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## Free to Disagree? The Effects of Social Control

Author: Carine George

The purpose of this research was to determine the mechanisms in the Chaldean community in El Cajon that are used to maintain social control within relationships. In particular, questions are asked that deal with dating, having a boyfriend/girlfriend, interracial marriage, and the consequences associated with each. Chaldeans and Syriac Catholics immigrated primarily from Northern Iraq and are guaranteed to be Catholic. As is the case with many ethnic groups, there are a lot of norms (cultural and religious) that people are expected to follow, and consequences are put into place to keep people's actions regulated. The hypothesis was that some people in the Chaldean community do not agree with the norms and values that are approved of. Those that wish to maintain membership for the sake of gaining what the community offers must conceal their disapproval, while those who are unable or do not wish to cover up their disapproval will feel the need to retreat from the community because it is too tightly controlled.



The research confirmed the hypothesis, and the two main areas where this was shown was in terms of gender and race. First, a gender double standard was found which indicated that men have far more privileges than women when it comes to relationships and other areas of life. If women behave in the same way as men, they will face much more severe consequences. For example, having a boyfriend/girlfriend and engaging in premarital intimacy is greatly frowned upon and not encouraged for anyone, but if men were to engage in these acts, people would not make a fuss about it. If a woman were to behave in the exact same way though, she would be talked about endlessly, her and her family's reputation would suffer, almost no one would be willing to marry her in the future, and her sister's prospects for marriage will also go down because it is assumed that the parents did not raise good children.

The research also showed disapproval for interracial marriages with people of certain races. When asked to rate who the community thought it would be best for a Chaldean person to marry, almost everyone ranked the best option as a fellow Chaldean, then Italian (or a Caucasian), then Hispanic, followed by Asian and African American as the worst option for marriage. When confronted, people answered that Italian and Hispanic received higher rankings because they tend to have a common culture with Chaldeans and they also share the same faith. However, when asked how the ratings would change if only the African American was Catholic and the others were atheists, most people agreed that the African American might get a few points, but the rankings would remain the same. It is not uncommon for immigrants to favor endogamous relationships, so it should be no surprise that marrying people of the lower ranking races would result in many consequences. The interesting thing to note is that many people choose to conform not because they cannot handle the pressure, but because they love their families and want to spare them the trouble. If the individual and their parents were confident in the individual's actions, they would face less disapproval from the community, but if the parents are not overjoyed and unable to stand up to the community, then they will face more consequences than the deviant themselves.

**Advisors: Professor Richard Madsen and Professor Jeffrey Haydu**

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