflected in their expressed perceptions, motives, and actions. The last section is a summary of findings.

Principal Research Questions Framework

Virtually nothing is known about African American community college trustees or what they bring to the community college trustee boards on which they sit. Conventional wisdom characterizes African American trustees as different from most other community college trustees who are mostly White, similarly to how women trustees are thought to be different than men trustees. The research questions, predicated on the assumption that African American trustees are, in some ways different than non-African American trustees, establish a framework for pursuing and understanding who African American community college trustees are, at least those who participated in this study, and what major considerations underlie their actions as trustees. Each principal research question will be addressed separately; however taken collectively, they provide insights into and understanding of the phenomenological corporeality, temporality, spatiality, and relationality of the participants lived experiences as community college trustees.

What is the Voice of African American Community College Trustees?

The voice of African American community college trustees as reflected in the observations, perceptions, and experiences of the participants in this study is a comfortable, confident, positive, and at times impatient voice that quietly says, “I *definitely feel empowered as a person that is in the position of developing and creating policy. That is a very enviable position to be in. And the ability to create*

policy brings a lot of opportunity, but it also brings a lot of responsibility"

(Carol). Participants clearly understand their roles as community college trustees and the unique expectations that others, fellow trustees, African Americans, and those who do not have a voice in the governance process have of them. They feel that because they are African American, members of a marginalized group, they are presumed to have the empathy and knowledge to speak for those who have little or no voice. For example, Henry states:

They never go to people who are in zone three or four or whatever, they don't go to them [the representatives from those trustee zones]. They come here. I see it all. Hispanic do it to me, Asians do it to me, definitely African Americans do it, and some whites. [they say] We know you are sensitive; they make the statement in their letters. We know you understand because of your background. I get it all the time. I have asked my colleagues, "Did you get a letter on this?" No. "Did you get a call?" No. (Henry)

Participants are cognizant of the responsibilities of trustee boards and recognize the limitations of trustee board power and authority.

We set the overall policies for the district; and we expect the chancellor, through his staff and so forth, to carry them out. The chancellor will make recommendations to the board on what he feels should be changed or added or new recommendations and things like that. And we, as board members are trustees for the funds of the voters. (Peter)

They are not confused about the role of community colleges in the education delivery system. *"We are a community college and as a community college, we are primarily responsible for providing an education system, be it skills or education, which is most beneficial to our community, where we exist."* (Steve)

Participants have no illusions about their individual power and authority.

"I recognize that my role is as a servant. As a board member, it is to serve, not to be served, not to be in awe with being on the board" (Henry). They think of themselves as consummate team members who must at times challenge the normative values and practices of their institutions.

One of the things I try to remember and tell people is that no matter how we feel or what we think, we all have one vote and everything boils down to that vote. We can disagree and argue and fuss and everything else, but in the final analysis, it comes down to a vote. (Peter)

They feel a responsibility to find subtle, but effective ways to minimize disrupting the harmony of their boards while pressing issues that their primary constituents are concerned about, but are not of high priority for other trustees.

I am expected by brothers and sisters [African Americans] to make some changes that benefit them.... You are under a microscope by your own kind and you are under a microscope by your non-kind, and you have your own notions of what needs to be done. So, I am not saying that maybe somebody else is not experiencing this, but I know darn well that this is the situation for true African Americans. And the true African American recognizes what minority status is all about. It is not a relaxing position. You have to be on your toes. (Steve)

Participants feel pressure to be experts, or at least knowledgeable about social issues.

Sometimes it can be an out right pain (being an African American trustee] because people expect, I don't think it is from a hostile standpoint or negative standpoint, me to have the answers for all other kinds of social issues that affect African American and other people of color. (Henry)

Participants do not believe that their ability to effectively participate in the governance of their institutions is substantively compromised because of racism or negative attitudes in their communities or at their institutions. In fact, Peter states,

"I don't know [whether racism is a factor]. I guess, in this community, to me it has not been that much of a problem. I never felt that [racism]." Perhaps this is partly due to the limitations that open meeting laws impose on the informal personal interactions trustees are permitted to have when not sitting as a board, and the formal meeting protocols that their boards have adopt to give transparency to their deliberations and to create a level field on which to take actions. However, participants acknowledge that racism is present in their communities and at their institutions, but they do not consider racism to be a determining factor in their effectiveness as trustees. From the perspective of the participants, racism is present, but it manifests itself below the surface.

My city is racist. The characteristic of the community is like a hidden agenda. You know it is there, but you have to do what you have to do, so you keep stepping. That is all I can say to that. I can't let it paralyze me. (Betty)

In characterizing the racial climate in which he works as a trustee, Henry stated:

The climate is fairly decent. But that doesn't mean that because we have not had any real rumbles there are no problems. People have a tendency to sit on their laurels. I think we have to be very careful. I tell people racism and the lack of diversity is like oxygen to the body, you don't see it, but if you take it away the body is dead. When you don't have diversity within a college and you pull away and try to make it homogenized, you kill the whole effect that community colleges have on society. (Henry)

Like Henry, Carol does not dwell on racial tensions in her community; she says that on the surface things are good, but could be better.

There is no one community; we are many communities. In this area, you probably have some of the best, at least on the surface, racial relationships that you can have. There are a number of different ethnic groups in the area. So, we are forced to really try to work at developing good relationships among ourselves because we are in such close proximity to

one another. I don't think there are any overt racial tensions that are overwhelming. I think that we can always develop better racial relationships. (Carol)

Steve refused to use the word racism; but the tone of his voice and facial expression left no doubt that he considers racism to be present in his community.

He wryly smiled and said:

I can say right now that a possible majority of the board would just as soon that I was not there, probably a majority of the board if the truth were known would just as soon that I never ever was there You know, our people talk a good game, but the game is not really there. You can take a look over the community and see it. There is a problem that is inherent here. (Steve)

Peter indicated that the classical African American-White racism dichotomy was not visible, but that tensions among minority groups because of race were present.

I think the climate is rather positive in our community. But, I think probably the minorities have some conflicts with each other because they are struggling for the few positions that may be there, the Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. They are all trying to fight for the same thing. (Peter)

Participants express a sense of impotence and frustration when they reflect on how little impact they have on faculty staffing at their colleges, especially as it pertains to African American and minorities.

Personally, I have not been able, we have not been able, to get as many qualified Black faculty as I would like to see. I think we have got, you know, significant numbers of Blacks in the other positions and different things like that, but, the real thing that I would like to see us get is more Black faculty, more so than black presidents and deans. I say that because the faculty has more impact on the students than the president and the deans. They come in direct contact with them [faculty] all the time. So, I would love to see us have another 40, 50, or 100 Black faculty as opposed to another Black president. (Peter)

Faculty staffing is the most frustrating issue that participants discussed with me. They see the low number of African American and minority faculty as a metaphor for their colleges' unwillingness to acknowledge demographic changes in society and to creatively embrace a paradigm of racial inclusiveness.

This college has got to come into the 21st century in the first place. And I don't mean with digital. I am talking about people relationships. It is asinine to sit here and think -- I certainly can't tell you about my great college when I think about the fact that we have been in business for 40 years and we have only hired two fulltime African American faculty.... The major issue of my college is not money; the major issue of my college is personnel.... You need to focus on the idea that you have a deficit in your representation out here at the college and you need to be doing something about it. You need to design something to do something about it. (Steve)

Participants think that the faculty screening processes at their colleges need to be revised. They understand the need for and benefits of a systematic, standardized screening and hiring process. However, they think that at best some of the individuals responsible for faculty hiring are wed to methods that do not provide diverse pools of applicants and at worse take actions designed to discourage qualified African Americans and minority applicants from applying.

In summary, like other trustees, participants understand their responsibilities as trustees and recognize the limits of their power and authority. Participants know where they fit on the governance team at their colleges and clearly distinguish between policy and administrative matters. They feel that racism, unseen for the most part, pervades their work environments, but is not a decisive factor in how they approach their responsibilities as trustees. Participants feel frustrated and powerless in dealing with faculty staffing patterns at their colleges; for them, the virtual absence of African American and minority faculty

represent an inherent weakness in their colleges' ability to effectively deal with the needs of a changing society.

How Distinct Is The Voice of African American Community College Trustees?

The voices of participants in this study resonate constructively and progressively in many ways at their institutions and beyond. Participants' voices are not particularly different from the voices of their fellow trustees in areas of general governance, nor is there evidence that their ethical orientation or attitude about the role of community colleges in society are different than that of their colleagues. However, regarding issues of equity, inclusion, and matters that pertain to African Americans, minorities, students, and others who do not traditionally have much say in the governance of their colleges, their voices are aggressive and clear in both kind and quality. Their assessment of situations and involvement in decisions take into account, overtly, the needs and interest of those presumed to have little power.

We are going back to an elitist society in how we deal with education. We have assumed that education is a right for everybody, but it is not viewed that way in our current society. I think the masses are going to be affected greatly if we [African American trustees] don't stand up and fight hard so the masses can continue to be part of the mainstream. (Henry)

Generally, participants identify with their boards and do not call attention to differences between themselves and their boards, but Steve made it clear that on matters of public accountability and transparency of board operations, he stood apart from his fellow trustees. He wants as much public scrutiny as possible on the deliberations of his board. He stated:

I don't think they [trustee board] are going to do that much to bring themselves out into the open where people can be educated on the system [the college] and what is happening in the system.... There are a few of us out there who want openness. I happen to be one of those. (Steve)

Evidence does not exist to suggest that participants think they should be more deeply involved in administrative matters, however they feel an obligation to call attention to policies, procedures, and decisions made by those in charge that do not serve everyone. For example, Henry stated that:

We only come on the frontline when the policies that we set impact everybody and we have to make sure they are balanced. And when they are questioned, we have to be bold enough to make a stand when we feel they are strong, and when they are weak, be courageous enough to say that we have made a mistake and go back and refocus and change. (Henry)

The issue of equity is ever present in the minds of participants. They feel constrained to speak up for those whose voices are weakest.

I have always promoted classified people. The reason I think I have done that so much is because I know in terms of where we are in all fields, they are the lowest, at the bottom, and I feel that we should always make sure that they have what they need. (Betty)

For me, my orientation is one of always trying to be aware of issues that impact us as African Americans in America, which are usually issues of equity. So, I think that is what is most important for me as an African American trustee, if you will. We are always trying to provide as much equity as we can. (Carol)

Participants feel compelled to align themselves with issues, individuals, and groups that are overlooked by tradition or standard operating procedures. They approach decision-making situations with the question: Where does equity lie? It is important to them that whatever is done at their colleges is inclusive and fair both formatively and substantively.

In summary, the low public profile of community college trustee boards and the collegial way that trustees work together militates against an individual trustee becoming a luminary because of her or his actions. Individual trustees are forced to devise long-term strategies based on principle if they expect to be able to influence their fellow trustees and community constituents and to be effective in their roles. Participants in this study have staked out the role of champion of those with little influence. They see themselves as a voice of African Americans, minorities, students, and those for whom the community college is the only option for an education. Participants call attention to matters that their colleges must address if they are to move forward with inclusive policies and programs.

Do African American Community College Trustees Perceive That Their Voices Are Heard?

Participants do not see the differences that they make as trustees in terms of grand programs or tangible events that can be definitively quantified or directly measured in dollars. They feel that evidence of their presences can be seen over time in the attitudes and behaviors of those associated with their colleges. As team players they are reluctant to claim individual credit for the fruition of proposals or ideas that they have promoted. Nevertheless, they feel that other trustees pay attention to what they have to say and that they influence the actions their boards take.

I think I have made a difference. I speak on behalf of what I feel is needed in our district. I say some of the things people want to say but can't. I am talking in terms of people working in our district as well as our constituents. By virtue of where I sit I have been able to make a difference not only here locally, but having been elected to state wide community college committees, I make a difference there too. (Betty)

A driving objective of participants is to disperse power as broadly as possible. They believe that their influence is felt among students and classified staff, two groups that they feel obliged to bring into the governance process.

I think that the students have felt more empowered; I think classified have felt more empowered; and I think that a team element that we have tried to bring together is becoming more of a reality. (Steve)

In an environment of collegiality where conflict is avoided, if possible, participants see themselves as a salutary force on their respective boards. They present themselves as the locus for compromise and creative problem solving. Participants feel that other trustees and the community rely upon them to bring balance to conflicts when they arise. Henry puts it as follows:

I think I bringing balance and different perspectives. I think the fact that I care and that I am not hung up on status have made a difference. I realize that my role is that of a servant as a board member. (Henry)

Peter believes that one of his greatest contributions to his board is his ability to get other trustees to listen to him and to have confidence in his ability to guide them through difficult situations.

I have made a difference, I think, probably by the visibility of a black person on this board. Because historically, there have been no blacks on the board. I think that maybe some of the contributions that I make are because I try to take a middle of the road approach to most issues rather than going from one extreme to the other. I think people kind-of look to that approach if we have potential controversy and so forth. They want to see how we can resolve the issue with little stress. I have even heard some of them say that I will figure out a way to get us out of a situation. I try to carry myself professionally and conduct myself in a professional, business-like manner. I think that helps the image of the district, the image of African Americans, and the image of people in general. (Peter)

Participants are reluctant to take sole credit or responsibility for things that happen at their colleges. However, when Carol was asked to describe a policy or program that demonstrates her leadership at her college, she stated:

I initiated the concept for a local and small business partnership policy. Working in an environment in which we can no longer talk about affirmative action in any meaningful way, the challenge was to determine how we could bring about equity without using affirmative action. So, for me, being instrumental in developing a small and local business policy for the district was very important. I think that people forget that the community college is a business; we sometimes think it is something else. But at its most basic level, it is a business and must be run like a business. We spend millions of dollars for erasers, paper clips, and capital improvements. Someone is making the money. In politics, we always know to follow the dollars. In following the dollars it is very important to know who is making money. It is important to support contractors who live in our district, and to support our own tax base by bringing money back into the district. That was the impetus for the small and local business policy. (Carol)

Henry is quite direct in his assessment of whether he has influenced events, activities, and programs at his college. Consistent with his belief that part of his responsibility is to promote racial and ethnic equity at his college, Henry states:

There is no doubt about it. People of color would not have benefited, across the board, whether it is in the faculty, whether it is in construction, whether it is in every other program, custodial, grounds keeper, all the way up through the management component. If I were not there, keeping that voice out there, it would not have happened. (Henry)

Participants do not doubt that they are influential on their boards. They point to the fact that in certain situations their fellow trustees look to them to take the lead in creatively solving problems. They are listened to on both policy and program matters. However, to the extent possible, they try to blend their ideas and actions with those of their boards so that controversy is minimized and board unity is projected.

In summary, participants point to policies and programs that they have initiated to illustrate that their voices are not only heard, but are listened to as well by other trustees. Although reluctant to take individual credit for board actions or achievements, they indicate that their contributions to matters of creative problem solving are accepted. So far as participants are concerned, their mere presence on their boards introduces perspectives on policy making, problem solving, and program initiation that would be absent if they were not there.

Overarching Themes Framework

This qualitative study yielded data that contributes to insight into and understanding of the perceptions and experiences of a small, select group of African American community college trustees. A set of overarching themes emerged from an analysis of the data of this study, that when put into proper context with other information about African American governance level leaders, should be helpful in bringing about understanding. The overarching themes that emerged are individually addressed in this subsection. The themes are: (1) integrated, but not assimilated into the governance paradigm of the college, (2) bringing a double consciousness to the role of trustee, (3) representing the marginalized, or those with little voice, and (4) leadership and service as a way of life for participants.

Integrated, But Not Assimilated

Despite the legacy of racial discrimination in society as a whole, participants in this study perceive themselves to be fully integrated, although not fully assimilated, into the governance paradigms of their respective trustee

boards. For purposes of this study, integration is characterized by the absence of structural barriers such as rules, conventions, or practices that disadvantage a participant in his or her participation in the activities and processes of their trustee board. Assimilation, on the other hand, is characterized by being integrated into the social and operational dynamics of their boards plus accepting and internalizing the prevailing practices, perspectives, values, and behaviors of their boards while submerging previously held perspectives, values, and behaviors. Participants are well-established members of their boards and within their college communities. Two of the participants have served on their boards longer than all of their colleagues and two others are the second longest serving members of their boards. It is inappropriate to think of the participants in this study as outsiders (i.e., on the perimeter of the locus of power on their boards) or in any way disadvantaged (i.e., not able to have their positions taken seriously by fellow trustees because they are African Americans).

Contrary to conventional thinking in some quarters, including my own when I began this study, the perceptions of participants in this study and the findings that emerged from it do not support the notion that all African American community college trustees are ostracized from the governance process of their institutions by other trustees or that they are victimized by other trustees because they are African Americans. Participants in this study were at the core, not at the periphery of the formal dynamic of their boards. This is remarkable considering the short time African Americans have been among the ranks of institutional leaders, the marginal status of African Americans in

society, and the relatively small number of African Americans in elected and appointed community college trustee positions of authority. Participants serve as board chairpersons, head key committees, and receive respect for their positions on issues. Participants also serve beyond their local boards in state and national community college trustee organizations where they also hold offices, lead committees, and enjoy the respect of other trustees and government officials. Nevertheless, they feel alone and sometimes struggle because some issues affect them differently than they affect their colleagues.

It is difficult being the only African American board member. I am sort of at war with them [other trustees] all the time. So, you are always in a struggle. You sit there and listen to people [other trustees] talk about how good things are and you know how bad things are for some people. (Steve)

Participants feel and express the extra pressure under which they work because they are, in three cases, the first and only African American to serve on their boards.

We have to go above and beyond. We have to make sure more than other people, the dominant culture, that we do things right. And, you know that is not an easy place to be or situation to be in. (Betty)

Betty and Steve acknowledge that as African American trustees, they are not in lock step with their fellow trustees or that the ideas and perspectives that they bring to the governance process are always embraced. In reality, participants do not consider themselves to be literally at war with their fellow trustees. Actually, they feel that they have a full portion of respect and influence on their boards and work well with other trustees. Albeit, they sometimes feel that they are marching to a different beat. Carol stated, “*I think*

that I am very influential on the board." Peter described his relationship with other trustees as one of mutual respect. *"When I talk with them [other trustees] individually and collectively, they are willing to listen just as I am willing to listen to them. We may not agree with each other all the time, but we do try to listen" (Peter).*

Betty noted, *"I have always been heard, as a matter of fact, other board members seek my opinions."* And Henry said, *"I think that now people [fellow trustees] know that if I speak on an issue, they give me the benefit of the doubt; they accept that I know what I am talking about."* This sense of acceptance by other trustees reinforces the self-confident attitude participants bring to their trustee roles and minimizes any sense of doubt they have about their ability to govern their districts.

On the other hand, participants feel that at times they are alone in perceiving, understanding, and caring about some issues that they believe should be of concern to all trustees. Betty cited her concern for and promotion of minority and women's issues as an example of an area in which she has had to take a strong lead role. As the sole woman on her board, prior to the last election in her district, she feels that women and minority issues are her special responsibilities. Carol, a former minority, small business owner pointed out how she introduced and promotes a program at her college designed to have her district do business with small businesses and minority owned businesses in her district whenever possible in order to stimulate economic development in the district and to strengthen the district's tax base.

You know in politics we always know to follow the dollars. In following the dollars, it is very important to know who is making money and it is important to support contractors who live in our district, to support our own tax base. That brings money back into the district. (Carol)

Henry called attention to his concern about making sure that all programs and activities of his college are, in fact, open and accessible to everyone in the district. He said that his relationship with other trustees is good; however there are times when there is disaccord and they must find common ground.

My relationship with the board members is very positive. We have our differences; by no means do we always agree. There are times that I have had to take a rather fractious position and times when they have had to take fractious positions, but we have been able to work through those and move forward to carry out the overall agenda for the college. (Henry)

As the foregoing indicates, participants feel that they are sufficiently integrated into the governance process of their boards and are influential enough that they can comfortably promote issues that do not rise to the threshold of concern for other trustees. Participants do not appear to think of themselves as radicals; in fact Steve declared, "*I am not a radical,*" but as community representatives who are sensitive to the needs and expectations of their constituents.

Participants serve on trustee boards composed of from five to eight members when student trustees are included. All participants are elected to their positions rather than appointed, as are most community college trustees (Smith, 2001). As elected trustees, they are directly accountable to a constituency of voters rather than a political appointing official or fellow trustees, as is the case with self-selecting boards found at many institutions of higher education. The

fact that participants are elected instead of appointed likely contributes to the acceptance accorded to them by other trustees and is probably an important factor in participants sense of independence, authority, and belonging. Longevity on their boards is another factor effecting how well participants are accepted and respected by their fellow trustees. Four participants have served multiple terms on their boards; only one is just in her second term. Their longevity gives them self-confidence and credibility. Participants feel that they have been accepted as equal partners by fellow trustees despite the fact that they believe that they bring a set of governance perspectives, obligations, and responsibilities that go beyond those of their fellow trustees

According to Peter, *"Most people realize that he or she is there representing the public."* Therefore, as community college trustees who have to work with their fellow trustees over sustained periods of time, participants become fully participating members of a small team of equals who concern themselves more with doing the people's business than with promoting a self-serving, divisive personal agenda. The prevailing working relationship that participants have with other trustees is one of cooperation.

I have had people from the audience, after the meeting, come up to me and say, "you guys debate and argue the issues, but after the meeting, you are so friendly" That is because we are about doing the people's business. We can disagree without hating each other. So, I believe that we have a good relationship among the board members. (Betty)

This sense of mutual respect and belonging is shared by Henry who states that, *"Board members' relations are very positive, no problems there at all.*

Like I said, we have our human differences that come to life, but beyond that,

there is nothing that I would throw a brick at." Steve's perception of his relationship with fellow trustees is a bit less sanguine; he has experienced personal disappointment in working with at least one fellow trustee and finds himself to be impatient with the generally conservative nature of his board.

I have learned to work with one of the persons on the board who I would not trust under any circumstances. That person has led the last two charges to get somebody to run against me. So you can imagine that there is some friction. (Steve)

In a rather frustrated and sardonic tone, Steve said, *"I would say that our relationship [between him and other trustees] is one of tolerance."* Steve is the longest tenured member of his board, wins his elections handily, and believes that he is the best-known community college trustee in his district. However, Steve's sardonically expressed frustration appears to stem as much from his limited success in getting his board to change some of its long standing operating practices as from his personal feelings about fellow trustees. He is quite perturbed that his board insists on holding board meetings during hours most district constituents are at work, and routinely raising student fees when state funding falls short before seriously exploring other revenue sources. Steve feels that a significant social class and economic gap exists between him and other trustees. He states, *"I think this board can do a lot. But this board is not going to. It is a conservative board. It does not think that it is necessary to do anything but sit in a meeting every month."* Although the members of his board have changed since he was first elected, he feels somewhat alienated, not assimilated, on a personal level from his board. He points out that, *"I became*

the first non-affluent individual to serve on the board; and I became the first individual who depended upon employment for survival." He is the first and only African American to serve on his board.

When I first came on this board, I was a token representative. And I gained a lot of my strength being the token representative. Now that I am the senior board member, a lot of my tolerance [being put-up-with] is on the basis of being the senior board member. I don't see myself being anymore impactful from beginning to end, except that I present a greater threat right now [credibility in the community]. So, on that basis, I say that my influence has somewhat increased. I think I am a stronger power now. (Steve)

Indeed Steve is a stronger power. He has served as board chairperson, and according to him, he engineered a major change in the district's president search and screening process; according to Steve, it had been a relatively closed process. *"We have improved our hiring practices. When I first participated in a hiring at the college, it was just a little select group. Nobody took cognizance of what this group represented. You know, it was just a little select group" (Steve).*

The change allowed substantive input from a much broader cross section of stakeholders, including minorities, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and citizens of the community. *"The next hiring we did, we had 27 board [screening oversight committee] members. The ACCT did our hiring for us" (Steve).* The changes in the search process led to a diverse pool of applicants.

I think it brought good results because this was the first time in the history of the college that they had five final candidates representing three races. They had two African Americans, they had two Europeans, and they had a Hispanic. We had never been in that position before. And it is such a trend that I know that when we go out again that the people will be looking for it, that type of representation. That is what they deserve; they deserve it. (Steve)

Steve underscores his perception of his influence by saying, *"I certainly caused a change to our employment practices in that regard, as far as our level, the board level."* He further states, *"The idea of getting a Hispanic president on this campus, to run this campus, was, I like to think, a great coup on my part."*

The democratic nature of community colleges undoubtedly contributes to the confidence and support African American community college trustees receive from their constituents and the acceptance, respect, and constructive working relationships they enjoy with other trustees. Despite the economic and social class differences that exist on Steve's board, evidence does not exist in the literature to indicate that economic status and social rank tend to be a major issue in the governance of community colleges. Betty said, *"I think the community colleges are the Ellis Island of education because we say bring everybody; the door is open to every one."* This includes trustees who are African American. Henry stated, *"community colleges are life lines on the ground with the everyday people right then and there, training, speaking to their needs, where they find refuge."* Community college trustee boards are not self-selecting nor are members appointed virtually for life as is the case for many institutional trustee boards. Nevertheless, turnover on community college trustee boards is not volatile. Most trustees serve multiple terms. Board stability appears to be advantageous for African American trustees because their long tenure on their boards permits them to accumulate significant amounts of institutional knowledge, gain invaluable higher education

governance experience, and establish strong working relationships with other trustees who also share long tenures on their boards.

We know what each other's pet peeves are and how we are going to vote. We know what stands each other is going to make. We have a good working relationship. We have had our differences, but over all it has been my experience that we work as a team. Even when we have knock down drag out battles, as I would call them, they have always stayed in house. And I find that quite rewarding with this board. (Henry)

Generally speaking, participants in this study enjoy good working relationships with their fellow trustees. Over time, trustees learn to respect and work cooperatively with one another. Longevity on a board appears to be a benefit to for participants

In summary, participants think of themselves as highly influential members of their boards. They admit that as the only African American on their board, they sometimes feel alone, but are compelled to go beyond the point other trustees must go on certain issues because they believe it is the right thing to do. They indicate that their fellow board members are willing to listen to them and that they share a positive working relationship with them. Participants acknowledge that they may have been viewed as token board members when they first came onto their boards, but that did not stop them from being influential and that due to their longevity on their boards their influence is firm. In effect, participants feel fully integrated into the governance paradigm of their boards.

As fully integrated members of their boards, no special rules or protocols apply to the participants as they might to a junior partner, to one who serves

conditionally, or to a victim of conspiratorial prejudice and discrimination. Participants choose to be bicultural, that is they are acculturated in both the dominant culture and the African American culture; they choose to not solely adopt the values, social premises, and behaviors of the dominant culture that would oblige them to ignore realities of African American life.

Bringing Double Consciousness

In this part of this section, I will examine the double consciousness that the participants in this study bring to their roles as community college trustees and their identification with multiple reference groups that they think are marginalized in the governance of their districts. By double consciousness, I mean that they sense issues from the perspective of an outsider as well as from the perspective of an insider – they experience two conflicting forces or realities that manifest themselves incompatibly at times. Participants think of themselves as trustees of their districts, leaders in their communities and among trustees, and African Americans with a legacy of struggle, survival, and triumph. They perceive themselves to be servants of both the institutions and of African Americans and other marginalized groups. Participants are cognizant of bringing a double-consciousness to their roles as trustees and of expanding the normative value constructs that underlie deliberations of their boards. In 1903, DuBois (1969) framed the double consciousness perspective that participants bring to their trustee roles:

...the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with a second-sight in this American world – a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of

the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness – strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (DuBois, 1969, p. 45)

Heightened awareness. Participants see themselves as being from a primary reference group culture that is different than that of most of their fellow trustees and that they bring a double consciousness to their roles as trustees. The basic principles of reference group theory also frame the notion that African American trustee operate with a double consciousness. The lived experiences of participants are the experiences of individuals who have been socialized in both the African American and the dominant American culture and understand that in order to be effective, they must clearly distinguish between the norms of both cultures. Reference group theory suggest that people take the standards of significant others as a basis for making appraisals, comparisons, and choices regarding use of information to make decisions and to take action (Dawson & Chatman, 2001). Participants feel that they bring to their boards a set of unique governance perspectives, obligations, and responsibilities that go beyond those of their fellow trustees. For example, Betty said: *"As an African American trustee, we have to raise questions and make decisions that we should not have to make."* Participants believe that they have the dual responsibilities of promoting, protecting, and enhancing the interest of their institutions and of working for inclusion and equity for African Americans and others who are not or feel that they are not represented. Carol states that:

I think African American trustees represent a community that is more often than not oppressed and marginalized in society. This helps to heighten our [African American Trustees] awareness of working to provide equity for African Americans and others that would not otherwise have equity. (Carol)

Participants in this study share a sense of mission and a leadership perspective that pushes them toward trying to effect institutional changes. They think that inherent in their role of trustee is the responsibility to broaden the outlook of their fellow trustees and to introduce new ideas about how their institutions should operate. For example, Henry thinks that part of his job is to influence the perspectives of fellow trustees.

We [trustees] are more in tune to the European view of the world, the European, Caucasian view of the world. Rather than looking at issues globally, as [those issues] encompasses the family of human kind, [we take a limited view]. And I think my role on the board is really to keep us in tune to the fact that there is another view. [not just a European view]. Not necessarily is the European view wrong, but there is another view. (Henry)

Being the conscience. Reference group theory like the concept of double consciousness suggested by DuBois is predicted on the assumption that individuals belong to and are shaped by the norms of groups and that their decisions and actions are rooted in the normative values of a group. Participants identify with African Americans and those they think do not have a voice. They find themselves continuously reconciling the interests of their reference group with the interests of their institutions. Throughout the interviews, participants indicated that they found themselves giving voice to matters that were either not of concern to their fellow trustees or had not reached the level of urgency for their fellow trustees. Participants felt that their role included being the conscience of their

boards, the challenger of traditions, and the advocate for selected programs and people.

I think being on the board I find myself being the conscience of society. Whether it is intentional or not or whether it is a cultural thing, I think sometimes people (trustees) are too pragmatic with the bottom line of economics and forget the humanness' of what we do and how it impacts students' lives and society as a whole. I feel that sometimes, I have to play the role, more often than not, of being the conscience (of the board). (Henry)

Participants not only feel that they have to continuously engage their fellow trustees in a dialogue that stretches and sensitizes their social conscience, but that they must also educate other minorities regarding the origin and nature of African American's presence in American society.

You know, it makes you just aware of how you deal with those you come in contact with that are non- African American. I think that for other people that are considered, quote unquote, people of color that you have to consciously work at dispelling the stereotypes and the myths that white America continues to perpetuate. So you have kind of a double bind there in working to make other racial groups aware of the importance of African Americans in the American society. (Carol)

Participants felt that they have caused their boards to become more sensitive to the needs of students, staff, minorities, and the community. In explaining some of the impact that he has had and how his presence has given rise to greater involvement of students and staff in the affairs of the college despite the fact that he also believes that he is a lone voice in an on-going struggle with his fellow trustees, Steve takes credit for empowering students and staff at his college.

I think I have made a difference at the board level. I think that I have grown a consciousness into that board. I could have been there before, but it was never spoken; it was never discussed; it was like that elephant out there in the middle of the table; nobody moving it. Well I think we got that elephant out in the middle of the table. Now, I think that the students have

felt more empowered; I think classified have felt more empowered; and I think that a team element that we have tried to bring together is becoming more of a team. (Steve)

Pushed sensitivity. Participants suggest that some of the traditional operational processes at their institutions are not equitable and must be challenged. They believe that their double consciousness and their primary reference group perspectives make it incumbent upon them to help lead toward change in the general social environment of their institutions.

I have pushed sensitivity programs. As a matter of fact, we had a group of our people [participate in specific activities] so they could understand the issues of racism and how it effects people. You know, too often just because you were not born Black, you just don't know. I think we have to learn those things. I really push that (understanding) in terms of parity and diversity. I don't know if they would have moved if I had not been supportive because I think we have a very enlightened board. (Betty)

One participant feels strongly that his fellow trustees are not sensitive to the needs of all students. He thinks that they believe that a generic formation and application of policies creates an inclusive environment that fairly serves students and others associated with the college. He thinks that they assume that all the students at the college are equally situated and that fairness means ignoring distinctions among individuals and groups.

One of the things the board wanted to remove [from the college non-discrimination policy] is the word "culture." I blocked it. No! You don't remove culture. You leave culture there. They say it is the same (covered by race, creed, etc.). No, culture is not the same. This board with its shortsightedness cannot see this. And I am not talking about a non-intelligent board. They have not experienced these things; they have never gone through these things; they simplistically think that this includes all people and it doesn't. (Steve)

What are you going to do now? Although participants feel that they are the conscience of their boards, they are conflicted over what they perceive to be the expectations the African American community has of them when it comes to making decisions and taking actions. Participants struggle to avoid being seduced by the norms or expectation of the African American community, their own primary reference group.

The African American usually look at us as, "so, what are you going to do (for me) now?" Well, I am from this school, I guess, because I was raised that way. If you are wrong you are wrong; but if you are right, I'll do everything I can to support you and uphold you. As an African American trustee we have to make those decision that we should not have to make. We should just have to make them just by virtue of the fact that we have been selected to make decisions, not because you are an African American. But, I guess maybe after another generation or two maybe my kids, my grandkids will be able to say well, "I am just a trustee." (Betty)

Issues as routine as deciding which programs to add, drop, or retain or as unique as hiring or firing the chief executive challenge participants to reconcile the normative expectations of their fellow trustees with the normative expectations of African Americans and others perceived to be voiceless. For example, one participant was intransigent in his opposition to his board consideration of reducing or eliminating its equal opportunity program services (EOPS) and its services to disable students program (DSS).

They know that I am against cutting categorical funding for those particular programs. EOPS, Equal Opportunity Program Services is the program that brings in the marginal qualified street people or whomever; brings them in and gives them an added boost to keep them in school. I am anti reducing the efforts of that particular program and our DSS which is our Disabled Students Program. So as an African American it becomes a personal battle. I regret that I am the epitome example of the deprived, but that is where I have to go. (Steve)

On constant alert. Despite the fact that participants feel that working relationships on their boards are generally good, they also feel that they must be on constant alert to read the intentions and implications of comments made by their fellow trustees. One of the participants, Betty, said that quite recently a fellow trustee with who she has had a long, constructive working relationship demanded of her, “*Who do you think you are, a dictator?*” Betty was serving as board chairperson at the time. His tone of voice and other language nuances that demonstrated disrespect shocked and hurt her. She said, “*It just caught me off guard.*” His question sounded to her like:

Who do you think you are, you Black bitch? I hate to think that. But, I feel like I have to question that. You never know what the true climate is. You never know because the institutionalized racism and privilege and dominance are still there.... I thought we had an ok climate, but you just never know what is beneath the top layer. I mentioned earlier how I never would have thought that my fellow board member could ask me the questions such as these. “Do you think you are a dictator?” Would he have said that to one of the white men on the board? I wonder; I don’t think so. (Betty)

Arguably, Betty reacted too sensitively, or maybe not, to the comments from a fellow trustee, nevertheless, as an African American trustee, with a double-consciousness, she is effected by how she feels that she is perceived by others on her board. Participants feel that sometimes they must process the comments and actions of fellow trustees on both a personal and objective level in order to be effective in their trustee role.

In summary, in this subsection participants expressed their perceptions regarding how they bring a double consciousness to matters that concern their boards and how they are always tuned to the unstated meanings behind the actions

of fellow board members. Participants indicate that they think that they are the conscience of their boards and must educate fellow trustees and others to ideas and concepts that do not predominate in the majority culture. They site efforts to sensitize their boards to the need to accommodate those who, for whatever reason, fall outside the mainstream and need special consideration. The duality of consciousness experienced by participants in this study is quite like the standpoint epistemology referred to by some feminist theorist to provide insight into how women navigate within a male dominated culture.

Representing the Marginalized

Participants think of themselves as representatives of the interests of African Americans and others whom they perceive to be marginalized, such as minorities, women, students, the poor, and others who have a weak or silent voice in the affairs of their districts. Participants have deeply rooted feelings about justice, equity, inclusiveness, and institutional transformation. They believe that they have a special connection to those whose voices are weak or non-existent. They indicate that this connection stems from their own sense of marginality in aspects of their own lives; expectations and requests made of them by those who feel voiceless or powerless, such as African Americans, minorities, students, and college staff; and what they perceive to be a de facto relegation of issues concerning African Americans and minorities to them by fellow trustees.

My greatest concern is equity. Experience has taught participants to be sensitive to inequities in the systems of their colleges. They continuously ask

themselves the question, is this fair to African Americans and others similarly situated?

I have a strong orientation toward social justice work. Always, my greatest concern is equity for African Americans. ...America has never allowed me to think of myself as just an American. I have always been labeled as a Black person. So, I think Black before I think American. And, that plays a large role in determining my actions. My actions are always guided by the fact that as an American, there have been less opportunity for equity. So I am always very concerned about equity in my thinking process. I think that is what is most important for me as an African American trustee. If you will, we are always trying to provide as much equity as we can. (Carol)

More diversity needed. Participant would like to see greater diversity on their boards, but do not wish to see the size of their boards increased in order to achieve greater diversity.

Given the demographics of the community that we represent, our board needs to be more diverse. We have no Asian or Latino representation on the board, and of course, those voices should be at the table as well as the person whose voice as an African American is more often than not left out. (Carol)

The absence of Asian and Latino trustees struck participants as a metaphor for slow progress in society toward inclusiveness.

We need more people of color on the board. We need Hispanics, we need Asians, we need the whole rainbow coalition. I think you would see things a little bit differently; I don't think, as a whole, our society is ready or willing to move to a real diverse group. We talk it, but we are not willing to get there. (Henry)

The sentiment for greater diversity on their boards is prompted more from a sense that diversity, especially racial diversity, is an inherent good rather than from a notion that a racially diverse board will make higher quality governance decisions. Participants believe that a racially diverse board will create a new and

different governance decision paradigm that will lead to more diverse decision results that will have taken into account the needs of a broader spectrum of community constituents.

If they [boards] were more racially diverse, your product is going to be more racially diverse. And that has got to be good. No, I don't think that if they were more racially diverse you are going to get more balance or more positive decisions or more negative decisions or whatever. I can't really go that far-- to say that is going to happen. But what I can say, of the wrong you get or the right you get, it will be more diverse. And I think that is about the only thing we as human beings can expect or champion for. (Steve)

Trustees represent a community. In the absence of wide diversity on their boards, participants feel a heavy responsibility, perhaps even a moral obligation, to expressly represent the interest of African Americans, minorities, women, and anyone else they perceive to be left out.

I think African American trustees represent a community that is more often than not oppressed and marginalized in this society. This helps to heighten our awareness of working to provide equity for African Americans and others that would not otherwise have equity. (Carol)

Participants are torn between their perceived responsibility to the constituents of their districts who elected them and the broader interest of their institutions. One participant, elected by a substantial African American and minority constituency, summed-up this dilemma as follows:

So, you have to reconcile representing your constituents with the good of the whole of the district, as part of the government of the whole district. That is always a challenge, meshing those two, representing your own various constituencies and representing the district as a whole. (Carol)

Two African American full time faculty. Participants' voices are uniform and robust in expressing dissatisfaction with faculty staffing practices at their

institutions. They feel that more can and should be done to increase the number of African American and minority faculty. Participants recognize that their fellow trustees understand the issue of diversity, but they believe that fellow trustees do not share their sense of urgency regarding the need to increase the number of African American and minority faculty. They feel that the faculty hiring and retention process is flawed and must be revised if their institutions are serious about inclusion and institutional transformation to serve a diverse society. In a rather sarcastic tone, one participant expressed his frustration by saying:

Forty years into this particular college there have been two African American full time faculty members hired. Forty years, that is no accident. And there is a reason that exists." (Steve)

The one governance area that participants take personally is that of faculty staffing. They recognize that the faculty staffing process at their colleges is out of the hands of their boards, and for all practical purposes, out of the hands of the chief executive officer as well – the one person they hire. The fact that they have little influence in this area is highly frustrating; they do not think anyone can be truly held accountable for the low number of African Americans and minorities among the faculty.

I feel fortunate to be able to have an input into the type of courses that we offer. But, I have not been happy with the fact that our colors are not more diverse. I have said this more than one time, as a matter of fact, I have said it many, many times. I think the people who work in the community college should be a reflection of the students they serve, and in our community college and in our district, that is not the case. We have our top level, in many instances, still lilly white. And the thing that hardens my heart is that fact that they say there are no qualified people out there, no one applied. No, I think that is just a big lie. ...They are out there; we just need to go and look for them. That is one of the things that really bothers me as a trustee in community college. (Betty)

For participants, the desire for greater racial diversity among the faculty extends beyond participants sense of racial equity within the workplace. They feel strongly that a racially diverse faculty adds a constructive dimension to the way their colleges operate and gives the constituents of their college districts an added measure of ownership.

We talk on our board about positive or negative influences of race. We talk about it because I make a point and emphasize the point that we need to be diverse in our hiring. I make a point about it; I am talking in terms of the fact that we need to make sure that when students come on our campuses and into our classrooms, and when people come into our administration offices, they see people that look like them. (Betty)

A ghetto school. One participant is struggling with her board and others over how to allocate resources to the different campuses in her district. The district's principal campus (flagship campus) is located in the central city. However, there is sentiment among some trustees and influential interest in the district to divert programs and construction resources away from the principal campus to other campuses.

Some of the people are coming to us and saying, "why are you doing this? You are going to make the flagship college a ghetto school." But, I am saying, we need to serve the people. It will only become a ghetto school, whatever that is, if we allow it to happen. (Betty)

On both philosophical and practical grounds, she opposes changes in the allocation of resources among campuses in her district. She feels that she would be derelict as a trustee of her college in protecting the long-term interest of her college and as the representative of a weak voice community constituency that would be disproportionately injured should resources be diverted from the campus

that serves them best if she does not do what she can to stop any diminution in the programs and facilities at the central city campus. In dealing with governance decision options such as this one is where participants believe that they bring broader insights to their boards and best represent the voiceless in their communities.

In summary, in this subsection participants discussed how they serve as the representative of those who do not have a voice in the college's governance process. In the absence of diverse trustee boards, participants feel a special responsibility to represent the interests of Asian and Latino constituents along with the interests of African Americans and others who do not have a voice in decision-making. Participants claim a strong orientation toward social justice and work for racial equity. They believe that trustee boards composed of all racial and ethnic groups could better serve the needs of the college and the community; however, they do not argue that a more diverse board would make better decisions, just more diverse decisions. Participants believe that staffing and resource allocation actions would likely be more equitably balanced among the needs of all groups in the district.

Leadership and Service

Participants view their service as community college trustees as just one more form of public leadership and service they feel obligated to render to their communities. They believe that their fellow trustees listen to them and the constituents of their communities depend upon them. All of the participants bring a long history of unpaid community leadership and service to their unpaid roles as

trustees. They represent the cadre of African American community leaders who also serve as institutional leaders. The record shows that they have been involved in community service, non-profit, professional, and civic organizations, including membership on school boards as a way of life.

Over thirty years of service. Steve states that, "*Approximately 30 years ago or there about, I was recruited to be a school board member.*" He shares school board experience with Betty and Peter. Both served two terms on elementary school boards before becoming community college trustees. Peter said, "*I had been a trustee with an elementary school board from 1972 to 1980.*" Henry and Carol are community activists. "*I have been in this community as an activist for over 30 years. I have a lot of name recognition*" (Carol).

"It has always been me, community service, even as a little girl" (Betty). Community service for participants includes service that extends back to the 1960s when they were members of boards that administered the federally funded War on Poverty and Model Cities programs. All of them have been active in local branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in some instances serving on the organizations executive board.

I have been involved in this community, which has a small African American population, for over 50 years. In addition to serving on the community college board, I serve also on the NAACP executive board, so people here are aware [of me]. I visit, periodically, some of the elementary boards and districts so they are aware there too. I am on the Boy Scouts Executive Council. (Peter)

Insufficient evidence is available to determine whether participants' age or their length of service has the greater impact on how they influence the governance

dynamic of their colleges. Both age and length of service are important. The chronological ages of participants, all are over 50 years of age, bring them the kind of respect accorded mature, seasoned leaders. On the other hand, the fact that they have been on their boards multiple terms, longer than most of their fellow trustees, has allowed them to acquire institutional knowledge and develop alliances that lesser experienced trustees do not have.

We pay one hell of a price. Participants sit on boards of state and national committees and organizations of community college trustees and other professional organization to which they belong. Their involvement in these organizations is both personal and as representatives of their boards. In either case, their participation appears to be constructive and supported by others beyond their immediate community or college.

The attitude of participants is that of servant leader. They see themselves as rendering a service and providing a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Participants consider their presence in leadership positions to be a significant end-in-itself. *"I think probably the visibility of a black person on this board is significant because historically there have been no blacks on there"* (Peter). Participants feel stressed, but believe they must serve. *"As an African American it is not a hey day. You ask yourself why are you here. You know why you are here. You know you can take an easier route, but you don't choose to take an easier route"* (Steve).

We pay one hell of a price to serve our community. It is lonely. It is often misunderstood and under appreciated. And, yet people want us to be all

things to all people. They drain from us and give very little back, the nourishment we need to have the will to stay in the struggle. Quite honestly, I have stayed for 12 years in spite of, not because of. (Henry)

All working for the same thing. By serving on community college boards and in other leadership capacities, participants feel that they are fulfilling a personal need they have as well as bringing a constructive perspective to the way matters should be handled.

I am always striving; one is to place myself into a position where I can be somewhat of a leader, to guide persons, and secondly is to fulfill somewhat of a wish that I have. And that is to be sort of famous; be famous in the sense that wherever I am or wherever I have gone from, the world is better off by me having been there. (Steve)

This attitude or perspective is somewhat consistent with how Peter sees his role as a leader.

I think the way I operate, as I hear people speaking on behalf of their group or their special interest, is, I try to bring it [the discussion] back to the middle of the road so to speak. In that, trying in subtle sort of ways to remind everyone that we are all working for the same thing and that once you close your eyes you can't tell the difference from one person and another or if you open your eyes they still have two eyes two arms two legs and we are better off if we work together rather than trying to fight each other. (Peter)

Additionally, participants have been instrumental in bringing African American service organizations such as the African American Chamber of Commerce to their communities and helping establish other organizations that speak to the special interests of African Americans. This work is emblematic of the kind of service they feel compelled to provide to their communities.

The voice of African America community college trustees as represented by the collective voices of participants in this study connotes a clarion call for

change and inclusiveness at their colleges. The voice is not a protest mantra with overt political overtones traditionally associated with African American leaders, but a negotiating strategy that capitalizes on their status as uniquely different trustees who are expected by their trustee colleagues, special interest groups, and others to bring a different and, perhaps, more understanding perspective to issues affecting their colleges. The say participants in this study have in the governance of their colleges is a voice on behalf of diverse groups who problematically would not otherwise have a say in the governance of their college.

In summary, participants see themselves as servant leaders; they believe that being a servant-leader is one who chooses to view situations from an integrated, wholistic perspective (Greenleaf, 2004). They have been engaged in service to their communities in a variety of ways and for a substantial part of their lives. They have served on the boards and held leadership positions in community, civic, and professional organizations that served the broad community or profession or just African Americans. In some instances, participants have been instrumental in establishing organizations that are needed. They bemoan the fact that their roles as leaders are taxing and often unappreciated by those they are trying to help; nevertheless, they feel compelled to carry on.

In this section the four overarching themes: (1) Integrated, but not Assimilated, (2) Bringing a Double Consciousness, (3) Representing the Marginalized, and (4) Leadership and Service that emerged from this study were addressed. Reflections of participants were used to support the thematic findings. Findings indicated that although participants are fully participating partners with

other trustees in the governance processes at their institutions, they believe that their responsibilities extend beyond those of their fellow trustees to include reexamining traditions and standard operating procedures and to addressing the unique interests of African Americans and others who do not have a voice in the governance of their colleges.

Like their fellow trustees, participants are primarily concerned with policy issues rather than operational matters such as faculty staffing procedures.

Likewise, for the sake of harmony, credibility, and relevance, participants have a compelling interest in supporting the norms of their institutions and doing what they can to assure that costs are minimized and controversy is not paralyzing.

However, participants struggle with the enigma of their institutions doing things right based on precedent and procedurally correct processes and doing what is right to transform their districts into inclusive institutions that allocate resources in ways to promote change and to support programs, activities, and facilities needed to serve all segments of their districts.

Summary

This chapter described how the study was conducted, introduced the participants, presented participants' perspectives as they pertain to the research questions that guided the study, and provides evidence associated with the four overarching thematic categories that emerged from the study. The qualitative data collected from the five African American community college trustees and reported in this chapter resulted from interviews. Participants were drawn from institutions of vastly varying sizes, organizational structures, geographical locations, and

population characteristics. Demographic data related to the participants indicated that their educational, professional, and civic experiences are quite similar in many ways. For example, all have attended graduate school, all have been highly active in community and professional organizations, and all but one has worked in education. This chapter also framed the perceptions of participants in the corporeal, temporal, spatial, and relational dimensions of their lived experiences as trustees.

CHAPTER V -- SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts. (Albert Einstein)

This chapter summarizes the findings of this study, provides a discussion of the implications of the findings, and offers recommendations for further research. This study sought to attain insight into and understanding of the lived experiences and perceptions of selected African American community college trustees as they work to impact the operations of their respective colleges. Community colleges are critical in the delivery of higher education in America. In the year 2000, the U.S. Department of Education reports that of 15,312,3000 students enrolled in college and universities, 5,948,400 attend community colleges; forty-three percent, 734,900 of the 1,730,300 African American college and university students attend community colleges (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). Few African Americans serve as community college trustees, only 8% (Vaughan & Weisman, 1997). Effective community college governance is critical to sustaining a viable higher education system that serves society and is vital to the future well being of African Americans in a changing society. Therefore, knowledge about and understanding of the perceptions, motives, values, and intentions of African American community college trustees is instructive to anyone concerned about the future of community colleges. Findings of this study provide some of the insights needed to begin the understanding process.

A second objective of this study was to contribute information to the literature regarding community college governance, particularly as it pertains to

African American trustees serving in public community colleges. Current literature provides little information about community college trustees and virtually no information about African American trustees. Therefore, information pertaining to the perceptions of selected African American trustees would be helpful to other trustees, college chancellors and presidents, faculty and other college employees, students and their families, community constituents, political and administrative officials, African Americans and other minorities, researchers, and special interest groups with a stake in quality community college leadership and governance.

Findings of this study are summarized in two frameworks: principal research questions and overarching themes. The three principal questions addressed in this study are: (1) What is the voice of African American Community college trustees? (2) How distinct is the voice of African American community college trustees? And (3) Do African American community college trustees perceive that their voices are heard? The four overarching themes are: (1) integrated, but not assimilated, (2) bringing a double consciousness, (3) representing the marginalized, and (4) leadership and service. The qualitative data pertaining to the lived experiences of the participants was obtained during guided interviews in which open-ended questions were used to capture the perceptions of participants in the study.

Summary and Discussion

In this section, I will use the framework of the principal research questions and overarching themes to summarize the findings of this study. Pertinent findings

of this study will be summarized under the rubric of each research question and overarching theme.

Principal Research Question #1: What is the Voice of African American Community College Trustees?

The voice of participants in this study is the expression of change and inclusion insinuated into the community college governance paradigm. They embrace an operating strategy that includes enlightening fellow trustees about different culture-centered perspectives and reaching out to faculty, classified staff, students, and the community for their input and support. Participants call for the dispersion and sharing of power and policy making among all stakeholders, not just from the top down, between the trustee board and the chief executive officer. The voice of participants question traditions and standard operating processes at their colleges that do not appear to have the same impact on everyone. Like other trustees, participants understand their responsibilities as trustees and recognize the limits of their power and authority. They are clear about where they fit on the governance team at their colleges and clearly distinguish between policy and administrative matters or governance and management responsibilities. However, in referring to the place of the trustee board, consistent with their sense of themselves as servant leaders, they suggest that:

[W]e are not the important component; the students are. The rules we set and policies we lay out should really address the best interest of the students secondly; the best interests of the staff [faculty and classified], who have to be on the front line; thirdly the administration; and fourthly the board. (Henry)

The voice of African American community college trustees is filtered through a general consensus of as wide a spectrum of stakeholders as possible with the explicit intent of assuring those with little or no voice that they are represented. It is the voice of advocacy for African Americans, minorities, and others left out of the governance process while promoting the overall, long-term interest of the college. The voice of participants in this study is the voice of leadership in both the college and the community; it challenges the status quo.

The notion that pervades participants' actions as trustees is: "*We are always trying to provide as much equity as we can*" (Carol) because they believe that unexamined policies and operational processes of their institutions are often weighted against African Americans and other minorities. This means that participants think that they, "*As an African American trustee, [we] have to raise questions and make decisions that we should not have to make*" (Betty). This perspective and the related actions taken by participants in working with their fellow trustees are intended to transform policies and practices at their colleges. Participants believe that their trustee role entails more than that of other trustees and that for them to be effective, they are obliged to see themselves as, "*...speaking for people who can't speak for themselves, who don't have the voices to speak for themselves*" (Steve). This notion of what they should be doing lies at the core of their concept of their role as a trustee and how they should be relating to other trustees.

Principal Research Question #2: How Distinct Is the Voice of African American Community College Trustees?

The low public profile of community college trustee boards and the collegial way that trustees work together militates against an individual trustee becoming very distinctive because of her or his actions. Smith (2000) points out that community college trustee boards are a corporate body and that individual members only have power and authority assigned to them by the board. Participants in this study have learned that to be effective, they must devise long-term strategies based on readily recognizable principles if they expect to be heard by and to influence their fellow trustees. They become reliable team players while taking stands and promoting issues that reassure their community constituents that they are sensitive to their interests and deserve to be continuously elected to their boards. Participant also minimize conflict between themselves and special interest groups that have the means to put them on the defensive by providing them a conduit for airing their concerns. Participants in this study have staked out the role of champion of those with little influence. They see themselves as a voice of African Americans, minorities, students, and those in their communities for whom the community college is the only option for an education. Participants call attention to matters that their colleges must address if they are to move forward with inclusive policies and programs.

Participants distinguish themselves by taking positions such as: *"I have always pushed women and minority positions" (Betty)*. And, *"... I am against cutting categorical funding for those particular programs [EOPS, Equal Opportunity Program Services and DSS, Disabled Students Program]" (Steve)*.

These advocacy positions are consistent with the participants' belief that they are expected to be the conscience of their boards and of society.

Principal Research Question #3: Do African American Community College Trustees Perceive that Their Voices Are Heard?

Participants point to policies and programs that they have initiated to illustrate that their voices are not only heard but are listened to as well by other trustees. *"When I talk with them [other trustees] individually and collectively, they are willing to listen just as I am willing to listen to them" (Peter)*. Although reluctant to take individual credit for board actions or achievements, they indicate that their contributions to matters of creative problem solving are accepted. *"Now, if I bring something to the table, they know that I am not going to put them in harms way and it is respected. They know that if I challenge something, I am high on principle and integrity" (Henry)*. So far as participants are concerned, their mere presence on their boards introduces perspectives on policy making, problem solving, and program initiation that would be absent if they were not there. *"By virtue of where I sit I have been able to make a difference not only here locally, but having been elected to statewide community college committees, I make a difference there too" (Betty)*.

Over Arching Theme #1: Integrated, But Not Assimilated

Smith (2001) found that the desire to serve is the principal reason individuals become community college trustees. Widmer (1987) found that African American serve on boards for the same reasons that non-African

Americans serve on boards, but that they face more stresses than white board members. Kanter's (1977) tokenism hypothesis suggests that working relationships between dominant group members and minority (i.e., gender, racial, cultural,) group members in an organization is a function of the proportion of each group in the organization. According to Kanter, when few minorities are in an organization stereotyping occurs, assumptions are made about how the minority individuals should behave, and how much power they should exercise. Indeed, being different presents challenges to participants in this study, but being different has not been a deterrent to being influential trustees.

They are fully integrated into their boards' governance processes. However, because they are participants in small groups, fewer than eight persons, and have the same nominal, position power and authority as other board members; they treat their difference as an asset. They have opted not to become assimilated into the culture of their boards. By not assimilating, they are able to see the structures, protocols, and issues of their colleges from the perspectives of both an outsider and an insider.

Participants think of themselves as highly influential members of their boards. They admit that being an African American on their board, they sometimes feel alone and compelled to go beyond the point of comfort of other trustees on certain issues because they believe it is the right thing to do. They indicate that their fellow board members are willing to listen to them and that they share a positive working relationship with them. Participants acknowledge that they may have been viewed as a token board member when they first came

onto their boards, but that did not stop them from being influential from the beginning of their tenure. And due to participants' longevity on their boards, their influence is firm; they are reservoirs of institutional knowledge and history.

In effect, participants feel fully integrated into the governance paradigm of their boards. However, they have not given-up their personal and cultural identities as African Americans and do not consider themselves to be fully assimilated into the cultural community of their boards. Participants are bicultural; they are acculturated as Americans, the same as their fellow trustees, and they are acculturated as African Americans as well. The former cultural manifestation permits them to understand and appreciate, without need for interpretation, the nuances of issues with which they and their fellow trustees must deal. The latter cultural manifestation, which they insist on maintaining, precludes their full assimilation into their trustee community and permits them to also see issues from the perspective of an outsider. For example, African Americans being integrated, but not assimilated on their boards is somewhat like a son or daughter-in-law from one region of the country marrying into a family with a different religious tradition and with roots in another region of the country; the in-law and the family members respect each other and work together with a minimum of friction. However, the in-law is not blind to shortcomings that the family takes for granted.

Not to be assimilated into the governance culture of their colleges is consistent with Kezar's (2001) suggestion that women and minorities see leadership differently than it is traditionally seen in the dominant culture. To be

assimilated is to be conforming and blind to differences, both positive and negative; and to neglect power differentials within relationships (Bensimon & Neumann, 1993). Participants feel influential and comfortable as trustees within the organizational and systemic structure of their boards; they feel integrated into their boards operations. They also feel individually empowered and heralders of a non-hierarchical governing dynamic that has at its core inclusiveness and transformation without being radical. Participants' presence on their respective boards, for better or worse, has introduced a multicultural or pluralistic dimension to the governance dynamic of their colleges.

Overarching Theme #2: Bringing a Double Consciousness

The concept of double consciousness is linked in a broad way to the concepts of structural integration and cultural assimilation. Structural integration according to Hall (1999, 2) is access to institutions, opportunities, levers of power in the mainstream economic, social, and political structures and cultural assimilation is both adoption of mainstream cultural norms and loss of indigenous cultural distinctiveness. The manifestation of double consciousness in African Americans puts these two concepts into conflict when one does not wish to lose his or her conscious identity as an African American. Hall (1999) quotes Marble (1994) as characterizing the double consciousness of African Americans as a form of identity. Marble is reported as stating in a speech delivered in 1994, that the African American is: "[A]lways found within the creative and contradictory tensions between tradition, ritual, and heritage on one hand, and innovation, individuality and assimilation on the other (Marble, 1994)' (Hall, 1999, p. 2)."

Double consciousness is at the core of being an outsider and an insider at the same time. Haynie (2001) found that African American state legislators also have a sense of double consciousness that sustains them as they work to be good legislators while at the same time trying to transform their legislatures. They, like participants in this study, nurture their double consciousness as a way of not separating themselves from those they represent. Guinier and Torres (2002) state that:

It is not impossible to be an insider and an outsider simultaneously. But if outsiders who have become insiders desire to retain their critical double consciousness as they exercise power or authority within the status quo, they need an alternative or independent source of power. (Guinier & Torres, 2002)

Participants expressed their perceptions regarding how they bring a double consciousness to matters that concern their boards and how they are always tuned to the unstated meanings behind the actions of fellow board members. Participants indicated that they think that they are the conscience of their boards and must educate fellow trustees and others to ideas and concepts that do not predominate in the majority culture. *"And I think my role on the board is really to keep us in tune to the fact that there is another view. Not necessarily that the European view is wrong, but that there is another view"* (Henry). They site efforts to sensitize their boards to the need to accommodate those who, for whatever reason, fall outside the mainstream and need special consideration.

"We see the world differently" (Betty). Participants share a worldviews that allows them to be at the center and on the margin at the same time on issues subject to a dynamic judgment. The form and substance of issues are of equal

importance to participants. It is important to them that things are done procedurally right; and that whatever is done is the right thing in terms of addressing the needs and concerns of everybody, including those who have a short history or no history at all associated with the matter.

I have the feeling that people should be fair and just. I just happen to be fair and just, hopefully. As an African American, that is the core of me. I want to do thing that I feel would benefit my people and all people because I truly believe that if we would understand that everybody, maybe this is a utopian illusion, but I think that everybody has basic needs. And we need to focus in on those needs and try to be people first. Because, it takes a whole lot of feeling to be a human being first. So, we need to deal with that. (Betty)

Participants do not operate divorced from the complex historical cultural and power relationship realities of society. For them, matters, whether simple or complex, are seen and considered in the light of historical barriers that African Americans, minorities, women, and others have had to overcome. Participants bring a passion to trying to be fair.

Much has been made of double consciousness in explaining the African American point of view. Double consciousness is a short hand metaphor for calling attention to the on-going perception (and reality) of being an outsider even though one is a full-fledged insider. This metaphor has limits in explaining the perceptions of all African Americans at all times because the African American community is not monolithic and all African Americans do not experience the world in exactly the same way. It is, however, useful as a shorthand way to enter into an analysis, explanation, and understanding of some behaviors of African Americans in institutional leadership positions.

The notion of double consciousness is most often associated with the reconciliation of conflicting factors at the core of a matter that appears to already be resolved and accepted by everyone. McPhail (2002) suggest that this is a limited perspective of double consciousness and offers a more expansive concept of double consciousness that is rooted in language (the tool for crystallizing thinking). McPhail (2002,) states that: "The theory of complicity explores how oppositional discourse essentializes differences, and thus reinforces the epistemological and social consequences of racial division (p. 77)." He goes on to suggest that the theory of:

Dialogic coherence provides an alternative to oppositional discourse through its emphasis on the epistemological impulses that lie beneath the transformative and emancipatory possibilities of language. It also offers a critique of static notions of difference and identity, and understanding of rhetoric that defines it as the faculty of discovering, managing, and synthesizing diverse conceptions of reality.(McPhail, 2002 p.77)

Both the limited and expanded notion of double consciousness are applicable in understanding the perceptions and behaviors of participants in this study. They are concerned with the operational dynamics of their colleges as well as engaging their fellow trustees in a process of discovery leading to a new, commonly shared view of what can and ought to be.

Overarching Theme #3: Representing the Marginalized

Participants pointed out how they serve as the representative of those who do not have a voice in their college's governance process. *"My role is to speak out on issues that nobody else is comfortable addressing" (Henry).* In the absence of diverse trustee boards, participants feel a special responsibility to represent the

interests of Asian and Latino constituents along with the interests of African Americans and others who do not have a voice in decision-making. Participants claim a strong orientation toward social justice and work for racial equity. They believe that trustee boards composed of all racial and ethnic groups could better serve the needs of the college and the community; however, they do not argue that a more diverse board would make better decisions, just more diverse decisions; albeit on matters of diversity, inclusiveness, and institutional transformation, they may be better. *"We need more people of color on the board, we need Hispanics, we need Asians, we need the whole rainbow coalition. I think you would see things a little bit differently" (Henry).* Participants believe that staffing and resource allocation actions would likely be more equitably balanced among the needs of all groups in the district.

Participants filter matters that come before their boards through an equity screen that includes as many points of view as possible, but point final results toward common ground for all stakeholders, especially those with little voice or power. They reject a zero-sum paradigm of problem solving predicated on a hierarchical power distribution model and instead opt for a pluralistic leadership model that is consistent with Cox's (2001) concept of a multicultural organization. According to Cox, a multicultural organization deliberately and systematically creates conditions that develop the organization's capacity to leverage diversity as a resource. He suggests that gender, national origin, race, and work specialization represent cultural differences and that when these differences are recognized and managed, the organization benefits. So, without losing sight of their primary

normative responsibilities as community college trustees, to hire the chief executive, set policies, assure fiscal integrity, and perform any other appropriate governance tasks required by law or charter, participants are keen to maintain a mind set that differentiates between things being done right and the right things being done, including sharing power, regardless of past practices and traditions.

Carver (1997, p. 51) states that board members' primary identity lies outside the organization, but that individual board members should see themselves as from a constituency, but not representing it (Carver 2002, p.77). Participants identify with the former perspective, but not with the latter; they not only identify with the community outside their colleges, but they parse that community and see themselves as a representative of parts of it. Their objectivity concerning the exercise of power and the distribution of resources is influenced by what they perceive to be the expectations and needs of those with whom they identify, not out of selfishness, but out of a belief that there are inherent inequities in a static organization and that change must be an ongoing process if everyone is to be equitably served.

Overarching Theme #4: Leadership and Service

Participants see themselves as servant leaders. *"I recognize that my role is as a servant" (Henry)*. They have been engaged in service to their communities in a variety of ways and for a substantial part of their lives. Participants have served on their boards and held leadership positions in community, civic, and professional organizations that served the broad community or profession or just African Americans. *"So far as being in the community is concerned, I suppose I have*

served in just about every place you can serve" (Steve). In some instances, participants have been instrumental in establishing organizations that are needed. "I started the African American Chamber of Commerce here. ... I was one of the youngest people to be elected to a school board" (Betty). They bemoan the fact that their roles as leaders are taxing and often unappreciated by those they are trying to help; nevertheless, they feel compelled to carry on. "Quite honestly, I have stayed for 12 years in spite of, not because of" (Henry).

The primary reason individuals serve on community college trustee boards is to be of service their communities (Smith, 2001). In this respect, participants are no different than other trustees, except that participants see their service transcending themselves and representing the suppressed aspirations of their primary reference group, African Americans. Three participants are the first African Americans to serve on their boards; their board leadership and service is symbolically interrogating the power structure in higher education. Their board presence symbolically asks, should the perspectives, intentions, and values of privilege shared by successful white men continue to dominate the leadership of higher education, or is there room for perspectives, intentions, and values of successful African American men and women?

Inherent in being an African American leader is to be a community servant engaged in transforming society (Guinier & Torres, 2002; Walters & Smith, 1999). This does not necessarily mean being political, holding office in an institution, or having a title that connotes occupying an official leadership position. It does, however, mean being committed to and supportive of individuals, groups, and

causes that promote justice and social change. Participants in this study meet these criteria and behave consistent with Greenleaf's (1991) notion of the servant as leader. Greenleaf (1991) suggests that the trustee has an obligation to deliver a new, more community serving institution and that: "The most important qualification for trustees should be that they care for the institution, which means that they care for all of the people the institution touches, and that they are determined to make their caring count" (Greenleaf, 1991, p. 55). Participants are determined to make sure that their colleges recognize the implications of demographic changes in society and position themselves to effectively deal with them.

Implications for Practice

In this section, I will address policy and practice implications of the findings of this study. The four overarching themes: (1) integrated, but not assimilated, (2) bringing a double consciousness, (3) representing the marginalized, and (4) leadership and service will serve as a framework. The implications will be addressed in the above order. However, to put the implications of this study into perspective, the reader is reminded that the two demographic characteristics of participants in this study that distinguishes them from other trustees are the fact that they are all African Americans and their careers have been primarily in the public sector, more precisely, in education. Participants share attitudes about the role of community colleges in society and the personal desire to serve their communities that are similar to those of other trustees. However, literature is silent on the lived experiences of trustees; hardly

anything is known about the experiences and perceptions of trustees in their roles as trustees. Their age, gender, political party, social status, and other such factors are used as proxies to make suppositions about trustees' motives, values, and behaviors. Therefore, the implications of the findings of this study, based on the lived experiences of selected African American trustees, should be helpful to other trustees, chancellors and presidents, special interest groups, and others who can benefit from a better understanding of the values and forces that meliorate the behavior of the participants in this study and, perhaps, others similarly situated.

Integrated, But Not Assimilated

It is clear that participants are integrated, but not assimilated into the governance paradigm of their trustee boards. It is easy to understand why participants feel highly confident in going about doing their jobs, while sometimes seeming to be out of step with other trustees. That is, raising questions and pressing issues that do not seem germane to others. Participants are structurally comfortable in their trustee roles; they do not feel that they hold their positions by the grace of their fellow trustees or a higher authority, such as an appointing official and that they are fully accepted as equals by their fellow trustees. Therefore, they feel free to fulfill their responsibilities without crippling ideological constraints and a minimum of personal prejudice and discrimination. However, they feel that they are not culturally just like most other non-African American trustees and that other trustees also think of them as being different, that is, bringing a different perspective and consciousness to their boards.

The implications of participants being equal members of their colleges' governance teams, but being perceived as somewhat different allows them to be aggressive in pursuing matters of concern to them without also spending energy having to fight for a place at the table because of who they are. In other words, their advocacy for certain issues is expected by their supporters or those they purport to represent and by those who want to challenge the status quo, including other trustees. They can take positions, even controversial positions, which reflect their personal ideas or the ideas of others without worrying about being perceived as or reacted to as not being a loyal board member. This means that other trustees, including new and experienced African American trustees; chancellors and presidents; special interest groups; and individuals with whom the participants deal should take care to judge the suitability, practicality, and applicability of participants positions because they may represent ideas or perspectives that are important, but could not be voiced before being raised by the study participant.

All constituents of the specific zones from which participants are elected, as well as African Americans and others who feel that they do not have a voice regardless of whether they reside in the zone of a particular participants are unrestrained in calling upon the participants to represent their concerns and interests in governance deliberations; they feel that they have a special connection to the participants. Expectations placed upon participants by special interest groups because participants are African Americans and are thought to be understanding gives participants an incentive to try to address issues that effect marginal groups long before they arise. Therefore, it is important that other

trustees and college administrators, especially chancellors and presidents pay attention to questions raised and issues proffered by African American trustees that are not yet on the governance agenda of the college. The genesis of the concerns is likely rooted in a marginalized community that is beyond the trustee board's normal source of information. Participants can be viewed as portals for ideas, perspectives, and positions that are not commonly available to other trustees and administrators.

Bringing a Double Consciousness

Participants bring a double consciousness to their roles as trustees, a sensing of issues from the perspective of an outsider as well as from the perspective of an insider. They are conscious of representing the interest of the college at the same time they are interrogating its policies, procedures, protocols, programs, practices, personnel, traditions, relationships, and structures to see what impacts, particularly adverse impacts, they are having on African Americans, minorities, and other marginalized groups. For example, arguably the faculty staffing practices at participants' colleges are well designed and legal, but participants sense that the practices are flawed because African Americans and other minorities are seldom included among those hired. Participants are torn between what they see as a cleanly designed process that can be defended and the results of that process that does not satisfy intentions of the college to be more inclusive in its hiring practices.

Another example of being torn between two perspectives at the same time is the need to minimize college expenditures and provide programs for non-

traditional students, many of whom can not get education or training anywhere else. All trustees grapple with these kinds of issues, but participants feel that the way they approach these kinds of issues defines them as trustees. This inherent bifurcated approach to perceiving matters that are dealt with by their colleges sometimes puts participants out of sync with the prevailing position of other trustees. Therefore, to the extent that other trustees, chancellors and presidents, and others at the college know that issues that were settled a long time ago may be revisited and that new issues are likely to be challenged by participants the easier it will be for policies and practices to be constructively examined and modified if necessary.

Representing the Marginalized

Participants in this study see themselves as representative of the marginalized; the marginalized are African Americans and others presumed by them to be operating at the fringe of the locus of power at their college. The overriding value construct that permeates analyses and decisions made by participants is that of equity of results. They want to be assured that the policies, practices, procedures, and processes of their colleges not only take into account the interests of everyone that might be affected when formulated, but also result in fair, inclusive results that are transformative if necessary.

To the extent that fellow trustees understand that participants are not necessarily in disagreement with the substance of a particular policy or practice that they challenge, the easier it will be for participants and other trustees to solve problems. However, sometimes participants are in disagreement because of

possible weaknesses or limitations inherent in the policies or practices as they pertain to a particular group or groups; a weakness or limitation that is readily seen by an outsider. As trustees look for common ground with the participants rather than attributing participants' motives to emotion, ignorance, or personal aggrandizement, something that participants indicate is done less as time passes, stress on participants is reduced. Mutual understanding about issues enhances open, honest communication among other trustees and participants and minimize the level of resources needed to make and implement effective policies for the college.

In their commitment to represent those they think are marginalized, participants need to believe that staffing processes, program and curriculum emphases, and resource allocation practices are designed to bring about results that include everyone in the district and position the college to meet changing demographics in society. Should chancellors, presidents, and other administrators know that participants' decisions are significantly influenced by whether they believe existing or proposed administrative actions have taken into account the needs and expectations of marginalized college constituents, they will be better able to obtain cooperation from the participants in implementing plans or programs.

Likewise, if marginalized groups are aware that participants are keenly concerned that college policies and practices result in them being included, they will be able to solicit participants for assistance in addressing their concerns. This would preclude the need for them to mount disruptive, direct action against the

college or push unions or other organizations to take recalcitrant positions with the college, thereby saving college resources.

An inherent, perhaps overarching, implication of this study is that the community college as a social institution, now that it is increasingly including African Americans among its governors, is arguably in the best position of any institution in society to advance the democratic ideals of an open, educated society that supports the fullest development of all citizens. Before African Americans joined the ranks of community college governors, community colleges were the people's college. They were established to bring convenient, affordable higher education to local communities. However, it is evident that the presence of African American community college trustees more directly links community colleges to those on the margins. For example, African American trustees promote non-conventional approaches to college staffing, beginning with the chief executive officer.

Because all trustees and administrators participate in the process of adapting the programs of their college to the needs of the community, it is not easy to parse the specific impact African American trustees have on making their college's sensitivity to the needs and interests of constituents, including marginalized individuals and groups. However, the symbolic presence of African Americans, as well as members of other minority groups and women among the ranks of community college trustees undoubtedly influences the attitudes, perspectives, and behaviors of other trustees, administrators, interests groups, and community constituents. Issues that are *prima facie* not the province of higher

education, but are important to constituents, such as developmental education, English as a second language, and job training, are given serious consideration because the community college is not just a classical academic institution; it is a new kind of institution that addresses the full range of needs that individuals have to become productive citizens. New, innovative ideas and process pertaining to democratizing society have a natural home in the community college.

Leadership and Service

Every community college trustee board is unique. The structure, scope of authority, and overall governance dynamic of each board is influenced by many factors. Principal influences on how a community college trustee board operates are a state's community college governance structures; a state's funding formula for community colleges; whether the trustees are elected or appointed; the nature of the community in which the college is located; and the operating relationships among the trustee board, administrators, labor organizations, and students.

Regardless of which factors influence the operation of a community college board, the normal flow of power and control of a board is hierarchal, from the top down. In some cases trustees are at the very top, bound only by their college's charter and prevailing statutes; in other cases, trustees exercise power and control within a broader authority and control structure. In either structure, individual trustees must learn to be negotiators and be able to shape the dynamic of their boards operation to meet their needs if they are to be effective.

Participants in this study have long experience in working in nonprofit organizations where collaboration and participatory decision-making are prized.

They bring to their trustee roles a leadership perspective that looks for input from as wide a spectrum as possible. As nominal outsiders, they seek to distribute power and authority as broadly as possible and democratize decision making as much as possible. They view themselves as servants, not lords. Therefore, other trustees, chancellors and presidents, and others who deal with them would be well advised to recognize that they are as concerned with democratizing the governance system itself as they are with exercising any individual power and authority they may have. An understanding of this aspect of participants' behavior will make it easier for others to consciously approach the development and implementation of policies and practices in a way that reduces friction with the participants.

Implications for Further Research

This study is limited in that it dealt only with qualitative data about the lived experiences and perceptions of selected African American community college trustees. It provides insight into and understanding of the motives and values that underlie their decision-making as trustees. Findings of this study may be used to authenticate a pattern of perceptions of similarly situated African American leaders.

It would be helpful to prospective trustees, community college administrators, appointing authorities, researchers, and others to know more about the individuals who serve as community college trustees, especially African American trustees. This study revealed that in fundamental ways, participants in this study perceive themselves to be like other trustees, but with obligations and responsibilities that go beyond those of non-African American trustees.

Participants in this study are not only leaders of the institutions they serve; they are also highly regarded persons in their communities. Participants in this study are all over fifty years of age; initially formed their worldviews and basic attitudes about higher education before community colleges became as accessible and as important as they are in America's education system; grew up in a society that tolerated racial discrimination in education and excluded African Americans from institutional leadership roles; and became public figures before the steep growth in Americas' minority population. Therefore, further research would contribute to knowledge about the character of African Americans participation in community college governance. Additional research should include areas listed below.

An examination of the leadership styles of African American trustees would be helpful in determining whether the preferred participatory, conciliatory, democratic inclined style of participants in this study is the dominant leadership style among African American trustees. In political and business arenas, African American leaders show a diversity of leadership styles, including autocratic, dogmatic behavior that abrogates cooperative relationships with colleagues. Because the effectiveness of a community college trustee board depends a great deal on the relationships among trustees and the relationships individual trustees have with other constituents, awareness of the range of leadership styles of African American trustees could be instructive.

An examination of the power sharing perspectives African American trustees bring to their trustee roles in situations in which African Americans constitute a majority on the trustee board would be helpful in learning whether the

governance dynamic, including the political aspects of community involvement, would be different than when African Americans are in a distinct minority, as is the case for four participants in this study. Although they are nominal outsiders, participants in this study occupy space at the locus of governance power at their colleges. They feel obliged to insure input from all quarters, especially from those who have little or no voice in policy setting and decision-making. It is problematic whether those in the majority, regardless of their shared experience of exclusion, can be empathetic standard bearers for those who feel left out. Therefore, greater knowledge about how power and place inform priorities and inclusion of outside concerns would be helpful.

An examination of the similarities and differences between the lived experiences of African American trustees, as was the case for this study, and trustees of other minority groups would be instructive in learning whether the race, ethnicity, or culture of trustees are of equal significance in understanding trustee behavior. In this study, race served as the portal to insights into participants' intentions, motivations, and values in their roles as trustees. Participants in this study take pride in being the champion of groups and individuals who have little influence on policies and practices at their colleges. They believe that others expect them to be the supporter of the voiceless because they are African Americans and understand what it is like to be on the outside. It is easy to believe that African Americans and other minorities have a common interest in wanting to transform institutional protocols and practices to make them more accommodating to minorities. It would be helpful to anyone interested in projecting the future of

community colleges to know whether African American and other minority trustees share similar perceptions of the issues needing attention and the preferred methods of dealing with them.

An examination of the similarities and differences between the operating styles of African American trustees born before 1965 and African American trustees born after 1965 would be instructive in understanding how assimilated African American trustees are on their boards. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, PL 88-352, made it illegal to discriminate against and segregate out persons on the basis of race. African Americans born after 1965 have developed a worldview and had a total life experience in a society in which it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of race; participants in this study experienced a segregated society. Also, since 1965, community colleges have significantly increased in importance as institutions of higher education and play a crucial role in providing education to African Americans, 43% of African Americans attending college, attend community colleges (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002) and others who need the educational convenience of a community college. Participants in this study are pioneers among African American institutional leaders and bring lived experiences to their trustee roles that trustees born after 1965 can never have. Participants in this study are consciously not assimilated into the governance paradigms of their boards. They are acculturated as Americans and as African Americans; they are bicultural. They also experience a temporal reality that includes a time when African Americans were excluded from being community college trustees. Institutions and individuals that work with African American

trustees would benefit from knowing whether the values, motives, and priorities of young African American trustees differ from those of older African American trustees.

Finally, it would be desirable for research pertaining to community college trustees to include African Americans as a sub-category for data analysis purposes. This was not the case for studies reviewed for this study. An African American category, like gender, age, and social status, can be instructive in characterizing, interpreting, and drawing inferences from findings about community college trustees.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Interview Questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Lets start by you telling me how you came to be a trustee.
2. Describe your general background: family, education, community service, professional organization involvement, how long you have lived in this area, etc.
3. What is your career, work, occupational background?
4. Are there any connections, parallels or crosswalks between your profession or past occupations and your role as a trustee?
5. What are the principal influences that have shaped your values and perspectives and play a significant role in guiding your actions?
6. Will you describe the governance and management structure of your college?
7. How do you characterize the relationship between the board of trustees and the president or the chancellor?
8. What are the general relationships among board members?
9. How well do you think the faculty, staff, students, and general community know who the trustees are and what they do?
10. What it is like being an African American trustee?
11. What are the major issues facing your college?
12. How do you think the major issues facing your college should be addressed?
13. What are the major issues facing community colleges in general?
14. How do you think the major issues facing community colleges should be addressed?
15. Starting from when you first became a trustee until now, describe your experience as a trustee?

16. Talk about your most trying and challenging experiences?
17. What have been the highlights of your experience as a trustee?
18. What have been your most disappointing experiences?
19. In which areas and in what ways have you made a difference?
20. If you could go back, knowing what you know now, what things would you have done differently?
21. Describe your influence on the board now and how it has grown or diminished over the years?
22. What initiatives, programs or priorities have you promoted at your college that would likely not have been promoted if you had not been on the board of trustees?
23. What initiatives, programs, or priorities have you blocked or caused to be significantly modified that are likely to have moved forward if you had not been on the board of trustees?
24. Characterize the relationships the board of trustees has with state and local political bodies and officials and how they influence you as a trustee?
25. How do you characterize the racial climate in your community and at your institution?
26. How do you characterize the racial climate on your board?
27. How does the racial climate in the community, at the institution, and on your board affect the way you operate as a trustee?
28. Can you describe any board of trustee actions, positive or negative, that were influenced by race?
29. How would it be helpful or harmful if your board were more racially diverse?
30. Talk about the ways the experiences of African American trustees differ from the experiences of trustees who are not African American?

31. Are there in fact or expected obligations and responsibilities that African American trustees have that trustees who are not African American do not have?

Appendix B – Informed Consent Document

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Voice of Outsiders Within: Lived Experiences of African American Community College Trustees
Principal Investigator: Dr. George Copa, School of Education
Research Staff: George A. Hendrix

PURPOSE

This is a dissertation research study. The purpose of this research study is to learn about the experiences and perceptions of African American community college trustees in their roles as trustees. The study will investigate the cross-cultural factors associated with governing a community college from the perspective of African American trustees. The study is expected to reveal patterns, themes, and insights into the experiences of African American community college trustees. Knowledge gained from this study will contribute to foundational data available to prepare African American and non-African American trustees to work together more effectively, to prepare presidents and other administrators to work constructively with African American trustees, and to help prospective African American trustees prepare for and serve as community college trustees. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, what you will be asked to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not. This process is called “informed consent”. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

We are inviting you to participate in this research study because you are an experienced African American community college trustee who is in a position to provide the kind of information need to make this study meaningful. Virtually nothing is known about the experiences and perceptions of African American community college trustees. This study will contribute to literature pertaining to African Americans and community college governance and leadership.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate, your involvement will last for approximately eight weeks during March, April, and May, 2003. During this period you will be interviewed at least three times. The first two interviews will be face-to-face, in-depth interviews that are expected to last approximately two hours each and be separated by approximately 24 hours. The third interview will be by telephone and follow the second interview by three to five weeks. If necessary, a fourth telephone interview will follow the third by two to three weeks.

The following procedures are involved in this study.

In early March, you will be contacted by telephone by George Hendrix, the researcher, to inquire about your willingness and availability to participate in this study. Should you express an interest, George Hendrix will send you an Informed Consent Document that must be signed and returned. He will call you to answer any questions while reviewing the Informed Consent Document.

On receipt of the signed Informed Consent Document, George Hendrix will contact you to schedule the first two interviews.

Based on the agreed upon interview schedule, George Hendrix will meet with you for interviews one and two.

Three to five weeks following the second interview, George Hendrix will contact you by telephone to follow up on the first two interviews. The purpose of the follow-up interview will be to clarify, verify, and if appropriate expand information transcribed from the first two interviews.

RISKS

The possible risks associated with participating in this research project are as follows.

Risk to you for participating in this study are minimal since your participation will be known only to you and George Hendrix, the researcher, who will keep confidential the source of all information shared by you and other participants in the study in order to avoid jeopardizing your relationships with your colleagues or anyone else. You will be assigned a pseudonym and all information obtained from you will be attributed to that name. In addition, pseudonyms will be given to your institution and its location.

BENEFITS

There will be no personal benefit for participating in this study. However, the researchers anticipate that, in the future, society may benefit from this study by helping those interested in becoming or currently serving as community college trustees better understand some of the cross-cultural issues, challenges and influences that affect African American community college trustees as they render service as trustees.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs for participating in this research project.

You will not be compensated for participating in this research project.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of participation in this research project will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies involving human subjects) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. It is possible that these records could contain information that personally identifies you. A pseudonym will be assigned to you and all information obtained from you or related to you will be associated with that pseudonym. Your identity will be known only to George Hendrix, the researcher. All written and recorded information, including interview notes, gathered during this study will be kept in a locked storage cabinet accessible only to George Hendrix. George Hendrix will personally transcribe all interview tapes. All gathered data will be destroyed upon completion of George Hendrix's dissertation. In the event of any report or publication from this study, your identity will not be disclosed. Results will be reported in a summarized manner in such a way that you cannot be identified.

Audio Recording

By initialing in the space provided, you verify that you have been told that audio recordings will be generated during the course of this study. Interviews will be recorded so that an accurate and complete account of the interviews will be available to George Hendrix, the researcher, during the analysis of the data and the writing of his dissertation. On the recording, you will be referred to by an assigned pseudonym. Only George Hendrix will have access to the recordings and when he is not using them they will be stored in a secure cabinet. George Hendrix will personally transcribe the tapes. The tapes will be erased when George Hendrix has completed his dissertation or by May 1, 2004, whichever comes first.

_____ Participants initials

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you agree to participate in this study, you may stop participating at any time. During the interviews, you are free to skip any question that you prefer not to answer. If you decide not to take part, or if you stop participating at any time, your decision will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. Should you withdraw from the study before it is completed, data already obtained from you will be integrated into data obtained from other participants and used in the study results.

QUESTIONS

Questions are encouraged. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:

Dr. George Copa
541-737-8201
copag@orst.edu
School of Education
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97339

Or

George Hendrix
503-281-9900
a-zebra@a-zebra.com
P.O. Box 4074
Portland, OR 97208

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Coordinator, at (541) 737-3437 or by e-mail at IRB@oregonstate.edu or by mail at 312 Kerr Administration Building, Corvallis, OR 97331-2140.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed):

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

RESEARCHER STATEMENT

I have discussed the above points with the participant or, where appropriate, with the participant's legally authorized representative, using a translator when necessary. It is my opinion that the participant understands the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this research study.

(Signature of Researcher)

(Date)