Criteria That Indicate When African-Centered Consciousness is Endangered or Depleted by The Mass Media*

by

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Abstract: Criteria that indicate when the African-centered consciousness of African descent people is endangered or depleted by the mass media are formulated and promulgated. The concepts that constitute African-centered consciousness--namely racial awareness, racial identity, and racial preference--are defined. The psychological states that result whenever a mass media communication successfully or potentially disparages racial awareness, racial identity, or racial preference are identified as psychological misorientation and mentacide (as defined in the Azibo Nosology). These two psychological states form the bedrock of the criteria such that any mass media communication that can potentially or does actually engender psychological misorientation or mentacide is seen to vitiate or actually deplete African-centered consciousness. Contemporary and historic examples are given for illustration wherein the usage of principles from learning theory is revealed.

Keywords: Psychological misorientation, mentacide, African (Black) consciousness, racial identity, racial preference.

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It is safe to say that media and popular culture institutions like the internet, television, movie, recording, and print industries, and so on must be impacted on behalf of African descent people (ADP). Indispensable in accomplishing this monumental and essential task is the formulation of criteria that indicate when African-centered consciousness in ADP is endangered or depleted by the mass media. The more plain and straightforward the criteria, the better.

Considering the multifariousness and pervasiveness of the mass media and the virtually limitless number of instances therein that could deplete African-centered consciousness, the author feels it is necessary to present the criteria in its most fundamental form or bare essence using African-centered psycho-cultural constructs and perspectives. By so doing the criteria are made applicable to every specific instance of African-centered consciousness endangerment or depletion that may possibly occur in any mass media organ.

The upshot of this will be a sound, systematic conceptual framework for African-centered interpretations of mass media presentations of imagery relative to the endangerment and depletion of African-centered consciousness. Thus the real possibilities of confusion and being overwhelmed inherent in the sheer vastness and pervasiveness of the mass media and its intricate, multifaceted, often insidious racial presentations will be overcome. There are two preliminary details in formulating criteria that indicate when African-centered consciousness is endangered or depleted. The first is to be clear on what African-centered consciousness entails. The second is to delineate the psychological state of ADP when their African-centered consciousness, in any of its constituent three parts, is depleted.

African-centered Consciousness

Following Ukombozi's (1981) breakdown, African-centered consciousness is constituted of the racial awareness, racial identity and racial preference of the African descent person. These three constituents of African-centered consciousness are defined as follows by Ukombozi:

1. Racial Awareness, the knowledge of the visible differences between racial categories by which one classifies people into these divisions and, once such knowledge is cognitively achieved, the acceptance of it,
2. Racial Identity, a consciousness of self as belonging to a specific group differentiated from other groups by obvious physical characteristics, and
3. Racial Preference, the attitude or evaluation attached to a racial category and members and artifacts thereof.

Whenever any constituent of African-centered consciousness is not affirmed or reflected in the orientation of a person of African descent, s/he will be less likely to engage in own-race maintenance behavior which is an imperative according to African-centered personality theory (Azibo, 1991, 1996).

Psychological Misorientation and Mentacide

The African-centered mental disorder called *psychological misorientation* is produced whenever African-centered consciousness is depleted. The psychological misorientation construct (Atwell & Azibo, 1991; Azibo, 1989, 2006; Kambon, 1996) refers to a psychological orientation wherein an African descent person negotiates the environment, i.e., subjectively or phenomenally interprets reality, with a cognitive structure composed of non-African or non-Black concepts. That is, the individual's implicit psychology, subjective culture (Triandis, 1972) or inference-making mechanisms (Wyer & Carlston, 1979) are void of elements that reflect or emanate from African history and culture. Consequently, the ideation of the psychologically misoriented African descent person is constructed with concepts and thought processes that come from a nonAfrican group(s). Stated differently, ADP's utamawazo, a term which means culturally structured thought (Ani, 1994), is put together or organized cognitively, intrapsychically determined in other words, with *Eurasian* cultural concepts! Small wonder, then, that ADP worldwide appear in extremis as they behave as if they were Eurasians and not ADP. Orienteering by a person of African descent, logically, cannot proceed in an African-centered manner when his or her consciousness orients towards Eurasian imperatives and can expand no farther than Eurasian dictates because it is comprised of Eurasian elements.

Psychological misorientation can be summarized as being genetically Black minus psychological Blackness (Atwell and Azibo, 1991; Azibo, 1989) although psychological Africanity is used in today's parlance. Of course there are degrees of psychological misorientation, some ADP being more misoriented than others (Azibo, 2006). Also, if the concepts or thought processes employed by the psychologically misoriented person are Eurasian, then they are likely to be anti-African as well (Azibo, 2001; Kambon, 1996). The upshot, then, is that the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, values--the very ideation--of the psychologically misoriented person, which directs his or her overt behavior, issues forth from a cultural perspective that in its genesis is not only not indigenous to him or her, but frequently anti-ADP, anti-him/her.

Mentacide

For a person with a depleted African-centered consciousness there is the possibility of a compounding psychological condition, *mentacide*. "When misorientation is resultant of systematic and deliberate attempts to destroy the African's mind, in preparation for his or her genocide, the compounding condition of mentacide is operating" (Azibo, 1983, p.6). Mentacide is the psycho-cultural technique that is used in retarding and inferiorizing ADP. Mentacide's group termination or extirpation aspect is made plain by Olomenji (1996). As explicated by the redoubtable Dr. Bobby Wright and developed in the African-centered nosology of mental disorders called the Azibo Nosology (Azibo, 1989, pp. 185-187), mentacide is simultaneously a process and an effect.

It is a process that purges ADP's cognitive structures of pro-African elements and/or deposits anti-African or pro non-African (Eurocentric, Arab-centered, etc.) elements. That is how mentacide controls the behavior of the victim population through mind control. The process is carried out by the institutions which project images, values, beliefs, and opinions. An illusion is created such as implanting in the minds of ADP that all things "West is best" or "White is right". Once the victim population internalizes the illusion, barring an intervention, it is too late for them as they will proceed toward their own genocide, often participating in it. Consequently, the mentacide process results in an effect that compounds the psychological misorientation that results from the internalizing of pro-Eurasian and anti-African concepts and the purging of existing pro-African images, if any.

As an effect, mentacide is two-pronged. First, it can discompose the overall personality and capacities of its victims. It has been observed by Olomenji (1996, p. 74) that "the effects of mentacide begin to overwhelm the victim, causing survival fatigue .... the victim begins to slowly die inside.... the victim loses the self, depression and fear set in, causing illness, death, etc.... a slow, tortuous death". When the process of mentacide produces distortion and disorganization of the general self or personality (aspects of self-functioning that do not involve race or ethnicity) it is diagnosed as *peripheral mentacide* (Azibo, 1989, p. 186). The second prong is mentacide's effect on the African group identity aspect of the self or personality. *Alienating mentacide* (Azibo, 1989, p. 186) is diagnosed when the mentacide process produces a psyche devoid of group-affirming cognitions and associated group-affirming motivational orientations. Hence, the individual is alienated from his or her race or group. The person of African descent is psycho-culturally necrosed having been daunted and stupefied by the trappings and flimflams of Western and Eurasian civilizations. This is mind control par excellence. Atwell and Azibo (1991) provide a case study and Baruti (2005) and Olomenji (1996) offer indispensable expositions on mentacide.

Statement of the Criteria

Now, having clarified the concept of African-centered consciousness and delineated the nature of the psychological states that characterize depleted African-centered consciousness, namely psychological misorientation and mentacide, the criteria can be presented in their most fundamental, and thereby most broadly applicable state. African-centered consciousness can be shown to be endangered whenever a communication has the potential to disparage or negatively impact the African descent person's racial awareness, racial identity or own-racial preference. To restate, whenever a communication can obfuscate, negate, or disparage racial awareness, racial identity, or own-racial preference that communication meets the criteria for endangering African-centered consciousness. By extension, whenever such an endangering communication attains its potential that communication meets the criteria for depleting African-centered consciousness.

In view of the fineness of the distinctions between racial awareness, identity, and preference and the apparently general lack of knowledge, understanding, and respect of African-centered mental and personality disorders suffered by ADP, and the intricacies of cognitive psychology that are so germane here, a succinct, overall, operational statement that summarizes the nature of the communications being addressed is in order. A communication of disparagement or negative impact is, operationally, one that produces or facilitates psychological misorientation: to wit, any communication that purges or otherwise renders less viable any African-centered or simply pro-Black concept or cognition and/or deposits or renders more viable any Eurocentric, Arab-centric, or non-African-centered or anti-African concept or cognition that is contrary to or exists at the expense of pro-Black and African-centered cognition endangers or depletes African-centered consciousness.

A clear statement of the relationship between psychological misorientation and mentacide and the criteria is in order. First, imagine a mass media communication of any sort from any source that is germane to ADP. Second, imagine the immediate net effect on the African descent receiver is to render void or less viable any favorable cognitions s/he holds about ADP as the communication obliterates or undermines them. In effect, this would qualify as an anti-African communication. Third, imagine the communication emplaced in the receiver's cognitive structure (constellation of beliefs, values, attitudes, etc.). Fourth, now imagine said communication affecting existing and future cognition favorable of ADP like a computer virus embedding in a hard drive: wiping and freezing what is there and preventing any new content from operating. Fifth, the state of the cognitive structure at this point can only be imagined as: (a) suffering depletion of and (b) more prone to rejecting racial awareness, identity, and preference as the infected computer rejects any programming and that which it had is nullified. Sixth, imagine the African descent receiver's orientation to reality at this point: S/he proceeds with ideation constructed intrapsychically with concepts, definitions, and thought processes (utamawazo) that are alien/non-African. And, colloquially, s/he "proceeds as s/he perceives". Seventh, imagine said receiver out and about and you have the reality of ADP worldwide: *psychologically* misoriented pseudo-Eurasians unable to orienteer in the interest of ADP. In this way does a simple anti-African communication disorder African-centered consciousness. When such communications are delivered en masse deliberately by a communicant who is exercising racial domination of ADP, the impact will be mentacidal. This thickens the psychological misorientation.

Examples

The broad applicability of the criteria shall be demonstrated using several examples out of the veritable legion that occur daily in mass media. By using past and recent examples, the criteria will be seen as applicable across eras. Additionally, the insidiousness of the demonstrably mentacidal forces in Euro-centric society will be shown.

Past Examples

Billie "Dee" Williams. In a magazine interview the heartthrob actor explained that he did not consider himself to be part of the Black race, but human (please note that the Burt Reynolds, Mick Jagger, et al., never renounce or denigrate in any way the fact of their whiteness, though some may express a similar "humanistic" sentiment). Williams went on to renounce his personal Blackness and the very concept of being Black. This communication can endanger and deplete African-centered consciousness by obfuscating and negating racial awareness and racial identity and perhaps, as a result, even own-race preference in ADP.

Vanessa Williams-Phyllis Hyman. Actress Vanessa Williams, a former Miss America, and singer/actress Phyllis Hyman (may she rest in peace) have been touted during their celebrity in various media as appropriate role models for Africans. As each woman was enjoying the pinnacle of her success pornographic magazines published nude layouts of them. These communications could endanger and deplete African-centered consciousness by negatively impacting on pride in being of African descent and, hence, weaken African identity and own-racial preference. The images of these two women (as well as others), models that generate emulation and vicarious learning in the learning theory sense, once conditioned to represent classiness, womanhood, achievement and the like, now also represent or cognitively invoke through ideation the baseness and utter vulgarity that characterize "Babylon" (the decadent aspect of United States and white world civilization generally). Because they represent their race, willingly or not, African-centered consciousness may (and does) suffer the negative impact of their degrading pornographic imagery (just as their positive imagery likely undergirded African-centered consciousness).

Louis Farrakhan-Jesse Jackson. This example is a chilling and revealing one. During the 1984 presidential campaign the television and print media's character assassination of Minister Louis Farrakhan, and Reverend Jesse Jackson by extension, can be shown to be communications that endangered and depleted African-centered consciousness. Farrakhan was consistently misrepresented as being an admirer of Adolf Hitler and supporter of Nazism by the television network news media (ABC, CNN, CBS, NBC). Many attempts using classical conditioning to associate Farrakhan with Hitler and Nazism were so blatant that images of Farrakhan were fused with swastikas and the anti-African Hitler himself. Also, the remarks of Farrakhan were aired simultaneously with pictures of Hitler and artifacts of Nazism. Such imagery is clearly defamatory and taints by linkage who and what Farrakhan allegedly stood for (ADP, strong African descent male models, African unity, racial justice, etc.). ADP may reject identification with or be inclined against Farrakhan, his supporters, and what he stands for due to these communications.

From here the attack stepped into higher gear. (Note that cases like Leonard Jeffries' and Tony Martin's provide ample supportive evidence for this presumption of an attacking media [e.g., Martin, 1993].) Jesse Jackson, who was running for the Democratic Party presidential nomination at the time, was linked to Hitler admiration and Nazism and all the attendant fallout via Farrakhan through techniques of conditioning: (1) newspaper headlines typically read "Jackson Pal Hails Hitler" or something similar; (2) after the Hitler-Farrakhan conditioning, television newscasters underscored the Farrakhan-Jackson relationship and immediately presented Jackson's picture alone or together with Farrakhan's. What we have here is the *skillful* utilization of principles of learning and cognitive consistency theory. For example, Hitler and Nazism are reprehensible, Farrakhan admires Hitler and Nazism, therefore Farrakhan is reprehensible; since Jackson likes Farrakhan, Jackson has to support Hitler and Nazism somewhat, therefore Jackson is reprehensible. As necessitated by the cognitive consistency drive, the conclusions of reprehensibility ascribed to Farrakhan and Jackson are generalized to their causes, supporters, and public constituency. Consequently, seeds of disunity among ADP are sown or fertilized. Racial identity and own-racial preference in ADP were attacked! Such communications as these produced psychological misorientation compounded by mentacide and thereby depleted and endangered the African-centered consciousness of many ADP, possibly millions. After all, it is unreasonable for ADP to identify with or prefer other ADP associated with Hitlerism.

Tawanna Brawley. At 15, Tawanna Brawley was kidnapped, raped, brutalized, placed in a trash bag and dumped on the side of the road almost dead. In covering the story, newspapers published photos of her private parts taken upon her discovery at the dump scene. She identified Caucasian police and government officials as the perpetrators. The state and FBI manipulated the investigation to exonerate the accused. A grand jury failed to indict and at that point the mass media's up to then low key excoriation of her and Alton Maddox erupted (Tawanna Brawley FAQ, 2010). The very next issue of *People Magazine*, for one, extolled the accused were not guilty and condemned Ms. Brawley as a discredited liar who had abused the public.

By extension, the human and civil rights activism built up around Ms. Brawley and its leadership were discredited. This is not minutiae as Ms. Brawley's cause was adopted by the grassroots like Rosa Parks' and Emmett Till's before her and was effectively mobilizing African-U.S. people. That is, the Tawanna Brawley imagery was building African-centered consciousness by stimulating racial awareness and identity. The discrediting, which flies in the face of the dump scene and medical evidence, Ms. Brawley's accusation, and government machinations of the legal process, orients the African descent receiver against racial identity. No wonder it is so hard to get mass movements going among African-U.S. people as so many are vulnerable to the *Necessary Illusions* (Chomsky, 1989) of America which make possible the spectacular achievements of its propaganda (Chomsky, 1991). Not being vulnerable, I have not touched *People Magazine* since that issue.

Examples from the 2000s

Barack Hussein Obama. Imagery that is undergirding of African-centered consciousness ostensibly or at a surface level can also militate against racial awareness, identity, and preference. Barack Hussein Obama is a case in point. Just by being of African descent and the United States President, Obama generates own-race pride in ADP worldwide. However, the constellation of Obama-the-President in the cognitive structure or belief system of ADP is fused with his policies and perspectives surrounding ADP's life and culture. For example,

(1)   He has turned his back on "the race question" in the United States (Klein, 2009);

(2)   He trivializes the historic racial significance of his election as meaningless to himself, but important for his mother-in-law and U.S.-ADP like her who haved lived through a different episode of life in these United States;

(3)   Consistently he has rejected developing any plans that target specifically the plight of U.S.-ADP;

(4)   With abhorrence, he pooh poohs and rejects the idea of reparations for U.S.-ADP;

(5)   He took a public position that there would be no Kwanzaa celebrated at the White House;

(6)   He rejected and criticized Reverend Jeremiah Wright for speaking truthfully about the United States;

(7)   He had beer with a Caucasian policeman who aggressed against an African-U.S. person (in full cognizance of the anti-ADP historical record of United States law enforcement); and

(8)   He "talks down" to African-U.S. people (to use Jesse Jackson's words). A case in point here is Obama's single speech directed to U.S.-ADP during his presidential campaign in which a major point to be taken was his scolding of African-U.S. men to take care of their offspring!

Each of these enumerated positions taken by Obama (which are non-exhaustive) undercut the perceived legitimacy of racial identity and racial preference and to some extent the perceived necessity of racial awareness. Though these effects may be desiderata in psychologically misoriented bi- and multi-racial circles as such, the positive contribution to African-centered consciousness made by the cognition "Barack Obama" is swamped and overridden by the positions he takes on "race questions".

Many print and visual media construct images of Obama with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The public is fooled because actually this depletes African-centered consciousness by displacing in the cognitive structure the "MLK" cognition with the "Barack Obama" cognition via overlay or substitution. The two cognitions are not compatible beyond the surface level as, for example, Dr. King called for reparations (Wise, 2002), embraced "the race question", and talked to ADP, not down to them.

Rosa Parks and Eve. The next example involves the fusing of civil rights icon Mother Rosa Parks with the contemporary celebrity rapper-actress Eve. In the trailers of a forthcoming movie about female roller derby skaters, it is revealed that "Rosa Parks" is the name of Eve's character. The African descent viewer's cognitive structure pertaining to "Rosa Parks" directly, dignified African-U.S. womanhood and motherhood, civil rights activism, sense of community and collective responsibility, and so on is flooded with concepts associated with Eve's celebrity like vulgarity, stripping, and the gamut of negative female hip hop imagery. This besmirching through imagery of one of African-U.S. people's more lofty historic icons serves to devalue and dismantle racial identity in ADP. The African-U.S. person is hard pressed to develop or reinforce his or her racial identity when one of the mothers of the movement for racial advance is reduced and trivialized by the association of her constellation in the cognitive structure with the "Eve" cognition. (The impact of Eve's evolution to legitimate actress and fashion model on her earlier image is an empirical question.) In order not to have her image tainted by association with negative rap lyrics and imagery, Rosa Parks did sue Outkast for using her name in a song.

Alfre Woodard and the White Women of Wisteria Lane (WWWL). The Desperate Housewives women are known for loyalty to and fiercely defending their families. For millions of African descent fans, Alfre Woodard's multi-episode appearance as an African-U.S. head of household was welcomed. She, too, portrayed a loyal, defend mine at all costs mother. As the plot unfolded serious conflict arose between Woodard's character and the WWWL that was settled by an embarrassing, debasing defeat of Woodard who was run out of town. Of course the plot could have unfolded to become the WWWL plus and African descent woman (ADW) with a multi-season part for Woodard. The racial message here, intended or not, is that ADP lose to Whites who prove out superior to them once again. As Frances Welsing pointed out in a lecture, "Nothing happens under White supremacy [society] that's not about White supremacy" ergo the White over non-White formula must be maintained (Welsing, 1991) by mass media. By losing again, especially without an iota of counterbalancing imagery, ADP's racial identity and preference are attacked. Identification with the winning side may be preferred by many. The attack is compounded by the unstated, but matter of course denial of permanency in American life represented by the WWWL. As a gestalt, the Woodard imagery is dangerously mentacidal.

If that were not bad enough, there was an *intended* anti-African message that ADP's lives are to be taken/forfeited when in contestation with Whites. What better way to communicate this than to have Woodard's character *consciously* and *deliberately* forfeit her son's life over to the police who unhesitatingly took it (shot and killed him). The son's crime, murdering a White girlfriend, is typical of the murder and mayhem taking place in that show. But, to satisfy the dictum, American vengeance requires not only the son be killed, but his mother must give him up in subservience. In point of fact, Woodard's character does not scurry from town head between legs until she witnesses (auditory) with relief and satisfaction the police kill her son. Woodard's imagery qualifies as "Certified Uncle Tom" (Council on Black, 2002). It is a splanchnic rejection of own-race preference and is doubtful of racial identity.

And, it was viewed by millions of ADP. At that time, the WWWL would never have participated in the death of their offspring at the hands of outsiders. (If things have changed on Wisteria Lane, I would not know because I never watched another episode after that one.)

Outmarriage and Dating non-ADP. The mass media is a frequent pusher of outmarriage and dating outside the race for ADP. Already classically conditioned to evoke positive emotional response, celebrities are often used as models. Their behavior is emulated, according to learning theory, because society rewards them for this behavior. A spate of movies of late starring high profile African descent celebrities have displayed African and non-African coupling. Although there is much material in the plots, the plots will not be analyzed due to length considerations. Nonetheless, the reader might recall Ashton Kutcher coming home to dinner to Bernie Mac's surprise, Sanaa Lathan's *Something New,* Latinas Eva Mendes and Rosario Dawson with Will Smith (*Hitch, Seven Pounds),* Mendes with Denzel Washington (*Training Day, Out of Time*), Smith as superpowered *Hancock* with Charlize Theron, ad infinitum. Racial preference clearly is out the door with this imagery. Perforce, racial identity is compromised.

Budding movie stars also make excellent models for achieving the mind control-socially engineered denouement of outmarriage by ADP. For example, the May 2010 *Ebony* cover story is about up and coming, pregnant actress Paula Patton and her Caucasian husband Robin Thicke. Her baby-filled stomach is prominently displayed and readers are informed in extra large print of her position that "as your love grows and the longer you are together, you get to the place where you're like, 'I don't care what anybody else thinks'" (Carter, 2010, p. 87). Patton dumps racial identity and preference and many emulators may be influenced likewise.

Sandra Bullock's Baby. Bullock's adoption of an African descent baby has been in the media (e.g., Penrice, 2010). Whatever good there may be in Bullock's action is far outweighed by the deleterious effects such adoptions have on ADP. Frankly, it is an outlaw act for a victorious group to adopt or otherwise practice "forcibly transferring children of the [conquered] group to another group" (Patterson, 1971, xii). And, the consequences for the adopted can be hellish as depicted in the movie *Rabbit Proof Fence* and the publicized case of a 5-year old (Scism, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c) and overall damaging (National Association, 2010). The media imagery accompanying these so-called trans-racial adoptions can cause a desire in ADP to (a) adopt Caucasian children over African descent children and (b) have Caucasians adopt them or other children of African descent. The consciousness of an African descent person with desires like this is psychologically misoriented compounded by mentacide. Racial preference is undermined by the former desire and the latter can produce or reflect a warped racial identity.

Bleaching by Sammy Sosa. Over the internet, baseball legend Sammy Sosa has expressed pride in bleaching his skin. "It's a bleaching cream that I apply before going to bed and whitens my skin some .... I'm going to market it" (Rojas, 2009). It would seem obvious that bleaching reflects psychic pathology (Hall, 1995; Love, 2009) in ways similar to hair misorientation (Imarogbe, 2003). Sosa's before (black) and after (white) photographs serve to blur racial awareness and encourage the dumping of racial identity and preference.

Music and Music Videos

The racial imagery predominant in music and music videos is so endangering to African-centered consciousness as to render any descriptive term an understatement. Let us consider first the integrated racial make up of the cast so inordinately prevalent in African descent artists' music videos. Because music videos depict male-female-familial relationships and social structural interactions in general, the effect of presenting whites as lovers, dates, mates, and salient acquaintances is to provide unrealistic imagery. Ideologically, for many ADP, this imagery is also undesirable. Such imagery obfuscates the realistic nature and effect of Caucasian cultural oppression and domination on African/non-African relationships. That non-Africans are indeed appropriate mates, dates, and so on for ADP under Eurasian dominated civilization is just not true (Azibo, 2002; Baruti, 2004; Crawford, 2002). Such inferences generated by music and other video imagery like movies and television may endanger and deplete African-centered consciousness by adversely affecting ADP's own-racial preference and racial identity. Also, ADP may begin not to accept visible criteria for racial classification thereby lessening racial awareness.

It is noteworthy that white music videos rarely use such African/non-African integration imagery. It should also be pointed out that in addition to the African/non-African integration imagery, the content of the vast majority of music videos endangers and depletes African-centered consciousness when our criteria are used. Also, the prevailing strategies used in the making of music videos about and by artists of African descent, as analyzed by Peterson-Lewis and Chennault (1986), by their very design deplete and endanger African-centered consciousness.

Erykah Badu's recent music video wherein she went nude in public in Dallas, Texas undermines African-centered consciousness in the same manner as Phyllis Hyman's and Vanessa Williams's nudity discussed earlier. Badu's imagery is more damaging than theirs, however, because Badu is directly linked to ADP's cultural-sociopolitical activism. Her artistry is imbued with activist stances and, for example, she was a platform speaker at the Million Man March. When an activist's private parts are displayed for viewer titillation, especially voluntarily, besmirched is the cause s/he stands for.

Badu's untainted image as artist is classically conditioned to Africentric activism. To keep our cognitions consistent (balanced, not dissonant), ADP's positive valuations of Badu the artist halo onto race-maintenance activism in general and the causes she has pushed specifically. Tainting her image with nudity forces the cognitive structure pertaining to ADP's activism to be adjusted in a negative direction. As a result, racial identity and preference may be undermined as they are associated with ADP's cognitive structure of activism in general and her causes specifically.

Examples are without end of African descent "dope-using, pornographic … rappers [who] create environ of death and abuse" (Reynolds, 2009) that is directed at ADP only. As examples, Reynolds pointed out that on a televised music awards show Snoop Dogg pulled partially clad African descent women along on dog leashes. In addition, Lil Wayne refers to African descent women as sluts who routinely fellate his dog, ad nauseam. Imagery like this has negative social consequences (Johnson, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; Reynolds, 2009). Racial awareness is not threatened but reinforced because the mass media reserves this imagery for ADP only. Racial identity and preference, in contrast, are undermined as women of African descent are scandalized and intra-race violence is propagated with glamorization. This type of imagery forges a degenerate racial identity imbued with thug, dog, pimp, player mentality. In short, the American Africanism (Morrison, 1992) which circumscribes African-U.S. identity "from nigger to negro" (Jennings, 2003, 251) is being socially engineered via the music video and music industries.

Concluding Remarks

It is hoped that the criteria for determining when African-centered consciousness is endangered or depleted by the mass media will facilitate the defense and development of the minds of ADP by providing a guide for accurate reality perception. The criteria can also be used by professionals and laypersons in our public and private lives to evaluate all mass media communications. I recommend the criteria be used as a first step. Secondarily, other considerations like whether the mass media communication is liked, sells, or appealing in some manner may be used. A strength of the criteria is that they are not only applicable to mass media communications but to any communication expressed by any individual or agency including lecture and conversation. Additionally, they are applicable to past as well as contemporary communications.

Regarding future work in this area, specific media can be empirically studied, using the criteria as a conceptual base, with the intention of developing media-specific criteria for the endangerment and depletion of African-centered consciousness and an attendant quantitative scale that measures the degree of depletion and endangerment. Factors, techniques, and strategies employable in the mass media that enhance African-centered consciousness should also receive attention.

To apply the criteria and to appreciate the arguments of this report presupposes knowledge and understanding of African-centered mental disorders that have been put into a nosology by Azibo (1989) and discussed by scholars (Anderson, 2003; Anderson and Stewart, 2007; Atwell and Azibo, 1991; Belgrave and Allison, 2006; Harrell, 1999). A nosology is a system for classifying disorder, disease, and pathology. If the reader does not possess this requisite knowledge, he or she is urged to obtain it. Acquiring this knowledge base is entirely in keeping with the African-U.S. tradition of seeking freedom and literacy (Harris, 1992), a tradition countervailing to the negative behavior of anti-intellectual, atheoretical, and ahistorical proceeding by many ADP. As African-centered scholars, psychologists, social scientists, and media workers construct reality in our professions using African-centered frameworks, we will become more serviceable. To that end, utilization of the criteria should become integral to our daily life and work.

It would seem inhumane, criminal, and reprehensible to deliberately orient a people in a manner that alienates them from their indigenous identity and group heritage while simultaneously disorganizing their personalities. This is accomplished using all the image making and concept formation techniques that learning and cognitive consistency theories have to offer mass media applications. Apparently, there is no end in sight to this. Because people proceed as they perceive, so to speak, own-race maintenance behavior, which is a natural human mental health imperative (Azibo, 1991, 1996; Azibo and Robinson, 2004), is always militated against by endangered or depleted African-centered consciousness in any of its three constituent parts (racial awareness, racial identity, and racial preference). The first line of defense against mass media communications harmful to ADP would seem to be the utilization of these criteria.

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