A Sociological Perspective

- Families are a social institution
- Social institutions have a set of roles and rules that define its importance to society
- Families are impacted by external forces in the social world

The Sociological Perspective on Families

- Roles, rules and relationships are created and maintained by larger society


Moynihan’s “Slavery-Specific” Hypothesis

Slavery → Weak Family Structure → Social Pathology

Unemployment Rates: 1948-1985

Employment-Population Ratios for Black and White Men Ages 20 to 24

Employment-Population Ratio is the ratio of the number of employed men to the total number of men in the population.

Youth Male Employment

Youth Male Employment

A Sociological Perspective

- Families are a social institution
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The Great Migration

Percent of African Americans Living in the South & Rural South

1940
77% in the South
49% in rural South

1970
50% in the South
24% in rural South
### Employment Sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Collar Jobs</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Collar Jobs</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Central City Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Jobs</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than h.s.</td>
<td>1,445</td>
<td>953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some higher ed.</td>
<td>1,002</td>
<td>1,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than h.s.</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some higher ed.</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Figures in thousands.

### Wilson’s Hypothesis

- **De-industrialization**
- **Changing Structure of the Economy**
- Low-paid, Low-skilled Jobs
- High paid, High skilled Jobs

### Skills Mismatch
Spatial Mismatch

Wilson and Economic Changes
- Concentration of minorities with low education and skills in central cities
- Structural economic changes affect them most
- Economic changes resulted in an increase in jobs requiring high educ and skills and a decrease in jobs requiring low educ and skills
- Skills mismatch and spatial mismatch
- Impact of the mismatches on economic outcomes for minorities in central cities

Wilson and the Family
- Black male joblessness
- Single mothers and female headed families
- High rate of joblessness
- High rate of mortality
- High rates of incarceration
- Low prop. of black men in stable econ. situations
- Low pool of "marriageable" black men
• 29 percent of black males 20 to 29 were under correctional supervision in 1996 (Beck, 1996)

**Wilson and the Family**

“Available evidence supports the argument that among blacks, increasing male joblessness is related to the rising proportions of families headed by women.”

**Wilson’s Hypothesis**

- De-industrialization
- Changing Structure of the Economy
- Low Wages, High Unemp. Inability to Economically Support a Family, Poverty
  - Low-paid, Low-skilled Jobs
  - High paid, High skilled Jobs
- Low Pool of Marriageable Men
- Single Parent Families

**Moynihan vs Wilson**

- Family Structure
- “Pathology”
- Male Unemployment
- Family Structure
Approaches to Studying African American Families

- The Pathological or Culturally Deviant Approach
- The Culturally Equivalent Approach
- The Culturally Relevant or Variant Approach