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A BEHAVIORAL INTERPRETATION OF THE ORIGINS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY STRUCTURE

By

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November 2018

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Gerald D. Jaynes

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Abstract

1960 to 1980 doubling (21% to 41%) of black children in one-parent families emerged from 1940-to-1970 urbanization converging population toward *urbanized* blacks' historically stable high rate, not post-1960 welfare liberalization or deindustrialization. Urban and rural child socializations structured different Jim Crow Era black family formations. Agrarian economic enclaves socialized conformity to Jim Crow and two-parent families; urban enclaves rebellion, male joblessness, and destabilized families. Proxying urban/rural residence at age 16 for socialization location, logistic regressions on sixties census data confirm hypothesis. Racialized urban socialization negatively affected two-parent family formation and poverty status of blacks but not whites.

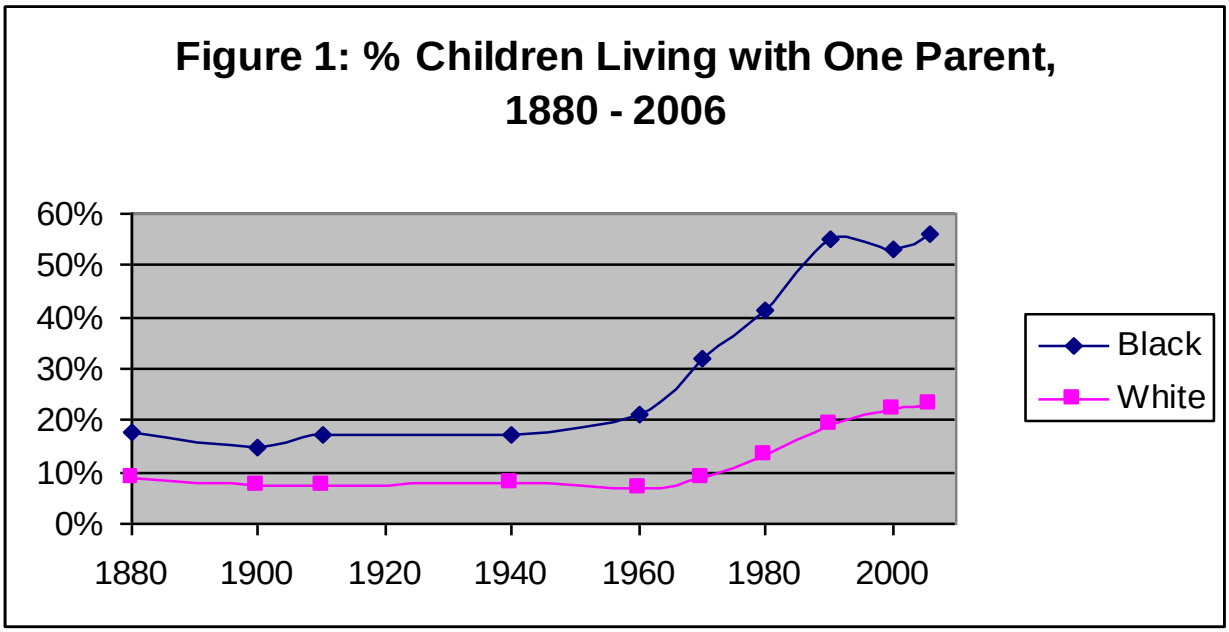
*Special Thanks to James Kung of the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Hong Kong for helpful comments. All errors are owned by me.

INTRODUCTION

Other than immigration, during the past fifty years, no demographic issue evoked more research and commentary among social scientists of the American scene than the causes of the disproportionately high percentage of African American children living in single-parent families. Virtually all such research focuses on post-1960 events to explain the large percentage of black children living in such families. This research strategy is certainly suggested by the time-path of the proportion of black children living in single parent families since 1880, Figure 1. Between 1880 and 1960, the proportion of black children in single-parent families exhibited a remarkable stability hovering in a narrow band around 20 percent. Then, abruptly, after 1960, this demographic equilibrium shattered as the proportion of black children in single-parent families doubled between 1960 and 1980 then continued its sharp rise reaching a new stable demographic equilibrium just above 50 percent near 1990.

Despite the clear 1960 break in the time series, I argue the emphasis on post-1960 events to explain these demographic trends is misplaced. Leading explanations such as post-1960 macro change in the economy like deindustrialization or social policy disincentives to marry due to growth of the welfare state likely exacerbated the changes, and play a role in sustaining them at present, but neither could be a determinative causal force explaining the high rates of single parent families I argue already characterized the *urbanized* black family structure extending back at least to the 19th Century and likely much earlier.

The behavioral framework elucidated in this paper implies that at any time prior to approximately 1975, it is crucial to divide the African American population into three distinct demographic and behavioral constructs, the rural, the urbanizing, and the urbanized. The latter two categories compose the nation's urban black population: the *urbanized* those blacks whose childhood socialization occurred in some urban area, and the *urbanizing* rural-to-urban migrants whose childhood socialization occurred in a rural area. The rural population is all blacks living in rural areas and it may contain African Americans who have always



Data for 1880, 1910, 1940, 1960, 1980 are children ages 0-14 from Ruggles (Table 2); 1900 children ages 0-15 from Gordon and McClanahan (Table 7); 1970, 1990, 2000, 2006 children ages 0-18 from published U.S. Census reports.

resided in some rural area as well as blacks who at some earlier time were urbanized or urbanizing.

The hypothesis underlying my reinterpretation of the origins of contemporary black family structure is, through the late 20th Century, throughout American history, *structural differences in the race relations and economic discrimination confronting blacks in rural versus urban locations produced distinct childhood socialization experiences.* These distinct socialization experiences exposed urbanized black children (north and south) to large numbers of recusant adults -- men and women socially alienated by urban job ceilings and truculently refusing to acquiesce to race relations based in white supremacy. Observation of and interaction with recusant adults and discriminatory economic institutions put urbanized black children at great risk of *early* projection of a failure to achieve self-verification of an acceptable social identity. The developmental outcome was early adoption of recusant identities and oppositional agencies leading to a polarized choice: either seek self-verification elsewhere by avoiding institutions such as schools, labor markets, and marriage (causing high rates of single parent families), or (attempting to alter one's reception

in such institutions) intensely engage them leading to civil rights activism and a rising black middle class. In contrast, rural black children were more likely exposed to adults seeking self-verification by striving to climb the agricultural tenure ladder a life goal requiring conforming to behavioral norms based in the era's white supremacist race relations. Failure to self-verify a positive self-image by achieving land ownership or rental tenancy occurred later in life when the adoption of oppositional agencies was greatly mitigated.

One consequence of urbanized blacks' greater ecological risk of becoming alienated from social institutions was their far greater likelihood of male joblessness and formation of female headed families with children. I theorize, throughout the period ranging from the 19th Century to today, the proportions of black children living in single-parent families have been stable historical constants at approximately 50% for the urbanized and 10% for rural blacks with urbanizing blacks intermediate but much closer to their rural counterparts. The aggregated actual census data in the top curve of Figure 1 represents a population average of the hypothesized constant series. Aggregating the African American population at any time before approximately 1980 camouflages the disparate behavior of the different subpopulations whose distinct behaviors with respect to family structure underlay the average trend. During 1900 only 15 percent of the black American population was urban, and the vast majority of this urban population was certainly urbanizing. The Great Migration of the black population during the WW1 era significantly altered blacks' geographic distribution, and, by 1950, the black urban population had reached 28 percent. However, urban blacks remained a highly urbanizing group, and the census average severely concealed the family behavior of the urbanized subpopulation that is most relevant for understanding and predicting overall post-1960 family structure. The rapid rural-to-urban migration 1940 to 1970 increased urban blacks' percentage to 80 turning the once overwhelmingly rural black population into an overwhelmingly urbanized population. The census average converged to a new demographic equilibrium reflecting urbanized blacks' unchanging behavioral responses to American Apartheid!

As suggested by the preceding paragraphs, this paper elucidates a behavioral economic explanation of the sharp post-1960 increase in the proportion of African American children living in single-parent-families. As applied here, behavioral economics explains behavior by adducing the economic consequences of assuming a theoretical construct of social psychology (*self-verification*) underpins individual behavioral choices. Self-verification refers to a basic human need to receive social affirmation one's core beliefs about one's self (one's identity) *are true* (Giecas & Schwalbe, 1983; Stets & Burke, 2000).[1] Self-verification underpins a fundamental proposition of social psychology that human beings avoid people and institutions that view them in ways they choose not to see themselves. Hence, one response to a failure to achieve self-verification in some important social realm (and the one this paper focuses on) is defensive -- avoid those settings and social roles jeopardizing one's ability to self-verify a positive sense of self (Goffman, 1973; Kelvin & Jarett, 1985). An alternative response (not discussed in this paper) is offensive -- intensely engage those settings and social roles to alter how one is perceived. Combining these behavioral strategies with a phenomenological description of crucial differences in the economic forces driving black children's socialization in rural versus urban economic markets provides a powerful means of explaining important economic choices such as labor market participation and family formation among the black population throughout the 20th Century.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, I present an econometric test of my hypothesis that differences in the behavior of urbanized and urbanizing blacks underlay the post-1960 changes in black family structure by applying logistic regression to data from the *Survey of Economic Opportunity* (SEO). The SEO is a survey undertaken by the U.S. Census Bureau during 1966-67 that oversampled African Americans living in urban areas throughout the nation. Following presentation of the econometric results,

[1] Self-verification is closely related to *relative deprivation*, a theoretical construct political scientists and sociologists use, often to investigate issues concerning distributive justice.

I explain why they confirm my hypothesis by expositing a behavioral theory linking identity construction and economic agency to distinct rural/urban child socialization experiences during most of U.S. history. Key to the behavioral explanation is a detailed identification and enumeration of the primary structural differences between rural versus urban Jim Crow economies responsible for distinct socialization experiences that led forward looking adolescents in urban settings to project failure to achieve self-verification and to adopt oppositional agencies at early ages. In the final section, I briefly summarize additional empirical evidence that strongly implies my hypothesis identifying distinct differences in the behaviors of urbanizing and urbanized blacks stretches back deep into the 19th Century.

Statistical Evidence, Testing the Theory

The hypothesis that black children were more likely to form recusant identities when socialized in urban settings implies measures of social alienation among African Americans should have increased significantly after 1960. The hypothesis is amenable to empirical testing. I explore the issue using data from the SEO undertaken by the Census Bureau in 1966-7. This survey sampled metropolitan areas throughout the nation oversampling African Americans, thus including large enough numbers of blacks to draw credible statistical inferences. Importantly, in addition to the usual kinds of questions found in Census Population Surveys, the SEO contains questions on residential background. For my purposes, the most relevant residential question (where a person resided at age 16) was coded rural or urban. This location could be North or South. I use urban and rural residence at age 16 to index urban and rural childhood socialization, respectively.

Before reporting relevant descriptive statistics and the econometric analysis, I discuss two important sources of bias in the data against my argument. The proxy variable for urban versus rural socialization is not perfect. The data provide no means of ascertaining exactly when a respondent self-reporting residency in an urban setting at age 16 arrived. Hence, many of the respondents labeled urbanized in the data could have been rural-to-urban migrants who were socialized in a rural setting for most of their childhood, but

happened to migrate not long before their sixteenth birthday. Since these respondents should properly be coded urbanizing, if my hypothesis is true, their presence biases any measured difference in urbanized/urbanizing behaviors downwards. Analogously, some of the respondents coded urbanizing because they report being in a rural setting at age 16 could have been socialized in an urban setting, but just happened to live in a rural area at age 16. The presence of such individuals also biases urbanized/urbanizing differences downward. Given the massive volume of rural-to-urban movement of the African American population during the three decades preceding the SEO, it is safe to assume that the proportions of respondents miscoded urbanized is far greater than the proportion miscoded urbanizing, an inference reinforced by the fact that the respondents are all residing in urban areas at the time of the survey.

A second source of downward bias against my hypothesis is the census bureau's definitions of rural and urban. The Census Bureau's definitions are primarily based on population size, a simplification long understood inadequate by urban sociologists who focus on population density, the organization of schools, and other factors (Wirth, 1939). Hence, strictly speaking, large numbers of individuals coded urbanizing in this data were actually socialized in urban settings and would ideally be coded urbanized. Hence, the presence in the data of individuals living in a jurisdiction that from the perspective of the theory should be urban but is coded by the Census as rural (e.g. an unincorporated jurisdiction with a population below 2500 but whose major industry is not farming) also biases downward urbanized/urbanizing differences. Their presence undoubtedly biases upwards measures of alienation among the urbanizing. I thus, conclude that any estimates obtained provide lower bounds on the size of group differentials and the value of any particular measure for the urbanized.

Table 1 displays summary statistics describing differences in the behaviors of urbanized and urbanizing African Americans living in northern and southern cities at the time of the Survey. North refers to all areas not in the South. First note, an important, even crucial finding; in the midst of the rapidly expanding U.S.

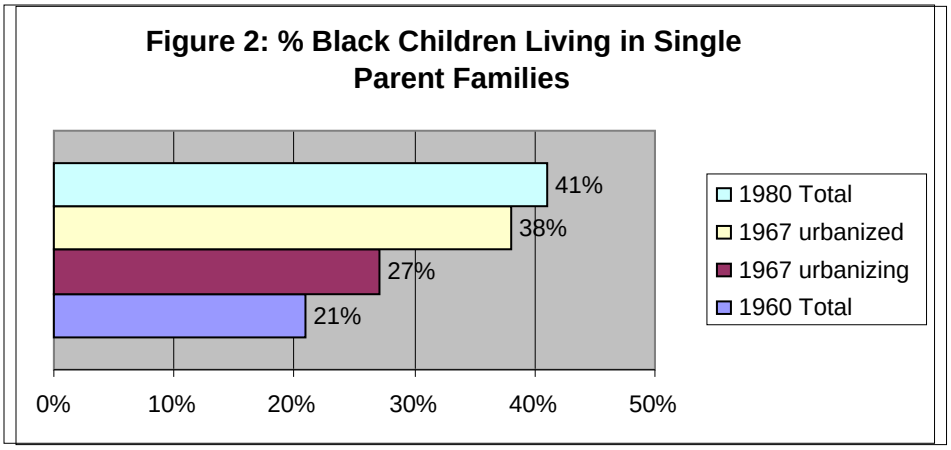
economy of the mid-1960s, among urbanized young black men 14-34 years of age who were not in school, 1 in 11 reported no time either working or looking for work; the comparable number for same age urbanizing black men was only 1 in 50. Among urbanized African American women ages 15 and above, 55% were married and living with spouse compared to 66% of same age urbanizing black women. Despite higher average educational attainment among the urbanized, children living in families with an urbanized African American head were more likely to be in poverty than were children in families with an urbanizing black head, 47% and 39% respectively. Most germane to our current topic and indicative of conditions that would characterize the family living arrangements of black children by 1980, compared to 27% of children living in families with an urbanizing head, 38% of African American children living in families with an urbanized head were in single-parent-families, see Table 1. Importantly, differences between the urbanized and urbanizing were prevalent in southern and border cities as well as the North and West. For example, differences in children's living arrangements exhibited similar patterns in cities as diverse as Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., a city that was still decidedly "southern" during the sixties.

The descriptive statistics exhibit substantial social underperformance and alienation from social institutions on the part of urbanized compared to urbanizing African Americans. They thus provide preliminary evidence in support of the hypothesis that urban socialization assumed a significant role in determining single-parenthood and other indices of alienation from traditional behavioral norms among blacks. However, absent appropriate tests confirming the group differences are statistically significant, and that the differences cannot be accounted for by *reasonable* alternative explanations, these findings are not definitive. To provide more rigorous tests of the theory and its primary hypotheses, I estimated logistic regression models to assess whether (after controlling for the effects of race, region, and migrant status per se) socialization location exerted a significant effect on the probabilities a family with children is two-parent or in poverty.

Table 1: Indices of Social Alienation among Urbanized and Urbanizing African Americans

	% Children with 1-Parent			% Women Married age ≥15			*% Men working zero weeks, age 14-34***		
	1967	1980	1960	1967	1980	1960	1967	1980	1960
Urbanized	38% n = 4223*			55..3 n =7207			9% n=1613		
Urbanizing	27% n=1222*			66..3 n = 1501			2% n=239		
U.S. Total		*41%*	*21%*		*44.6*	*59.8*		*14***	23***

Source: Data calculated from U.S. Bureau of the Census, SEO, 1966-67. Marital Status of the Population 15 Years Old and Over by Sex and Race: 1950 to Present, MS-1 (www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/ms1.xls). *n refers to number of families in sample. **Refers to men not in school. Urbanized and urbanizing families and persons reside in urban areas; U.S. totals refer to nationwide populations. ***Men 20 to 24 years old.



Competing Explanations

The econometric framework tests alternative explanations of the descriptive findings that receive support in social science research. There is a substantial literature contributed to by economic historians

and social demographers finding statistically significant differences in social status indices between northern and southern born blacks living in northern cities. These studies overturned popular beliefs among the general public and social scientists' alike that southern migrants to northern cities were primarily responsible for increases in black unemployment, poverty, and welfare rolls in such cities. They did so by showing, in fact, southern migrants to northern cities outperformed native born northern blacks in virtually all indices of social status other than educational attainment, an exception that seemed to make the findings even more incredible. Subsequent literature explained these counterintuitive findings with two primary arguments: the black northern deficit model, blacks born in the northern states were argued to have attitudinal handicaps or cultural pathologies that ill-equipped them to compete with black southerners who for some unknown reason were argued not to have these handicaps; the migrant selection hypothesis that argued black southerners living in the north were a population selected for greater than average success as is the case for many migrant populations (Lieberson and Wilkinson, 1976; Long, 1974; Weiss and Williamson, 1972).

My conceptualization rules out these explanations in favor of a more general economic performance mechanism capable of explaining all of the findings. Urban socialization induced forward-looking black adolescents to foresee a failure of self-verification during adulthood inducing many to adopt coping strategies centered on white avoidance (e.g. dropping out of mainstream labor markets). Exacerbating this historical problem, the mid-20th Century influx of large numbers of low-skilled rural migrants exhibiting obsequious role behaviors toward whites both decreased wages in "black jobs" and increased white employers' and co-workers' expectations of black subservience exacerbating the drop-out problem among native urbanites. The wage component of this deterioration in employment conditions is confirmed by Leah Boustan's (2016) findings that although black southerners more than doubled their earnings by moving north, their competition with northern-born black workers limited black–white wage convergence in

northern labor markets and slowed black economic growth. The race relations component is confirmed by a plethora of testimonial evidence offered by northern-born blacks of the period (Jaynes, in progress).

To rule out the hypotheses competing with my conceptualization, the econometric model must first demonstrate that behavioral differences between southern black migrants and northern-born blacks, all living in the north, are better understood in terms of the behavioral determinate rural versus urban socialization not generic differences in regional backgrounds suggesting attitudinal handicaps solely affecting northern African Americans. I do this by observing, if the north-south differences uncovered in northern cities by demographers derived from more broadly based regional differences between northern and southern African Americans, socialization location as specified in my theory should hold no explanatory power for behavioral outcomes among blacks living in *urban areas of the south*. Alternatively, if rural versus urban socialization location is the determinative causal variable in the creation of social behaviors such as poverty and family formation patterns, differences in the behaviors of urbanized and urbanizing African Americans should be significant within southern as well as northern cities. Upping the ante, a finding that the urbanized-urbanizing difference in the south equaled that in the north would imply a powerful structural-behavioral nexus in the theory and provide especially strong evidence for its support.

Secondly, the econometric model must demonstrate behavioral differences between urbanized and urbanizing are not due to migrant selectivity (e.g. southerners who migrated north were not selected on some unobserved trait that increased their probability of maintaining two-parent families). Because the urbanized/urbanizing distinction is inherently a comparison of non-migrants and migrants, this second task appears daunting. However, I dismiss this possibility in two ways. First, and especially important, there is considerable independent evidence that the massive rural-to-urban migration of the mid-20th Century, which rested on an exceedingly strong push factor due to mechanization of southern agriculture after 1945, was not selective with respect to economic characteristics of the black rural population (Boustan, 2016; Day,

1967; Whatley, 1987). Moreover, the data do allow such a test. To borrow a term from the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1973:112), I am expositing a theory grounded in the structuration of norms of behavior among a disadvantaged minority subordinated within a social structure's racialized class-gender relations. Nothing in the theory implies urbanized-urbanizing behavioral differences should exist among the super ordinate group, whites. Hence, the theory implies urbanized whites should not exhibit signs of social alienation in the north or south. Using whites as a placebo group allows me to test if any socialization location effects found for blacks are pure race effects, and not due to some unobserved factor (such as higher motivation to succeed among urbanizing southern migrants generally) causing spurious correlation between urban socialization and alienated behavior patterns. Any behavioral differences between urbanized and urbanizing whites should display different patterns than those among blacks. The strongest possible hypothesis predicts socialization location has no effects on white family formation. That is, if observable urbanized/urbanizing differences among whites fail to duplicate the patterns among blacks, we can conclude there is no pure migrant selectivity effect producing the differences among African Americans.

Econometric Model

I estimated the following model.

$$\text{Logit P}(e|X_i) = \alpha + \beta_1 s_i + \beta_2 r_i + \beta_3 b_i + \beta_4 s_i r_i + \beta_5 s_i b_i + \beta_6 r_i b_i + \sum \beta_j x_{ij} + \varepsilon_i.$$

Where, $\text{P}(e|X_i)$ is the probability some event e is true and X_i is a vector composed of the following components: s_i is a binary variable indicating the ith observation's socialization location either urban or rural; r_i is a binary variable indicating region of residence at time of survey, north or south; b_i is a binary variable indicating race, black or white, terms five through 7 represent the respective interactions of these variables, and the x_{ij} represent covariates discussed below. I make the usual assumptions concerning the error term. The region variable consolidates all regions not in the census definition of south as north.

Theoretical Predictions and Results of Logistic Regressions

Table 2 summarizes, for each of the eight relevant household head status positions, the econometric model's estimate of the relevant logit (in terms of the coefficients), and the predicted signs of and relationships between the coefficients implied by my theoretical argument. In terms of the parameters to be estimated, each row entry in column two represents the model's estimate of the log odds that a household head in the indicated status group of column one is two-parent. Column three displays the theory's prediction concerning the signs of and any specific relationships between the estimated parameters. The reader should observe that the entries in column three represent the sharpest interpretation of the theoretical argument possible, i.e. all discernible effects of socialization location on the likelihood of a family being two-parent are independent of region and discernable for blacks but not whites. In this regard, in addition to the theory's primary prediction that socialization location has an important negative effect on the log odds a black family is two-parent ($\beta_1 < 0$) and there are no main or interactive regional effects ($\beta_2 = \beta_4 = \beta_6 = 0$), I call special attention to the theory's strong implication that socialization location has no effect on the log odds a white family is two-parent ($\beta_5 = -\beta_1$). As discussed earlier, nothing in the theory suggests the superordinate group should be affected by socialization location.

Table 3 displays the actual results for the model without covariates. The model with covariates is discussed in the section on robustness. Estimation of the full model verified that both the main effect of region and its interactive effects with other variables were statistically insignificant at the five percent level and the hypothesis that the relevant coefficients equal zero cannot be rejected. I conclude, with respect to family formation, the effects of race and socialization location are independent of region, and applying Occam's Razor, the regression results shown in Table 3 use the minimal set of predictor variables necessary to test the primary hypotheses generated by the theory. This first set of predictors contains four binary categorical variables named race (coded 0 = black, 1 = white), socialization location (coded 0 = urbanizing,

1 = urbanized), region (coded 0 = southern residence, 1 = northern residence), and an interaction between socialization location and race. Status of the family head determined variable coding. All results refer to families living in urban areas (roughly defined by the census as jurisdictions of population 2500 or greater).

The reference group for model 1 is black urbanizing southerners. For this group, the constant term 1.008 in the second row of Table 3 is the estimated log odds of being two-parent. Exponentiation of this constant term gives 2.74 as the odds that a black urbanizing southern family is two-parent. These odds imply the estimated probability .73. The coefficient for region estimates the difference in the log odds of being two-parent between the reference group and a black urbanizing family living in the North. Region's coefficient is negative but small and, as predicted, the coefficient for region (β_2) is not even remotely close to being statistically significant, and we cannot reject the hypothesis that the coefficient is zero. Moving to column 5 we see that the odds an urbanizing black family residing in the North is two-parent is .975 times the odds for the reference group, giving estimated odds of 2.67 and a probability equal to .728 virtually equal to the reference group. Thus, as displayed in the lower part of Table 3, the probability that a black urbanizing family living in the South is two-parent is equivalent to the probability for a black urbanizing family living in the North. With respect to family formation behavior, blacks socialized in rural areas behaved no different in the urban south than in the urban north.

The coefficient for socialization location estimates the difference in the log odds of being two-parent between the reference group and a black *urbanized* family living in the South. The estimated effects of changing from an urbanizing to an urbanized black family in the South are negative and statistically significant with a p value of .001. The estimated odds that a black urbanized family in the South is two-parent is .784 times the odds of a similarly situated urbanizing black family, and we estimate the probability that an urbanized black southern family is two-parent at .683. Given the statistical significance of the coefficient for socialization location, we reject the hypothesis that the log odds of being two-parent are the

same for urbanized and urbanizing black families in the South. From the table it is clear the log odds of being two-parent are also different for urbanized and urbanizing black families in the North. Moreover, comparing urbanized families in the south and north, we cannot reject the hypothesis that there is no difference in the log odds of being two-parent. As with the urbanizing, urbanized blacks behave similarly north and south. Intra and inter-regional differences between black urbanized and urbanizing households

Table 2

Black Urbanizing South	α	$\alpha > 0$
Black Urbanized South	$\alpha + \beta_1$	$\beta_1 < 0$
Black Urbanizing North	$\alpha + \beta_2$	$\beta_2 = 0$
Black Urbanized North	$\alpha + \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_4$	$\beta_2 = \beta_4 = 0$
White Urbanizing South	$\alpha + \beta_3$	$\beta_3 > 0$
White Urbanized South	$\alpha + \beta_1 + \beta_3 + \beta_5$	$\beta_5 = -\beta_1$
White Urbanizing North	$\alpha + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + \beta_6$	$\beta_2 = \beta_6 = 0$
White Urbanized North	$\alpha + \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + \beta_4 + \beta_5 + \beta_6$	$(\beta_5 + \beta_1) = \beta_2 = \beta_4 = \beta_6 = 0$

are virtually identical. Socialization location appears to be so powerful a conditioner of household formation patterns it is independent of region in the strongest sense.

The remaining two coefficients in Table 3 provide estimates of the effects of race on the log odds of a family being two-parent. The coefficient on race is an estimate of the pure race effect, the difference in the log odds of being two-parent for urbanizing black and white families living in the urban South. As predicted, this pure race effect is positive, large, and statistically significant with a p value less than .0005. I reject the hypothesis that urbanizing black and white families in the South have equal log odds of being two-parent;

the odds of an urbanizing southern family with a white head being two-parent is 3.21 times the odds for a similarly situated family with a black head, and the estimated probability for the urbanizing white southern family is .898. Finally, the coefficient for the race-socialization location interaction term provides a test of the hypothesis that the effects of socialization location are different for blacks and whites. The coefficient for the interaction is positive and statistically significant at the five-percent level allowing rejection of the

Table 3: Logistic Regression Predicting Log Odds of 2-Parent Family

Predictor	B	s.e.	P value	Odds ratio	-2 Log likelihood	Pseudo R Square
Constant	1.008	.069	.000	2.74	13846	.10
Race	1.167	.096	.000	3.21		
Socialization Location	-.243	.072	.001	.784		
R*SL	.215	.107	.044	1.24		
Region	-.026	.046	.572	.975		

Group	Black urbanizing south	black urbanized south	white urbanizing south	white urbanized south	black urbanzg north	black urbanzd north	white urbanizing north	white urbanized north
Predicted Probability	.733	.682	.898	.895	.728	.677	.896	.893
Observed Frequency	.735	.685	.889	.896	.725	.675	.90	.893
N	581	1961	750	2068	641	2262	1432	6295

hypothesis that the effects of rural and urban socialization are equal for blacks and whites. The odds an urbanized white southern family is two-parent (3.213*.784*1.24*2.74) equals 8.55 and its estimated probability of being two-parent is .895, indicating no difference between urbanized and urbanizing white families in the South. Or equivalently, as implied by the theory and confirmed by an F test, the interaction effect of race and socialization location cancels the main effect of socialization location (see row six column 3 of Table 2 and in Table 3 rows four and five of column 2). Analogously, the estimated probability for an urbanized white family in the North is .892. We conclude that the effects of urban versus rural socialization on family formation depend on race; for whites there are no differential effects, the predicted probabilities for white urbanized and urbanizing are equivalent; for blacks there is a significant difference, the odds a black urbanized family is two-parent is about four-fifths the odds of a black urbanizing family.

These results clearly discredit the northern black cultural deficit hypothesis. The urbanizing outperform the urbanized in the south as well as the north. I argue including the race variable and the race-socialization location interaction is equivalent to having a placebo group (whites) and the results on the coefficients for these controls strongly rule out the possibility the results for blacks are due to some spurious artifact in the data. The finding of no socialization location effects for whites also discredits the hypothesis that rural to urban black migrants were selected according to some unobserved trait increasing the likelihood of maintaining two parent families. The finding of no socialization location effect for whites implies if there were such a migrant selection effect it only existed for blacks. It is difficult to imagine what that race related trait could be. However, it is not difficult to imagine that the identified race effect is located not in the migrant's themselves but in the economic ecological system of their destination, urban America. Furthermore, strong evidence says rural-to-urban black migrants of the mid-Twentieth Century were not a population self-selecting according to some trait predictive of stable two-parent families. Between 1940

and 1970, the majority of the black American population moved from the countryside to a town or city as the mechanization of cotton farming devastated landowners' demand for labor wiping out entire plantations.

Table 4: Logistic Regression Predicting Log Odds of Family Poverty Status

Predictor	B	s.e.	P value	Odds ratio	-2 Log likelihood	Pseudo R Square	
Constant	-.767	.069	.000	.465	12272	.15	
Race	-1.09	.097	.000	.338			
Socialization location	.224	.073	.002	1.251			
R*SL	-.588	.111	.000	.555			
Region	-.567	.047	.000	.567			

Group	Black Urbanizing South	Black Urbanized South	White urbanizing south	White urbanized south	Black urbanizing north	Black urbanized north	White urbanizing north	White urbanized north
Predicted Poverty	.317	.367	.136	.099	.208	.248	.082	.058
Observed Poverty ra	.314	.365	.139	.101	.212	.250	.08	.057
N	590	2019	757	2098	651	2314	1448	6423

When nearly everyone migrates, selectivity is highly unlikely, a conclusion also confirmed by Boustan's (2016) finding that southern migrants to the north were not especially selected, either positively or

negatively. Moreover, if there were selectivity in who migrated from rural areas, it was exactly the opposite of that required to cast doubt on my results. Single parent families headed by a woman were generally untenable in farming areas, and they were generally the first to migrate into town, see Table 5 and its discussion.

I conclude discussion of this model with reports of additional tests examining the robustness of the estimated coefficients on race and socialization location by augmenting the simplest model with additional predictors. Augmenting the model with additional covariates such as schooling or age of the family head and interactions with race (whether categorical or continuous) and family income further substantiates these results. I call attention to three points: schooling is a significant positive predictor of family formation; augmented models produce trivial changes in the coefficient estimates for race, socialization location, and their interaction and usually improve the significance level of the interaction term suggesting that the coefficient estimates are quite robust to alternative specifications of the model. Recoding categorical variables to test robustness of main effects also produced results confirming the predictions of the theory, as did recasting the regression as a linear probability model.

Prediction of a family's poverty status also confirms the statistical significance of rural versus urban socialization location and race. Table 4 presents output from a logistic regression estimating the log odds a family is in poverty. I include the results from this analysis because key differences in the interaction between race and socialization location are especially illuminating. Substituting poverty status as the dependent variable, model 2 of Table 4 duplicates the independent or predictor variables of model 1 in Table 3. As is expected, because of higher wages in the north than south, unlike the case for two-parenthood, region is a significant predictor of poverty; the predicted odds that an urbanizing black family in the North is poor are only about .57 of the predicted odds for a similar family in the South. Also note that socialization

location remains significant and positive; an urbanized black family in the South has odds of being in poverty 1.25 times higher than an urbanizing black family living in the same region.

I also tested for interaction effects between race, region, and socialization location asking if socialization location had a different effect on poverty for blacks than whites or in the south versus north. The findings for these interactions are especially illuminating. In the case of poverty, although estimates of the race-socialization location interaction show that the effects of socialization location depend significantly on race, the race effects are in opposite directions. Although urbanized blacks face higher odds of being poor than do urbanizing blacks, for whites these odds were reversed. Urbanized whites faced odds only .55 the odds of urbanizing whites. This latter finding is consistent with findings of social demographers that southern white migrants living in northern cities displayed higher rates of poverty, more joblessness, and were more likely to be on public welfare than were northern-born whites in northern cities. My tests also provide similar results for southern whites living in southern cities. Augmenting the independent variables with predictors such as gender, education, full-time work status of the family head leaves the estimated effects of race, socialization location, and their interaction intact and statistically significant. I conclude from the results of these hypothesis tests, as predicted by the theory, socialization location is a significant predictor of African American behavioral outcomes and that urban socialization has a negative effect for blacks but not whites.

The poverty findings for whites are what should be expected under the common sense hypothesis that white migrants to the city (in any region) face adjustment obstacles not present for resident whites. This common sense approach was also applied by researchers who erroneously hypothesized that black southern migrants to the north were responsible for rising poverty, joblessness, and concomitant problems in northern cities. However, such a common sense approach to behavior is not a reliable indicator of African American social outcomes. The nation's pathological race relations structured different patterns of behavior among

blacks and whites. White Americans did not undergo severe ordeals of discrimination in either rural or urban environments. Thus, urbanized whites did not develop attitudinal and behavioral defense mechanisms to cope with day-to-day assaults on their self-worth. Not surprisingly, during this period, urbanized whites do not exhibit high levels of alienation from social institutions relative to urbanizing whites. The lack of comparable findings among whites strongly supports the hypothesis that the explanation of the behavioral differences between urbanizing and urbanized African Americans is due to divergent processes of social identity construction and disparate attitudes between urbanized and urbanizing African Americans. A full assessment of this theoretical framework requires supplementing the quantitative data presented here with qualitative evidence that investigates the attitudes of rural, urbanizing, and urbanized blacks toward major social institutions and race relations? I address these issues in an ongoing book length study. For example, blacks socialized in urban environments held quite different attitudes toward discriminatory labor markets than did urbanizing blacks who were generally more resigned to accommodating themselves to subordinate racial roles in low pay jobs. The remainder of this essay, gives a more detailed explanation of the theoretical argument just tested.

Socialization in Two African American Enclaves

As stated in the introduction, by behavioral economics I refer to explanations of economic behavior based on exploring the economic consequences of assuming a theoretical construct of social psychology (in this case, *self-verification*) underpins individual behavioral choices. Self-verification refers to a basic human need to receive social affirmation one's beliefs about one's self (one's identities) *are true*. Failure to achieve self-verification generally evokes a response, either an evasive defensive attempt to avoid the offending institutions and settings or an offensive intense engagement with them that seeks to change one's reception. In the present context, failure to achieve self-verification involves economic behavior because

African Americans' failure to self-verify an acceptable self-image invariably causes alienation from economic institutions.

Urban black Americans' residential segregation into ethnic enclaves meant their major interactions with whites occurred in economic transactions, e.g. in job markets permeated with pathological race relations undermining self-verification of a self-regarding identity. A major coping strategy, avoidance of mainstream labor markets, involves reductions in mainstream labor force participation and increased joblessness, two behaviors simply not compatible with maintenance of stable two-parent families.

Confronting whites' expectation that blacks efface themselves by assuming subordinate roles, generations of African Americans avoided whites to escape demeaning race relations that stripped them of dignity and self-respect. Exceptions to this desire usually involved blacks' receiving a substantial payoff in terms of standard of living. But for most African Americans, the available monetary gains for giving up ones concept of self were too low. The most frequent manifestation of agencies of avoidance was to seek any semblance of self-employment and to avoid relations with whites as much as possible (Johnson, 1943). The sharecropping tenancy system of the rural South developed partially because African American families sought to attain their notion of freedom by working somewhat independently of white supervision on their own leased farms (Jaynes, 1986, Ransom and Sutch, 1977). In urban areas, avoidance of whites meant working in the urban black enclave economy that frequently involved extra-legal and black market activity such as gambling and trading in banned substances and activities.

The discussion of African American children's socialization centers on the role of labor force participation and its effects on household formation patterns in two distinct black enclaves hosting two black enclave economies. The race relations and economic structures of both enclaves enticed blacks to overestimate opportunities for economic and social status blocking social and economic incorporation into the broader society. The first enclave is the residentially segregated black-belt agriculture of the agrarian

south; the second is black/grey and illegal enterprise and employment within urban black America. The discussion centers on the different incentives and characteristics of the two enclaves that disproportionately socialized urbanized adolescents to dissociate themselves from institutions such as mainstream labor markets and marriage.

The determining characteristics of an ethnic enclave are: a geographically defined area inhabited by an ethnic or racial group maintaining life-styles distinctively separate from the peoples surrounding them. Its close relative, ethnic enclave economy, requires 1. The enclave must be spatially bounded from the main economy enabling an internal labor market dominated by minority labor to function; 2. the minority group must be large enough and sufficiently diversified in socioeconomic status and resources (human or physical) to employ or (through network ties) guarantee group members access to employment (Portes (1981:290–291). The following discussion ignores a substantial sociological literature debating the merits and demerits of ethnic enclave economies as vehicles of economic mobility focusing instead on the specific features of these two enclaves that shaped different socialization experiences responsible for the divergent attitudes and behaviors of urbanized and urbanizing African Americans.

A central concept underlying the enclave hypothesis is social capital which I define as the expected economic benefits derivable from a group's social networks. Succinctly we may say social capital refers to the economic advantages and resources available to a social group due to the depth and quality of its social networks. Although, social capital can be defined in a manner distinct from the concepts physical capital and human capital, in practice the quality of social networks will depend on the amounts of physical and human capital embodied within the people composing the networks. Keeping these interrelationships between the three types of capital in mind, understanding how social capital operates in the two enclaves under discussion is important for understanding differences in the socialization process experienced by black children.

Structural Differences between Rural and Urban Black Communities

Table 5 exhibits five major differences in the structural characteristics of agrarian and urban black enclaves that socialized African American children so differently. Several features of agrarian social

Table 5: Major Sources of Agrarian and Urban Socialization Differences

AGRARIAN ENCLAVES	URBAN ENCLAVES
(1a) the foundation of the agrarian economy was the labor supply of *two-parent* households organized on a gendered division of labor based in patriarchy supporting male ego gratification.	(1b) urban economies organized *black labor* independent of household structure in occupations founded in racialized and gendered divisions of labor that undermined patriarchy and male ego gratification.
(2a) spatial location of residence and work coincided, societal norms segregating races created spatially bounded black enclaves minimizing individualized black-white job competition facilitating blacks' integration throughout the rural economic system's occupational structure.	(2b) spatial location of residence and work diverged creating direct job competition between the races so norms promoting job discrimination and intra-workplace segregation truncated blacks' occupational opportunities severely malintegrating them within the urban economic structure.
(3a) the major instruments of socialization were parental authority at home thus work, church, and school each stressing conformity to black behavioral roles steeped in subordination to whites.	(3b) the major instruments of socialization remained parental authority, church, and school, and urbanizing parents continued to stress conformity to subordinate racial roles; however, churches and schools were less likely to promote such conformity, and with parents working away from home, the locus of children's socialization shifted toward schools and adolescent peers.
(4a) the efficacy of competent parental training for future work within the enclave combined with blacks' integration across the occupational structure supported inflated perceptions of economic mobility within the farm tenancy ladder.	(4b) black adults' malintegration with better job networks and low competence negotiating institutions such as schools diminished parental authority. Children's internalization of equalitarian values taught by schools and peer groups, their cognizance of limited life chances due to racialized class-gender positions induced alienation from labor markets early during adolescence or teen years a point in the life-cycle when disruptive and rebellious behavior are most likely.
(5a) The vast majority of adolescents acquiesced to culturally sanctioned social roles, and social alienation due to failure to achieve aspirations (landownership or rental tenancy) occurred relatively late in adulthood when disruptive and rebellious behaviors were unlikely.	(5b) many urbanized black youth alienated from social roles demanding black subordination to whites defiantly rejected such roles and adopted recusant social identities flagrantly contemptuous of mainstream social norms.

structure especially supportive of norms promoting marriage, labor force participation, and conformity to obsequious black role behaviors were either absent or severely abated in urban social structures. From an economist's perspective, the most important features involved the organization of mainstream labor markets, household production and domestic relations, and how these interacted with race relations. Agrarian spatial location of residence and work coincided so that societal norms segregating races created black enclaves within black majority counties or sections of counties where direct individualized black-white job competition was attenuated facilitating black employment networks throughout the economic system's occupational structure. Furthermore, because the agrarian economy was founded on the joint labor supply of *two-parent* households organized on a gendered division of labor based in patriarchy, the rural economy strongly reinforced cultural desires to marry and cohabit with children. The instrumental value of competent parental training for future work skills within the technologically stagnant rural enclave combined with blacks' strong employment networks across the tenancy ladder undergirded aspirations based on inflated perceptions of economic mobility up the tenure ladder. Black children could observe black farmers even at the top of the tenure ladder (Daniel, 2015; Alston and Ferrie, 2005; Woofter, 1938, Wright, 1986). These perceptions of economic mobility allowed adolescents to project future avenues of self-verification as independent landowners or rental tenants. The social and economic structure socialized the vast majority of adolescents to conform to culturally sanctioned behaviors. Virtually unchallenged, the major mechanisms of rural socialization were planter paternalism, parental authority at home thus work, church, and school. Each stressed conformity to subordinate racial behavioral roles (Alston and Ferrie, 1993; Raper, 1974; Woofter, 1938). Failure to receive self-verification by achieving landownership or rental tenancy occurred relatively late in adulthood when disruptive and rebellious behaviors were unlikely.

Alternatively, unlike many white southern families working in textile mills utilizing family labor units, black families living in urban areas but excluded from textile employment until the 1960s received no

structural support from urban economies that organized labor independent of household structure in occupations founded in racialized and gendered divisions of labor (Wright, 1986; Heckman and Payner, 1989). Moreover, while urban spatial structure separated black and white residential patterns, black and white men faced off in common work sites where black men were forced into direct job competition with white men. Hence, social norms promoting job discrimination and segregation structured intra-workplace segregation and job ceilings that truncated black men's occupational opportunities and employment networks. African American women who dominated domestic service occupations were a largely noncompeting group with white women. Black women's low-wage but steady employment became an economic mainstay of black households undermining patriarchy and male ego gratification. Under these circumstances, in urban enclaves, parents suffered diminished authority due to their malintegrated job networks and frequent low competence negotiating institutions such as schools. The major mechanisms of urban socialization remained parental authority, church, and school with *urbanizing* parents continuing to stress conformity to subordinate racial roles. However, urban churches and schools were less likely to promote such conformity, and with parents working away from home, the locus of children's socialization shifted toward schools and adolescent peers. Children's internalization of equalitarian values taught by schools and peer groups and their cognizance of limited life chances in truncated racialized job networks threatened self-verification early during adolescence or teen years a point in the life-cycle when disruptive and rebellious behavior are most likely.

In contrast to the rural south where the unlikely attainability of one's life plan of landownership was not thrust upon one's consciousness until early middle-age, the job-ceiling in urban economies forced this realization on black men and women during early adolescence. The difference in timing is paramount. In town, disillusion came early. Such disillusion occurred at a point in the life-cycle when youthful energy increased the likelihood of adopting highly disruptive oppositional social identities. Alienated and

desperately searching for self-verification, malcontented African Americans growing up in urban America increasingly rejected racist social norms. Many were drawn to the urban black enclave economy based on illicit and illegal employment where they could withdraw from mainstream labor markets and avoid direct job competition and demeaning contact with whites. Such employment, even when illegal, dangerous, and incompatible with stable family lifestyles, appeared to offer young people opportunity for self-verification of acceptable identities. Abundant supplies of peer group and older role models competent to train adolescents to work in the enclave combined with blacks' thick employment networks integrating them across the enclave's occupational structure undergirded aspirations based on super-inflated perceptions of economic mobility. Many adolescents defiantly rejected the subordinated social roles offered African Americans in truncated mainstream opportunity structures and adopted recusant social identities flagrantly contemptuous of mainstream social norms.

Despite the risks involved in crime, very young men and women found it easy to discount or completely ignore the risks of such careers and throughout much of the 20th Century could enter the numbers racket (a form of gambling descended from 19th Century state lotteries that was ubiquitous in black urban areas) and later drug markets with the hope of rising to a position of wealth and ghetto fame. Young men and women involved in the lifestyle carved out a social existence similar in some of its structural features to the tenant farming of the rural South. Whether it was landownership in the rural South or wealth and prestige as a ghetto hustler, seeing blacks who had gained the prize was visible confirmation one could attain the highest success. Open access to the chase provided the opportunity for young people to maintain self-esteem by pursuing a life plan they could value and confidently believe in their capacity to execute. The two institutions were similar in another respect. Although eager young entrants to the chase possessed the confidence they would defy the odds against success, most hustlers and criminals, similar to most sharecroppers who found themselves

landless and poor at early middle-age, would learn that crime usually leads to lengthy periods of incarceration or to an abrupt and violent end to a short life.

Evidence of 19th Century Urbanized/Urbanizing Differences

This section provides a brief discussion of a research literature that supports the inference that differences in urban African Americans' behavior toward social institutions is rooted in distinctive urbanized/urbanizing behaviors with origins at least as early as the mid-19th Century. Simply put, an important body of research considering evidence from the mid-Nineteenth to the mid-Twentieth Centuries consistently reports much larger rates of one-parent families among African Americans living in urban than rural areas, and, among blacks living in urban areas, significantly higher rates of one-parent families among subgroups reasonably inferred to be urbanized than subgroups inferred urbanizing.

The econometric results have already shown that, during the 1960s, findings of differential behavior between northern-born and southern-born blacks residing in northern cities is better understood as differences between the urbanized and urbanizing. Suppose, we reinterpret northern-born and southern-born as representing respectively, the urbanized and urbanizing. For black Americans born before 1950 these designations are highly credible proxies. Blacks born in the North were virtually all urbanized and those born in the South were overwhelmingly born and raised in rural areas. With this relabeling of the data, all research finding higher rates of one-parent families among northern-born blacks are consistent with my hypothesis that the fundamental explanatory variable explaining differential rates of two-parent family formation is socialization location encompassed by its two categories of urban residents – the urbanized and urbanizing. For example, Furstenburg et al (1974: 220-221, 232) utilized census records to compare the proportion of two-parent families among free-born blacks and ex-slaves in 1847 Philadelphia. They found ex-slaves (a group much more likely to have rural origins) were more likely to live in two-parent households than were the free-born (who, in my terminology, were overwhelmingly an urbanized population). In the

same city during 1880, two-parent families were more prevalent among the southern-born than among the northern-born. Similar results describe the black population of 1880 Boston (Pleck: 18-20). It consisted of those born in the south (49%); the northern-born (42%), and immigrants mostly from Canada and the Caribbean (9%). The vast majority of the northern born were urbanized, most within Boston, while the southerners were far more likely to have undergone rural socialization. A majority of household heads (61%) had been born in the South. The much higher marital rates among the southern born meant they dominated statistics describing households with children. In Elizabeth Pleck's entire Boston sample, 18% of black families were one-parent, a number hiding significant differences between subpopulations encompassing what were likely different proportions of urbanized and urbanizing families. Even though Pleck combined husband-wife couples with and without children in her computations biasing downward the proportion of families with one-parent, consistent with my hypothesis, the proportion of one-parent families among blacks born in Massachusetts was 28% compared to 17% for those born in southern states.

The sociologist E. Franklin Frazier (1939) and the historian Herbert Gutman (1976) found higher rates of mother-only families in southern cities than rural areas. For example, using methods similar to Pleck's, Gutman's downward biased estimates of mother-only families with children in southern locations during the period 1865 – 1880 found the highest proportions of mother-only families were in cities: Natchez 30%, Beaufort 30%, Richmond 27%, and Mobile 26%. Each of the rural areas he examined had rates below 19%. This finding holds consistently from the 1930 census (where black mother-only households were more prevalent in urban areas (25.2%) than farm areas (10.5 %)) onwards. Frazier (examining the 1920 through 1940 censuses) found similar results for rural and urban areas in the south.

Disputing the culture of poverty thesis that blamed the high incidence of black mother-only families on southern agrarian migrants to northern cities, historian Eugene Genovese (1972:451) informed readers of his brilliant study of slavery that anyone familiar with primary documents of black history knew significant

differences in rural and urban household formations always favored rural African Americans whose children were far more likely to live with two parents than were urban black children. Observing the consistency of these differences, and the history of severe discrimination against African Americans in the north, Furstenburg, et al. and economic historian Stanley Engerman (1972) independently hypothesized at about the same time as did Genovese that high rates of black mother-only families were most likely best explained by discrimination and poverty in northern cities.

Thus, explanations for the higher incidence of one-parent families among blacks named either cultural deficits among black southerners (legacy of slavery and sharecropping), or hypothesized something particularly venal and debilitating about racial discrimination in the north. Although the latter hypothesis is more consistent with the evidence presented here than is the slavery/share-cropper thesis of a rural culture of poverty, the fact that significant rural-urban differences in black family structure also existed in the south makes it doubtful the high rate of one-parent families among urban blacks can be explained by arguing discrimination in northern states had especially negative effects on black family formation.

Conclusion

Throughout American history, urbanizing African Americans arrived in cities with a strong work ethic, high valuation of marriage, and a fundamentalist religious outlook. Many also arrived with negative to diffident attitudes toward formal schooling, a cultural attitude ingrained into generations of black farmers functioning within a social structure dominated by employers dedicated to preventing the emergence of a discrepancy between farm worker's educational attainments and the stagnant low skill techniques of southern agriculture. The urbanized children of these migrants, frequently underachieving in school and confronted with employment discrimination in any case, perceived all paths to success blocked. The response of many second and later generation working class African American urbanized youth followed two well-traveled paths taken by generations of urbanized African Americans throughout U.S. history. One

path led toward bitter social alienation and withdrawal, the other fierce engagement challenging the racial practices within America's putatively democratic institutions. At mid-20th century, the difference from earlier periods was the tremendous volume of rural migration to America's towns and cities, south and north. Tradition oriented urbanizing migrants both hid the emerging behavioral transformation within average statistics and made the transformation possible as their procreation yielded fresh recruits for a long existing deeply alienated street-corner society *and* for an emergent middle class both becoming increasingly rebellious toward their second-class status. When a majority of African American women and men in their procreation years had been socialized in urban settings a jump in the proportion of children living without one or both parents occurred. This discontinuity in the data appeared dramatic and perplexing in the absence of a thorough understanding of the complex child socialization changes structured by urbanization.

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