ALSO BY WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON

Power, Racism, and Privilege

The Declining Significance of Race

The Truly Disadvantaged

Through Different Eyes (co-editor)

The Ghetto Underclass (editor)

Sociology and the Public Agenda (editor)

Poverty, Inequality and the Future of Social Policy (co-editor)

WHEN WORK DISAPPEARS

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To Beverly

During that year I visited a number of European countries and observed and studied their problems of race, poverty, and joblessness. The knowledge gained is reflected in Chapters 6 and 8, where I draw comparisons between Europe and the United States.

Finally, to my wife, I have dedicated this book.

W.J.W.

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in the twentieth century most adults in many inner-city ghetto neighborhoods are not working in a typical week. The disappearance of work has adversely affected not only individuals, families, and neighborhoods, but the social life of the city at large as well. Inner-city joblessness is a severe problem that is often overlooked or obscured when the focus is placed mainly on poverty and its consequences. Despite increases in the concentration of poverty since 1970, inner cities have always featured high levels of poverty, but the current levels of joblessness in some neighborhoods are unprecedented.

The consequences of high neighborhood joblessness are more devastating than those of high neighborhood poverty. A neighborhood in which people are poor but employed is different from a neighborhood in which people are poor and jobless. Many of today's problems in the inner-city ghetto neighborhoods—crime, family dissolution, welfare, low levels of social organization, and so on—are fundamentally a consequence of the disappearance of work.

What causes the disappearance of work? The public debate around this question is not productive because it seeks to assign blame rather than recognizing and dealing with the complex and changing realities that have led to economic distress for many Americans. Explanations and proposed solutions to the problems are often ideologically driven.

Thus, those who endorse liberal ideology have tended to emphasize social structural factors, including race. By social structure I mean the ordering of social positions (or statuses) and networks of social re-

lationships that are based on the arrangement of mutually dependent institutions (economy, polity, family, education) of society. Race, which reflects both an individual's position (in the sense of social status defined by skin color) and network of relationships in society, is a social structural variable. Many liberal explanations of social inequality cite race to the exclusion of other structural variables.

Those who endorse conservative ideology tend to stress the importance of values, attitudes, habits, and styles in explaining the different experiences, behavior, and outcomes of groups. According to this view, group differences are reflected in the culture. To act according to one's culture is to follow one's inclinations as they have been developed by learning or influence from other members of the community to which one belongs or with which one identifies.

This book attempts to demonstrate that social structural factors are important for understanding joblessness and other experiences of the inner-city poor, but that there is much these factors do not explain. Although race is clearly an important variable in the social outcomes of inner-city blacks, much ambiguity remains about the meaning and significance of race in certain situations. Cultural factors do play a role, but any adequate explanation of inner-city joblessness and poverty should take other variables into account. Social psychological variables—a set of factors generally absent from the current debate—must be integrated with social structural and cultural variables. We need a broader vision that includes *all* of the major variables and, even more important, reveals their relative significance and their interaction in determining the experiences and life chances of inner-city residents. Such a vision guides my interpretation and integration of the research reported in the following chapters.

I highlight problems in order to inform the public and social policy debates. A good deal of what we call attention to as social scientists is related to the ultimate objective of our research. Social researchers who wish to inform and influence public policy are more likely to focus on a community's problems than on its strengths. Their purpose is to stimulate thought so that policymakers, concerned citizens, journalists, and others will have a basis for understanding such problems and the need to address them. Given the reemergence of the discussion concerning the importance of genetic endowment, it is urgent

that social scientists once again emphasize, for public policy purposes, the powerful and complex role of the social environment in shaping the life experiences of inner-city ghetto residents.

Since the publication of *The Bell Curve* in late 1994, a genetic argument has resurfaced in public discussions about the plight of inner-city residents. This controversial book by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray argues that regardless of social, economic, or ethnic background, low intelligence is the root cause of many of our social problems. Herrnstein and Murray attempt to demonstrate that "cognitive ability," as measured by intelligence tests, powerfully predicts not only earnings but a range of other outcomes from parental competence to criminal behavior. *The Bell Curve* questions the extent to which the environment influences group social outcomes and whether intervention programs can compensate for the handicaps of genetic endowment.

Herrnstein and Murray argue, for example, that early intervention programs for children of the "underclass" hold little promise. Why? Because the substantial gains in standardized test scores recorded during the preschool programs quickly erode after the children leave. They point out that within a few years the test scores of the children who attended Head Start programs do not differ significantly from the scores of those who did not. "Cognitive benefits that can often be picked up in the first grade of school are usually gone by the third grade," they state. "By the sixth grade, they have vanished entirely in aggregate statistics." This is what is called "fade-out"—"the gradual convergence in test scores of the children who participated in the program with comparable children who had not." The authors maintain that for the foreseeable future outside intervention programs such as Head Start will not be effective because they do not address the problems associated with low cognitive ability.

Anyone familiar with the harsh environment of the inner-city ghetto should not be surprised by the research findings on the Head Start fade-out. It would be extraordinary if the gains from Head Start programs were sustained in some of these environments. The children of the inner-city ghetto have to contend with public schools plagued by unimaginative curricula, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate plant and facilities, and only a small proportion of teachers who have confidence in their students and expect them to learn. Inner-city ghetto children also grow up in neighborhoods with devastating rates of job-

lessness, which trigger a whole series of other problems that are not conducive to healthy child development or intellectual growth. Included among these are broken families, antisocial behavior, social networks that do not extend beyond the confines of the ghetto environment, and a lack of informal social control over the behavior and activities of children and adults in the neighborhood.

If enrichment programs like Head Start were extended throughout elementary, middle, and even high school, it is very likely that initial gains would be sustained. In the absence of such programs, however, it is unwarranted and intellectually irresponsible to attribute either the academic failure of these children or their lack of success in postschool employment mainly to their "cognitive ability." Moreover, most geneticists agree that there is currently no definite line separating genetic influences from environmental influences.

Indeed, the test used by Herrnstein and Murray as an indicator of innate intellectual ability, the Armed Forces Qualifications Test (AFQT), is largely an achievement test, not a test of genetic endowment. It reflects the cumulative weight of poverty and racial experiences. Recent research reveals that additional years of schooling and work experience result in significant changes in AFQT scores. Herrnstein and Murray claim that they controlled for environmental experiences using an indicator of family background (parental education, occupational status, family income) measured at the time the youth took the AFQT test (between ages 15 and 23). However, as the economist James Heckman points out, this measure does not capture the 15 to 23 years of cumulative environmental influences, including the long-term effects of living in certain neighborhoods, the cultural milieu, the quality of schooling, the nurturing of parents, the resources they are able to spend or pass on to their children, and so on.

If the importance of the ghetto environment is deemphasized in studies such as *The Bell Curve*, it is also downplayed by those scholars who purport to "defend" inner-city residents and correct what they believe to be distortions in the descriptions of their behaviors and experiences. The earlier proponents of this approach were African-American scholars who reacted angrily in the 1970s to the unflattering depictions of ghetto blacks in *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, Daniel Patrick Moynihan's controversial 1965 report on the black family.

These scholars were highly critical of the Moynihan report's emphasis on social pathologies within ghetto neighborhoods not simply because of its potential for embarrassment but also because it conflicted with their claim that blacks were developing a community power base that could become a major force in American society. This power base, they argued, reflected the strength and vitality of the black community. These African-American scholars emphasized the positive aspects of the black experience. In fact, those elements of ghetto behavior described as pathological in the late-1960s studies of the inner city were seen as functional in this new interpretation because, it was argued, inner-city blacks, and especially the black family, were resilient, able to survive and even flourish in a racist environment. These revisionist arguments shifted the focus from the consequences of racial isolation and economic class subordination to inner-city black achievement. In short, as in *The Bell Curve*, but of course for entirely different reasons, the devastating effects of the inner-city environment were either ignored, played down, or denied.

The most prominent and recent "sympathetic" portrayal of inner-city residents which shifts the focus away from the ghetto environment was presented by the sociologist Mitchell Duneier. In a book entitled *Slim's Table*, Duneier reports on his extensive interviews with a small group of working-class men, including one named "Slim," from an inner-city neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. These men frequent a cafeteria in the nearby affluent neighborhood of Hyde Park, where the interviews were conducted. Duneier argues that sociologists and journalists ignore people like Slim who continue to live in the ghetto. In reaction to the arguments I presented in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, Duneier points out that even in the most troubled neighborhoods one will find hardworking and family-oriented people who are committed to the values of mainstream society.

The arguments in *The Truly Disadvantaged* do not contradict this view. I pointed out that both middle-class and working-class blacks—who have historically reinforced the traditional patterns of work, family, and education in the inner city—have departed many ghetto neighborhoods in significant numbers. I argue that there is a paucity of such families not only because of the exodus (outmigration) of higher-income families but also because of declining employment opportunities associated with the economic restructuring that currently

afflicts Americans in all racial and ethnic groups. In other words, the ranks of the stable and employed families in many inner-city neighborhoods have been severely reduced, not totally eliminated.

In this volume the devastating effects of the inner-city ghetto environment are discussed and documented. The residents who live in these environments plainly see this process themselves and many of them discuss the situation in clearer and more graphic terms than the social scientists who are researching these neighborhoods.

Like the older men who eat regularly in the Hyde Park cafeteria, whom Duneier claims are representative of ghetto blacks, the people interviewed in their actual homes and neighborhoods by our researchers spoke with dignity and in their remarks expressed values of work, family, and education. But they also focused on issues not highlighted in the benign portraits in *Slim's Table*—the problems of racial segregation, class subordination, and social isolation that not only make their efforts to survive very difficult but have destroyed so many of their relatives, friends, and neighbors.

In emphasizing the powerful role of the environment in shaping the lives of inner-city residents, we should not ignore or deny the existence of unflattering behaviors that emerge from blocked opportunities. Indeed, as spelled out in Chapter 3, some of these behaviors, which often impede the social mobility of inner-city residents, represent cultural responses to constraints and limited opportunities that have evolved over time. The tendency of some liberals to deny the very existence of culturally destructive behavior and attitudes in the inner city is once again to diminish the importance of the environment in determining the outcomes and life chances of individuals. The environment embodies both structural and cultural constraints and opportunities. In order to fully appreciate and explain the divergent social outcomes of human groups, we must take into account the exposure to different cultural influences.

It is also necessary to account for the exposure to different structural influences. For example, it is important to understand and communicate the overwhelming obstacles that many ghetto residents have to overcome just to live up to mainstream expectations involving work, the family, and the law. Such expectations are taken for granted in middle-class society. Americans in more affluent areas have jobs that offer fringe benefits; they are accustomed to health insurance that

covers paid sick leave and medical care. They do not live in neighborhoods where attempts at normal child-rearing are constantly undermined by social forces that interfere with healthy child development. And their families' prospects for survival do not require at least some participation in the informal economy (that is, an economy in which income is unreported and therefore not taxable).

It is just as indefensible to treat inner-city residents as superheroes who are able to overcome racist oppression as it is to view them as helpless victims. We should, however, appreciate the range of choices, including choices representing cultural influences, that are available to inner-city residents who live under constraints that most people in the larger society do not experience.

I argue that the disappearance of work and the consequences of that disappearance for both social and cultural life are the central problems in the inner-city ghetto. To acknowledge that the ghetto still includes working people and that nearly all ghetto residents, whether employed or not, support the norms of the work ethic (see Chapter 6) should not lead one to overlook the fact that a majority of adults in many inner-city neighborhoods are jobless at any given point in time.

This book also emphasizes that the disappearance of work and the growth of related problems in the ghetto have aggravated an already tense racial situation in urban areas. Our nation's response to racial discord in the central city and to the growing racial divide between the city and the suburbs has been disappointing. In discussing these problems we have a tendency to engage in the kind of rhetoric that exacerbates, rather than alleviates, urban and metropolitan racial tensions. Ever since the 1992 Los Angeles riot, the media have focused heavily on the factors that divide rather than those that unite racial groups. Emphasis on racial division peaked in 1995 following the jury's verdict in the O. J. Simpson murder trial. Before the verdict was announced, opinion polls revealed that whites overwhelmingly thought Mr. Simpson was guilty, while a substantial majority of blacks felt he was innocent. The media clips showing public reaction to the verdict dramatized the racial division—blacks appeared elated and jubilant; whites appeared stunned, angry, and somber. Blacks believed that O. J. Simpson had been framed by a racist police conspiracy; whites were

convinced that he was guilty of the murder of two people and was being allowed to walk free. The racial divide, as depicted in the media, seemed as wide as ever.

The implications of these developments for the future of race relations and for programs perceived to benefit blacks remain to be seen. As one observer, on the eve of the Simpson verdict, put it: "When O. J. gets off, the whites will riot the way we whites do: leave the cities, go to Idaho or Oregon or Arizona, vote for Gingrich . . . and punish the blacks by closing the day-care programs and cutting off their Medicaid."

The extent of the racial divisions in this country should not be minimized. The different reactions to the Simpson trial and the verdict reflect in part the fundamentally dissimilar racial experiences of blacks and whites in America—the former burdened by racial injustice, the latter largely free of the effects of bigotry and hatred. Nonetheless, the emphasis on racial differences has obscured the fact that African-Americans, whites, and other ethnic groups share many common concerns, are beset by many common problems, and have many common values, aspirations, and hopes.

If inner-city blacks are experiencing the greatest problems of joblessness, it is a more extreme form of economic marginality that has affected most Americans since 1980. As I shall argue in Chapters 7 and 8, solutions to the broader problems of economic marginality in this country, including those that stem from changes in the global economy, can go a long way toward addressing the problems of inner-city joblessness, especially if the application of resources includes wise targeting to the groups most in need of help. Discussions that emphasize common solutions to commonly shared problems promote a sense of unity, regardless of the different degrees of severity to which these problems afflict certain groups. Such messages bring races together, not apart, and are especially important during periods of racial tension. In comparison with the rhetoric highlighting racial divisions, however, messages promoting interracial unity have been infrequent and are generally ignored in the media.

It is important to recognize that racial antagonisms, or the manifestation of racial tensions, are products of economic, political, and social situations. In a 1992 op-ed article in *The New York Times*, I used this argument to point out why it is important for political, leaders to channel the frustrations of average citizens in positive or constructive directions during periods of economic duress. I discussed the 1992 political campaign of President Bill Clinton, who not only explicitly acknowledged the growing racial tension in America and the need for political leadership to unite and not divide the races, but who had actually developed a public rhetoric that reflected these concerns. This campaign rhetoric warned Americans against the distraction of pitting race against race; it urged citizens to associate their declining real incomes, increasing job insecurity, and growing pessimism with the complex but real sources of these problems. I pointed out that the use of this positive public rhetoric during a period of intense racial tension enabled Clinton to bring together antagonistic racial groups to form an effective political coalition in the primary elections—even in Louisiana where a majority of white voters supported the former Klansman David Duke in the 1991 gubernatorial election. Unfortunately, the media, preoccupied with allegations surrounding Mr. Clinton's personal life, failed to record the significance of this event.

Because the problems of ghetto joblessness are so severe and because they are associated with social problems that make many of our central cities increasingly unattractive places in which to reside and work, a vision of interracial unity that acknowledges distinctively racial problems but nonetheless emphasizes common solutions to common problems is more important now than ever. Such a vision should be developed, shared, and promoted by all leaders in this country, but especially by political leaders.

I have in mind a vision that promotes values of racial and intergroup harmony and unity and rejects the commonly held view that race is so divisive that whites, blacks, Latinos, and other ethnic groups cannot work together in a common cause. This vision recognizes that if a political message is tailored to a white audience, racial minorities draw back, just as whites draw back when a message is tailored to minority audiences. The foundation of this vision emphasizes issues and programs that concern the families of all racial and ethnic groups so that individuals in these groups will come to see their mutual interests and join in a multiracial coalition to move America forward; it promotes the idea that Americans have common interests and concerns that cross racial and class boundaries—such as unemployment and job security, declining real wages, escalating medical and housing costs, the scarcity of quality child care programs, the sharp decline in the quality of public education, and the toll of crime and drug trafficking

in all neighborhoods. This vision encourages Americans to see that the application of programs to combat these problems would benefit everyone, not just the truly disadvantaged; to recognize that the division between the suburbs and the central city is partly a racial one and that it is vitally important to emphasize city-suburban cooperation, not separation; and, finally, to endorse the idea that all groups, including those in the throes of ghetto joblessness, should be able to achieve full membership in society because the problems of economic and social marginality spring from the inequities in society at large and not from group deficiencies. I believe that this vision, supported by a public rhetoric of interracial unity, is essential to address the problems discussed in this book.

Most of the following chapters rely heavily on data collected during the course of three research projects conducted at the Center for the Study of Urban Inequality at the University of Chicago. Appendix B describes each of these studies in some detail, but I would like to point out here that the most important of these projects is the Urban Poverty and Family Life Study (UPFLS). Conducted in 1987 and 1988, this project includes a random survey of nearly 2,500 poor and nonpoor African-American, Latino, and white residents in Chicago's poor inner-city neighborhoods. These are neighborhoods with poverty rates of at least 20 percent. As part of this broad project, the UPFLS includes data from the Social Opportunity Survey, a subsample of 175 UPFLS participants who answered open-ended questions concerning their perceptions of the opportunity structure and life chances; a 1988 survey of 179 employers—in most cases the information came from the highest-ranking official at each firm sampled—selected to reflect the distribution of employment across industry and firm size in the Chicago metropolitan areas; and comprehensive ethnographic research, including participant-observation research and life-history interviews, conducted during the period of 1986 to 1988 by ten research assistants in a representative sample of inner-city neighborhoods.

The first of the two remaining projects includes a 1993 survey of a representative sample of 500 respondents from two high-joblessness neighborhoods on the South Side of Chicago and six focus group discussions involving the residents and former residents of these neighborhoods. The third study is a 1989–90 survey of a representative

sample of black mothers and up to two of their adolescent children (ages 11 to 16) in working- and middle-class neighborhoods and high-poverty neighborhoods. The respondents from the households in the high-poverty neighborhoods included 383 mothers and 614 youths. Those from the households in the working- and middle-class neighborhoods were represented by 163 mothers and 273 youths. I have integrated the data from these three studies with census-type information and relevant findings from the research of other scholars.

product of systematic racial practices such as restrictive covenants, redlining by banks and insurance companies, zoning, panic peddling by real estate agents, and the creation of massive public housing projects in low-income areas.

Segregated ghettos are less conducive to employment and employment preparation than are other areas of the city. Segregation in ghettos exacerbates employment problems because it leads to weak informal employment networks and contributes to the social isolation of individuals and families, thereby reducing their chances of acquiring the human capital skills, including adequate educational training, that facilitate mobility in a society. Since no other group in society experiences the degree of segregation, isolation, and poverty concentration as do African-Americans, they are far more likely to be disadvantaged when they have to compete with other groups in society, including other despised groups, for resources and privileges.

To understand the new urban poverty, one has to account for the ways in which segregation interacts with other changes in society to produce the recent escalating rates of joblessness and problems of social organization in inner-city ghetto neighborhoods.

CHAPTER 2

Societal Changes and Vulnerable Neighborhoods

The disappearance of work in many inner-city neighborhoods is partly related to the nationwide decline in the fortunes of low-skilled workers. Although the growing wage inequality has hurt both low-skilled men and women, the problem of declining employment has been concentrated among low-skilled men. In 1987–89, a low-skilled male worker was jobless eight and a half weeks longer than he would have been in 1967–69. Moreover, the proportion of men who "permanently" dropped out of the labor force was more than twice as high in the late 1980s than it had been in the late 1960s. A precipitous drop in real wages—that is, wages adjusted for inflation—has accompanied the increases in joblessness among low-income workers. If you arrange all wages into five groups according to wage percentile (from highest to lowest), you see that men in the bottom fifth of this income distribution experienced more than a 30 percent drop in real wages between 1970 and 1989.

Even the low-skilled workers who are consistently employed face problems of economic advancement. Job ladders—opportunities for promotion within firms—have eroded, and many less-skilled workers stagnate in dead-end, low-paying positions. This suggests that the chances of improving one's earnings by changing jobs have declined: if jobs inside a firm have become less available to the experienced workers in that firm, they are probably even more difficult for outsiders to obtain.

But there is a paradox here. Despite the increasing economic marginality of low-wage workers, unemployment dipped below 6 percent

in 1994 and early 1995, many workers are holding more than one job, and overtime work has reached a record high. Yet while tens of millions of new jobs have been created in the past two decades, men who are well below retirement age are working less than they did two decades ago—and a growing percentage are neither working nor looking for work. The proportion of male workers in the prime of their life (between the ages of 22 and 58) who worked in a given decade full-time, year-round, in at least eight out of ten years declined from 79 percent during the 1970s to 71 percent in the 1980s. While the American economy saw a rapid expansion in high technology and services, especially advanced services, growth in blue-collar factory, transportation, and construction jobs, traditionally held by men, has not kept pace with the rise in the working-age population. These men are working less as a result.

The growth of a nonworking class of prime-age males along with a larger number of those who are often unemployed, who work part-time, or who work in temporary jobs is concentrated among the poorly educated, the school dropouts, and minorities. In the 1970s, two-thirds of prime-age male workers with less than a high school education worked full-time, year-round, in eight out of ten years. During the 1980s, only half did so. Prime-age black men experienced a similar sharp decline. Seven out of ten of all black men worked full-time, year-round, in eight out of ten years in the 1970s, but only half did so in the 1980s. The figures for those who reside in the inner city are obviously even lower.

One study estimates that since 1967 the number of prime-age men who are not in school, not working, and not looking for work for even a single week in a given year has more than doubled for both whites and nonwhites (respectively, from 3.3 to 7.7 percent and 5.8 percent to 13.2 percent). Data from this study also revealed that one-quarter of all male high school dropouts had no official employment at all in 1992. And of those with high school diplomas, one out of ten did not hold a job in 1993, up sharply from 1967 when only one out of fifty reported that he had had no job throughout the year. Among prime-age nonwhite males, the share of those who had no jobs at all in a given year increased from 3 percent to 17 percent during the last quarter century.

These changes are related to the decline of the mass production system in the United States. The traditional American economy featured rapid growth in productivity and living standards. The mass production system benefited from large quantities of cheap natural resources, economies of scale, and processes that generated higher uses of productivity through shifts in market forces from agriculture to manufacturing and that caused improvements in one industry (for example, reduced steel costs) to lead to advancements in others (for example, higher sales and greater economies of scale in the automobile industry). In this system plenty of blue-collar jobs were available to workers with little formal education. Today, most of the new jobs for workers with limited education and experience are in the service sector, which hires relatively more women. One study found that the U.S. created 27 clerical, sales, and service jobs per thousand of working-age population in the 1980s. During the same period, the country lost 16 production, transportation, and laborer jobs per thousand of working-age population. In another study the social scientists Robert Lerman and Martin Rein revealed that from 1989 to 1993, the period covering the economic downturn, social service industries (health, education, and welfare) added almost 3 million jobs, while 1.4 million jobs were lost in all other industries. The expanding job market in social services offset the recession-linked job loss in other industries.

The movement of lower-educated men into the growth sectors of the economy has been slow. For example, "the fraction of men who have moved into so-called pink-collar jobs like practical nursing or clerical work remains negligible." The large concentration of women in the expanding social service sector partly accounts for the striking gender differences in job growth. Unlike lower-educated men, lower-educated women are working more, not less, than in previous years. The employment patterns among lower-educated women, like those with higher education and training, reflect the dramatic expansion of social service industries. Between 1989 and 1993, jobs held by women increased by 1.3 million, while those held by men barely rose at all (by roughly 100,000).

Although the wages of low-skilled women (those with less than twelve years of education) rose slightly in the 1970s, they flattened out in the 1980s, and continued to remain below those of low-skilled men. The wage gap between low-skilled men and women shrank not because of gains made by female workers but mainly because of the decline in real wages for men. The unemployment rates among low-skilled women are slightly lower than those among their male

counterparts. However, over the past decade their rates of participation in the labor force have stagnated and have fallen further behind the labor-force-participation rates among more highly educated women, which continue to rise. The unemployment rates among both low-skilled men and women are five times that among their college-educated counterparts.

Among the factors that have contributed to the growing gap in employment and wages between low-skilled and college-educated workers is the increased internationalization of the U.S. economy. As the economists Richard B. Freeman and Lawrence F. Katz point out:

> In the 1980s, trade imbalances implicitly acted to augment the nation's supply of less educated workers, particularly those with less than a high school education. Many production and routine clerical tasks could be more easily transferred abroad than in the past. The increased supply of less educated workers arising from trade deficits accounted for as much as 15 percent of the increase in college–high school wage differential from the 1970s to the mid-1980s. In contrast, a balanced expansion of international trade, in which growth in exports matches the growth of imports, appears to have fairly neutral effects on relative labor demand. Indeed, balanced growth of trade leads to an upgrading in jobs for workers without college degrees, since export-sector jobs tend to pay higher wages for "comparable" workers than do import-competing jobs.

The lowering of unionization rates, which accompanied the decline in the mass production system, has also contributed to shrinking wages and nonwage compensation for less skilled workers. As the economist Rebecca Blank has pointed out, "unionized workers typically receive not only higher wages, but also more non-wage benefits. As the availability of union jobs has declined for unskilled workers, non-wage benefits have also declined."

Finally, the wage and employment gap between skilled and unskilled workers is growing partly because education and training are considered more important than ever in the new global economy. At the same time that changes in technology are producing new jobs, they are making many others obsolete. The workplace has been revolutionized by technological changes that range from the development of robotics to information highways. While educated workers are benefiting from the pace of technological change, involving the increased use of computer-based technologies and microcomputers, more routine workers face the growing threat of job displacement in certain industries. For example, highly skilled designers, engineers, and operators are needed for the jobs associated with the creation of a new set of computer-operated machine tools; but these same exciting new opportunities eliminate jobs for those trained only for manual, assembly-line work. Also, in certain businesses, advances in word processing have increased the demand for those who not only know how to type but can operate specialized software as well; at the same time, these advances reduce the need for routine typists and secretaries. In the new global economy, highly educated and thoroughly trained men and women are in demand. This may be seen most dramatically in the sharp differences in employment experiences among men. Unlike men with lower education, college-educated men are working more, not less.

The shift in demand has been especially devastating for those low-skilled workers whose incorporation into the mainstream economy has been marginal or recent. Even before the economic restructuring of the nation's economy, low-skilled African-Americans were at the end of the employment queue. Their economic situation has been further weakened because they tend to reside in communities that not only have higher jobless rates and lower employment growth but lack access to areas of higher employment and employment growth as well. Moreover, as we shall see in Chapter 5, they are far more likely than other ethnic and racial groups to face negative employer attitudes.

Of the changes in the economy that have adversely affected low-skilled African-American workers, perhaps the most significant have been those in the manufacturing sector. One study revealed that in the 1970s "up to half of the huge employment declines for less-educated blacks might be explained by industrial shifts away from manufacturing toward other sectors." Another study reported that since the 1960s "deindustrialization" and the "erosion in job opportunities especially in the Midwest and Northeast . . . bear responsibility for the growth of the ranks of the 'truly disadvantaged.' " The manufacturing losses in some northern cities have been staggering. In the twenty-year period from 1967 to 1987, Philadelphia lost 64 percent of its manufacturing jobs; Chicago lost 60 percent; New York City, 58 percent; Detroit, 51

percent. In absolute numbers, these percentages represent the loss of 160,000 jobs in Philadelphia, 326,000 in Chicago, 520,000—over half a million—in New York, and 108,000 in Detroit.

Another study examined the effects of economic restructuring in the 1980s by highlighting the changes in both the variety and the quality of blue-collar employment in general. Jobs were grouped into a small number of relatively homogeneous clusters on the basis of job quality (which was measured in terms of earnings, benefits, union protection, and involuntary part-time employment). The authors found that both the relative earnings and employment rates among unskilled black workers were lower for two reasons: traditional jobs that provide a living wage (high-wage blue-collar cluster, of which roughly 50 percent were manufacturing jobs) declined, as did the quality of secondary jobs on which they increasingly had to rely, leading to lower relative earnings for the remaining workers in the labor market. As employment prospects worsened, rising proportions of low-skilled black workers dropped out of the legitimate labor market.

Data from the Chicago Urban Poverty and Family Life Survey show that efforts by out-of-school inner-city black men to obtain blue-collar jobs in the industries in which their fathers had been employed have been hampered by industrial restructuring. "The most common occupation reported by respondents at ages 19 to 28 changed from operative and assembler jobs among the oldest cohorts to service jobs (waiters and janitors) among the youngest cohort." Fifty-seven percent of Chicago's employed inner-city black fathers (aged 15 and over and without undergraduate degrees) who were born between 1950 and 1955 worked in manufacturing and construction industries in 1974. By 1987, industrial employment in this group had fallen to 31 percent. Of those born between 1956 and 1960, 52 percent worked in these industries as late as 1978. But again, by 1987 industrial employment in this group fell to 28 percent. No other male ethnic group in the inner city experienced such an overall precipitous drop in manufacturing employment (see Appendix C). These employment changes have accompanied the loss of traditional manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs in Chicago. As a result, young black males have turned increasingly to the low-wage service sector and unskilled laboring jobs for employment, or have gone jobless. The strongly held U.S. cultural and economic belief that the son will do at least as well as the father in the labor market does not apply to many young inner-city males.

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The number of employed black males ages 20 to 29 working in manufacturing industries fell dramatically between 1973 and 1987 (from three of every eight to one in five). Meanwhile, the share of employed young black men in the retail trade and service jobs rose sharply during that period (from 17 to almost 27 percent and from 10 to nearly 21 percent, respectively). And this shift in opportunities was not without economic consequences: in 1987, the average annual earnings of 20-to-29-year-old males who held jobs in the retail trade and service sectors were 25 to 30 percent less than those of males employed in manufacturing sectors. This dramatic loss in earnings potential affects every male employed in the service sector regardless of color.

The structural shifts in the distribution of industrial job opportunities are not the only reason for the increasing joblessness and declining earnings among young black male workers. There have also been important changes in the patterns of occupational staffing within firms and industries, including those in manufacturing. These changes have primarily benefited those with more formal education. Substantial numbers of new professional, technical, and managerial positions have been created. However, such jobs require at least some years of postsecondary education. Young high school dropouts and even high school graduates "have faced a dwindling supply of career jobs offering the real earnings opportunities available to them in the 1960s and early 1970s."

In certain urban areas the prospects for employment among workers with little education have fallen sharply. John Kasarda examined employment changes in selected urban centers and found that major northern cities had consistent employment losses in industries with low mean levels of employee education and employment gains in industries in which the workers had higher levels of education. For ex-

ample, during the 1980s New York City lost 135,000 jobs in industries in which the workers averaged less than twelve years of education, and gained almost 300,000 jobs in industries in which workers had thirteen or more years of education. Philadelphia lost 55,000 jobs in the low-education industries and gained 40,000 jobs for workers with high school plus at least some college. Baltimore and Boston also experienced substantial losses in industries employing low-education workers and major gains in industries employing more educated workers.

Kasarda's study also documents the growing importance of education in nine "economically transforming" northern cities and in Los Angeles. The jobs traditionally held by high school dropouts declined in all nine northern cities between 1980 and 1990, while those held by college graduates increased. "Los Angeles, which experienced a 50 percent increase in city [urban] jobs held by college graduates, also experienced a 15 percent growth in jobs held by those who have not completed high school. The latter no doubt reflects the large immigration of Hispanic workers and other minorities" who have little education.

To some degree, these changes reflect overall improvements in educational attainment within the urban labor force. However, they "were not nearly as great as the concurrent upward shifts in the education of city jobholders." Moreover, much of the increase in the "college-educated" jobs in each city reflected the educational status of suburban commuters, while much of the decrease in the "less than high school" category reflected the job losses of city residents, few of whom could aspire to a four-year postsecondary degree.

As pointed out earlier, most of the new jobs for workers with limited training and education are in the service sector and are disproportionately held by women. This is even more true for those who work in social services, which include the industries of health, education, and welfare. As we have seen, within central cities the number of jobs for less educated workers has declined precipitously. However, many workers stayed afloat thanks to jobs in the expanding social service sector, especially black women with less than a high school degree. Robert Lerman and Martin Rein report that among all women workers, the proportion employed in social services climbed between 1979 and 1993 (from 28 to 33 percent). The health and education industries absorbed nearly all of this increase. Of the 54 million female workers in 1993, almost one-third were employed in social service industries.

Social services tend to feature a more highly educated workforce. Only 20 percent of all female workers with less than a high school degree were employed in social services in 1993. (The figure for comparable males is even less. Only 4 percent of employed less educated men held social service jobs in 1993.) Nonetheless, the proportion of less educated female workers in social services is up notably from 1989.

Indeed, despite the relatively higher educational level of social service workers, the research of Lerman and Rein reveals that 37 percent of employed less educated black women in central cities worked in social services in 1993, largely in jobs in hospitals, elementary schools, nursing care, and child care. In central cities in the largest metropolitan areas, the fraction of low-educated African-American female workers in social services sharply increased from 30.5 percent in 1979 to 40.5 percent in 1993. Given the overall decline of jobs for less educated central city workers, the opportunity for employment in the social service industries prevented many inner-city workers from joining the growing ranks of the jobless. Less educated black female workers depend heavily on social service employment. Even a small number of less educated black males were able to find jobs in social services. Although only 4 percent of less educated employed males worked in social services in 1993, 12 percent of less educated employed black men in the central cities of large metropolitan areas held social service jobs. Without the growth of social service employment, the rates of inner-city joblessness would have risen beyond their already unprecedented high levels.

The demand in the labor market has shifted toward higher-educated workers in various industries and occupations. The changing occupational and industrial mix is associated with increases in the rates of joblessness (unemployment and "dropping out" of, or nonparticipation in, the labor force) and decreases in the relative wages of disadvantaged urban workers.

The factors contributing to the relative decline in the economic status of disadvantaged workers are not solely due to those on the demand side, such as economic restructuring. The growing wage differential in the 1980s is also a function of two supply-side factors—the decline in the relative supply of college graduates and the influx of poor immigrants. "In the 1970s the relative supply of college graduates grew rapidly, the result of the baby boomers who enrolled in college in the late 1960s and early 1970s in response to the high rewards

for college degrees and the fear of being drafted for the Vietnam War," state Freeman and Katz. "The growth in supply overwhelmed the increase in demand for more educated workers, and the returns to college diminished." In the 1980s, the returns for college increased because of declining growth in the relative supply of college graduates.

Also in the 1980s, a large number of immigrants with little formal education arrived in the United States from developing countries, and affected the wages of poorly educated native workers, especially those who had dropped out of high school. According to one estimate, nearly one-third of the decline in earnings for male high school dropouts compared with other workers in the 1980s may be linked to immigration. However, although the increase in immigration contributed to the growing inequality, it is only one of several factors depressing the wages of low-skilled workers. As Sheldon Danziger and Peter Gottschalk point out in this connection, "Immigrants are heavily concentrated in a few states, such as California and Florida . . . inequality did rise in these states, but it rose in most areas, even those with very few immigrants."

Joblessness and declining wages are also related to the recent growth in ghetto poverty. The most dramatic increases in ghetto poverty occurred between 1970 and 1980, and they were mostly confined to the large industrial metropolises of the Northeast and Midwest, regions that experienced massive industrial restructuring and loss of blue-collar jobs during that decade. But the rise in ghetto poverty was not the only problem. Industrial restructuring had devastating effects on the social organization of many inner-city neighborhoods in these regions. The fate of the West Side black community of North Lawndale vividly exemplifies the cumulative process of economic and social dislocation that has swept through Chicago's inner city.

After more than a quarter century of continuous deterioration, North Lawndale resembles a war zone. Since 1960, nearly half of its housing stock has disappeared; the remaining units are mostly run-down or dilapidated. Two large factories anchored the economy of this West Side neighborhood in its good days—the Hawthorne plant of Western Electric, which employed over 43,000 workers; and an International Harvester plant with 14,000 workers. The world headquarters for Sears, Roebuck and Company was located there, providing

another 10,000 jobs. The neighborhood also had a Copenhagen snuff plant, a Sunbeam factory, and a Zenith factory, a Dell Farm food market, an Alden's catalog store, and a U.S. Post Office bulk station. But conditions rapidly changed. Harvester closed its doors in the late 1960s. Sears moved most of its offices to the Loop in downtown Chicago in 1973; a catalog distribution center with a workforce of 3,000 initially remained in the neighborhood but was relocated outside of the state of Illinois in 1987. The Hawthorne plant gradually phased out its operations and finally shut down in 1984.

The departure of the big plants triggered the demise or exodus of the smaller stores, the banks, and other businesses that relied on the wages paid by the large employers. "To make matters worse, scores of stores were forced out of business or pushed out of the neighborhoods by insurance companies in the wake of the 1968 riots that swept through Chicago's West Side after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Others were simply burned or abandoned. It has been estimated that the community lost 75 percent of its business establishments from 1960 to 1970 alone." In 1986, North Lawndale, with a population of over 66,000, had only one bank and one supermarket; but it was also home to forty-eight state lottery agents, fifty currency exchanges, and ninety-nine licensed liquor stores and bars.

The impact of industrial restructuring on inner-city employment is clearly apparent to urban blacks. The UPFLS survey posed the following question: "Over the past five or ten years, how many friends of yours have lost their jobs because the place where they worked shut down—would you say none, a few, some, or most?" Only 26 percent of the black residents in our sample reported that none of their friends had lost jobs because their workplace shut down. Indeed, both black men and black women were more likely to report that their friends had lost jobs because of plant closings than were the Mexicans and the other ethnic groups in our study. Moreover, nearly half of the employed black fathers and mothers in the UPFLS survey stated that they considered themselves to be at high risk of losing their jobs because of plant shutdowns. Significantly fewer Hispanic and white parents felt this way.

Some of the inner-city neighborhoods have experienced more visible job losses than others. But residents of the inner city are keenly aware of the rapid depletion of job opportunities. A 33-year-old unmarried black male of North Lawndale who is employed as a clerical

worker stated: "Because of the way the economy is structured, we're losing more jobs. Chicago is losing jobs by the thousands. There just aren't any starting companies here and it's harder to find a job compared to what it was years ago."

A similar view was expressed by a 41-year-old black female, also from North Lawndale, who works as a nurse's aide:

> Chicago is really full of peoples. Everybody can't get a good job. They don't have enough good jobs to provide for everybody. I don't think they have enough jobs period. . . . And all the factories and the places, they closed up and moved out of the city and stuff like that, you know. I guess it's one of the reasons they haven't got too many jobs now, 'cause a lot of the jobs now, factories and business, they're done moved out. So that way it's less jobs for lot of peoples.

Respondents from other neighborhoods also reported on the impact of industrial restructuring. According to a 33-year-old South Side janitor:

> The machines are putting a lot of people out of jobs. I worked for *Time* magazine for seven years on a videograph printer and they come along with the Abedic printer, it cost them half a million dollars: they did what we did in half the time, eliminated two shifts.

"Jobs were plentiful in the past," stated a 29-year-old unemployed black male who lives in one of the poorest neighborhoods on the South Side.

> You could walk out of the house and get a job. Maybe not what you want but you could get a job. Now, you can't find anything. A lot of people in this neighborhood, they want to work but they can't get work. A few, but a very few, they just don't want to work. The majority they want to work but they can't find work.

Finally, a 41-year-old hospital worker from another impoverished South Side neighborhood associated declining employment opportunities with decreasing skill levels:

> Well, most of the jobs have moved out of Chicago. Factory jobs have moved out. There are no jobs here. Not like it was 20, 30 years ago. And people aren't skilled enough for the jobs that are here. You don't have enough skilled and educated people to fill them.

The increasing suburbanization of employment has accompanied industrial restructuring and has further exacerbated the problems of inner-city joblessness and restricted access to jobs. "Metropolitan areas captured nearly 90 percent of the nation's employment growth; much of this growth occurred in booming 'edge cities' at the metropolitan periphery. By 1990, many of these 'edge cities' had more office space and retail sales than the metropolitan downtowns." Over the last two decades, 60 percent of the new jobs created in the Chicago metropolitan area have been located in the northwest suburbs of Cook and Du Page counties. African-Americans constitute less than 2 percent of the population in these areas.

In *The Truly Disadvantaged*, I maintained that one result of these changes for many urban blacks has been a growing mismatch between the suburban location of employment and minorities' residence in the inner city. Although studies based on data collected before 1970 showed no consistent or convincing effects on black employment as a consequence of this spatial mismatch, the employment of inner-city blacks relative to suburban blacks has clearly deteriorated since then. Recent research, conducted mainly by urban and labor economists, strongly shows that the decentralization of employment is continuing and that employment in manufacturing, most of which is already suburbanized, has decreased in central cities, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. As Farrell Bloch, an economic and statistical consultant, points out, "Not only has the number of manufacturing jobs been decreasing, but new plants now tend to locate in the suburbs to take advantage of cheap land, access to highways, and low crime rates; in addition, businesses shun urban locations to avoid buying land from several different owners, paying high demolition costs for old buildings, and arranging parking for employees and customers."

Blacks living in central cities have less access to employment, as measured by the ratio of jobs to people and the average travel time to and from work, than do central-city whites. Moreover, unlike most other groups of workers across the urban/suburban divide, less edu-

cated central-city blacks receive lower wages than suburban blacks who have similar levels of education. And the decline in earnings of central-city blacks is related to the decentralization of employment—that is, the movement of jobs from the cities to the suburbs—in metropolitan areas.

But are the differences in employment between city and suburban blacks mainly the result of changes in the location of jobs? It is possible that in recent years the migration of blacks to the suburbs has become much more selective than in earlier years, so much so that the changes attributed to job location are actually caused by this selective migration. The pattern of black migration to the suburbs in the 1970s was similar to that of whites during the 1950s and 1960s in the sense that it was concentrated among the better-educated and younger city residents. However, in the 1970s this was even more true for blacks, creating a situation in which the education and income gaps between city and suburban blacks seemed to expand at the same time that the differences between city and suburban whites seemed to contract. Accordingly, if one were to take into account differences in education, family background, and so on, how much of the employment gap between city and suburbs would remain?

This question was addressed in a study of the Gautreaux program in Chicago. The Gautreaux program was created under a 1976 court order resulting from a judicial finding of widespread discrimination in the public housing projects of Chicago. The program has relocated more than 4,000 residents from public housing into subsidized housing in neighborhoods throughout the Greater Chicago area. The design of the program permitted the researchers, James E. Rosenbaum and Susan J. Popkin, to contrast systematically the employment experiences of a group of low-income blacks who had been assigned private apartments in the suburbs with the experiences of a control group with similar characteristics and histories who had been assigned private apartments in the city. Their findings support the spatial mismatch hypothesis. After taking into account the personal characteristics of the respondents (including family background, family circumstances, levels of human capital, motivation, length of time since the respondent first enrolled in the Gautreaux program), Rosenbaum and Popkin found that those who moved to apartments in the suburbs were significantly more likely to have a job after the move than those placed in the city. When asked what makes it easier to obtain employment in the suburbs, nearly all the surburban respondents mentioned the high availability of jobs.

The African-Americans surveyed in the UPFLS clearly recognized a spatial mismatch of jobs. Both black men and black women saw greater job prospects outside the city. For example, only one-third of black fathers from areas with poverty rates of at least 30 percent reported that their best opportunities for employment were to be found in the city. Nearly two-thirds of whites and Puerto Ricans and over half of Mexicans living in similar neighborhoods felt this way. Getting to suburban jobs is especially problematic for the jobless individuals in the UPFLS because only 28 percent have access to an automobile. This rate falls even further to 18 percent for those living in the ghetto areas.

Among two-car middle-class and affluent families, commuting is accepted as a fact of life; but it occurs in a context of safe school environments for children, more available and accessible day care, and higher incomes to support mobile, away-from-home lifestyles. In a multitiered job market that requires substantial resources for participation, most inner-city minorities must rely on public transportation systems that rarely provide easy and quick access to suburban locations. A 32-year-old unemployed South Side welfare mother described the problem this way:

> There's not enough jobs. I thinks Chicago's the only city that does not have a lot of opportunities opening in it. There's not enough factories, there's not enough work. Most all the good jobs are in the suburbs. Sometimes it's hard for the people in the city to get to the suburbs, because everybody don't own a car. Everybody don't drive.

After commenting on the lack of jobs in his area, a 29-year-old unemployed South Side black male continued:

> You gotta go out in the suburbs, but I can't get out there. The bus go out there but you don't want to catch the bus out there, going two hours each ways. If you have to be at work at eight that mean you have to leave for work at six, that mean you have to get up at five to be at work at eight. Then when wintertime come you be in trouble.

Another unemployed South Side black male had this to say: "Most of the time . . . the places be too far and you need transportation and I don't have none right now. If I had some I'd probably be able to get one [a job]. If I had a car and went way into the suburbs, 'cause there ain't none in the city." This perception was echoed by an 18-year-old unemployed West Side black male:

> They are most likely hiring in the suburbs. Recently, I think about two years ago, I had a job but they say that I need some transportation and they say that the bus out in the suburbs run at a certain time. So I had to pass that job up because I did not have no transport.

An unemployed unmarried welfare mother of two from the West Side likewise stated:

> Well, I'm goin' to tell you: most jobs, more jobs are in the suburbs. It's where the good jobs and stuff is but you gotta have transportation to get there and it's hard to be gettin' out there in the suburbs. Some people don't know where the suburbs is, some people get lost out there. It is really hard, but some make a way.

One employed factory worker from the West Side who works a night shift described the situation this way:

> From what I, I see, you know, it's hard to find a good job in the inner city 'cause so many people moving, you know, west to the suburbs and out of state. . . . Some people turn jobs down because they don't have no way of getting out there. . . . I just see some people just going to work—and they seem like they the type who just used to—they coming all the way from the city and go on all the way to the suburbs and, you know, you can see 'em all bundled and—catching one bus and the next bus. They just used to doing that.

But the problem is not simply one of transportation and the length of commuting time. There is also the problem of the travel expense and of whether the long trek to the suburbs is actually worth it in terms of the income earned—after all, owning a car creates expenses

far beyond the purchase price, including insurance, which is much more costly for city dwellers than it is for suburban motorists. "If you work in the suburbs you gotta have a car," stated an unmarried welfare mother of three children who lives on Chicago's West Side, "then you gotta buy gas. You spending more getting to the suburbs to work, than you is getting paid, so you still ain't getting nowhere."

Indeed, one unemployed 36-year-old black man from the West Side of Chicago actually quit his suburban job because of the transportation problem. "It was more expensive going to work in Naperville, transportation and all, and it wasn't worth it. . . . I was spending more money getting to work than I earned working."

If transportation poses a problem for those who have to commute to work from the inner city to the suburbs, it can also hinder poor ghetto residents' ability to travel to the suburbs just to seek employment. For example, one unemployed man who lives on the South Side had just gone to O'Hare Airport looking for work with no luck. His complaint: "The money I spent yesterday, I coulda kept that in my pocket—I coulda kept that. 'Cause you know I musta spent about $7 or somethin'. I coulda kept that."

Finally, in addition to enduring the search-and-travel costs, inner-city black workers often confront racial harassment when they enter suburban communities. A 38-year-old South Side divorced mother of two children who works as a hotel cashier described the problems experienced by her son and his coworker in one of Chicago's suburbs:

> My son, who works in Carol Stream, an all-white community, they've been stopped by a policeman two or three times asking them why they're in the community. And they're trying to go to work. They want everyone to stay in their own place. That's what society wants. And they followed them all the way to work to make sure. 'Cause it's an all-white neighborhood. But there're no jobs in the black neighborhoods. They got to go way out there to get a job.

These informal observations on the difficulties and cost of travel to suburban employment are consistent with the results of a recent study by the labor economists Harry J. Holzer, Keith R. Ihlandfeldt, and David L. Sjoquist. In addition to finding that the lack of automobile ownership among inner-city blacks contributed significantly to

their lower wages and lower rate of employment, these authors also reported that African-Americans "spend more time traveling to work than whites," that "the time cost per mile traveled is . . . significantly higher for blacks," and that the resulting gains are relatively small. Overall, their results suggest that the amount of time and money spent in commuting, when compared with the actual income that accrues to inner-city blacks in low-skill jobs in the suburbs, acts to discourage poor people from seeking employment far from their own neighborhoods. Holzer and his colleagues concluded that it was quite rational for blacks to reject these search-and-travel choices when assessing their position in the job market.

Changes in the industrial and occupational mix, including the removal of jobs from urban centers to suburban corridors, represent external factors that have helped to elevate joblessness among inner-city blacks. But important social and demographic changes within the inner city are also associated with the escalating rates of neighborhood joblessness, and we shall consider these next.

The increase in the proportion of jobless adults in the inner city is also related to changes in the class, racial, and age composition of such neighborhoods—changes that have led to greater concentrations of poverty. Concentrated poverty is positively associated with joblessness. That is, when the former appears, the latter is found as well. As stated previously, poor people today are far more likely to be unemployed or out of the labor force than in previous years. In *The Truly Disadvantaged*, I argue that in addition to the effects of joblessness, inner-city neighborhoods have experienced a growing concentration of poverty for several other reasons, including (1) the outmigration of nonpoor black families; (2) the exodus of nonpoor white and other nonblack families; and (3) the rise in the number of residents who have become poor while living in these areas. Additional research on the growth of concentrated poverty suggests another factor: the movement of poor people into a neighborhood (inmigration). And one more factor should be added to this mix: changes in the age structure of the community.

I believe that the extent to which any one factor is significant in explaining the decrease in the proportion of nonpoor individuals and families depends on the poverty level and racial or ethnic makeup of

the neighborhood at a given time. For example, as pointed out in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, the community areas of Chicago that experienced the most substantial white outmigration between 1970 and 1980 had moderate rates of family poverty (between 20 and 29 percent) in 1980. Today, four of these communities are predominantly black. Only one, Greater Grand Crossing, is a new poverty area. Unlike the other three black community areas with poverty rates in the 20 percent range in 1980, Greater Grand Crossing remained virtually all black from 1970 to 1990. A clear majority (61 percent) of the adults in Greater Grand Crossing held jobs in 1970. Accordingly, the transformation of this neighborhood into a new poverty area (it had an adult employment rate of only 44 percent in a typical week in 1990) cannot be linked to the exodus of white residents.

Considering the strong association between poverty and joblessness, the sharp rise in the proportion of adults who are not working in Greater Grand Crossing is related to two factors: the outmigration of nonpoor families and, perhaps even more significant, the increase in the number of poor families, probably due to inmigration. From 1970 to 1990, despite a 29 percent reduction in the population (from 54,414 to 38,644), the number of individuals existing at or below the poverty level in Greater Grand Crossing increased by more than half (from 7,058 to 11,073).

Between 1950 and 1960, Greater Grand Crossing underwent a drastic change from being 94 percent white to being 86 percent black. Because few whites lived in the neighborhood by 1960 and because African-Americans are at greater risk of joblessness, the chances of Greater Grand Crossing becoming a new poverty area increased. In other words, even though a white exodus did not directly cause Greater Grand Crossing's deterioration between 1970 and 1990, the emptying of the white population out of the neighborhood from 1950 to 1960 increased the area's vulnerability to changes in the economy after 1970.

Of Chicago's fourteen other new poverty areas, five—including the three Bronzeville neighborhoods of Douglas, Grand Boulevard, and Washington Park—have remained overwhelmingly black since 1950. Therefore, the economic and demographic changes within the African-American community resulted in the transformation of these neighborhoods into new poverty areas.

One of the important demographic shifts that had an impact on

the upturn in the jobless rate has been the change in the age structure of inner-city ghetto neighborhoods. Let us again examine the three Bronzeville neighborhoods of Douglas, Grand Boulevard, and Washington Park. As shown in Table 2.1, the proportion of those in the age categories (20–64) that roughly approximate the prime-age workforce has declined in all three neighborhoods since 1950, whereas the proportion in the age category 65 and over has increased. Of the adults age 20 and over, the proportion in the prime-age categories declined by 17 percent in Grand Boulevard, 16 percent in Douglas, and 12 percent in Washington Park between 1950 and 1990. The smaller the percentage of prime-age adults in a population, the lower the proportion of residents who are likely to be employed. The proportion of residents in the age category 5–19 increased sharply in each neighborhood from 1950 to 1990, suggesting that the growth in the proportion of teenagers also contributed to the rise in the jobless rate. However, if we consider the fact that male employment in these neighborhoods declined by a phenomenal 46 percent between 1950 and 1960, these demographic changes obviously can account for only a fraction, albeit a significant fraction, of the high proportion of the area's jobless adults.

The rise in the proportion of jobless adults in the Bronzeville neighborhoods has been accompanied by an incredible depopulation—a decline of 66 percent in the three neighborhoods combined—that magnifies the problems of the new poverty neighborhoods. As the population drops and the proportion of nonworking adults rises, basic neighborhood institutions are more difficult to maintain: stores, banks, credit institutions, restaurants, dry cleaners, gas stations, medical doctors, and so on lose regular and potential patrons. Churches experience dwindling numbers of parishioners and shrinking resources; recreational facilities, block clubs, community groups, and other informal organizations also suffer. As these organizations decline, the means of formal and informal social control in the neighborhood become weaker. Levels of crime and street violence increase as a result, leading to further deterioration of the neighborhood.

The more rapid the neighborhood deterioration, the greater the institutional disinvestment. In the 1960s and 1970s, neighborhoods plagued by heavy abandonment were frequently "redlined" (identified as areas that should not receive or be recommended for mortgage loans or insurance); this paralyzed the housing market, lowered prop-

TABLE 2.1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN DOUGLAS, GRAND BOULEVARD, AND WASHINGTON PARK, 1950–1990

	1990	1980	1970	1960	1950
DOUGLAS					
Total Population	30,652	35,700	41,276	52,325	78,745
% female	58.3	57.6	55.1	52.2	52.3
% male	41.7	42.4	44.9	47.8	47.7
% age 0–4	10.5	9.0	10.2	15.1	11.0
% age 5–19	24.5	26.2	33.3	29.9	21.7
% age 20–44	34.8	36.4	32.0	33.0	43.3
% age 45–64	15.6	16.5	16.8	15.9	18.7
% age 65+	14.7	11.9	7.7	6.1	5.3
GRAND BOULEVARD					
Total Population	35,897	58,741	80,150	80,036	114,557
% female	55.9	54.4	53.8	52.3	52.7
% male	44.1	45.6	46.2	47.7	47.3
% age 0–4	11.4	9.5	9.4	11.7	8.3
% age 5–19	30.0	31.5	36.4	21.3	16.8
% age 20–44	30.3	27.9	24.8	32.6	45.3
% age 45–64	14.0	17.5	18.4	25.0	24.0
% age 65+	14.3	13.6	11.0	9.4	5.6
WASHINGTON PARK					
Total Population	19,425	31,935	46,024	43,690	56,865
% female	54.5	54.7	53.0	52.0	52.5
% male	45.5	45.3	47.0	48.0	46.8
% age 0–4	11.8	9.9	9.0	9.7	7.2
% age 5–19	28.8	30.8	31.8	18.1	15.7
% age 20–44	33.7	28.5	28.5	34.9	47.0
% age 45–64	14.9	18.8	20.3	27.6	24.5
% age 65+	10.8	12.0	10.4	9.4	5.6

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing, File STF3A; and Local Community Fact Book—Chicago Metropolitan Area.

erty values, and further encouraged landlord abandonment. The enactment of federal and state community reinvestment legislation in the 1970s curbed the practice of open redlining. Nonetheless, "prudent lenders will exercise increased caution in advancing mortgages, partic-

ularly in neighborhoods marked by strong indication of owner disinvestment and early abandonment."

As the neighborhood disintegrates, those who are able to leave depart in increasing numbers; among these are many working- and middle-class families. The lower population density in turn creates additional problems. Abandoned buildings increase and often serve as havens for crack use and other illegal enterprises that give criminals footholds in the community. Precipitous declines in density also make it even more difficult to sustain or develop a sense of community. The feeling of safety in numbers is completely lacking in such neighborhoods.

Although changes in the economy (industrial restructuring and reorganization) and changes in the class, racial, and demographic composition of inner-city ghetto neighborhoods are important factors in the shift from institutional to jobless ghettos since 1970, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that this process actually began immediately following World War II.

The federal government contributed to the early decay of inner-city neighborhoods by withholding mortgage capital and by making it difficult for urban areas to retain or attract families able to purchase their own homes. Spurred on by massive mortgage foreclosures during the Great Depression, the federal government in the 1940s began underwriting mortgages in an effort to enable citizens to become homeowners. But the mortgage program was selectively administered by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and urban neighborhoods considered poor risks were redlined—an action that excluded virtually all the black neighborhoods and many neighborhoods with a considerable number of European immigrants. It was not until the 1960s that the FHA discontinued its racial restrictions on mortgages.

By manipulating market incentives, the federal government drew middle-class whites to the suburbs and, in effect, trapped blacks in the inner cities. Beginning in the 1950s, the suburbanization of the middle class was also facilitated by a federal transportation and highway policy, including the building of freeway networks through the hearts of many cities, mortgages for veterans, mortgage-interest tax exemptions, and the quick, cheap production of massive amounts of tract housing.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the offer of municipal services as an inducement, cities tended to annex their suburbs. But the relations between cities and suburbs in the United States began to change following a century-long influx of poor migrants who required expensive services and paid relatively little in taxes. Annexation largely ended in the mid-twentieth century as suburbs began to resist incorporation successfully. Suburban communities also drew tighter boundaries through the manipulation of zoning laws and discriminatory land-use controls and site-selection practices, making it difficult for inner-city racial minorities to penetrate.

As separate political jurisdictions, suburbs exercised a great deal of autonomy in their use of zoning, land-use policies, covenants, and deed restrictions. In the face of mounting pressures calling for integration in the 1960s, "suburbs chose to diversify by race rather than class. They retained zoning and other restrictions that allowed only affluent blacks (and in some instances Jews) to enter, thereby intensifying the concentration and isolation of the urban poor."

Other government policies also contributed to the growth of jobless ghettos, both directly and indirectly. Many black communities were uprooted by urban renewal and forced migration. The construction of freeway and highway networks through the hearts of many cities in the 1950s produced the most dramatic changes, as many viable low-income communities were destroyed. These networks not only encouraged relocation from the cities to the suburbs, "they also created barriers between the sections of the cities, walling off poor and minority neighborhoods from central business districts. Like urban renewal, highway and expressway construction also displaced many poor people from their homes."

Federal housing policy also contributed to the gradual shift to jobless ghettos. Indeed, the lack of federal action to fight extensive segregation against African-Americans in urban housing markets and acquiescence to the opposition of organized neighborhood groups to the construction of public housing in their communities have resulted in massive segregated housing projects. The federal public housing program evolved in two policy stages that represented two distinct styles. The Wagner Housing Act of 1937 initiated the first stage. Concerned that the construction of public housing might depress private rent levels, groups such as the U.S. Building and Loan League and the National Association of Real Estate Boards successfully lobbied Con-

gress to require, by law, that for each new unit of public housing one "unsafe or unsanitary" unit of public housing be destroyed. As Mark Condon points out, "This policy increased employment in the urban construction market while insulating private rent levels by barring the expansion of the housing stock available to low-income families."

The early years of the public housing program produced positive results. Initially, the program mainly served intact families temporarily displaced by the Depression or in need of housing after the end of World War II. For many of these families, public housing was the first step on the road toward economic recovery. Their stay in the projects was relatively brief. The economic mobility of these families "contributed to the sociological stability of the first public housing communities, and explains the program's initial success."

The passage of the Housing Act of 1949 marked the beginning of the second policy stage. It instituted and funded the urban renewal program designed to eradicate urban slums. "Public housing was now meant to collect the ghetto residents left homeless by the urban renewal bulldozers." A new, lower-income ceiling for public housing residency was established by the federal Public Housing Authority, and families with incomes above that ceiling were evicted, thereby restricting access to public housing to the most economically disadvantaged segments of the population.

This change in federal housing policy coincided with the mass migration of African-Americans from the rural South to the cities of the Northeast and Midwest. Since smaller suburban communities refused to permit the construction of public housing, the units were overwhelmingly concentrated in the overcrowded and deteriorating inner-city ghettos—the poorest and least socially organized sections of the city and the metropolitan area. "This growing population of politically weak urban poor was unable to counteract the desires of vocal middle- and working-class whites for segregated housing," housing that would keep blacks out of white neighborhoods. In short, public housing represents a federally funded institution that has isolated families by race and class for decades, and has therefore contributed to the growing concentration of jobless families in the inner-city ghettos in recent years.

Also, since 1980, a fundamental shift in the federal government's support for basic urban programs has aggravated the problems of joblessness and social organization in the new poverty neighborhoods. The Reagan and Bush administrations—proponents of the New Federalism—sharply cut spending on direct aid to cities, including general revenue sharing, urban mass transit, public service jobs and job training, compensatory education, social service block grants, local public works, economic development assistance, and urban development action grants. In 1980, the federal contribution to city budgets was 18 percent; by 1990 it had dropped to 6.4 percent. In addition, the economic recession which began in the Northeast in 1989 and lasted until the early 1990s sharply reduced those revenues that the cities themselves generated, thereby creating budget deficits that resulted in further cutbacks in basic services and programs along with increases in local taxes.

For many cities, especially the older cities of the East and Midwest, the combination of the New Federalism and the recession led to the worst fiscal and service crisis since the Depression. Cities have become increasingly underserviced, and many have been on the brink of bankruptcy. They have therefore not been in a position to combat effectively three unhealthy social conditions that have emerged or become prominent since 1980: (1) the prevalence of crack-cocaine addiction and the violent crime associated with it; (2) the AIDS epidemic and its escalating public health costs; and (3) the sharp rise in the homeless population not only for individuals but for whole families as well.

Although drug addiction and its attendant violence, AIDS and its toll on public health resources, and homelessness are found in many American communities, their impact on the ghetto is profound. These communities, whose residents have been pushed to the margins of society, have few resources with which to combat these social ills that arose in the 1980s. Fiscally strapped cities have watched helplessly as these problems—exacerbated by the new poverty, the decline of social organization in the jobless neighborhoods, and the reduction of social services—have made the city at large seem a dangerous and threatening place in which to live. Accordingly, working- and middle-class urban residents continue to relocate in the suburbs. Thus, while joblessness and related social problems are on the rise in inner-city neighborhoods, especially in those that represent the new poverty areas, the larger city has fewer and fewer resources with which to combat them.

Finally, policymakers indirectly contributed to the emergence of jobless ghettos by making decisions that have decreased the attractiveness of low-paying jobs and accelerated the relative decline in wages for low-income workers. In particular, in the absence of an effective labor-market policy, they have tolerated industry practices that undermine worker security, such as the reduction in benefits and the rise of involuntary part-time employment, and they have "allowed the minimum wage to erode to its second-lowest level in purchasing power in 40 years." After adjusting for inflation, "the minimum wage is 26 percent below its average level in the 1970s." Moreover, they virtually eliminated AFDC benefits for families in which a mother is employed at least half-time. In the early 1970s, a working mother with two children whose wages equaled 75 percent of the amount designated as the poverty line could receive AFDC benefits as a wage supplement in forty-nine states; in 1995 only those in three states could. As discussed in Chapter 8, even with the expansion of the earned income tax credit (a wage subsidy for the working poor) such policies make it difficult for poor workers to support their families and protect their children. The erosion of wages and benefits force many low-income workers in the inner city to move or remain on welfare.

CHAPTER 3

Ghetto-Related Behavior and the Structure of Opportunity

Seven out of eight people residing in ghettos in metropolitan areas in 1990 were minority group members, most of them African-Americans. But the figure also includes a considerable number of Hispanics. This is not a monolithic socioeconomic group, however; the term embraces all the Spanish-speaking cultures of the New World, which vary broadly. For example, there are significant differences in the socioeconomic status of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. The latter are largely concentrated in New York City and more closely resemble African-Americans than Mexicans in terms of poverty concentration.

If comparisons are drawn only between the two largest minority groups in the United States—African-Americans and Mexicans—some significant neighborhood differences become clear. In the Urban Poverty and Family Life Study, 85 percent of the inner-city Mexican random sample were first-generation immigrants. Nonetheless, their neighborhoods were on average less poor than those of Chicago's inner-city African-American population. In 1980, 21 percent of blacks but only 7.9 percent of all Mexican immigrants lived in tracts with poverty rates of 30 to 39 percent. And one-fifth of blacks—but only 2 percent of the Mexican immigrant population—resided in ghetto poverty census tracts. Thus, whereas inner-city African-Americans are overrepresented in areas of high to extremely high poverty concentration, inner-city Mexican immigrants are more likely to live in areas of moderate poverty. More important, the Mexican immigrant neighborhoods in the inner city feature lower levels of joblessness and higher levels of social organization than comparable African-American

neighborhoods. As Martha Van Haitsma, a member of the UPFLS ethnographic research team, puts it, "Mexican immigrants living in Chicago poverty areas may well be residents of crowded and dilapidated buildings, but they are surrounded by small local businesses, many of them owned and operated by persons of Mexican origin, and by Mexican-targeted social service agencies. Poverty-tract blacks are more isolated from jobs and from employed neighbors than are Mexican immigrants."

As we shall soon see, the residents of these jobless black poverty areas face certain social constraints on the choices they can make in their daily lives. These constraints, combined with restricted opportunities in the larger society, lead to ghetto-related behavior and attitudes—that is, behavior and attitudes that are found more frequently in ghetto neighborhoods than in neighborhoods that feature even modest levels of poverty and local employment. Ghetto-related behavior and attitudes often reinforce the economic marginality of the residents of jobless ghettos.

I choose the term "ghetto-related" as opposed to "ghetto-specific" so as to make the following point: Although many of the behaviors to be described and analyzed below are rooted in circumstances that are unique to inner-city ghettos (for example, extremely high rates of concentrated joblessness and poverty), they are fairly widespread in the larger society. In other words, these behaviors are not unique to ghettos, as the term "ghetto-specific" would imply; rather they occur with greater frequency in the ghetto.

Neighborhoods that offer few legitimate employment opportunities, inadequate job information networks, and poor schools lead to the disappearance of work. That is, where jobs are scarce, where people rarely, if ever, have the opportunity to help their friends and neighbors find jobs, and where there is a disruptive or degraded school life purporting to prepare youngsters for eventual participation in the workforce, many people eventually lose their feeling of connectedness to work in the formal economy; they no longer expect work to be a regular, and regulating, force in their lives. In the case of young people, they may grow up in an environment that lacks the idea of work as a central experience of adult life—they have little or no labor-force attachment. These circumstances also increase the likelihood that the residents will rely on illegitimate sources of income, thereby further weakening their attachment to the legitimate labor market.

On the other hand, many inner-city ghetto residents who maintain a connection with the formal labor market—that is, who continue to be employed mostly in low-wage jobs—are, in effect, working against all odds. They somehow manage to work steadily despite the lack of work-support networks (car pools, informal job information networks), institutions (good schools and training programs), and systems (child care and transportation) that most of the employed population in this country rely on. Moreover, the travel costs, child care costs, and other employment-related expenses consume a significant portion of their already meager incomes. In other words, in order to fully appreciate the problems of employment experienced by inner-city ghetto workers, one has to understand that there is both a unique reality of work (see Chapter 2) and a culture of work (see sections below).

Accordingly, as we examine the adaptations and responses of ghetto residents to persistent joblessness in this chapter, it should be emphasized that the disappearance of work in many inner-city neighborhoods is the function of a number of factors beyond their control. Too often, as reflected in the current public policy debates on welfare reform, the discussion of behavior and social responsibility fails to mention the structural underpinnings of poverty and welfare. The focus is mainly on the shortcomings of individuals and families and not on the structural and social changes in the society at large that have made life so miserable for many inner-city ghetto residents or that have produced certain unique responses and behavior patterns over time. Later I discuss these responses and patterns of behavior, not in isolation but in relation to the constraints and opportunities that shape and provide the context for this action.

A few points highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2 should be reiterated here in order to set up the discussion to follow in this chapter. The reader should keep in mind the point that the current jobless situation evolved from a set of circumstances that must be understood and repeatedly underscored in order to appreciate the particular adaptations to chronic subordination in the ghetto. The inner-city ghetto was not always plagued by low levels of employment and related problems. In the 1950s, employment rates were high. People were poor, but they

were still working. Ghetto neighborhoods were as highly segregated as they are now, but people were working.

The disappearance of work in many inner-city neighborhoods is in part related to the nationwide decline in the fortunes of low-skilled workers. Fundamental structural changes in the new global economy, including changes in the distribution of jobs and in the level of education required to obtain employment, resulted in the simultaneous occurrence of increasing joblessness and declining real wages for low-skilled workers. The decline of the mass production system, the decreasing availability of lower-skilled blue-collar jobs, and the growing importance of training and education in the higher-growth industries adversely affected the employment rates and earnings of low-skilled black workers, many of whom are concentrated in inner-city ghettos. The growing suburbanization of jobs has aggravated the employment woes of poor inner-city workers. Most ghetto residents cannot afford an automobile and therefore have to rely on public transit systems that make the connection between inner-city neighborhoods and suburban job locations difficult and time-consuming.

The reader should also be reminded that changes in the class, racial, and demographic composition of inner-city neighborhoods contributed to the high percentage of jobless adults who continue to live there. The proportion of nonpoor families and prime-age working adults has decreased. Today, joblessness is more strongly associated with poverty than in previous years. In the face of increasing and prolonged joblessness, the declining proportion of nonpoor families and the overall depopulation make it more difficult to sustain basic neighborhood institutions or to achieve adequate levels of social organization. The declining presence of working- and middle-class blacks also deprives ghetto neighborhoods of key resources, including structural resources (such as residents with income to sustain neighborhood services) and cultural resources (such as conventional role models for neighborhood children). The economic marginality of the ghetto poor is cruelly reinforced, therefore, by conditions in the neighborhoods in which they live.

Finally, it is important to keep the following point in focus. In addition to changes in the economy and in the class, racial, and demographic composition of inner-city ghetto neighborhoods, certain government programs and policies contributed, over the last fifty years, to the evolution of jobless ghettos. Prominent among these

are the early actions of the FHA in withholding mortgage capital from inner-city neighborhoods, the manipulation of market incentives that trapped blacks in the inner cities and lured middle-class whites to the suburbs, the construction of massive federal housing projects in inner-city neighborhoods, and, since 1980, the New Federalism, which, through its insistence on localized responses to social problems, resulted in drastic cuts in spending on basic urban programs. Just when the problems of social dislocation in jobless neighborhoods have escalated, the city has fewer resources with which to address them.

Given the current policy debates that tend to assign blame and attribute failure to personal shortcomings (see Chapter 6), these are the points that the reader should keep in mind as I discuss the responses and adaptations to chronic subordination, including those that have evolved into cultural patterns. The social action—including behavior, habits, skills, styles, orientations, attitudes—discussed in this chapter and in the next chapter ought not to be analyzed as if it were unrelated to the broader structure of opportunities and constraints that have evolved over time. This is not to argue that individuals and groups lack the freedom to make their own choices, engage in certain conduct, and develop certain styles and orientations, but it is to say that these decisions and actions occur within a context of constraints and opportunities that are drastically different from those present in middle-class society.

Many inner-city ghetto residents clearly see the social and cultural effects of living in high-jobless and impoverished neighborhoods. A 17-year-old black male who works part-time, attends college, and resides in a ghetto poverty neighborhood on the West Side stated:

> Well, basically, I feel that if you are raised in a neighborhood and all you see is negative things, then you are going to be negative because you don't see anything positive. . . . Guys and black males see drug dealers on the corner and they see fancy cars and flashy money and they figure: "Hey, if I get into drugs I can be like him."

Interviewed several weeks later, he went on:

> And I think about how, you know, the kids around there, all they see, OK, they see these drug addicts, and then what else do they

see? Oh, they see thugs, you know, they see the gangbangers. So, who do they, who do they really look, model themselves after? Who is their role model? They have none but the thugs. So that's what they wind up being, you know. . . . They [the children in the neighborhood] deal with the only male role model that they can find and most of the time that be pimps, dope dealers, so what do they do? They model themselves after them. Not intentionally trying to but if, you know, that's the only male you're around and that's the only one you come in close contact with, you tend to want to be like that person. And that's why you have so many young drug dealers.

A 25-year-old West Side father of two who works two jobs to make ends meet presented a similar point of view about some inner-city black males:

> They try to find easier routes, uh, and had been conditioned over a period of time to just be lazy, so to speak. Uh, motivation nonexistent, you know, and the society that they're affiliated with really don't advocate hard work and struggle to meet your goals such as education and stuff like that. And they see what's around 'em and they follow that same pattern, you know. The society says: "Well, you can sell dope. You can do this. You can do that." A lot of 'em even got to the point where they can accept a few years in jail, uh, as a result of what they might do. . . . They don't see nobody getting up early in the morning, going to work or going to school all the time. The guys they—they be with don't do that . . . 'cause that's the crowd that you choose—well, that's been presented to you by your neighborhood.

Describing how children from troubled neighborhoods get into drugs and alcohol, an unemployed black male who lives in a poor suburb south of Chicago stated:

> They're in an environment where if you don't get high you're square. You know what I'm saying? If you don't get high some kind of way or another . . . and then, you know, kids are gonna emulate what they come up under. . . . I've watched a couple of generations—I've been here since '61. I watched kids, I saw their fathers ruined, and I seen 'em grow up and do the very same thing. . . . The children, they don't have any means of recreation whatsoever out here, other than their backyards, the streets, nothing. . . . The only way it can be intervened if the child has something outside the house to go to, because it is—just go by the environment of the house, he's destined to be an alcoholic or a drug addict.

Some of the respondents relate the problems facing children to the limited opportunity structure in high-jobless neighborhoods. "There's less opportunities over here: it's no jobs. The kids aren't in school, you know, they're not getting any education, there's a lot of drugs on the streets. So, you know, wrong environment, bad associations," reported a 40-year-old mother of six who lives in a ghetto poverty tract on the South Side.

> So you have to be in some kind of environment where the kids are more, you know, ready to go to school to get an education instead of, you know, droppin' out to sell drugs because they see their friends, on the corner, makin' money: they got a pocket fulla money, you know. They got kids walkin' around here that's ten years old selling drugs.

According to a 37-year-old unemployed black male from the South Side, the situation is different for males than it is for females. He stated:

> Some kids just seem like they don't want to learn, but others, they stick to it. Especially the females, they stick to it. The males either become—they see the street life. They see guys out here making big bucks with fancy cars, jewelry and stuff, and they try to emulate them. That's our problem, you know. The males, they're pretty impressionable. That's why they drop out. . . . They see their peers out here, they didn't go to school, they makin' it. But they makin' it the wrong way.

In recent years, the process of inner-city neighborhood deterioration has been clearly related to the growth of the inner-city drug industry. The decline of legitimate employment opportunities among

inner-city residents increases the incentive to sell drugs. When asked the best way to get ahead in Chicago, a 29-year-old unmarried, employed cook and dishwasher from a poor black neighborhood in which only one in four adults was employed in 1990 stated: "I hate to say it, but it, it look to me dealin' drugs, 'cause these guys make money out there. This is wrong, but, you know, uh—they make a lot of money, fast."

A 35-year-old unemployed male from a nearby neighborhood with a comparable jobless rate emphatically justified his involvement in drug trafficking:

> And what am I doing now? I'm a cocaine dealer—'cause I can't get a decent-ass job. So, what other choices do I have? I have to feed my family . . . do I work? I work. See, don't . . . bring me that bullshit. I been working since I was fifteen years old. I had to work to take care of my mother and father and my sisters. See, so can't, can't nobody bring me that bullshit about I ain't looking for no job.

When the people in his poor neighborhood on the South Side run out of money, a 33-year-old janitor stated, they "get depressed, drink, snort, break in other people's houses. Borrow, get on aid, whore—that means prostitute."

A 28-year-old welfare mother from one of the large public housing projects in Chicago also explained what people in her neighborhood resort to when they are out of money.

> Shit, turn tricks, sell drugs, anything—and everything. Mind you, everyone is not a stick-up man, you know, but any and everything. Me myself I have sold marijuana, I'm not a drug pusher, but I'm just tryin' to make ends—I'm tryin' to keep bread on the table—I have two babies.

The lack of success in finding full-time employment led a 25-year-old unmarried father of one child from a high-jobless neighborhood on the West Side to sell drugs to augment his income from part-time work.

> Four years I been out here trying to find a steady job. Going back and forth all these temporary jobs and this 'n' that. Then you know you gotta give money at home, you know you gotta buy your clothes which cost especially for a big person. Then you're talking about my daughter, then you talking about food in the house too, you know, things like that. . . . Well, lately like I said I have been trying to make extra money and everything. I have been selling drugs lately on the side after I get off work and, ah, it has been going all right. . . . Like I was saying you can make more money dealing drugs than your job, anybody. Not just me but anybody, for the simple fact that if you have a nice clientele and some nice drugs, some nice 'caine or whatever you are selling then the money is going to come, the people are going to come. . . . I can take you to a place where cars come through there like this all day—like traffic—and it got so trafficky that people got to seeing it and they got to calling the police and the police got to staking out the place, raiding the place and all this kind of stuff.

The presence of high levels of drug activity in a neighborhood is indicative of problems of social organization. High rates of joblessness trigger other problems in the neighborhood that adversely affect social organization, including drug trafficking, crime, and gang violence.

The current drug problem began to emerge in the early 1980s when crack—a highly addictive, relatively cheap, and smokable form of cocaine—was widely marketed by dealers on the streets of many American cities, especially in urban ghettos. Addiction to crack reached epidemic proportions in the mid-1980s. Not surprisingly, the rate of drug offense arrests likewise increased, "which, especially for nonwhites (primarily African-Americans), started to move upward in the early 1980s, but accelerated appreciably after 1985." By 1990, the distribution and consumption of crack-cocaine had become widespread in the ghetto neighborhoods of Chicago. In 1994, consumption leveled off "as heroin made a comeback."

In our 1993 survey of two high-jobless neighborhoods on Chicago's South Side (see Appendix B) respondents revealed that the increase in drug trafficking heightened feelings that their neighborhoods had become more dangerous. As a consequence, many residents retreated to the safety of their homes. "More people are dying and being killed," reported one respondent. "There are many drugs sold here every day. It's unsafe and you can't even go out of your house because of being

afraid of being shot." Another stated, "I stay home a lot. Streets are dangerous. Killings are terrible. Drugs make people crazy." Similar sentiments were voiced by other residents who felt trapped. One put it this way: "It's scary to see these people. I'm afraid to go outside. I know people who go to work and leave the music on all day and night."

The journalist Isabel Wilkerson points out that "crack has been like a bullet wound to the communities that were already suffering. Even if the bullet can safely be extracted, it has left these neighborhoods deeply scarred." Perhaps the most visible problem associated with the crack-cocaine epidemic may be summed up by Wilkerson's observation of the proliferation of "guns that crack dealers started to carry, the way accountants carry calculators." These weapons filtered down into the hands of adolescents and remain in circulation. "When the epidemic subsided," states the criminologist Jeffrey Fagan, "the guns stayed behind."

When crack landed in a neighborhood, its effect was devastating. Wilkerson described these effects:

> The drug's fleeting highs and long, desolate lows created a frenetic field of customers who again and again had to come back for more. In all the chaos, small-time dealers could set up shop practically anywhere, and did. Teenagers who might have otherwise stuck to hustling and shoplifting suddenly had a shot at the big time. As kingpins and upstarts competed for prime locations, disputes were settled with violence. With more guns on the streets, homicides skyrocketed.
>
> No matter the city, homicide charts tell the same story. Whatever year crack took hold, in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, Chicago, the homicide rates soared. The rate has leveled off in these cities, but the toll is still much higher than before crack arrived, because the guns remained, even as crack declined. And the survivors have found that crack has turned the social order of their neighborhood upside down. Armed teen-agers control the streets, residents say. They decide who can stroll on the sidewalk or who can enter an apartment building, while the adults are afraid of the children or depend on them for drugs.

Teenagers with guns, especially rapid-fire assault weapons, increase the danger in these neighborhoods. Adolescents are generally less

likely to exercise restraint than mature adults are. Armed with deadly weapons, youngsters are tempted to solve temporary problems in a very permanent fashion. The sharp growth in the number of teenage male homicide victims is directly related to the sudden rise in the number of young male killers. In 1984, there were slightly more than 80 homicide deaths per 100,000 black males ages 15 to 19; by 1992 that figure had ballooned to more than 180 homicide deaths per 100,000.

It is important to emphasize that the norms and actions within the drug industry in ghetto neighborhoods can also affect the behavior of those who have no direct involvement. For example, the widespread possession of guns among drug dealers, and therefore the increased availability of weapons in the neighborhood, prompts others to arm themselves. Some acquire weapons for self-protection, others for settling disputes that have nothing to do with drugs, and still others for the simple purpose of gaining respect from peers and acquaintances in the neighborhood. A National Institute of Justice survey of 758 male students in ten inner-city public high schools in California, Illinois, New Jersey, and Louisiana revealed that "22 percent of the students possess guns," 12 percent carry them all or most of the time, and "another 23 percent carry guns now and then." Within this survey the students revealed that the primary reason for their most recent gun acquisition was self-protection.

As possession of firearms and drug use increase, the residents of troubled neighborhoods become more fearful of leaving the safety of their homes. Such fears decrease their involvement in voluntary associations and informal social control networks essential to maintain the social organization of the neighborhood. One resident who moved from a dangerous housing project to a safer area nearby described the difference in neighborhood informal interaction.

> Well, mostly, you know . . . I know a lot of peoples communicate . . . together . . . try to keep the neighborhood together . . . so far since I lived here . . . and . . . I don't see too many peoples, you know, just hanging out and gettin' high on the street anymore like . . . like when I was livin' in the project. I used to see it all the time, but around here I don't see it too much.

Neighborhoods that feature higher levels of social organization—that is, neighborhoods that integrate the adults by means of an exten-

sive set of obligations, expectations, and social networks—are in a better position to control and supervise the activities and behavior of children. Youngsters know they will be held accountable for their individual and group action; at the same time, they know they can rely on neighborhood adults for support and guidance. In terms of levels of social organization, black working- and middle-class neighborhoods in Chicago stand in sharp contrast to the new poverty neighborhoods. Data from the 1989–90 survey (see Appendix B) reveal that in addition to much lower levels of perceived unemployment than in the poor neighborhoods, black working- and middle-class neighborhoods also have much higher levels of perceived social control and cohesion, organizational services, and social support.

The connectedness and stability of social networks in strong neighborhoods transcend the household because the neighborhood adults have the potential to observe, report on, and discuss the behavior of the children in different circumstances. These networks reinforce the discipline the child receives in the home, because other adults in the neighborhood assume responsibility for maintaining a standard of public or social behavior even on the part of children who are not their own. As Frank Furstenberg put it, "Ordinary parents are likely to have more success when they reside in communities where the burden of raising children is seen as a collective responsibility and where strong institutions sustain the efforts of parents."

The norms and supervision imposed on children are most effective when they reflect what James S. Coleman has called "intergenerational closure"—that is, the overlapping of youth and adult social networks in a neighborhood. Intergenerational closure is exhibited in those neighborhoods where most parents know not only their children's friends but the parents of those friends as well. As a general rule, adolescents seem to benefit directly from the exchange of resources produced by their parents' social integration with others in the neighborhood.

Nonetheless, social integration may not be beneficial to adolescents who live in neighborhoods characterized by high levels of individual and family involvement in aberrant behavior. "Although we tend to think of social integration as a desirable endpoint," state Laurence Steinberg and his colleagues, "its desirability depends on the nature of the people that integration brings one into contact with. There are many communities in contemporary America in which it may be

more adaptive for parents to be socially isolated than socially integrated. Indeed, some of Frank Furstenberg's recent work on family life in the inner city of Philadelphia suggest that social isolation is often deliberately practiced as an adaptive strategy by many parents living in dangerous neighborhoods."

A similar finding emerged from ethnographic research in a densely populated housing project in Denver. Concerns on the part of some parents about safety in this housing project affected their degree of involvement or interaction with their neighbors. Such parents were skeptical of other parents and youths in the housing project and therefore resisted casual contact with their neighbors, established few friendships, and did not get involved with neighborhood problems. They also expressed negative views of their more socially engaged neighbors and their nonconventional behavior (drinking and "hanging out"). Analogous views were voiced by some parents in the Urban Poverty and Family Life Study. As a 42-year-old married father of one child and an employed part-time salesman from a ghetto poverty area on the South Side put it: "It makes no difference what's in that street, you don't have to socialize with the people around here, that's your personal preference."

On the basis of research conducted by the University of Chicago's Center for the Study of Urban Inequality on successful adolescent development in high-risk areas (see Appendix B), it appears that what many impoverished and dangerous neighborhoods have in common is a relatively high degree of social integration (high levels of local neighboring while being relatively isolated from contacts in the broader mainstream society) and low levels of informal social control (feelings that they have little control over their immediate environment, including the environment's negative influences on their children). In such areas, not only are children at risk because of the lack of informal social controls, they are also disadvantaged because the social interaction among neighbors tends to be confined to those whose skills, styles, orientations, and habits are not as conducive to promoting positive social outcomes (academic success, pro-social behavior, etc.) as are those in more stable neighborhoods. Although the close interaction among neighbors in such areas may be useful in devising strategies, disseminating information, and developing styles of behavior that are helpful in a ghetto milieu (teaching children to avoid eye-to-eye contact with strangers and to develop a tough demeanor in the

public sphere for self-protection), they may be less effective in promoting the welfare of children in the society at large.

Despite being socially integrated, the residents in Chicago's ghetto neighborhoods shared a feeling that they had little informal social control over the children in their environment. A primary reason is the absence of a strong organizational capacity or an institutional resource base that would provide an extra layer of social organization in their neighborhoods. It is easier for parents to control the behavior of the children in their neighborhoods when there exists a strong institutional resource base, when the links between community institutions such as churches, schools, political organizations, businesses, and civic clubs are strong. The higher the density and stability of formal organizations, the less that illicit activities such as drug trafficking, crime, prostitution, and gang formation can take root in the neighborhood. A weak institutional resource base is what distinguishes high-jobless inner-city neighborhoods from stable middle-class and working-class areas. As one resident of a high-jobless neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago put it, "Our children, you know, seems to be more at risk than any other children there is, because there's no library for them to go to. There's not a center they can go to, there's no field house that they can go into. There's nothing. There's nothing at all."

Parents in high-jobless neighborhoods have a much more difficult task of controlling the behavior of their adolescents, of preventing them from getting involved in activities detrimental to pro-social development. Given the lack of organizational capacity and weak institutional base, some parents choose to protect their children by isolating them from activities in the neighborhood, including the avoidance of contact and interaction with neighborhood families. Wherever possible, and often with great difficulty considering the problems of transportation and limited financial resources, they attempt to establish contact and cultivate relations with individuals, families, and institutions outside the neighborhood, such as church groups, schools, and community recreation programs.

When speaking of social isolation, therefore, a distinction should be made between those families who deliberately isolate themselves from other families in dangerous neighborhoods and those who lack contact or sustained interaction with institutions, families, and individuals that represent mainstream society.

As I pointed out earlier, the most impoverished inner-city neighborhoods have experienced a decrease in the proportion of working- and middle-class families, thereby increasing the social isolation of the remaining residents in these neighborhoods from the more advantaged members of society. Data from the UPFLS reveal that the nonworking poor in the inner city experience greater social isolation in this sense of the term than do the working poor.

Nonworking poor black men and women "were consistently less likely to participate in local institutions and have mainstream friends [that is, friends who are working, have some college education, and are married] than people in other classes" and ethnic groups. However, there are noticeable gender differences in the structure of interpersonal relations among the nonworking poor blacks in the inner-city neighborhoods of Chicago. Jobless black females (mostly mothers on welfare) were significantly more isolated from mainstream individuals and families than jobless black males. Welfare mothers interacted with other welfare mothers. "It is not simply poverty that isolates women, but being non-working further increases isolation. This lends some credence to the imagery of AFDC [Aid for Families with Dependent Children] women being cut off from others." Overall, the personal friendship network of blacks (both male and female) is more insular, and they are less likely to have at least one employed close friend than are the Mexican immigrants.

This form of social isolation operates in the inner-city black neighborhood as a result of the lack of access to resources provided by stable working residents. Such resources include informal job networks. Analysis of the UPFLS ethnographic data reveals that "social contacts were a useful means of gaining informal work to help make ends meet but far less often successful in helping with steady employment; networks existed but largely lacked the capacity to help lift residents into the formal labor market."

Moreover, UPFLS data on job-search behavior reveal that black men and women in the inner city are less likely than Mexican immigrants to report that they received help from a friend or relative in obtaining their current job. Recognizing the importance of the informal job network system, a 35-year-old welfare mother of two children in the UPFLS stated: "A lot of people get good jobs because they know friends, and they work there. If you know somebody that's been work-

ing in an established company for a long time, and they tell you to come in and fill an application, you can get a job. It always pay to know somebody." However, the job-search strategies that black inner-city residents most frequently reported using were filling out an application at a place of business and seeking assistance at an employment office. Also, both black men and women more often use the public transit system to get to and from work than do Mexicans, who rely more heavily on carpooling, itself an important network activity.

In short, social isolation deprives inner-city residents not only of conventional role models, whose strong presence once buffered the effects of neighborhood joblessness, but also of the social resources (including social contacts) provided by mainstream social networks that facilitate social and economic advancement in a modern industrial society. This form of social isolation also contributes to the formation and crystallization of ghetto-related cultural traits and behaviors, a subject to which I now turn.

"Culture" may be defined as the sharing of modes of behavior and outlook within a community. The study of culture involves an analysis of how culture is transmitted from generation to generation and the way in which it is sustained through social interaction in the community. To act according to one's culture—either through forms of nonverbal action, including engaging in or refraining from certain conduct, or in the verbal expression of opinions or attitudes concerning norms, values, or beliefs—is to follow one's inclinations as they have been developed by influence or learning from other members of the community that one belongs to or identifies with.

All communities within the broader society share common modes of behavior and outlook. However, the extent to which communities differ with respect to outlook and behavior depends in part on the degree of the group's social isolation from the broader society, the material assets or resources they control, the benefits and privileges they derive from these resources, the cultural experiences they have accumulated as a consequence of historical and existing economic and political arrangements, and the influence they wield because of those arrangements.

For all these reasons one would expect variations in the culture of

subgroups within society, even though many elements of their cultural repertoires are similar. The available research suggests that the total culture of the inner-city ghetto includes ghetto-related elements, but it also includes a predominance of mainstream elements. Many media discussions of the "underclass" often overlook or ignore these mainstream elements. Indeed, one gets the distinct impression from these discussions that the values of people in the inner-city ghetto, to quote *Time* magazine, "are often at radical odds with those of the majority—even the majority of the poor." The UPFLS research reveals, however, that the beliefs of inner-city residents bear little resemblance to such descriptions.

Despite the overwhelming poverty, black residents in inner-city ghetto neighborhoods verbally reinforce, rather than undermine, the basic American values pertaining to individual initiative. For example, the large survey of the UPFLS found that nearly all the black respondents felt that plain hard work is either very important or somewhat important for getting ahead. Indeed, fewer than 3 percent of the black respondents from ghetto poverty census tracts denied the importance of plain hard work for getting ahead in society, and 66 percent expressed the view that it is very important.

Nonetheless, given the constraints and limited opportunities facing people in inner-city neighborhoods, it is altogether reasonable to assume that many of those who subscribe to these values will, in the final analysis, find it difficult to live up to them. Circumstances generally taken for granted in middle-class society are often major obstacles that must be overcome in the inner-city ghetto. Take, for example, the case of a 29-year-old black male from a high-jobless neighborhood on the South Side who is employed in a job without the fringe benefits most workers associate with stable employment, such as paid sick leave. His situation is described in the field notes prepared by a member of the UPFLS research team.

> Clifford is a 29-year-old black male who quit school in eleventh grade and currently works night-shifts (from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m.) as a "dishwasher and assistant cook" in a western suburb of Chicago. He has lived in the city for 16 years and in his present neighborhood for two years. He resides with his mother, a homemaker of 52, his sister of 23, a younger sister of 18, and a little brother of

12. Clifford has never been married and has no children. While he was raised partly on welfare support, he has never received public aid himself.

Clifford has been working for several years as a dishwasher for different employers. He now cooks, mops, and washes dishes for $4.85 an hour. He has held this job since February of 1985 without taking a single day of vacation. His supervisor has made it crystal clear to him that he is expendable and that if he takes too much (that is, any) vacation, they will not keep him. On the day of the interview, he had had a molar pulled and was in great pain (partly due to the fact that, not having any money and having already borrowed cash to pay for the extraction, he could not buy the prescribed pain-killers); yet he was . . . reluctant to call his boss and ask for an evening off.

When I asked if he expects to find a better job soon, he laughed: "I don't know: this is up to the employers, if they wanta hire me." Should he find one, it would be "somethin' in the restaurant business, hospital, or maybe a hotel or somethin', doing dishes."

He has not taken any steps to get further education or training, mainly because his work schedule and lack of resources make such planning quasi-impossible. Yet he clearly would like to get more so he "can better [himself] in life," he says, as he tucks his shirt under his armpits, strokes his belly, yawns as he lays stretched out on the couch. . . . With his present wage, he cannot save any money ("You can't, uh [chuckles], I be right back to my next day. You can't. Don't make enough").

As a result, he frequently finds himself without any money. "Yeah, like today. I had to get my tooth pulled and I had to go out and rent money." When this happens, he borrows small sums (about $20.00) from friends and associates: "I just try to hang in there, whatever I can do." People in the neighborhood often find themselves out of cash too, and the result is that illegal activities are fairly routine: "Oh, man, some of them steal, some of them, uh . . . It's hard to say, man: they probably do anything they can to get a dollar in their pocket. Robbin', prostitution, drug sale, anythin'. Oh boy!" . . . At this point in the interview, Clifford holds his hand to his cheek and constantly moans in pain. . . . Once the interview was over, I explained I'd pay him with a money order

because we don't carry cash with us. "I don't blame you for not bringing any money around here, man. I don't blame you. I have been stuck up before."

There are many individuals in the inner-city ghetto like Clifford, people who struggle against the odds at great individual sacrifice to live up to mainstream norms and ideas of acceptability. For example, a woman in one of the new poverty neighborhoods on the South Side described her husband's financial struggles:

> My husband, he's worked in the community. He's 33. He's worked at One Stop since he was 15. And right now, he's one of the highest paid—he's a butcher—he's one of the highest paid butchers in One Stop. For the 15—almost 18—years that he's been there, he's only making nine dollars an hour. And he's begged and fought and scrapped and sued and everything else for the low pay he gets. And he takes so much. Sometimes he come home and he'd sit home and he'd just cry. And he'd say, "If it weren't for my kids and my family, I'd quit." You know, it's bad, 'cuz he won't get into drugs, selling it, you know, he ain't into drug using. He's the kind of man, he want to work hard and feel good about that he came home. He say that it feels bad sometime to see this 15-year-old boy drivin' down the street with a new car. He saying, "I can't even pay my car note. And I worry about them comin' to get my car."

There are many people in the inner-city ghetto (like Clifford and the butcher) who are working hard under extremely difficult circumstances to make a go of it. Some are able to maintain their employment only under considerable strain, while others, because of the very nature of their economic circumstances, are sometimes compelled to act in ghetto-related ways—for example, existing for a period of time without a steady job or pursuing illegitimate means of income. They may strongly agree with mainstream judgments of unacceptable behavior and yet feel utterly constrained by their circumstances, forced sometimes to act in ways that violate mainstream norms. Outsiders may observe their overt behavior and erroneously assume that they regard this illegitimate income as rightful.

Thus, in some cases, ghetto-related behavior may not reflect internalized values at all. People are simply adapting to difficult circum-

stances. In addition to constraints associated with limited access to organizational channels of privilege and influence, there are also constraints on the choices they can make because they lack access to mainstream sources of information needed to make responsible and helpful decisions. For example, research conducted in a Chicago inner-city high school suggested that many of the seniors had attainable goals and could have made a successful post–high school transition had they received adequate information, guidance, and resources. In addition, every counselor at this high school reported that he or she did not have sufficient informational materials, time, and training needed to provide students with effective career counseling.

In other cases, the decision to act in ghetto-related ways, although not necessarily reflecting internalized values, can nonetheless be said to be cultural. The more often certain behavior such as the pursuit of illegal income is manifested in a community, the greater will be the readiness on the part of some residents of the community to find that behavior "not only convenient but also morally appropriate." They may endorse mainstream norms against this behavior in the abstract but then provide compelling reasons and justifications for this behavior, given the circumstances in their community.

A reasonable hypothesis concerning behavior is that in stable neighborhoods, people who are economically marginal and are struggling to make ends meet are more strongly constrained to act in mainstream ways than are their counterparts in high-jobless neighborhoods that feature problems of social organization and ghetto-related modes of adaptation. The former may be able to exercise a range of illegal or unacceptable solutions to their problems, but the widely held mores of their community, reinforced by economic and social resources that keep the community stable, strongly pressure them to refrain from such activity. However, individuals in the latter neighborhoods may be more likely to pursue such activity because it is more frequently manifested and tolerated in the overt behavior of their neighbors, who are also struggling to survive economically. In this case, ghetto-related culture "may be seen as at least to some extent adaptive, in that situationally suitable modes of action are not only made available as techniques but also tend to be given some measure of apparent legitimacy."

Individuals in the inner-city ghetto can hardly avoid exposure to many kinds of recurrent and open ghetto-related behavior in the daily interactions and contacts with the people of their community. They

therefore have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with a range and combination of modes of behavior that include elements of both the mainstream and the ghetto. The degree of exposure to culturally transmitted modes of behavior in any given milieu depends in large measure on the individual's involvement in or choice of social networks, including networks of friends and kin. Through cultural transmission, individuals develop a cultural repertoire that includes discrete elements that are relevant to a variety of respective situations. For example, jobless individuals who receive cultural transmissions that grow out of lack of steady employment may find some of the transmitted elements, such as street-corner panhandling, quite relevant to their situation. This, as Ulf Hannerz points out, is why some elements of culture should be seen as *situationally adaptive*—that is, they provide members of a group with models of behavior that apply to situations specific to that community.

As Hannerz also notes, however, not all aspects of cultural transmission involve rational decisions as to which aspects of a person's cultural repertoire are relevant in a given situation. There is also the phenomenon of accidental or nonconscious cultural transmission—also called transmission by precept—whereby a person's exposure to certain attitudes and actions is so frequent that they become part of his or her own outlook and therefore do not, in many cases, involve selective application to a given situation. The cultural sharing exemplified in role modeling epitomizes this process. "When a mode of behavior is encountered frequently and in many different persons," it is more likely to be transmitted by precept. Ghetto-related practices involving overt emphasis on sexuality, idleness, and public drinking "do not go free of denunciation" in inner-city ghetto neighborhoods. But the failure of forces of social organization allow these practices to occur much more frequently there than in middle-class society, so the transmission of these modes of behavior by precept, as in role modeling, is more easily facilitated. As the sociologist Ann Swidler has noted,

> People may share common aspirations, while remaining profoundly different in the way their culture organizes their overall pattern of behavior. . . . When we move from one cultural community to another, action is not determined by one's values. Rather action and values are organized to take advantage of cultural competencies. . . . Students of culture keep looking for cul-

tural values that will explain what is distinctive about the behavior of groups or societies, and neglect other distinctively *cultural* phenomena which offer greater promise of explaining patterns of action. These factors are better described as culturally shaped skills, habits, and styles than as values or preferences.

Skills, habits, and styles are often shaped by the frequency at which they are found in their own community. As Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith so clearly shows in her book, *Deadly Consequences*, youngsters in inner-city ghetto neighborhoods are more likely than other children to see violence as a way of life. They are likely to witness violent acts and to have role models who do not adequately control their own violent impulses or restrain their own anger. Accidental cultural transmission can also be seen in the development and crystallization of outlooks or beliefs that grow out of the common experiences of many different people. Elijah Anderson points out that receiving respect from peers, acquaintances, and strangers has become highly valued among inner-city adolescents, who have increasingly been denied status in mainstream terms. Respect is often granted when one is carrying and willing to use an assault weapon. Accordingly, given the ready availability of firearms, knives, and other weapons, adolescents' experiments with aggressive behavior often have deadly consequences.

In short, regardless of the mode of cultural transmission, ghetto-related behaviors often represent particular cultural adaptations to the systematic blockage of opportunities in the environment of the inner city and the society as a whole. These adaptations are reflected in habits, skills, styles, and attitudes that are shaped over time. This was the message articulated in the pioneering works of such authors as Kenneth B. Clark, Ulf Hannerz, and Lee Rainwater and was based on research conducted in the 1960s. These authors demonstrated that it is possible to recognize the importance of macrostructural constraints (that is, to avoid the extreme notion of a "culture of poverty") and still see "the merits of a more subtle kind of cultural analysis of life in poverty." This point can perhaps be most clearly demonstrated in an analysis of the impact of persistent joblessness.

I believe that there is a difference between, on the one hand, a jobless family whose mobility is hampered by constraints in the economy but

nonetheless lives in a neighborhood with a relatively high rate of employment and, on the other hand, a jobless family that lives in a new poverty neighborhood that is affected not only by these same constraints but also by the behavior and outlook of other jobless families in the neighborhood.

As Pierre Bourdieu demonstrated, work is not simply a way to make a living and support one's family. It also constitutes a framework for daily behavior and patterns of interaction because it imposes disciplines and regularities. Thus, in the absence of regular employment, a person lacks not only a place in which to work and the receipt of regular income but also a coherent organization of the present—that is, a system of concrete expectations and goals. Regular employment provides the anchor for the spatial and temporal aspects of daily life. It determines where you are going to be and when you are going to be there. In the absence of regular employment, life, including family life, becomes less coherent. Persistent unemployment and irregular employment hinder rational planning in daily life, the necessary condition of adaptation to an industrial economy.

One of the earliest studies to examine the effects of persistent unemployment was conducted over fifty years ago by Marie Jahoda, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Hans Zeisel in Marienthal, a small industrial community in Austria "at the time of a depression that was much worse than anything the United States went through." During the period of the research, the entire community of Marienthal was unemployed. "One of the main theses of the Marienthal study was that prolonged unemployment leads to a state of apathy in which the victims do not utilize any longer even the few opportunities left to them."

Before this economic depression, when people in the community were working, political organizations were active. People of the town read a lot, "entered eagerly into discussions, and enjoyed organizing a variety of events." The factory was at the center of this lively community. It "was not simply a place of work. It was the center of social life." All of this disappeared when the factory shut down. Describing the situation during their field research in 1930, the authors stated:

> Cut off from their work and deprived of contact with the outside world, the workers of Marienthal have lost the material and moral incentives to make use of their time. Now that they are no longer under any pressure, they undertake nothing new and drift

g existence into one that is undisci-
p. k over any period of this free time,
th ...call anything worth mentioning.

For hours on end, the men stand around in the street alone or in small groups, leaning against the wall of a house or the parapet of the bridge. When a vehicle drives through the village they turn their heads slightly; several of them smoke pipes. They carry on leisurely conversations for which they have unlimited time. Nothing is urgent anymore; they have forgotten how to hurry.

The idleness due to joblessness in Marienthal is not unlike the idleness associated with joblessness in today's inner-city neighborhoods. A 25-year-old employed, unmarried father of one child who works two full-time jobs talked to a UPFLS researcher about his life as an employed worker and his experiences when he was out of work and on drugs.

> The guys in my neighborhood, I used to be with them a few years ago when I was drugging. But, once I quit I found if someone was my friend so-called, all we had in common was drugs and once I quit drugs we had nothing to talk about because things that I was trying to do such as being at work on time and not being able to stay out until two o'clock on a weeknight 'cause I had to get up in the morning in order for me to be punctual at the job, that wasn't their concern because they didn't have no job and a job was furthest from their mind.

It should be clear to the reader that when I speak of joblessness or the disappearance of work, I am referring to the declining involvement in or lack of attachment to the formal labor market. It could be argued that "joblessness," in the general sense of the term, does not necessarily mean "nonwork." To be officially unemployed or officially outside the labor market does not mean that one is totally removed from all forms of work activity. Many people who are officially jobless are nonetheless involved in informal kinds of work activity, ranging from unpaid housework to work in the informal or illegal economies that provide income.

Housework is work, baby-sitting is work, even drug dealing is work. However, what distinguishes work in the formal economy from work in the informal and illegal economies is that work in the formal economy is characterized by greater regularity and consistency in schedules and hours. The demands for discipline are greater. It is true that some work activities outside the formal economy also call for discipline and regular schedules. Several studies reveal that the social organization of the drug industry is driven by discipline and a work ethic, however perverse. But as a general rule, work in the informal and illegal economies is far less governed by norms or expectations that place a premium on discipline and regularity. It is also negatively sanctioned by state authorities and therefore discourages open and continuous participation. For all these reasons, when I speak of the disappearance of work, I mean work in the formal economy, work that provides a framework for daily behavior because it readily imposes discipline and regularity.

The problems associated with the absence of work are most severe for a jobless family in a low-employment neighborhood because they are more likely to be shared and therefore reinforced by other families in the neighborhood through the process of accidental or nonconscious cultural transmission. One of these shared problems is a perception of a lack of self-efficacy.

In social cognitive theory, perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's own ability to take the steps necessary to achieve the goals required in a given situation. Such beliefs affect the level of challenge that an individual feels he or she is able to tackle, the amount of effort expended in a given venture, and the degree of perseverance when encountering difficulties. As Albert Bandura has put it, "Inability to influence events and social conditions that significantly affect one's life can give rise to feelings of futility and despondency as well as to anxiety." Two sources of perceived futility are distinguished in self-efficacy theory: people may (1) seriously doubt their ability to accomplish what is expected or (2) feel confident of their abilities but nonetheless give up trying because they believe that their efforts will ultimately be futile due to an environment that is unresponsive, discriminatory, or punitive. "The type of outcomes people expect depends largely on their judgments of how well they will be able to perform in given situations."

Unstable work and low income, I would hypothesize, will lower one's perceived self-efficacy. A recent study on the adverse effects of economic pressure on mental health and parental behavior, based on

data from a sample of both black and white inner-city parents in Philadelphia, provides some support for this view. The study reported that mounting economic pressures, caused by unstable work and low income, created feelings of emotional depression and thereby tended to lower the parents' sense of efficacy in terms of what they believed to be their influence over their children and on their children's environment. Strong marriages effectively minimized such effects on the behavior of parents in both racial groups, whereas marriages marked by conflict and single-parent households compounded them.

I would therefore expect lower levels of perceived self-efficacy in ghetto neighborhoods—which feature underemployment, unemployment, and labor-force dropouts, weak marriages, and single-parent households—than in less impoverished neighborhoods. Considering the importance of cultural learning and influence, I would also expect the level of perceived self-efficacy to be higher among those individuals who experience these same difficulties but live in working- and middle-class neighborhoods than among their counterparts in ghetto neighborhoods.

In the more socially isolated ghetto neighborhoods, networks of kin, friends, and associates are more likely to include a higher proportion of individuals who, because of their experiences with extreme economic marginality, tend to doubt that they can achieve approved societal goals. The self-doubts may exist for either of the two reasons stated earlier: these individuals may have questions concerning their own capabilities or preparedness, or they may perceive that severe restrictions have been imposed on them by a hostile environment.

The longer the joblessness persists, the more likely these self-doubts will take root. I think it is reasonable to assume that the association between joblessness and self-efficacy grows over time and becomes stronger the longer a neighborhood is plagued by low employment. This hypothesis cannot be directly tested, but my assumption is that there are lower levels of self-efficacy in the inner city today than there were in previous years when most of the adults were working and involved in informal job networks.

Since joblessness afflicts a majority of the adult population in the new poverty neighborhoods, I think it is likely that problems of self-efficacy stem more from perceived environmental restrictions than from doubts about individual capability. In contrast, I would hypothesize that problems of perceived self-efficacy among jobless families in neighborhoods with moderate to high employment may suffer more from feelings of low individual capability because a majority of families in the neighborhood have jobs whereas they do not.

Many of the UPFLS respondents expressed the view that growing up in poverty and living in an environment plagued by joblessness and other problems make it difficult to sustain motivation. A 28-year-old unmarried welfare mother of two children who lives in a large housing project put it this way:

> Because, like I said, to get discouraged, if—I don't care how far you are down the road, to get discouraged takes you back halfway. Because then you got to get your self-esteem up again, you know, you got to get the motor goin' again. And that's what I feel is one of the biggest downfalls for people in the neighborhood. They just—give up. . . . I feel like this [the housing project] was meant to be a stepping stone, you can come here, you can save you a little money. I don't save a damn dime. I don't know who brought that one up, who thought that you could save something. You know, on my public aid application, they actually asked me if I had a savings account! I can't—what am I going to save?

Another unmarried welfare mother of three children who is 35 years old and lives in one of the poor neighborhoods on the South Side stated:

> Sometimes you can try and then you say "I'm tired of trying." I have did that. You try so hard it seems as if when you just about to get up, something happen to knock you back down and you just forget it, then. 'Cause I did that many a time.

The open-ended survey of the UPFLS revealed that although a number of respondents have relatively high aspirations and seem to display confidence in their ability to get ahead, many others were despondent and were pessimistic about their ability to succeed. They insisted that despite the opportunities that may be available to many people, they are destined to remain in a state of poverty and live in troubled neighborhoods. The respondents argued that inner-city blacks will not be able to progress because inferior education has placed them at a disadvantage. They blame racism and the rising num-