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SOUTHERN SUBCULTURE OF VIOLENCE: EFFECTS OF CHANGE FROM  
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SUPPORTING VIOLENCE

by

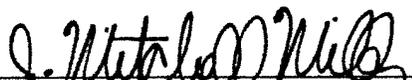
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## **Abstract**

This study examines the changing demographics and its affect on the influence of the South on attitudes supportive of violence. The South has maintained a high level of violence compared to other regions of the country. Research has uncovered a myriad of correlates, predictors, and/or causal factors that explain high rates of violence in the South. To date, the consensus theory that explains this phenomenon is the subculture of violence theory. Previous research established the basis of a Southern subculture of violence based upon the consistently high homicide rates in this region. Research also has proposed many cultural and structural constructs that explain attitudes supportive of violence with the disparities in rates of violence in the South.

Recent studies by Ellison and McCall have indicated the potential diminishment in the regional disparity in attitudes supportive of violence. Therefore, the present research examined the 1976, 1984, and 1993 GSS data years through regression analysis in an attempt to discover the existence of a declining influence of the South in attitudes supportive of violence. After controlling for the main influences of region in each time period, the findings substantiate a declining trend from 1976 to 1993 in regional attitudes supporting violence. Finally, implication of the findings and future research are discussed.

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## **Chapter I. Introduction**

Throughout history, the South has maintained a high level of violence exceeding all other regions. In fact, the Southern populace at times has emphasized violent means to maintain social norms and behaviors. In a modern society, which promotes less violent methods of resolving conflict, scholars have investigated why this antiquated ideology persists. Research has uncovered a myriad of correlates, predictors, and/or causal factors that explain high rates of violence in the South. To date, the consensus theory that explains this phenomenon is the 1967 Subculture of Violence Theory by Wolfgang and Ferracuti. Finally, the pioneering work of Gastil (1971) and Brearley (1935) established the basis of a Southern subculture of violence based upon the unwavering homicide rates.

Furthermore, numerous studies validate the relationship between the high homicide rates and the Southern geographic region (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994, 1997; Cohen et al., 1996; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987). Other research has illustrated that birth and residence in the South are strong predictors of the attitudes related to violence (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Corzine & Huff Corzine, 1989; Ellison & McCall, 1989; O'Connor & Lizotte, 1978). In addition, only in cases where an individual continues to reside in the South are violent attitudes present (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Borg, 1997). Finally, the Southern subculture of violence thesis attempts to explain the rates of Southern violence

as a consequence of cultural and structural orientation in association with distinct regional disparities in rates of violent crime (e.g. homicides).

Although the Wolfgang and Ferracuti's Theory provides a basis for the theoretical definition for the Southern violence phenomena, theorists still argue over the primary predictor variables outside of region. Although research provides some evidence that indicates the South's violent subculture, debate continues on the factors that influence this level of violence. Similarly, theorists correlate tolerant normative attitudes of violence to the culture of honor (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994, 1997; Cohen et al., 1996). These studies provide the definitive basis for the culture of honor and defensive or retributive violence. In this thesis, studies will be reviewed that examine a spectrum of concerns: from Southerners' support for capital punishment (Borg, 1997; Clarke, 1998) to cultural ideals (Ellison, 1991; Ellison & McCall, 1989), as well as many other cultural norms which illustrate the support of the use of defensive violence.

Within the Southern subculture of violence, theorists argue two main constructs - structural and cultural. While structural factors have shown some partial evidence, cultural concepts have shown a higher correlation with attitudes supportive of violence. Cultural constructs include beliefs systems, attitudes specific to ideology (e.g. racism, violence). Within these Southern cultural elements, certain norms exist which contribute to the toleration of violence within the subculture. These norms include both ideals supporting punitive punishments (e.g. capital punishment) as well as defensive violence. These two norms converge to accepted attitudes which support defensive or retaliatory violence. However, several articles have shown the culture of honor has eroded within the Southern subculture throughout the course of the past century.

In a 1991 study of the General Social Survey, Ellison revealed findings which were contrary to popular theory. One revelation found that older generations support defensive violence which was contrary to conventional wisdom. Conventional wisdom has indicated that as people age their attitudes supporting violence diminishes (Ellison, 1991). His findings further indicated a negligible difference in the attitudes supportive of violence between “in-migrants and non southerners” (Ellison, 1991, p. 1233). Ellison surmised that “cohort replacement and interregional migration are further undermining southern attitudinal distinctiveness” (Ellison, 1991, p. 1233). In fact, many writers and experts have highlighted the sweeping changes that have occurred in the Southern region over the second half of the 1900s (Ellison et al., 2003). Finally, Ellison (1991) suggested that data collected on violent attitudes at several points in time may result in stronger prediction of the decline in these attitudes within the Southern region. Ellison’s findings suggest erosion in normative violent attitudes in the South.

This present thesis examines the regional differences in violence. This study will provide a review of research examining correlates of the Southern subculture of violence (structural and cultural) and its relationship to the benchmark subcultural theory. Furthermore, this study will focus on the Culture of Honor concept established by Cohen and Nisbett and the foundation of its hypothesis about regional disparity in attitudes which support defensive violence. Based on the Ellison work, this study proposes an erosion of supportive attitudes in explaining Southern violence. Utilizing data from the 1976, 1984, and 1993 General Social Survey for the research design and analysis this study will attempt to examine the trend associated with the proposed decline in attitudes supportive of violence in the South. Finally, the study will conclude

by discussing the implications of the findings on popular attitudes concerning regional variations in support of violence, attitudes which support defensive violence, and the culture of honor.

## **Chapter II. Literature Review**

The Southern subculture of violence is a complex topic requiring an understanding of the previous literature and research to comprehend this phenomenon. In the following section, this literature review will examine contemporary research conducted on the Southern subculture anchored by the theoretical framework put forth by Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967). The review will highlight the primary structural and cultural variables associated with the Southern subculture perspective. Furthermore, the culture of honor will be discussed as the consensus causal factor among cultural variables. Finally, changes within the Southern region have shown the potential to erode the attitudes supportive of violence. In the following review, the compilation of the previous research will provide insight into the primary constructs within this subculture.

The Southern subculture of violence possesses cultural ideals that uniquely orient the examination of the high levels of violence including homicide. Research shows that the South leads the nation in per capita homicides (Ellison 1991, Bureau of Justice Statistics 2000). Referenced in Borg's (1997) work, FBI homicide data has indicated circuitous strength for the regional violence argument. Interpersonal violence is one of the largest predictors of a violent subculture. Borg (1997) supports this point stating that "the proportion of homicides resulting from argumentative situations

[between familiar parties] is greater in the South than it is in other regions and that southerners appear more likely to kill people they know" (p.27).

Argued as the "Southernness" factor, numerous scholars attempt to explain these violent affinities (Gastil, 1971, Borg, 1997). The constructs of structure and culture facilitate an explanation of the phenomena of "Southern" violence. Within the cultural construct is the Southern subculture of violence perspective which suggests punitive support for capital punishment, attitudes associated with retaliatory or defensive violence, ideals of honor and/or courage, and the socialization of these attitudes which culminates in violent tendencies (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994, Borg, 1997, Clarke, 1997).

The level to which individuals display some form or motivation toward violence in certain situations accentuates this cultural premise. Although Wolfgang's subculture of violence theory indicates not all situations result in violence, a violent culture perpetuates the foundations of attitudes conducive to situational aggression and violence. Ellison (1991) recommended a measure of the population's response to capital punishment as an indicator of a violent subculture. If Ellison is correct then extensive support of punitive ideals would demonstrate a subculture of violence within the South.

In order to examine this subcomponent of the cultural construct Borg (1997) argued that attitudes should be reflective of the emphasis and support placed upon punitive punishments with particular focus on the support of capital punishment. Borg (1997) examines indicators of the accentuation to include a higher level of support for the death penalty among Southerners versus non-Southerners. Borg suggests that Southerners as a population do not vary in the extreme from the attitudes of the rest of

the country. However, a small segment of Southerners exhibits a more punitive attitude than other Southerners and non-Southerners. This, however, does support the idea of a subculture of violence. Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1967) work suggests that even if all persons are equally exposed not all will equally share these values (p. 160). Borg (1992) suggested that Southerners would hold these values central to their point of view. His findings highlight the premise of Wolfgang and Ferracuti's idea that a subculture must still be a part of the larger population even though some views are in stark contrast to that society.

Clarke (1998) furthered this argument by suggesting the normative attitudes of racial intolerance are the leading link to advocacy of capital punishment. His qualitative approach focused on the charted, known, and historical accounts. While describing the evolution of capital punishment from the concept of lynching, Clarke highlighted the evidence of mass acceptance of lynching through a longitudinal study. Because of the qualitative nature of Clarke's work, some discussion is required to illustrate his central issue.

According to Clarke's work, capital punishment permeated Southern culture during the late 1800s and early 1900s, only transferring mediums due to federal involvement. Prior to formal federal interventions, lynching was the dominant punitive sanction levied, especially against blacks. Along with a lack of legal sanctions, eyewitness accounts of mob behavior and diversity of ages within the crowds illustrated the vast support and socialization of these types of activities (Clarke 1998). The presence of children during these events socialized people at an early age to the acceptance of lynching as an appropriate form of violence. Even in cases determined to

possess unfounded accusations, these episodes further represented the toleration of illicit violence which is another correlate of subculture of violence. Despite how widely known these events were, less than 1% ever received punishment (Clarke, 1998; Gastil, 1971). Over time, Southerners realized the degradation caused by this form of violence to the economy and society, thus lynching decreased (Clarke, 1998). Clarke's findings, therefore, indicate the infancy of the change in attitudes which support circumstantial violence. Mob violence declined with changing attitudes. Although capital punishment prevailed, debate persists that these lawful methods to enforce Southern cultural norms only altered the methods of retributive violence.

By the 1920s, capital punishment executions statistically surpassed lynchings in number of occurrences (Clarke, 1998). Exposing all these facets, Clarke correlated the elements of Wolfgang and Ferracuti's theory (1967) to the Southern subculture of violence. Satisfying key elements, these findings included socialization of the population, agreeable attitudes associated with violence, and decade's long continuation showing the cultural support. In addition, the transition from lynching indicated an initial shift from endorsed chaotic violence to a more formal sanction. Also, the negative economic backlash forced an education upon the subculture that unsubstantiated violence had repercussions. Finally, Clarke argues that the continuous nature of support for capital punishment is a powerful statement of the punitive nature demonstrated by the Southern subculture.

While supporting the socialization role, Borg (1997) argues that variability of "Southernness," [a group with strong Southern attitudes] determines support of capital punishment [thus a punitive nature toward certain situations]. In other words, the

strength of Southern norms within each individual delineates the support for punitive punishments in comparison to other Southerners. As mentioned earlier, Borg (1997) indicated Southerners vary only as a subculture of the population but not overwhelmingly as a demographic group when compared to other Americans on the specific issue of capital punishment. Both of these findings indicate only a certain segment of that particular population is separate from the general population. According to Borg (1997), stereotyping and antipathy for blacks, which are strong Southern correlates, remained a predictor of capital punishment. Although Southerners holistically support the death penalty for capital crimes, these elements identify an exclusive regional characteristic which sets it apart from other regions. Such findings confirm Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1967) premise that the subculture accepts the norms of the larger population.

Barkan and Cohn (1994) use a bivariate correlation including Southern residence in their model. Their linear regression results provide additional confirmation that a significant relationship between Southern residence and support of the death penalty exists (Barkan & Cohn, 1994). This research illustrates a picture of the diffused support of violence in the South.

Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) propose socializing, associating, and identifying with attitudes that condone violence establishes a subculture's value system. Providing the foundation for this argument, Cloward and Ohlin found in their delinquent gang study that subcultures establish value systems that provide opportunities to recuperate from a status punishment. This development leads to a pattern of violence in which the individual must defend his veracity and honor (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960). In fact, this

value system consists of norms and attitudes delineated within violent subcultures which accept the use of interpersonal violence in defense of honor (Ball-Rokeach, 1973). Further research has illustrated the principle of the establishment of value system within the subculture tolerant to violence. While referencing Wolfgang and Ferracuti, Felson et al. (1994) argues that groups are more violent when these distinct values support or tolerate violence. In conjunction with the subculture of violence theory, this demonstration of a lack of evocation of guilt indicates a perception of violence absent of an illicit behavior. Although the Felson et al. (1994) study discusses several varying explanations for violence, variants exist within the Southern societal values arguably from a sense of honor, defense, and/or retribution, versus aggression.

Within the Southern subculture, the culture of honor advances the idea that cultural norms influence violence as an accepted method of resolving these slights. In addition, this honor principle mainly perpetuates interpersonal violence. Borg (1997) supports this point, stating “the proportion of homicides resulting from argumentative situations [between familiar parties] is greater in the South than it is in other regions ...” (p.27). Argued as the “Southernness” factor, numerous researchers attempt to explain these violent affinities (Gastil, 1971, Borg, 1997). Finally, research has conclusively supported this concept that the culture of honor principle has established a value system within the subculture tolerant to violence.

In order to understand the link between honor and violence, research must provide evidence of the influence a sense of honor has on violent tendencies. Within the southern subculture, courage in the face of provocation is defined as honorable. Consequently, in some cases, when a Southerner does not respond courageously to a

slight, he may be branded a coward (Ellison, 1991). Therefore, within the context of the Southern subculture, a culture of honor is synonymous with courage. With that being established, a link between provocation and violence must be ascertained.

Markowitz and Felson (1998) conducted a study that investigated 3 graded level provocation scenarios in an effort to provoke individuals through different levels of stimuli. They determined that people who place a greater emphasis on courage and retribution are more “disputatious” [that is to say easily provoked] and are more likely to engage in violence. In fact, attitudes affirming courage (and subsequently honor) and retribution significantly affected frequency of violence (Markowitz & Felson, 1998). These findings supported the link between the culture of honor and defensive violence in the face of provocation.

In addition, research has demonstrated that this culture of honor exists within the Southern region (Cohen et al., 1998; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Even though Markowitz and Felson’s findings establish the link between honor and violence, the research must be able to differentiate between regions. We must show, in essence, that a Southerners will resort to culturally disposed violence in cases when threats to their person and defacement of their honor exist (Ellison, 1991; Reed, 1982). As mentioned earlier, when confronted with these violent situations, an individual socialized in the South would be disgraced if they did not respond to provocation with violence (Reed, 1982). Additionally, this culture of honor is an informal norm and understood implicitly. The general definition is widely known as virtue but at other times as a measure of status and reputation. Finally, it can be observed as the social theme around which all

interpersonal activities are controlled (Vandello & Cohen, 2003). The following research elaborates on the phenomenon to scrutinize its influence on violence.

Several studies scrutinize the affiliation between intensity of an individual's support of violence through attitudes supporting defense of honor and courage. This perspective initially took roots in a study conducted by Brearley (1935). This study argued the manifestation of the 'the feudal spirit' in the salience of honor and loyalty. Brearley stated Southerners' violent attitudes exemplify a cultural response to threats against honor, aggression against women, and in defense of family (Brearley, 1935; Ellison & McCall 1989). When regressed to examine violent (aggressive) and defensive attitudes, research indicates a tolerance for low levels of violent infractions against proper societal conduct as well as legitimatization of violence in defensive situations (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987). In his 1991 study, Ellison regressed region and a set of socio-demographic factors, community embeddedness, and predictors of violent attitudes. Ellison concluded that Southerners advocate defensive violence in hypothetical situations more than non-Southerners, thus confirming influence of slights of honor on violence in the Southern subculture (Ellison, 1991).

Research indicates that attitudes supporting defensive violence remained significant for individuals socialized in the South (Ellison, 1991; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987). These findings reveal that slights to honor influence violence within the Southern subculture. Additional findings suggest that individuals in the South learn to approve of violence in a wide range of situations and its enhancement of honor (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987). Ellison extended the concept of socialization. Ellison (1991) stated the propensity toward regionally and socially rooted "homophile" among native

Southerners are projected to cultivate attitudes of defensive or retaliatory violence. Consistent with the understood findings of Southern subcultural norms, acceptance of violence correlates in defensive or retributive situations invoked by a sense of courage and honor. In other words, slights to the honor of a Southerner or Southern norm influence violence in defense of the culture of honor. Additionally, the findings correlate to the subculture of violence theory - the embodiment of violence perceived as a righteous behavior must exist in the framework of a subculture along with the correlate that embraces violence as socially developed norms (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967).

When determining the influence of slights of honor on violence, Cohen and Nisbett (1994) argued the philosophy of honor validates violence. In their study, the researchers analyzed data from three separate surveys. What they found was remarkable. They found that Southerners, especially White Southerners, endorsed the use of interpersonal violence more than Northerners in the defense of honor. Furthermore, they discovered that it was especially true for those individuals who held the concept as a central norm and were extremely sensitive to slights of their honor (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994). Although the study identified several other accepted arenas for the causes of violence, honor and defense of it seemed innermost to the researchers' findings.

In addition, other research by Cohen and associates (1994) examined the influence of slights to honor on regional violence. In their examination of honor, the researchers conducted three experiments. Within the experiments, they utilized a confederate who intentionally slammed into the participant (a University of Michigan

student) and subsequently insulted the individual. The researchers found both an emotional and physiological change in the participants who grew up in the South versus those individuals with a Northern heritage. Furthermore, they found that the Southerners were more likely to feel as if their reputation or honor had been challenged. As a result, they felt greater levels of anger and aggression than Northerners did as it related to the derogatory insult (Cohen et al., 1996). This study clearly shows the connection between slights to honor and their influence on violence.

This concept of honor not only involves slights committed by strangers and/or friends but also involves slights committed in intimate relationships. In the most recent study, Vandello and Cohen (2003) examined the influence of violence within domestic situations. The researchers investigated through vignettes and dramatization of domestic violence situations the employment of violence in marital infidelity situations (Vandello & Cohen, 2003). Because within the traditional Southern culture, male reputation is a factor in the ability to maintain the integrity of his household, any female infidelity would be perceived as a slight to his honor. As a result, this slight to his honor would influence the use of violence to restore his reputation. Their study compared honor societies such as the Southern U.S. and other historically known areas (e.g. Latin America) with non-honor societies. The first study examined loss of honor due to the wife's infidelity. In the second, the researchers dramatized a domestic violence situation and evaluated the response of the observers. In the first study, researchers found that in honor oriented cultures, infidelity was a slight to the man's honor, and individuals condoned at least a minimum level of violent response. In the second study, the findings were more dramatic. When compared to non-honor culture

(e.g. Northerners), Southerners were almost three times as likely to tolerate violence. In sum, the research demonstrated that honor, especially in men, is a focal point in the Southern culture. Furthermore, when his honor is slighted or reputation is affected by the actions of another (e.g. marital infidelity), violence is used to partially redeem this degradation (Vandello & Cohen, 2003). Although individuals provide situational evidence, the ultimate measure is how individuals perceive the cultural ideal of honor and attitudes supportive of defensive violence.

Although many studies previously discussed the influence of the culture of honor, reinforcement through institutional media indicate the extent to which the cultural norms permeate that specific society, and influence violence and attitudes supportive of violence. In conjunction with subcultural theory (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967), the extent to which institutions reflect the cultural norms demonstrates the extent of socialization and association with those norms. In addition, when a culture is violent, traditionally, more institutional, communal, and shared support agencies exist which influence violence in that culture (Cohen & Nisbett, 1997). Therefore, according to Cohen and Nisbett “the laws of the South and West are more likely to endorse violence consistent with a strong ethic of self-protection and honor” (1997, p.1193). As a result, institutions affect the cultural norms by providing public representation of acceptable attitudes and behavior. In essence, when presented to the public, these institutions provide feedback to the community indicating acceptable attitudes and behaviors (Cohen & Nisbett, 1997).

Cohen and Nisbett (1997) examined these issues using two different experiments to examine the instruments by which this feedback occurs. In the first

experiment, fabricated job applications were submitted for employment to several major corporations. One story indicated that the applicant had an honor related conviction (defensive or retaliatory violence) and the other a theft related conviction. According to the culture of honor concept, the researchers expected that agencies from the South and West would be more empathic to the honor related offense versus the theft. The researchers found that when the employers' responses were scored, letters involving theft were treated equally. However, the letters involving the honor related offense received positive feedback in the South and West more than in the North (Cohen & Nisbett, 1997). This finding highlights the acceptance and reinforcement by institutions of offenses involving defensive violence. In addition, it shows institutional attitudes supporting defensive or retaliatory violence.

In the second study, a fabricated story was generated and sent to newspaper writers. Expectations dictate that newspapers write stories within the confines of the cultural codes of the population or region of their readership. Therefore, journalists writing for publication in Southern or Western regions should generate articles more sympathetic in the cases involving honor related offenses than the non-honor related event. The researchers found in both scenarios that there was a trend for Southern and Western papers to treat the honor-related offender more sympathetically, while Northern papers treated the non-honor related offender more sympathetically (Cohen & Nisbett, 1997). These findings again conclude the same support and reinforcement for honor related violence. Together, these studies indicate a culture of honor in the South supportive of honor related violence. This support, in turn, validates to individuals the

accepted behavior which ultimately reinforces and influences future use of violence as an appropriate behavior in honor related incidences.

In conjunction with tolerant attitudes toward violence, an emerging and popular explanation for Southern violence is gun ownership and availability of guns as a cultural norm (Corzine & Huff, 1989; Dixon & Lizotte, 1987, 1989; Ellison & McCall, 1989; O'Connor & Lizotte, 1978). The findings of this research dispute the credibility of the argument. Therefore, this issue is beyond the scope of this research. Stemming from Lizotte's earlier research (O'Connor & Lizotte, 1978), Dixon and Lizotte (1987) findings assert that further investigation is necessary to conclude whether specific types of gun ownership and violence are correlated. Based on current research, the variables must be defined further (e.g. type of weapon and legal and illegal ownership) before conclusive arguments can be made.

Along with the cultural constructs, structural orientation provides further illumination of the relationships associated with the Southern subculture of violence. The key structural elements are gender, regional orientation, education, family, socio-economics, race, rural dispersion, age, political affiliation, and religious affiliation. Numerous studies have established correlations between structural variables of religion, political affiliation, age, and region. We will examine structural correlates linked to Southern violence. Due to the effects of interregional migration, education, and aging, our study will provide a deeper insight into the erosion of the structural construct of region as a predictor of attitudes supporting violence.

Several studies provide evidence excluding specific correlates of violence. Evidence has shown that individuals who have higher incomes and lower educations are

more tolerant or accepting of violence, aggressive or defensive, in both the South and remainder of the United States (Barkan & Cohn, 1994; Borg, 1997; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000; Cohen & Nesbitt, 1994; Ellison, 1991; Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Based on history, some research assumes a benchmark of the racial explanation of the historical causes of violence via income and racial inequality in the South (Clarke, 1998). Further, because of recent industrialization of the South and the influx of large production facilities, there is a lack of regional research on urbanization and Southern subcultural violence. Family socialization is another structural subcomponent that has been sufficiently shown as a socialization tool. Additionally, Ellison (1991) found that the closer the bond to family the less likely members are to engage in violence. His findings establish well rooted and extensive support in the social control and bond theories. For the purpose of this study, no further research is necessary to show the influence of family in the structural construct. Finally, despite Ellison's (1991) argument associated with controlling for regional difference with structural constructs, several researchers discovered some remarkable correlations which partially explain Southern violence.

In the following, the connection between structural factors and violence as a significant construct attempts to explain the Southern subculture of violence. Post Civil War, the South has remained an impoverished area with a lower income per capita than any other region in the United States (Gastil, 1971; US Bureau of the Census, 2001). Research is consistent with the concept that lower socio-economic status has a tendency to influence attitudes and influence violent behaviors. In other words, the more poverty an individual encounters, the more concern they have for courage in conflicts and the

more punitive they are in nature. Socialization of these attitudes results in the establishment of a causal relationship on behavior. Moreover, these behaviors lead to emphasis on the importance of grievance expression, retribution, and courage as well as the likelihood of violence when irritated (Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Markowitz and Felson would argue further that “attitudes regarding retribution and courage are originally learned as justification for violent behavior” (1998, p.134) thus supporting the subculture of violence theory. In addition, recent research has indicated that lower socio-economic status has a significant effect on attitudes toward courage and reprisal. These attitudes play a role in the explanation of the social-demographic variation in “disputatiousness” [ability to be provoked] and violence (Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Therefore, it can be argued that the lower socio-economic status has an effect on violence as a normative ideal in the Southern subculture.

Gastil (1971) and Loftin and Hill (1974) also verify the relationship of socio-economic status to violence in the Southern subculture. Utilizing a poverty index, the correlation between socio-economic constructs and state levels of homicide was established (Gastil, 1971; Loftin & Hill, 1974). In fact, Gastil’s (1971) data indicated a negative correlation between income and homicide. These findings were verified in a later study conducted by Messner (1983) which discovered the poverty index exhibited very strong correlations with homicide, along with regional measures and racial composition.

Additionally, the homicide rates at state levels show an end to end integration from low socio-economics to variations in provocation to violence (Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Furthermore, O’Connor and Lizotte (1978) support the arguments that

poverty creates circumstances that increase rates of violence, e.g. homicide.

Additionally, this concept structurally integrates Markowitz and Felson; Cohen and Nisbett (based on their argument mentioned earlier) to the previous study by Gastil / Loftin and Hill. Even Ellison (1991) found weak positive correlation between SES and regional attitudes toward defensive violence. In sum, some research argues that class or impoverishment does not perpetuate violence. As indicated previously, the Southern subculture of violence, through a sense of dignity embedded as honor, carries out a circumstance which perpetuates violence.

While socio-economic status may exert some influence on violence, religious fundamentalism is a long standing correlate to the intolerance of counter norms within the Southern culture provoking violence. Historical research routinely predicts that Southerners fail to extend civil liberties to outside beliefs and groups (Ellison, 1993). In fact, modern surveys have shown that Southerners consistently report “higher levels of piety and institutional religious participation” (Ellison, 1993, p. 380). Another finding showed that fundamentalism adhered to in White Southern males enhances the intensity of death penalty advocacy. In contrast, when the research model removed regional factors, fundamentalism failed to reach significance (Borg, 1997). This finding signifies the association between religion and region. Borg (1997) states, “non-southern fundamentalist church members are less likely to advocate the death penalty” (p.40). However, a further suggestion indicated that because fundamentalists in the South are in church more often, they tend to receive more emotionally charged messages of intolerance. Based on the fundamental beliefs, distinctive epistemological orientation

argues that the Southerners have much to lose should the non-religious factions exist in their presence (Borg, 1997).

In conjunction with these beliefs and the strong sense of good versus evil, Southerners may see their struggle as “valiant” against the groups they see as undesirable, and thus use violence to defend their beliefs (Ellison, 1993). As mentioned earlier, death penalty support clearly shows the tolerance or advocacy of violence in certain situations by the Southern subculture. Furthermore, evidence advocates that the heart of Southern religious culture carries out retaliation for clearly defined transgressions or in the protection of others. Seen as supporting a punitive and vengeful God, religious influence may provide guidance on the conduct of interpersonal relationships (Ellison, 1991). These findings culminate with theological conservatism having the strongest negative forecaster of tolerance toward these groups seen as unbiblical (Ellison, 1993). In other words, the stronger the fundamental belief, the less tolerance is extended to these groups by Southerners. Based on other findings, we can then draw the following conclusions. This intolerance lends itself to violence to combat these groups unseemly conduct which violates the Southern cultural norms, jeopardizes honor, and contests the values and attitudes of right and wrong (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Ellison, 1991, 1993). An example would be when an individual violated a societal norm and individuals sought retribution through physical vengeance rather than peaceful means. Attendance correlated positively to support for defensive or retaliatory violence. In fact, under defensive and retributive circumstances, religious fundamentalists communicate relatively stalwart support for interpersonal violence.

Conversely, the remainder of the American populace has shown a negative correlation between church attendance and attitudes that support violence (Ellison 1991).

In sum, those who attended services regularly in the Southern fundamentalist churches advocated not only the death penalty for cases of serious breaches of norms but also supported defensive or retaliatory violence in handling of intolerance to groups perceived as counter to fundamentalist mores. Sighting recent studies, Borg (1997) argues that Southerners not only incorporate the concept of vengeance with religious circles, but also incorporate their religious beliefs into daily aspects of their lives. As evident from the previous discussion of attitudes supportive of violence, fundamental beliefs draw a parallel between violence and the aspects of the daily Southern normative attitudes especially when seeking reprisal for violations of societal norms. These findings lend credence to the religiosity argument on regional acceptability of violence.

In substantiating these regional attitudes of violence, Ellison (1991) clarifies the conditions which validate the argument along with level of analysis that provide this distinction. Ellison (1991) argues that historically data has been analyzed at the aggregate level, making it insurmountable to connect violence with social learning, individual values, and region. Felson et al. (1994) concurred with this finding stating that aggregate level data could not explain the actions of subcultural groups. Once the level of data is examined at the individual level two conditions must be met to qualify the existence (Ellison, 1991). Initially, Ellison mentions [a parallel to the subculture of violence theory (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967)] that an attitude or value system must be in place which differs from the general population. Secondly, Ellison indicates that research must show that mediums for socialization in this violence along with the

perpetuation of the values exist throughout many generations among the group (Ellison 1991). Therefore, this connection between these qualifiers and attitudes will explain the high rates of violence.

This portion of the review has shown the presence of societal norms which support violence in defensive situations. In turn, these norms are linked to sources for provocation and subsequently causing violence. In addition, the means to socialization of these attitudes and norms has been established supporting Ellison's conclusions. Furthermore, regional distinctions indicate a culture of honor exists and highlights the disparity between the South and all other regions. Other factors have shown relevance in the explanation of high levels of violence in the South. As shown, even those factors point toward defense of honor and slights to that honor as causal factors behind the attitudes supporting violence. Until recently, all these elements perpetuated an explanation of the regional disparity. However, research has indicated a diminishment or erosion of these attitudes which support violence within the South. The Southern subculture of violence has indicated erosion in the attitudes supportive of violence. Research has begun looking at the longitudinal effects of age, migration and rural dispersion (or urbanization) altering the historical correlation of regional violence to Southern subculture.

The current perspective of interpersonal violence in the South traces its roots to the antebellum South (Gastil 1971) where issues of extreme racial violence (highlighted earlier in the death penalty section), and perceived inequalities perpetuated a tolerance of violence. In other words, those individuals perceived as a threat to the norms advocated by Southern beliefs were sought after violently. Military defeat and political

domination and economic exploitation gave rise to high levels of tolerance for interpersonal violence (Ellison 1991). An agricultural production industry as well as a type of “frontier society” also characterized Southern culture more than the other areas of the US throughout the mid 1800s and into the 1900s (Gastil 1971). This environment perpetuated violence as a way to resolve personal issues.

With previous violence as an indicator of future violence, researchers pursue this argument illustrating the South’s torrid past. Clarke (1998) illustrates the dueling, violent, and murderous history of the South. Again Clarke illustrated this violence was accomplished through violence to oppress the ethnic minorities. Clarke further argued that once federal troops left and there was no fear of governmental intervention, the secretive nature of the violence became an open and socially acceptable form of marginalizing minorities.

As previously discussed, attitudes towards violence originated out of several ideals but primarily from an ideal justifying violence for defensive purposes. Research argued that the chivalrous ideals and exaggerated defensiveness were manifest in the norms of honor and loyalty among Southern gentlemen (Ellison, 1991). Socialization of these elements continued throughout history aided by the interaction of the families (Clarke, 1998; Ellison, 1991). Finally, research discussed earlier highlights this continuation throughout the later 1800s and early 1900s, although in some cases changing mediums to gain acceptance (e.g. lynching to death penalty). Although defensive violence should continue based on the existing norms and the socializing mechanism, several findings may soon affect this perspective.

This research uncovered three main factors which are affecting a potential shift in the attitudes supporting violence – age, education, and migration. First, most current literature interprets a decline in violent attitudes with age. In addition, younger adults and males are more likely to emphasize retribution (Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Based on this premise, Southern subculture violence should comply with this concept. However, among native Southerners, research indicates support for defensive violence is strongest among the oldest cohorts. Further evidence contradicts the contemporary findings within gender and age in support of the values of courage and disapproval of cowardice [revealed earlier as predictors of attitudes toward violence]. Ellison (1991) determined women and older adults admire courage and disapprove of cowardice more than other ages and gender groups. Furthermore, older Southern natives continue to have strong normative support for violence which diverges from national aging out trends and contrasts the physical and psychological vulnerability of senior citizens. In fact, it conflicts with the finding that interpersonal orientations- trust, mutuality, and propensity for cooperation – increase with age (Ellison, 1991). In other words, when Ellison compared age cohorts within the Southern culture, older cohorts continue to support violence in certain circumstances even when this cohort is attempting to retire peacefully.

Researchers also argue that the socialization into Southern culture should perpetuate the violence even in the face of continued migration into the region. Research has illustrated that birth and residence in the South are strong predictors of the attitudes related to violence (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987; Corzine & Huff Corzine, 1989; Ellison & McCall, 1989; O'Connor & Lizotte, 1971). However, numerous studies find

migration out of the South by native Southerners decreases the values of violence. Although a small correlation between attitudes with violence and exposure to Southern values exists, those individuals who migrate in or out of the South show no significant difference in attitudes toward violence compared with people who never resided in the South (Borg, 1997; Ellison, 1991; Ellison & McCall, 1989). Only in cases where an individual was socialized and continues to reside in the South, are violent attitudes present (Dixon & Lizotte, 1987, Borg, 1997). Arguably, migration in and out is slowly diluting the value system held by traditional Southerners (Gastil, 1971). Additionally, with the continued large influx of Yankees into the culture, attitudes will shift with increased socialization of youth to the non-violent norms and values embraced in other regions of the country. Research suggests that the declining regional attitudes of violence within the Southern subculture would decline with national integration and economic development (Ellison, 1991).

The Southern subculture of violence attempts to resolve the rates of Southern violence because of the influence of cultural and structural orientation in contrast to the eroding regional distinction. Additionally, explanations have attempted to explain Southern violence through a subcultural theory. Within the context of this review, subcomponents of cultural and structural constructs including: the punitive support of capital punishment, socio-economic status, religious fundamentalism and especially regional disparity and attitudes supportive of defensive or retaliatory violence in conjunction with the culture of honor. Although Southerners continue to exhibit the highest levels of violence, this study examined the erosion of the attitudes due to the influence of migration and aging out of older Southern norms and beliefs. Ellison

alludes to the eventual dissipation if not disappearance of the Southern subculture of violence.

With the established research on the attitudes supporting defensive violence in and their erosion caused by interregional migration, education and aging, the following study will examine three cross-sectional studies of the data from three separate years. Therefore, the study hypothesizes that the effects of change in levels of education, age, and migration over the past 30 years on the Southern region will diminish the effects of Southern residence on attitudes supportive of defensive violence. The study will use regression to examine the strength of prediction in attitudes supportive of violence by region and identifying a trend when comparing the three cross-sectional data over a twenty year period.

### **Chapter III. Research Design and Findings**

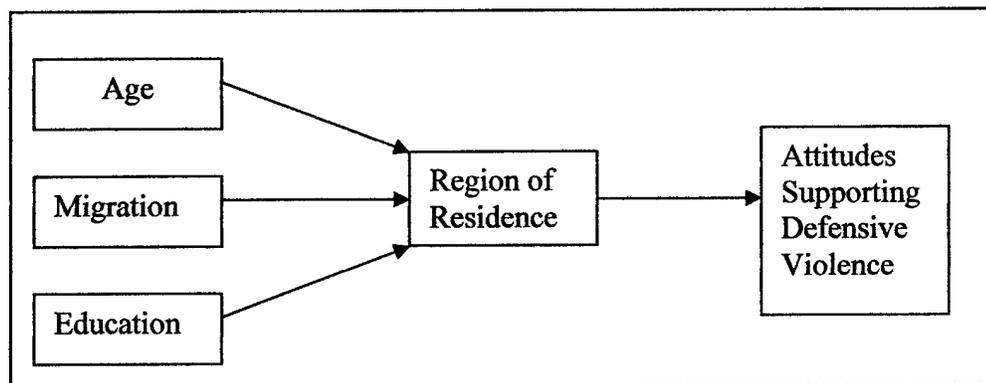
Utilizing a multivariate regression model, this study examined the hypothesis, that the effects of change in levels of education, age, and migration over the past 30 years on the Southern region will diminish the effects of Southern residence on attitudes supportive of defensive violence, through three cross-sectional data. Specifically, this study used the 1976, 1984, and 1993 General Social Survey data sets. These data permitted the examination of any regional changes that occurred over time in attitudes supportive of defensive violence. The GSS is composed of individual self reported surveys sent randomly to participants. According to Ellison (1991) and Ellison et. al. (2003), a study of data collected over time may be able to determine whether attitudes supportive of violence are, in fact, eroding. To ensure the highest levels of reliability and validity these archival data were used. Furthermore, the questions for all three years were identical. With these factors in mind, the General Social Survey instrument was the most advantageous for analyzing the hypothesis.

The hypothesis states that regional disparity of attitudes which support violence in defensive situations within the Southern subculture will diminish when aging, migration, and education are taken into account (Figure 1). By analyzing the data in three cross-sections, the study can assess the regional changes in attitudes supportive of violence. Migration could, for example, influence the Southern population by changing attitudes supportive of violence. Education could enlighten a subculture supportive of

retributive violence. In addition, age would bring about maturation and lower strength in support of violence. If the hypothesis is affirmed, there should be a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, the region variable should see a decline in the slope of the linear relationship (beta) as well as the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient –  $r$ .

The analysis will center on the years of 1976, 1984, and 1993. These three years were selected because of the consistency in the questions asked. Furthermore, the analysis should be able to detail the changes in attitudes over approximately 20 years. Evidence discovered could allow a projection based on a trend. The research will examine descriptive statistics, t-tests (to examine mean differences in key variables) and a correlation matrix to observe for collinearity and linear relationship between all variables. Finally, bivariate and OLS regressions will be examined to assess the net effects of the measured factors on attitudes supportive of defensive violence.

Figure 1



### **Measures - Variables:**

*Independent variables.* The independent variables included age, migration, education, and region. Age of the respondent was measured as a continuous self reported variable (age in years) at the time of the survey. Respondents who stated they did not know or did not answer were recoded as missing data. The second independent variable was highest education of the respondent (education). This variable was a ratio level variable measured as the highest level or grade completed in school which was self reported by the respondent. In addition, responses of don't know or no answer were recoded as missing data. Migration was recoded as a dichotomous variable indicating whether a person had moved since they turned 16 years of age. Again, responses, that were recorded as don't know or no answer, were recoded as missing. The final independent variable was a dummy variable of Southern residence. The variable was recoded into those who lived in the South versus all other regions. For the purposes of this study, the Southern region was defined as Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas. The General Social Survey defined Southern areas according to U.S. Census boundaries. Therefore, the Southern region included Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Although not a part of the original confederacy according to the U.S Census is considered as part of the Southern region.

*Dependent Variable.* The dependent variable represented a continuous index measuring an individual's attitudes supportive of defensive violence. Six individual variables were recoded into dichotomous variables. Respondents' answers for the six

separate variables were coded as supporting violence as yes, no, not sure, no answer, not applicable. For this analysis, each questions responses were recoded to yes (yes =1) or no (no =0) in order to properly measure the presence or absence of attitude supporting violence. Furthermore, the six variables were compiled from six independent questions focusing on six separate scenarios. The answers to the questions assessed support for defensive violence in six independent situations. These six defensive violence situations included the following scenarios:

1. Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger in any situation.
2. Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger if the stranger was in a protest march showing opposition to the other man's views.
- 3) Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger if the stranger was drunk and bumped into the man and his wife on the street.
- 4) Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger who had hit the man's child after the child accidentally damaged the stranger's car.
- 5) Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger if the stranger was beating up a woman and the man saw it.
- 6) Respondent would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger had broken into the man's house.

Answers of don't know were recoded to equal zero '0' to provide a more conservative estimate of support for violence. All six variables were summed to create an index of support for violence.

### **Methodology:**

A multi-step strategy was employed to examine the three archival General Social Survey (GSS) data – 1976, 1984, and 1993. The descriptive information examined the central measures of tendencies as well as how the data were distributed. After examining the descriptive statistics, independent samples *t* tests were conducted on those dichotomous predictor variables – South and migration. For the independent samples *t* tests, the null hypothesis for region ( $H_0$ ) is that the mean of the index of

support for violence for Southerners is equal to the mean for the other regions ( $\mu_{\text{south}} = \mu_{\text{other regions}}$ ). The alternate or research hypothesis for each test ( $H_1$ ) is that the mean of the index of support for violence for Southerners is greater than the mean for the other regions ( $\mu_{\text{south}} > \mu_{\text{other regions}}$ ). According to Nisbett and Cohen (1994, 1996), Southerners should have greater support for violence than other regions due to the culture of honor and its support for violence in retributive or defensive situations.

For the independent samples  $t$  tests on migration since age 16, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is that the mean of the index for support of violence for those who have remained in the same location since age 16 is equal to the mean for those who have moved (migrated) since age 16 ( $\mu_{\text{same}} = \mu_{\text{moved since 16}}$ ). The research hypothesis for each test ( $H_1$ ) is that the mean of the index for support of violence for those who have remained in the same location since age 16 is different than the mean for those who have moved (migrated) since age 16 ( $\mu_{\text{same}} \neq \mu_{\text{moved since 16}}$ ). As hypothesized, individuals who move should have a mean support for defensive violence unequal to that of those who have lived in the same location. We hypothesized that this effect is due to a broader understanding of the effects and cultural norms which tolerate violence. For each  $t$  test, a Levene's test was conducted to determine whether there were equal variances across groups and whether the means differed significantly from each other.

A bivariate regression was conducted to individually test each of the four independent variable's linear relationship with the dependant variable index of support for defensive violence. Multiple regression was used to test the linear relationship of all the factors simultaneously. For all bivariate regression models in each year, our null

hypothesis will vary based on which variable we are testing. It was hypothesized that there would be a linear relationship between age, region, education, migration, and attitudes supportive of violence. In addition, the multiple regression will examine the influence of Southern region while controlling for age migration, region, and education. For any correlation between independent variables which have a correlation coefficient greater than .700 are deemed collinear. This relationship can confound the relationship between the predictor variable and the dependant variable.

### **Findings:**

Descriptive statistics for the data included 1499 cases ( $N_{1976}=1499$ ) for 1976 as well as 1473 cases for 1984 ( $N_{1984}=1473$ ), and 1606 cases for 1993 (See Appendix A, Table 1). Furthermore, the data indicated a 2.7% rise of those respondents residing in the Southern region over the three respective years (32.1% / 33.6% /34.8%). Although this increase is the result of survey selection, it will prove valuable in the final analysis. This study hypothesized that over time an increase in education would affect the regional differences supportive of defensive violence. While the individual measures ranged from 0 – 20 years, the mean increased from 11.7 to 12.4 to 13.05 over time. In other words, over the three data sets the average education of the sample increased 1.3 years between 1976 and 1993. Therefore, the educational level for the entire study increased. Finally, age ranged from 18-89 years of age but the mean over the three cross-sections did not differ.

The dependent variable representing the index of support for defensive violence varied only slightly over time. However, the last year 1993 had a spike compared to the other two years. Because this data incorporated the entire sample, the support for

defensive violence could have been skewed slightly due to the large number of missing cases ( $n=555$ ). However, another likely explanation was the higher levels of crime during the late 80's and early 90's which may have caused this spike (e.g. post Gulf War, War on Drugs, etc).

The analysis included an independent samples t test for all three data sets for the two grouping variables – migration and South (Southern residence). While showing that equal variances could be assumed for all t tests, the results clearly show that the residence in the South on average predicted of higher levels of support for defensive violence when compared with other regions. As hypothesized, the significance declined over time indicating a diminishment of independence between the two groups. When comparing t-values for Southern region and support of violence over the three years the results indicate they were significant as well as steady decline over the three data sets from 1976 ( $t=2.72; p=007$ ) through 1984 ( $t =2.60; p = .009$ ) to 1993 ( $t = 1.98; p=.048$ ). Another noteworthy trend is the increase in significance from highly significant in 1976 to nearly missing significance at  $p<.05$ . Unexpectedly, for all three years, migration failed to reach significance. The finding indicated no difference in the means between those respondents who moved since turning 16 and those respondents who lived in the same place. These two statistics show a defining trend in the reduction of influence on South as a predictor of support for defensive violence.

Following the t – tests, a Pearson's correlational matrix was examined for all three years in order to measure presence of a linear relationship between all variables and determine any collinearity. The correlation produced some interesting results (see Appendix A, Table 2). As mentioned earlier, no collinearity problems were observed

due to all variables failing to exceed  $r=.700$ . Across all three data years migration failed to reach statistical significance. In fact, all correlational relationships (whether positively or negatively) declined over the three data sets (see Appendix B, Figure 2). In reference to the main independent variable, region was significant ( $p<.05$ ) and diminishes in the linear relationship to the index of support for defensive violence when compared over time from  $r=.071$  (1976) to  $r=.068$  (1984) to  $r=.061$  (1993). Furthermore, these findings indicate, that with the exception of migration, the independent variables have a significant linear relationship with our dependent variable thus supporting the hypothesis. One other noteworthy correlational trend occurred between education and migration. The education and migration association increased over the three data sets moving from no significant relationship to a highly significant relationship. From this finding, one could surmise that with increased education there is a greater likelihood of migration affecting regional composition. Finally, the correlation between migration and education was significant in 1984, and 1993.

In order to simplify and break down the effects of the independent variables on our dependent variable, our analyses utilized a bivariate regression for each independent variable in each data set year (see Appendix A, Table 3). In turn, these results were compared with the multiple regression (OLS) (see Appendix A, Table 4). The results should provide evidence to support the hypothesis of the declining influence of the Southern region on attitudes supportive of violence.

The bivariate regression examines the linear relationship between region and attitudes supportive of violence. In 1976, region accounted for 0.5% of the variance ( $R^2 = .005$ ) indicating a positive linear relationship ( $b = .071$ ). However, the subsequent

years support our hypothesis as indicated by the decline in beta for 1984 ( $b = .068$ ) then in 1993 ( $b = .061$ ). This is a 14.19% reduction in beta since 1976. Furthermore, region only accounted for 0.4% ( $R^2 = .004$ ) of the variance in 1993. When comparing explained variance from 1976 to 1993, the region's ability to explain variance in the dependent variable declined by 20%. Although not dramatic, these findings provide partial support of the hypothesis.

Finally, an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was employed to examine the net effects of Southern region when age, migration, and education were controlled. In support of the hypothesis, region was significantly related to the dependent variable ( $p < .05$ ) while diminishing in standardized beta between 1976 and 1993. From 1976 to 1993, standardized beta dropped from  $b = .087$  to  $b = .072$  which is a 17.24% reduction (see Appendix A, Table 4). The t-test for each year confirmed the difference in the region coefficients observed as significant – 1976 ( $t = 3.32$ ;  $p = .001$ ), 1984 ( $t = 2.74$ ;  $p = .006$ ), and 1993 ( $t = 2.32$ ;  $p = .02$ ). Although the OLS models determined region as one of the predictive factors in the support for violence index, a trend has emerged showing a decline in its influence over time (see Appendix B, Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5). When examining the R squared for the entire model in order to understand the combined influence of all independent variables, the model's predictive strength of variance decline substantially over the three years. From 5.3% of variance in 1976 ( $R^2 = 0.53$ ), the R squared dropped to 4.1% in 1984 ( $R^2 = 0.41$ ) and down to 1.7% in 1993 ( $R^2 = 0.17$ ). Statistically, the model's ability to predict proportion of variance in the dependent variable dropped 68%. Furthermore, according to the findings, the overall model's findings for sum of squares and F tests showed that the predictive influence of

region within the entire OLS model over the 18 years (1976 through 1993 models) declined over time. In sum, the findings of the bivariate and OLS regression models support the research hypothesis that the influence of the Southern region on attitudes supportive of violence is diminishing over time.

## **Chapter IV: Conclusions and Discussion**

The intent of this study was to examine the attitudes supportive of violence within the Southern subculture. The literature reviewed and data examined indicated the presence of attitudes supportive of violence in the South. In addition, previous works by Nisbett and Cohen (1994 and 1997) along with others illustrated the origin of the “southernness” factor as well as its evolution into the culture of honor. Within the culture of honor, the research showed the many characteristics which may create circumstances where violence is not only condoned but also socialized as the normative response. Despite this fact, researchers have discovered the changing “face” of the South both culturally, socially, and economically (Ellison et al., 2003).

This thesis examined the effects of the change on the composition of the Southern region on attitudes supporting violence for a 20 year period. The objective was to find support for the Ellison observation that when measured at the individual level that a diminishment of the attitudes in the South favorable to violence resulting from the interregional migration, increased education, and aging within the Southern subculture of violence. As hypothesized, the bivariate regression and OLS regression indicated a diminishing influence of region on predicting support for defensive violence. Therefore, these results support the hypothesis that the effects of region on attitudes which support defensive violence is diminishing. Consequently, the culture of honor may, in fact, be on the decline. Although no termination point has been

identified, future statistical research could provide a continual trend of the declining influence of the Southern region on attitudes supportive of defensive violence.

Furthermore, these findings do not indicate that individual beliefs will evolve. Over generations and where there is further separation from the animosity lingering from the Civil War and Reconstruction the attitudes supportive of violence in defensive circumstances may diminish. Furthermore, based on these data the findings indicate diminishment of attitudes supportive of violence in non-lethal circumstances. Thus, the findings of this study suggest a projected termination point on these types of attitudes. Future research should also incorporate detailed survey of lethal or aggravated violence. Based on the solid historical support for capital punishment and lynching, another avenue of study would be to focus on support for lethal forms of defensive or retaliatory violence to examine how extensively individuals support violence.

In conclusion, this research suggests the potential diminishment of the culture of honor in the Southern region of the U.S. However, with the recent terrorist attacks and increase in gang violence in Southern cities and rural communities, attitudes favorable to retributive violence may again increase. Only time and further survey evidence will provide the insight into this and other related issues.

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## Appendix A

### Table 1

#### Descriptive Statistics in Multi Cross-Sectional Regression Analysis

For GSS Data for Years 1976, 1984, & 1993

Variable	1976	1984	1993
Region (South = 1)	481 (32.1*)	495 (33.6*)	559 (34.8*)
Migration (Since 16 = 1)	828 (55.2)	879 (59.7)	941 (58.7)
Education (years)	11.7 (3.25)	12.4 (3.18)	13.05 (3.05)
Age (years)	45.29 (18.31)	44 (17.81)	46.05(17.36)
Index Supportive of Violence	2.88 (1.24)	2.86 (1.25)	2.95 (1.22)

\*  $p < .05$

Note: Region and Migration (dichotomous) category of interest reported percentage (in parentheses).

Note: Means and Standard deviations(in parentheses).

**Table 2**

**Pearson's Correlation between Independent Variable  
and Index Supportive of Violence**

**For GSS Data for Years 1976, 1984, & 1993**

Variable	1976	1984	1993
Region (South = 1)	.071**	.068**	.061*
Migration (Since 16 = 1)	-.015	.010	.009
Education (years)	.163**	.110**	.066*
Age (years)	-.193**	-.176**	-.094**

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

**Table 3**  
**Results of Bivariate Regression of Index Supportive of Violence**  
**And Each Independent Variable**  
**For GSS Data Years 1976, 1984, & 1993**

Variable	1976	1984	1993
Region (South = 1)	.005**	.005**	.004*
Migration (Since 16 = 1)	.000	.000	.000
Education (years)	.027**	.012**	.004*
Age (years)	.037**	.031** -	.009**

Note: R squared values  
 \* $p < .05$   
 \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 4**

**Results for Regression of Index Supportive of Violence  
and Independent Variables**

**For GSS Data Years 1976, 1984, & 1993**

Variable	1976	1984	1993
Region (South = 1)	.087 (3.32)*	.071 (2.74)*	.072 (2.32)*
Migration (Since 16 = 1)	.003 (.102)	.027 (1.01)	.014 (.459)
Education (years)	.011 (4.25)*	.069 (2.53)*	.051 (1.58)
Age (years)	-.145 (-5.16)*	-.160 (-5.84)*	-.091(-2.86)*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.53	0.41	0.17
Df	4	4	4
N	1429	1431	1042

Note: Standardized Coefficients and t values (in parentheses).

\* $p < .05$

## Appendix B

Figure 2 Pearson's Correlation Trends

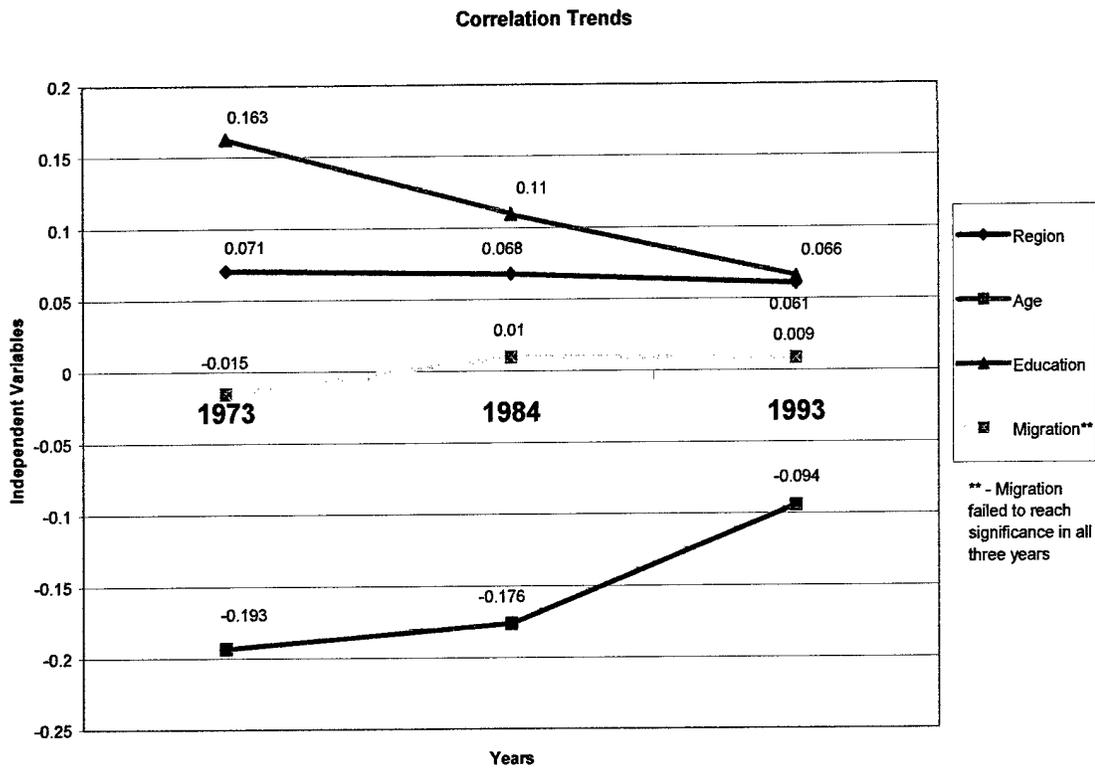


Figure 3 T Value Trends

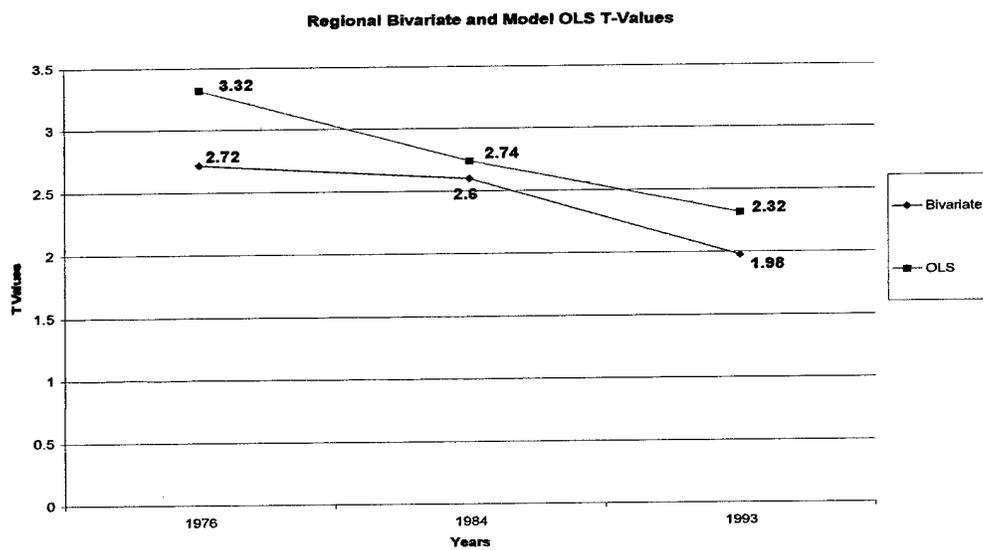


Figure 4 R Squared Value Trends

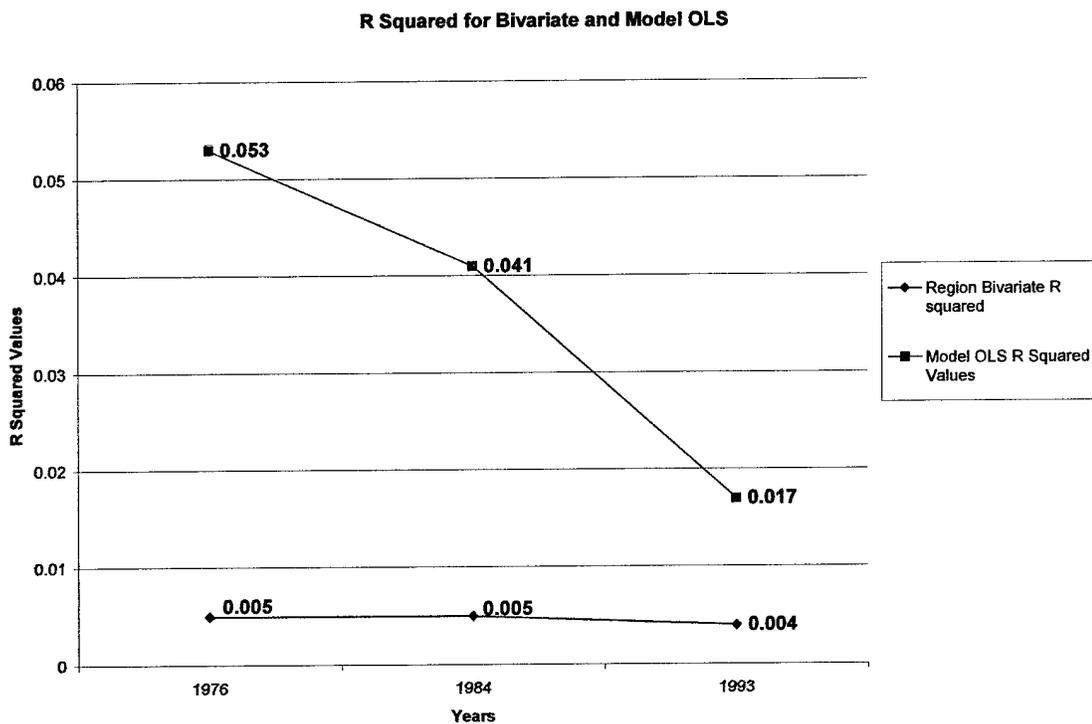
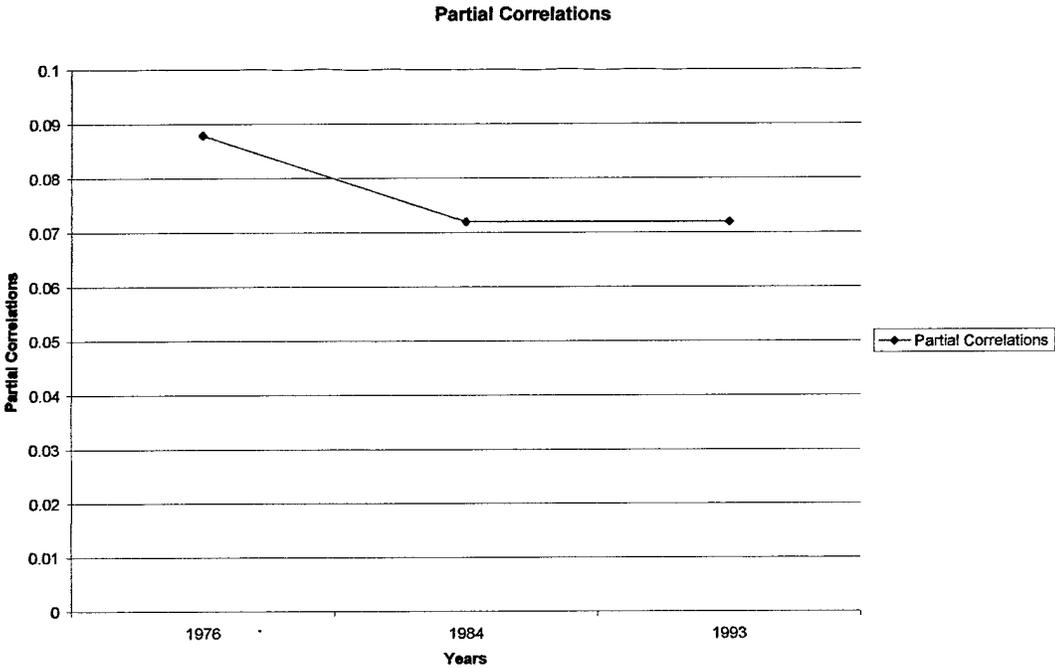


Figure 5 OLS Partial Correlational Trends



## **Appendix C**

### **SPSS Outputs**

**SPSS Descriptive Statistics**

Variables	1976		1984		1993	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Region (Current Residence)						
South	481	32.1*	495	33.6*	559	34.8*
All Other Areas	1018	67.9	978	66.4	1047	65.2
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Migration						
Moved since 16	828	55.2	879	59.7	941	58.7
Same	634	42.3	585	39.7	662	41.2
Missing	37	2.5	9	0.6	3	0.2
Education of Respondent (Highest Grade Completed)						
Mean	11.7		12.4		13.05	
SD	3.25		3.18		3.05	
Range	0 - 20		0 - 20		0 - 20	
Age of Respondent (Years)						
Mean	45.29		44		46.05	
SD	18.31		17.81		17.36	
Range	18 - 89		18 - 89		18 - 89	
Index of Support for Defensive Violence (Units)						
Mean	2.88		2.86		2.95	
SD	1.24		1.25		1.22	
Range	0 - 6		0 - 6		0 - 6	

N=1499

N=1473

N=1606

\* p < .05

**BIVARIATE CORRELATION MATRICES**

		1976 GSS				1984 GSS				
		Age	Region	Education	Migration	Age	Region	Education	Migration	Index of Violence
Age	1									
Region		-0.002	1			-0.009	1			
Education		-.363**	-.130**	1		-.286**	-.093**	1		
Migration		.148**	-.035	.048	1	.122**	-.026	.102**	1	
Index of Violence		-.193**	.071**	.163**	-.015	-.176**	.068**	.110**	.010	1

\* p<.05  
\*\* p<.01

		1993 GSS				Index of Violence				
		Age	Region	Education	Migration	Age	Region	Education	Migration	Index of Violence
Age	1									
Region		.057*	1							
Education		-.255**	-.121**	1						
Migration		.070**	-.068**	.179**	1					
Index of Violence		-.094**	.061*	.066*	.009					1

\* p<.05  
\*\* p<.01

**SPSS Results for Linear Regression of  
Index of Support for Defense Violence**

**1976 GSS**

Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	t-value
Moved since 16	.007	.066	.003	.102
Age	-.010	.002	-.145	-5.16**
Education	.046	.011	.119	4.25**
Region	.233	.070	.087	3.32**
Constant	2.717	.183		14.88**

R<sup>2</sup> 0.53 \* p<.05

df 4 \*\* p<.01

N 1429

**1984 GSS**

Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	t-value
Moved since 16	.067	.067	.027	1.01
Age	-.011	.002	-.160	-5.84**
Education	.027	.011	.069	2.53*
Region	.188	.069	.071	2.74**
Constant	2.914	.180		16.16**

R<sup>2</sup> 0.41 \* p<.05

df 4 \*\* p<.01

N 1431

**1993 GSS**

Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	t-value
Moved since 16	.036	.078	.014	.46
Age	-.006	.002	-.091	-2.86**
Education	.021	.013	.051	1.58
Region	.186	.080	.072	2.32*
Constant	2.89	.223		12.93**

R<sup>2</sup> 0.17 \* p<.05

df 4 \*\* p<.01

N 1042