Some demographic changes in the Black population of the United States

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ABSTRACT

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Some Demographic Changes in the Black Population of the United States

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This thesis is designed to illuminate the numerous social changes happening within the United States among the black population.

This writer seeks to assess the trends and developments that have been indicated by the decennial reports from 1900 to 1970. This is done through the careful analysis of four current studies done that were concerned with blacks and their migration patterns, degrees of occupational shifting, levels of educational attainment and finally the marriage patterns and living arrangements that occurred as a result of these.

The major conclusion of this study is that racial parity in the above categories has not been reached, though considerable progress has been made over the past seventy years.
SOM DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN THE BLACK POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The following discourse is an attempt to analyze some of the social changes that are occurring within the black population of the United States. Basically, the effort here is to do this in layman terms because far too often demographic data are presented in very technical, trade-related language and are usually confusing to those outside the discipline.

The focus is on several aspects of social change, namely, the shifts in residence, occupational shifts in the labor force, changes in the level of educational attainment received by blacks and changing marriage patterns and family arrangements which occur as a result of these.

The approach used is one which discusses the demographic analyses available on these subjects. The papers chosen for use here are four of those presented in 1974 to the W.E.B. DuBois Conference on the Population of the American Black. They are titled as follows and will appear in this order:

(1) "The Black Migrant: Changing Origins, Changing Characteristics, by Ann R. Miller
(2) "Blacks in the Labor Force in the United States", by Daniel O. Price
Perhaps it should be noted that all four authors are considered authorities in their respective fields and because of this, I felt that the need for scrutiny of their conclusions was even more necessary.

Data sources for all of these papers are mainly publications of the United States Bureau of the Census and, as is so well known, the indices of social change as measured by the census are relative. This means that it is limited to the questions asked and to the information available to outside researchers due to the confidentiality of all material collected. Nevertheless, census data still provide the best general indices of social change in the United States and where comparable categories over time periods exist, the data can provide the basis for making decisions on anticipated changes for the future.

It should also be noted that census data are always updated in terms of classification and this holds true particularly in the classification scheme used in describing if a city is rural or urban. Of course, the census data have moved from this simple rural-urban classification into a metropolitan-nonmetropolitan classification system, with differentials between central cities, urbanized areas, outside urbanized areas within metropolitan areas, and
distinctions between rural farm and nonfarm populations.

Overall, census data and the Current Population Surveys indicate higher levels of education for blacks, higher income levels, and lower fertility rates.
CHAPTER II

MIGRATION

Because the first topic to be discussed here concerns the migration of blacks out of the South into the cities of the North and West, it would be good to interject some background data on the growth of the American black population.

First of all, it should be noted that after World War II and the Korean War the general population increased. This occurred basically in the 1950's and caused a total population increase of 28 million people, most of which was urban. It was also during the fifties that black migration from the rural South gained its greatest momentum. This can be attributed to the mechanization of the South's agrarian economy and thereby the displacement of blacks out of the rural labor force. In addition to this, we see the 1950's as the period of greatest metropolitan and urban expansion because as blacks populated the urban areas of the non-South, whites moved to the suburbs and caused the perimeters of the metropolitan areas to expand.

Blacks now represent 25 percent of all central city residents because over 56 percent of all black Americans live
in SMSAs\textsuperscript{1}, as compared to 28 percent for whites. It has been said that reference to the black population outside the South, and inside the South to a certain degree, is reference to an urban population. As noted earlier, the increased concentration of blacks in large cities outside the South is due to the redistribution of urban blacks and the out-migration of whites to the suburbs. Population losses to rural and nonmetropolitan areas have brought many problems of their own, especially for older and poor people who are faced with increasing poverty, unemployment and decreasing services.

It might also be pointed out here that the 1960's represented a general period of economic prosperity, extensive civil rights legislation, declining fertility rates, and an easing up in metropolitan expansion. In 1970 urban growth for blacks and whites declined in both the North and South, especially in the large cities.

Because the following analyses will often include statistical comparisons: It should be remembered that blacks have been oppressed in this country and because of this they will tend to show higher gains than whites in terms of

\textsuperscript{1}Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) consist of counties or a group of counties containing at least one central city or twin cities of 50,000 persons or more and adjacent counties which are metropolitan in character and socially and economically integrated with the central city.
percentages. This is true for occupational distribution, income levels and educational attainment. All statistical comparisons should be viewed historically and in light of the fact that stringent discriminatory policies have only recently been lowered, though covert racism still exists within all the systems portrayed here.

Noting percentage gains only tends to perpetuate the illusion that equality has been reached or is very near, and that great advances have been made by the less advantaged group.

Population grows through reproduction and migration, and because of lowered rates of fertility, migration is the cause for a large proportion of change in a city's population today. As pointed out elsewhere, size of place seems to have important effects on all population growth, and judging from the statistics this seems to be true of blacks in the United States who are anticipating a move to another place. To migrants size of the destination place would definitely be an important factor if only in terms of the visible aspects.

In terms of the kinds of migrants we will be discussing, they can be intrastate migrants, those moving to the city within the same state, interstate migrants, moving into the city from another state, or interregional migrants, moving into cities from another region. As noted by Tucker and Reid, interregional migrants from the South made up
the largest class of migrants to non-Southern cities, then intrastate migrants, and the smallest number migrating were interstate migrants. Thirty-five percent of all urban-directed migrants relocated in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit and Houston.

However, as noted in numerous studies, the process of geographical migration calls for much more than the sheer physical movement involved and requires the learning of a new set of customs and adjustments to be made toward new people, new job demands, new income levels, as well as the family and friend adjustments. All of which contribute to the overall social change taking place.

Long distance moves are also expensive and the decision made must be strong enough to surmount the financial obstacles. In terms of moving into the South, blacks have traditionally been faced with obstacles not encountered by whites, and that must also be kept in mind when discussing the migration patterns of blacks. On the other hand, today many of these barriers have been somewhat removed, particularly on the higher socio-economic levels.

The Black Migrant: Changing Origins, Changing Characteristics*

Miller's paper is a discussion of the changing characteristics and origins of black migrants in the United States, as witnessed by the 1960 and 1970 censuses. In it she discusses the recent metropolitan origins of migrants today, the age and educational groups from which today's migrants come, and the occupational distribution of those employed in 1970.

As an introductory measure to the data base which is to follow, Miller points out the following: that between 1900 when there were only three metropolitan areas with over 100,000 black residents, and 1970, when there were thirty-four in this category and two with well over 1,000,000 black residents, the black population that was 80 percent rural in 1900 had become over 80 percent urban by 1970. She couples this with the fact that this shift was achieved mainly by the migration of young adults.

Although this movement from rural to urban is a phenomenon happening worldwide, it is felt that the uniqueness within the black population of the United States lies in the rapidity with which the shift has occurred and the long distances involved.

Because this paper was presented to the 1974 W.E.B. DuBois Conference on the Population of the American Black, there are numerous instances where analogies are drawn between the data available to us today on migrants and that which DuBois used in his study on Philadelphia blacks in 1899.3

Miller also discusses the estimates of net intercensal migration which disproves the belief that the urbanization of blacks before World War II was due entirely to the movement out of the South, and that it was only in the more recent period that the South's urban centers became important for rural out-migration.4

Although part of the growth in the urban black population in the South is due to natural increase and part to the reclassification of previously rural areas, most of this growth arises from the in-migration of blacks from rural areas of the same or neighboring states.

To better limit her data, Miller has chosen the 243 SMSAs as her data base. In 1970 these metropolitan areas

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included three-fourths of the black population at that date. Seventy percent often lived in the 34 areas mentioned earlier, i.e., those whose black residents numbered 100,000 or more. It was in these places that practically all urban growth took place in the 1950's and 1960's. In earlier periods many of these populations were living in areas that were classified as rural, and therefore growth of these areas could not be directly compared with the growth of the urban population. By census criteria the urban population is composed of those persons living in places having 2500 inhabitants or more and in the densely settled urban "fringe" surrounding large cities.

Before beginning the discussion of the nature and characteristics of black migrants, Miller reminds us of the heretofore predominant idea that "black migrants are ill-trained peasants whose presence has a disrupting influence on the community". It is this notion that her findings systematically disengage.

Initially, we are informed that the dominant stream with regard to residence for black migrants is from one metropolitan area to another. Miller's data show that 60 percent of the migrants to metropolitan areas over the

1965-1970 interval had lived in a metropolitan area in 1965, and that for the six largest SMSAs, which in combination included over 25 percent of all black residents in 1970, two-thirds of all in-migrants came from another metropolitan area.  

What is illustrated is that over the last decade the cumulative effect of generations of urbanward movement and the eventual disruption of the rural based population had reached the point that despite continuing rates of out-migration from the rural South, the place of origin of the majority of black migrants was a metropolitan area. This dramatic change in the place of origin of migrants is not the result of a higher mobility among metropolitan residents, but arises from the fact that the black population of the United States is now so urban and the nonmetropolitan population so small, that we can only anticipate further increases in the dominance of the intermetropolitan stream among black migrants. What this means is that future redistribution of blacks will be an increasingly urban redistribution and more attention will need to be focused on urban to urban movement. Those still found in rural areas are the elderly,

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6Miller, p. 6.
with relatively few young adults in the productive labor force.

Of course, there have been references made elsewhere to a counterstream of blacks moving back into the South, but suffice it to say that this counterstream, if existant, is directed toward urban metropolitan areas.

That brings us to Miller's discussion of the characteristic differences between migrants and nonmigrants of the black population and the attributes of migrants in each of the streams within the metropolitan-nonmetropolitan matrix.⁷

Those characteristics discussed are age, education, activity status and occupation. The first of these, age, represents the most highly reported information around. Here it is pointed out that 22 percent of blacks in the age group of 20-24 reported in 1970 that they had changed their place of residence since 1965. This group is the peak age group for all four streams in the matrix, but migrants from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas are more highly concentrated than are other types of migrants, and therefore this is the age group at which net shift out of nonmetropolitan areas is largest. However, even here, over half of the migrants to metropolitan areas come from other metropolitan

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Upon further analysis of the 1970 census data Miller shows that a consistent difference exists between those who were 20-24 years of age and those aged 25-29, the two age groups in which rates of migration are highest. Fifty-four percent of the in-migrants to metropolitan areas were 20-24 years old in 1970, while 64 percent were 25-29 years of age.

As indicated by Miller, this can be explained partly by military service or schooling, but that would not account for the major portion of the difference. He hypothesizes that these differences reflect the continuing "step-migration" DuBois described seventy-five years ago. This would mean that those in the 25-29 age group include many people who are migrating for at least the second time and this second migration is probably from one metropolitan area to another. The inferred suggestion here, that persons who move once are likely to move again, adheres to the known behavior of migrants in general.

Which brings us to the very recent generalization that migrants usually have higher levels of educational attainment than nonmigrants. Because educational levels in nonmetropolitan areas are usually lower than those in urban areas, the migrants from rural areas who may be better educated than those left behind may still be at a disadvantage when they reach their urban destination. This was the situation for blacks in the past. Also, although the census data on the educational attainment of migrants eliminates the age
groups mentioned before, and designates only persons aged 25 years and over, the pattern of differences is so consistent for the older age group that it is unlikely that said patterns would be reversed for younger age groups. A point of information here is the fact that within the dominant stream, those moving from one metropolitan area to another, the proportions of the population that have completed high school or more have for every age group far higher levels of education than nonmigrants or any of the other migrant streams.

Generally, the metropolitan black population gained people of higher educational status through migration in the 1965-1970 period. Therefore, in summarizing these findings, Miller reiterates that the relative educational status of the majority of black migrants to metropolitan areas now is significantly different from what DuBois found in 1899 and from what has been the general impression throughout the period since that time.

Because the effect of their educational status should be reflected in their economic status, Miller then discusses the activity status of males in 1970 and the occupations of those employed at that time. As is pointed out, in doing this we must remember that the occupational distribution of the employed includes only a portion of the total number of migrants: for of those aged 16 and over only 52 percent were working at a civilian job in 1970, 4 percent were looking for work and 16 percent were in the armed forces. That leaves 28 percent who were not in the labor force and of whom we have
no concrete knowledge in this sense.

Relatively speaking, Miller found that urban or metropolitan areas import economically active persons from rural communities and export those less likely to be working. These differences between migrants to metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas can be viewed as a reflection of the differences in the age distribution. Available data show that migrants to nonmetropolitan areas include a higher proportion of older persons that do those going to metropolitan areas.

In a situation where the major occupational groups used are very broad, the single measure used is the percent of the employed who are in white-collar jobs, i.e., professional, technical, managerial, sales and clerical workers. Using this measure Miller's findings reinforce those presented earlier, for both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, the proportion of employed in-migrants in white collar occupations is higher than that for nonmigrants in these areas, for each specific age group.

In summarizing, Miller concludes: (1) that the average black migrant is well educated by current standards and relatively successful at utilizing his education, (2) that the sharp differences between the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups are due to a considerable degree of "remigration"
among the older group, (3) that therefore step-migration is probably still occurring, and (4) that among interstate migrants who have a proportionately higher level of educational attainment, the highest levels are found among those who are moving to at least their third state of residence.

It is these findings which have important policy implications with regard to the impact of migration on metropolitan areas and the entire country.

Finally, Miller suggests the idea that the experience of the black population here in the United States is indicative of the kinds of experiences yet to come in less developed countries as their rural populations move out of the agricultural setting into a more urban setting. Although movement of the black population here differs in the sense that it took place in a developed country with a rapid rate of economic growth, Miller feels that the difference is superficial mainly due to the fact that black people in the United States have been systematically excluded from sharing in the economic benefits offered her white citizens.

Miller concludes that in the future the decision to move and the destination chosen will be less dictated by economic circumstances and will reflect a much wider range of considerations than in the past. Of course, this is based on the aforementioned fact that it is those with a higher level of education and whose occupational-economic status is above average who are the most likely to be remigrants.
CHAPTER III

OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY

I'm sure we would all agree that the series of occupational choices which we have made were affected considerably by the economic circumstances at the time, the degree of freedom and independence associated with an occupation, other available opportunities and the training and education necessary. The amount and type of occupational mobility reflects these external circumstances that are such a congruent part of American society, as well as reflecting the individual's characteristics. It would come as no surprise that the hope of a better, freer life in the big city is capable of stimulating occupational and residential mobility among people who had benefited the least from their work on farms in rural areas of the United States.

In general, the likelihood of shifting occupations is greater for the youngest workers and older black workers in lowpaying jobs run the risk of unemployment or being forced out of the labor force well before the usual retirement age.

Although the census data show an improvement in the relative position of blacks in the income and occupational categories, median incomes for blacks are still lower than those for whites when education is controlled for,
but the differences are lower than in previous times.

While blacks do show a greater propensity for occupational shifts, particularly among lower paying jobs, it is evident that these shifts are not necessarily reflective of a high degree of geographic or social mobility, as Price's study implies.

**Blacks in the Labor Force of the United States**

Daniel Price's paper on the participation of blacks in the labor force between 1910 and 1970 is a concise discussion of the changing trends in the occupational structure of the American population. He uses picture graphs to substantiate the discussion of his findings and though well done, they are confusing if one is not readily acquainted with this kind of illustration or has not had advanced training in demography.

Initially, Price notes that the overall proportion of both black and white males in the labor force has been declining slowly but continuously since 1948, though the figures indicate that this decline has been somewhat higher for black males than for white males. This seems to be due to the decline in the labor force participation of black males after the age of 35 despite an increase in the number of younger black males.

In writing about the labor force participation of black females, it is pointed out that black females have always had

a higher rate of participation than white females, though this gap is narrowing now as a result of the increase in the number of white females who have entered the labor force since 1965.

For the South, Price feels that the labor force participation of black males is not significantly different from that seen in the United States as a whole. He feels that the most important factor to be mentioned is the greater proportion of rural black males not in the labor force.

The data on employment levels of blacks and whites is presented in terms of cohorts from 1910 to 1970.¹

The first of these shows that the labor force participation of black females in each cohort has been increasing with the age of the cohort and with each successive cohort, suggesting that the trend is to continue. For white females, the pattern of participation is similar to that for black females in that each succeeding cohort has higher levels of labor force participation. Although there are some differences between age groups, Price feels that both groups will continue to show increasing participation due to the earlier starting age of young females.

As mentioned earlier, for males Price's data show that both black and white males have declining levels of employment, beginning at ages 35-44. However, this decline doesn't start for females until ages 45-54.

¹A cohort is a population that enters on some stage of life simultaneously, hence may be looked upon as a group of people traveling through life together.
Essentially these findings illustrate that the patterns of white female labor force participation are changing and becoming similar to the patterns for black females, and that one can expect decreasing rates of participation among older black males and increasing rates among younger black males.

An even more telling aspect of social differentiation is found in the proportion of blacks unemployed, or not in the labor force in 1970, who had been employed in 1965. Here we see that not only is there a high degree of occupational mobility, but there is also an extraordinarily high number of black males that had moved into the status of the unemployed. Price found that the rates of unemployment were about twice as high for blacks as they were for whites, though the discrepancies seen are somewhat reduced when age and education are considered.

As noted, nearly half a million able bodied black men previously employed were not working in 1970, representing an extensive amount of resources not being used. As Price indicates, some of these people may have moved into educational or training programs, but that is not known from the census data. He feels that the differences noted in the employment rate of blacks and whites will be lowered because of the rapid increase in the level of education received by blacks.

It is here that in a few categories with most and least education, black females have lower unemployment rates
than like white females. This is also true for men over 45 years of age with 16 or more years of education. But as noted by others, we will see that black males tend to have a lower level of educational attainment than do whites or black females, so the incidence of finding black males over 45 years of age with more than 16 years of schooling is very low.

As for differentials present between the income levels of blacks and those for whites, Price determines that these are due to the patterns of occupational employment and not to rates of pay within an occupation. Because this is true, it then became necessary to analyze the occupational distribution of blacks and whites.

In the professional, technical and kindred workers category, it is shown that the employment of black males is lagging thirty years behind that of white males. For females, this gap has been virtually eliminated. This is attributed to the generally higher levels of educational attainment among black females and the lower resistance of whites to the upward mobility of black females as opposed to that exhibited toward black males.

The same trend appears for males and females in the managerial and administrative occupations. On the other hand, between 1965 and 1970 about one-third of those who shifted out of the professional, technical and kindred workers class moved into this category even though Price did not include this in his presentation. The movement in this five year
period could be a movement upward due to the possibility of increased income. It should be pointed out that generally the gap here between the proportion of blacks in this class and the proportion of whites is a wide one, especially for black males whose numbers in this category are too low to be compared to the earliest white cohorts.

Price seems to feel that the category of clerical and kindred workers indicates a favorable outlook for continued improvement in the employment of black males and females. For white males, an increase occurs until ages 25-34, then a decline with increasing age. For black males an increase is shown until ages 55-64. This Price feels is attributable to the fact that clerical occupations represent different levels of achievement for the two groups of people:

For many black males, employment in clerical occupations represents upward mobility whereas for white males, for whom more and better opportunities are available, this may represent stable or dead-end employment.  

For sales workers, the data shown also indicate the aforementioned gap between the employment status of black and white females, though the separation is smaller for females than for males, and closing.

The period between 1965 and 1970 does show a shift among black males from the sales worker category into the

\(^2\)Price, p. 12
professional and managerial class, but the greatest proportion of these men moved into the clerical and kindred worker group.

Again, when discussing the craftsmen category, Price feels that the greatest gains in relative employment were seen, though those gains are still 30 years behind that seen for whites between 1910 and 1970.

In the operative class, the doubled number of males over females becomes most apparent. This too represents a situation where the author feels that the conditions for blacks are "better" than those for whites. Therefore, he feels that these are "more desirable occupations" for blacks. This statement is made based on the alternative Price sees open for blacks, that of laborer, while for whites there are better paying employment opportunities.

This brings us to service workers and laborers, where blacks, both male and female, have a higher employment rate than whites. It's stated here that the trends shown indicate that the non-overlapping of black-white male cohorts will remain the same, while the black-white female cohorts will probably increase with larger proportions of black females in this category. This he buttresses with the

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3 Edward E. Cahill, "Social Relevance of Recent Residence and Occupational Shifts of Blacks"; A paper presented at the Meeting of the Rural Sociology Section of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Memphis, 1974, p. 5.

idea that this occupation is a financial improvement for black females leaving low paid private household work and low paid laboring occupations.

Lastly, Price includes the data which show large declines in the employment of blacks in private household work and agriculture, which will continue. This was true over the 1910-1970 period as well as the 1965-1970 period. The latter period saw the highest proportional shift among all the occupational categories for black males. This is not pointed out in the study. In terms of numbers, there were 12,000 black men who changed from the farm workers category between 1965 and 1970 and 3,000 black women who left, as compared to 106,000 men and 15,000 women who left this category totally. In other words, as all other categories in the 1965-1970 period were experiencing 30-60 percent increases, the farm workers category experienced a 22 percent decline in the number of blacks employed.

The indicated increase in the number of blacks in those occupations demanding more education and training reflect both the increasing specialization in American society and reductions in discriminatory practices in job hiring that has transpired in the last twenty years. However, the proportion of blacks in the upper level categories is considerably less than that for whites.

The Price study ends with the thought that something needs to be done to make financial rewards for black males more equitable. For males who worked in 1969, by years of
education, the ratio of black to white income declines with increasing education all the way through 16 years of education. At the graduate level this trend reverses and additional education appears to be profitable for black males. For black females the ratio increases for all educational levels, thereby provided more incentive for females than for males.

Today, it seems that except for a small percentage of educated persons, middle-aged and elderly blacks have comparatively little opportunity for upward social mobility. For them the choice is a more lateral movement or a movement out of the labor force altogether.

With the change brought on by civil rights legislation and the improved education of younger blacks, life chances have greatly improved, but there still remains a disproportionate number of blacks unemployed, out of the labor force, or in low-paying, highly vulnerable jobs. This is something the Price study skimmed over, but did not state specifically. In reality, the major interpretive factors discussed revealed the weakness of the research done.
CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION

Educational attainment is the best quantitative measure of socio-educational progress, though the census questions limit it to the adult population aged 25 and over. It is closely related to occupation and income and therefore gives a fairly good picture of the overall socio-economic status of any group. Unlike occupation and income, status indicators which can change at any time, the degree of education achieved by age 25 in the United States, is a definitive statement.

Educational Changes in the Black Population of the United States and the South*

It is impossible to discuss the educational attainment of black people in America without taking a look backward and understanding the temperament previously exhibited toward the subject of the education of blacks.

Bouvier realized the importance of the historical perspective when analyzing the education of blacks in the United States, and it is to this that the first half of his paper is devoted. He successfully covers the period in

United States history after the Civil War up to the 1950's, and the relative attitude of policymakers shown toward the education of former slaves.

When analyzing black education, one must first include the prevalent, overriding ideas of Booker T. Washington and his impact on the kinds of training black students received. Basically, this training was "industrial education", and concentrated on preparing young black men and women for roles as farmers, cooks, mechanics, etc. This was in total agreement with policymakers then, particularly in the southern regions of the United States. They were already complaining about the cost involved and strove politically to "keep Negroes in their places", since they were now freemen but unable to carry their share of the tax load required to educate themselves. This kind of education for blacks was used as an excuse for developing differential allocations for schools. The following well known facts occurred:

(1) the average length of the school year for black children declined,
(2) salary differences between black and white teachers increased, and
(3) per capita expenditures for white schools increased, while those for black schools remained static.

As pointed out by numerous authors, this pattern of discrimination continued into the 1950's and was the basic cause of the inferior education black schools offered.

Washington's philosophies on education also perpetuated the cast system already active in the United States because he only trained blacks for the traditionally reserved jobs.
This left their "place" in southern society at the bottom, but it also caused stratification within the group - a higher status being reserved for teachers, preachers, and other lower level professionals. Then the Industrial Revolution brought about structural changes in the occupational systems which meant that this kind of special education was preparing people for jobs that soon would not exist.

Despite the many people, both black and white, who disagreed with this kind of education for blacks, no effective strides were made nationally until the advent of the ideas of W.E.B. DuBois at the turn of the century. Yet it wasn't until the 1950's that the legal and social battles were noticeably altering the characteristics of the American educational system and its black students. Until that time, the quality of education for black youths from elementary school through college, in the North and South, was far more inferior than that available for white children.

As Bouvier so well illustrates, in essence then it wasn't until the 20th century that the concept of an industrial education for blacks was removed, and not until the 1954 Supreme Court decision that any serious legal attempts were made to equalize school expenditures in the South. It might also be noted that it wasn't until recently that national focus on the quality of education received by black children has received attention.

Included here are the problems encountered in the country's use of affirmative action programs and the like,
where the attitude was that "culturally deprived" meant "intellectually deprived". Bouvier cites a number of instances where qualified black students were rejected from elite schools because of this stereotype and their high test scores, while students of a lower capability were admitted, with scholarships. The thrust would be for affirmative action programs to eliminate anti-intellectual concepts from their programs.

It is brought out here that while the struggles were going on, the American blacks' faith in education as a means toward overall social progress was unabiding and withstanding to the deliberate, systematic attempts to block any and all progress.

Now we are ready to begin the demographic anlaysis of the education of blacks in the United States and the South. That will cover illiteracy, school enrollment and educational attainment.

To begin with, it should be noted that a certain basic problem exists when making statistical comparisons between blacks and whites in terms of education, as was indicated earlier for most demographic analyses of the American situation. That problem is the ability of the oppressed group to exhibit significant percentage gains over the advantaged group. Again, percentage gains should not be relied upon solely in documenting the differentials between blacks and whites in this country because that tends to perpetuate the illusion that the situation is better than it really is. In this case, we expect blacks to exhibit substantial advances
over whites, but Bouvier's main concern, and our main concern, is whether the advances are eliminating the differences in quality of education as well as the quantity received.

From the 19th to the 20th century the decline in the proportion of illiterate blacks continued. In 1930 30 percent of the southern black population was illiterate compared to 3.7 percent of white southerners. In 1969, the figures for illiteracy for the country were .7 percent for whites and 3.6 percent for blacks. Although the percentage for blacks that were illiterate are still too high, it does represent a major accomplishment in just a short period of time.

Today, illiteracy is spoken of as "functional illiteracy", which means having completed less than five years of schooling.

We're reminded that if we're seeing a decline in illiteracy for blacks we will also see an increase in school enrollment. Bouvier illustrates the rise in school enrollment nationally as well as the differences seen between regions. We all are aware that the South has historically been behind in school attendance for all its' population, and this has been true for blacks particularly, for the reasons stated earlier. In short, blacks and whites who were living in the South were less likely to be attending school than their northern counterparts. Perhaps the most important thing to be mentioned here is the reduction of functional illiteracy from 41.8 percent in 1940 for blacks to 14.5 percent
In terms of national differences in the educational attainment of blacks and whites, advances have been made in narrowing the differences, but since 1950 they have been limited to the upper age group. As noted by Bouvier, economic conditions were responsible for the increased enrollment of blacks in the lower age groups as well as causing the decreased enrollment at the upper levels. Mothers being forced into full-time employment in the former case, and black youths dropping out of school to seek jobs in the latter.

It is reiterated that although each decade shows progress, differences in school enrollment are still prevalent today. On the other hand, the proportion of blacks attending college has been increasing: in 1965 they were 10 percent of all blacks aged 18-24 and in 1973 they were 16 percent of all blacks that age. During this period the 25-26 percent of whites in college in this age group remained static, suggesting that this might be the final percentage for blacks when a parity is reached.

As shown, these figures do not indicate an achievement of educational parity with whites and the number of blacks in college is still substantially lower than their representation in the general population.

When determining the degree of social progress by educational attainment, it has to be remembered that all progress is relative. As Bouvier points out, given the nature of American society, it is assumed that the adult population's
level of education would increase, and therefore as older citizens die off and are replaced by younger people who have had more education, the average of years of school completed will be higher. Bouvier feels that the much cited improvements were the result of a major decline in the number of people receiving less than eight years of school and the increases in the number completing high school. In 1970, the number of blacks receiving a college education was 4.4 percent as compared to 11.3 percent for whites, which shows that the net gains have occurred at the lower range of the educational ladder and therefore that equality is still far off.

In terms of regions, the differences have declined, although the number of black people receiving only an elementary education is still some 50 percent of the black population age 25 and over (in 1972).

Migration does become a factor when discussing regions, and particularly so since out-migrants generally have a better educational background than those left behind. He feels that although the exodus out of the South was contributing to the increase in the educational differential between blacks and whites, by region, since 1960 changes have been due to the fact that the actual net out-migration of blacks was considerably smaller than ever before. In addition, this loss was compensated for by the number of in-migrants who were equally as well educated. Bouvier cites the 1965-1970 data which show that those leaving and entering
the South Atlantic division of the United States had relatively equal amounts of education.

Overall, Bouvier feels that the changes seen illustrate the dramatical progress made since integration of the schools occurred, and for the South, the changes have been due to the increased school enrollment and the shift in the migration patterns of young black adults.

This study is closed with the idea that a plateau had been reached in 1974 in terms of income differentials and perhaps now is the time for another massive effort to achieve racial parity in education, occupation and income.
CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE PATTERNS

Black Families: Marriage Patterns and Living Arrangements*

In this study by Paul Glick and Karen Mills the marriage patterns of both blacks and whites are treated in historical perspective and within socio-economic groups. Also, recent changes in the overall living arrangements of the two groups are analyzed. The materials included were taken from the decennial census reports of 1960 and 1970 and from the Current Population Survey Reports published by the Census Bureau.

Since 1890 when the first statistics on marital status were published, the marital status distribution has been greatly affected by the aging component of the population. This comes as a direct consequence of the declining birth and death rates and by the relatively high immigration rate among whites during the first half of this century and the relatively low immigration rate for the second half of the twentieth century.

Glick and Mills' data are restricted to the 35-44 age group mainly because they feel this makes the data more relative and easier to understand, as opposed to presenting information that has been generalized for all age groups. The group in the 35-44 range is said to be young enough to have shared in the high rates of divorce during the last decade and old enough to have contracted most of the divorces that will occur during their lifetime. Also, this group has been identified as the cohort with the earliest age at marriage on record and the highest fertility rates during the twentieth century.

For blacks in this group, the most important factors illustrated are the 1950 peak in the percent married and the corresponding 1950 low point in the percent single, the marked decline in the percent widowed, and the very substantial increase in the percent divorced. Marital trends for this age group has been marked by recent changes in the direction of more marriages among whites and fewer among blacks. For people who remarry after widowhood or divorce, the proportion has been increasing to the point of four out of every five people in the 35-44 age group.

Another fact brought out by Glick and Mills is the lowered proportion of men to women who were reported in 1970 as divorced. One reason given for the difference here is that men of this age range have generally not been married as long as women, since men tend to be about three years
younger than women at the time of their first marriage. Additionally, more women than men never remarry after divorce and there is also the problem of misreporting. A related hypothesis for the misreporting factor is that many married women report themselves as single because they don't want to jeopardize their ability to qualify for welfare benefits and the aid to families with dependent children.

One of the more important facts presented here is that the proportion married among blacks 35-44 years of age has tended to be smaller than that for whites, while the proportion divorced has been consistently higher, and the gap for both instances has been widening instead of closing.

With respect to the incidence of delayed marriage, Glick and Mills relate this to the increase in college enrollment among black and white women, the increase in the labor force participation of women in their twenties, the high unemployment rate for young men and women since 1971, and the fact that the War in Vietnam temporarily withdrew millions of men from the marriage market.

Another reason for the increased percent of single women reported is the idea that both black and white women have been more frank about reporting their marital status as single when they are unwed mothers or are living with an unrelated man.

The age at first marriage is also a dimension brought into the picture and the researchers found that it is directly
related to marital stability. Glick and Mills found that the mean age at first marriage, for those who entered their first marriage in the 1960's, was about one year older for blacks than for whites. For first marriages, it was found that those entered into at early ages were much less likely to be stable than those that were started at more mature ages. This could be due to the difficulty in achieving an occupational level sufficiently high enough to support a family at an earlier age and the ability therefore to avoid excessive tension over economic matters.

The data presented here indicate that blacks who had married in the 1965-1967 period well before they had reached the central ages for marriage, were half as likely to be living apart from their spouse in 1970 as those who had postponed marriage until they reached the optimum age range for a marriage to remain intact. This "optimum range" for black men is about 25-29 years of age and for black women 20-24 years of age. This also happens to be the age at which many black college graduates marry for the first time.

For whites, Glick and Mills found a smaller percentage of recently married couples living apart two to five years later. Again, those who married at an earlier age showed a higher incidence of divorce or separation than those who waited.

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1Central ages for marriage are those ages when people of all races are most likely to marry.
It should be noted that blacks who were living apart from their spouse, whom they had married two to five years earlier, were slower about dissolving their marriage in divorce and remarrying than whites.

Of particular interest is the fact that women who marry early tend to have less education and thus have less capacity for self-sufficiency than those who marry at a later age.

Which takes us up to the discussion of men and the positive relationship between marital stability and income level. In their analysis, Glick and Mills include statistics that show the proportion of all men who were still living with their first wife advanced dramatically at higher income levels, until approximately the median income for all men in the 35-44 age group was reached. This was true for black and white men in 1960 and 1970. This is interpreted as showing that marital stability and income level tend to be interacting variables at all income levels.

With regard to those who had been divorced before, a significant finding for blacks and whites was that the proportion of men divorced but living with their second wife in remarriage was generally higher for those in the income brackets above the median level. This is consistent with the notion that a poor man experiences greater difficulty than the man of average or greater mean in convincing a potential marital partner to enter into remarriage with him. It is
postulated that this difference in ease with which marriage is accomplished is due to the personal and social characteristics of the men.

In comparing socio-economic levels, Glick and Mills found that men who had never married by the time they reached the ages of 35-44 had clearly the lowest median incomes whereas those who were in unbroken first marriages at that age had the highest median incomes. One can understand the presumptions made and the importance of these facts in indicating the prevalence of economics in determining who marries, divorces, and remarries.

For women, education was the variable chosen to determine socio-economic status. This was done because it is applicable to all women, as opposed to the problems encountered if income is used as the determining variable.

The marital patterns for women by educational level differ greatly from those for men by income level, and black women differ from white women. The statistics shown indicate that those women in their first marriages at age 35-44 were among those with the highest levels of education. But, the most stunning difference is the distinctly lower proportion of intact first marriages among women 35-44 years old with five or more years of college training as compared with those of four years of college. This difference is greater among white women. Glick and Mills indicate that no such pattern is found among men in their educational distribution or in the upper income level distributions. Possibly it is
due to the greater employment opportunities available to women with graduate school training. Additional data support the generalization that women without a complete high school education tend to be more likely to remarry after divorce than those with higher levels of education.

It is important to understand that between 1960 and 1970 for black and white women, the proportion separated and divorced increased, with the largest rate of increase among those divorced. Of those, a much larger proportion of blacks were separated and divorced than whites, though blacks tended to be separated but not divorced. It is suggested that this reflects differences in the prevailing modes of marital disruption for blacks and whites and the promptness with which divorce and remarry occur after separation.

To summarize, this portion of the Glick and Mills study showed that in comparing socio-economic status and marital stability, for blacks and whites, the upper income and educational group exhibited like patterns, though marital stability was a little higher for whites than for blacks, and that men of the lower status group usually married after middle age, were more likely to be divorced or widowed, and were less likely to remarry than men of the upper status levels. Of course the women who demonstrated the conduciveness to long marriages tended to be those of the higher educational group and this was true regardless of race.

For living arrangements, we first need to quantify
what constitutes a family to the federal government. A family was a group of two or more related persons living together in the same household, including as one family two related married couples.

Initially, it is pointed out that although female headed households have become an increasing proportion of all black families since 1930, there is still a significant majority of households with both husband and wife present. Secondly, Glick and Mills present the percentages involved in this characteristic, which are that husband-wife families were 80 percent of all black families in 1930, but only represented 61 percent of all black families in 1973. This, too, they feel reflects the ability of black women to maintain their own households, as pointed out earlier, especially due to their increased levels of education and subsequent ability to obtain better paying jobs than before.

For the children of these families we see that among black children under age 18 in 1970, 69 percent lived with both father and mother, 13 percent lived with mothers separated, 5 percent with divorced mothers, 6 percent with mothers never married, 5 percent with widows, and 2 percent with mothers married and living apart from the father. However, this does not represent some 900,000 black children and 1,500,000 white children under age 18 who were not living with either parent in 1970. These children represented 9.4 percent of all black children in this age group and 2.5 percent of all white children. These children were usually
living with grandparents or other relatives.

It is important here that one remember the 15 percent decline in the national birth rate between 1960 and 1973. This becomes necessary in light of the fact that the number of children under age 18 who were preschool age in 1970 and 1973 was lowered as a result of the decline in birth rate in the United States. The understanding is also that having fewer young children helped mothers to start or continue their employment or schooling and to maintain their own household whether separated, divorced or unwed.

This section also includes a brief discussion on the incidence of generations of families living together. Glick and Mills found that 50 percent of the children living in their grandparents home were accompanied by their parents. For blacks the figures were 45 percent and for whites 60 percent of the children fell in this group.

Which brings us to informal living arrangements, where we see historically more black households in this category than white households. However, the number reported in this category was six times as great in 1960 as in 1970, and for whites the number reported was nine times as great in 1970 as in 1960. Overall, the frequencies referred to were 143,000 in 1970 as opposed to 17,000 in 1970. This proves statistically that the practice of living together without being married had become far more common in 1970 than it was in 1960.
Of the persons living alone, the statistics included here indicated a doubled increase among blacks and a three-fourths increase among whites. The largest increase in the number of people living alone was among older people, particularly widows, and they represented 50 percent of all persons living alone. This reflects the high incidence of young adults living away from home and women who outlive their husbands and can afford to live alone.

Basically, this study illustrates the effect of the demographic aspects discussed previously and proved that the similarities rather than the differences tend to be greater between blacks and whites and their marriage patterns, especially when socio-economic status is held constant. This holds true also in living arrangements.

An hypothesis mentioned to explain the increase in divorce rate in both blacks and whites was the "no-fault" divorce laws on the books of twenty-three states and the availability of Legal Aid to those that qualify. This increased divorce rate is also attributed to educational and employment opportunities for women, which offer alternative roles to the traditional homemaker concept.

Glick and Mills feel that marital stability varies over time and is subject to cultural change and also that it varies among social and economic groups. As illustrated by the number of people living alone or reported single, many people are opting for this route whether in transition to remarriage or adjusting to divorce, regardless of
socio-economic level.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summation, the information reviewed here on migration indicates that future redistribution of blacks will be an increasingly urban redistribution and therefore more attention should be reserved for an urban to urban movement. It was noted that metropolitan areas seem to import people who are economically active while exporting those likely to be moving out of the labor force. These differences are reflective of the age distribution involved. Older people tend to migrate to nonmetropolitan areas while young adults move to the urban, metropolitan areas.

It was shown by Miller's study that the average migrant is well educated by current standards and relatively successful at utilizing his education.

All of the above are supported by the fact that the proportion of in-migrants who hold white collar jobs is higher than that for nonmigrants and that the highest number of white collar workers is found among migrants who moved from one metropolitan area to another.

In the study on occupational distribution and mobility the important factors were the following: The possibility of shifting occupations is greatest for younger workers because older workers in low-paying jobs are more likely to be
unemployed and sometimes forced out of the labor force. In essence, then, although there has been some improvement in the relative position of blacks in the income and occupational categories, median incomes are still lower than that for whites.

In terms of labor force participation, we see an increase in the number of white females entering the job market and a decrease for black males who are middle-aged or older, while an increase is shown for young black males.

Unemployment rates are twice as high for blacks as for whites. Here I question Price's remarks that this discrepancy in employment rates will be lowered because of the higher levels of education blacks are receiving today. Higher education levels are of no use if there are no jobs in which to use that training. If blacks were not the last hired and the first fired we wouldn't see this doubled effect in comparing the unemployment rates to those of whites. They certainly don't represent two times as many whites in the general population.

A thirty year lag behind the employment status of white males is shown in the professional, technical and kindred worker class, though no such lag exists in this category between black and white females. One of the important reasons for this being the lower amount of resistance exhibited toward black females reaching this level and that shown by whites toward black males. You might also include the fact that women have only been in these occupations, in numbers, in
the most recent years.

When we look at the managerial and administrative category, that thirty year lag behind the rates for whites is existant for both black men and women.

With reference to Price's statements that the clerical and kindred worker class represents an acceptable end achievement for black males, I would point out that clerical occupations, though useful in the overall upward occupational mobility, is not necessarily a great achievement for black males, as it is portrayed. Hopefully, for them as for white males, there are more and better opportunities to take advantage of.

The same kind of attitude holds true for the sales, craftsmen, operatives, service and private household workers. Although the statistics do indicate a shift upward from the lower positions, and although blacks do represent a higher percentage in these occupations than in others, I don't think any of these represent "better conditions" for black people. Nor do I feel that the only alternatives for a person in the operative or sales worker class is a job as a laborer, as is stated by Price.

Because the move from a private household into a service worker or laborer job is somewhat of a financial improvement does not mean that it represents a desirable occupation. I would like to see a total reduction in the number of blacks holding private household jobs. This is happening in the farm worker category, but there it often
reflects the number of black people being *forced* out of the labor force.

While there has been an increase in the number of blacks in occupations which require more education and training, the proportion in these upper level categories is considerably less than that for whites.

It should also be remembered that the occupational shifting for middle-aged to older black people is a more lateral than upward movement than that seen for whites, or it is a movement out of the labor force completely.

A major problem throughout the Price study is the weakness in the research done as portrayed by the interpretive discussion that concurs as a result of that research. This can possibly be due to the use of the statistical comparisons in analyzing differentials between blacks and whites in the United States, without accompanying that analysis with some historical perspective.

Overall, the changes which have occurred in the American legal and political realms have improved life chances for blacks, especially in the younger age groups, but we represent a disproportionate number of those unemployed or in low-paying, highly vulnerable jobs.

As for levels of educational attainment reached by blacks, we see that although progress has been made from one decade to the next, there are differences between the school enrollment of black children and that seen for white children. On the other hand, the functional illiteracy rate
has been greatly reduced. There is an increasing proportion of black students going to college, though this number is still substantially lower than their representation in the population.

The effect of migration from the South by young blacks is a factor when comparing regions, but that migration has decreased considerably since 1950 and now the loss is compensated for by the number of in-migrants to the South who have relatively equal amounts of education as those leaving.

Last of all, I would like to refer to the material included that discussed the effects of migration, occupational shifting and increased education on the marriage patterns and living arrangements of black Americans.

Generally, we see a higher incidence of divorce and separation among blacks than among whites and thereby a lower proportion of marriages.

For first marriages, it is seen that those entered at later ages tend to be more stable than those begun at younger ages. This could possibly reflect the importance of the economic factor in determining whether a marriage lasts for more than two to five years.

In comparing socio-economic status, it was shown that men who had never married by ages 35-44 had the lowest median incomes, while those who were in an unbroken first marriage at this age had the highest median incomes.

The same held true for women of the upper educational levels, though a number of women with a graduate school level
of education or more were either divorced or not married. Also, the differences in the modes of marital disruption were portrayed and we saw a more prompt finalization (through divorce) by whites than by blacks.

In looking at living arrangements, it was illustrated that although the number of husband-wife households have been decreasing in the black community, there is still some 61 percent that have both husband and wife present. An aspect that usually isn't included when the statistics are cited.

As for informal living arrangements, there were far more people in 1960 than in 1970, both black and white, who reported this situation.

Overall, the study on marriage patterns and living arrangements illustrated that similarities between blacks and whites in this area tend to be greater, particularly in terms of socio-economic level.

Conclusion

All of the studies reviewed here illustrate the kind and degree of social change that is occurring within the confines of the black community in America. My final remark would be that progress is being made toward the goal of social, economic and educational parity between the black and white populations of the United States, but there is still much to be done if that goal is ever to be realized.
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