

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE BLACK CHURCH: BARRIERS
TO AND EMPOWERMENT OF CLERGYWOMEN
IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

By

Cynthia B. Bragg

Submitted to the

Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

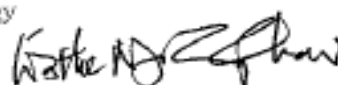
the Requirements for the Degree

of Doctor of Philosophy

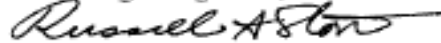
In

Sociology

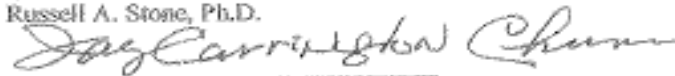
Chair:



Esther Ngan-ling Chow, Ph.D.



Russell A. Stone, Ph.D.



Jay Carrington Chunn, Ph.D.



Dean of the College

August 4, 2011

Date

2011
American University
Washington, D.C. 20016

© COPYRIGHT

BY

Cynthia B. Bragg

2011

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

DEDICATION

For my mother

Gladys Lavetta Bragg

and in memory of my father

the late Robert L. Bragg

WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN THE BLACK CHURCH: BARRIERS
TO AND EMPOWERMENT OF CLERGYWOMEN
IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

BY

Cynthia B. Bragg

ABSTRACT

This exploratory research study investigates present-day issues with particular emphasis on ordination of women facing the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). Examination of both past and present leadership models in this denomination is also addressed. The research focuses on how the issue of ordination is affecting churchwomen’s agency in relation to clergymen’s full status positions in the church. Essential to this investigation are barriers impacting churchwomen who feel they have been “called” to ministry. Challenges become apparent to churchwomen when considering constitutional laws and biblical interpretations versus equality in church practice and governance. While the literature on women in ministry is advancing, limited research has addressed the COGIC with particular emphasis on women’s leadership and the issue of ordination. I attempt to fill the gap in terms of research specific to leadership models more appropriate for church governance in style and functionality.

Interviews with 70 respondents provided rich data revealing sensibilities affecting respondents' impressions of the present state of church affairs and leadership roles specific to churchwomen. Interviewees consisted of pastors, elders, missionaries, First Ladies, a senior mother, and deacons. My data revealed the existence of patriarchy which intersected with structures that further advanced women's subjugation in a system of governance. Structures supporting the "glass ceiling" were experienced by churchwomen who attempted to obtain clerical leadership positions. Challenges center on a needed change in policy, biblical interpretations, and more representation in terms of inclusion of women in the decision-making process of the church.

My theoretical framework specifically focuses on women-centered theories and theologies in order to give voice to churchwomen and strategies for self-empowerment. Gendered organization theory and black feminist thought also inform this research. It is believed by some researchers that black women have a unique need to speak on their own behalf due to their experiences of interlocking oppressions of race, class, gender, and sexuality. My findings suggest a need for churchwomen to focus on self-definition and collective agency by strengthening alliances with other religious groups. As a lifelong member of this denomination, my analysis of the data will also challenge the current ecclesiastical structure of the COGIC and call for a more equitable leadership model for churchwomen and clerics. Because so much involving governance is steeped in the history of this church, I argue for inclusivity of women who have been the sustaining force and sustenance of this denomination, at the highest levels of this church, comparable to clergymen.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The support of many individuals contributed to my completion of this dissertation. First, I would like to thank Dr. Esther Ngan-ling Chow, Chair of my dissertation committee for her tireless commitment to graduate students. She is truly a model to follow in her compassion, love, and excellence in academics. There are no adequate words to describe her support and encouragement throughout this research project. She will always remain cherished in my heart.

I wish to thank Dr. Russell Stone for his quiet yet continued support throughout this endeavor. In classes, he challenged me to become a more critical and analytical thinker. Building on this foundation, I transferred the knowledge and skills developed and applied them to my research. This was very beneficial in the findings chapters of my dissertation.

Dr. Jay Chunn's input to this study was a great contribution in expanding my knowledge on the concept of empowerment. His broad background and shared experiences in community outreach projects brought depth and wisdom to this research. He offered significant insights relative to my chapter on the empowerment of women in ministry. I was honored to have him serve on my committee as the outside academician.

The support of many other individuals is mentioned. My church family is comprised of caregivers for my mother and personal friends. The church family, in particular, prayed for me endlessly while I worked through stages of my research.

Godmother, Luberta James came to live in our home and cared for mother while I worked and attended classes at American University. My auntie, Mrs. Deloree Stargell and uncle, Reverend Alvin Stargell also took a “leave of absence” from their home in South Jersey and came to stay with my mother as caregivers while I continued work on my studies. My cousin, Patricia Edwards-Costen also spent days and nights at home caring for mother while I worked in Maryland. Cousin Gladys Stargell came to our rescue to help get my sister and I settled when we moved mother to Maryland to live with us. Dr. Harry Bass also assisted us with major moves involving transporting mother at various points and times. Their help was so appreciated.

Other caregivers helped in so many ways. Caregivers included were Mr. & Mrs. Cole, Scott Cole, Lillian Ochieng, Tysheia Brooks, Larry and Melinda Johnson, Ethel Dollson, Ethel McCoy, Ruth West, Mildred Joyner, James & Minerva Coleman, Victoria Phifer-Smith, the Chatman family, Ollie & Pamela Blackwell, Elder Gilbert Grant, Curtis Joyner, and Lance & Beliza Adams. Pastor Lawrence Powell and the Agape Church Family gave a memorable appreciation service in honor of our mother one day before the passing of my oldest brother, Elder Lester P. Bragg. This memory remains etched in our hearts of the Bragg Family.

I wish to thank Dr. Maurice St. Pierre, Chair of the Sociology & Anthropology Department at Morgan State University. He provided scheduling for my classes which gave me flexibility to handle issues regarding my professional and personal concerns. Information regarding the creation of knowledge has challenged

me to critically examine this concept. I was able to grasp a fuller understanding of this idea which I incorporated in my research.

The aid of Mrs. Sandra Linden, the administrative assistant for the sociology department at American University continues to go beyond the call of duty. Without her reminders of specific calendar dates and deadlines I probably would have experienced consequences that would have prohibited a smoother transition through the doctoral program. Editor Dana Lane and V. Karen McMahon's formatting expertise was priceless. Without the assistance of both Dana and Karen, completion of this research would have been an enormous undertaking. I wish to thank them from the bottom of my heart. Also, Dr. Leonard Lovett, the foremost scholar in Black Holiness Pentecostalism, provided significant information relevant to my chapter highlighting the history and emergence of Black Holiness Pentecostalism in reference to the denomination being studied. Carl Turnipseed, Reverend Oglessa Gowder, Dr. Alyncia Bowen, Howard Belton, Drs. Laura Toussaint and Steve Hamilton are my long-time friends who believed in me and never stopped supporting me in their own personal ways. I am blessed to have such loving and special friends.

Lastly, my brother, Reverend Alvin L. Bragg continues the emotional and spiritual support I needed to endure until completion of this project. His prayers meant so much to me. My sister, Dr. Willie A. Bragg was there for me—in the bad times and in the good times. Her love and support surrounds me daily. Having a loving family and support has truly been a tremendous blessing to me for which I am eternally grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| ABSTRACT | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | iv |
| LIST OF TABLES | ix |
| Chapter | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS | 19 |
| 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 52 |
| 4. WHERE ARE THE CHURCHWOMEN? LEADERSHIP AND THE CHURCH | 64 |
| 5. WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH—BARRIERS | 85 |
| 6. BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP: ORDINATION OF WOMEN | 98 |
| 7. SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP AND SHARED MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP | 124 |
| 8. CHURCHWOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS | 147 |
| 9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS | 169 |
| Appendix | |
| A. LETTER TO CHURCHWOMEN/CLERGYMEN..... | 176 |
| B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS | 177 |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| C. INTERVIEW GUIDE | 178 |
| D. INTERVIEW DATA | 180 |
| REFERENCES | 184 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 5.1 | Age Distribution by Gender in the Sample (Total sample=70)..... | 86 |
| A.1 | Interviewee Data | 180 |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Some historical references to “the Black Church” characterize it as a social institution termed “the Negro Church” (Frazier and Lincoln 1974; Mays and Nicholson 1969; Woodson 1972) which maintained some vestiges of African social cohesion and religious practices in the “invisible institution,”—black religion under slavery. Initially, the “Negro Church” was comprised of proselytized Negro slaves by Methodists and Baptists and those who adapted to Christianity forming Negro “congregations” while under white supervision. Separate black churches organized under black leadership was established during the 1700s and early 1800s and “patrolled” by the white ruling class. Ultimately, the Black Church made up of independently organized and operated churches which emerged subsequent to the founding of the Free African Society (established by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones).

Institutionalization of the Black Church in the United States of America represented the presence of a strong ecclesiastical organization in defiance to a long history of oppression which had denied black men full manhood and black women their womanhood. The newly organized church, specifically, the indigenous church of the black religious community, witnessed a presumed brief period of “overt” liberation to succumb to social injustice within its own ranks. Women who belonged

to black churches supported the social, political, economic and religious agendas set forth by ruling clergymen while being restricted to the traditional roles dictated by male authority. Giddings (1984) reports that within the civil rights movement where black churches functioned as the institutional and organizational center, decision-making roles for women were nonexistent. Civil rights activist Ella Baker affirmed that in view of her “status” within the movement, the role of women was one of taking orders—not providing leadership. Barnett (1996) reports that although Baker was considered a quintessential organizer of the civil rights movement, men who were ministers or heads of offices held the highest ranking leadership positions.

Various researchers argue against the gender-stratified manner in which men occupy positions of power and prestige while women maintain secondary, subordinate ones within religious congregations (Allen 2005; Calhoun-Brown 1999; Carpenter 2001; Cone 1993; Felder 1984; Giddings 1984; Grant 1989; Gilkes 1985; Griffin 1989; Hardy 2007; Hopkins 2002; Jones 1977; Riggs 2003; Sanders 1997; Wallace 1975; Wiggins 2005). A “sexist” religion means that it privileges men and male experience as superior and devalues or denigrates those of women as inferior” (Peach 2002:2). The exclusion of women from occupying significant roles in the church has resulted in their absence of voice and visibility in ecclesiastical conclaves. In particular, the roles of women in reference to the Black Church have been prescribed by clerics delimiting churchwomen’s authority and leadership. Thus, my research seeks to address the questions: By what manner would churchwomen and churchmen share ministerial leadership in the Church of God in Christ? Why are so

few churchwomen in leadership positions in the Black Church such as the Church of God in Christ?

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) is one of seven major historic black denominations that were organized along with other black denominations such as the Baptist (e.g., National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.) near the turn of the twentieth century (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Like most churches, women maintain numerical dominance yet they are scarce in positions of leadership. Despite their subordinate positions, COGIC women have organized one of the most powerful Women's Department of any black denomination. Gilkes (1985) points out that the enterprising agency of these women has enabled them to carve out "spheres of influence" (despite restrictions such as ordination) and function in a cooperative mode with male clerics while struggling against structures of subordination based on gender.

While the literature on studies dealing with the roles of women in the Black Church is limited, this study seeks to add to the developing body of research having a woman-centered approach to the study of women, religion and the church. Moreover, because there is scarce research specific to examination and analyses of the Black Church as a gendered organization, this inquiry will fill the gap regarding research seeking to get a more informed view of the social processes involved with this institution and the structural barriers limiting women's leadership positions.

In view of my conceptualization of the COGIC as a gendered organization, gendered organizational theory, black feminist theory, leadership theory and womanist theology also informs this research. Gendered organization theory posits

men's domination over women therefore subjecting them to subordination and a dis-empowered state. Black feminist theory challenges women to articulate life experiences, thus speaking from their own particular standpoint. Leadership theory focuses on support or lack of support of women in ministry. Womanist theology maintains that voice is necessary in a bold manner for theologizing a woman-centered biblical tradition for ministry within the church.

Main Research Questions

More often than not, the logic of qualitative research is inductive rather than deductive. As a qualitative study, my research questions are mainly exploratory in nature, lending to descriptions of situations, interactions, and interpretation of meanings in religious contexts. A Qualitative method (interviews) was utilized to answer my research questions as listed:

1. What are the current leadership positions in the church for women? Why are so few churchwomen in leadership positions in the Black Church such as the Church of God in Christ? What are the barriers prohibiting churchwomen from acquiring full status leadership positions in the church?
2. Why do churchwomen seek ordination and pastoral positions? How are issues of sexism and classism affecting ordination of women?
3. In what ways can black churches be changed to develop or facilitate a "symbiotic" relationship with both churchwomen and clergymen sharing ministerial leadership in terms of church structure, policy, and governance?
4. What are the future prospects for churchwomen's leadership and their empowerment in the church?

Background and Rationale

During the antebellum period and following The Emancipation Proclamation declaring “black freedom,” African-American women in particular would become all too familiar with exclusionary practices levied against them. A considerable number would take on leadership positions in the social and religious arena, however, but not without battles against racism, sexism, and classism as well. For example, white political supremacy in the South inhibited passage of the Nineteenth Amendment until 1920 which “legally” gave all American women the right to vote. For most African-American women, maintaining the ballot would entail an intense struggle involving participation in local, regional, and national women’s suffrage activities, and clubs affiliated in state federations several following generations.

The women’s suffrage movement beginning at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 took on several phases which had an effect on the changing status of black women. Actively involved in suffrage activities, they experienced a “waiting” period when a split in the movement necessitated prioritizing suffrage for black men ahead of black women. Because Frederic Douglass (a woman suffragist) argued that the right to vote was paramount to black men, women opted not to jeopardize this right, subsequently supporting what was called the “Negro suffrage” side of the debate (Brown, Hine, and Terborg-Penn 1993:1125). Growing societal pressures stemming from strained race relations impacted the movement causing black women to establish their own clubs such as the Phyllis Wheatly Club in order to have a larger voice in suffrage matters.

Many women suffragists assumed leadership positions in the social and political realm as well as the religious. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, organized the black women's club movement in the state of Illinois and Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Bethune-Cookman College, was a social justice activist and religious leader. The September 1963 edition of *Ebony Magazine* notes that Bethune's "Last Will and Testament" epitomizes her moral and spiritual orientation:

- I leave you faith. Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without faith, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible...
- I leave you racial dignity. I want Negroes to maintain their human dignity at all costs. We, as Negroes, must recognize that we are the custodians as well as the heirs of a great civilization...
- I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow men. The problem of color is world-wide...

To a large extent, the struggles and life experiences of pioneer African American women, parallel churchwomen's experiences in the institutionalized Black Church. An overview of the religious experiences of black women chronicles their participation in and exclusion from the religious life and practices of the church worldwide. Racial oppression, sex discrimination, social injustice and patriarchy, that is, the power and political system which men use by force, law, or tradition to subsume women everywhere under men (Rich 1976), in addition to systems/structures of domination, are embedded in church and society. Despite these obstacles of oppression, women remain unrelenting in their commitment to the church. Sojourner Truth was adamant about women's rights as she was an activist propagating Methodist religiosity during the Great Awakening. Aimee Semple McPherson founded a Pentecostal Gospel movement that made her one of the most

celebrated evangelist of the twentieth century and Phoebe Palmer was instrumental in establishing a periodical which gained prominence in American Protestantism.

Women described as trailblazers in the religious, political, and social justice cause such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Anna Julia Cooper etched a distinct black feminist sociology in history (Lengermann and Brantley 1998) in response to challenges facing “freed” slaves during the post-Emancipation era. Cooper’s definition of the individual’s moral agency is centered in her theological stance articulated as persons possessing a divine spark or “urge-cell” compelling them toward overcoming injustices in the pursuit of freedom. A staunch advocate for women’s suffrage, Cooper believed education is the key to social equality for women and voice should be raised by women on their own behalf—no one should or could speak for the black woman.

Cooper’s theological and philosophical persuasions are a testament to many churchwomen’s experiences in the contexts of the religious life and practice of the black church. When independent black churches became fully established following the closing decades of the antebellum period, “black religion” remained essentially androcentric, patriarchal, sexist, gender stratified and segregated. Women were excluded from positions of leadership, authority, and power. Some women, however, who felt they were “called” to ministry forged ahead with their missionary work. Many became itinerant preachers such as Jarena Lee who was the first woman to petition the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church for authority to preach. Denied on her first attempt, Lee later returned and received endorsement from Bishop Allen who was presiding over the church at that time. Although the AME church

struggled with the issue of women preachers, many denominational leaders today continue to exploit women and prohibit their chances of obtaining leadership positions.

For this investigation, the Black Church is defined by Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) as those independent, historic, and totally black controlled denominations, which were founded after the Free African society of 1787 and which constituted the core of black Christians (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). These denominations consist of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church; the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E.Z.) Church; the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated (NBC); the National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated (NBCA); the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990:1).

The roles and statuses of women in the COGIC have changed significantly since the denomination's inception in 1907. Historical records note that the founder, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason acknowledged the strength and potential of women who could advance the work of the church and appointed them to positions of authority. Mason's plenipotentiary powers were unparalleled by any individual and he exercised it discreetly in all areas of the church. He can be viewed as a charismatic leader having a high degree of influence which is Max Weber's notion of ideal type charisma. However, his death ushered in a newly configured ecclesiastical structure consisting of a governing board and twelve bishops (Ross 1969). The arrangement positioned women subservient to clerics having leadership dictated by men. This configuration is mirrored in the viewpoint that "the power structures of

[COGIC churches] are control[ed] by a board of bishops and the prevalence of an independently organized women's work...where female leaders assume much authority, but with deference and loyalty to the bishops" (Shopshire 1975:144-145).

Gilkes (2001) notes that while the COGIC was in its embryonic stage, women leaders were called overseers—a term synonymous to men who presided over a given jurisdiction. She points out usage of this term, stating its Greek translation to mean "bishop." Upon her observation, "such usage implied that the founders of the [COGIC] and other denominations initially envisioned a church organized in parallel structures of both male and female overseers" (Gilkes 2001:55). Having appointed women overseers beside the men, one might conclude that the founder, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason's notion of church leadership to be egalitarian in nature, symbiotic in practice.

COGIC women have organized themselves forming a strong women's department and used their enterprising agency via education to create career pathways. Moreover, they have developed an economic base thus enabling them to work in cooperation with men, not in economic dependence on them. In this way, churchwomen command a degree of independence in relation to the dominant male constituency. While this stance commends the work of women, positions of authority, namely ordination of women, remains on hold. Issues of classism, sexism, and gender functioning as barriers to the (COGIC) will be a focus of this investigation.

Even in a context of structural subordination, Gilkes (2001) points out pioneer woman Lillian Brooks Coffey's use of agency to establish relationships with

prominent women. While serving as supervisor of the women's department, Coffey established a friendship with Mary McLeod Bethune whose protégé was Dr. Arenia C. Mallory, president of Saints Junior College in Lexington, Mississippi. This junior college was formally the COGIC undergraduate institution. Consonant with the notion in gendered organization theory that hierarchical organizational positions are almost entirely occupied by men (Acker 1990), some of the noted leaders of this denomination advanced to become bishops despite the fact that they were once students at Saints Junior College under the teacher/mentorship of Mallory during her presidency. She remained in a "lesser" role of leadership as compared to clergymen.

The COGIC Women's Department continues to work collaboratively with the cadre of men. Historically, many women have relinquished authority and ownership such as giving up the "fruits of their labor" upon the death of a leader by giving over churches to clergymen. More recently, however, some churchwomen have been reluctant to "hand over" churches in instances where women have labored beside their spouses. In a few exceptional cases, women have been ordained but without the authorization of the entire board of bishops. Ordination of women has only been deemed legitimate in situations where they will serve as chaplains in the service. However, with the continued influx of COGIC women entering seminaries, acquiring educational training, and acknowledging their call to leadership, it has become increasingly more difficult to "justify" not ordaining women. Some churchwomen are pastors of COGIC churches without the official endorsement of the governing board. It is noted here that women's invisibility and lack of full status positions of leadership is reflected in ecclesiastical structure.

Doctrinally, the COGIC is basically Trinitarian teaching the infallibility of scripture and recognizing church ordinances—communion, baptism, and feet washing. Its governmental structure is basically episcopal—that is, church governance by bishops, with the General Assembly being the legislative body. The governing board of the church consists of twelve bishops, (all men) a presiding (Senior) bishop, first and second to the presiding bishop, and nine other bishops making up the general board representing the states of Michigan, California, Virginia, New York, Wisconsin, and Louisiana, and Texas. Moreover, as reported in the *International Directory of the Church of God in Christ*, there are one hundred and thirty two jurisdictions within the fifty states (USA) which are all headed by bishops.

While the Church of God in Christ remains headed by clergymen who establish church rituals, beliefs, doctrine, and practices, their position and authority has remained, until more recently, largely unquestioned by the masses, including churchwomen who constitute the largest population in membership. The women's work in terms of church ministries is an outgrowth of the founder's vision who established four major departments—the Women's Department, Sunday School, Young Peoples Willing Workers (YPWW), and the Home and Foreign Mission, prior to his death and the agency of women who were instrumental in the development of various church auxiliaries.

A changing trend, however, has ushered in women who have prepared themselves in theological and professional training schools to take their place in church and society. As a lifelong member of the COGIC, I am part of this pool of aspiring professionals who are seeking self-empowerment while at the same time

desirous of being afforded opportunities of serving within the ranks of the church. I have lived the experience of a churchwoman serving and supporting this denomination. My father was pastor and founder of a COGIC church in New Jersey and presided over a district of approximately 10 churches. My mother was the First Lady and worked diligently alongside my father while serving as head of the women's department. All of the four siblings were active in the church. I am also known as a "PK", a preacher's kid who endured all of the scrutiny coming from parishioners while growing up in the church as most "PKs" do. As a licensed missionary, however, I am deeply committed to the mission of this church. Yet I am challenged in my own thinking about COGIC women in wondering what place can I take among the rank and file members and church clerics. What can I aspire to in terms of a leadership position since having been practically raised and "groomed" for service to others?

As the denominational membership continues to grow, this area of concern becomes more evident. Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) report that:

Church growth has been as phenomenal in the past twenty years as in the preceding forty. COGIC is currently the second largest of all the black Christian bodies, outranked by only the National Baptist Convention, Inc. The church has more than 10,000 clergy (pastors) and about 10,000 local churches, indicating an average congregation of 400 members. (p. 84)

This consternation of events has generated even more questions in relevance to churchwomen's "rightful" position within the church generally, and their place regarding church leadership in particular. My lived experience in the church reflects the lack of women in leadership positions evident by a tradition of male superiority, marginalization of women, and resistance toward their ordination. Moreover, the

continuing rise in women obtaining professional degrees pose a further threat to the male constituency of the church whose principle programs have relied disproportionately on churchwomen for their support and success. Inevitably, the question of the equality of women in authority and leadership vis-a`-vis male clerics will be a matter the COGIC will have to come to terms with—and hopefully resolve.

As women's roles within the COGIC continue to change, the issue of ordination remains unresolved. Some clergymen believe the question of ordination began with the flood of women graduates from Charles Harrison Mason Seminary located in Atlanta, Georgia—the denomination's only accredited seminary. Others conclude the matter is a consequence of societal changes, the emergence of “enlightened” theological perspectives, influences of feminism, acceptance of more liberal views regarding non-sexist attitudes of women in ministry—or a combination of all of the above.

Rationale for the Study

A qualitative study on this research topic is needed. Only scarce literature exists on the history of this church. Very limited materials are available on the founder who largely contributed to the total organization of the church which laid the foundation for governance and leadership. Limited records are available which capture the dynamics and change in governance from the historic church headed by the founder to the present-day church. Qualitative research on this denomination is extremely rare. One aim of this study is to utilize qualitative findings to get an in-depth understanding of how churchwomen and men view and experience leadership in this church—geographically in the Northeast, South, Mid-West and West. The

normative ideal that churchwomen conformed to in the past reverting back to tradition is no longer the case. Recent changes in reference to biblical interpretations and ideologies expressed by both women and men center attention on barriers affecting women's ordination. This study will add new knowledge pertaining to inequality in religious denominations. The research will also provide information for future researchers examining gendered organizations and church leaders considering gender justice as it relates to religious institutions.

Significance of the Study

The strength of a society, it is believed, comes from its institutions—religious and civil, to public institutions and their policies. Institutions are central to the “health” of civil society and play a key role in the sustenance of civic, religious, morals and values. Religious institutions are essential to a just and civil society. Present-day social issues such as homelessness, teen pregnancy, and gay rights affect societal institutions thus calling on our leaders' response and attention to address the needs of individuals in communities. Leaders function as moral agents in society and religious groups in addressing social matters, thus mirroring the principles of equality and social justice. Where there is injustice, there exists a need for justice.

Within the context of the church, just leaders have a moral and ethical obligation to maintain practices of fairness and good will as well as to address structures that perpetuate inequalities. My research explores practices of subordination of black churchwomen facing issues of exclusion by way of class, sex, and gender within the confines of the Black Church and the ruling leadership of men. This research also has implications for needed change in church policy, polity,

doctrine, and constitutional laws affecting governance in this denomination as well as for other religious congregations facing the same issues of inequality.

Since a few decades ago, organizational theories and research have been directed toward patriarchal society and gender issues which are a more recent addition to sociological research. Conceptualizing the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) as a gendered organization explores the possibility of contributing to the expanding scholarly dialogue on gendered organizations as it relates to religious institutions. Supporting research concerning the affects of gender on religious institutions is the Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) study pointing out gender issues within the COGIC, particularly the matter of ordaining women. My inquiry seeks to fill the gap in the literature on theoretical frameworks for studying churchwomen not only in the Black Church therefore making more apparent their concerns in reference to injustices.

In view of women's subordination in the church, present-day activism and continued support of religious congregations merit analyses. Despite women-dominated churches, full status leadership positions are predominantly occupied by male clerics. My study also seeks to add to the literature on inequality and feminist theories. Primary data on womanist thought is useful for theories on empowerment and theological reflections.

Much needed are the voices to be heard that come from African-American churchwomen who choose to make known their lived experiences in denominational churches. Consequently, formulating what I term "black feminist church thought," an accompaniment to womanist thought, would aid churchwomen in developing a

gender-based standpoint position (theory) focusing on gender relations within the hierarchical power relations/structures of the church, and articulated in particular settings. My study will provide more data that support structural and cultural forces that have shaped, and maintained, gender specific roles in the church. COGIC women's power is in their economic clout and numbers which when taken together cultivates a collective consciousness and shared standpoint. I argue that if the power vested in self-sacrificing could be transformed into a collective power, COGIC women could be frontline advocates for gender justice.

Following many years of social activism, Collier-Thomas (2010) points out that Protestant women began to realize a need for change to take place in religious institutions. In an effort to advance the cause of justice, women's activism in community-related organizations, such as the Church Women United (CWU) addressed issues of social reform and gender equality. Collier-Thomas's book has a chapter, "Woman power"—Religion, Race, Gender which I associate the term, "womanpower" with COGIC women who are in my view, women seeking to overcome barriers to leadership by their continued agency. In this way, women will be able to have a voice in the decision-making process involving the church and governance.

Limitation of the Study

One limitation of my study is that knowledge that is produced cannot be generalized to the larger population of the denomination—a case, the COGIC. This is characteristic of most qualitative research. Additionally, the results of my investigation can be easily influenced by the researcher's personal experiences. This

is evident since I am a lifelong member of this denomination. Data triangulation, use of multiple sources was utilized including personal interviews, archival materials, diaries, magazine articles, newspaper clippings, books, and denominational publications to strengthen the validity and truthfulness of the research. There is also the possibility of bias entering the data collection. I conducted the study in a manner that will make the interviewees as credible and objective as possible.

Organization of Dissertation Chapters

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of the historical as well as present-day literature relative to the Black Church, black religion, and the COGIC. This chapter also provides a review of the theoretical perspectives that provide the framework for my research. Chapter 3 presents my research methodology. In Chapter 4, “Where are the Churchwomen? Leadership and the Church,” I examine the history and genesis of the COGIC in comparison to its organizational structure today. Emphasis is placed on the importance of structure and history as well as structure and the COGIC in its “contemporary” mode. I explore barriers affecting churchwomen’s advancement in acquiring leadership positions in view of hierarchical church structures in Chapter 5, “Women’s leadership in the Church--Barriers.” In Chapter 6, “Barriers to Leadership: Ordination of Women,” I specifically examine factors such as biblical interpretations and constitutional laws negatively impacting the issue of ordination for women. This chapter also explores how some women have dealt with obstacles prohibiting ordination by pursuing alternative choices in terms of church leadership. In Chapter 7, “Symbiotic Relationship and Shared Ministerial leadership,” I discuss several models of leadership that are practiced in COGIC

churches including a “preferred” model more in line with contemporary thought.

Strategies for self and collective empowerment are addressed in Chapter 8,

“Empowerment and Future Prospects.” The “Summary and Conclusions” in Chapter

9, summarizes insights and judgments in reference to my vision of the future direction

of the COGIC particularly in view of its present structure and governance.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

An examination of black religion and its development is necessary in order to mark the genesis of the Black Church. This review includes a general overview of the first independent black congregations in the United States. The Church of God in Christ which is among one of the seven historic black denominations (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990) traces its origin to an interracial movement under the leadership of an African American minister (Alexander 2005; Bartleman 1980; Clemmons 1996; Lovett 1973; Nichol 1966; Smith 1990; Synan 1971; Tinney 1971). Current research in the field mainly provides descriptive materials regarding women's roles in this denomination but there are limited studies focusing on women's leadership in terms of agency/activism that provide substantive historical and theoretical import. Conceptualizing the Church of God in Christ as a gendered organization, my theoretical framework includes theories in relation to barriers that impact women's leadership and their empowerment.

Historical Overview of Black Religion and the Black Church

The "invisible institution," termed black religion under slavery, was carried out in various locations such as slave meetings in slave quarters, "brush arbors" (secluded thickets), plantation "praise houses" (dwellings set aside for slaves), and camp meetings (Raboteau 1978). The message espoused by slaves (assumed as

leaders) during secretly held gatherings focused on prayer and deliverance from the bondage of slavery. It was in these secret secluded quarters that slaves made Christianity part of their being.

During the slave era, women endured the oppression of slavery working in the fields managing extreme laborious duties as well as working in slave quarters for their families after a long day of toil. White (1999b) argues that slave women and men did not experience slavery the same way. Within the institution of racial slavery there existed two systems—one for women, the other for men. In particular, slave women were bound by the constraints of race, class, and gender, “triple jeopardy.” White discusses stereotypes ascribed to slave women noting them mainly for historical significance while debunking the myths associated with them. Slavery was an institution that exerted both social and sexual control over women—sexual exploitation of slave women was central to this institution (Giddings 1984).

Some of the first books which emerged in the 1970s addressing the distinctive experiences and roles of women in slavery are Gerda Lerner’s “Black Women in White America: A Documentary History” and other research citing “plantation mistresses” who lived on plantations among the slaves (Clinton 1983; Fox-Genovese 1988; Firor-Scott 1970). Each of the published works portrays how race, class, and gender shaped the experiences of these women and determined their identities.

Despite the extreme dehumanization and cruelty of slavery, the fact that slaves survived is a significant feat (Blassingame 1977; Genovese 1967). Acts of resistance by slave men and women were met with harsh punishment and sometimes death by slavemasters. The religious belief that in the eyes of God slaves had human worth

insulated them from completely having their womanhood and manhood destroyed. Slave religion was key to the notion of survival in that it created a psychological mindset necessary for having the recourse to a survival tradition involving future battles of racism in American society.

The earliest independent religious movements among Africans in America reflect survival themes (Ross 2003:2). Based on traditional religious affirmations of African Americans, survival themes center on the preeminence of life as a gift from God. Therefore, religious practice functions to sustain life. Liberation themes in Black religion associated with slave society where African American Christianity originated, reiterate themes of life and freedom for all mankind irrespective of race. Thus, one dimension of the concept of *racial uplift* was the utility of an ideology to raise the level of consciousness of blacks and to improve lives of the masses. Therefore, liberation themes coincide with freedom concerns affirming life practices to bring about social change.

Before slavery was abolished, the emergence of some black churches had taken place in America. For example, although evidence is sketchy, documents indicate that as early as the 1700s, the first church built for blacks was a Baptist church near Savannah, Georgia. However, claims of being the first are contested by another Baptist church in Virginia. Nevertheless, with the Civil War's end in 1865 organized black churches, particularly the Baptists, saw the need to establish programs for the newly emancipated slaves. Churches assisted slaves by way of agencies and associations while others established missions abroad in parts of Africa.

Initially, some slaves worshipped in churches of their slavemasters, however, the issue of racial discrimination led Richard Allen to organize the independent African-American Methodist Episcopal church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He successfully sued the Pennsylvania courts and secured independence from white Methodists for this congregation. As more independent black churches were established, however, issues such as power struggles, schisms, internal divisions, tenure/term limitations for the president, doctrinal issues, and controversies involving ownership and control over National Congresses weakened churches structurally and spiritually. Inevitably, following the closing decades of the antebellum period, independent black churches' "black religion" became essentially androcentric, patriarchal, sexist, gender stratified, and gender segregated.

"The Black Church" which replaces the older terminology used by scholars, "the Negro Church," are the seven totally independent, black controlled, historic denominations founded after the Free African Society of 1787. For the most part, memberships in black churches grew following the Civil War and Reconstruction. Since its inception, membership in COGIC churches has grown significantly spreading to countries all over the world. Charles Harrison Mason, founder of this denomination and whose parents were former slaves led this denomination from its humble beginnings to a religious group known globally.

Barriers Impacting Leadership

Under the leadership of founding patriarch Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, women served in positions not having a "down-graded" status as compared to men. Mason sought to elevate the leadership positions of women equal to that of men.

Following his death, however, a new structure for church governance was instituted changing the positioning and status of COGIC women (Clemmons 19996; Cornelius 1973; Ross 1969). While women continued to work in ministries involved in the church, increasing numbers are becoming disenchanted with policy and structures prohibiting them from acknowledging their “call” to ministry ¹. Rejecting the notion that only men receive a call to ministry, womanist theology offers more than a myopic view of biblical interpretations from Scripture and tradition centered on men only (Cannon 1996; Gilkes 1999; Grant 1989; Williams 1986;). Womanist theology affirms black women’s place in the world taking serious the notion of being made in the image of God. It recognizes patriarchal systems as problematic and embraces the practice of inclusivity.

The female “call” to ministry of many COGIC women parallels pioneer women from other denominations who were the religious, activists, and educational leaders of their era—Mary McLeod Bethune, Florence Randolph, Nannie Burroughs, and Harriet Tubman (“Moses”), to name a few. Although scarce references may be found, some writers note the determination of women who pursued their “call” to a particular ministry (Loewenberg and Bogin 1976).

Sociologists Patricia Lengermann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley pose three questions which I paraphrase and which parallel my research: “And what about the women?” “Why then is all this as it is?”“How can [women] change [the Church of God in Christ] to facilitate a “symbiotic” relationship with clergymen in leadership

¹A “call” is defined as an experience of the Divine, influencing one’s conscience and making known a God-given mission for service in the Church.

and governance? Bell Hooks' (1990:15) stance in reference to black women is viewed through the lens of Paulo Freire who states: "We cannot enter the struggle as objects in order to later become subjects." The declaration undergirds a basic assumption that I have regarding the position needed for women in the COGIC (and the Black Church) who have acknowledged their "call," mission, and purpose in life.

Patriarchal structures, sexism, classism, and gender issues are barriers to developing a symbiotic relationship in COGIC churches. Gendered roles ideology, such as the proper "place" (missionary, for example) for women are noted in the Church of God Official Manual. The "place" and status of women remains subordinate to men. Designations such as "men's space" (pulpit) and the pew remains as women's place has been traditionally. Women have been the backbone of the Black Church (Allen 2005; Collier-Thomas 2010; Gilkes 1985; Hoover 1993; Riggs 2003; Wiggins 2005;) but the term has reference to location rather than function—what is really meant is that women should be kept in the background to work as supporters (Grant 1993). Churchwomen bear the responsibility and burden of "triple jeopardy"—work in the secular world, caring for the family, and church work. Although black women formed the backbone of the civil rights movement, they served in the background only to take orders from men (Giddings 1984).

The base of *structural* power of the COGIC is positioned in the hands of the clergy (Gilkes 1985; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Churchwomen are bound by the Constitution and literally interpreted Scriptures that clerics use in support of their positions. While it is not always verbalized by some clergymen, apostolic succession for leadership is the norm—that is, the predominance of men in the ruling class.

Sometimes this concept in reference to leadership is rooted in the biological differences between the sexes. The subjugation of women under male domination according to Nancy Chodorow questions the biological claims of difference and she rejects, for example, Freud's assertion of women's inferior development of the self and the Oedipus experience. And from anthropological evidence, it is noted that at a certain time women's brains become smaller than men. Subsequently, the sex role of women is centered on devotion to a life of family dedication characterized by what he determines as the affective function (women) and the intellectual function (men).

Empowerment

In view of the barriers facing COGIC women, they continue to empower themselves individually and collectively creating strategies for change. COGIC women have built a strong women's department as a result of their enterprising agency (Clemmons 1996; Gilkes 2001) and some claiming this department is among the most powerful in any Christian denomination (Collier-Thomas 2010). Numerically and economically, COGIC women continue to advance, however, they remain restricted in terms of ministry due to power structures. The oppression of women in ministry encompasses various elements—the invisibility of women “theologizing” and included in knowledge production; barring women from ordination; androcentric practices, preaching, and teaching; and the authenticity of women's “call” to ministry questioned.

More recently in this denomination, churchwomen have pursued professional careers, established churches as non-ordained pastors, formed coalitions and collectivities, and further advanced themselves economically for self empowerment.

Some male theologians recognize sexism as an oppressive force thus hindering the ministerial work of women in churches. Jacqueline Grant (1989:206) reports that in James Cone's essay, *New Roles of Women in the Ministry: A Theological Appraisal*, he challenges the Black Church to divest itself of traditional oppressive attitudes towards women. McKenzie (1996) notes that theologians James Cone and Cain Felder support egalitarianism and a more proactive stance regarding women's involvement.

Believing in a biblical womanist theology calling forth what she terms the "Daughters of the Conference," McKenzie (1996:43) is making reference to Jarena Lee, Armanda Berry Smith, and other contemporary clergywomen who will be deliberate in assuming ministerial roles. In order to avoid theological truth "patented" by male authority which Gerda Lerna claims to be an "androcentric fallacy," McKenzie "reconstructs" a faith community. She contextualizes theology thus highlighting experiences of women such as Salome, Phoebe, Deborah, and Mary Magdelene and places them in association with the liberation of her contemporaries from marginalization. Lincoln and Mamiya's (1990) dialectic of universalism and particularism has utility here because the universalism of the Christian message is essential to women as well as men taking into account the particularism of a history of sexism within the Black Church.

What COGIC women are doing to advance the empowerment of women, Wollstonecraft (1967) and John Stuart Mills (1869) suggested centuries ago. As a feminist and proponent of women's rights, Wollstonecraft addresses elements regarding education, gender differences and women's oppression in *A Vindication of*

the Rights of Women. It can be surmised that feminist elements became a part of discourse among feminist thinkers which began during the Enlightenment period with individuals such as John S. Mill, Condorcet, and Mary Wollstonecraft. Freedom should entail liberation from the dominance of men. Wollstonecraft recommends that women get a “proper education” to get a “Well-trained mind.” She supports the independence of women and believes that any weaknesses women might possess can be attributed to circumstance, lack of education and social position. The acquisition of knowledge and education would transform the social environment and eradicate racial and class differences. Wollstonecraft was dedicated to the ideals of human excellence, human rights, equality of the sexes, and the attainment of independence for women through their conscientious efforts enabling them to take their rightful position in society.

In a similar vein, Mill (1869) disclaims the stereotypical label attached to women characterizing them as being inferior to men. He also argues that oppression of women is evident in marriage and the family. The element of obedience in spousal relationships (e.g., wives, obey your husband) suggests that the division of labor between the sexes compliments each other. The obedience of wives to husbands is sometimes used as, that is, man’s paid labor is consonant with women being engaged in the domestic sphere.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

When viewing the COGIC from a woman-centered perspective, the selected theories look at churchwomen through the lens of feminist and womanist researchers. The following theories are utilized to inform this research.

Feminist Theory

Organized feminism did not really materialize until the first Women's Conference was held in Seneca Falls, America, in 1848 where 300 women and men signed the Declaration of Sentiments—a plea for the end of discrimination against women in all spheres of society. Some pioneer contributors to the development of feminist consciousness and women's rights with regard to education, abolition of slavery, and women's suffrage were Emmeline Pankhurst, one of the founders of the suffragette movement, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Blackwell, Julia Ward Howe, Harriet B. Jones, Carrie Williams Clifford, and the Grimke Sisters. In a speech Sojourner Truth delivered in 1867, *Keep the Thing Going While Things Are Stirring*, recapping her experiences during slavery she states, “I used to work in the field and bind grain, keeping up with the cradler, but men doing no more, got twice as much pay...” White colonizers brought sexism from their European homeland to the Americas during the earliest stages of the slave trade since men, as laborers, were valued more than women. Institutionalized sexism would form the base of the American social structure along with racial imperialism (Hooks:15). Thus, some of the earliest records report structures of patriarchy and sexism as oppressive forces in the lives of black (and white) women.

John Stuart Mill's feminist publication (in collaboration with his wife) entitled *The Subjection of Women* was adopted by leaders of the suffrage movement and distributed at conventions because of its explication of women's position in society. This essay addressed issues of inequality encountered by women in areas such as law, religion, domestic life, education, vocations, marriage, and human rights.

Mill believed character attributes are instilled in females early in life. They are encouraged to define themselves by self-denial and sacrificial giving to both family and spouse, consequently, making this the focus of their affections. As a result, connections are tightly bound in this unit and social conditioning over time becomes the means by which women acquiesce to submissive roles. Subordination of one sex to the other causes women to become dependent upon men continuing what Mill terms “a primitive state of slavery.”

Early feminist thought initiated by the suffragette movement and proponents of feminism provided a foundation for the formulation of theory and advancing the notion of “women” not in an essentialist fashion—that is, as a unified term. As a result, the differences and diversities in experiences and context coupled with race and class have engendered differential standpoints and social locations therefore enabling women to speak with many different voices. In this instance, development of women’s movements and feminist consciousness followed thus recognizing feminism as a social and political movement focusing on the impact of race, class, and gender oppression even sexuality and physical ability upon the lives of women.

The focus and consciousness of women differed during the women’s movement of the 60s and 70s from the first woman’s rights movement of the early 1800s. Educating women and particularly securing the right for women to vote spawned the woman suffrage movement just like the civil rights movement of the early 1960s gave rise to the women’s second wave liberation movement. During this era, women’s concerns centering on their traditional roles in the private sphere, family, work, and the church changed in a more revolutionary fashion. Specific to

the church, Schneider and Schneider (1997) note that laywomen and clergywomen's thinking about themselves in relation to the church and synagogue became more woman-centered and even their perceptions about the nature of religion and theology. However, black women's isolation and exclusion from the mainstream of all movement events was expressed openly in a disconcerting way. Black women developed womanism, criticizing the feminist movement for racism, criticizing the civil rights movement for sexism, and add[ed] their concerns about class (Schneider and Schneider, 181).

When viewing society's ills through the lens of feminism, social and political structures, stratification, and other coercive means which abuse, disenfranchise, and disempower women in particular, become evident. Feminism has not been a single ideology. According to some researchers, the term "feminism" has a history linked to women's activism and the developing women's movement occurring in what is termed "waves" (Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1998; Ritzer 2000). The pioneer feminists' movement has generally been referred to as first-wave feminism focusing on the right of women's suffrage during the nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries and other issues such as education, marriage laws, and employment. Feminist and existentialist Simone de Beauvoir embraced "classical" feminist thought but her groundbreaking treatise, *The Second Sex* moved beyond traditional thought thus focusing on distinct categories of feminism characteristic of second wave thinking. Specifically, recognition of the exercise of power in various settings was a key element.

Second-wave feminism in America originated around the 1960s as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement focusing on independence and greater political activism to acquire economic equality between the genders, inclusion of women in traditionally men-dominated arenas, improvement of women's rights, and the recognition of lesbian women. Differences, however, existed in this movement among the various strands of feminisms. Third-wave feminism emerged in the 1990s, extending the definitional boundaries of gender and sexuality while incorporating post-structuralist interpretations. This wave of feminism critically examined the monolithic concept of "woman" and differences resulting from unequal distribution of goods and services based on an individual's race, class, ethnicity, and affectional preference. Third-wave feminism also stressed women-of-color consciousness, opposition to all systems of domination, sexual ideology and false consciousness.

Black Feminist Theory

Black feminism in the US is rooted in the struggles of generations of black women, many of whom formed the foundations (Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1998) of black feminist sociology. While social researchers differ concerning a precise definition, the term black feminism became prominent during the contemporary black women's movement in the 1970s. Black feminist ideas, experiences, sensibility, and feminist consciousness represent elements that may aid in advancing black feminist epistemological insights. Central to the concept of feminist epistemology is that of the situated knower, consequently, situated knowledge—specifically, knowledge reflecting particular perspectives of the subject.

Hill-Collins (2000) suggests that black feminist thought consists of specialized knowledge created by African-American women which clarifies a standpoint of and for Black women. [That is,] black feminist thought encompasses theoretical interpretations of Black women's reality by those who live it. Arguing that black women's experiences comprise the foundation of thought, Hill-Collins places their ideas and experiences at the center of analyses. Moreover, she bases her analysis in multiple voices in addition to highlighting her assertions that objectivity and subjectivity e.g., "I," "we," and "our" can produce scholarship. Hill-Collins lists some core themes of black women's standpoint: legacy of struggle; self-defined knowledge for group empowerment; exploitation of black women's labor; oppression denying women rights and privileges; and controlling images given to black women.

Hill-Collins's "outsiders-within" perspective involving social location is utilized in this study in association with the black church. She points out how this location fosters marginality and contradictions between dominant groups' ideologies and subordinate groups. Hill-Collins's paradigm posits the importance of ideas, experiences, and voice to clarify a standpoint. Furthermore, the narrated experiences and ideas expressed by women cannot be divorced from individuals who create them. In reference to this study, black churchwomen's contextual experiences have initiated hermeneutical critiques (the Bible) as well as aided to development of a collective standpoint. Hence, the traditional roles assumed have contributed to the exclusion of COGIC churchwomen from "privileged" positions of ordained leadership, exclusion from "theological discourse" involving biblical interpretations, governance, and placement in gendered positions having limited visibility. This has meant that the

outsider-within locations privilege clerics while the marginalization and subjugation of churchwomen still largely exists.

Although COGIC churchwomen maintain alternative strategies for leadership, Hill-Collins also points out that “outsider-within” locations provide a unique angle of vision which can promote positive self-definitions and self-valuations for black women. Other studies report that black working class women marginalized as outsiders (e.g., domestic workers) and experiencing the triple jeopardy of race, class, and gender oppression develop a distinct and critical stance regarding their position. For some researchers such as Alison Jaggar (1983), this particular awareness is a more in-depth revelation coming from an oppressed group and may be beneficial when attempting to understand systems of power. One other strategy employed by black women while being aware of their social structural position is found in the private space of an individual woman’s consciousness. According to Hill-Collins (2000:118), this can be personally empowering in that a “Black woman who is forced to remain ‘motionless on the outside,’” is creating a sphere of freedom on the inside.” This independent space of consciousness transforms the docile woman into an activist individual employing agency/resistance in multiple ways.

Canon (1985:30) notes that throughout US history “the interrelationship of white supremacy and male superiority has characterized the Black woman’s reality as a situation of struggles—[struggles] to survive in two contradictory worlds simultaneously, one white, privileged, and oppressive, the other black, exploited, and oppressed.” One aim of this proposed research is to examine the interrelationship of patriarchy and male superiority that has characterized black churchwomen’s reality as

a situation of struggles to survive in two contradictory worlds simultaneously—one black civil society, in addition to white oppressive society, oppressive, patriarchal, and in juxtaposition with reliance on women’s leadership and their willingness to give of their time for “church uplift,” the other, black “church” society, characterized by sexism and hegemonic structures of control and domination. It is also noted that when put in the larger context, the Black Church exists in a white racist society where black men live racially oppressed as well. And, women are also oppressed in white oppressive society.

Hill-Collins (2000:300) defines standpoint theory in terms of a group location in hierarchical power relations which produce common challenges for individuals in those groups. Moreover, shared experiences can foster similar angles of vision leading to group knowledge or standpoint deemed necessary for informed political action. Feminist standpoint theory is a type of critical theory—a theory aiming to make situations better for the oppressed. Hill-Collins posits the feminine cognitive style as being epistemically superior because of the belief that an ethic of caring e.g., emotions, personal expressiveness, developing a capacity for empathy, “talking with the heart,” is superior to an ethic of domination. Ways of knowing informed by the motive of caring produces more valuable representations. Additionally, central to Hill-Collins’s knowledge validating process is the ethic of personal accountability, the use of dialogue in assessing knowledge claims and the lived experiences of women as a criterion of meaning (2000). Women’s standpoint, Hill-Collins believes, is derived from experiences associated with core themes and the diversity in black women who encounter these themes. She asserts that “intersecting oppressions”

situate black women in a particular marginalized place when compared to white women and black men.

Early feminist standpoint theorists were influenced by Marx and Engels who viewed the poor as providing less false views of the world than the privileged. Standpoint theorists such as Sandra Harding, Julia Wood and Dorothy Smith in particular, saw women's marginalized status and consequent contribution to sociological theory being constructed by men thus giving a distorted picture of women's experiences. She viewed women's consciousness as being problematic because of inconsistencies with their experiences vis-a-vis the established culture, which she terms, "bifurcated consciousness." Smith also believes the voices of women especially need to be heard—voices speaking from the center of social life rather than from an objective viewpoint. Moreover, theorists believe that knowledge generated from the standpoint of dominant groups is considered "objectively weak." Therefore, feminist researchers contend that a standpoint approach is more pragmatic in the sense that it provides a better assessment of unjust practices. From another vantage point in feminist study, feminist standpoint theorists contend that outsiders learn how to function in both their own world and the world of dominant society. In this process, outsiders gain a particular perspective about social structures and how they function that members of the dominant group may not or cannot see.

When applying standpoint theory to the Black Church, one might ask: Is the viewpoint of churchwomen more valued than the pastors/leaders who obviously have more power?

Leadership Theory

Belleville (2000) illuminates her study by asking three pertinent questions: In what ministries can women be involved? What roles can women play in society? Can women hold positions of authority? She tackles the issue of women as leaders in the church highlighting their roles in antiquity in comparison to the contemporary church. Her conclusions are gender-neutral in that she attempts to establish truths based on theological, hermeneutical, and exegetical analyses of biblical scripture. Specifically, Belleville proposes gender equity and notes the following: women are given gifts just as men are—there is no priority regarding one gender over another; the relationship between clergymen and women in the church should be egalitarian; the concept of church is organic—ideally, members work together, supporting each other so that the body functions as a whole. Thus, relationships are built on mutual submission (not top-down management) therefore establishing a church devoid of a hierarchical structure.

Women's leadership positions in relation to men's necessarily considers sex and gender. Sex is referred to as biological differences and the categories of female and male. Gender, such as roles that are the expectations for behavior and attitudes, and culture defines as appropriate for women and men (Andersen 2003:33) class namely social location and status, specifically, the position someone occupies. Bipolar categories, however, such as female/male or masculine/feminine tend to foster notions of the superiority of one category over another, prejudicial attitudes, and discriminatory practices centered on sex and gender. Winter, Lummis and Stokes (1994) point out one specific problematic involving women's inability to

acknowledge their inferior status as reported in Chafetz and Dworkin's (1986:1) cross-cultural study. The researchers expound on incidences of women's "forms of revolt" and "women's movements" noting that "despite the prevalence of female disadvantage, only occasionally have [they] openly and collectively revolted against their deprivation....in fact, it is safe to assume that many [women in societies] have not been cognizant of the fact that, on the basis of their sex alone, they are systematically disadvantaged. Specific to Chafetz and Dworkin's study, it is also noted that in situations of "revolt" and "movements," the consciousness of women has been raised to a level of awareness thus recognizing their state of collective deprivation and consequent legitimization of agency as a basis for structural change.

Northhouse (2001:3) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Based on the various ways leadership is conceptualized, Northhouse contends there are several components pertinent to the phenomenon of leadership: leadership is a process; leadership involves influence; leadership occurs within a group context; and leadership involves goal attainment. Northhouse presents several studies that highlight research on female and male leaders in various occupations. More recently, studies conducted comparing leadership of the genders have allowed researchers to utilize meta-analyses to determine overall trends. Northhouse (2001:217) points out that research on women leaders and managers conducted over the past 20 years have addressed key questions: Can women be leaders? Do men and women leaders differ in their behavior and effectiveness in organizations? Why do so few women leaders reach the top? How can more women leaders reach the top?

Structural obstacles continue to affect women's progress and maintain the "glass ceiling" in occupations and organizations in addition to attitudes associated with sex and gender. Acker (1992) contends that the distinction between women and men, masculinity and femininity have designated responsibilities concerning employees' appropriate work behavior and influenced their career progress, resources, salaries, power and authority.

Central to the notion of leadership within the context of conservative American Christianity are three main positions characterizing the theological basis of the Christian Rights discourse on gender and the Bible. Scholz (2005) lists three positions specific to this group which defines their stance on church leadership as it relates to women and men. All positions claim the Bible as their authoritative source for interpretations concerning gender roles, however, they differ on the meaning of gender in biblical texts. The "complementarian" position is sometimes referred to as "hierarchicalism" or "traditionalism" and is considered to be the most influential in terms of political power according to Scholz. This position has become one of the dominant forces in American culture and politics thus making American feminism less visible in academia and religion. Proponents of this position contend that women and men are equal but different therefore having different roles in church and society. They espouse "mutual interdependence" claiming biblical "manhood" and "womanhood" is in keeping with the "divinely created order" therefore men are the responsible leaders in the home and church while women are to be supportive and submit to male leadership. Women are not to serve as ecclesiastical leaders but rather strive for maturity in their "womanly" assigned role.

The egalitarian position criticizes complementarians for patriarchal and gender discriminatory practices against women in the church. Establishing support for their position, egalitarians have formed organizations that endorse gender justice for women of all races and classes arguing for social and ecclesiastical equality. Specifically basing their stance on proper biblical interpretations, equality is the most important tenet forbidding discrimination against women based on race, class, or gender. Lastly, the “moderate” position is espoused by proponents who support politically and religiously conservative organizations and the American Christian Right. Criticism has been levied against feminists’ critique of male imagery for God by moderate John W. Miller (1999) in his publication, *Calling God “Father”: Essays on the Bible, Fatherhood, and Culture*. Miller’s (1999:4) main indictment against feminist theologizing is his conviction that “depatriarchalized” theologies do not validate fathering as a predominately cultural achievement therefore destabilization of the home results in the absent father and mother-alone family. Consequently, moderates are totally uncomfortable with more radical deviations from fundamentalist Christian principles and beliefs which foster a disconnect in the cultural tradition and sociopolitical order of religion and society.

The study by Zikmund, Lummis, and Chang (1998:5) examines various aspects of sixteen mainline Protestant denominations including men and women leadership styles, ordination, spiritual feminism, lay leaders’ perceptions of clergy and jobs held by clergymen and clergywomen after ordination. The researchers emphasize the steady increase of women into the clergy vocation during recent decades. Having been pillars of support for the institutional church, they report that

only recently have women entered the ranks of the professional “clergy” in significant numbers. While a main focus of their study examines ordained women, perceptions of the laity regarding clerics’ professional leadership is also highlighted.

With the influx of women occupying positions as religious leaders, leadership models and style have become a matter of concern for clergy and laity alike. Some studies on religious leaders have categorized pastors in terms of their use, misuse, and abuse of power and authority (Polis 1991; Stortz 1993). Regarding clergy leadership styles, Zikmund et al. (1998:50) report that “sharing ministry” is more conducive to church growth and development. Furthermore, “this leadership style is also supported because it is an effective way for pastors to develop and maintain congregational vitality. Research shows that when a pastor has a ‘genuinely collegial style of ministry,’ the mission and outreach of local congregations flourish.”

The focus of more recent research on leadership has centered on the transactional (attributed to male leaders) and transformational (attributed to women) approaches (McKenzie 1996; Northouse 2001; Pierce and Newstrom 2003; Zikmund et al.1998). Transactional leadership refers to a model of command-and-control, directive, giving something to receive something, whereas transformational leaders (sometimes termed charismatic or visionary leadership) are more engaging with followers, attentive to the needs and motives of others, interactive, democratic, emphasizing power *with*, and not *over* members of their congregations (Zikmund, et al.1998). Both approaches are viewed as a process—one which changes and transforms individuals in relation to values, ethics, standards, goals, and engages people (such as Mohandas Gandhi) in making connections that raises the level of

motivation and morality in both leader and followers (transformational) and one that focuses on exchanges (such as politicians) which occur between leaders and their followers (transactional) (Northouse 2001:132).

Based on evidence concerning the historic Black Church, women have always been a part of ministry alongside men. Although records of their participation, leadership, and contributions to religious institutions are limited, Carpenter (2001) states that African American clergywomen have been in the United States since the time of slavery. Moreover, black women, according to Carpenter, have greatly influenced the direction, role, and leadership of the black church in social issues and action affecting the development and progress of African Americans in the US since the days of enslavement. When black denominations emerged and women worked in churches in subordinate positions, despite a legacy of struggle against racism, sexism, classism, and patriarchal structures, churchwomen were forced to establish their own spheres of influence and leadership “within” and “outside” the church. During this period, they built a powerful club movement and many community organizations (Giddings 1984; Gilkes 1985).

Clubwomen, many of whom were staunch church-goers, organized themselves to address social and political issues and also formed national organizations to legitimate black women’s leadership, womanhood, racial solidarity and uplift. Hill-Collins (2000), however, points out the absence of documentation involving black women’s leadership and other classes of women of color being caused by exclusive focus on middle and upper-class women’s studies. More recently, some research has shifted the focus of black women’s leadership from the

margin to the center of examination highlighting pioneer clubwomen such as Mary Church Terrell, first president of the National Association of Colored Women.

White (1999a) presents a vivid description of five black clubwomen's national organizations—the National Association of Colored Women, the National Council of Negro Women, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the National Welfare Rights Organization, and the National Black Feminist Organization. She focuses on their leaders pointing out the historic struggles involving gendered issues of exploitation, conflict, and exclusion at times from white women and black men. While persistently giving voice to issues involving suffrage, women's rights, race relations, and civil rights, clubwomen's goodwill was often overshadowed by “irreconcilable” differences involving race, class, gender, religion, and sexuality.

The leadership of black women during the civil right movement of the 1950s and 1960s was barely acknowledged due to sexism and the controlling forces of men who were specifically recognized on the forefront of the movement. Elliott (1996:593) reports that the marginal and all-too-sporadic examination of women in the chronicles of the civil rights movement has been curiously misrepresented. Noted figure Ella Baker worked with Rosa Parks in the Montgomery NAACP (National Association for Advancement of Colored People) office on a leadership conference and espoused her philosophies such as “Power to the People” among clergymen and activists. Elliott notes that Baker epitomizes a woman of social change in her insistence that individuals do for themselves and prepare to become responsible leaders. She promoted the concept of an inclusive model of leadership through the development of programs as well as a group-centered leadership

approach in her involvement with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Conference (SNCC).

Theoretically, Elliott concludes that Baker utilized a transformational approach to leadership in view of her communicative strategies, choice to guide individuals to solutions rather than dictate policy, support for students' independence as a separate civil rights organization (SNCC), a decision in opposition to Martin Luther King, Jr. and others, and her zeal to motivate people to activism thus challenging the status quo and affecting the lives of all people she came in contact with.

In the study conducted by Zikmund et al.(1998:53) of clergywomen and clergymen, the collaborative "power with" leadership emerged as the preferred pattern of leadership for all ministry. According to the researchers, this style is the least controlling and most inclusive of individuals in the decision-making process. However, the democratic style is stereotypical "feminine" and may pose gender-specific classification to this approach as being "women-centered only" therefore widening the gap between clerics in religious institutions.

Although the number of African American clergywomen is on the increase, there remains a need for more published literature on leadership that pertains to black clergywomen's issues and experiences such as ordination, gender of clergy, and the "glass-ceiling" evident in male dominated churches.

Carpenter (2001) reports there is very little quantifiable or qualitative data available on women in ministry. One of the most noted studies examining the plight of black women's approval and disapproval rates in gaining access to associate and

pastoral positions is the Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) research involving seven historic black denominations. While the study by Zikmund et al.(1998:3) contains information obtained from predominantly white Protestant denominations, clergy in the historically black Protestant denominations (and Roman Catholic) are not included. Only “information about ethnic minority women and men within.... sixteen predominantly white Protestant denominations is included.” In contrast, Carpenter’s (2001) study on African American clergywomen and clergymen, gives an overview of pioneer women in ministry in addition to a profile of black women and men Master of Divinity (M.Div.) clergy in ministry. One aim of this writer is to explore how shifts in gender are affecting clergywomen and clergymen in the black church—namely, the Church of God in Christ.

Gendered Organizational Theory

The ever presence of distinctions between sex and gender and attitudes associated with both categories have resulted in “gendered” workplaces. Work organizations have been traditionally dominated by men with the seat of power being occupied by all-male enclaves at both the national and international levels. When feminism was introduced, Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s (1993) *Men and Women of the Corporation* illuminated corporate power and structures of organizations as it relates to women. Other writers followed highlighting connections between organizations and women and particular aspects of their work situation (Felberg and Glenn 1979; Ferguson 1984; Morgan 1986). Researchers Martin and Collinson (2002) support more scholarly research based on studies conducted earlier that highlight gendered organizational processes. They contend there is a real need to integrate organization

studies and gender studies by the creation of new theories and gendered organization theories representative of all involved individuals.

Like occupations, organizations grappling with issues of sex and gender can also be racialized. Recent work on economic organizations informs one about social processes involved in the production and reproduction on gender differences. One must understand organizational processes to understand gender inequality. Acker's (1990, 1992) theory of gendered organizations and stated social processes involving the creation of gendered organizations may be adapted to religious institutions/organizations. Acker's social processes involving the production and reproduction of gendered organizations follows: images and forms of consciousness that justify gender divisions; interactions among individuals; differential structural location of men and women; and the internal mental work of individuals as they consciously construct understandings of the organizations' gendered structure. Acker sees organizations not as gender-neutral but rather as sites involved in the "gendering" of organizations.

Feminist theorizing has been minimized due to discourses conceptualizing organizations as gender neutral thus taking as reality the world seen from the standpoint of men. Smith (1979) argues that such discourses concerning organizational sociology are grounded in concepts centered on the ruling relations of men, experiences, and participation in the ruling apparatus of society.

In *The Epistemology of the Gendered Organization*, Britton (2000:419-420) argues that Acker's gender-organization paradigm lacks clarity. She asks specifically, What is meant by an organization, organizational policy, or slot in the

hierarchy being “gendered?” Or stated differently, how do we know a gendered organization when we see one? Britton contends that since there is no clear definition in empirical work, prospects for meaningful organizational change is jeopardized. However, one might argue that she provides not clear definition of her meaning of “gendered organizations.” Britton enumerates three ways organizations and occupations are viewed as gendered arguing that: the ideal-typical bureaucratic organization is inherently gendered; organizations or occupations are gendered to the extent they are male or female dominated; organizations or occupations are gendered in that they are symbolically and ideologically described and conceived in terms of a discourse that draws on hegemonically defined masculinities and femininities.

Britton argues against researcher Kathy Ferguson’s agreement with the ideal-type bureaucratic organization and her notion of “feminization” of administrators and workers stating this analysis glosses over differential experiences of administrators and workers therefore leaving hegemonically defined masculinity free to shape the form and content of bureaucratic domination. Another paradigm, psychoanalytically informed analysis, espoused by theorist Jessica Benjamin is considered by Britton to have a more solid basis in terms of providing support for the social processes of gendered organizations although some theorists of this persuasion do not take into account differences in terms of race and class.

Based on various aspects of COGIC churches and in agreement with Acker’s theory of gendered organizations, this theory is used to inform this inquiry. There exist clear boundaries in the social organization of COGIC churches between women and men’s domain which may be thought of as structural location within these

domains. Clergymen are viewed as being decision makers, leaders, and administrators while women are nurturers, carers, and servers which also accounts for their roles as builder, maintainers, and supporters of churches. The essentialist image of clerics as leaders and women as nurturers establishes the symbolic boundary between women and men. While churchwomen give of themselves unselfishly and freely, this is looked upon as being admirable and in a positive light. Acker points out that women's unquestioning acceptance of this obligation to care is a component of "the internal mental work" (Acker 1992) characteristic of a gendered organization constructed by parishioners.

By the same token, extrapolating from Acker's theorization concerning social processes translates to the relationship between gender roles existing in churches (COGIC) and the attribution of social roles to women as supporters versus leaders and administrative roles to clergymen. While domains maintain differential locations for parishioners and leaders, gender typing, namely the process through which occupations come to be seen as appropriate for workers with masculine or feminine characteristics (Britton 2000:424), positions are viewed as gendered. Feminization or masculinization of positions within churches, however, may take on either designation. Gender "appropriate" positions come under authority of the essentialist image of men as decision makers and leaders thus allowing them to have the power to make appointments based on their *own* assessments and church needs.

The role of churchwomen as servers creates invisible work that is embedded in the construction of femininity and masculinity. Interactions between churchwomen and men demonstrate the gendered nature of social processes within churches and

reinforce the subordination of women and dominance of men. Acker (1990, 1992: 235) concludes that interactions between women and men that “enact dominance and subordination” produces and reproduces gendered organizations.

Womanist Theology

Womanist theology emerged, in part, as a response to the absence of women’s voices in the liberation theology tradition as well as the need for a specific focus on black feminist concerns. Critiquing racism from outside the black community, liberation theologies failed to see sexism within the community experienced by women particularly in reference to the Black Church. Introduction of Alice Walker’s *womanist* thought stemming from black culture and defined in terms considered more reflective of both the language and ethos of the black community (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990), was “appropriated” by pioneering women activists who represented a literary tradition and “feminist religiosity” long before womanist theology came into existence. Hence, bold, strong, self-determined, outspoken, and proud American women such as Anna Julia Cooper who promulgated the idea of the “undisputed dignity” of black womanhood, Jarena Lee, Amanda Berry Smith, Sojourner Truth, and “A’n’t I a Woman” presents “womanist” ideas introduced in themes of dignity, womanhood and personhood.

These women defined and named their own experiences in their own voice after their own fashion (Walker 1984). Despite dehumanizing practices, they maintained both a particularistic and universalistic stance: particularistic in their concern for black women and other oppressed women, and focus on the wholeness

and welfare of individuals regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (universalistic).

The context and reality of black women's experiences provides the backdrop for womanist theologians' universal connection to the oppression of others—they share race suffering with black men; with white women and other Third World women, they are victims of sexism; and with poor blacks and whites and Other Third World people, especially women, they are disproportionately poor (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990:303).

Katie Cannon “[identifies] a womanist principle in the way Black women [interpret] scripture; Gilkes (2001:1276)”[utilizes] the womanist concept to clarify what she identified as a “holy boldness” among sanctified churchwomen as they created their own power base within sanctified churches, characteristic of COGIC churchwomen. In reference to concerns addressed by womanist theology, Hine et al. (1993) lists several characteristics identifiable with womanist theology: womanist theology is a theology of survival—this involves black woman's attempt to preserve black life and negate efforts to devalue this life. Survival also includes honoring the wisdom, values, spirituality, and traditions handed down to sons and daughters and acknowledgement of women whose roles have contributed to caretaking and transmission of religion and culture to their children. God's role as sustainer is encapsulated in women's testimonies and biblical witness. Secondly, womanist theology is a theology of liberation—it addresses the multifaceted dimensions of oppression, namely targeting issues of racism, sexism, classism and heterosexism as they impact the black community. As a liberating theology, womanist theology is

reflective of Old Testament scripture depicting the Israelite journey and liberation from Egypt, thus reminding the contemporary religious community of the importance of unity, brotherly/sisterly love, and justice. Thirdly, womanist theology is global. It identifies black people of a larger community of people who are in a struggle for freedom and equality. Globally speaking, womanist theology draws attention to God's universality in his liberating quest for all people.

Finally, womanist theology is a church theology. This theology substantiates the biblical claim for women's total involvement in mission and ministries of the church. Womanist theology takes into account lay churchwomen who experience the everyday struggles of life and living. Empowerment and liberation of women are of utmost importance (Hine et al. 1993:1276-1277).

Walker's womanist thought has strong spiritual and religious overtones when exploring her notions concerning community, family and the church. Mothers and grandmothers have been known to maintain dignity, a sense of self, and to keep the spirit alive during periods of low ebbs in family and the church. Knowing about the history of black women's consistency in support of the church and "the race," Walker highlights their "tenacity of the artistic spirit," innate creativity, and determination to keep the creative spirit alive despite hardships and struggles. This characterization of black women is akin to Gilkes's notion of COGIC churchwomen defined as "enterprising agents" working within women's departments. They have maintained a tradition of support and accommodation despite restrictions on positions for church leadership and established spheres of influence and opportunity at the same time.

Womanist theology offers a specific discourse for African American women. Unlike black theology, womanist theology is not limited to a critique of racism; nor is it simply restricted to racism and classism; it does, however, extend a critique of sexism and patriarchy. This theology creates an avenue for women to articulate insights regarding their lived experiences of racism, classism, and sexism in addition to enabling them to turn to writings (and experiences) of noble women as unique representations and inspirational models. Thus, the relevancy of womanist theology to this study centers on the “isms” that oppress churchwomen, the universal-particular dynamic, naming of women’s experiences in their own voice, theological independence, and articulations of spirituality in terms of their human experiences. Moreover, womanist theology calls into question forces designed to keep women in a subordinate position thus taking seriously the matter of church doctrines and references made of forebearers (churchwomen) whose personal lives as role models and experiences as “behavioral feminists” helped in shaping the spirituality and ethics of black churches (Gilkes 2001) and serves as a source for drawing knowledge.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is an inductive approach concerned with the non-statistical analysis of social phenomena. It is referred to by various terms, depending upon the research strategy being utilized. Qualitative research is termed field research when field researchers make direct observations of human behavior in everyday life. Ethnographic studies such as Liebow's *Tally's Corner* are undertaken when social scientists seek to better understand the culture through the lens of the participants involved.

Qualitative research grew out of a need to study social phenomenon from the participant's perspective and move away from the numeric means of verifying theory. This research focuses on subjective meanings, definitions, symbols and the documentation of events. For researchers, the recording of what people say should be specific to the context in which it occurs. Exactness in this area captures the social meaning and significance which brings about a better understanding of human behavior and individuals' experiences. In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research involves the researcher's inductive interpretations, takes the form of a non-positivistic perspective and is cyclical. Its goal is to make sense of the lives of individuals and describe those meanings.

Some topics are better suited for one research strategy over another. This investigation is a field study. Field and observation of official records, statistics,

documents, yearbooks, and church publications were utilized. In this regard, church publications such as the *Whole Truth*, *The Pentecostal Interpreter*, the *Church of God in Christ International Directory* and *The Voice of Missions* were utilized. To explore how clergywomen and clergymen view leadership within the church as a gendered organization, qualitative methodology is used primarily because of its inherently flexible design lending itself to providing insights into the socially-constructed realities of its informants. This distinct advantage allows the researcher to keenly observe in face-to-face interviews such things as expressions, voice intonation, and body language of the respondent. Additionally, an interview schedule can be readily adjusted when a response merits further follow-up questioning or probing. By interjecting or reformulating questions spontaneously, the researcher gains a more in-depth understanding of the individual's attitudes, motivations, beliefs, values, and practices. Since interviews included churchwomen in various positions, a qualitative approach proved to be advantageous in reference to the gender of respondents because women were able to voice their opinions in the context of their situation.

Whereas a quantitative strategy involves quantifiable categories and statistical techniques which summarize responses, qualitative methodology provides rich, descriptive data (a justification for using this approach) for examination of processes and structural conditions involving the problem under study. Rich descriptive data thus enabled me to attempt to understand interviewees' feelings, interpretations, and perceptions of their reality.

One aim of this research was to expand upon the theoretical understandings of the relationship between the ecclesiastical structures and lived experiences of women

in ministry in the COGIC. Emphasis was placed on identifying strategies and needed policy changes to alleviate sex discrimination and inequality in church leadership. This study explores how women are situated in the church in terms of their leadership roles vis-à-vis male clerics. Borrowing from Michael Burawoy's theorizing, I highlighted the hermeneutical dimension regarding issues involving the understanding and interpretation of data. This method was also useful in my data collecting and analysis. The community of participants constitutes the community from which data are extrapolated.

The normative ideal that churchwomen conformed to in the past while serving in leadership positions in the church reverts back to tradition under the leadership of founder, Charles Harrison Mason. Collecting data from interviewees both women and men did not always comply with norms of the past when asked the question : Why are so few churchwomen in leadership positions in the Black Church such as the Church of God in Christ? Making problematic exceptional cases, the extended case method looks for changes that have taken place over time thus taking note to forces shaping these deviations.

When viewing the COGIC as a gendered organization, consideration of the social processes is amenable to qualitative examination. I argue that gender has been socially constructed by clergymen to imply biological differences between women and men grounded in differences based on biblical interpretations. Furthermore, this construction "validates" domination of clerics over churchwomen thus enabling men to maintain ecclesiastical structures of dominance over church policies and governance.

Sampling Design and Collection

Research participants consisted of 70 interviewees, a non-probability sample, coming from four regions across the U.S.A.—Northeast, South, Mid-West, and West. There were 15 clergymen that were interviewed during the Memphis Convocation. Also, 15 churchwomen were also interviewed at this time, equaling a total of 30 individuals. Participants interviewed during the National Convocation in Tennessee (and following the convocation) represented the four geographical regions specified in the sampling plan—Northeast, South, Mid-West, and West. Almost all participants were African American. The selection process involving four regions was utilized to avoid regional bias from any one single geographical area.

Shortly following the Memphis Convocation, individuals were interviewed from each geographical region. Since New Jersey is my home, interviewees (10 interviewees, five clergymen and five churchwomen) came from churches in this state and the feasibility of administering the questionnaire was achieved expeditiously. Subsequently, the remaining interviewees represented the South, Mid-West, and West equaling 15 clergymen and 15 churchwomen (30 in total)—five clergymen from the South, five from the Mid-West, and five from the West. Similarly, five churchwomen were interviewed from the South, five from the Mid-West, and five from the West. Various local and regional church meetings year around facilitated time and travel. Although clergymen occupy most positions of authority, it was interesting to observe their attitudes as leaders vis`-a-vis` unordained women. Purposive sampling was utilized since I am familiar with several denominational churches having women as a “Shepherdess.” Babbie

(1995:225) points out that sometimes it is appropriate for researchers to select their sample based on knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of one's research aim. The rationale for selection of participants was based on my belief that clergywomen's leadership roles should be equal to clergymen. Inclusion of women in governance of the church is a central focus of this investigation.

Measurement

This research focused on the perceptions of churchwomen (COGIC) and clergymen and their conceptions regarding leadership positions. In order to understand how interviewees conceptualized leadership, my questions investigated how they viewed positions of leadership in the COGIC and their subjective understandings of the scope, dimensions, and elements comprising leadership coupled with the qualifications that are necessary in order to lead. Interviewees were asked to describe current leadership of women, a "call" to ministry, and why so few women were occupying leadership positions. These questions provided comparative information from churchwomen and men concerning their perceptions and interpretations of leadership.

My interview guide (Appendix C) had the following categories which were related to my research questions: leadership, a "call," sexism, classism, gender, interpretation of Scripture, ordination, symbiotic relationship, and empowerment. My next main category was ordination which I conceptualized as: subsequent to a Divine "call," the consecration of a woman or man to the ministry. Questions for this category were designed to provide information in reference to interviewees' perceptions of ordination and the influences, if any, of sexism, classism, and gender.

Questions were asked such as “Does your church have a policy to bar women to become ordained?” “Do you believe ordination should be limited to men only?”, “Comment on this statement: In the future, women *will* be ordained in the COGIC,” “Should churchwomen assume their *rightful* place and “call” to ministry in the church along with clergymen?” In qualitative research, as the key instrument, I was the researcher as interviewer, observer, facilitator and interpreter of data.

A symbiotic relationship was the next category where questions were asked to get interviewees’ perceptions on a shared ministry with churchwomen and clerics. Interviewees were asked if having a voice in policies and church governance might affect change in a shared ministerial model for leadership. Questions centered on policies, voice, and inclusivity were asked in reference to bringing about change to the present leadership style such as: “Are there leadership positions in the church which clergymen should be given preference over churchwomen?” Interviewees were asked about structuring the General Assembly differently to accommodate more women in the decision-making process of the church. In terms of the “glass ceiling” effect, interviewees were asked: “Do you envision churchwomen having a seat on the general/governing board of the church?” In reference to the imbalance of power in the church between churchwomen and clergymen as a barrier to a symbiotic relationship interviewees were asked: “How can power and authority be shared by women and clerics in the church?”, “How can women leaders be more involved in governance in the church?”

The last category involved questions about future prospects for churchwomen’s leadership and empowerment in the church. Empowerment is

defined as an individual's capacity to take control of her life and alter the power relations that constrain her. Interviewees were asked: "What do you see as being a major challenge facing the COGIC?" Asking this question allowed interviewees space to reflect on the church's mission locally and globally with the inclusion of women as co-partners in ministry. Interviewees provided a variety of responses that suggested the need for a more collaborative leadership style. Interviewees were asked: "What ministries do you think churchwomen can utilize to advance their visibility and voice?" What advice would you give to churchwomen who have acknowledged their ministerial call?"

Interviewees were asked: What changes, if any, would you like to see take place within the COGIC for women to become visible and effective leaders?" Several changes were listed among the women, however, I feel that the full impact which could be made in reference to concrete changes in leadership has yet to be realized by women collectively.

Data Collection: Methods and Procedures

As a lifelong member of the denomination under study, I am familiar with the necessary "protocols" for entrance into churches. As a member of the Church of God in Christ, access is dependent upon church membership. Data collection involved in-depth interviews to clergymen and churchwomen. Pre-testing of the questionnaire (leaders) was arranged with colleagues and friends who offered their suggestions and feedback.

An initial contact by phone or letter covering issues of the research purpose was adequate. In-depth interviews took place with members of the COGIC at

preplanned times—at local congregations and at the National Convocation in Memphis, Tennessee held annually. This is a two-week long national gathering where thousands of COGIC members meet for fellowship and spiritual renewal. In view of the scheduling of events at this meeting, three interviews were scheduled per day. Within the COGIC, local, district, state meetings, conferences, and church gatherings convene monthly. All of these assemblages will allow for setting up an appointment time with interviewees following the Memphis meeting. Informed consent will have been established prior to interview sessions in addition to a location (e.g., conference room) that was conducive for the meeting.

Individuals were interviewed following the National Convocation in Tennessee. In-depth interviews were conducted with clergymen which included bishops, pastors, elders, First Ladies, superintendents, and deacons in addition to churchwomen who hold leadership positions within churches. Women interviewed had positions as First Lady, State Supervisors, District Missionaries, “co-pastors,” licensed Missionaries, pastors, and senior mother. Additionally, few churchwomen were the pastor (officially) of a church, although the COGIC does not officially ordain women to pastor churches. This is the highest position given to churchwomen as an ordained woman and member of the clergy. She has all of the rights and privileges to participate in the rituals and ordinances of the church. Women who become pastors have either inherited churches that were founded and organized by late husbands, were officially appointed by a bishop or are women who have acknowledged their “call” to ministry and continue to maintain membership

with the COGIC while serving as a pastor. To my knowledge, these women pastors cannot be dismissed from church membership nor dis-fellowshipped.

Contact with other clergy members attending monthly meetings at the local, district, and state levels was made in advance of these meetings in order to facilitate matters involving location for the interviews. For pastors presiding over churches, logistically the church served as the location for the interview. Initial contact was made by telephone and a follow-up correspondence sent by letter or email requesting a time to visit the church. Several churchwomen and other church leaders used their local churches for interviews or their own residence. I interviewed, face-to-face individuals utilizing a semi-structured questionnaire. Each interview was scheduled for two hours. When prompted by a response, probing was used to get deeper reflections on the meanings of individuals' perceptions, religious orientations, theology, and experiences. Following ethical precautions, all interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Interview questions and responses generate large amounts of data which must be organized in some manageable fashion. A data reduction process included organizing the data, identifying patterns, themes, and categories. Content analysis was also utilized for categorizing statements, and noting recurrent themes in preparation for coding the data. Newsletters, church records and documents, statistics, archival data, yearbooks, and directories were sources for obtaining data. Once the data were coded, counts of the categories were taken. Babbie (1995) notes that content analysis is essentially a coding operation. Communications—oral,

written, or other, were coded or classified according to some conceptual framework. Gendered organizational theory and black feminist theory informed this research. Similarly, womanist theology challenges COGIC churchwomen to self-empowerment through their voice and agency within the Black Church. Churchwomen serving in the COGIC having clerics in positions of authority will validate the use of a “feminist” content analysis.

The matter of validity in qualitative research is addressed throughout the data collection phase as researchers look for common themes and patterns. While qualitative researchers continue to seek common patterns and themes, in a sense this process is working to support validity claims. Data in its “naturalistic” form maintains a high level of validity. Data also reflects the social reality as experienced by black churchwomen. Therefore, the data offers a high level of validity.

Each interview was recorded using a tape recording. Probes were interjected when responses were unclear or if I needed my own clarification in reference to interviewees’ responses. Tapes were transcribed verbatim following an interviewing session in order to keep answers in the context when interviewed. Additional notes were taken to capture nuances, body language, and any dialect phrases which may have been expressed. African Americans in the Black Church have a “church dialect” all their own. This is a language with expressions specific to their church culture such as, “I’m blessed and highly favored.” Sometimes expressions might include a biblical Scripture which has a spiritual or symbolic meaning. Analytic induction was utilized as themes and patterns emerged from the data which was useful for comparative

purposes in noting differences and similarities. Particular attention was given to “deviant” or unusual responses.

Created code categories were formulated so that counts could be used to identify patterns. Using color-coded categories allowed me to look for and point out data that would “fit” into the pre-constructed categories. An inductive approach allowed me to look for patterns and themes from the raw data to place into categories. Manifest and latent content was also examined to determine underlying meanings.

Reliability and Validity

Cross validation, also known as triangulation, utilizes multiple data sources that are analyzed in order to get a deeper understanding and interpretation. When multiple measures are utilized, a richer, more accurate, and comprehensive picture is presented on the phenomenon under study. Denzin (2000) labeled two types of triangulation—“between (or across) methods,” used for cross validation (validity), using two or more complementary methods, and “within-methods” which uses multiple techniques (reliability) within one single method for collecting and interpreting data. The “between methods” approach is generally thought to lead to more valid results.

To complement data from interviews, my study included organizational materials such as the Official Manual with the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of God in Christ, Doctrinal Review Committee Report (issue of ordination of women), newspapers clippings, yearbooks, magazine articles, church publications, archival data, directories, and books to examine leadership of churchwomen and clergy in the COGIC and barriers facing women in gaining full status positions. My

sample included 70 respondents, women and men who were interviewed (semi-structured). One source of data as evidence of scarce references to women in leadership therefore minimizing their voice and visibility is unobtrusively expressed in a correspondence sent to officials of the church from the Presiding Bishop Louis H. Ford. The letter stated that the Deborah Mason Patterson/Arenia Mallory Memorial Multi-Purpose Hall would soon be under construction in Lexington, Mississippi, named in honor of these women. Deborah Mason Patterson was the daughter of founder, Charles Mason and Arenia Mallory had been president of COGIC's only institution of learning at that time. This act by Ford was an effort to elevate the status and value of women and memorialize their names in honor of work done in the church.

Data from the other measures centering on barriers in reference to women's leadership, specifically ordination, is congruent with data from interviews thus supporting evidence of validity. However, judging the applicability of a multi-methods approach, that is, the question of whether the evidence is valid and useful, may be questionable because determinations that are made have a probability of being subjective.

CHAPTER 4

WHERE ARE THE CHURCHWOMEN?

LEADERSHIP AND THE CHURCH

The denominational bookstore was an absolute treasure trove. When the manager room and came out with a rare historical volume that was absolutely essential to my research...The prominence and importance of black women in the life of this particular denomination were exhibited plainly in these documents full of rules and regulations...They were emblems that offered answers to larger questions about black women in their churches and communities and...women's culture that operated as a political and economic force in the life of the church....

I was especially intrigued by the handbook for the women's department... As I asked the bookstore manager if I had acquired everything I needed to understand the women's department, a male customer shook his head muttering, "The women's department, the women's department,... I'm so tired of the women's department." The manager responded forcefully, "If it wasn't for the women, you wouldn't have a church!" (p.1).

Cheryl Townsend Gilkes (2001)

A detailed discussion of the history of this denomination is offered since it is vitally important to getting a full understanding of the church's organizational structure and approach to leadership. Current leadership is significantly different from the leadership of women and men during the lifetime of the denomination's founder. I examine a movement away from the traditional leadership model as it

relates to women in the church. Present-day leadership involving women restricts them to subordinate positions in relation to clerics. I argue that there are so few women in full status leadership positions because of patriarchy, sexism, classism, and gender barriers. The data indicate churchwomen's continued agency to obtain equality and fairness in church administrations.

An account of Church of God in Christ (COGIC) history provides the necessary background for examination of church leadership involving COGIC women. In order to look at current leadership, it is vitally necessary to view the genesis of leadership involving women during the lifetime of founder and bishop, Charles Harrison Mason. It is difficult to discuss one without the other since current leadership rests on the established model set forth by Bishop Mason and pioneer women such as Lizzie Robinson, Lillian Coffey, Anne L. Bailey, Mattie McGlothen, and E.J. Dabney who served in the church during Mason's era. When examining both time periods comparatively, various structural changes have taken place within the COGIC. Governance has a different configuration thus impacting leadership of churchwomen serving in ministries of the church under the authority of men clerics.

I present various themes which are linked to theory that inform my discussions. In this chapter, data from interviews are utilized to address my main research questions: What are the current leadership positions in the church for women? Why have there been so few churchwomen in leadership positions in the black church such as the Church of God in Christ?

Historical Background

In the past, women of all races, nationalities, ethnicities, statuses, and classes have been involved in, associated with, and intricately connected to the church and religion. Whether for reasons of spirituality or activism, their participation in religious organizations has occupied a unique place in feminist history. In particular, women in black churches such as the COGIC have been a major factor in the establishment, sustenance, and support of this denomination. While the literature is expanding in regards to reporting women's exclusion from church histories, much still needs to be written about their agency and involvement in the church community to which they belonged.

For too long, church authority in many religions is believed to have been the "legitimate" domain of clergymen only. Studies of some world religious groups reveal that women have been oppressed and relegated to subservient positions in churches all over the world. Peach (2002) notes the cultural and historical significance of women's contributions to religious traditions which have largely been ignored. She concludes that most traditions have been androcentric—established and developed by men from male perspectives and focused on experiences of men. More importantly, Peach (2002) points out that world religions are all patriarchal and sexist in origins, development, leadership, authority and power.

In the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches, for example, "women rarely preach, serve as trustees, control funds, or make decisions about the pastor, church, or church programs" (Andersen 2009:246). However, some changes toward

advancing women's position in black churches, for example, such as Pentecostal and Holiness churches, are taking place where women make up in some cases as much as 90 percent of the congregations.

A development ushering in the Pentecostals was the Black Holiness-Pentecostal movement, primarily a late 19th century and early 20th century phenomenon. A relatively large number of Holiness-Pentecostals identify with the historic Azusa Street Revival where it is witnessed the spirit was poured out on men and women. The revival took place in Los Angeles, California for several years and was led by William J. Seymour who was an African American preacher. People came from around the world to Los Angeles to witness manifestations of the Spirit. This event left an indelible imprint on the black religious tradition. In James Tinney's (1971) study, *Black Origins of the Pentecostal Movement*, he concluded that:

both black and white Pentecostalism in America can be traced to a little band of black believers who met in a storefront church on Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906 .A black minister, W.J. Seymore took the message (of Pentecostalism) to Los Angeles Here begins the modern genesis of the movement. (pp. 4-5)

Charles Harrison Mason emerged from this movement to become founder and leader of the COGIC—the largest black Pentecostal denomination in the US. Other black churches were established, particularly in northern cities where memberships were constantly growing. Historical records indicate that independent Protestant churches were founded before the Civil War by such notables as Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church; Absalom Jones, founder of a black congregation in 1794; James Varick and Christopher Rush were both

prominent leaders in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) church. These churches were founded after the Free African Society of 1787, were independent and totally black controlled. Another group of congregations emerged embracing various aspects of the African cultural religious heritage classified as the “Sanctified Church.”

According to Gilkes (2001:78):

The Sanctified Church encompasses those independent denominations and congregations formed by black people in the post Reconstruction South and their direct organizational descendants. These churches arose largely in conflict with the older denominations (Baptist and Methodist)...The Sanctified Church represents the black religious institutions that arose in response to and largely in conflict with postbellum changes in worship traditions within the Black community....the label ‘Sanctified Church’...distinguish[ed] congregations of ‘the saints’ from those of other black Christians.

Gilkes elaborates further by stating that “the Sanctified Church is important because its small size carried with it a large cultural impact. The Sanctified Church had a respect for and positive redefinition of black women’s special historical background. It came to prominence at a time when the role of black women in their community and the larger society was under tremendous negative pressure” (Gilkes 2001:78-79). In light of the repression of the nineteenth century, Gilkes says that the Sanctified Church affirmed the freedom of womanhood in a number of ways.

Gilkes (2001) points out that the numerical as well as the financial support women give to the Sanctified Church, however, of which the COGIC is termed as, does not necessarily translate to acquiring leadership positions traditionally held by male clergy. Gilkes (2001:37) states that “not only did church women use their women’s clubs to carry on leadership roles outside the confines of their churches, but they also formed autonomous and highly elaborate women’s organizations [and

departments] within their churches. For these women, the development of acculturated grassroots leadership was a principal task.” Gilkes’s primary enumerations of a Sanctified Church’s Women’s Department, a label attributed to the COGIC, typifies women and their leadership roles “honed out” as enterprising agents.

Leadership roles as far as women were concerned in the COGIC had its genesis during Charles Harrison Mason’s era. Mason’s inclusionary style of leadership for churchwomen is demonstrated by his acknowledgement of women in ministries of the church during a time when they were referred to as “overseers”, a point that Gilkes (1985) keenly observes. While the COGIC was in its embryonic stage, women leaders were called overseers—a term synonymous to men who presided over a given jurisdiction. She notes usage of this term, stating its Greek translation to mean bishop. Gilkes concludes that such usage implied that the founders of the COGIC and other denominations initially envisioned a church organized in parallel structures of both men and women overseers. Having appointed women overseers beside the men, one might further conclude Bishop Mason’s notion of church leadership to be egalitarian and symbiotic in nature.

Morgan (2007:37) reports in *Charisma Magazine* that although Mason appointed men to lead the groups the women had “dug out,” he affirmed women’s freedom to teach men once telling a group of male pastors who attempted to walk out of a Bible study that [Mother Lizzie] Robinson was teaching to “go back and sit down and learn some sense.”

The structure for church doctrine and policy in the COGIC has roots in the history and formative years of the denomination. Mason’s attendance at the Azusa

Street Revival in Los Angeles, California in 1907 included what Ware (2009) termed as Mason's Pentecostal experience characterized by imbuing of the Holy Spirit and subsequent glossolalia (speaking in tongues). This event was an historic Pentecostal revival that gained national attention and is believed to have been the catalyst for 20th century Pentecostalism. According to Lovett (1973:36), "twentieth century Pentecostalism began during the turn of the century as a movement. The Pentecostal Movement was primarily Afro-American in origin under the leadership of W. J. Seymour in Los Angeles in 1906." Some scholars believe that twentieth century Pentecostalism also points to Seymour and the Mother church at the Azusa Street Mission. Untold numbers of Pentecostals and charismatics in many denominations today trace their religious heritage to the Azusa Street meeting.

The Azusa Street Revival was characterized by preaching, praying, healing, the intermingling of the races, assembling of all classes of people, attendance of various religious groups, and the encouragement of women in leadership. This revival was led by William J. Seymour and an interracial team of women and men. During the earlier and formative stages of the revival, Ware (2009) points out that reports indicate that a small group of African American women (domestics) were given the liberty of preaching and praying at the revival and ultimately established churches elsewhere. Under Seymour's leadership, the *Apostolic Faith Newsletter* bearing his name as author states that "on the day of Pentecost they all preached through the power of the Holy Ghost.

In Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female, all are one" (Ware 2009:218). However, at a later date, Seymour changed his position and put

restrictions on women's church leadership. In his *Doctrines and Disciplines* published in 1915 according to Ware (2009:218-219), Seymour states that "women can be ministers but not elders or bishops....only a colored man [could] serve as bishop. Women could not hold positions that placed them in authority over men....they could not lay hands [or] confer holy orders on a man". Seymour's change in his initial attitude toward women in ministry may have been related to a personal matter. The fact that an active woman having an administrative position in the revival befriended him causing much grief and distress, may have been a contributing factor.

Who were some women of the Azusa Street Revival? Alexander (2005) notes there were several women from various racial and cultural backgrounds who were instrumental in contributing to a world-wide spiritual movement that spanned the globe. She highlights some of the women such as Lucy Farrow, Florence Crawford, Lucy Leatherman, Julia Hutchins, Clara Lum, Mable Smith Susie Valdez and Emma Cotton. Alexander points out that Emma Cotton was an evangelist who had come to Azusa Street in the first year of the revival and thereafter was involved in evangelistic preaching throughout California. She is believed to have started congregations in Fresno, Bakersfield, and Oakland and finally settled in Los Angeles, California. She also had direct ties to the COGIC by her association and substantial influence on the life and ministry of Samuel Crouch who ultimately became a well-known bishop in the COGIC and served on the highest board of the church. In particular, Alexander (2005) reports that somewhere in the 1930s, Cotton develops a friendship with Aimee Semple McPherson, founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

With the encouragement of McPherson, Emma Cotton established the Azusa Pentecostal Temple in Los Angeles and served as co-pastor with her husband, Henry Cotton. This church remained as an independent congregation throughout Cotton's lifetime. Alexander (2005) states that although Cotton probably held credentials with the COGIC while taking on a more prominent leadership position in terms of being a pastor (in place of her husband due to his work schedule as a railroad employee), her affiliation with the COGIC, however, did not allow women to serve as pastors. Consequently, the Cotton's "founding rights" were relinquished under COGIC authority and today the church is known as the Crouch Memorial Pentecostal Church of God in Christ located in East Los Angeles, California. Alexander (2006) reports that this church is named for Samuel Crouch, who was mentored in the church and ministry as a young man under the guidance of Emma Cotton. Crouch "inherited" the church subsequently becoming the pastor and built it to a sizeable congregation.

Women who served in leadership positions designated by the revered founder, Bishop Mason, were much like women of the Azusa Street Revival. During the formative years of growth in the COGIC, women worked with clergymen in a collaborative way, participating in ministries, "digging out" churches and giving them over to clergymen. According to Ross (1969), Bishop Mason acknowledged the strength and potential of a unique woman who could promote the work of the Church. Mason was known to have a keen and discerning eye regarding the work of women in the church. He was well aware of the strength and agency of prominent women such as Mary McLeod Bethune, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Ida B. Wells and sought to establish the COGIC women's work and structure it in an egalitarian manner. In this

way, women would be able to utilize their gifts and talents while functioning as leaders alongside (sympiotically) men clerics. Mason recruited Mother Lizzie Woods Roberson from Arkansas and appointed her as the first supervisor over the women's work.

Mother Robinson, an honorific title given to respected individuals, gained added experience in church work as she and her husband pioneered the frontiers in "digging out" churches². Cornelius (1975) gives a description of what life was like for traveling evangelists during the early years of church growth. Very often money was scarce thus adding to the difficulties of maintaining churches and supporting memberships. Despite these obstacles, Mother Robinson and her husband established a COGIC in Omaha, Nebraska which became their home. Mother Robinson continued her mission work of training women in the church for service. Although the home and church responsibilities prohibited Mother Robinson's husband from accompanying her during travels, she was still able to establish a National Headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee and form several auxiliaries which exist in almost every COGIC church today.

Upon Mother Robinson's death in 1945, Lillian Brooks Coffey, a high-spirited energetic and capable individual was destined to carry on the women's work. As a young person she was nurtured in the faith by Bishop Mason. In addition to serving as Mother Robinson's assistant, Mother Coffey was well qualified to head the women of the COGIC. Appointed by Bishop Mason, her administration added

² "Digging out" churches refers to a person, usually a woman who goes to a location, starts a work by organizing people in a church, building, home, etc., and establishes a church.

breadth and depth to the structure of the women's department. As noted by Cornelius (1975), some of Mother Coffey's major accomplishments included organizing the first Women's International Convention in 1951 held in Los Angeles, California. She also organized the "Lillian Coffey Train" which transported women to this convention at a price of \$100.00. During her tenure in office, state and national programs were expanded, numerous boards and committees were established, the Lillian Coffey Home was founded in Detroit, Michigan and in the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy welcomed the women to the White House in Washington, DC.

Mother Anne L. Bailey succeeded Mother Coffey and continued to broaden the women's work nationally and internationally. *The Whole Truth* newspaper (1967a) reported that Mother Coffey presented Mother Bailey as her capable assistant to Bishop Mason desiring her to be the successor in leading the women as the next supervisor of the Women's Department. While serving as International Supervisor of Women of the COGIC, Mother Bailey was also appointed as State Supervisor of Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, and Washington, DC. Because of her loving and compassionate nature, she was reportedly called the "Sweetheart" of the church.

Initially, the women's department of the COGIC formulated a structure of succession of leadership which would minimize, if not eliminate, dissension and strife. While each successor was well-trained under the present supervisor prior to her death, the National Mother made her request known to the Senior Bishop as to who was qualified to lead the women's department. In this manner, the women's work could be carried on in an orderly and uninterrupted fashion. Such was the case

with mother Lizzie Robinson, Mother Coffey, and Mother Anne L. Bailey. This procedure seemed to be a natural part of organization for women of the church even though they had no previous model to emulate. Additionally, some possessed skills which would automatically enhance organizational structure within the COGIC as did Mother Lizzie Robinson who served as a matron of a Baptist Academy in Dermott, Arkansas.

The women's work contributed to the expansion and organization of the church as envisioned by Bishop Mason. He had a perception of overseers (men) having a counterpart in church organization and sought to include the skills of women in the operations of the church. Bishop Mason viewed the COGIC as having an evangelistic zeal typical of the early Christian church and considered harmony among leaders in the work of the church as sacred and essential. Based on this notion of harmonious working relations, each overseer had a woman working with him to organize the women in a given state. In addition to the work and organization of the denomination, Ross (1969) notes that Bishop Mason recognized the necessity of training the youth of the church. Establishment of a small school took place in Mississippi and in 1926,

Arenia C. Mallory was appointed by Bishop Mason to head this school. After an educational board was established, the name given to the school was Saints Junior College. Mallory's life, like so many other women, is a testament to sacrificial living for the love of the COGIC. Simmons and Martin (1983) note some of Mallory's achievements: the first woman to head a school owned and operated by the COGIC; she was elected to the Holmes County Board of Education in 1968; she received the

Governor's Outstanding Mississippi Award; A day proclaimed in the state of Mississippi in her honor; The Holmes County Board of Supervisors changed the name (Castalian Road) in Lexington, Mississippi to Arenia C. Mallory Road. Mallory was also a member of Eleanor Roosevelt's Negro Women's League in which she advised the First Lady on issues from an African-American woman's perspective. Many other achievements included her involvement in community, political and religious organizations.

Other pioneer women in the COGIC were deeply concerned with the spiritual aspects of church ministries and served as spiritual and "anointed" leaders in the church. The late Mother E.J. Dabney quoted as being a woman who touched the world from her knees and Elsie Shaw of Ohio were exceptional women who consecrated themselves to a life of fervent prayer. Mother Dabney's ministry of prayer was so effective that Bishop Mason frequently summoned her to assist bishops and pastors in their churches. In her book, *What It Means To Pray Through*, Dabney records her life story and establishment of the Garden of Prayer COGIC in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her desire was to have a prayer ministry reaching races of people from all over the world. Dabney (1987) stated a group of business people visited the service one night where she was conducting a meeting. The building was quite uncomfortable with no conveniences. People had been attending service from Syria, China, Africa, India, Australia, England and other parts of the world. Sympathetic about the conditions under which she labored, a business group of mixed nationalities called Bishop Mason for permission to secure another building for Mother Dabney and her husband. Dabney recorded, "Friends, those of all

nationalities and denominations, who love the truth, made us a present of the church of granite, which is the Garden of Prayer” (1987:43).

Much like the spiritual leader and educator, Mary McLeod Bethune, whose activism influenced people all over the world and Harriet Tubman who was a visionary and devout Christian, Mother E.J. Dabney’s life also exemplified a legacy akin to the activism and struggle of nineteenth-century black women who were concerned about the welfare of not only black people but all people. Their writings resonate with discourses concerning oppression that impacted differentiated subordinate groups. Mary McLeod Bethune and Harriet Tubman had a passionate faith in God and were particularly committed to a theology centered on spiritual and economic uplift of the poor and the disposed. Similarly, Mother Dabney being a woman of fervent prayer used biblical precepts and an ethic of caring for people that transcended the boundaries of race class, gender, nationality, and age in her prayer ministry. Her action is in line with feminist practices across group boundaries.

Dabney (1987:44) herself states:

Last year we sent out seven million blessed handkerchiefs, which had been “anointed” and prayed over for the sick and afflicted. We sent three million of the seven million to the foreign fields. The soldiers, the sailors, WACs, trained nurses and missionaries who are stationed in the far-away land received these..[In the church] the Lord’s name must be hallowed... There are no special seats; first come, first served. Great respect is paid unto the elderly people; great care is given unto the young; no one is slighted or molested.

Fully condoned by Bishop Mason, Dabney’s leadership in this ministry of prayer was completely independent of church or governance structures while Mason remained alive and served as Senior Bishop of the denomination.

During Bishop Mason's era, COGIC women had a genuine respect for and devotion to their leaders. Excerpts from an article in *The Whole Truth* in February of 1976b records:

It is the truth that the women of the church have been taught through the leadership of the late Mother Lizzie Rob[in]son, first supervisor of Women's department, to be loyal to leadership especially the men of the church and to keep out of their affairs where differences among them are concerned....At another era, Mother Lillian B. Coffey, a woman of her day....also stressed loyalty to leadership....During the lifetime of our founder, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, when....his body became weak and tired....it was Mother who forsook all, comforts of home and self to travel with Bishop Mason to see to his comforts (p.5).

Mason's era is replete with testimonials and references to churchwomen's devotion to Bishop Mason—a man greatly used by God. At the age of 95, the passing of Bishop Mason in 1961 ushered in dramatic changes in church leadership and governance. An Executive Board was formulated which was in keeping with the Constitutional provisions. This was a board made up of twelve individuals—A. B. McEwen, J.S. Bailey, O. M. Kelly, J. O. Patterson, U. E. Miller, S. M. Crouch, O. T. Jones, Sr., Wyoming Wells, L. H. Ford, C. E. Bennett, John White and W.G. Shipman. According to Ross (1969), A. B. McEwen was elected Chairman of the Executive Board, J. S. Bailey Vice Chairman, J. O. Patterson General Secretary and O. T. Jones, Sr. was honored as the ceremonial head of the church or the “Senior Bishop.”

The church attempted to move forward, but a bitter power struggle threatened. Ross (1969) notes the issue of where the authority of the COGIC is placed by its Constitution involved two questions: “How much” authority and power should be given to Senior Bishop O.T. Jones, Sr., and who determines the authority and power

of the Executive Board? Subsequently, conflicting issues could not be resolved and this schism resulted in a lengthy court battle. In a lamentable tone, Ross (1969:77) recorded that “from November, 1964 to November, 1968, the darkest chapters of the history of the Church of God in Christ were voluminously inscribed on the pages of the courts of Tennessee, Alabama, Texas and many other states.”

This unstable period continued as years dragged on and disorganization persisted. The state of affairs within the church has been termed the Dark Period in COGIC history. Charles Blake (1965), who was at that time co-pastor of a COGIC church in California (and who is now the Presiding Bishop of the COGIC), concluded in his study, *The Church of God in Christ: Its Organizational Crisis*, that:

One of the primary problems which confronts the Church of God in Christ today is the problem of an undetermined locus of authority or power in the organization. The Senior Bishop, the Council of Bishops, and the General Assembly are the three entities from one of which the future leadership of the Church of God in Christ will most likely come (p. 12).

Blake did not specify who should lead but believed that close examination of all the entities would yield fruitful benefits in terms of leadership.

Beyond Bishop Mason's Era—Churchwomen's Leadership

When James Oglethorpe Patterson, Sr. became the Presiding Bishop of the COGIC in 1968, Mother Anne L. Bailey and Mother Mattie McGlothen were two pioneers of the church who were still living and who had worked in the church during Mason's era and personally witnessed the leadership structure of the denomination. Under Patterson's leadership, he appointed auxiliary bishops and upgraded the financial and organizational structure of the church. A March issue of *Charisma & Christian Life* (1990) reports that Patterson established the Fine Arts Department and

the Historical Museum and Fine Arts Center. He organized the Charles Harrison Mason Foundation and the Presiding Bishop's Benefit Fund which provides scholarships to deserving young people. Patterson also initiated the idea for All Saints University (ASU).

The women's department had advanced tremendously under the leadership of Mother Lizzie Robinson and Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey. Noted accomplishments under Robinson's leadership were allocation of resources in helping to establish a National Headquarter's in Memphis, Tennessee, the Prayer and Bible Band, the Sewing Circle and the Home and Foreign Mission Board. More recently, the women's department has advanced to a more complex classification of units. Some units are the Hospitality Committee, the Young Women's Christian Council, the Volunteer Missions, the Nurses Unit and the Business and Professional Women's Federation.

According to the *Handbook for the Department of Women*, units were designed to "meet the needs of twentieth century Holy Women [and] they all contribute to the wholeness of the department" (1990:1). The twentieth century model of the Women's Department has several characteristic features. It is comprised of women from all walks of life who are professionally trained and committed to the COGIC. The units which were added during the administrations of Mothers Coffey, Bailey, and McGlothen include services and support for both girls and boys of all ages such as the Boy's League and Big Brothers. In cases where there are homes with absent fathers, inspiration and guidance is given to young boys to help in their development toward manhood. Wholesome activities and instruction are

given by men (and women) particularly when there is need for a “substitute” mother figure in the lives of young boys who have no mothers in the home. Volunteer Missions workers render services locally and globally wherever there is a need of mankind regardless of race, color, or creed. The United Sisters of Charity serve in convalescent homes and senior citizens homes providing food, clothing, and comfort for the needy. The remaining units such as the Junior Missionary Alliance, Missionary Circle, Business and Professional Women’s Federation, and the Nurses Units seek to minister to needs of the total person spiritually and develop outreach ministries impacting the less fortunate, sick and shut-in thus organizing Christian women for agency/activism.

COGIC women continued to faithfully serve in the church during the early stages of church growth. Succeeding Mother Coffey, Bailey exercises her voice and commenting on the changing role and position of women in *The Whole Truth Newspaper* (1976b:5), she states:

The church began to enlarge through the women. Men did not get out churches by themselves but the women were gathered in to help. Women would go where there were no churches with their tambourines and testify that Jesus saves from sin....Louvenia Taylor of Texas worked out more churches in the state of Texas than any man. She did not attempt to pastor them. As fast as she worked them out she turned them over to Bishop Page....Under the older dispensation, women hid themselves, but today, we openly do our work in the church.

Not only were churchwomen advancing obtrusively, they were also, methodologically speaking, writing and compiling oral histories and preserving the voices of pioneers in the church from their standpoint—specifically through the lens of COGIC women and their lived church experiences. For example, (1) Evangelist

Elnora L. Lee's book, *C.H. Mason: A Man Greatly Used of God* recapitulates important events encompassing the life and ministry of Bishop Mason which is copyrighted under the authorship of the Women's Department with Anne L. Bailey serving as the International President (2) Cornelius (1975) writes about growth of the women's department, leadership of both women and men, and establishment of the annual Holy Convocation in Memphis, Tennessee where members gathered for services including prayer and fasting and feasts for the church body (3) The first Women's Ministry Magazine entitled *Lifted Banners* was developed by Mother Lizzie Robinson in 1943 which was the official magazine of the Women's Ministry of the COGIC. Thus, churchwomen were expanding the body of knowledge from a structurally located position. Black women's experiences are linked to a consciousness that develops effecting how their thoughts collectively, form a collective wisdom. Hills-Collins (2000:24) points out how "black women's experiences and ideas as a 'group'...foster[s] group commonalities...that encourage the formation of a group-based, collective standpoint...enabling [women] to construct a collective body of wisdom." Additionally, the construction of knowledge which is woman-centered has contributed to black feminist epistemological literature.

Equally important to the COGIC, and the women, was the preservation of history and tradition and expanding the vision of the church for future growth. Taking part in this vision was Bishop Ford (who succeeded Bishop J. O. Patterson), a charismatic and energetic leader of the church. In a correspondence sent to officials of the church in 1991 from Presiding Bishop L. H. Ford, he stated plans were underway for The Deborah Mason Patterson/Arenia C. Mallory Memorial Multi-

Purpose Hall in Lexington, Mississippi...Among its features will be the Mallory Library containing artifacts of the late Deborah Mason Patterson, our Sainted Founder, C. H. Mason, church pioneers, executive housing, offices, conference rooms and two (2) dining halls seating 500 persons in one and 200 in the other. The plans for this project, which will be an excellent site for retreats, conferences and recreation, are 98% complete.

At the 84th International Holy Convocation held in Memphis, Tennessee, Bishop Ford stated that additional changes involving the COGIC agenda would be forth coming. At a press conference held on November 11, 1991 Ford announced on CBS television plans of a future facility for homeless people. The October 1991 issue of *The Whole Truth* newspaper reported Bishop Ford's assertion that "there [was] a great need for an increase in....commitment to missions, programs for our senior citizens, saving of our youth and aiding the homeless" (p.2).

The years including growth of the COGIC and the women's work following Mason's passing give a portrayal of the overall climate of the church under each successive leader. Bishop Ford's administration included the building of new edifices to enhance not only the appearance of COGIC properties but also to honor prominent women of the church. Utilizing many church members from various locations and congregations who had skills in bricklaying, housing development, repairs, etc., Ford rallied the membership to join him in the efforts of improvements. During his latter years in office, he was responsible for having former president Bill Clinton (William Jefferson Clinton) address the Holy Convocation which convenes annually in Memphis, Tennessee.

Summary

Pioneer women have played an important part in the development of the women's department in the COGIC. As workers in the ministry, their contributions enhanced the operational, organizational and managerial aspects of the church.

Early churchwomen provided a model for COGIC women. Self-initiative in organization and religious activities of women leaders were some distinguishing features of their church involvement and dedication. The outcome of their activity was manifested in the women's department as auxiliary structures and created positions for women in church leadership.

Stages of growth and development in the COGIC have always included the efforts of women. While functioning in the capacity of "double duty" i.e., working in the church and in the home (or on a job), traditionally, COGIC women have maintained a posture of cooperation and assimilation within the church. As noted by Cornelius (1975), "...It is in the church along with our men [that] Great Women helped pioneer the church...."(p. 22).

Presently, roles of women in the church range from secretary to state supervisor, an administrative role at the state level which is the highest "status" position for women. This position is traditionally given to a mature and seasoned woman who has served many years in the church. Most of the time, a jurisdictional bishop of a state makes the appointment. Although more women have recently gained positions which were traditionally occupied by men, ordination for women remains off limits.

CHAPTER 5

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH—BARRIERS

In this chapter, I discuss the specific barriers having an effect on churchwomen's leadership in the church. I describe how interviewees feel about the present state of women's leadership and factors influencing their viewpoints on the expediency of condoning women as pastors of churches. The data indicate churchwomen's discontent with church rules and doctrines used as justification for governance by clergymen only.

Individuals interviewed for this research consisted of pastors, elders, missionaries, deacons, first ladies, district missionaries (women who worked with pastors who presided over a local church district), church mothers, and individuals who served on various boards of the church at the state and national levels (See Appendix D). Some interviewees were well-educated having earned degrees in various fields of study and others had acquired theological training in addition to their main careers such as a nurse having a Masters of Divinity degree. Seminary training proved to be advantageous for women (as well as men) especially since the historical church tradition in reference to leadership uses biblical interpretations as a basis for defining women's roles. Women who had theological training and many women who had titles but not the degree interpreted scriptures differently than men and clerics in the church. As women enter this arena of biblical interpretations, they also bring subjective interpretations based on their personal experiences. This expands

and offers new theological discourse. The beliefs, opinions, and interpretations coming from both sides, however, continue to be an ongoing debate concerning gender.

**Table 5.1 Age Distribution by Gender in the Sample
(Total sample=70)**

| Age | Men | Women | Total |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 20 and below | 0 | 2.86 (1) | 1.43 (1) |
| 31-40 | 8.57 (3) | 17.14 (6) | 12.86 (9) |
| 41-50 | 28.57 (10) | 28.57 (10) | 28.57 (20) |
| 51-60 | 48.57 (17) | 45.71 (16) | 47.14 (33) |
| 61-65 | 11.43 (4) | 2.86 (1) | 7.14 (5) |
| Above 65 | 2.86 (1) | 2.86 (1) | 2.86 (2) |
| Total | 100% (35) | 100% (35) | 100% |

Table 5.1 shows the distribution of respondents according to age range by gender. Of the 70 interviewees, 35 were women and 35 were men. The age range was age 25 to 75. The mean age for women was 51.71 years old and the mean age for men was 53.54 years old. The age range 41 to 50 and 51 to 60 were the highest and therefore most of the interviewees for this study fell within those two categories. Data from my interviews indicate that third and fourth generation COGIC members (particularly women) were more likely to be dissatisfied with the current leadership model when compared with younger church members. The third and fourth generation would be individuals two generations past Mason's children. These individuals would most likely be in their 60s today. Most men did not see anything wrong with leadership holding fast to the traditional model favoring clerics only in full status positions.

Leadership in terms of women acquiring full status positions is a highly contested subject in the COGIC. Structural barriers devise a "glass ceiling" effect

limiting churchwomen's access to leadership positions. Few women end up in positions equal to clerics who maintain dominance over women that are trained and qualified to lead. In Ruth Wallace's (2000) article entitled, *Women and Religion: The Transformation of Leadership Roles*, she explores leadership roles of women in social science research organizations and draws parallels with researcher Marie Augusta Neal (1975:34) who argues "the fact that religion, more than any other field, is inextricably tied to a male-dominant power elite who make all the decisions."

Furthermore, Neal purports that "the problem for women in religion....is how to break into that elitist circle and get involved in the decision-making processes." Gender is supposedly not to be a determining factor in one's rightful place in worship. Similarly, Wallace's research centers on implications for policy change regarding women and leadership positions.

Years later, in a presidential address at the 1995 meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Wallace's topic was: *The Mosaic of Research on Religion: Where are the Women?*" While Wallace (2000) argues against factors causing the gender gap in research on religion, another kind of gap is also quite evident in black churches, such as the COGIC, where women press for leadership positions vis a` vis male clerics and are particularly exonerated from the decision-making process. Consequently, a theme related to this research centers on the absence of voice of churchwomen in the decision-making processes of the church.

Associated with this theme is the element of inclusion needed in governance, policy, polity, and administration. Interviews exhibiting this theme focus on various roles women have occupied at the local, state, national, and international levels and

their abilities to function extremely well. However, women's church involvement has not merited a voice in recognition of their agency nor inclusion in church administration. Case # 7, a well-educated ordained woman pastor of a COGIC church discusses the scarcity of women in leadership positions this way:

Leadership has not been the issue for women in COGIC---what has been an issue for women in COGIC is to have a voice in the policy-making and the decision and policy-making process in COGIC...I've worked in the role of being a District Missionary and basically in the district, much of the work was the work that went forth as a result of my leadership!...looking at women who would be district superintendents, or state bishops, or women on the General Board, those are the roles that women are shut out of!...women have been in leadership all along but in what places? That's what we're talking about in terms of the church policy, but to come around the table and say, "I have a place at the table," that's not what's said. But that's what we want!

This interviewee stresses the need for voice, visibility, and a change in church policy. To have a position of leadership according to the constitutional dictates still relegates women primarily to work in the private sphere of the church rather than recognition in the public sphere of the church. The exclusion of women in the decision-making process of the church was a reoccurring theme among churchwomen. This represents a structural factor that must be addressed by clerics if there is to be more churchwomen acquiring full status leadership positions. Opinions expressed by more proactive, outspoken, COGIC women are noted by a man elder, Case # 21 notes:

Women even want to be pastors now. The women have demanded their voice be heard! They don't want to be just evangelists, they don't want to be just missionaries, to speak here and there. They are a very vocal [group], quick in the forefront to speak at all sorts of activities, and functions.... where it has always been a man. The women are powerful! On TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network), look at Paula White, look at Juanita Bynum. People are flying and sacrificing [a lot of money] to get to these places to hear them speak—because they have a message. And even men are enjoying them—I do. I

think women are very vital, they're essential. As essential as [pause], the mitochondrion is to a cell! [interviewee laughs].

Patriarchal privilege that help clerics in keeping control over women is not as operative as it has been. An increasing number of COGIC women who have devoted their lives to the church are beginning to speak out against structures of labor and power. These structures maintain sexual-gender oppression therefore continuing to deny churchwomen deserving positions of leadership.

In her discussion of leaders in the COGIC and to references concerning churchwomen in the Black Church, Gilkes (2001:45) states that “[women] have created for themselves a variety of roles, careers, and organizations with great influence but with variable access to structural authority.” The theme of patriarchy and domination by men is evident and Case # 60, a missionary, makes reference to this point of view by acknowledging first and foremost the necessity to observe closely the church culture and environment associated with COGIC churches in general. While black worship is usually emotionally and spiritually uplifting, there is an ever present need for keen observations within these congregations to discern who is in charge. This point can be easily overlooked by an outsider looking in:

I don't really see it as being few,[women] in the visual sense. So that to me, still walking into the COGIC, even if I were to see a program on TV, COGIC, when I walk in and see, many times there are women leading praise and worship, many times there are women leading devotion, and many times there are even women preaching! And so I don't really see it as them not being, if you would, visible leaders....Now! If I kind of dig a little deeper and get into the administration of the churchWho is truly [in charge], the bucks stop here!” Yes, it's pretty much a man. The pastor of that church is probably going to be a male. The people who pretty much count the money and handle the money, men! And again, that's if I kind of get into a closer zoom in look.

This interviewee speaks the sentiment of COGIC women who have a keener sense of discernment when it comes to observations. Quality time to develop oneself spiritually supersedes the need for church involvement centered on the need for recognition and a “status” position in the church. As stated by one interviewee, women in the church generally want to be able to “do ministry” within churches (and abroad) should their mission and calling designate. Church structures and patriarchal dominance only present unnecessary boundaries that prohibit the advancement, growth, and development of churches all over the world where women remain subjugated by clergymen.

Sexism in Church and Society

Sexism, according to Riggs (2003), is evident when men resort to the use of sexist ideology rooted in the white patriarchal historical tradition of America. Sexism in society and the church was expressed by various interviewees of the church. Interviewee Case # 52, a man pastor, elaborates on the exclusion of women in leadership positions as it relates to elements of sexism, class, race, gender, and authority:

In my opinion, there is very little [women] leadership in the COGIC. They (women) are required or asked to do a number of things, particularly in the area of raising funds, but ultimate decisions do not rest with women in the COGIC....In some churches.... the male would feel that having] a female [as a leader], would challenge his authority or be in opposition [to it]. In terms of biblical teachings down through the years, the woman was always subjected to the man, to be a subordinate but never put an equal status. So therefore, in the religious approach, men have always tried to keep women in a subordinate kind of position in terms of leadership as far as the church goes. But yet, when the church needed things to be done, the pastor always looked to the female sex of the church.

In addition to few women having leadership positions in the church, other interviewees expressed the existence of sexism, a common theme throughout the interviewing process. A man deacon, Case # 6 states:

It is not because of a lack of qualified people. So few churchwomen are occupying leadership positions within churches because I think it's the "old guard mentality"—they are accepted but not much above the missionaries, church mothers, and the First Ladies. When it comes to women, they (churchwomen) generally know how to get their way. For every successful man there is a successful woman. I don't think that their contributions are diminished at all because of that.

Another interviewee expands the discussion on sexism in the church. Case # 39, a man elder explains:

Women, because of their ability to supersede men in some areas, men are jealous! They don't want the women to be over them, they don't want to answer to a female. They don't want women running things—they want to run things and keep women under their thumbs. It's that male chauvinism, that's all it is, that's all it is. And once that's dispelled and they can see what a woman can do, and their [women's] acceptance is adhered to, that thing takes off—whatever it is! It will take off if she has the vigilance to get the job done. And most women do.

Another interviewee's comments, Case # 17, a First Lady, center on the theme of sexism in society that influenced the church world:

Well, we have to look at where we've come from. And I feel we've come a long way as far as occupying positions in churches because there was a time earlier, about 40 years ago, when we were almost recognized as sisters in the church. We could "do" anything, we could sing, we could pray, we could teach even though we might have been able to preach—but they would never call it preach. And so, I think it's a matter of society, how society views women. Men, it's a man's world! Men just do not accept women as equals. They may say they do, but really, I don't think they do [interviewee laughs].

As long as sexist ideologies and man-centered viewpoints are pervasive in churches, until women are granted spiritual and theological equality the COGIC will continue to be weakened in its spiritual, theological, and ecclesiastical dimensions.

Traditional Viewpoint of Leadership

Some church leaders saw very little if anything wrong with leadership as it relates to women. Presumably, the current leadership roles serve as a model for both churchwomen and clergymen although the lines of gender still favor men over women positionally. The theme of a traditional man leadership model identifies the protocol for leadership roles and responsibilities for women and men. One interviewee, Case # 49, a man pastor states: “I won’t say that they (women) don’t occupy leadership positions within the COGIC. When you look in every local church and even in the district and jurisdiction, women play a vital role.” Case # 19, a man pastor, elucidates:

I think the current leadership of women in the COGIC, in reference to our structure, with women in ministry, has proved itself to be effective. I think [women’s] leadership is respected....Then I think the work of the women in the church depends upon the local pastor, the mindset of the bishop (jurisdictional). If we could just tap into the overall move of the national [church], our local churches would be stronger. The caliber of women in ministry, I think also determines the effectiveness of women....

In a similar vein, the theme of the roles of women according to the Constitution seemed most appropriate for women in the COGIC according to this interviewee’s comments Case # 4, a man pastor:

I think our current leadership accepts women in leadership roles in an area where it allows it to happen constitutionally! With reference to the General Assembly in the church, the maximum number of women is involved by the constitution. And then if you look departmentally, we have a ‘he and she structure’—if there’s a departmental president, then there’s a departmental lady’s position; YPWW President, (Young People Willing Worker) there’s a YPWW Chairlady; Sunday School Superintendent, then there’s a Sunday School Field Representative, on down across the board. Now when we get to leadership as far as pastoral, there’s a select area for women who are pastoring.

One selected area for women who lead churches that the COGIC has designated categorizes women as a “Shepherdess”. Mother R.T. Jones, Sr., of Christian Tabernacle COGIC in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was appointed Shepherdess of the church upon the death of her husband, Bishop R.T. Jones, Sr. The appointment was made by Bishop O.T. Jones, Jr. on April 20, 1990. Confirmation of this position, which is presumably equal to that of a pastor, was witnessed by people from various denominations in addition to four members of the COGIC General Board—Bishop Levi Willis, Bishop Neual Haynes, Bishop Phillip A. Brooks and Bishop Chandler D. Owens. Since that time, however, women have continued to expand the discourse on biblical interpretation concerning pastoral positions for women in the church.

Analysis of Bourdieu’s classification system is applied to the church world and religious practices impacting women in the COGIC who are not in the “selected area” for leadership. By extending Bourdieu’s logic of class struggle to the religious realm, symbolic classification reproduces class privilege—i.e., the dominant group defines the church culture in their favor further legitimizing biblical interpretations as key to church rule by clerics over women. The culture of the dominant or cultural capital referred to by Bourdieu, reproduces institutional biases and inequality effecting churchwomen.

Some interviewees felt that women’s current leadership is in a developing state as noted by interviewee Case # 2, a First Lady:

I believe women are in a very unique place, because God has prepared us for such a time like this. Many of the women will experience opportunity, preparation, and success. I didn’t figure that out myself but I believe God is

extending women's ministry—it's coming to fruition, it's not exactly where it should be, but that door of opportunity is open right now and if we really tap into it and continue to prepare ourselves, we're going to come to a special place and the position that God provides for us to be.

Similarly, a broader view of women and leadership follows from interviewee

Case # 18, a woman missionary who notes:

The current role of women in the COGIC today is developing....very much so.... it is evolving, developing and evolving. In that, I see women who are moving to various levels as pastors, not only pastors but, developing ministries in ways in which [they] have not been (I don't want to say not that typical to COGIC), but many women are very outstanding in not just church growth but in ministry outreach such as working with new needs, having schools, various levels of schools, as well as addressing social needs such as homelessness, and certain women's issues such as battering.

Interviewee Case # 48, a woman missionary, states:

Women's current leadership in the COGIC as having moved into a greater area, where we're accepted more by men in a certain way. But we still have not been able to name it –name[ed] as pastor or elder, or anything like that. But I feel that we are making good progress in the area of ministry. We're co-pastors now. There are pastor after the demise of their husbands, recognized [and]/or recognized.

Another interviewee, a male church deacon, Case # 6, saw current leadership in a more symbiotic manner having men and women working together in the church for the “common good.” The theme of symbiotic relationship in leadership is aligned with Bishop Mason's concept of leadership in the church where churchwomen and churchmen work together in a harmonious and egalitarian manner. This model of leadership reflects parallel structures, women and men sharing “equal” power. The inclusion of women is also viewed as a necessary component for the youth and ministries of the church. The following excerpt Case # 6, identifies this notion:

Women's leadership is an integral part of the church. Certainly, anything that the church obtains, you could not do it without the women. You have the men, they have their part, but I don't care what it is, if you are going to be

successful in anything, it is going to take the work of the Maker to go along with it. It just works out much better if you have 2 people going in the same direction—trying to obtain the same goal. And, not only that, it's that we're men and we're supposed to be the leaders, we're supposed to be the 1st partakers of things and all of that, but as far as my own personal experience, we can't always be right.

Leadership and Spirituality

Interviewee Case # 20, woman PhD (earned) and an instructor (church), expressed a unique viewpoint on leadership in the church centered on the theme of spirituality superseding class and status as expressed by this interviewee's individualized personal theology and philosophy concerning life and living. Most important was maintaining an authentic sense of spirituality characteristic of born again believers:

I'm a teacher—I teach Sunday school, children ages 5 – 10. Uh huh. Yeah, I'm fine with that mainly because of my professional life that is incredibly demanding! The politics of professional life, of any professional's calling....I really want the church to be a place where I connect to God. I don't want to get into any business, in terms of the administrative business of the church when I go to church.

Aside from the barriers that negatively impact women's leadership, agency is part of the church culture in which they are associated with. On the positive side, because of women's continued activism, they are sitting on boards that were traditionally occupied by clerics e.g., judiciary board as lawyers. Power and the influence that churchwomen have has been a great benefit to them in terms of aggressively moving in the direction of empowerment for leadership roles. The theme of the power of churchwomen noted by Case # 43, a pastor, is highlighted by this interviewee:

Women are a dynamic [group]. [Looking at the church as a living organism], without women, many things would never happen because women have always gotten the job done. They push the men to do things that they otherwise would not do. Women have the “wear with all”, they have the stick-to-it-tive-ness to get the job done. That’s why they’re being better recognized than ever before....

In view of COGIC women’s continued push for equality in the church, yet there remains battle fronts to deal with, such as the ordination of women. Some believed that ordaining women would elevate the level of spirituality among leaders since it is generally believed that women are more spiritual than men due to their close association with the church. Assuming this is true, the church would be benefitted in both the sacred and secular realms.

Summary

This chapter focused on some of the pertinent factors barring churchwomen’s from gaining entrance to positions of status and authority. Some of the more prevalent barriers are sex, class, gender, race issues and the lack of voice. The lack of voice is significant in that not being involved in the decision-making, governance, policy and procedures places a stronghold on women since they have little to no input regarding church matters.

The element of class has relevance in my analysis. Churchwomen who are supervisors or have the title of First Ladies are viewed as being in a higher class when compared to missionaries or the president of an auxiliary. Such class divisions have a way of being divisive because they engender a spirit of competition among women when considerations are made in reference to leadership positions. Although clergymen to a large extent “preside over” matters involving credentialing, some

women jockey for the highest position they can obtain. In many instances, higher class women get the more prestigious church positions such as a state supervisor

More men than women felt there was nothing wrong with the current roles and positions for women because in every place where a man functioned, there was a woman to accompany the man (leader). This is, however, unequal power relations since men still hold the coveted positions as “the leader.” There are a number of churchwomen who may express dissatisfaction with the current arrangement of leadership but choose to leave matters as they are. These impressions emerged from the data suggesting that the dichotomous woman/man divisions are at the heart of deep-felt sensibilities regarding sexism and inequality.

Women, more so than men, viewed leadership as being in a developing state, or coming to fruition, or making progress. Although barriers are quite apparent, the impression given was that these women felt it more feasible to allow the advancement of women obtaining full status positions to take place in a normal and gradual process. The rational approach is deemed better suited for church protocol. The power that women have collectively, however, may not be realized by a significant number. Based on their numerical and economic strength, a strong women’s department which characteristically portrays COGIC women, has the capacity to bring about meaningful change affecting church doctrine and governance. As women continue their moral and economic support to the church, they keep hammering on the door of equality to open and break down barriers of oppression and discriminatory practices still existing in the church.

CHAPTER 6

BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP: ORDINATION OF WOMEN

According to Hardy (2007:737) the well-known evangelist and ordained preacher, Ida Robinson of the United Holy Church, a Pentecostal denomination, defected from this religious group when she heard rumors that the ordination of women would cease. She received a vision after many days of fasting and was divinely instructed to “come out on Mount Sinai and loose the women.” Thereafter, she established a new regional “confederation of churches,” later called the Mount Sinai Holy Church of America, based in her new home of Philadelphia to provide, at least in part, institutional space for women to exercise clerical leadership.

The issue of ordination of women for ministry continues to be an unresolved matter in churches all over the world. In 1853, the first woman ordained in a denomination in the US was Antoinette Brown. Graduating from Oberlin seminary, Brown was ordained in the Congregational Church after a struggle over the legitimacy of ordaining a woman. At the turn of the nineteenth century, more than 1,000 women had been ordained representing at least 12 denominations with a majority advocating for women’s rights and social reform. Following World War II and an increasing need for clergy during the 1950s, more denominations granted ordination to women with a second wave of religious groups opening its clergy ranks to women beginning in the 1970s onward. Researchers Lincoln and Mamiya (1990:297) also note that:

“postwar proliferation of Christian churches in the US contributed to the expanding need for professional clergy during the 1950s. Consequently, about one third of Protestant denominations in the World Council of Churches changed their disciplines thus allowing full ordination of women.”

Across the historic mainline black denominations, Barnes (2006:373) points out that support for women clergy varies. “Support was evidenced in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), African Methodist Episcopal (AME), and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) denominations when they began to ordain women ministers in 1891, 1948, and 1954 respectively.” In Lincoln and Mamiya’s (1990) study focusing on the above named churches in addition to the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated (NBC), the National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated (NBCA), the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC) and the COGIC, the Baptists and COGIC strongly opposed the ordination of women. In view of church tradition, doctrine, and biblical interpretation, the Official Manual of the COGIC (1973:146) notes the “scriptural importance of women in the Christian Ministry...but nowhere can we find a mandate to ordain women to be an Elder, Bishop or Pastor...[The Apostle] Paul styled the women who labored with him as servants or helpers, not Elders, Bishops or Pastors.”

In April of 1999, a report on the findings and statements on the question of ordination of women by the Doctrinal Review Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of God in Christ, Inc., was chaired by Bishop George D. McKinney. This report was submitted to Bishop Frank Ellis, chairman of the General Assembly. In the introduction of the report, it is noted that after twenty years of educating women in the Charles Harrison Mason Seminary located in Atlanta, Georgia, there was a

serious need to address the issue of ordination and women. At that time, the Presiding Bishop (Chandler D. Owens) and General Board had authorized the limited ordination of women for special ministries—that is, for serving as chaplains in the military, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions. Following this action, some bishops have ordained women and appointed them as pastors over local congregations. However, according to the Doctrinal Review Committee (DRC) report, a key factor relative to the issue of ordination centers on whether or not the church is in line with biblical and theological principles allowing full and complete ordination of women.

Juxtaposed to this question, the DRC also raised the question as to whether women's contributions in special ministries allowed by church officials make their ordination and contributions less valid because they are women? In order to provide a specific plan of study for inquiry and a way of approaching the issue of women in ministry, eight items were listed by the DRC as a guide for further investigation: (1) defense for The Official Doctrinal Manual of the COGIC; (2) defense for women who are already pastoring in the church; (3) definition of terms, such as preacher, pastor, prophet, missionary and prophetess; (4) historical review of women in the Old Testament; (5) historical review of women in the New Testament and early church history; (6) a woman's view of women in ministry from the traditional and feminist viewpoints including the New Feminist Bible; (7) a biblical answer to "Who calls to the ministry?" "How is a person "called?" and (8) a view of male domination and headship in Scripture and the concepts of ministry about ruling and serving.

The Doctrinal Review Committee was comprised of bishop, superintendents, pastors, evangelists, scholars, laity, and women and men from every region in the nation. Committee meetings were held in four locations—Memphis, Tennessee, Dallas, Texas, Atlanta, Georgia, and San Diego, California. These committee members accepted the challenge of examining doctrine which required biblical exegesis as a foundation to following the mandate for doing justice. An interim DRC report listing basic findings and areas of controversy were inclusive of the following: (1) the COGIC has always recognized women in ministry as missionaries, evangelists, teachers, church planters; (2) the COGIC has recognized and affirmed women in ministry by licensing through the Department of Women; (3) during the past thirty years, several bishops have, without the official sanction of the National Church ordained women as elders—some have served as pastors, administrators, chaplains in the military and hospitals and other institutions.

The areas of controversy included interpretation of scripture, the importance of culture, manners, and customs related to the status and role of women in New Testament times, influence of women's liberation and feminist movements, the question of God's order for biological family being analogous to God's divine order for the church, and the question: Would God bestow gifts on women which He did not intend for them to use? One area for further investigation added to these basic controversial issues is absence of the body of women in the General Assembly to vote on constitutional matters. Several themes relating to women and ministry illustrate DRC members' beliefs—women and men. As of this date, these issues are unresolved and remain open for continued deliberations by clerics and churchwomen

regarding the future of women in ministry in the COGIC—particularly the matter of ordination.

One interviewee who is the pastor of a large church commented on the dilemma facing the COGIC and the matter of ordination following a special summit meeting under the leadership of Bishop Chandler Owens. Case # 30, a pastor stated:

I do feel that [ordination] is going to be a challenge—I do feel it's going to take some time. During the tenure of Presiding Bishop Chandler Owens, he had a summit on this issue in Memphis. He split us up in about 4 different locations in Memphis and they discussed it. The topic of [this summit] was Women in Ministry. The general session was held at Mason Temple...and when all the other groups came with their findings, the bottom line was, I would say that about 80 % of the church did not accept [ordination of women], did not embrace it!

Although churchwomen from every level of the church participated in the summit report, according to this interviewee, the predominance of men was evident due to the constitutional guidelines favoring clerics numerically over churchwomen. This gender-stratified configuration was bound to affect the outcome of the summit. Gender-stratification privileges men who occupy positions of power and prestige while women remain subordinate to clerics within religious congregations (Cannon 1995; Carpenter 2001; Felder 1984; Grant 1989; Jones 1977; Sanders 1997; Williams 1995). Such is the case with COGIC women. Interviewee Case # 30, a man pastor further elaborates:

The [General Assembly] members [are] a mixture of the church, [female and male]. Of course there would be more men because of how the configuration was at that time. But if they had that same meeting today, it would be automatically a different result because the women's department under Mother Rivers has been very shrewd by asking for more representation in the General Assembly of the church. [Namely], it was a great increase in the last couple of years of the number of district missionaries, and a number of lay members that were coming into the General Assembly of the church. So the

number of women has increased in voting in the church. And she's trying to get it where every district missionary can vote.

The theme of the power of the vote abounds among various interviewees.

While collectively, women are powerful economically, there is a deeper need to target structures and barriers limiting their efforts to break the stronghold of patriarchal dominance. One of the strategies women are using is pushing for the inclusion of more women in the General Assembly to increase voting in favor of women's issues.

A woman pastor, Case # 41 points out:

Churchwomen would have to look at economics. Look at economics and say, this church is 90% female, then, at least 90% of the funds, the revenue that comes in from this church, comes from females. So, if we could organize on that level—economic strength. Also, to be able to look at the vote—that's where we need to be! If we could get in and get a right to vote! Concerning voting, well, the General Assembly needs to be open to everyone. You need to include female officers. I think everyone who is an officer and who makes financial contributions to the national work should have a voice in voting.

Similarly, another interviewee, a First Lady, Case # 2 states:

I would like to see delegates [added to the General Assembly]—definitely! They just changed everything and added more women, which was good. Now, what they're trying to do is to accept every pastor's wife. You see, we have the new position now! Pastors' wives were just pastors' wives before. Now they own a voice totally. So you have the District Missionaries, you have your Evangelists, they want to be included, then you have your pastors' wives, then you have the educated administrators.

Another interviewee sees voting power for churchwomen as being significant in bringing about changes in the COGIC which would impact its present structure in dramatic ways. A man pastor, Case # 37 predicts:

If churchwomen are given an opportunity to have wider voting rights in the church, the first thing that would happen would be the changing of some of the rules regarding doctrine and the constitution of the church in reflection to women in ministry. Currently, I don't know if you heard this but they use to want our women to be licensed as a pastor, but they stopped that under Bishop

Gilbert Earl Patterson—I don't know the exact year, but he stopped it under his administration because he felt it didn't reflect the constitution. [Consequently,] he wouldn't allow them (women) to receive any license as pastor. So, in our jurisdiction they stopped giving their pastoral support to the national church.

Black women's activism is noted by Hill-Collins (2000:204) who discusses two primary dimensions of their activism. The first dimension focuses on black women's struggle for group survival. In this case, women utilize what Collins terms "spheres of influence within existing social structures." These spheres consist of the creation of independent and oppositional identities which enable black women to craft strategies (political and otherwise) to affect change in "black consciousness" thus bringing about a freeing and empowering of the mind in order to resist, influence, and undermine oppressive structures.

The second dimension of black women's activism centers on women's struggles to bring about institutional transformation. Women's actions may involve bringing about change in areas of discriminatory policies and practices in various social institutions such as schools, the media, government, and the workplace. In this situation, individuals or groups confront and challenge rules and power inequities that oppress and subordinate women. Activities might include boycotts, demonstrations, and contestations coming from labor and feminist groups. Hill-Collins points out that this dimension is rarely successful without the support of coalition-building strategies. Coalition-building in terms of the like-mindedness of COGIC women and their out-spoken comments continue to expand the contestations of women seeking inclusion via voice and voting power.

In addition to challenging current structures, there is an immediate need for inclusion of women in the General Assembly from every level of the church (local, jurisdictional, state, and national) to affect change regarding the constitution.

Interviewee, a woman pastor, Case # 41 renders a solution for contesting the issue of women's subordination with emphasis on coalition-building strategies among churchwomen thus initiating change particularly in church governance:

In some ways I liken it [women's efforts to confront barriers] to the nonviolent resistance of the civil rights movement...so I think we gotta step up...what really changes our ability to go in and [gain equality] such as comparative to the civil rights movement is to march! Our theology is to live peaceably and then our theology teaches us that [if] God called you, He will qualify you. Your gift will make room for you.

In this discourse, younger pastors with "like-mindedness" would constitute one coalition group with whom COGIC women leaders would connect with to bring about gender justice. Additionally, the older women (a coalition group), many of whom are pioneers of the church would give voice in support of the need for changes to be made in current structures of church governance.

The theme of constitutional prohibition against ordination is expressed by various interviewees. Case #11 a man pastor comments:

As of right now, the COGIC does not recognize women in the ministry—from our constitution. But there is a "but" there. I said I was ordained by Bishop Jones and I was (pseudonym) took in a woman pastor which was totally against the grain of the COGIC. Since then, what we've had is a lot of women coming to our jurisdiction (New York) (pseudonym) so they are recognized as pastors in our jurisdiction but not by the national church.

The "mega-level" constitutional and hierarchical structure within the COGIC is expressed this way by interviewee, a pastor, Case# 52:

Constitutionally, there's no provision made to allow ordination. It was really, I guess you might say, that the constitution was formulated at the founding of the church. When you read either the ordination ceremony or the ordination statement...see, in our church, the levels are, the laity, the licentiate, the ordinariate, and then the bishopric. Everyone that comes to the Lord or comes to our church comes as laity. Then they receive quote unquote, a divine call from God—they may be male or female—they're called, they reach that level, we will license them—license the men as a licensed minister [and] we license our women as evangelist missionary. But after the licentiate level, the ordinariate and the bishopric, those roles or those levels are only occupied by the male members in our church. And so within the structure, the guidelines, and the rulings of our church, women [have] not here to fore been ordained.

The researcher utilizes content analysis in regards to this interviewee's constant use of the phrases, “our church,” “we will license them,” and “our women.” It is assumed that such usage denotes patriarchal power over and “ownership” of the women of the church.

Churchwomen in dual-sex roles and having gendered positions mean that women exercise power in parallel structures (Gilkes 2001) to clerics and the flow of power is from the top down with men always being at the top. Structures of power and authority already in place by way of the COGIC constitution maintain unequal power relations thus disempowering marginalized women. Additionally, the barriers to women's leadership when focusing on religious ideology “justifies” tradition, culture, beliefs, practices, constitutional rules and regulations, biblical interpretations thus offering further support to hegemonic dominance by male clergy. Various interviewees referred to the constitution as “grounds” for noninclusivity of women as stated by a pastor who believed ordination should be limited to men when he commented, “at this time, we have to –by the mandates and guidelines of our

church.” Consequently, COGIC clergy continue to hold the coveted top leadership positions.

Cheryl Sanders, professor of Christian Ethics at Howard University School of Divinity points out in a paper, presented at the National Conference of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) a survey conducted by Pearl Williams-Jones of five major Pentecostal churches. In Sander’s (1996) paper, *History of Women in the Pentecostal Movement*, she notes that Williams-Jones highlighted the treatment of women in ministry and leadership by categorizing churches that subordinated women in ministry roles. One was the COGIC. In addition to being denied inclusivity, present-day COGIC women lament over the unfriendly atmosphere and negative attitudes of some clerics who resent their positions being occupied by women. One ordained woman pastor states, “The way is hard, the way is [difficult]....you don’t get a real welcoming,...inviting, I guess you could say from everyone.”

Notions of justice, according to Hill-Collins (1998) is conceptualized as “a group-based phenomenon.” Critical social theory and its commitment to justice centers on unjust power relations and the oppositional knowledge created by oppressed groups. Within organizational settings such as Black churches, black women were provided an arena for political activism for social justice. However, their activism and agency has always unselfishly been for the good of the black community and its uplift. Black women relinquished their special interests fighting on behalf of social justice and freedom for themselves and the entire black community. In particular, sustenance of the Black Church and its development historically to the

present-day has benefitted from women's involvement in social, political, and economic issues as well as sacred and secular endeavors. Regardless of the system of domination in COGIC churches and negative attitudes of male clergy toward ordained women, churchwomen as a collectivity maintain the self-definition and self-determination or power to define one's reality in the face of gender discrimination.

Hill-Collins's work on black feminist thought brings a unique approach to social justice. One of its strength is found in the concept of intersectionality. Numerous publications of her work center on intersecting oppressions and placing Black women's experiences in the center of analysis. She argues that Black women are uniquely situated in that they are the focal point where the oppressive systems of race and gender intersect. Understanding this intersectionality prompts one to investigate other areas where systems of inequality come together. Socially and culturally constructed categories of religion-based ideology, class, gender and sexuality center on the issues of oppression and the matrix of forces that produce inequality.

Hill-Collins's concept of intersectionality pinpoints how oppression provides a form of "second sightedness" for individuals who are oppressed. In this case, the oppressed specifically feel and know their oppressor because it surrounds the person (and he/she feels the pressure from the oppressor) in their everyday [church] lives [emphasis added]. An example is given by a senior church mother, Case # 61 who expresses her thoughts this way:

I started doing human needs work, way before God called me in the hills of Alabama. I felt that God wanted me to help people and to teach the Word. But when I got to St. Matthew COGIC (pseudonym) it was just teach, sit

down, then nothing. If there was a mission [at St. Matthew] it didn't serve the whole person. I feel good about it when God called me over 40 years ago to open up a place and I didn't get started until 32 years ago. I'm a nurse by profession, but God [was] saying, 'Leave that.' I left the hospital to open this place, Mary's House [pseudonym], to open a place for human needs.

Like the senior church mother, this interviewee, Case # 41, a woman pastor, described her ministries that transcend the pulpit (theme):

I have gone out and organized a church and I'm doing community service. I worked in the community at various levels, working with the police department, working with ex-offenders, working with the homeless, working with youth, working with the mayor's office in the city of New York [pseudonym] around such things as domestic violence. Currently, I am a CPE supervisory candidate for clinical pastoral education supervision i.e., supervision/education. That is a role/job that trains seminarians and ministry student for professional chaplaincy and other aspects of ministry. I also am director of pastoral care for a health system. This is a community outreach endeavor which uses a New Testament perspective by touching lives, going out and helping people, getting out "amongst the people" and caring for them in that regard.

Although not necessarily a popular viewpoint church wise, some clerics were openly in favor of women's ministries to include being the pastor of a church. The late Presiding Bishop Louis H. Ford genuinely supported women pastors. There were other bishops that supported women in ministry. This was an area where there was not a lot of talk about bishops condoning women as pastors. Some bishops went as far as ordaining women officially until national headquarters put a halt on this action.

Interviewee, Case # 41a woman pastor, recalls a meeting that Bishop Ford had and an experience with introducing a women as the pastor. The interviewee states:

In a meeting, I heard Bishop Ford say there was a woman in Joliet, she worked out a church, prayed out a church, developed a school and was bringing it into the jurisdiction And in this meeting, Bishop Ford presented this woman's work ... and said, "Let's welcome her to the jurisdiction." And then, some man said "Bishop, are you going to appoint a man over her when she comes in?" And this was in,...[interviewee ponders the year]...1980. And

Bishop Ford denounced that. He had some choice words for that man [interviewee laughs], beginning with, “You must be crazy! Why should I do that? I want the [church] work to thrive! I don’t want somebody to go out there and kill it!”

Another interviewee in support of women pastors reports Case # 54, an elder of the church:

It’s my understanding that the bible says that there is neither male [nor] female in the Lord. Then I believe that there is no difference between the sexes in leadership. In other words, a man or a woman could lead or could be a pastor of a church. Well, unfortunately very few pastors even mention this scripture at all. And what I’m noticing is that nowadays pastors talk about matters like district meetings, business meetings, pastors and elders conferences and the women are working and supporting our churches—but very few of them [churchwomen] lead them [churches].

A church deacon, interviewee Case# 65, also lends support to women pastors: “Ordination should not necessarily be limited to men only. If you have a woman that has been in the church and has proven herself then I don’t see any problem with that. I don’t think that pastors in general, [are] something that should be exclusive to men.”

The journey of Pastor Cathy Fielding who was once affiliated with three different denominations, one of which was the COGIC is noted. Finding the “stained glass ceiling” hard to pierce, Fielding finally joined the Methodist Church where she found a place to call home. While fellowshiping with the COGIC, Fielding laments over the fact that she did not see women occupying leadership roles. Lawrence Mamiya, an expert in African American religion at Vassar College in New York, notes that “there is an emerging giant in the church. There are more Black women than men in the divinity schools everywhere...it will be hard to beat back this large, educated and dedicated generation of women who want to show their talents in ministry and the pulpit.” The more recent trend regarding educational achievement of

churchwomen continues to advance. Comments are recorded from interviewees Cases # 9 (missionary), Case # 55 (missionary), Case # 63 (missionary), concerning educational advancements of churchwomen who will be taking on the traditional roles occupied by clerics.

Interviewee # 9:

I think what is going to continue is younger pastors who are coming up. There are pastors who are becoming more educated and that's going to make a difference for them being more educated as well in terms of occupying clerical positions.

Interviewee # 55:

Yes! We have several attorneys in our church and they are working with the Trustees. We have women judiciaries; we don't have any women bishops because we don't have women pastors/elders. We have not really recognized officially women as pastors.

Interviewee # 63:

I...want to become a ministerial consultant. I have dealt with so many young men who want to pastor, they want to be in ministry, doing, [and] thinking that they're prepared and they're not. At this point, I have been in the ministry for over 35 yrs. I've been an evangelist, I've traveled all over the United States of America and other places, I have spoken during the Women's Convention for many yrs I am the Dean of the C.H. Mason Bible College.

Whereas some churchwomen opt to continue moving toward professionalization and remain committed to the church, others follow a different course. Ernestine Cleveland Reems-Dickerson (now Bishop Reems-Dickerson), is founder and past senior pastor of Center of Hope Community Church in Oakland, California. The daughter of Bishop E.E. Cleveland (COGIC), Reems-Dickerson founded this church with four members on November 3, 1968. She has effectively organized social ministries to elevate the quality of life within the church and community including a food feeding ministry, charter school with grades K – 8, a 150

unit affordable housing complex, a senior housing unit, and a 17 unit transitional facility for homeless single women with children. Although she is a product of the COGIC and has been ordained by a COGIC clergyman, Center of Hope Community Church is nondenominational—independent. The church has had phenomenal growth to the extent that after more than 37 years serving as pastor, Reems-Dickerson's eldest son Brondon and daughter-in-law Maria Reems were installed as Pastors of Center of Hope Community Church in October of 2004.

Banerjee (2006:3) reports in *The New York Times* that Cathy Fielding and other churchwomen have left the COGIC after many years of belonging to the denomination. Reverend Alise D. Barrymore, 37, is co-pastor of a non-denominational church which she founded with another minister in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Banerjee reports the sentiment of Barrymore who states that there are powerful women as members in the COGIC, however, “you can't handle the sacraments, and it would not be rare for you to preach from the floor and not the pulpit, though that has changed a little bit in recent years...as a woman, you teach but don't preach? Yet the teaching sounds just like preaching”.

A number of interviewees want to be ordained because they feel they have a calling upon pastoral positions for churchwomen. The theme of ‘unofficial preachers and pastors’ categorize women who lack the necessary credentials which would enable them to perform church rites and preside over a church. One interviewee Case # 40, a woman missionary, states that “you're allowed to do the work of the Lord, but you're not credentialed for it! And that's the problem. Whatever you want to do, but...in some cases you can pastor but you're not encouraged...you're discouraged to

say that ‘I’m a pastor.’” Interviewee Case # 34, a missionary, remembers her calling to preach:

I know God called me to preach. Okay, I went to my mother at that time and she said “Oh my God, what did you say?” My mother [was] an evangelist too. I said, I know I heard a voice that told me to preach. She said, well just do it, don’t say anything about it—just do it. In other words she said, you can just do it—actually in the COGIC women have always been allowed to preach, teach, do whatever they wanted to. But they’ve never been allowed to name it. If I’ve got the education and the knowledge, if I have the ability, I want the title! I don’t want to just do it—I want the title!

This interviewee continues:

I work alongside [my pastor, who is my husband] but I never lose the spiritual appetite and the spiritual anointing which has been given to me by God. He has [always] allowed me to exercise my gifts. On Sundays, I’m in church doing whatever, [doing many things]. But, he has also said, “You can say wherever you want, that is, that you’re the co-pastor” but he has never officially, officially, made me the co-pastor of St. James Temple [pseudonym]. So therefore, I do feel that women have a long way to go because of men.

Various COGIC women continue to preach and pastor churches despite doctrinal rules prohibiting it. The disjunction between when churchwomen began seeking to be ordained and when the denomination (s) began to grant ordination to women illustrates what Chaves (1997) terms “loose coupling” (a disconnect) between rule and practice. Specifically, “loose coupling” is defined as “the mismatch between official organizational policy and actual organizational practices” Adams (2007:82). Chaves points out that it is important to distinguish between when the organizational occurrence by which women are allowed full ordination status and the time in which women are actually ordained.

In Chaves’s article, *The Symbolic Significance of Women’s Ordination*, Gilkes is quoted as saying that while the COGIC does not ordain women to be pastors,

elders, or bishops, women may be in charge of a church in a pastor's absence.

Another way to see loose coupling, according to Chaves is to note that churchwomen have occupied leadership positions reserved for male clerics while at the same time these positions were forbidden to churchwomen. Gilkes elaborates further by stating that churchwomen may "teach" while only men may "preach," a symbolic distinction without an apparent difference in practice. The public speaking of prominent women in the COGIC, [however], is indistinguishable from the most exemplary 'preaching'" (p.95).

In line with the concept of churchwomen preaching and teaching, interviewee Case # 51, a missionary, further elaborates:

You can do whatever you like. If you want to have jail ministry, prison ministry, you may not say that you're preaching but you're teaching. But you can go out and do the work but... in some cases, call it by another name, you know [you can't do that]—a sweet rose by another name! [respondent laughs]. I don't like that, but that's the way [it is] in some cases.

When it comes to women's equality in ministries and considerations regarding ordination, the practices of other denominations bring about ecumenical pressure (theme) on religious groups. Since the COGIC is closely connected to some of the mainline denominations via relationships with clergy and laity, church officials are knowledgeable about other denominational practices in reference to women. It is a common practice of denominations to observe how other churches are handling the issue of ordination of women. Excerpts from a pastor, Case # 67, a man pastor relates to this point:

My sister is an ordained elder in the Full Gospel Church. She grew up in the COGIC but she married a Baptist preacher and when Bishop Morton came out with this Full Gospel, that kind-of united the COGIC and Baptist. She was just happy as a lark! But she became an elder in that church which is kind of against the grain from COGIC. But, she likes that—she has her "place" there. She started a ministry that's called, Sister-to-Sister because women are able to minister to women more so than some issues that men couldn't deal with. There are some personal issues about women I don't want to talk about---I don't talk about.

Bishop Paul S. Morton's father was the pastor of two congregations, one in Windsor, Ontario and another one in Detroit, Michigan. Both churches were part of the COCIC Inc. Although Morton grew up in the COGIC, he ultimately became the International Presiding Bishop of the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship, being consecrated to this office in March, 1993. Initially, he served as co-pastor of Greater St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church and then the pastor following the death of Pastor Percy Simpson in 1974.

Interviewee Case# 70, an elder in the church, reiterates the theme of ecumenical pressure:

In my opinion, I think it's going to happen because just not in our churches but in other churches I've been noticing in the Methodist church, the majority of their pastors are women—they're going into the ministry. And that just tells you the signs of the times that so many more women are getting involved in pastoral roles. You can accept it, or you can reject it. Whatever! You're going to have to deal with it. Many other denominations are [moving away] from siphoning off the women [whereas] in our denomination they're (women) not allowed the opportunity to pastor.

Pinn, Finley, and Alexander (2009) report that the first women elected to the episcopacy in one of the historic mainline black churches, the AME Church, was Vashti McKenzie. She is a pastor from Baltimore, Maryland who was consecrated as bishop in 2000. Subsequently, two other women have been elected as bishops. Carolyn Tyler Guidry serves the Sixteenth Episcopal District and Sarah Frances Davis serves the Eighteenth District including conferences in the smaller southern African nations of Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, and Mozambique.

On a similar note, Wallace (1975) reported that some Protestant denominations in the United States encountered increased pressure for making a

change in tradition, pointing out numbers on the rise involving women being ordained in the United Methodist Church, United Presbyterian Church and the Lutheran Church. Wallace suspects the ecumenical pressure affecting the Catholic Church will continue based on data for enrollment in theological schools where women continue to graduate at increasing numbers.

Lincoln and Mamiya (1990:274) note the emphasis put on women regarding “pulpit space” being exclusive to men only. They report that “traditionally in the Black Church, the pulpit has been viewed as ‘men’s space’ and the pew as ‘women’s place.’” This attitude is demonstrated by clerics as expressed by this interviewee, Case # 37, a man pastor stated:

Because our denomination does not license women, a lot of the brethren will not receive women. We here in the mid-west, we’re a little bit more liberal with that stance [as compared to] some of my counterparts, even in Ohio. I had a conversation with pastors in Ohio that wanted to ask me where do the women sit if they’re a pastor? ... Yes, sit! Do they sit in the pulpit with you or do they sit somewhere else? And when [I said] they sit in the pulpit with you, [you should have seen] the look on their faces!

Traditionally, gender norms remain embedded in some COGIC churches thus contributing to male clerical hegemony. Such norms prevent women from occupying sacred or clerical space designated for ministers only. Lee’s (2004) research demonstrates how an activist pastor in support of women clergy and gender equality used liberal preaching and a message of black liberation and freedom, new clerical appointments and initiatives, which transformed a congregation to acceptance of women into ecclesiastical authority.

When asked this question: Does the church have a policy to bar women to become ordained? Researchers Lincoln and Mamiya (1990:287) point out that “the

COGIC has taken a firm policy stand against the full ordination of women as clergy.”

However, a more recent trend according to responses from some interviewees indicate ambiguity and ongoing discussions regarding the policy issue as stated by an interviewee of the church who said that “there’s still some decision-making going on about that [policy to bar women] within the church and I believe it comes to the parliamentary floor every year.” Interviewee Case # 29, an elder in the church, elaborates further:

I would think it’s an unspoken law. Each year, we debate the same issue—when we go to the General Assembly. We have a right side, left side, then the in-between side. Therefore, the church will stand and say, “Yes, it is our policy to ordain women.” And, they (the church) will not say, it is not our policy to ordain women—it sort of hangs in the balance. And what they do is they take each situation at hand, such as, if a woman has seemingly the authority in her church, or if she has that power in her church and her husband has accepted her as co-pastor, they don’t fight that! If he [pastor] happens to die and she has the power and the people are with her as well as I would say, the money, most of the time, they [pastors, elders] will allow her to take over. But there is no set policy that I know of.

One First Lady views unfeminine characteristics of churchwomen as being a hindrance to possibilities of ordination, Case # 66:

I believe that there are two reasons that may seem to be happening. One is I think women, a lot of times sometimes forget who they are as women...and they cross lines. They forget boundaries and I think we need to stay feminine in whatever capacity we serve in. Sometimes although we’re assertive, we should not sometimes be so dogmatic. So I think some women have gone out of character and that may be has made the “baring” happen so that other women who could probably do the job well, aren’t seen as forthright.

Despite constitutional barriers and structures oppressing churchwomen and denying them religious space, some interviewees are in agreement with churchwomen who take a visible and bold approach to ministry regardless of church structures, dogma and doctrine. Progressively, more COGIC churchwomen are expressing their

support in womanist theological affirmations (theme) regarding a woman's call to a leadership/pastoral role in ministry. One interviewee, Case #46, a missionary, expresses her sentiment this way:

Don't stagnate your gift! Speak out and move forward with whatever God has blessed you with. If God has blessed you, and if God has laid it on your heart to pastor, and to take on that whole role of pastoring, because that's an awesome responsibility—that you're going to be responsible for somebody's soul! Because you can miss out, if you miss the mark! But if God has laid that on your heart, follow the will of God because that's what we're supposed to do—that's what we're charged with doing, following the will of God. If you feel that way, do it—just go for it! And don't let anybody stop you! Man can't tell you God didn't call you. Man doesn't know how God is using you—so go for it and do it!

Another interviewee Case # 36, a missionary, views a pastoral role in “gender neutral” terms:

The Bible relates to, not so much the position to say it is...aligned just to gender. I believe pastoring is leading and guiding individuals. I don't believe that only men can do that! I believe when women are definitely anointed and called to do it—if God has commissioned it, they should do it! So, I don't see that as a [specific] gender role position.

Womanist Theology

Coined by the novelist Alice Walker, “womanist” is a term that was introduced in 1982 and is specific to black culture. As a theology, it substantiates the biblical claim for women's total involvement in mission and ministries of the church. Womanist theology takes into account lay churchwomen who experience the everyday struggles of life and living. Empowerment and liberation of women are of utmost importance (Hine et al. 1993: 1276-1277).

COGIC women predecessors such as Robinson, Coffey, Bailey, and McGlothen framed their activism in what might be termed an accommodationist

mode alluded to by researcher James Shopshire. In contrast, however, some third and fourth generation COGIC women leaders as well as younger ones are utilizing womanist concepts and theology that interrogates the intersections of race, class, sex and gender. Womanist theology also maintains that voice is necessary in a bold manner for theologizing a woman-centered biblical tradition for ministry within the church. This theology also represents one voice utilized by COGIC churchwomen in contestation to barriers impacting their human freedom and equality in the church. According to Thomas (1999:1), “Womanist theology is an emergent voice of African American Christian women in the United States....womanist religious reflection is.... the empowering assertion of the black woman's voice.” COGIC churchwomen continue to challenge prevailing doctrinal rules and regulations via their voice, agency, and womanist affirmations.

Womanist theology advances a bold leadership style which translates to claiming the religious space (theme) that churchwomen should legitimately be able to occupy. An example of this position is stated by interviewee Case # 41, a woman pastor:

I'm hearing that older women are becoming tired...I'm also observing at our conferences and hearing what's being said. In our workshops and seminars and hearing what's being said from our National Mother---you know, those kinds of things...what's being said on our state level in terms of State Supervisors, women who have as they say, women who have been here, who have suffered all this while, and they're tired...and I'm hearing, this in a COGIC. We're like in its 4th or 5th generation...I'm actually 1st generation COGIC and my family. But where I fit in the broader scheme of things is 3rd generation. And[women] are not stepping back...women who are beginning “a work,” as you know that's termed...They're taking their work and going on and claiming that as their own and not allowing a man to be appointed, such as Mother Coffey [did when she] started the COGIC in Illinois...yeah, Lillian Brooks Coffey. She started a COGIC in Illinois and

Yes! Yes! Yes! She allowed it—[she] may not have had much choice [spoken softly].

Paris (1993) contends that in terms of breaking down barriers and bringing about ecclesial change, the building of an alliance between womanist religious scholars and black laywomen in churches would help to eliminate sexism. He believes that womanist thought is the special domain of black women scholars in religion who have the experiential base from which to offer constructive womanist thought to laywomen. In turn, laywomen would serve as the potential power base whereby collectively, womanist scholars and churchwomen would bring about significant institutional reform in churches. The idea of alliance building among churchwomen emerged from the data as a strategy that some COGIC churchwomen observed as being beneficial and useful toward change and the empowerment of women.

The system of patriarchy in churches engenders sexist and hegemonic structures, classism and racism thus limiting the advancement of churchwomen to full status leadership positions. COGIC doctrine, dogma, ideology, constitution, and culture contribute to barriers impeding women's advancements in the church. The issue of ordination continues to be an unsettled matter with some clerics in support of ordination while others adhere to church tradition. Churchwomen's agency reflects persistence and their womanist stance keeps advancing the momentum toward "absolute" ordination. Womanist concepts also are used to identify relations regarding sex, class, and gender. Some clerics are aware of the fact that characteristically, churchwomen will do everything within their power to validate a

“calling” to ministry as evidenced in a statement from a pastor of a church, Case # 19 who commented saying, “The kind of women that we have today....seek and acquire even more positions than they have in the past—we just can’t stop them!” Assuming a position in the church without the necessary credentials seems not to be an option for some COGIC women. The theme expressed by many churchwomen in this study note the necessity of credentialing as being paramount to leadership because recognition of their work and educational advancement support empowering them for service in the church and broader society.

Some COGIC women are intent on recovering religious space (theme) and holding on to churches they have “dug out,” inherited via loss of a spouse, or have been appointed to “officially” by bishops of the church. While some women are posed to continue challenging issues of inequality without threatening the existence or strength of the church, others have opted to leave the denomination finding “greener pastures” in denominations that are less conflicting. Groups of coalition-building are evidenced by the younger women beginning to work in concert with the older and more experienced women who are both in agreement with biblical interpretations regarding women in ministry. Speaking from their lived experiences and particular standpoint, clerics are confronted with societal influences as well as ecumenical pressure to change. Churchwomen’s outsider-within position, external demographics of large numbers attending seminaries and universities, completion of terminal degrees, participation in the labor force, agency, feminist/womanist thought, and economic clout builds a stable power base for positioning them to facilitate gender justice in the COGIC.

Summary

It has been well documented that the male constituency of the COGIC has reservations regarding female authority, specifically with the issue of ordination which would credential women to pastor churches. Despite this barrier, women continue to be actively engaged in ministries of the church. They are involved in fundraising and community efforts, building orphanages in the U.S. and abroad, the establishment of schools, homes, providing welfare services, and supporting the church economically.

Since ordination has not been an option for the women, some have chosen to establish their own churches, and still remain connected to the COGIC (by name). Others have become affiliated with denominations other than the COGIC, no longer being identified with the denomination. Unlike the traditional model of leadership, women want the space they deserve for working and building church missions and many have begun alliance-building for self and group empowerment. While their economic power continues to rise, their agency and persistence is more “womanist” in nature. Gilkes (2001) foresees added benefits in developing an infrastructure whereby collectivism and autonomy as an organized group will render a substantial measure of economic and political power.

A strong women’s department within local congregations and at the national level will undoubtedly continue making a statement to COGIC clergymen who fail to view women as equal partners in ministry particularly in reference to ordination. With women’s economic support to the church, they keep hammering on the door of

equality to open and break down barriers of oppression and discriminatory practices still existing in the church.

CHAPTER 7
SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP: SHARED
MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP

The COGIC as a Gendered Organization

The term “gendered institutions,” according to Acker (1992:567) means that gender is present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life. Like societal institutions, religious institutions/organizations are organized along lines of gender being developed by men, dominated by men, and interpreted from the standpoint of men. Women’s input in terms of their perceptions has been absent. Men continue to dominate the central institutions of society as well as the religious institutions where the gender maze still exists.

Acker’s (1990, 1992) theory of gendered organizations and stated social processes involving the creation of gendered organizations may be adapted to religious institutions/organizations. Acker’s social processes involving the production and reproduction of gendered organizations follows: images and forms of consciousness that justify gender divisions; interactions among individuals; differential structural location of men and women; and the internal mental work of individuals as they consciously construct understandings of the organizations’ gendered structure. Manville (1997) in support of Acker’s (1990,1992)

gendered organization theory, posits that parishioners in a parish constructed a social organization divided into two domains—women and men. The social organization of the parish and interactions between women and men illustrates the gendered nature of social processes in the parish. The woman and man domains represent symbolic locations or boundaries as opposing “others” having an essentialist image of men as decision-makers and leaders and women as nurturers, servers, and carers.” Manville points out that the nurturing role of women in the parish is basically caring work and essentially the invisible work of women. For women in the parish, caring work is obligatory whereas for men, it is optional or exceptional. Women, however, view the caring work positively since they are “giving of themselves” to others and the church. Their unquestioning acceptance of this obligation is a component of Acker’s notion of “internal mental work” which is necessary in constructing a gendered organization.

COGIC women exemplify caring work which is specific to the woman’s domain defined by man. In an address at the Holy Convocation held in Memphis, Tennessee, at the age of 94, Mattie McGlothen who served as the fourth General Supervisor of the Department of Women highlighted accomplishments made by women of the church. She suggests a need for structural change, recognition of women’s agency, economic empowerment, and includes mention of an “ethic of caring” and giving of themselves exhibited by women in the church. She begins:

What a wonderful privilege, an extended privilege, a long desired privilege for we the women of God to have a day like this....I love humanity until I don’t want to just say the women of God today. I just want to include everybody, both men and women....The Bible made us one—therefore, we’re not to leave out one....Let’s go together The activism of churchwomen and accomplishments made in support of the church are enumerated: Let’s go together....let’s go back to tell you some things the women have

accomplished....Almost three fourths of the church today are women—we are 90% churchwomen....it's not that we have the churches (she speaks softly," we could have one if we wanted it"). God has blessed the women and their pocketbooks are not empty....Since 1975, we have done a few things....We (women) went to Haiti and built a home for the senior citizens and unwed mothers. We now have an installation service for women. Women can be appointed like the men so we install and appoint our women publicly. Years ago, women got their appointment in the mail. In 1985, we purchased the McGlothen House—a home for the retired mothers of the church. In 1986, we passed the Deborah Mason Patterson Scholarship Foundation for students. We have contributed thousands of dollars from the women's department. You may say, what is the necessity of that today?

McGlothen's final statements summon churchwomen to agency, standpoint, and *new* leadership roles for women in the COGIC (that was aligned with Mason's notion of symbiotic leadership):

We've got a program too. We know how to do administrative work too! We know how to do business too. We know how to do the job but you've got us little more encouragement....Who is that wife that doesn't feel happy when her husband comes home and brings her flowers? Well, we're in the church. The brethren are our leaders. Would you brethren tell the brethren we still like flowers?

We're with Bishop's (J.O. Patterson, Sr.) program one hundred percent....we believe in his program, we believe in his doctrine, we love him, we love him dearly. "But a little more elbow room"....Some of us are going on the board, I better wait until I get to the General Assembly because I'm going to say it there. Now some of you women be outside the door so if they kick me out, you'll pick me up!

Although caring work by women may be complimentary, it does not lend itself to advancements toward symbiotic (sharing) leadership. Essentially, this work reproduces inequality, typical of the gendering process, thus continuing to subject women to the supportive roles while keeping them from attaining higher status positions within the church structure where policy, governance, and decision-making takes place.

Based on various aspects of COGIC churches, Acker's theory of gendered organizations is used to demonstrate there exist clear boundaries in the social organization of COGIC churches between women and men's domain which may be thought of as structural location within these domains. Clergymen are viewed as being decision makers, leaders, and administrators while women are nurturers, carers and servers which also accounts for their roles as builder, maintainers, and supporters of churches. The essentialist image of clerics as leaders and women as nurturers establishes the symbolic boundary between the sexes. The construction of symbols and gender images such as displays in media, church literature, national meetings conferences, convocations, etc., picture the General Board of Bishops consisting of 12 men. This reproduces the gendering of positions giving the image of esteemed leaders of the church as powerful, prayerful, consecrated, and dedicated men. So powerful is the image of men in this position that few clerics thought a woman would ever serve on this General Board of Bishops. Interviewee Case # 33, a pastor comments:

(Long pause) I don't know if [a woman may serve on this board]. Look! I don't see...(interviewee's voice starts to fade...) I can just say some things won't happen in my lifetime! But let me tell you this! That does not restrict women. In our jurisdiction, and I have to use our jurisdiction as my example, Bishop Smith (pseudonym) appointed a woman over a church. She was an evangelist just awesome, straight out awesome! This was back in the 80s. She has built a 2.5 million dollar church [in California (pseudonym)].

This interviewee's initial hesitancy and subsequent telling the story of the woman pastor suggests his inclination to know that women are capable of leading a church. However, "church patriarchy" will not allow it. Another interviewee, Case # 4, a man pastor states, "I don't see an ordained elder or a pastor sitting on that board

that's not a bishop." However, more women than men envisioned seeing a women in the future serve on the highest board of the COGIC. This interviewee, Case # 18, a missionary states:

Oh yes! They [churchwomen] need to have a seat on every board. They [need to be] at the top governing board—the very top!! Okay, you have 12 on the Board of Bishops. Four of them need to be women. (interviewee repeats) Four of them need to be women on that top 12. Well, somebody is going to break the ice. I think that maybe when Bishop Smithfield (pseudonym) (this is someone the interviewee knows personally) would be one of the ones that would help bring them (women) on that top board.

It seems like the underlying assumption of this interviewee suggests that women's agency is still powerful. Women are known to have the wisdom and ability about knowing how to go about getting things done—even if they have to “partner” with the clergymen of the church.

While churchwomen give of themselves unselfishly and freely, this is looked upon as being admirable and in a positive light. Acker points out that women's unquestioning acceptance of this obligation to care is a component of “the internal mental work” (Acker 1992) characteristic of a gendered organization constructed by parishioners. By the same token, extrapolating from Acker's theorization concerning social processes translates to the relationship between gender roles existing in COGIC churches and the attribution of social roles to women as supporters versus leaders and administrative roles to clergymen. While domains maintain differential locations for parishioners and leaders, gender typing, namely the process by which occupations come to be seen as appropriate for workers with masculine or feminine characteristics positions are viewed as gendered. Feminization or masculinization of positions within churches, however, may take on either designation. Gender “appropriate”

positions come under authority of the essentialist image of men as decision makers and leaders thus allowing them to have the power to make appointments based on their “own” assessments and church needs.

The role of churchwomen as servers creates invisible work that is embedded in the construction of femininity. Interactions between churchwomen and men demonstrate the gendered nature of social processes within churches and reinforce the subordination of women and dominance of men. Acker (1990, 1992: 235) concludes that interactions between women and men that “enact dominance and subordination” produces and reproduces gendered organizations.

Shared Leadership Model/Symbiotic

The time has come and is long overdue for married couples to minister and preach the gospel side by side. Traditionally, many women have labored quietly behind the scenes, faithfully undergirding their husbands as dutiful, passive first ladies and pastors’ wives. These women unselfishly suppressed their own spiritual gifts and talents in the name of submission, obedience and tradition...The time has come for women not only to undergird their husbands but also to stand alongside them in the awesome joint anointing that can only flow from a couple united as one in God and the love of Christ.

Bishop Ernestine Cleveland Reems

Darrell Hines is the pastor of Christian Faith Fellowship Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and a member of the COGIC. Recently elevated to the position of a Bishop, Hines’s (2000) book, *Let Them Have Dominion*, focuses on the symbiotic ministry with his wife Pamela and the roles of husband and wife in marriage. Based on his perceptions of the marital relationship, Hines believes there is a God-given authority that rests upon the shared ministry of married couples. Darrell and Pamela are careful not to make this claim for “every” husband and wife team.

Their personal sensitivity and revelation of the scriptures helped to ground their faith and belief in God's purpose for their lives.

Unlike the ministry of Bishop Hines and his wife, not many COGIC congregations follow this model. Steeped in tradition and fundamentalist biblical interpretations, the COGIC does not ordain women for ministry in the church.

The October 2010 issue of the *Indianapolis Recorder Newspaper* reported on "Women Rising in Christian Leadership." The influx of African American women to the clergy has prompted the breaking down of barriers that prohibited them from occupying leadership positions held by men. It is reported in this article that women have been elected as bishops as recent as 2000 in several denominations such as the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church, Disciples of Christ, and some Apostolic and Pentecostal (The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW)) churches. A proliferation of church growth and development has taken place in the area, according to Angelique Walker-Smith, director of the Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis. When she began her service in ministry, Walker-Smith points out that churches had what she terms a "general structure" indicative of the "glass ceiling" which prohibited women from acquiring full status leadership positions. Some female pastors such as Sarah Barbour believe other denominations will embrace the concept of women in ministry because the "anointing" is resting on these women who are prepared academically and spiritually.

Within the COGIC, co-pastoring of women with their husbands is a more recent phenomenon. Some churchwomen who are not able to find "space" to co-pastor or pastor a church will seek ordination via other denominational clerics and

may ultimately establish their own congregations independent of the COGIC. In cases where the pastor is deceased, various women have carried on the church without official endorsement from church officials and continue to do so to this present day. Congregations that feel comfortable with churchwomen leading are becoming more visible while the COGIC continues to struggle with the issue of ordination.

A church deacon, interviewee Case # 6, believed that power and authority by clerics and churchwomen could be shared:

Power and authority can be shared by women and clerics in the church but sometimes people have to think [and remember] that they can't always be in charge with the most power, but that they have to just sometimes take a back seat. I think that it's good to share power and authority because that makes for much better leadership in the church.

According to Wallace (1993:37), a collaborative leadership style is based on equality rather than hierarchy [with] all of the persons in an organization work[ing] together to achieve a common end.” In Wallace’s article, *The Social Construction of a New Leadership Role: Catholic Women pastors*, she discusses facilitating factors which contributed to new lay leadership roles for women pastors in priestless parishes throughout the United States. Using Berger and Luckmann’s (1967) social construction of reality theory, Wallace highlights changes in church law and demographic factors that affected positive results. Nonordained Catholic women “worked in conjunction with their parishioners, practicing collaborative leadership, and thus creat[ed] a new social reality” of leadership at the parish level.

Women's Leadership: Biblically Based Model

Some interviewees felt that a woman's call to ministry or to pastor a church was sanctioned biblically but only in rare cases (theme). Sanctioning to full status leadership positions was validated when their lives resembled that of prominent women of the Bible: Interviewee Case # 18, a missionary states:

In the Bible, we have many women who aided Christ, they were there to help the Apostle Paul—Priscilla was right by the side of Aquilla, her husband. I think even in the Old Testament Esther showed a great, strong, leadership ability for her people because her husband was a Hebrew and so she had to show leadership over the Jewish people in order to spare and save them. And I would say, we could call that today, I mean you can call it Apostle, Prophet, whatever you want to call it, but it was definitely a leadership position—yes, definitely!

This interviewee allows room for women's leadership beyond just a few women in the Bible by naming other women who had prominent roles. This goes beyond COGIC constitutional law by suggesting differing biblical interpretations.

Another interviewee comments Case # 37, a pastor:

Look at Esther—no one could fill that role but a woman, and not 'just' a woman, but a woman like Esther....Deborah, Mary, and other women of the Bible—'special women.'"

Interviewee Case # 67 a pastor, elaborates on churchwomen's call to ministry and the unnecessary need of women having to prove they are equal to men:

If she's sure of herself, and knows who she is, I don't have any problem—doesn't feel threatened, doesn't have to prove that she's equal with a man....because it's really the church itself—the property of God and then He chooses to assign someone to maintain his property. He allows someone to lead the sheep.

According to this interviewee, only under unique circumstances can a women lead. While acknowledging the sovereignty of God, the statement is half finished.

The interviewee does not go as far as to say that the chosen person to lead might very well be a woman.

Leadership: “Special Cases”

In reference to women in ministry, some interviewees were in agreement to sanction women’s leadership in situations where churches had been “dug out” by husband and wife (theme) as well as leadership of women categorized as “special ladies” (theme) having a calling upon their lives in specific circumstances. One pastor, Case # 19 states:

I have no problem with a woman being the pastor, especially when she and her husband both “prayed and worked out” a ministry [such as founders] because in many homes, the mother must take over in the absence of the father...

Interviewee continues:

I think it takes a ‘special kind of woman’ to lead a church. As we look at our church, the women leaders....influence ministries, departments, etc.—women are doing a fantastic job! But, it takes a ‘special woman,’ a lady, to rise to the occasion, and lead men and women! Look at Esther—no one could fill that role but a woman, and not ‘just’ a woman, but a woman like Esther....Deborah, Mary, and other women of the Bible—‘special women.’

Some interviewees felt that a woman’s call to ministry or to pastor a church was sanctioned biblically but only in rare cases (theme). Sanctioning to full status leadership positions was validated when their lives resembled that of prominent women of the Bible: Interviewee Case # 18, a missionary states:

In the Bible, we have many women who aided Christ, they were there to help the Apostle Paul—Priscilla was right by the side of Aquilla, her husband. I think even in the Old Testament Esther showed a great, strong, leadership ability for her people because her husband was a Hebrew and so she had to show leadership over the Jewish people in order to spare and save them. And I would say, we could call that today, I mean you can call it Apostle, Prophet, whatever you want to call it, but it was definitely a leadership position—yes, definitely!

Another interviewee comments Case # 37, a pastor:

Look at Esther—no one could fill that role but a woman, and not ‘just’ a woman, but a woman like Esther....Deborah, Mary, and other women of the Bible—‘special women.’” Interviewee Case # 67 a pastor, elaborates on churchwomen’s call to ministry and the unnecessary need of women having to prove they are equal to men:

If she’s sure of herself, and knows who she is, I don’t have any problem—doesn’t feel threatened, doesn’t have to prove that she’s equal with a man....because it’s really the church itself—the property of God and then He chooses to assign someone to maintain his property. He allows someone to lead the sheep.

In support of women pastors, against the official endorsement by the top leadership of the church, a pastor, Case # 28 recalls an incident involving a woman who was given authority over a church as pastor:

At one point, we had as many as 10, 12 [women appointed as pastors] in our jurisdiction (1st jurisdiction)...our Assistant State Supervisor is a woman—is a pastor, and doing quite well. One [churchwoman] in our jurisdiction, her husband passed and technically [the bishop became] the pastor [over the church]. If anyone would ask [about the church], the bishop would say, “I’m the pastor. You know what I’m going to do? I’m gonna pastor this church but she’s going to run it!” That’s the kind of thing he would do. He would embrace [women]. He gave her the authority to do what she had to do in the pastoral role of the church.

Women, according to some interviewees believe that churchwomen make better leaders when compared to clergymen. Interviewee Case # 61, a senior church mother states: “Well number one, they’re [women] more prayerful. And they’re more faithful to their calling in COGIC. Only the few pastors I know... [are faithful]. So women are, and do serve, and are more committed—those that God has called.”

Traditional [Man] Leadership Model

The traditional leadership model in the COGIC is pastor as the head of the church, wife as the helpmate. Shared leadership or the symbiotic model is more of a recent trend in the church. Some interviewees were ambivalent in terms of making definitive statements concerning women as pastors. The hold onto church tradition is evident in this interviewee's comments. Case # 17, (First Lady) responds:

In my view, I do feel that men have a place in some instances, where I would not suggest women—not overall,...if a woman would say “I want to step out, I want to be co-pastor, God has called me as pastor, bishop,” or whatever, and then again, I’m still a little leery when it comes to women bishops, and women as pastors. I feel we have the pastoral spirit but the naming of it, we haven’t gotten to that yet.

One interviewee viewed churchwomen and churchmen as having equal power and sharing leadership. This particular perception, however, reverts back to COGIC church tradition thus maintaining symbolic boundaries between the male and female domains (Acker 1990) imaging men as leaders, vis-à-vis women in the private sphere.

Case # 52, a pastor states:

I think [churchwomen and churchmen] have equal power. In the areas that they are to occupy, they have equal power. I look at our current national youth department...you have a Joyce Rogers, then you have president Hill; Joyce Rogers has a stronger style, but yet she's very....I don't want to say submissive but respectful of the president. But yet she has a very strong, [powerful] ministry and it's effective in the youth dept of the church. Yet, she's a lady. She does her job—she works in her area as the chairlady—she doesn't try to be the president. They complement one another-----shares power, shares leadership—like a father and a mother in the raising of children. Not husband and wife, but father and mother. Because we know we prefer that fathers and mothers be married.

This interviewee draws a symbolic parallel to leadership by making reference to the man as “head” (as father in the home) and woman as secondary (subordinate to the head).

Other interviewees contend that certain leadership roles are not open to women and therefore use supporting Scriptures to “validate” their claim (I Timothy 2: 11-12 and I Corinthians 14: 34 – 35, for example): “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” (I Timothy 2: 11-12). One interviewee Case # 43, an elder in the church, makes reference to constitutional guidelines of the church which are already in place—structurally: I guess the best thing to say is we have women, there are women of authority that are willing to operate under authority.”

Hall (2004) questions whether the time has come to consider the inclusion of women into the ranks of clergy. Basically, he holds to church tradition and biblical interpretation referring to one Scripture among several used to bar women from top leadership positions: Women should not usurp authority over a man. Hall speaks the sentiment of other pastors whose topics were listed in the DRC report such as for example, *Women in Ministry From the Pastoral Epistles*, *A View of Male Domination and Headship in Scripture*, and *the Concepts of Ministry About Ruling and Serving*, and *A Defense For the Doctrinal Manuel of the Church of God in Christ*.

Hall, who is pastor of the “mother” church, Temple Church of God in Christ, which was founded by Bishop Mason, does not support women’s ordination for church leadership. He believes that the issue of women’s ordination has basically weakened church structures and added confusion to the organization thus adding to

the continued turmoil between the sexes. He mentions the sexual revolution, women's liberation movement and "other socio-political phenomena" that have applied pressure on the COGIC and other churches to make changes related to biblical interpretations. Arguing that the "episcopacy is the strongest element in the polity of the COGIC," Hall criticizes bishops who steer away from apostolic succession modeled after the chosen 12 disciples in the Bible. Furthermore, ordination of women would grant control over local congregations (once in the hands of clergy) as well as authority/power over ordained clergy as Hall views it. This he believes is "thoughtless," not pragmatic, and represents a paradigm shift away from tradition.

Another leadership model having a semblance of the traditional model is termed as the "feminine leadership model." Both churchwomen and clerics find non-femininity problematic. Women who feel they have been "called" to leadership in churches are criticized by churchmen and women who do not envision women "acting like" a man in the pulpit. The need for churchwomen to maintain their femininity (theme) is viewed as a necessary component for leadership. One clergyman, Case # 67 put it this way:

If a woman is 'strong' enough or 'versatile' enough, long as she can maintain her femininity and still lead people, I have no problem with that! And as long as she does not allow herself to feel that she's in opposition or she's being opposed, because these forces sometimes hurt her heavy. [sort of like] being like a 'sore thumb stuck out'—feeling like she's always being threatened or she's always being challenged...

In a similar vein, the First Lady of a church, Case # 17 asserts:

Now you know I know God called me honey. I know he called me. I don't care what the man said, I don't care what he's done, I don't have to be a man to be up in here, I feel comfortable in the pulpit"—they don't need to say all

that! Just do what you got to do—just do what you have to do! If you happen to have to go in the pulpit, then stand there—always maintain your femininity—that’s something you know you don’t want to get in to, do you? (interviewee chuckles). The maintenance of femininity should always be carried out in the church. We’re not trying to be men. We shouldn’t be trying to be men. And we shouldn’t feel [like] I’m taking a man’s position, because you’re not.

The theme of maintaining femininity represents gender difference and reproduction of the gender order by way of the process Acker categorizes as the internal mental work of individuals. Kimmel (2008:114) points out that this process might include the “demands for gender-appropriate behaviors and attitudes” imposed on women by men in gendered organizational structures and may also involve “patterns of dress, speech, and general presentation of self.” Also, interactions between women and women and their gendered positions within the COGIC will reproduce gender domination by maintaining the gender order.

Visionary Leadership Model

In general, it is noted by several responses coming from interviewees that difference in leadership style of pastors vis-à-vis churchwomen does not necessarily lend itself to sharing power and authority “equally” with women in ministry. What is needed are more “contemporary” and “progressive thinkers” (theme) who are church visionaries. Note the following responses: Case # 20, a woman educator states:

I think clergymen and church women have a different style. I think women tend to be more “socialist” less hands—we can make it right. Men tend to, “I know what to do, you get in line and follow the orders I give.” Our ways of leading [women and men] are totally different. There tends to be a “much more shared governance type” style coming [from] women versus men [who] are a little more traditional, top down—the military. Get your rank, and just fall in line and do what we tell you and don’t ask a bunch of questions.

Interviewee continues:

Sharing, I really think it can happen if you have progressive thinking men. If you have “good ole boy” thinking... You will just appear as an aggressive woman when you try to just take power—and other women will [also] see you that way... The sharing of power and authority can happen, [however], You need some “progressive thinking” men to get that done.

One very unique leadership style was expressed by Case # 50, a woman educator (earned PhD) rendered a unique version of shared leadership which centered on the woman and man domain but with authority given to both genders under unusual and different circumstances. The beginning responses are taken from references and stories in the Bible by the interviewee to draw a parallel to leadership positioning:

God is going to bring the women forth and the women will come forth, according to God’s will. And [God] will use men, He (God) used Moses, meeting his wife at the well, and Moses went and uncovered the well for the women.... God will use men to uncover the well for the women to come and partake in the ministry.

This interviewee continues:

[The COGIC churches] should have the structure and the infrastructure designed in such a way that women can fulfill their ministry. That’s all women want to do! [That] is to fulfill their ministry! And it’s not all in just being a pastor. But, I pray that the Lord will open up the brother’s eyes.

Now, Men are the head! ... That’s God’s order. They’re the head—but they’re not always in the lead. God will use whomever He wants. We do not seek to usurp any authority and that’s what the women who are called to pastor in ministry need to understand---their role. And not to usurp the authority that God has put in place. Now that’s what they don’t like to hear. God placed man---you don’t change that! But it doesn’t mean that our purpose cannot be fulfilled within that structure—God intends it to be fulfilled. [For example], I can have a worldwide ministry and I’m over that ministry. That’s true! But if I’m a member of a church, I become subject to that pastor in that church. And that’s what I’m exemplifying now. I have a ministry independent of the church, but I’m under a pastor, and a head—he’s my head in terms of ... God’s order. So the women have to understand that—that they’re not battling, and the men have to understand, okay, well God’s going to use the women,

and they're trying to dethrone me [men are thinking]. They're (men) fighting God. How can [you] fight God?

This interviewee goes on to point out sexism in leadership relative to clerics:

But where the men [state their case] they say then, that the women are under us, so they can't teach us. This is what I say to them (men)...when you're in the body of Christ and in the Spirit, if God has given me the gift of wisdom, and he chooses to exercise that gift in the corporate body, who are you to say that God doesn't talk to her, to the corporate? I'm the head of the corporate! I know I'm not to circumvent [God's] own plan and order—I know that...If I'm going to be partnering with say my pastor, what I share with him within the limits, I don't overstep my bounds in God in dealing with him...I believe can become a pastor, and be under a pastor, and still be a pastor because pastors need to be under authority as well.

Churchwomen in many of the mainline black denominations have supported the churches they love unconditionally. The COGIC's firm policy against full ordination of women as clergy makes the idea of symbiotic or shared ministry seem like a foreign idea. Because the Women's Department allows women to function in the capacity of missionary, deaconess, etc., some clergymen are content with the roles and statuses of women at this level. However, sexist attitudes and patriarchy dominate women to the extent of their expressions of discontentment becoming more apparent. Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) report that a pastor's tenure in office in a COGIC could very well be for life and upon the passing of a pastor, congregations will often prefer to have the wife carry on as minister. For churchwomen who feel they are "called" to pastor a church, if they are not a First Lady, chances are slim they will become a pastor of a church.

De Vaus and McAllister's (1987:473) study renders 3 explanations regarding gender differences in religious orientation relative to the structural location of women. Structural location theory is utilized to explain how work force participation

influences religious commitment. De Vaus and McAllister note that Luckmann argues that “the degree of involvement in the work processes of modern industrial society correlates negatively with the degree of involvement in church-oriented religion.” Furthermore, Luckmann believes that secularization impacting industrialization and urbanization have led to “institutional specialization” thus diminishing values related to the church and religion. Consequently, the effects of work force participation have contributed to individuals adopting “alternative sources of identity, interests, values, legitimations, and commitments therefore, religion becomes less important.”

From one interviewee’s comments one might assume that the absence of male presence in the church negatively affects the possibility of “preferred” male leadership since the COGIC does not ordain women. And, the possibility of shared leadership is consequently “off-centered” because the absence perpetuates the constant imbalance of churchwomen and clerics numerically thus further weakening the bonds of unity among church leaders. In some cases like this, men come back to the church “after” their hiatus to preside “over” churchwomen who have been steadfast during their absence—as such, women’s continued support to local congregations never ceased. A pastor, Case # 15 comments on the absence of men:

Men have kind-of alienated themselves away from the church... taken a back seat—stayed at home and watched the football game. My father-in-law first came here, my son was an arm baby. And my [father-in-law] came, and he would hold my son. But then football season came and he kind of came, then went home to watch football and said, “I’ll be back as soon as football season is over.” Football season was over and then basketball, and after basketball comes baseball, and after baseball comes football all over again. So even recently he told me, “I would come to church but the Bears are playing today.”

We have lost a lot of our men to the sports arena. I don't want to be misinterpreted....I don't think that men should stay at home and use this as their excuse and that's what I hear. If they're not watching the game, they're playing golf or they're playing basketball. They do it on Sunday because that's their day off.

Since the male domain is reserved for men, their absence from church is a threat to their future positioning of authority. Men in churches who may be in line to be appointed over a church or inherit a church (like father, like son), are trained early as helpers and assistants to pastors. This training cultivates the “psychological” mindset in preparation for leadership. Having easy access to ordination is a definite advantage over women in the church and loss of that space would be detrimental to maintaining patriarchal dominance. There are instances where COGIC clerics rationalize that positions which “should” be occupied by men are filled by women due to non-attendance of men in churches and as one pastor stated, churchmen’s “continuance to be slothful and disorganized. Women seem to have more unity and strength.” Women are therefore used to fill the lacuna consequently causing men to miss out on their “esteemed” roles and positions. Such has been the case where churchwomen are filling positions on some governing boards which have been traditionally held by men. This line of thought coincides with Catherine Forbes’s article, *Maintaining the Gender Order: Using Women, preferring Men* in an Episcopal Campus Chapel, 1927-1949 where an Episcopal Campus Chapel used women, but preferred men.

It has been well documented that women outnumber men in church membership. Studies have also noted that men attending churches is lower vis-à-vis churchwomen (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990; Mattis et al. 2004). Mattis et al. examined

non-attendance of African American men (and women) in churches and possible causes. Some theories considered in their article and used for explanatory purposes were religious socialization theories, functionalist theories, and social integration theory. Some theories, according to the researchers, support the notion that African Americans' religious involvement promotes well-being (Ellison and Gay 1990; St. George and McNamara 1984). Religious affiliation also contributes to positive outcomes for individuals socially, spiritually, and emotionally. Being socially and religiously involved in fellowshiping and worshipping with others in churches provides a basis for development of socially supportive relationships (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990).

Some researchers, such as Mattis et al. (2004) seek to clarify the reasons why non-attendance of African American men exists in churches. They point out other researchers whose theories focus on gendered disparities in patterns of religious participation among African American men. Important insights of these researchers explore notions of the lack of interest in group worship, rejection of faith, structural location of women restricting them to the private sphere, influences of familial patterns of religious participation, limited involvement in religion early in life, and secularizing trends in the culture (secularization theory).

The agency of COGIC women might have a bearing on non-attendance of men. Mattis et al. (2004:390) quote Tinney (1981) who gives a viable explanation for consideration regarding African American men's lack of involvement in churches. Tinney argues "that African American men may indirectly benefit from women's involvement in organized religion, making it less necessary for men to become

directly involved in church life.” Lincoln and Mamiya (1990:305) explain differences between cultural and value transmitting roles of women compared to the cultural explanations for men as quite different. A week’s reward for work, cultural explanations for men “include Sunday distractions such as sports or other recreation...teenage black males are often socialized by their male role models to view too much church involvement as a sign of weakness or absence of machismo: “Time to be a man and learn the ways of the world. Leave the church to the women.”

While African Americans have been traditionally viewed as being religious, some black churches are experiencing a decrease in male attendance as well as membership while others are reporting increase. Founder and senior pastor T.D. Jakes presides over a nondenominational church founded in 1996 in Dallas, Texas. It is reported to be one of the fastest growing churches in the nation by The Dallas Morning News. With more than 30,000 members some of the programs are a GED/Literacy program, counseling services, post traumatic stress disorder awareness, HIV/AIDS outreach and a host of other ministries designed to spiritually enrich and empower the laity. In terms of demographics, men comprise 45% of the total congregation (The Potter House website).

Unity

Barriers to advancing the notion of shared (symbiotic) leadership and its utility in the COGIC center on several factors involving both churchwomen and clerics. Issues such as sexism, structures related to constitutional mandates, perceptions concerning femininity, and lack of unity among church leaders (women

and men) increases the probability of discord. One top church official holding a key office Case # 46, a churchwoman states:

If we (the church) do anything, we need to come together at a ‘roundtable’ kind of environment, to discuss these issues openly, males and females together where women are not going to be intimidated to express their point of view but [be able to] express things frankly and honestly and in a manner of coming to the table with a level of respect! Agree to agree, and agree to disagree at the table.

The theme of unity that is needed also comes from a pastor in the church,

Case #30, a man pastor states:

Until we all come into the ‘unity of the faith,’ [that is what’s needed]. Everybody got their ministry but there’s one objective—We’ve got to get unity. We got different offices—everybody’s not the same---we don’t have the same gifts. But it’s still one objective. We got to come into the unity of the faith. We’ve got to teach the same thing, believe the same things. But right now, we are the church in Corinth that’s divided because everybody has got their own little thing and they want to push just their little thing. But we’ve got to get like the church Paul wrote to in Ephesians.

Summary

This chapter addresses models of leadership that emerged from my data. Specifically, the traditional man leadership model, symbiotic (shared) leadership model, and the egalitarian leadership model. Other “sub models” were presented such as the visionary leadership model, biblically based model, “special cases model,” and one model classified as just “unique.” Each “sub model” shared characteristics with my main leadership models discussed. For example, biblically based model resembles the traditional man leadership model having men to lead while women assisted. The exception was that clergymen deemed women leaders as valid or acceptable if their lives resembled that of prominent women of the Bible such as Esther, Deborah, Priscilla, and Mary, or any other revered woman.

Still there were barriers facing women regarding leadership issues associated with sex, class, and gender. In some instances, leadership roles were determined by biological differences where men were defined as autocratic and women were viewed in the mothering, nurturing style. Regarding the traditional man leadership model, one interviewee's response, Case # 53, a woman, to the matter of women being excluded from full status leadership responded: "Sitting in the pulpit alongside the clergymen, wearing a clergy collar....as a COGIC woman, I wouldn't assume that—you have to be "let in." You have to be "accepted in."

Sharing leadership has not readily been accepted nor endorsed by the COGIC men constituency since clerics would have to give up some power and authority associated with the title. The issue of "pew" space and "pulpit space" remains in a contested state in trying to decide who belongs and sits where. Church culture, tradition, ideologies, biblical interpretations, beliefs values, practices, and power all have a bearing on what the state of equality might be in the context of the Black Church experience.

CHAPTER 8

CHURCHWOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Empowerment encompasses many elements. It can be about challenging oppression and inequality—the need for fairness, equity, nondiscriminatory actions. Women's empowerment can lead to freeing for both women and men—women's freedom from patriarchy and power structures that subordinate them, freedom from tradition and ideology for men who are blinded by misinterpretations and misconceptions. Empowerment may focus on good governance and needed participation of both women and men in leadership roles. Elliott (2008:7) notes that some scholars define women's empowerment as “an individual's capacity to take control of her own life and resources;...to alter power relations that constrain her options, autonomy, and well-being; and to achieve her desired outcomes.” The transformational process centering on women's movement from a disadvantaged state involving power relations to a position of being able to make life's choices regarding ministry is central to the plight of COGIC women in this study. Whatever group has access to power is essential to the notion of empowerment.

Generally speaking, in black mainstream churches, women occupy significant positions but not at the structural level where higher-echelon ecclesiastical positions matter the most, particularly clerical ones. Despite their religious involvement, churchwomen are subjected to the dictates of men leaders where the ongoing struggle centers on matters such as constitutional issues, laws, doctrine, policy, tradition,

ideology and culture. The “glass ceiling” operating as an organizational barrier restricts opportunities for women to obtain pastorates in many denominations, including the COGIC, while increasing numbers of seminary-trained women prepare to serve in congregational churches.

COGIC history records a covenant promise the Lord gave Bishop Mason prophesying that “the sun would never set upon the expanse of the Church of God in Christ” (Lovett:1). This prophecy essentially meant there would never be a building large enough to accommodate COGIC membership. Mason established a symbiotic type leadership model where women served in ministry alongside churchmen despite a patriarchal system embedded in society during his era.

Clemmons (1996) records Adrienne Israel’s account that only four years after the COGIC was incorporated as a Pentecostal denomination, establishment of a women’s department would prove to be a driving force in the sustenance and growth of the denomination. Anthea Butler, a member of the COGIC, states in a documentary, *The 100 Year Celebration of the Church of God in Christ 1907– 2007* that “I think it’s very important to think about [Bishop] Mason as one who empowered women. There was a women’s organization in place that allowed women to have a position of authority, a teaching authority, and a position of charismatic authority within the church from the very beginning.” Israel notes further that Mason’s wisdom regarding the role of women motivated him to “organize[d] women’s work within the context of prevailing historical forces” and two important movements. One historical force was the role of women in the nineteenth century holiness revivals and the Pentecostal movement (Clemmons 1996:103-105). Within

both movements was ushered in a freedom of speech and agency allowing women to “speak in public as preachers and evangelists and pastor[ed] churches at a rate unequaled since” (Clemmons 1996:103). Israel concludes that three historical forces—the holiness and Pentecostal revivals, the black self-help movement, and woman’s suffrage all set the stage for advancing women’s ministry and developing prominent leaders during the formative years of the COGIC.

Strategies of Women’s Empowerment

The black self-help movement was a time following Reconstruction when the federal government relinquished support and aid to freed slaves. This left African Americans to fend for themselves, however, the slogan “lifting as we climb” associated with women, defined the period during which they created self-help strategies to improve their situation and the African American community. Collier-Thomas (2010) notes that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century women created missionary societies and women’s conventions to “improve the race” and to also gain recognition for themselves. Utilizing education as a means by which they could achieve success and advancement, women in particular helped chart the future course for their race and the black church.

Achieving women’s suffrage was a slow and gradual process in the US. The women’s suffrage movement addressed issues such as women’s rights, voting rights, and property rights. Women constructed a network of local, state, regional, and national organizations to advance their cause into public life. The agency of women was instrumental in initiating participation in the public discourse about the roles and status of women. Moreover, women began to key in on the importance of support

from other women's groups to gain access to resources for further advancements. Collier-Thomas (2010) points out that black women leaders established a partnership with leaders of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in order to leverage power in other white organizations. Such strategies further advanced the real possibilities of empowerment for women in the public sphere.

One dimension of the concept of empowerment noted in Chow's (2008:78) article entitled *Empowerment of Migrant Factory Workers in South China: Opportunities and Contradictions* is "collective." This concept denotes women's mobilization and action with the "ultimate goal of women's empowerment" being centered on the individual and collective engagement "in self-examination, voice,...needs and interests, and becom[ing] active agents to change power relations and social inequality." One respondent speaking on behalf of the "collectivity" of women talks about the discontent of noninclusivity in matters pertaining to policy, polity, and church governance is Case # 7, a woman pastor states:

In terms of policy-making, in terms of determining budget and how the money is spent, in terms of strategic planning, in terms of making decisions that are critical to the growth and development of our church. As long as you're pastoring and long as you're paying your reports... Well, [we'll] keep doing some of the things that we're doing. Women are meeting, and we are talking about all of these things... You see, there are women that are meeting and talking and our women leaders in COGIC are addressing these types of concerns.

Resisting injustices by doing something unexpectedly is a strategy that was used by a well-known First Lady in the COGIC. Hill-Collins (2000) classifies this act as being empowering for women. Interviewee, Case # 17, First Lady of a

congregation in the Mid-West gives excerpts involving the incidence associated with this act:

I was present when Louise Patterson, First Lady and wife of the past Senior Bishop, G.E. Patterson [made a bold statement] and said in a Women's Convention, "Women, we're going to rise up and take our positions. We're no longer going to hide behind or cover perversions...or hidden relationships that are not good...if we have the goods, then...we want the recognition!"

This was an unexpected act coming from a First lady. According to Hill-Collin, doing or saying something that is unexpected may also be termed as an individual act of resistance, when associated with, in this case, churchwomen's rejection of subordinating practices in the church. This combination of both the act and rejection of practices suggest that a distinctive, collective Black women's consciousness exists (Hill-Collins 2000).

Another interviewee had a different viewpoint on resisting opposition when it comes to self-empowerment. In order to affect change in policy and other areas where it really matters, one interviewee admonishes women to "bring something to the table." Hill-Collins (2000) points out the power of self-definition (theme) and how it relates to self-identity and empowerment. Interviewee Case # 20, a woman educator, expresses the importance of self-definition and self-determination as noted by this comment:

I see women as an "outsider." So, one way to be involved in church governance to influence policy is certainly to be educated and have something to contribute....I think for women [what is needed], "What do you bring to the table?" You can't just show up and say, well, "I'm a woman, you should let me sit here." If you're the "best" to be able to get the books done, if you're the "best" to be able to get the service to run in order, [etc.,]...I think you have to show your value. And I think women will be able to move in more leadership positions but they're not just going to have it handed to them.

When looking at our teaching, if we've been taught to be "queens" and not "kings," then we're happy playing chief operating officer as opposed to chief executive officer know how to play the 2nd fiddle and so we're naturally comfortable.

This interviewee also suggests an element of preparedness that necessarily creates the image of an African American woman advancing empowerment through a self-defined standpoint.

One aspect of black feminist epistemology espoused by Hill-Collins (2000) is that "safe spaces" provide opportunities for self-definition. This space is an environment where women can speak freely and have safe discourse. She points out three locations where voice operates in safe spaces: First, is black women's relationships to one another. The relationships can take place in family (or extended families) or in public spaces such as organizations, businesses, and churches. Mentoring within black women's church circles is also empowering where knowledge can be shared among the group. Special relationships can also be formed and nurtured among mothers, daughters, and sisters by way of affirmations to each other's humanity and uniqueness. The inclination of women to really listen to one another is also significant in terms of the importance of voice in women's lives. The Women's Convention (COGIC) is an annual event that takes place in various cities in the US. Here women are able to form relationships with women from around the nation. Sessions and workshops include dialogue about pertinent issues relative to women such as social, political, economic, and religious matters, health, work, and family situations effecting women in their daily living.

In this environment, churchwomen are empowered as they “pass on everyday knowledge essential to survival as African American women.”

The second location of safe space involves cultural expressions which are expressions through poetry, music, and the arts. The third location is the voices of black pioneer women of the church. Testimonials concerning everyday experiences, survival strategies and knowledge essential to the survival of African American Christians represents this location. Endearing testimonials of pioneer Mothers Robinson, Coffey, Bailey, and McGlothen may include words of encouragement and appreciation to the women who serve the church in many capacities. Mother Coffey established the Lillian Brooks Coffey Rest Home in Detroit, Michigan, where the motto is, “We make no excuse for the things which we have here, for that which we have the Lord has provided, and we are thankful.” Testimonials in churches and special events allow women to communicate with one another and produces a sense of shared identity.

Barriers to Women’s Empowerment

Although COGIC women are quite visible in many areas of the church, they lack voice for self-empowerment (theme). A man elder, Case # 22 views women’s empowerment as being demonstrated by having voice so as to affect change:

Women need to stand up for their rights as long as they know they’re right. They need to be able to be a recognizable force in the body of Christ....When I use the terminology that “women need to stand up for their rights,” I’m talking about [women]....having a voice in what is happening or how things are done. Seek wisdom from the Lord as to how to approach certain kinds of situations.

On a similar note, this interviewee, Case # 31 a woman missionary, sees the lack of empowerment for women specifically related to the business of

economics (theme). It's simply a case of business: I don't think there are ministries that will advance visibility and voice for women. I almost want to say No. And I think that part of...if there's a ministry called Business of Administration, that's what we need to get to the ministry of business! (interviewee laughs) "Follow the dollar." I mean the parking lot ministry, the praise and worship, the singing and dancing, those ministries are "workabee slots." They're not the directors, they're not the managers. Several interviewees point out a lack of spiritual leadership (theme) which hinders church growth and creates a barrier for women's empowerment.

Interviewee Case # 50, a woman educator, put it this way:

You really want to know what I think? (Interviewer) Yes. They've put God out! They've [leaders] rejected God and they put in place [something else]....Here's the church, the body of Christ...Bishop Mason put in place an infrastructure, which was to enhance ministry. But the infrastructure has been polluted. It has now become a system within the system, that is ungodly—it's like power —seeking, it's positions, it's moneyGod has very limited space.

Chow (2008:95) points out in her research on migrant factory workers that empowerment is dialectical and paradoxical—that is, what may be empowering in one context might be disempowering in another context. This researcher predicts that COGIC women may very well experience empowerment and disempowerment in differential contexts. For example, in addition to structural and constitutional barriers, permitting more churchwomen to participate in the General Assembly and secure voting privileges along with clerics may not necessarily empower them. Although churchwomen need the vote to have a greater voice in church governance, I predict their vote may be used by clerics and bishops to compete among the male constituency of the church in order to maintain their "own" privileged status. Since churchwomen outnumber men, drawing from this "reservoir of women" could prove beneficial in having a "voting advantage" by clerics aiming to maintain top leadership positions, particularly at the General Board (highest) level of the church where

bishops are voted back in office every four years. This would only strengthen clerics' patriarchal stronghold using the women's votes to secure a significant advantage to maintain power and control.

Based on the dominance of men and hierarchical church structure, churchwomen might instead consider how current changes constitutionally would better situate them for positions alongside clerics at every level of the church—local, regional, state, and national. Constitutional barriers and biblical interpretations determining leadership positions are areas currently needing the most attention.

The “old way of doing things” (theme) also plays an important part in structural matters and tradition of the church and is a barrier in terms of advancing women in ministry. Any organization lacking knowledge, wisdom, and discernment concerning the need for change will not advance for “where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18). Although this statement is biblically based, it can apply to sacred as well as secular institutions. Needed change in order to advance the church was Bishop Mason's style of leadership because his inclusion of women in ministries working alongside men. This was basically atypical in several black denominations during Mason's time when sexism, classism, and racism was predominant in society. The current leadership model for women in the COGIC is leadership “fashioned” in inclusion but exercised in exclusion by way of patriarchy. It was only after his demise that a new structure and configuration tightened the reins on women in ministry necessitating a much needed change in the twenty-first century church.

Interviewee Case # 20, a woman educator, talks about the antiquated ways of doing things related to the COGIC. She specifically points out, however, that the addition of “newer” methods such as adding more ministries and building larger churches do not necessarily produce positive results, empower people, and/or are the results of “better churches.” She states:

Their old way of doing things! And not to say it's the best. I mean, do we need mega churches everywhere? I don't think so. You need to have the word of God where people get nourished, and are encouraged them to live holy. A good bible believing church, you don't have to have 40,000 members. The COGIC is big. And it probably is stagnating itself by not having re-thought some of its old ways. This is reverting back to leadership—they're stuck in their old ways.

Spirituality and Empowerment

Spirituality is conceptualized by Lindholm and Astin as spirituality focusing on our interiors, one's subjective life. The spiritual domain deals with human consciousness—experiences we have privately and what we hold dear; and what we feel and have deep-seated concerns with. Some have defined spirituality as an energizing force, “a source of inner strength...an expression of ourselves that shape...who we really are” (Lindholm and Astin 2006:2). Hill-Collins (2008:244) asserts that “spirituality,...that is organized through and sanctioned by Black Christian churches...provides one important way that many African-American women are moved to struggle for justice.” Justice was the theme of many pioneer African American women such as Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Ida B. Wells Barnett, to name a few. Sojourner Truth's spirituality imbued her with a special energy that was a process of her thinking and feeling working together and moving her toward a journey for justice.

According to Hill-Collins (1998) passionate commitment, a love for justice, articles of faith, and belief in God, are all dimensions of spirituality. COGIC women's history in the church exemplifies these attributes. One respondent Case # 61, a senior church mother, makes a reference to the spirituality of churchwomen when she responds by saying, "It is the women giving 60 percent of their labor in love, for souls, really souls...women are more faithful, and they have the commitment, and they know God... [women] are more prayerful. And they're more faithful to their calling in COGIC." COGIC women also possess knowledge and wisdom—a product of their lived experiences. And, lived experiences are a criterion for credibility when making knowledge claims. Hill-Collins (2000) believes that women give a higher priority to wisdom in assessing knowledge. I contend there is a unique dimension of discernment coupled with wisdom. In view of the fact that churchwomen have lived a sacrificial life in the church, they also possess a certain discerning quality giving them a deeper insight that accompanies their spirituality. As such, this may also be associated with what Hill-Collins terms "ways of knowing."

Gilkes (2001) draws attention to prominent women such as Mary McLeod Bethune and Mamie Garvin Fields whose "missionary motives" materialized when their call to missions work resulted in closed doors to ministry. After graduating from Moody Bible Institute and thereafter being denied a post to serve in Africa, Bethune discovered "her Africa" to be at home in the US. Such was the case with Arenia Mallory who discovered "her Africa" to be in Lexington, Mississippi to head Saints Junior College—the first woman to head a school owned and operated by the COGIC. Mallory had studied to be a concert pianist before realizing that her "call" in

life would be the “African mission field” on the raw edge of America’s Mississippi Delta”(Simmons and Martin 1983). When Mallory first took over the post as president of the college, she had envisioned staying for only a short period of time. Little did she know her life would be a journey of selfless dedication to a school and students she loved and served with the help of God.

It can be surmised that “missionary motives” (theme) of COGIC women consist of “another” mission and purpose discovered in life because of being denied leadership positions in the church. Whereas some seek ordination, others are carriers of the gospel in their “calling” by way of professionalization e.g., lawyers, doctors, teachers, nurses, morticians, beauticians, the armed services, chaplains, counselors, CEOs, business executives and the like. Entering the paid labor market provides economic empowerment enabling churchwomen to have a sense of well-being and independence. Since being a member of the clergy only makes room for leadership positions “in” the church, with the exception of serving as chaplains in the service (in this case the COGIC will ordain women), finding a need for self-empowerment and religious expression has prompted many women to advance themselves professionally “outside” the church. Conceptually, empowerment is a process which leads to achievements for these women economically (employment), socially (social relations and position in social structures), and educationally (acquired degrees). These categories resemble Chow’s (2008:87) dimensions of empowerment which were reported in her research.

Some churchwomen might have a position in the church such as a missionary but a “higher calling” such as pastoring a church leaves no avenue for advancement

as far as women are concerned. Essentially, churchwomen are engaged in activities outside the church while others sometimes simultaneously are active in both the sacred and “secular” realms. More recently, some women (judges) have been admitted to serve on boards of the COGIC such as the judiciary board—these are positions that had always been occupied by churchmen. One of the reasons why the Women’s Department is a very powerful component of the church is due to large numbers of women who not only serve churches locally, regionally, and nationally but also maintain professional lives in the public arena. This plurality brings a “lot to the table” in terms of resources, expertise, experience, wisdom, and spirituality.

Other interviewees’ observations also centered on the church’s movement away from spirituality as noted by this man pastor, Case # 33. He believed most importantly, that “maintaining holiness in this changing world and lack of a fear of God” were key areas of weaknesses in the church. Another man pastor, interviewee Case # 37 also sees the church becoming more secular and moving away from the sacred domain. In this state, leaders and parishioners are negatively affected by the absence of spirituality—leadership becomes more carnal and subordination of women under these conditions is more likely to intensify thus threatening the possibilities for their self-empowerment. This interviewee comments:

Some of our quote un quote leaders today are [having a tendency] to inch away. And if we can’t find quote un quote[exact]...scripture “for thou shall not do it”, we back away from saying, don’t do it! There are a lot of things that I teach or preach [about] that we may not have to tell you it’s a sin, but are you willing to sacrifice some conveniences in order to have a greater anointing? A life of sacrifice?

The interviewee continues:

God has blessed us—we've turned everything into a blessing. He didn't bless us, to go back. He blesses us to go forward. My generation would not play slot machines. Now we've got video games. We didn't play cards but we'll see Solitaire played on our laptops. So it's easy to condemn what you don't have available to you.

The late Senior Bishop J.O. Patterson warned against movement of church leadership away from spirituality and reminded clergymen and the church of the virtues of Holiness. In his sermon, *Make Sure The Lord Delights In You*, he stated:

We may have been a little off [base]... We said you couldn't wear a necktie... everything that we could not find verbatim in the Bible we were against it... [I] suppose we were a little off [base]. Now which is worse? To have been a little off and called for true Holiness or [to say that] nothing is wrong?

Bishop Patterson continues,

Let us not take up the worldly ways and try to make this church like others. Let's [not] get too smart... too dignified and too sophisticated—and rule out the Spirit of God!

Bishop Patterson was reminding the parishioners of the need and importance of Godly living since those principles were the very foundation upon which the denomination was built and advocated by its founder.

The Anointing Births Leaders

Some leadership positions churchwomen occupy are “God-ordained” and bring create an “agency anointing” which gives individuals a spiritual endowment for a particular mission in life. The word anoint means to authorize, or set apart, a person for a particular work or service (Isaiah. 61:1). The anointed person belongs to God in a special sense. The phrases, "the Lord's anointed," "God's anointed," "My anointed," "Your anointed," or "His anointed" are noted in certain scriptures in the Bible to refer to kings, priests, and prophets. King Saul (I Samuel 26:9, 11), King David (II Samuel.

22:51), King Solomon (II Chronicles. 6:42). Priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil which was poured on the head of the person being anointed (Exodus 29:7). In reference to COGIC women (and men), an anointed person is endowed with a special, spiritual, empowerment, among other attributes, that equips the individual for a “God-ordained” destined leadership role.

The leadership and music ministry of legendary Mattie Moss Clark, according to McCoy (1994:29) chronicles her experiences within the COGIC, her agency and anointing, “the supernatural functioning of such [anointing] that erases the impossible and causes the possible to be seen clearly, especially in difficult situations, so that the name of God is glorified.” Regarding the anointing, Ware (2009) also reports on a spiritual empowerment and anointing of women who were associated with the well-known Azusa Street Revival in California which took place during the turn of the 19 century.

According to McCoy (1994:68), encountering patriarchal structures within the church such as, statements made regarding Mattie Moss Clark’s stepping into territory reserved for the brethren within the musical arena did not affect her to any great degree. “[Some] preachers, states Mattie Moss Clark, would tell me I had too much anointing, that I was too big.” She had few supporters, one of which was Bishop J.S. Bailey of Detroit, Michigan who gave her the freedom of functioning as his Minister of Music for many years and the authority to follow her “calling” which greatly impacted her music ministry.

McCoy (1994:19-20) reports that Clark revolutionized the musical department in the COGIC by introducing a *new* Pentecostal sound and choir style for singing in

churches in addition to one important element—the anointing. McCoy notes further that “the anointing was the foundation of Clark’s life and ministry....[which] is the manifestation of the [Holy Spirit] that imparts power....mak[ing] a difference in [choirs’] presentations and therefore mak[ing] a difference in the lives of individuals.” The anointing also imparts power to an individual to effectively accomplish whatever the Lord has admonished one to do. The anointing is [also] like a screen, so when the pressure comes, I can stand it. McCoy goes on further highlighting that Clark relied on the anointing to empower her in all of her endeavors. Without the anointing, Clark lacked the spiritual empowering to do the work and mission assigned to her hands.

Mattie Moss Clark’s method of teaching choir members to develop a sense of commitment and responsibility was uniquely functionalist. McCoy (1994:74-77) lists four points related to Clark’s approach. The first approach emphasizes that choir members are an indispensable part of the choir; commitment and responsibility add to the success of the whole choir. The second approach addresses the element of selfishness—choir members are admonished to refrain from an egotistic posture, remembering that every voice is needed. The third approach notes that members should demonstrate a strong sense of belonging because without members, a choir would not exist. The fourth approach centers on musicians that should serve as an accompaniment for the singer or singers. Accomplished musicians never allow his/her music to override or overshadow the singer. Once introductions to selections are played, the musician should “fade” to the background by playing softly so as to not drown out the lead singer by playing a snappy, syncopated introduction too long.

In other words, the musician should decrease so that the singer can increase. This approach produces balance and equilibrium to the overall musical presentation.

McCoy (1994:31) comments further about Mattie Moss Clark's exceptional abilities related to working with choirs:

Dr. Mattie Moss Clark's trademark ability to train an entire choir on a new song in only five minutes was rivaled by none. And when the choir began to sing, the anointing fell...The discipline of a consecrated life gave birth to an anointing that followed her all of the days of her life. She has devoted her life to elevating the standard in church music, as well as educating a new generation of church leaders in the anointing and power of the Holy [Spirit].

A repetitive theme throughout the interviews was the anointing. In reference to COGIC women (and men), an anointed person is powerful! One interviewee, a man pastor, stated, "The Lord's calling [to a ministry] puts an anointing on your life and you have to be very careful how you handle that anointing" (Case # 37, a pastor). The anointing also characterizes individuals possessing supernatural manifestations of the spirit such as healing through prayer and the "laying on of hands." Another interviewee's exposition of the anointing and leadership is described by an educator this way ,Case # 50, woman educator:

My call to ministry, the Lord gave it to me. I remember when He spoke it. The "anointing" [is very spiritual]. He told me not to traditionalize. He (the Lord) gave me a concept and a model to bring to the body of Christ for inner city urban churches. And some of this was birthed out of my profession in managerial positions as a CEO, etc.

The attitude of the church is that they don't want women to interviewee pauses momentarily [be independent in one's position]. In terms of being used of God and being called and anointed by God to do a work....What God has gifted me with, not only in terms of knowledge and skills, natural and spiritual, God has raised me up so that people had to respect where He had placed me even though I didn't have to fight for respect. The gifting and the qualifications qualified me.

This interviewee goes further to recount an event which further confirmed her calling to a unique ministry by a “prophetic word” coming from a visiting pastor: He said, “Nicole (pseudonym), you’ve been asking the Lord about pastoring” and he said, “The Lord has given you a pastoral anointing but” he said, “it’s not to pastor a church. You are to pastor pastors, and ministers, in the work, so you need that ‘anointing’ to communicate through the spirit, because [you] don’t want to communicate garbage—you need to communicate things of the spirit....you need to be ‘anointed’ to do that”.

A “prophetic word” operates like the following description noted by the interviewee:

And he called me out [in the audience] and he said, (and I never talked about what God had told me about the pastoral anointing and pastoring) but, what God had him [the visiting pastor] tell me, [confirmed my pastoral anointing] and I know it was God because I never discussed it with [the pastor]. See, God always uses language that you will understand and know and recognize in your communication with Him!

Another interviewee, a man pastor, Case #56, describes the ministry of a woman pastor who is highly anointed and leading a prominent church in the North-East:

This woman (pastor) is bad! She’s so awesome! Her anointing is so powerful. I’ve seen her do some things I’ve never seen anybody [else] do. The only comments I’ve heard about her is that she’s Bishop Mason in a woman’s body! Her name is Bernice [pseudonym]. She grew up in the church, She was the youngest district missionary in our jurisdiction. The Lord called her to pastor and she built this church from the ground up. I think she left the church (COGIC). I know she was in the church 2 years ago....She asked if she could come [under my jurisdiction]....

According to COGIC standards, a highly anointed person was respected, revered, and held in high esteem among congregations.

Future Prospects

When women begin to move into church leadership positions, they are uniquely able to create a process by which they become more proactive in acquiring leadership roles. As one interviewee, a First Lady, Case # 47 puts it, “I see women as “channels of birth. God has instituted that in us. We bring life and everything that women touch, things grow. As women, we are nurturers. We [welcome] development, growth and change.” As such, women develop skills in making connections, building relationships and intuitively lead with the heart instead of the head—a process focused on not only concerns dealing only with the means to achieve ends.

Mentoring within Black women’s church circles is also empowering where knowledge can be shared among the group. Special relationships can also be formed and nurtured among mothers, daughters, and sisters by way of affirmations to each other’s humanity and uniqueness. The inclination of women to really listen to one another is also significant in terms of the importance of voice in women’s lives. The Women’s Convention (COGIC) is an annual event that takes place in various cities in the US. Here women are able to form relationships with women from around the nation. Sessions and workshops include dialogue about pertinent issues relative to women such as social, political, economic, and religious matters, health, work, and family situations effecting women in their daily living. In this environment, churchwomen are empowered as they pass on everyday knowledge.

Some more “contemporary” thinking pastors (theme) realize how empowering education can be for churchwomen and local congregations. A man pastor, interviewee Case # 15 states:

Right now we have three teachers [churchwomen] with one working on her doctorate that belongs here now. When we move into our new facility, we’re going to be offering after school classes, GED classes. The big thing now is computers—everybody’s got to be computer literate, and you’d be surprised at how many people are not computer literate so that’s going to be one of the avenues [areas] we’re going to [highlight]!

Similarly, another man pastor, Case # 28 reiterates the same theme of education for the young and adults:

I feel that the strength of the church is how strong the local churches are. I would put effort into developing our church [e.g.,] education. Our children have to prepare to compete with children in other countries. And then churches need to be prepared to compete with other denominations. And I don’t feel...we’re able to do that. We have some that are aggressive—they’re at our leadership conferences, our teaching conferences. I feel that training and preparation are important for the teacher. I feel the church is missing on that point...Education is critical, critical, critical!

Gilkes (2001:210) speaks her sentiment as she sees it in reference to the plight of women in ministry: “The picture for women in the ordained ministry within the historically African-American denominations is not good...the full empowerment of the church to speak to the needs of all African American people cannot be accomplished without the full empowerment of women at every level.” Effective change occurs through action and action is what COGIC women are accustomed to. However, multiple barriers require group action to keep enabling the process for change.

In terms of the future outlook regarding women’s leadership in the COGIC, I do not envision a waning in their activist stance. Many of the women interviewees

spoke adamantly about necessary change in policy and governance. I did not perceive a let up in their sensibilities toward the ordination of women. Some of the narratives coming from COGIC women spoke of other women who left the denomination to serve elsewhere as well as others who established their own churches without COGIC validation. It is reported that various newly organized churches are faring well with memberships upward rather than downward. Mamiya (2006) reports of the growing concern the COGIC is confronted with because of the steady influx of women receiving seminary training. It seems unlikely that this trend will slow down.

Borrowing from Hill-Collins (1998), COGIC women's history indicates they have a passionate commitment to the church, a love for justice, articles of faith, and belief in God that continues to inspire them toward higher heights and deeper depths for the cause of gender justice.

Summary

COGIC women's long-standing endurance to opposition enables them to stand and keep the strength to oppose objectification. Known to have "dug out" and established churches that were given over to clerics, their voices of resistance ring louder and clearer. No longer are many of them willing to give up churches they "birthed" out of their own struggles. In this day, agency takes a new form—educational endeavors, unexpected acts of resistance, acknowledging their "call" to ministry, pastoring independent churches, co-pastoring COGIC churches, "pastoring" COGIC churches without official credentials (ordination), formation of alliances, and speaking in a louder voice expressing their discontent with structures, constitutional barriers, and the *glass ceiling effect*. By way of professionalization, many women

have become better educated thus empowering themselves academically and economically.

Gilkes (2001:210) speaks her sentiment as she sees it: “The picture for women in the ordained ministry within the historically African-American denominations is not good...the full empowerment of the church to speak to the needs of all African American people cannot be accomplished without the full empowerment of women at every level.” Effective change occurs through action and action is what COGIC women are accustomed to. However, multiple barriers require group action to keep enabling the process for change.

One barrier noted in this chapter concerns the lack of spirituality involving leadership, affecting laity, and churchwomen’s empowerment. A consequence of this situation is a decrease in the growth and development of congregational churches as well as church membership. This further complicates the issue of ordination and advancement of churchwomen. The seriousness of this barrier is that it can very well slow down the process of advancement thus impacting every area of oppression that has to do with ministries involving women. Hopefully, prayerfully, this will not be the case.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research explores the dimensions of church leadership in the COGIC as it relates to churchwomen and clergymen in the new millennium. In-depth interviews provided rich data for descriptions and interpretations of thoughts, actions, and multiple dimensions of the religious lives of women and men. A particular focus of this research was the issue of women's ordination in view of church tradition and its affect upon current leadership in the church. Since rare qualitative research has been conducted on this denomination, my research will provide a basis for comparative analyses between the COGIC and other religious groups that are dealing with changes in women's ministries, specifically, their inclusion regarding the rites, rituals, ordinances and church governance.

As the data emerged, theories that were utilized in my research provide new areas for future investigation such as exploring the ecumenical affect of churches that ordained women as compared with the COGIC which denies churchwomen's right to ordination. I point out the possibility of negative repercussions stemming from COGIC's strict adherence to constitutional laws and doctrine and the need for changes that will positively impact future church growth and development.

. Although my study is not generalizable to the larger population of this denomination, there are some important similarities and differences that can be noted on essential items which lead me to my *first* finding. The founder of this

denomination established a model for the ministry of women and men in the church along with the compliance of women. In view of societal influences during the formative years of church growth, it is a generally consensus among present-day members that this model was appropriate. Secondly, at that time, women's leadership was more accommodationist since Bishop Mason remains revered as a leader having plenipotentiary power who ruled righteously and in a godly manner. Problematic is the issue of how "feasible" is this model in an era where evidence points to unequal treatment between the genders involving churchwomen who are known to be the strongest supporters of the church both religiously and economically. A proven history of work follows COGIC women from the genesis of this denomination to its present state in today's society. While the economic climate changes, women remain obligated to maintain their financial support in view of added pressures to comply with over-ruling clerics.

Women interviewees in particular are unwilling to support a model of leadership which is deemed unjust and unfair. They reject cleric's biblical interpretations calling for "reinterpretations" of Scripture specific to this situation. The influx of theologically trained churchwomen in the church adds to the dissention in that a more enlightened viewpoint espoused by seminary trained women seems to be reaching more of the masses of people.

The *second* finding expands on women's lack of visibility, inclusivity, and voice. Churchwomen are more interested in having a voice in the decision-making process of the church since unequal power relations exist having men to hold the coveted leadership positions. Since ordination in this instance is not an option for

them, women are expressing their need for having a voice via voting strength coming from more representation in the General Assembly.

The unsettled issue of ordination illustrates my *third* finding. Clergymen's strongest support for not ordaining women is grounded in biblical interpretations and the Constitution of the church. Since the attendance of women to Mason Theological Seminary, the only graduate institution of the denomination, exceptions have been made which allow women who serve as chaplains to be ordained. A created title for churchwomen who "inherit" churches after the passing of a spouse who was the pastor has been named as "Shepherdess". In cases where the First Lady carries on the work of her late husband, these extenuating circumstances compound the matter of ordination for clerics adhering to male dominance. As these exceptional cases keep coming forth, the male leadership will need to further examine their positions in reference to the traditional model of leadership.

The *fourth* finding is that there are several leadership models that are evident: (1) traditional male leadership model (2) Symbiotic (shared) leadership model (3) egalitarian leadership model. While the egalitarian leadership model promotes equality, this is a "preferred" model but in reality does not exist. The symbiotic model (shared leadership) seems conducive for a cooperative leadership style, however, not many clergymen agreed with this model. Sharing power is not popular in a church where the male constituency has been in place/power for years. Giving up power is problematic for clerics.

The *fifth* finding is that empowerment for women must involve self-empowerment and group coalition building. Womanist theology is useful in

reference to empowerment as women continue their agency, self-identity, and self-determination in light of womanist thought, interpretations of Scripture, and biblical interpretations. Here the boldness and audacity becomes needful as churchwomen continue their fight for equality.

My following conclusions are based on my major findings in addition to my personal judgments as a lifelong member of the COGIC. Firstly, the traditional model of leadership was effective in the formative years of the COGIC. However, with changes taking place in society, I feel the need for changes to take place in leadership and church governance based on societal changes. For example, just as more women are in the working world today, churchwomen are working in secular and sacred places. Women's educational achievements mandate roles and positions in churches where their professions can be useful. One Presiding Bishop of the COGIC stated that professionally trained members would not be content with "sitting" in church congregations with their hands folded. As more and more women become educated, some have been able to fill positions within the church which were traditionally held by men. Sitting judges now occupy positions on the Judiciary Board of the church. Given these advancements, structures barring women from advancing themselves in the church will need to change. Because of the barring that is still taking place in the COGIC, some women have established their own churches while some have remained faithful to current leadership.

In order to share power, there is a definite need for all women to be able to vote who hold credentials such as missionaries, deaconesses, First Ladies, district missionaries, and church mothers. Presently, there are rules and regulations which

limit the number of women who can serve as delegates to the General Assembly which shuts them out of the voting and the decision-making process. Consequently, emerging from my data were the discontent among churchwomen who complained by invisibility and having no voice at all in the governance of the church. Sexism, classism, and gender concerns were echoed among the women of the church and some clerics. Coupled with the lack of voice, churchwomen are validating their “call” to leadership irrespective of what the COGIC claims. Making statements during the interviewing session such as, “Man does not call people, God does,” women are feeling assured that they are doing God’s will. Discriminatory practices within the church, I believe, will not be tolerated for a much longer period of time since churchwomen are becoming weary of acts concerning unfairness and inequality.

Although men are the only ones that are being ordained, women are accepting and making known their “call” to ministry. Their viewpoint on the traditional model, while it was good and served its purpose during Bishop Mason’s era, needs to be expanded to be more inclusive of a woman’s call to pastor/lead a church. One Scriptures cited in support of this position is that “there is neither male nor female in the Lord.” This specifically means that gender is not an issue when leadership is viewed as “genderless.” Some churchwomen have used this Scripture in defense of their position and their own religious undertakings as it relates to pastoral positions in the COGIC. While there are a few officially ordained female pastors, I believe that more will be coming forward to request credentialing from church officials. I personally believe that a man’s “call” to ministry is no different than a woman’s “call” to ministry.

For some clergymen, a shared (symbiotic) leadership model is preferred especially in cases where the First Lady is helpful in ministries of the church. Only a few clergymen (about 10 percent) agreed that women could be effective pastors of churches particularly in regards to women who portrayed “special” attributes for leadership. For the most part, clergymen were satisfied with the traditional model of leadership where the pastor was viewed as the head and the wife was viewed as co-laborer. A large majority of women interviewees (65 percent) saw the woman’s role in the church basically as being the “backbone” in terms of support and no longer thought that role was applicable to a present-day model and therefore outdated. While some churchwomen were very vocal concerning subordination in the church, others were more accommodative in their posture believing that change for women would eventually come with patience and prayer. This group is more willing to wait for change as compared to vocal churchwomen who express their dissatisfaction.

The need for women’s empowerment is vital. Churchwomen have recorded history which is a testament to their labor of love for the COGIC. Establishing churches on their own will necessarily include a name and claim as their accomplishment. While some researchers envision the progress of women to be a continued uphill battle, others see effective change taking place in the future based on the continued agency of COGIC women. A pressing concern, however, regarding the future of this denomination is connected to the need for a spiritual renewal centered on leadership. With a church steeped in so much tradition, movement away from its founding principles, values, beliefs, and practices will be detrimental to the growth

and development of this church. The loss of women leaving for “greener pastures” will weaken the denomination’s effectiveness and promise for a better future.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO CHURCHWOMEN/CLERGYMEN

Dear _____

I am a doctoral student in the Sociology Department at American University in Washington, DC, writing my dissertation on women's leadership in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). As a lifelong member of this church, I am particularly interested in interviewing COGIC members who would be willing to share some of their insights with me regarding churchwomen.

If you might be able to fulfill my request, the interviewing session will take about one hour and can be conducted at a time suitable for you.

This research has been approved by the departmental representatives of the Institutional Review Board at American University and all responses will be anonymous. Participation is voluntary and your confidentiality is ensured. Should you have any questions, I can be contacted by email at: cbragg@mindspring.com or you may give me a call at home at your convenience. My phone number is: 410.825.8955.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cynthia B. Bragg, Ph.D. candidate
American University

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS

My name is Cynthia Bragg and I am a doctoral student at American University in Washington, DC. My proposed research has been approved through the Institutional Review Board process at American University. The purpose of this study is to conduct research about women and men in ministry and leadership in the church.

The study may yield information relevant to the perceptions of clergymen and churchwomen regarding leadership in the black church and may be used in future publications. Real names of respondents who are interviewed or any identifiable material will not be used or included in the publication. I will send you a project summary if you request one.

Since there is no sensitive information being sought, foreseeable risks are minimal. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. Confidentiality of your information will be maintained by securing records in a safe-deposit box in possession of only the researcher.

You may contact me at cbragg@mindspring.com or 410-825-8955 should you have any questions. You may also contact my academic advisor, Dr. Chow at echow@american.edu.

Interviewee:

Researcher:

Print Name

Cynthia Bragg

Sign Name

Sign Name

Date: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

What are the current leadership positions in the church for women? Why are so few churchwomen in leadership positions in the black church such as the Church of God in Christ?

- 1) In your opinion, describe women's current leadership in the Church of God in Christ
- 2) How did you acquire your present position? (missionary, state supervisor, district missionary, "shepherdess", bishop, pastor, elder).
- 3) Why are so few churchwomen occupying leadership positions within churches?
- 4) How long have you been the pastor/missionary, of this/your church?
- 5) Describe the experience involving your "call" to ministry as an elder, pastor, or missionary.
- 6) As you view it, are there leadership positions in the church which clergymen should be given preference over churchwomen?
- 7) Comment on this statement: The responsibility of being a pastor is a man's job. Why do churchwomen seek ordination and pastoral positions? How are issues of sexism and classism affecting ordination of women?
- 8) Does your church have a policy to bar women to become ordained?
- 9) Is a churchwoman's call to lead a church sanctioned biblically? Why or why not?
- 10) Do you think churchwomen are excluded from leadership positions because of their gender?
- 11) Do you believe ordination should be limited to men only?
- 12) Should churchwomen assume their *rightful* place and "call" to ministry in the church along with clergymen?

- 13) Comment on this statement: In the future women *will* be ordained in the Church of God in Christ. In what ways can black churches be changed to develop or facilitate a “symbiotic” relationship with both churchwomen and clergymen sharing ministerial leadership in terms of church structure, policy, and governance?
- 14) What is the present policy (ies) regarding incorporating women in leadership positions within the church?
- 15) As you view it, are there leadership positions in the church which clergymen should be given preference over churchwomen?
- 16) To what extent can churchwomen have more of a voice in policies and church governance?
- 17) How would you structure the General Assembly to include more women?
- 18) Do you envision churchwomen having a seat on the general/governing board of the church? Why or why not?
- 19) If yes, how can women leaders be more involved in governance in the church?
- 20) Do you think that clergymen and clergywomen have the same or different leadership styles?
- 21) In your opinion, how can power and authority be shared by women and clerics in the church?
- 22) Do you agree or disagree with the following statement or comment on the following statement: “Churchwomen should be given equal opportunity with clergymen for exercising their talents in ministries of the church.” What are the future prospects for
- 23) What do you see as being a major challenge facing the Church of God in Christ?
- 24) What ministries do you think churchwomen can utilize to advance their visibility and voice?
- 25) What advice would you give to churchwomen who have acknowledged their ministerial call?
- 26) What changes, if any, would you like to see take place within the Church of God in Christ for women to become visible and effective leaders?

APPENDIX D

Table A.1. Interviewee Data

| CASE # | GENDER | AGE | TITLE/POSITION | CLASS |
|--------|--------|-----|---------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |
| 2 | Female | 55 | First Lady | Middle |
| 3 | Male | 55 | Elder | Upper-Lower |
| 4 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 5 | Male | 40 | Elder | Lower |
| 6 | Male | 60 | Deacon | Middle |
| 7 | Female | 60 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 8 | Male | 65 | Elder | Lower |
| 9 | Female | 55 | Missionary | Lower |
| 10 | Female | 60 | District Missionary | Middle |
| 11 | Male | 50 | Pastor | Middle |
| 12 | Male | 40 | Elder | Lower |
| 13 | Male | 45 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 14 | Female | 55 | Missionary | Lower |
| 15 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Middle |
| 16 | Female | 60 | Missionary | Lower |
| 17 | Female | 60 | First Lady | Middle-Upper |
| 18 | Female | 55 | Female | Upper-Lower |
| 19 | Male | 65 | Male | Middle |
| 20 | Female | 50 | Educator | Middle |
| 21 | Male | 55 | Elder | Middle |
| 22 | Male | 69 | Elder | Upper-Middle |

| CASE # | GENDER | AGE | TITLE/POSITION | CLASS |
|--------|--------|-----|----------------|--------------|
| 23 | Male | 45 | Elder | Lower-Middle |
| 24 | Female | 25 | Missionary | Middle |
| 25 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Middle |
| 26 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Middle |
| 27 | Male | 45 | Elder | Middle |
| 28 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 29 | Male | 45 | Elder | Upper-Lower |
| 310 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 31 | Female | 60 | Missionary | Upper-Middle |
| 32 | Male | 40 | Deacon | Upper-Lower |
| 33 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Middle |
| 34 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Middle |
| 35 | Male | 50 | Deacon | Upper-Lower |
| 36 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |
| 37 | Male | 50 | Pastor | Middle |
| 38 | Female | 55 | First Lady | Middle |
| 39 | Male | 45 | Elder | Lower-Middle |
| 40 | Female | 45 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |
| 41 | Female | 60 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 42 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Middle |
| 43 | Male | 55 | Elder | Upper-Lower |
| 44 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |

| CASE # | GENDER | AGE | TITLE/POSITION | CLASS |
|--------|--------|-----|----------------------|--------------|
| 45 | Male | 45 | Elder | Upper-Lower |
| 46 | Female | 65 | Missionary | Middle |
| 47 | Female | 55 | First Lady | Middle |
| 48 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Middle |
| 49 | Male | 65 | Pastor | Middle |
| 50 | Female | 60 | Educator | Upper-Middle |
| 51 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |
| 52 | Male | 60 | Pastor | Middle |
| 53 | Female | 45 | Missionary | Upper-Lower |
| 54 | Male | 60 | Elder | Upper-Lower |
| 55 | Female | 55 | Missionary | Middle |
| 56 | Male | 55 | Pastor | Upper-Middle |
| 57 | Female | 55 | Missionary | Middle |
| 58 | Male | 45 | Elder | Lower-Middle |
| 59 | Female | 50 | Missionary | Middle |
| 60 | Female | 55 | Educator | Upper-Middle |
| 61 | Female | 75 | Senior Church Mother | Upper-Lower |
| 62 | Male | 55 | Elder | Middle |
| 63 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Lower-Middle |
| 64 | Male | 55 | Elder | Lower |
| 65 | Male | 60 | Elder | Lower |
| 66 | Female | 50 | First Lady | Middle |

| CASE # | GENDER | AGE | TITLE/POSITION | CLASS |
|--------|--------|-----|----------------|--------------|
| 67 | Male | 60 | Pastor | Lower-Middle |
| 68 | Female | 40 | Missionary | Lower-Middle |
| 69 | Male | 55 | Elder | Middle |
| 70 | Male | 65 | Elder | Upper |

REFERENCES

- Abrahams, Roger D. 1997. "Negotiating Respect: Patterns of Presentation Among Black Women." Pp 73-106 in *"Sweat": Zora Neale Hurston*, edited by Cheryl A. Wall. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender & society* 4: 139-158.
- _____. 1992a. "From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions." *Contemporary Sociology* 221: 565-569
- _____. 1992b. "Gendering Organization Theory." Pp 248-260 in *Gendering Organizational Analysis*, edited by A.J. Mills and P. Tancred. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Adams, Jimi. 2007. "Stained Glass Makes the Ceiling Visible: Organizational Opposition to Women in Congregational Leadership." *Gender & Society* 21:80-105.
- Alexander, Estrela. 2005. *The Women of Azusa Street*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press.
- Alexander, Estrela and Amos Yong (eds). 2009. *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, Publications.
- Allen, Earline. 2005. *Go Tell My Brethren: Overcoming Changes and Challenges Facing Women in Ministry in the Church of God in Christ*. Hazel Crest, IL: Faithday Press.
- Alvesson, Mats and Yvonne Billing. 1997. *Understanding Gender and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Aman, Kenneth (ed). 1987. *Border Regions of Faith: An Anthology of Religion and Social Change*. New York: Orbis Books.
- Andersen, Margaret. 1997. *Thinking About Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- _____. 2005. "Thinking About Women: A Quarter Century's View." *Gender & Society* 19: 437-455.

- _____. 2008. "Thinking About Women Some More: A New Century's View." *Gender & Society* 22: 120-125.
- Babbie, Earl. 1995. *The Practice of Social Research*, 7th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Baer, Hans. 1993. "The Limited Empowerment of Women in Black Spiritual Churches: An Alternative Vehicle to Religious Leadership." *Sociology of Religion* 54: 65-82.
- Baker-Fletcher, Karen. 1993. "A Womanist Ontology of Freedom and Equality." *The Journal of Religious Thought* 49: 60-71.
- _____. 1994. *A Singing Something: Womanist Reflections on Anna Julia Cooper*. New York: Crossroads.
- Banerjee, Neela. 2006. "Clergywomen Find Hard Path to Bigger Pulpit." *New York Times*, August 26. Retrieved July 25, 2011 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/26/us/26clergy.html>).
- Barnes, Sandra. 2006. "Whosoever Will Let *Her* Come: Social Activism and Gender Inclusivity in the Black Church." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 45: 371-387.
- Barnett, Bernice McNair. 1996. "Invisible Southern Black Women Leaders in the Civil Rights Movement: The Triple Constraints of Gender, Race, and Class." Pp 265-287 in *Race, Class, & Gender: Common Bonds, Different Voices*, edited by Esther Ngan-ling Chow, Doris Wilkinson, and Maxine Baca Zinn. CA: Sage.
- Bartleman, Frank. 1980. *Azusa Street*. Plainfield, NJ: Logos International.
- Beale, Francis. 1993. "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female." Pp 284-292 in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. New York: Orbis Books.
- Belleville, Linda L. 2000. *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Critical Questions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. 1967. *The Social Construction of Reality; A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Bethune, Mary McLeod. 1963. "My Last Will and Testament." *Ebony Magazine*. September 1963, pp. 151-156.

- Blassingame, John. 1977. *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies*. Louisiana State University Press.
- Britton, Dana M. 2000. "The Epistemology of the Gendered Organization." *Gender & Society* 14: 418-434.
- Brooks, Evelyn. 1988. "Religion, Politics, and Gender: The Leadership of Nannie Helen Burroughs." *Journal of Religious Thought* 44: 7-22.
- Brumback, Carl. 1947. *"What Meaneth This?" A Pentecostal Answer to a Pentecostal Question*. Springfield, MI: Gospel Publishing House.
- Burawoy, Michael. 2009. *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, and One Theoretical Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Calhoun-Brown, Allison. 1999. "No Respect of Persons? Religion, Churches and Gender Issues in the African American Community." *Women and Politics* 20: 27-44.
- Callas, Marta B. and Linda Smircich. 1992. "Using the 'F' Word: Feminist Theories and the Social Consequences of Organizational Research." Pp 222-234 in *Gendering Organizational Analysis*, edited by A.J. Mills and P. Tancred. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Cannon, Katie. 1995. "The Positionality of Women in the Church Community." Pp 210-216 in *Defecting in Place: Women Claiming Responsibility For Their Own Spiritual Lives*, edited by Miriam Winter, Adair Lummis and Allison Stokes. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company.
- _____. 1996. *Katie's Cannon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community*. New York: Continuum.
- Carpenter, Delores. 2001. *A Time For Honor: A Portrait of African American Clergywomen*. Missouri: Chalice Press.
- Chafetz, Jane and Anthony Gary Dworkin. 1986. *Female Revolt: Women's Movement in World and Historical Perspective*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld.
- Chaves, Mark. 1996. "Ordaining Women: The Diffusion Of an Organizational Innovation." *American Journal of Sociology* 101: 840-873.
- _____. 1997. "The Symbolic Significance of Women's Ordination." *The Journal of Religion* 1:87- 114.

Chow, Esther Ngan-ling, Doris Wilkinson and Maxine Baca Zinn. 1996. *Race, Class & Gender: Common Bonds, Different Voices*. CA: Sage.

_____. 1997. "Discourses on Women, Sex, and Gender" in *Feminist Foundations: Toward Transforming Sociology*, edited by K.A. Myers, C.D. Anderson and B.J. Risan. California: Sage.

_____. "Empowerment of Women Migrant Factory Workers in South China" in *Global Empowerment of Women: Responses to Globalization and Politicized Religions*, edited by Carolyn M. Elliott. New York: Routledge.

Christ, Carol P. and Judith Plaskow (eds). 1979. *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader In Religion*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

Chung, Patricia M.Y. 2003. "Escaping the Procrustean Bed: A Critical Analysis of the Study of Religious Organizations 1930-2001." Pp 123-136 in *Handbook for the Sociology of Religion*, edited by Michele Dillon. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Church, H. Carlyle, Jr. 1996. "The Accommodation and Liberation of Women in the Church of God in Christ. *The Journal of Religious Thought* 52&53: 77-90.

Church of God in Christ Manual. 1973. *Official Manual With the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of God in Christ*. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Publishing House.

Church of God in Christ Handbook. 1980. *Women's Handbook Newly Revised Edition of Organizations and Procedures*. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Publishing House.

Church of God in Christ International Directory. 1991. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Publishing House.

Clemmons, Ithiel. 1996. *Bishop C.H. Mason and the Roots of the Church of God in Christ*. Bakersfield, CA: Pneuma Life Publishing.

Clinton, Catherine. 1983. *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South*. NY: Pantheon Books

Cole, Johnnetta and Beverly Guy-Sheftall. *Gender Talk: 2003. The Struggle For Women's Equality in African American Communities*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Collier-Thomas, Bettye. 2010. *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1998. *Fighting Words: Black Women & the Search For Justice*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and Politics of Empowerment*. London: Unwin Hyman Inc.
- Cone, James. 1993. "Biblical Revelation and Social Existence." Pp159-176 in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. New York: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1993. "Black Theology and the Black Church: Where Do We Go From Here?" Pp266-275 in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. New York: Orbis Books.
- Cornelius, Lucille. 1973. *The Pioneer: History of the Church of God in Christ*. n.p.
- Cummings, Melbourne and Judi Moore Latta. 2010. "When They Honor the Voice: Centering African American Women's Call Stories." *Journal of Black Studies* 40: 666-682.
- Daly, M. 1985. *The Church and the Second Sex*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Denzin, N. and Y. Lincoln. 2000. *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- De Vaus, David and Ian McAllister. 1987. "Gender Differences in Religion: A Test of the Structural Location Theory." *American Sociological Review* 52:472-481.
- Dickerson, Bette J. 1995. *African American Single Mothers: Understanding Their Lives and Families*. London: Sage.
- Dill, Bonnie Thornton. 1979. "The Dialectics of Black Womanhood." *Signs: Journal Of Women in Culture and Society* 4:543-555.
- Dillon, M. (ed). 2002. *Handbook For the Sociology of Religion*. MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Dodson, Jualynne E. and Cheryl Townsend Gilkes. 1986. "Something Within: Social Change and Collective Endurance in the Sacred World of Black Christians." in *Women and Religion in America: Volume Three-The Twentieth Century*, edited by Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller.
- _____. 1988. "Power and Surrogate Leadership: Black Women and Organized Religion." *Sage* 5:37-41.

- Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Last Will and Testament Website.
(<http://www2.cookman.edu/development/Media-release/lastwill.htm>).
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1903. *The Negro Church*. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta University Press.
- Elliott, Aprele. 1996. "Ella Baker: Free Agent in the Civil Rights Movement." *Journal of Black Studies* 26: 593-603.
- Elliott, Carolyn M. 2008. *Global Empowerment of Women: Responses to Globalization and Politicized Religions*. New York: Routledge.
- Ellison, Christopher G. and David A. Gay. 1990. "Religion, Religious Commitment, and Life Satisfaction Among Black Americans." *The Sociological Quarterly* 31: 123-47.
- Everist, Norma C. 2002. "Gender, Power and Leadership." *Journal of Religious Leadership*. 1: 45-67.
- Feldberg, Roslyn and Evelyn Nakano Glenn. 1979. "Male and Female: Job Versus Gender Models in the Sociology of Work." *Social Problems* 26: 524-538.
- Felder, Cain. 1984. "The Bible, Black Women and Ministry." *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* 10:9-21.
- Ferguson, Kathy E. 1984. *The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Firor- Scott, Anne. 1970. *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Fobes, Catherine. 2004. "Maintaining the Gender Order: Using Women, Preferring Men in an Episcopal Campus Chapel, 1927-1949." *Review of Religious Research* 46: 72-87.
- Ford, L.H. Letter to COGIC officials, March 4, 1991.
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. 1988. *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*. NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Frazier, E. Franklin and C. Eric Lincoln. 1974. *The Negro Church in America: The Black Church Since Frazier*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Genovese, Eugene. 1967. *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South*. Vintage.

- Giddings, Paula. 1984. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women On Race And Sex in America*. New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc.
- Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. 1985. "Together and in Harness:" Women's Traditions in the Sanctified Church." *Signs* 10:678-699.
- _____. 1994. "The Politics of 'Silence': Dual-Sex Political Systems and Women's Traditions of Conflict in African-American Religion." Pp 80-110 in *African American Christianity: Essays in History*, edited by Paul E. Johnson. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- _____. 1999. "The Role of Women in the Sanctified Church." *The Journal of Religious Thought* 43:24-41.
- _____. 2001. *If It Wasn't For the Women: Black Women's Experience and Womanist Culture in Church and Community*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Glass, Kathy. 2005. "Tending to the Roots: Anna Julia Cooper's Sociopolitical Thought and Activism." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 6: 23-55.
- Grant, Jacqueline. 1989. *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- _____. 1993. "Black Theology and the Black Woman." Pp 323-338 in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. New York: Orbis Books.
- Grenz, S.J. and D.M. Kjesbo. 1995. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Griffin, Arthur. 1989. *By Your Traditions: A Theological Perspective on Women in the Gospel Ministry*. Chicago, IL: Black Light Fellowship.
- Groothuis, R.M. 1997. *Good News For Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Hall, David. N.d. "Essays to the Next Generation: An Interpretation of Church of God in Christ Faith and Practice."
- Hambrick, Arlene. 1997. "You Haven't Seen Anything Until You Make a Black Woman Mad Pp 64-82 in *Oral Narrative Research With Black Women*, edited by Kim Marie Vaz. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hamilton, Malcolm. 2001. *The Sociology of Religion: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*. London/New York: Routledge.

- Hardy, Clarence. 2007. "From Exodus to Exile: Black Pentecostals, Migrating Pilgrims, and Imagined Internationalism." *American Quarterly* 59: 737-757.
- Harris, James. 1987. *Black Ministers and Laity in the Urban Church: An Analysis of Political and Social Expectations*. MD: University Press of America, Inc.
- _____. 1991. *Pastoral Theology: A Black-Church Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Higginbotham, Evelyn. 1994. *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*. MA: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 2003. "The Black Church: A Gender Perspective." Pp 187-208 in *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology*, edited by Cornel West and Eddie Gaude Jr., Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hill-Collins, Patricia. 1988. *Fighting Words: Black Women & the Search For Justice*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. London: Unwin Hyman Inc.
- Hine, Darlene Clark, Elsa Barkley Brown, and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn. 1993. *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia-Volumes 1 & 2*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hines, Darryl. 2000. *Let Them Have Dominion*. Milwaukee, WI: Double Blessing.
- Hochschild, Arlie. 1997. *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Hooks, Bell. 1989. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- _____. 1990. *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Hoover, Theresa. 1993. "Black Women and the Churches: Triple Jeopardy." Pp 293-303, in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. New York: Orbis Books.
- Hopkins, Dwight. 2002. *Heart and Head: Black Theology—Past, Present, and Future*. New York: PALGRAVE.

- _____. 2003. "Slave Theology in the 'Invisible Institution'." Pp 790-830 in *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology*, edited by Cornel West and Eddie S. Gaude, Jr. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hunter, Andrea G. and Sherrill Sellers. 1998. "Feminist Attitudes Among African American Women and Men." *Gender & Society* 12: 81-99.
- Jakes, T.D. 1994. *Why? Because You Are Anointed*. California: Pneuma Life Publishing.
- Jacobsen, Dennis. 2001. *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Jaggar, Alison M. 1983. *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld.
- Jones, Jacqueline. 1985. *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family From Slavery to the Present*. New York: Basic Books.
- Jones, Pearl Williams. 1977. "A Minority Report: Black Pentecostal Women." *Spirit, A Journal of Issues Incident to Black Pentecostalism* 1: 21-30.
- K Healing Love. N.d. *The 100 Year Celebration of the Church of God in Christ—1907-2007*. DVD. Burbank, CA.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1993. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kelley, Vernita. 1999. "African American Women Preachers: Fulfilling a Mandate And a Calling." Pp 63-79 in *African American Sociology: A Social Study of the Pan-African Diaspora*, edited by James L. Conyers, Jr. and Alva P. Barnett. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall Publishers.
- Kimmel, Michael. 2008. *The Gendered Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Knudsen, Christian and Haridimos Tsoukas. 2002. *Organizational Theory as Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, Elnora. 1967(Applied For). *C.H. Mason: A Man Greatly Used of God*. n.p.
- Lee, Shayne. 2004. "The Structure of a Spiritual Revolution." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 33: 154-177.

- Lehman, Edward Jr. 1993. "Gender and Ministry Style: Things Not What They Seem." *Sociology of Religion* 54: 1-11.
- Lengermann, Patricia and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley. 1998. *The Women Founders: Sociology and Sociological Theory 1830-1930*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Lerner, Gerda. 1972. *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History*. NY: Vintage Books-A Division of Random House.
- Liebow, E. 1967. *Tally's Corner*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Lincoln, C. Eric and Lawrence H. Mamiya. 1990. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lindholm, J.A. and H.A. Astin 2006. "Understanding the Interior Life of Faculty: How Important is Spirituality?" *Religion & Education* 33:64-90.
- Loewenberg, Bert J. and Ruth Bogin. 1976. *Black Women in Nineteenth-Century American Life: Their Words, Their Thoughts, Their Feelings*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Lorber, Judith. 1998. *Gender Inequality*. California: Roxbury Publishing Company.
- _____. 2000. "Dismantling Noah's Ark: Gender and Equality." Pp 591-604 in *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*, edited by Tracey Ore, Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- _____. 2000. "Using Gender to Undo Gender." *Feminist Theory* 1: 79-95.
- Lovett, Leonard. 1973. "Perspectives on the Black Origins of the Contemporary Pentecostal Movement." *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* 1: 36-49.
- MacKinnon, Catharine A. 1979. *Sexual Harassment of Working Women*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Manville, Julie. 1997. "The Gendered Organization of an Australian Anglican Parish." *Sociology of Religion* 58: 25-38.
- Martin, Joanne. 1994. "The Organization of Exclusion: Institutionalization of Sex Inequality, Gendered Faculty Jobs and Gendered Knowledge in Organizational Theory and Research." *Organization* 1: 401-431.

- Martin, Patricia Yancey. 2004. "Gender as Social Institutions." *Social Forces* 82: 1249-1273.
- Martin, Patricia Yancey and David Collinson. 2002. "Over the Pond and Across the Water: Developing the Field of 'Gendered Organizations.'" *Gender, Work and Organization* 9: 245-267.
- Mattis, Jacqueline S., Klu Eubanks, Alix A. Zapata, Nyasha Grayman, Max Belkin, N'Jeri Mitchell, Sharon Cooper. 2004. "Factors Influencing Religious Non-Attendance Among African American Men: A Multimethod Analysis." *Review of Religious Research* 45: 386-403.
- May, Deborah. 1985. "The Impact of Racism and Sexism Upon Black Clergywomen." Thesis, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York.
- Mays, Benjamin E. and Joseph W. Nicholson. 1969. *The Negro's Church*. New York: Russell and Russell.
- McCoy, Eugene B. 1994. *Dr. Mattie Moss Clark: Climbing Up the Mountain: The Life And Times of a Musical Legend*. Nashville, TN: Sparrow Press.
- McGlothen, Mattie. N.d. Address in Memphis, Tennessee. Church of God in Christ Meeting.
- McKenzie, Vashti M. 1997. *Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development For African American Women in Ministry*. Ohio: United Church Press.
- _____. 1999. *Journey to the Well*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.
- McKinney, George D. 2005. *The New Slavemasters*. Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.
- Miller, John W. 1999. *Calling God "father": Essays on the Bible, Fatherhood, and Culture*. New York: Paulist.
- Mills, Albert and Peta Tancred. 1992. *Gendering Organizational Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Mills, John Stuart. *The Subjection of Women*. 1869.
- Mitchell, Ella. 1988. *Those Preaching Women: More Sermons By Black Women Preachers*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.
- Mitchem, Stephanie Y. 2002. *Introducing Womanist Theology*. New York: Orbis Books.

- Monroe, Irene. 2009. "Taking Theology to the Community." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Spring 25: 184-190.
- Morgan, Gareth. 1986. *Images of Organization*. CA: Sage.
- Morris, Aldon D. 1984. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing For Change*. New York/London: The Free Press.
- Murray, Pauli. 1993. "Black Theology and Feminist Theology: A Comparative View." Pp 304-322 in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, edited by Gayraud Wilmore and James Cone, New York: Orbis Books.
- Neal, Marie Augusta. 1975.
- Nichol, John. 1966. *The Pentecostals*. Plainfield, NJ: Logos International
- Northouse, Peter G. 2001. *Leadership Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Paris, Peter J. 1993. From Womanist Thought to Womanist Action. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. 9: 115-125.
- Peach, Lucinda Joy. 2002. *Women and World Religions*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Perry, Brandon A. 2010. "We Can Do It: Women Rising in Christian Leadership." *Indianapolis Recorder*, October 1, pp. B1
- Peterson, Carla. 2003. "Doers of the Word": Theorizing African American Women Speakers and Writers in the Antebellum North." Pp 366-393 in *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology*, edited by Cornel West and Eddie Gaude Jr. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Pierce, Jon L. and John W. Newstrom. 2003. *Leaders & the Leadership Process: Readings, Self-Assessments & Applications*. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Pinn, Anthony B., Stephen C. Finley, and Torin Alexander. 2009. *African American Religious Cultures*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Polis, James. 1991. *The Abuse of Power*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Porter, Jeanne. 2000. *Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images For Women's Leadership*. Philadelphia, PA: Innisfree Press, Inc.
- Proctor, Samuel DeWitt. 1995. *The Substance of Things Hoped For: A Memoir of African-American Faith*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

- Purvis, Sally. 1995. *The Stained Glass Ceiling: Churches and Their Women Pastors*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Raboteau, Albert. 1978. *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Radford-Hill, Sheila. *Further to Fly: Black Women and the Politics of Empowerment*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Report on the Findings and Statements on the Question Ordination of Women. April, 1999. The Doctrinal Review Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of God in Christ, Inc.
- Richardson, Marilyn. 1980. *Black Women and Religion: A Bibliography*. Boston, Massachusetts: G.K. Hall and Company.
- Rich, Adrienne. 1976. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. New York: Norton.
- Riggs, Marcia Y. 1994. *Awake, Arise, & Act: A Womanist Call for Black Liberation*. Ohio: The Pilgrim Press.
- _____. 1995. "Answering God's Call in the Academe." Pp 201-220 in *Perspectives on Womanist Theology*, edited by Jacquelyn Grant. Atlanta: ITC Press.
- _____. 1997. *Can I Get A Witness? Prophetic Religious Voices of African American Women: An Anthology*. New York: Orbis Books.
- _____. 2003. *Plenty Good Room: Women Versus Male Power in the Black Church*. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press.
- Ritzer, George. 2000. *Modern Sociological Theory*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Robnett, Belinda. 1997. *How Long? How Long?: African American Women in the Struggle For Civil Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Roof, Wade C. and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion; Its Changing Shape and Future*. London/New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Ross, German R. 1969. *History and Formative Years of the Church of God in Christ With Excerpts From the Life and Work of its Founder—Bishop C.H. Mason*. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Publishing House.

- Ross, Rosetta. 2003. *Witnessing & Testifying: Black Women, Religion, and Civil Rights*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Russell, Letty. 1993. *Church in the Round*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster/John Knox.
- Sandel, Michael. 2009. *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Sanders, Cheryl. 1996. "History of Women in the Pentecostal Movement."
- Sanders, Cheryl J. 1997. *Ministry at the Margins: The Prophetic Mission of Women, Youth, & the Poor*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Sawyer, Mary S. 1992. "Black Religion and Social Change: Women in Leadership Roles." *The journal of Religious thought* 47:2.
- Scarupa, Harriet Jackson. 1986. "Women in Ministry: Challenging Old Assumptions." *New Directions: The Howard University Magazine*, February 19:6.
- Schneider, Carl J. and Dorothy Schneider. 1997. *In Their Own Right: The History of American Clergywomen*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company.
- Scholtz, Susanne. 2005. "The Christian Right's Discourse on Gender and the Bible." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 21:81-100.
- Shafritz, Jay and J. Steven Ott. 2001. *Classics of Organizational Theory*, 5th edition. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishers.
- Shopshire, James M. 1975. "A Socio-historical Characterization of the Black Pentecostal Movement in America." Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University.
- Simmons, Dovie M. and Olivia L. Martin. 1983. *Down Behind the Sun: The Story of Arenia Conelia Mallory*. Memphis, TN: Riverside Press.
- Slevin, Kathleen F. and C. Ray Wingrove. 1998. *From Stumbling Blocks to Stepping Stones*. New York: New York University Press.
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1979. "A Sociology For Women." in *The Prism of Sex: Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge*, edited by Julia A. Sherman and Evelyn Torton Beck. Boston: Northeastern Press.
- _____, 1988. *The Everyday World As Problematic*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

- _____. 1990. *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Smith, Harold. 1990. *Pentecostals From the Inside Out*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
- Springer, Kimberly and Beverly Guy-Sheftall. 1999. *Still Lifting, Still Climbing: Contemporary African American Women's Activism*. London/New York: New York University Press.
- St. George, and Patrick H. McNamara. 1984. "Religion, Race, and Psychological Well-Being." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 23: 351-63.
- Stortz, Martha. 1993. *Pastor Power*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Sudarkasa, Niara. 1998. *The Strength of Our Mothers: African & African American Women & Families—Essays and Speeches*. New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Synan, Vinson. 1971. *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- _____. 1990. "An Equal Opportunity Movement." Pp 44-50 in *Pentecostals From the Inside Out*, edited by Harold B. Smith. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
- The Columbus Dispatch. 2002. "Faithful Follow Holy Spirit: Church of God in Christ Takes Pentecostal Path." November 2.
- The Potter's House Website. June 21. Retrieved June, 2011.
(<http://www.thepottershouse.org/Local/About-Us.aspx>).
- The Whole Truth. 1967a. "Plan Now to Attend The Sixteenth Annual Women's Convention." March 6.
- _____. 1967b. "The Important Place of Women in the Indestructible Church." February 5.
- Thomas, Linda E. 1999. "Womanist Theology, Epistemology, and a New Anthropological Design." *Cross Currents*, 48: 1-9.
- Tinney, James S. 1971. "Black Origins of the Pentecostal Movement." *Christianity Today*, October: 4-5.
- _____. 1983. "Church of God in Christ Celebrates 75-Year Climb to Prosperity." *The National Leader*, March: 14.
- Townes, Emilie. 1993. *Womanist Justice, Womanist Hope*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.

- Walker, Alice. 1983. *In Search of My Mother's Garden*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich.
- Wallace, Ruth. 1975. "Bringing Women In: Marginality in the Churches." *Sociological Analysis* 36: 291-303.
- _____. 1993. "The Social Construction of a New Leadership Role: Catholic Women Pastors." *Sociology of Religion* 54: 31-42.
- _____. 1997. "The Mosaic of Research: Where Are the Women?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36: 1-12.
- _____. "Women and Religion: The Transformation of Leadership Roles." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39:497-508.
- Ward, Jane. 2004. "Not all Differences are Created Equal." *Gender & Society* 18: 82-102.
- Weber, Lynn. 2001. *Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Weiss-Ozorak, Elizabeth. 1996. "The Power, But Not the Glory: How Women Empower Themselves." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39:17-29.
- West, Candace and Sarah Fenstermaker. 1996. "Doing Difference." Pp 357-384 in *Race, Class, & Gender: Common Bonds, Different Voices*, edited by Esther Nganling Chow, Doris Wilkinson, and Maxine Baca Zinn. CA: Sage.
- White, Deborah Gray. 1999a. *Too Heavy A Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves 1894-1994*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- _____. 1999b. *Are 'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*. NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Wiggins, Daphne. 2005. *Righteous Content: Black Women's Perspectives of Church and Faith*. New York: New York University Press.
- Williams, Delores S. 1986. "The Color of Feminism: Or Speaking the Black Woman's Tongue." *The Journal of Religious Thought* 43: 42-58.
- _____. 1995. "Afrocentrism and Male-Female Relations in Church and Society." Pp 43-56 in *Living the Intersection: Womanism and Afrocentrism in Theology*, edited by Cheryl Anne Sanders. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

- Williams, Juan and Quinton Dixie. 2003. *This Far By Faith: Stories From the African American Religious Experience*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.
- Wilmore, Gayraud and James Cone. 1979. *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Winter, Miriam, Adair T. Lummis, and Allison Stokes. 1994. *Defecting in Place: Women Claiming Responsibility For Their Own Spiritual Lives*. New York: Crossroad.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. 1967. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*.
- Woodson, Carter G. 1921. *The History of the Negro Church*. Washington, DC: The Associated Publishers.
- Wuthnow, Robert. 1988. *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Zikmund, Barbara Brown, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia M.Y.Chang. 1998. *Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Zuckerman, Phil. 1997. "Gender Regulation as a Source of Religious Schism." *Sociology of Religion* 58: 353-373.