

Whiteness, Poverty, and the Politics of Place SOC 2202: Cities and Society Fall 2019

#### Reminders...

- Place profiles uploaded to your OneDrive folder by **Friday**, **October 4**.
  - Additional Office Hours this week.
- Canceling Office Hour Appointments.
- Reminder: Expert Blogs are due within one week of discussing your question(s).
  - What if we don't discuss your question on your assigned day?

### Previously ...

#### The Persistence of Poverty – Three Competing Theories

#### • Massey and Denton — Hypersegregation

- The persistent role of racial domination in federal and local policies that kept blacks historically segregated from economic opportunities.
- The "hypersegregation" of blacks as a necessary condition of urban poverty and related social problems.

#### • Wilson – "Underclass" Thesis

- Poverty explained by deindustrialization, disinvestment of urban areas, outmigration
  of the black middle class, producing social isolation.
- Cultural  ${\rm Argument}-{\rm Economic}$  conditions result in a dearth of unmarriageable men, resulting in single-parent, welfare-dependent households.
  - concentration effects: social networks saturated with other chronically poor individuals.

### Previously ...

#### • The Persistence of Poverty — Three Competing Theories

#### • Sharkey – The Ghetto as "Inherited"

- Concentrated poverty and racial segregation have not only persisted and intensified in post civil-rights urban areas, but these economic and social realities have been transmitted from one generation to the next.
- Upward mobility among blacks who remain in high poverty areas is not necessarily stable over generations.

### Supporting Integration

- $\,\cdot\,$  INTEGRATION has been difficult to achieve through government policies.
  - Maintaining racial compositions.
  - $\ensuremath{\text{Differing}}$  attitudes among blacks and whites in relation to racially integrated neighborhoods.
    - Most whites still prefer to live in all-white neighborhoods and suburbs.
       Racial thresholds (around 40%).
    - Most blacks prefer living in neighborhoods with equal numbers of black and white residents.
  - Affirmative marketing techniques and financial incentives.
  - Courts have been central in promoting integration.

### Supporting Integration Elijah Anderson, The Iconic Ghetto

Since the end of the Civil Rights Era, legislation has made it possible for historic racial integration and incorporation, including the growth of the black middle class.

- ➤ "The ghetto" associated as the place "where black people live."
  - ➤ Image of "the ghetto" extends largely from perceptions created and proliferating in the media.
    - impoverished, chaotic, lawless, drug-infested, and ruled by violence.
  - The "iconic ghetto" also contributes to associations of African Americans with declining housing values, further inhibiting efforts for sustained community diversity.

# Measure of Isolation:Index of Dissimilarity

• Index of dissimilarity: measure of the relative separation or integration or groups across all neighborhoods of a city or metropolitan area.

	Dissimilarity Index		Percent of
	With Whites*	Population**	Total Population
White*		907,166	31.32%
Black*	87.	3 1,053,739	36.39%
American Indian*	63.	5 4,253	0.15%
Asian*	51.	9 124,437	4.30%
Native Hawaiian*	81.	8 972	0.03%
Other*	64.	8 4,331	0.15%
Two or More Races*	44.	6 47,474	1.64%
White/Black*	63.	7 5,267	0.18%
White/American Indian*	58.	8 2,377	0.08%
White/Asian*	47.	2 6,751	0.23%
White/Other*	54.	2 19,138	0.66%
Other Combinations*		13,941	0.48%
Hispanic	61.	4 753,644	26.02%
Total	-	2.896.016	100.00%

## Measure of Isolation: Index of Dissimilarity

• Index of dissimilarity: measure of the relative separation or integration or groups across all neighborhoods of a city or metropolitan area.

	Dissimilarity Index		Percent of
	With Whites*	Population**	Total Population
White*	-	58,201	90.59%
Black*	40.7	1,611	2.51%
American Indian*	35.0	283	0.44%
Asian*	36.5	1,967	3.06%
Native Hawaiian*	77.4	29	0.05%
Other*	56.7	96	0.15%
Two or More Races*	28.7	1,088	1.69%
White/Black*	36.3	211	0.33%
White/American Indian*	37.0	278	0.43%
White/Asian*	34.8	217	0.34%
White/Other*	48.7	123	0.19%
Other Combinations*	-	259	0.40%
Hispanic	35.3	974	1.52%
Total	-	64,249	100.00%

### Supporting integration

#### • Gautreaux vs. Chicago Housing Authority (1966)

- public housing as de facto segregation
- led to a housing voucher program
- Moving to Opportunity:
  - designed to see if moving to less impoverished communities might affect quality of life.
    - results mixed
    - MTO study seemed to show that living in quieter, less stressful environments did have very positive effects on children.

### Supporting Integration

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher

- families can rent units above fair market rate (FMR) as long as they pay the difference between the government-established FMR limit and the actual rent.
- Income Mixing in Public Housing
  - greater socioeconomic mixing in public housing
- Scattered-Site Subsidized Housing
  - families are given vouchers to live in low poverty neighborhoods
- Redevelopment
  - Hope VI Program (1992)

### Institutional Barriers to Housing Choice

- Lower incomes
- Racial discrimination in housing markets
  - $\bullet$  realtors as neighborhood "gatekeepers"
  - Dual housing markets
  - blockbusting

 $\bullet$  Today, it remains more difficult for blacks to find more affordable housing relative to whites.

- mortgage disinvestment
- subprime loans



- Lincoln Square (Manhattan)
- 55 "affordable (low-income) housing units" in a 33-story building.
- 219 market rate units.
- The rich and poor not only have separate entrances, on **Riverside Boulevard and West 62nd Street**, respectively, they have different addresses. The rich officially live at **50 Riverside Blvd.**, the poor at **40 Riverside Blvd.**



### Neighborhood Diversity

- Racial and economic diversity in neighborhoods is often treated as an omen.
- Some neighborhoods/communities have succeeded in maintaining long-term diversity (since the Civil Rights Movement)
  - Diversity by direction
  - Diversity by circumstance

### Diversity by Direction

 $\bullet$  Creation of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other community organizations.

 $\bullet$  Religious institutions are encouraged to play a prominent role in promoting prodiversity values.

 $\bullet$  The places where different groups in the community come together on a regular basis are more prevalent and development.

• Greater financial and political resources to promote diversity.

- $\bullet$  Working relationships with banks and real estate agents to market the community.
- Bi-racial or bi-ethnic character instead of a multiracial or multiethnic character.

### Diversity by Circumstance

- Multiethnic as opposed to bi-racial/bi-ethnic
- Multiple groups representing multiple ethnic/racial differences.
- $\bullet\,$  Religious institutions are central for building bridges between groups.
- Fewer social seams to bring different groups together.
- $\bullet\,$  Difficult to organize collectively due to multicultural character.
- $\bullet\,$  Limited financial resources (often due to high number of immigrants)
- Substantial number of affordable housing units.

#### Examples

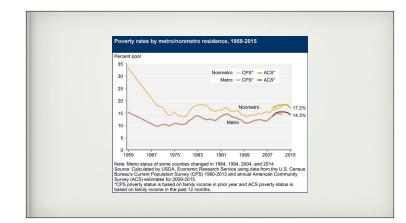
• Examples of Diversity by Direction

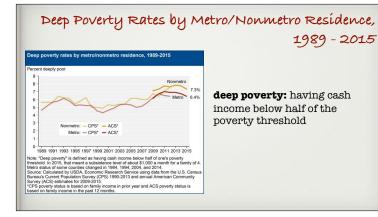
- Sherman Park (Milwaukee); Park Hill (Denver); West Mount Airy (Philadelphia); Forest Park (Chicago)
- Examples of Diversity by Circumstance
  - Jackson Heights and Fort Greene (New York City); Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Uptown (Chicago); San Antonio and Fruitvale (Oakland); Houston Heights; Southeast Seattle

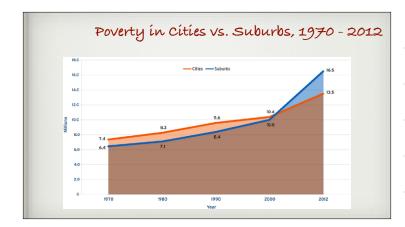
Why do you think scholars emphasize the black urban poor than on poor whites?

In rural settings like that of the Golden Valley, Sherman highlights the importance of the moral value of coping strategies. She ranks them in the following way (most moral capital to least): paid work, subsistence work, family help, cheap housing, unemployment, disability, welfare and finally illegal activities. How does the importance of these factors change, if at all, when one looks at an urban setting, such as New York City or Chicago? Which factors gain importance, and which other factors loose importance and why?

-Andrew M., Expert Question







# Possible Explanations

 $\bullet$  The "hypersegregation" of blacks relative to the racial isolation of whites.

• The lower poverty rates of whites relative to those of blacks.

• The availability of black communities vs. poor white communities (physical access vs. communal access).

• The rural-urban divide

• rural: counties outside the commuting zones of cities of 50,000 or more.

#### • Culture of Poverty Arguments:

• Early "culture of poverty" arguments attempted to generalize across "regional, rural-urban, and even national boundaries" (Lewis 1959: 2).

### understanding Poverty

- Poverty in the United States is relative, based on a percentage of the median income in a given location.
- Poverty is officially measured based on absolute poverty: the point at which a household's income falls below the necessary level to purchase food to physically sustain its members.
  - The official poverty line in the U.S. is calculated by a formula developed in the 1960s by Mollie Orshansky:
    - Estimates food costs for minimum food requirements to determine whether a family can "afford" to survive.

#### Poverty Thresholds in the United States (The 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia)

PERSONS IN FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD	POVERTY GUIDELINE 2017	POVERTY GUIDELINE 2016
For families/households with more than 6 persons, add \$4,180 for each addit	iccal person.	
1	\$12,060	\$11,880
2	\$16,240	\$16,020
3	\$20,420	\$20,160
4	\$24,600	\$24,300
5	\$28,780	\$28,440
6	\$32,960	\$32,580
7	\$37,140	\$36,730
8	\$41,320	\$40,890