



JANUARY 2008

Neighborhood Research

Selected Annotated Bibliography on
Neighborhood Effects, Mobility Programs,
Racial & Socio-Economic Segregation

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berube, Alan, and Elizabeth Kneebone. *Two Steps Back: City and Suburban Poverty Trends 1999-2005.* Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2006.

- Suburban poor outnumbered city counterparts by 2005
- Poverty rates rose in Midwest and South, but stayed steady in West and Northeast
- 1/2 of cities saw significant rise in poverty rates (6 of 10 were in Midwest)
- 1/3 of suburbs did as well
- In cities and suburbs where poverty rates rose from 1999-2005, child poverty rates rose faster

Boyd, Melody, et al. "The Durability of Gautreaux Two Residential Mobility Program: A Qualitative Analysis of Who Stays and Who Moves from Low-Poverty Neighborhoods." *Population Association of America Annual Meeting.* Los Angeles, CA, 2006.

Compared stories of "movers" and "stayers." Found some common axes around which decisions revolved: (1) Unit quality; (2) Relationships with landlords; (3) Proximity to social networks; (4) Transportation; (5) Children's experiences; (6) Financial concerns

If people had good quality units, responsive landlords, made new friends, had a car (or lived in an area where they could walk to what they need), had children doing well in the new school, and didn't have any financial shocks, they were more likely to stay. If those things were negative, they were more likely to move. For those people who moved again and cited social ties as the reason, they were often involving care or responsibility issues: either they had to care for a sick relative, for example, or they relied on family members for childcare. People who stayed with their old jobs, daycare, and health care providers had difficulty accessing them from the new neighborhood.

People who stayed most likely had family and friends already in the area (same with those who moved, but moved to high-opportunity areas), had jobs in the area, explicitly valued racial residential integration, and were more likely to have previously lived in areas outside of public housing.

Briggs, Xavier de Souza, and Margery Austin Turner. "Assisted Housing Mobility and the Success of Low-Income Minority Families: Lessons for Policy, Practice, and Future Research." *Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy* 1.1 (2006): 25-61.

An emphasis on whether or not a program "fails" or "succeeds" hides the more important question as to why outcomes are so varied across contexts, client groups, and implementation approaches. For example, MTO programs in five cities had differing outcomes -- the share of MTO families who were successful in moving ranged from a low of 34% in Chicago to a high of 61% in L.A. (p. 32) Also, although the average gains in employment across the five sites were not significant, when stratified by sites, you see significant increases in employment in L.A. and earnings in New York

Concludes with five lessons:

- *Targeting people* -- you need to know who wants to move and what they need to be successful. Families who were most likely to succeed were more motivated about moving; more optimistic about chances of success; owned cars; had fewer children. Families with strong social ties to their neighbors or with a disabled family member were less likely to lease up in the private market; Hispanic families were less successful than African American families. (p. 32) Families who receive vouchers but no assistance are less successful.
- *Targeting places* -- you need to know more about how to define "opportunity rich" neighborhoods and not just use proxies such as poverty rate or racial composition alone. Rather, use concrete measures like school quality, job growth, etc. With regard to disappointing MTO results (education, employment, etc.): "we underline the strong possibility that MTO's specific failure to move a large number of families in the experimental group to more stable,

racially diverse neighborhoods in higher performing suburban school districts may limit benefits for families over the long term.” (p. 36)

- *Staying there, not just getting there* -- many families need help staying in their new neighborhoods, due to their economic insecurity, tight housing market conditions, and conflicts with landlords over unaddressed problems. Many movers in MTO moved again, sometimes more than once, and typically to poorer communities. Most of it was involuntary -- rent increases, problems with landlords. This points to the need for post-move counseling; broader recruiting of landlords; fostering institutional connections; flexibility in managing the voucher program (such as granting “exception rents”); increasing the supply-side of rental units that are affordable over time (some by “social landlords” such as nonprofits). Research from Chicago’s Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) shows that second-move counseling can help families stay in lower-poverty areas. (p. 43)
- *Leveraging the value, and mitigating the risks, of new neighborhoods* -- find out more about how moving affects health, teen behavior, education, and employment, and what assistance people need as they adjust. Cites important benefits from MTO program: increase in mental health among MTO parents (who are mostly single mothers) was statistically significant and on par with mental health gains typical under the most effective psychotherapeutic treatments available (p. 45). From qualitative research in MTO, found that parents didn’t want their children to move schools because they viewed moving as disruptive per se and wanted the school to be a source of stability. People who were not working were often facing barriers unrelated to location, such as disabling illnesses, limited skills, lack of reliable childcare or transportation. Families’ use of new places varies according to structure of social relations; specific family needs; nature of access to other places of significance; levels of trust towards new neighbors. (Note that they underscore that although neighborhood conditions have an important influence, they are not the only and probably not the main source of influence.)
- *Low risk to receiving areas, untapped potential* -- research shows little or no risk of damage to receiving communities if programs are well designed and managed, and therefore, voucher programs are underutilized in high-opportunity areas due to stigmas, lack of information, discrimination, weak incentives, oppositional politics, bureaucratic impediments (mobility programs are tiny, given the demand and the promising results). Nationally, vouchers are generally not clustered geographically; but where they are clustered, they are in high-poverty, mostly minority central-city neighborhoods.

Brisson, Daniel, and Charles L. Usher. “The Effects of Informal Neighborhood Bonding Social Capital and Neighborhood Context on Homeownership for Families Living in Poverty.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29.1 (2007): 65-75.

Found that informal trusting relationships among neighbors can be measured, and that higher bonding is associated with higher homeownership rates (for people in the study group, who were residents of low-income urban neighborhoods), controlling for duration of residence. Justifies building social capital for asset-building outcomes in low-income community based programs. [They looked only at “bonding” -- intra-neighborhood -- not “bridging” -- inter-neighborhood relationships] Also, informal neighborhood bonding social capital has a significant and positive relationship with median neighborhood income, and the median years residents have lived in a neighborhood. Found disparity in homeownership rates for women and people of color, controlling for neighborhood condition. In this sample, whites were 201% more likely to own their own home than blacks, and women were 17% less likely than men.

Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne, et al. “Do Neighborhoods Influence Child and Adolescent Development?” *The American Journal of Sociology* 99.2 (1993): 353-95.

(Note that this is -- as of September 2007 -- the most highly cited article on “neighborhood effects.”)

“The effects of neighborhood characteristics on development of children and adolescents are estimated. There are reasonably powerful neighborhood effects -- particularly the effects of the presence of affluent neighbors -- on childhood IQ, teenage births, and school-leaving, even after the differences in the socio-economic characteristics of

families are adjusted for. The study finds that white teenagers benefit more from the presence of affluent neighbors than do black teenagers.” (From authors’ abstract, p. 353)

Find that children growing up in affluent neighborhoods do better than those in low-income neighborhoods. Deduced partial support for Wilson’s theory of importance of collective socialization (role models v. social isolation). However, found that low-income youth may not appear to benefit from affluent neighbors and that home learning and family income is important. For example, in their research, “the most potent family-level variables are raising the incomes of families for young children” (p. 385). Income was a more potent predictor than maternal education.

However, do conclude that neighborhoods confer considerable advantages or disadvantages. Methods by which it might work: (1) “contagion” (2) “collective socialization” (3) “competition” (compete for scarce resources) (4) “relative deprivation” (evaluate your relative standing vis-à-vis your neighbors)

Chapple, Karen. “Overcoming Mismatch: Beyond Dispersion, Mobility, and Development Strategies.” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72.3 (2006): 322-36.

“Local activity patterns do shape employment chances. Planners trying to improve employment outcomes should focus on policies that will provide [them] with opportunities to interact with a diverse social network and meet workforce intermediaries” (322).

Clark, William A.V., Marinus C. Deurloo, and Frans M. Dieleman. “Residential Mobility and Neighborhood Outcomes.” *Housing Studies* 21.3 (2006): 323-42.

Concludes that with regards to housing mobility, “neighbourhoods matter in the choice process” (p. 337). Notes that nearly 20% of low-income movers make neighborhood gains with no housing quality gain. “Overall, the paper provides important evidence of the way in which neighborhood works independently in the residential choice process” (p. 340)

Dawkins, Casey J. “Are Social Networks the Ties That Bind Families to Neighborhoods?” *Housing Studies* 21.6 (2006): 867-81.

Dawkins investigates the impact of social ties on the intra-neighborhood mobility of families with children, using data from the 1997 and 2002 CDS of the PSID. Results suggest that social ties inhibit mobility, particularly for low-income families. In Dawkins’ terms, “Among low-income families, local social ties are even more ‘binding.’” (p. 867).

Density of local kinship ties and childhood friendships both deter mobility; density of adult friendships does not; mobility is most impacted by whether the household had received in-kind assistance from someone in the most recent month; but local social ties provide more than just in-kind assistance and emotional support; neighborhood social bonds are highly localized and affected by small changes in a family’s residential location; and, perhaps most strikingly: “it is found that the magnitude of the impact of nearby relatives on mobility is about 40 per cent larger for low-income families, and the magnitude of the impact of childhood friends is more than two times larger for low-income families” (p. 878).

---. “Recent Evidence on the Continuing Causes of Black-White Residential Segregation.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 26.3 (2004): 379-400.

Summary and critique of recent evidence on competing hypotheses concerning black-white residential segregation.

“Recent studies provide more convincing evidence of the link between housing market discrimination and residential segregation by race. These studies suggest that housing market discrimination may affect segregation through several mechanisms: price discrimination, exclusion, steering, and by altering the perceived desirability of particu-

lar neighborhoods. Of these, steering and outright exclusion from suburban areas appear to have become more important in recent years” (p. 396).

Devine, Deborah J. Housing Choice Voucher Location Patterns: Implications for Participants and Neighborhood Welfare: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2003.

Study of Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV), which provides rental assistance to very low income households to use in private market. While participants are “encouraged” to seek out low-poverty neighborhoods, there are no restrictions on location choice. Found that minority participants are more likely to live in neighborhoods where poverty is concentrated: “Black and Hispanic families are more likely than White participants to live in neighborhoods where poverty is concentrated. . . the latter are more likely to live in low-poverty neighborhoods.”

Dietz, Robert D. “The Estimation of Neighborhood Effects in the Social Sciences: An Interdisciplinary Approach.” *Social Science Research* 31 (2002): 539-75.

Defines neighborhood effects as “a social interaction that influences the behavior or socioeconomic outcome of an individual” (540).

Scope of effect is generally census tract or block group, which is driven by the data that is available, not thoughtful theoretical considerations.

Types of effects: (1) endogenous -- the behavior of an individual has a direct influence on the behavior of all others in the neighborhood; (2) correlated -- individuals have similar characteristics or institutional exposure. (Cites Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987) as prime example); (3) contextual or exogenous -- actions of individual depend on exogenous characteristics of individual’s neighbors; (4) among-neighborhoods -- characteristics of nearby neighborhoods impact each other

Time horizon -- is it contemporaneous or lagged

Theories and models of neighborhood effects:

- *Sociological models* -- sociologists work on the mechanisms by which a neighborhood effect may arise and operate. This includes (a) “Contagion” (peer influences that spread social ills); (b) collective socialization (how do positive behaviors spread, such as contact with role models or community networks; (c) competition theory (zero-sum resource allocation); (d) relative deprivation theory (again, winners depress losers).
- *Economic models* -- not much on neighborhood effects, except Benabou and Durlauf, who look at human capital accumulation, which is determined within a local context. Benabou’s model indicates that long run growth is generally promoted by the mixing of families. Durlauf’s work shows how community sorting can lead to persistent inequality. Economists also look at peer effects. These studies show that neighborhood sorting isn’t random or predetermined: “Economic and social processes determine the geographic assignment of households in an urban area” (546). Game theory is also useful. For example, some studies have shown that the size of the group and the spatial structure affects the learning process (interaction decisions and outcomes). For example, how “close” are you to a social institution (are you a member, a relative of a member, etc.) Studies have also shown that it is easier to coordinate socially beneficial outcomes within small interacting groups.

Discusses limitations of neighborhood effects research, such as endogenous independent variables and omitted relevant variables. Concludes that many studies suffer from these problems and that when newer studies control for them, there is less of an effect: “Spatial clustering of socioeconomic phenomena exists, but the reasons for this concentration remains contested” (569). Other shortcomings: Studies don’t find out what happens when the size of the neighborhood unit changes. What is a neighborhood? Don’t people spend lots of time in different neighborhoods? What is the relationship among neighborhoods?

Ding, Chengri, and Gerrit-Jan Knapp. "Property Values in Inner-City Neighborhoods: The Effects of Homeownership, Housing Investment, and Economic Development." *Housing Policy Debate* 13.4 (2002): 701-27.

Housing prices and neighborhood quality have been shown to be highly correlated. Housing prices are influenced by many factors, including proximity to jobs and commercial establishments, access to environmental amenities, taxes and public services, and the income level of neighborhood residents. Population out-migration can negatively affect property values.

Duncan, Greg, and Anita Zuberi. "Mobility Lessons from Gautreaux and Moving to Opportunity." *Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy* 1.1 (2006): 110-26.

Gautreaux I: Tracking families addresses in the 1990's (22 years after initial moves), found that 2/3 of families placed in the suburbs were still in the suburbs and that it succeeded inter-generationally as well: their children continue to reside in neighborhoods with lower poverty rates, higher rates of educational attainment, and more integrated than mothers' origin neighborhoods.

Reviews MTO research and highlights mental health improvements for mothers. "Thus, by the criteria of what mattered most to the participants themselves, MTO was very successful" (p. 116). And notes that MTO improved neighborhood quality, but not necessarily school quality, because kids stayed in same schools.

Feins, Judith D., and Mark D. Shroder. "Moving to Opportunity: The Demonstration's Design and Its Effects on Mobility." *Urban Studies* 42.8 (2005): 1275-99.

"Our focus is entirely on mobility and on measurable attributes of residential neighbourhood that participation in the experiment changed. Discussion of changes to housing, health, education, income, delinquency and other risky behavior we leave to other research" (p. 1276).

Summary: "[experimental group] families that moved to low-poverty areas are still in neighborhoods with considerably lower poverty rates than control families" (p. 1289); the Section 8 families' neighborhoods fall in-between. And, only the experimental group showed a significant impact on racial/ethnic segregation. But neither group moved to predominantly White neighborhoods. Results also show clear improvements in neighborhood quality and safety and of great importance to MTO participants

Freeman, Lance, and Hilary Botein. "Subsidized Housing and Neighborhood Impacts: A Theoretical Discussion and Review of the Evidence." *Journal of Planning Literature* 16.3 (2002): 359-78.

Does subsidized housing lead to a decrease in surrounding property values, white flight, increased crime, and/or higher poverty rates? Short answer: it depends. How it depends is an important future research need. Impacts on property values: "the manner in which the presence of subsidized housing affects property values is context dependent" (371), Impacts on poverty concentration: earlier studies didn't distinguish between direct and indirect impacts; later study (Freeman 2001) "found no relationship between the existence of subsidized housing in a neighborhood and individual dynamics associated with poverty concentration" (373). Impacts on neighborhood racial transition: "extant evidence, although sparse, suggests that the development of subsidized housing generally does not lead to neighborhood racial transition" (374). Crime: "it does appear ...that in certain circumstances, subsidized housing can lead to increases in crime in surrounding neighborhoods" (375).

Freeman, Lance, and William Rohe. "Subsidized Housing and Neighborhood Racial Transition: An Empirical Investigation." *Housing Policy Debate* 11.1 (2000): 67-89.

Freeman and Rohe find that there is no empirical evidence that project-based assisted housing (including public housing developments, other types of HUD-assisted housing, including Section 236, FHA and Section 8 New Construction, and LIHTC developments) causes white flight.

“Our findings also suggest that assisted housing developments have the potential to promote racial and economic integration. Although assisted housing is still targeted toward low-income minority communities, a substantial number of non-poor, majority-white communities received assisted housing during the 1980s. More important, these neighborhoods usually did not experience significantly greater neighborhood racial transition as a result. At least in these neighborhoods, assisted housing may be fostering racial integration that might not have occurred otherwise.” (p. 86)

Friedrichs, Jurgen, George Galster, and Sako Musterd. “Neighborhood Effects on Social Opportunities: The European and American Research and Policy Context.” *Housing Studies* 18.6 (2003): 797-806.

Neighborhood effects have been in American scholarly literature for over 50 years (European: last 30 years).

How large are the effects? “The American literature on size of impact generally has concluded that the neighborhood environment makes a non-trivial, independent difference for a variety of outcomes, although the impact is not nearly as decisive as parental or individual characteristics, or macro-economic conditions” (p. 800). Not as much European research on this.

How do we measure them? Tends to be two types of study, the neighborhood case study, and statistical analysis of non-experimental, longitudinal databases. Debates over each strength and weakness and how to improve.

How do they work? Emerging consensus on these potential mechanisms: (1) Neighborhood resources (reputation; services; job accessibility; recreation; health; etc.) (2) Model learning via social ties and interrelationships (interpersonal networks and peer groups) (3) Socialization and collective efficacy (norms, control of public space) (4) Resident perceptions of deviance (crime, drug dealing; physical decay and disorder)

Galster, George. “Making a Nationwide Gautreaux Program More Neighborhood Friendly.” *PRRAC Newsletter* January / February 2005.

- Relationship between % poor and social problems: “The research literature consistently suggests the existence of thresholds: critical values of neighborhood poverty after which significantly different impacts on residents’ behaviors occur with the addition of one more poor household. The literature identifies two thresholds. One appears at the intuitive demarcation between low and moderate-poverty neighborhoods (approximately 15 to 20 percent) and denotes a point after which socially problematic outcomes begin to rise rapidly with increasing concentrations of the poor. The second appears at the demarcation between moderate- and high-poverty neighborhoods (approximately 30 to 40 percent) and denotes a point after which further concentrations of the poor produce no noticeable additional negative consequences.” (p. 7)
- Negative property effects: “. . .in sufficient concentrations, poor households with housing vouchers can have a deleterious effect on property values in the nearby neighborhood. . . The magnitude of impacts from the in-migration of voucher holders was clearly contingent on neighborhood context and spatial concentration.” (p. 7)

Therefore need to look not just at appropriate communities, but to the scale of the individual neighborhoods: “We must worry about the neighborhood level distribution of voucher holders, for it is at this small scale where critically important consequences for social problems and property values emerge.” (p. 8)]

Galster, George. “Residential Segregation in American Cities: A Contrary Review.” *Population Research and Policy Review* 7.2 (1998): 93-112.

Response to an article by William Clark (1986), in which Clark asserts that racial residential segregation is due to economic factors, job location, preference, and information, not by private acts of housing discrimination. Galster finds that on the contrary, private acts of discrimination are equally significant.

Galster, George C., Jackie M. Cutsinger, and Ron Malega. "The Social Costs of Concentrated Poverty: Externalities to Neighboring Households and Property Owners and the Dynamics of Decline." Revisiting Rental Housing: A National Policy Summit. Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2006.

Results from empirical models show that

- there is no substantial relationship between neighborhood poverty changes and property values or rents when poverty rates stay below ten (10) percent. By contrast, marginal increases in poverty when neighborhood poverty rates are in the range of 10 to 20% results in dramatic declines in value and rent.
- Had all census tracts in 1990 with > 20% poverty had their rate reduced to 20% by 2000, and only the lowest-poverty tracts allocated the additional poor populations, with each increasing their poverty rate by 5%, owner occupied property values would have risen \$421 billion (13%) and monthly rents would have risen \$400 million (4%) in aggregate, *ceteris paribus*.

Galster, George C., Kurt Metzger, and Ruth Waite. "Neighborhood Opportunity Structures and Immigrants' Socioeconomic Advancement." *Journal of Housing Research* 10.1 (1999): 95-127.

Research on immigrants socioeconomic status has not, until recently, focused on the spatial context of immigrant neighborhoods. This study assesses "the extent to which a group's neighborhood-opportunity context in 1980 is associated with its average socioeconomic progress during the subsequent decade, controlling for other factors." Looked at five sites: NYC, LA, Atlanta, Philadelphia, D.C.

Conclusion: "we find support for the proposition that various aspects of neighborhood context independently affect the ability of immigrants to advance economically in several dimensions."

"Collectively, these findings support the notion that neighborhoods isolated from the world of work and characterized by minimal educational achievement impose multifaceted, deleterious economic impacts on immigrants, just as they do for native-born residents" (p. 123).

Galster, George C., Kurt Metzger, and Ruth Waite. "Neighborhood Opportunity Structures of Immigrant Populations, 1980 and 1990." *Housing Policy Debate* 10.2 (1999): 395-442.

Finds that "with a few notable exceptions, immigrants are not exposed to neighborhood socioeconomic conditions as disadvantageous as those to which black residents of the same metropolitan area are exposed"; that "white immigrant groups currently occupy neighborhood niches that promise roughly the same opportunities for advancement as do those of the white population as a whole"; that over ten years, "most of the additional immigrant population growth occurred evenly, both in areas inside and outside traditional enclaves. There is, therefore little support for the notion that immigrant groups in general are becoming noticeably more residentially clustered in own-group enclaves" (p. 425 - 427)

Conclusions and implications: (1) most immigrant groups are highly spatially assimilated and show little tendency to become more spatially clustered; (2) it is not unusual for different immigrant groups to share the same census tracts in substantial numbers; (3) white immigrants are generally as residentially assimilated as whites as a whole; (4) many nonwhite immigrant groups have diverse interracial and interethnic exposure, but this is rarely the case for white immigrants, who typically follow the same segregated living patterns established by whites in general; (5) it is not the general case that immigrants are being left behind in the urban core and (6) With the exception of Dominicans living in New York City, however, no immigrant groups in any of the metropolitan areas studied (even black Jamaicans) are exposed to the sort of disadvantageous neighborhood conditions to which black households are exposed (p.431- 433, all verbatim).

Galster, George, Chris Hayes, and Jennifer Johnson. "Identifying Robust, Parsimonious Neighborhood Indicators." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 24 (2005): 265-80.

Research project was to find a handful of neighborhood indicators that were (1) updated annually (2) inexpensive (3) summarizing the information embodied in a much larger set of indicators. Crunching 63-75 neighborhood indicators, used factor analysis for first cut then use regression analysis to find a subset. Tested in five cities with rich data (b/c part of UI's NNIP): Boston, Cleveland, Indy, Oakland, and Providence.

Find that Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data on mortgage approval rates, loan amounts (median), and number of loan applications and Dunn and Bradstreet data on number of businesses are the best "robust and parsimonious" (quick and dirty) set of indicators. Mortgage approval rate is most robust. However, largely renter-occupied neighborhoods or those with lack of turnover won't work and "unfortunately, it is often these sorts of neighborhoods where the need for such indicators is greatest" (272).

Galster, George, and Sean P. Killen. "The Geography of Metropolitan Opportunity: A Reconnaissance and Conceptual Framework." *Housing Policy Debate* 6.1 (1995): 7-43.

Galster and Killen lay out the framework and empirical support for their concept of "the geography of metropolitan opportunity" or "metropolitan opportunity structures." Central hypothesis is "The geography of metropolitan opportunity is changing in such a way that a growing cadre of inner-city youth are persuaded to make decisions that ultimately lock them into a state of deprivation" (p. 8).

Geography shapes the decision making model in two ways: (1) objective spatial variations in many components of the opportunity structure and (2) subjective spatial variations in values, aspirations, and preferences and in perceived opportunity sets, due to spatial variations in the local social network (p. 21).

"The foregoing summary indicates that much statistical evidence supports the influence of neighborhood social networks and economic conditions on youth's intellectual development, educational attainment, marriage and fertility, labor market participation and earnings, and, to a lesser extent, criminal behavior and drug use" (p. 35).

Galster, George, and Maris Mikelsons. "The Geography of Metropolitan Opportunity: A Case Study of Neighborhood Conditions Confronting Youth in Washington, Dc." *Housing Policy Debate* 6.1 (1995): 73-102.

Analyses the spatial variation of adverse socioeconomic conditions across metropolitan D.C., and the levels of exposure of youth of different races and ethnicities to these conditions. Finds, in sum, that youth in black, female-headed families are exposed to the most negative neighborhood conditions.

Found that the variables vary spatially, and that extreme values of the indicators tend to cluster in particular geographic areas. Also looked at how indicators of disadvantage correlate with each other. Most of them are highly correlated, but tract poverty rates are not good predictors of all types of disadvantage; for example, poverty rates don't predict drug, property, or violent crimes; therefore, neighborhood poverty rates are imperfect proxy for the robust opportunity nexus. (p. 95)

When paired with demographics, find racial segregation and that "youth face substantially different neighborhood characteristics depending on their race and ethnicity" (p. 97)

Galster, George, Peter Tatian, and John Accordino. "Targeting Investments for Neighborhood Revitalization." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72.4 (2006): 457-74.

This looked at City of Richmond, VA "Neighborhoods in Bloom" (NiB) program -- strategically targeted CDBG and HOME funds on a small number of blocks to get a critical mass to stimulate self-sustaining private market activity. Found the best results (for public investment driving private activity (measured by home prices) at two spatial scales: (1) census tract level -- need to spend \$87,000 per tract per year; (2) census block -- need to spend \$6,000 per block per year.

Galster, George, Peter Tatian, and Robin Smith. "The Impact of Neighbors Who Use Section 8 Certificates on Property Values." *Housing Policy Debate* 10.4 (1999): 879-917.

Galster's study of home values near sites with Section 8 tenants in Baltimore County used an advanced econometric model. This model builds on the work of numerous researchers who have statistically investigated the degree to which a variety of factors associated with a neighborhood affect the sales prices of nearby single-family homes. At the heart of this is a statistical model that attempts to "decompose" the sales price of a home into the prices paid for different attributes of a home (rooms, yard, quality of public schools, proximity to shopping, etc.) through a multiple regression analysis. Galster et. al. focused on one particular attribute: is the home close to a site occupied by someone using a Section 8 voucher. They structured the experiment to create the equivalent of a pre- and post-experiment (before and after a nearby site is occupied by a subsidized tenant).

Galster et. al. found that the demographics of the host neighborhood affects the property value shift. For example, "if only a few Section 8 sites were located within 500 feet, we found a strong positive impact on property values in higher-valued, real-appreciation, predominantly white census tracts. However, in low-valued or moderately valued census tracts experiencing real declines in values since 1990, Section 8 sites and units located in high densities had a substantial adverse effect on prices within 2,000 feet..."

Greenberg, M.R. "Improving Neighborhood Quality: A Hierarchy of Needs." *Housing Policy Debate* 10.3 (1999): 601-24.

Crime and physical deterioration of neighborhoods are, for residents, the most critical factors associated with neighborhood quality.

Iceland, John, Cicely Sharpe, and Erika Steinmetz. "Class Differences in African American Residential Patterns in Us Metropolitan Areas: 1990-2000." *Social Science Research* 34 (2005): 252-66.

In breaking out segregation indices by race and class, authors find the highest segregation indices between African Americans and all non-Hispanic Whites among those in the lowest income quartiles, decreasing with increasing income. On average, the higher your income, the less racially segregated you are (although the lowest segregation measure is still very high). However, also finds that segregation between African Americans and non-Hispanic Whites of the same SES [socioeconomic status] category to be the second highest in the highest income quartile, higher than the segregation measure for African Americans and all non-Hispanic Whites. That is, high earning African Americans are more segregated from equally high earning Whites than they are from poorer whites. Therefore, high income Whites are still segregating themselves from high income African Americans.

Jargowsky, Paul A. *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problems: The Dramatic Decline of Concentrated Poverty in the 1990s*: The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 2003.

In short, the *stunning progress* is the decline of the number of people living in concentrated poverty, and the number of concentrated poverty neighborhoods, but the *hidden problem* is the rise in poverty in the older / inner-ring suburbs. ("This report documents a dramatic decline in the 1990s in the number of high-poverty neighborhoods, their population, and the concentration of the poor in these neighborhoods. It also finds, however, several indications that poverty rose in the older suburbs of many metropolitan areas." (p. 2))

In general, places with declines had big population declines as well. The steepest declines were in the Midwest and South; the number of high-poverty neighborhoods in the Northeast remained virtually the same, and the West substantially increase.

Jargowsky cites concentrated poverty as exacerbating a "hostile environment," low-performing schools, middle- and higher-income family flight, social needs and the lack of a fiscal base to address them.

Jencks, Christopher, and Susan E. Mayer. "The Social Consequences of Growing up in a Poor Neighborhood." *Inner-City Poverty in the United States*. Eds. Jr. Laurence E. Lynn and Michael G.H. McGeary. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1990. 111-86.

Literature review of sociology studies investigating how much a neighborhood or school's mean socio-economic status (SES) affects a child's life chances. (This review is cited by all following reviews as the 'bedrock' article that kicked more quantitatively rigorous studies into high gear).

Identifies six methodological challenges: (1) Controlling exogenous influences (distinguishing between neighborhood effects and family effects); (2) Longitudinal Versus Cross-sectional Models (lack of longitudinal studies; families usually move b/c their circumstances change; assumption that neighborhoods remain stable); (3) Nonlinear Effects of Socioeconomic Mix (many models assume a linear effect, but this is not verified and some evidence indicates it is nonlinear); (4) Interactions Between Neighborhood SES and Individual SES; (5) Choosing Appropriate Measures of Neighborhood Composition (Researchers use different measures and weight them differently); (6) Estimating Neighborhoods' Overall Effect (Studies rarely identify and analyze the differences among neighborhoods' and schools' total effects -- that is, neighborhood studies do not ask, how much variation is there among neighborhoods for the outcome and how much is attributable to exogenous factors).

Conclusion: "There is no general pattern of neighborhood or school effects that recurs across all [educational attainment, cognitive skills, crime, teenage sexual behavior, labor market success] outcomes." (p. 174; emphasis added)

"As a rule, the more aspects of family background we control, the smaller neighborhood and school effects look." (p. 176)

Future research should (1) look at poverty rates and racial composition; (2) investigate whether or not effects are linear (this affects policy outcomes) (3) are poor families more sensitive than affluent ones to neighborhood and school characteristics.

Kling, Jeffrey R., Jeffrey B. Liebman, and Lawrence F. Katz. "Experimental Analysis of Neighborhood Effects." *Econometrica* 75.1 (2007): 83-119.

In a January 2007 article that assesses outcomes five years after MTO families moved across all five cities, researchers reported that the evidence of effects from relocation to lower poverty neighborhoods on adults and youth is strongest (statistically significant) for mental health (Kling, Liebman and Katz). The leading hypothesis for this mechanism is the reduction in stress when families moved away from dangerous neighborhoods where fear of violence was pervasive. Economic self-sufficiency and physical health measures showed a positive direction for adults. Researchers did not find statistically significant effects on the composite of physical health, but did note a large and statistically significant effect on obesity.

For all youth, the direction of effects is positive for mental health and education, and negative for physical health and risky behavior. The youth results differ with regards to gender, however: the results show large positive effects on mental health and risky behavior for female youth, while displaying negative effects on physical health and risky behavior for male youth. In fact, for female youth, the pattern of beneficial effects is consistent across outcomes: 13 of 15 outcomes moved in a beneficial direction for Section 8 and experimental groups. For males, the largest negative outcomes were for injuries and substance abuse. There are several possible explanations for gender differences; the authors of this paper concluded that "differences in adult contact are the most likely contributor."(106)

Important finding: MTO had little impact on job-related social networks. That is, only about 8% of the sample found a job through someone living in their neighborhood (99). Transportation difficulties and disrupted social networks were additional barriers.

Langston, Jennifer. "Overweight? Blame Your Zip Code: Property Value Beats Income and Education as Obesity Predictor." *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* September 12, 2007.

Each additional \$100,000 in median home value for a ZIP code corresponded with a drop in obesity of 2% points. This beat income and education as predictors.

Hypothesized reasons: in less affluent areas, lack of access to fresh produce, health insurance, and affordable, nutritious groceries.

Proposed solutions: a coalition is lobbying the Legislature next year for funds for food banks to buy more fresh food from local farms; cities should establish standards for access to affordable healthy food (like they do to open space or bus stops)

Leventhal, Tama, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. "Moving to Opportunity: An Experimental Study of Neighborhood Effects on Mental Health." *American Journal of Public Health* 93.9 (2003): 1576-82.

Used data from 3-year follow-up of MTO in New York.

"Results: Parents who moved to low-poverty neighborhoods reported significantly less distress than parents who remained in high-poverty neighborhoods. Boys who moved to less poor neighborhoods reported significantly fewer anxious/depressive and dependency problems than boys who stayed in public housing." (p. 1576)

The mental health impacts were larger for children than they were for parents. Most pronounced for boys, and for children 8-13 years old. Among boys, moving to low-poverty neighborhoods resulted in 25% reduction in depressive/anxiety and dependency problems, relative to in-place controls. General lack of findings for girls.

Leventhal, Tama, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. "Neighborhood and Gender Effects on Family Processes: Results from the Moving to Opportunity Program." *Family Relations* 54 (2005): 633-43.

Investigated how neighborhood SES and gender independently and jointly affect parent-child interactions using New York City MTO 3-year follow-up data.

Parents who moved to the experimental (low-poverty) locations were observed to be harsher toward their daughters than parents in the high-poverty locations. This was contrary to expectations. The literature would have predicted that parents would provide more monitoring and routines to girls than boys (and they did provide more routines to girls), but expected that parents would relax in the low-poverty neighborhoods. ("Harsh parenting is hypothesized to be exacerbated by the stressful conditions of raising a family in a poor neighborhood").

Hypothesized explanations: If mother-daughter relations are more strained (than mother-son) relationships, then they may be more vulnerable to disruptive effects associated with moving; disruptions of parents' social networks may have made moms rely more on their daughters for social support; less familiarity with the parents of their peers maybe made them more protective; or girls may have been forced to take on more household and family responsibilities. (p. 640-641)...but note that the program implementation may have contributed to lack of expected results: 65% of families in LPVG ultimately didn't move, so sample size was small. LPVG families moved to better neighborhoods, but they still were not middle-class areas. Plus, although parental stress went down due to improved location, their "economic circumstances remained unaltered."

Advice is for more support services, including focus on "(a) the disruption of social networks and integration into new neighborhoods and (b) renegotiation and stabilization of parent-child relations after the move." (p. 642)

Macintyre, Sally, Anne Ellaway, and Steven Cummins. "Place Effects on Health: How Can We Conceptualise, Operationalise and Measure Them?" *Social Science and Medicine* 55 (2002): 125-39.

Argue that "place effects" "often appear to have the status of a residual category, an unspecified black box of somewhat mystical influences on health which remain after investigators have controlled for a range of individual and place characteristics" (p. 125). They argue that the distinction between resident "composition" (i.e. smoking rates)

and place “context” isn’t helpful and that “features of both material infrastructure and collective social functioning may influence health.” (p. 125)

Renewed interest in place effects posited them as alternative explanations to composition variables, but did not consider them as connected. “compositional and contextual explanations have tended to be seen as mutually exclusive, competing, and culturally and historically universal” (p. 128) ... “a more differentiated picture has tended to emerge, in which rather than there being one single, universal “area effect on health” there appear to be some area effects on some health outcomes, in some population groups, and in some types of areas.” (p. 128)

Three problems with composition vs. context approach:

- distinction may not be clear or useful: for example, social class is likely to be shaped by local labor market; educational achievement by local school standards; etc.;
- individual “controls” may actually be intervening variables on pathways between places and health, not “confounders”;
- lack of theorizing re: mechanism by which area and behavior is linked

In a previous paper, they put forward three types of explanation for geographical variations in health: (1) compositional (2) contextual and (3) collective. Now, they don’t think it’s smart to view contextual and collective as separate. Plus, they don’t want to limit “collective” to issues like “social capital” but want to include “ethnic, regional, or national identity, religious affiliation, political ideologies and practices, legal and fiscal systems, shared histories, kinship systems, domestic division of labor, gender, age and caste appropriate roles” etc. (p. 130) And, elements of “collective” identity might cut across traditional geographic spaces (i.e. not be proximate) and be manifest in interest groups, at work, etc.

Their framework:

- physical features of environment shared by all (i.e. air, water)
- availability of healthy environment at home, work and play
- services provided (public & private) to support people’s daily lives
- socio-cultural features of a neighborhood
- reputation of area

Three methodological issues:

- what spatial scales are appropriate
- at what spatial scale is information actually available
- what is appropriate time interval between environmental exposures and effects on health

Massey, Douglas S., Andrew B. Gross, and Kumiko Shibuya. “Migration, Segregation, and the Geographic Concentration of Poverty.” *American Sociological Review* 59.3 (1994): 425-45.

Massey, Gross and Shibuya find that the concentration of black poverty arises from three interrelated mechanisms: the in-migration of poor blacks into poor black neighborhoods; the net downward socioeconomic mobility among blacks; and the most important factor, racial discrimination in housing markets. The authors conclude that “race-specific policies to end discrimination in housing markets must be undertaken as an essential part of any broad poverty effort.” (p. 443)

“What separates blacks from other groups in the United States is not their neighborhood racial preferences... What makes blacks unique is the high degree of discrimination they face -- discrimination that systematically channels their housing demand away from white neighborhoods and into a few unstable areas on the periphery of existing ghettos”(p. 442).

Nguyen, Mai Thi. "Does Affordable Housing Detrimentially Affect Property Values? A Review of the Literature." *Journal of Planning Literature* 20.1 (2005): 15-26.

Nguyen reviews 17 studies and finds that "the extent to which property values are lowered depends on a variety of factors: design and management of affordable housing, compatibility between affordable housing and host neighborhood, and concentration of affordable housing."

"The likelihood that property values will decline as a result of proximity to affordable housing increases when (1) the quality, design, and management of the affordable housing is poor; (2) affordable housing is located in dilapidated neighborhoods that contain disadvantaged populations (i.e., usually low-income and predominantly minority); and (3) when affordable housing residents are clustered. In contrast, instances in which affordable housing appears to have no effect occur when (1) affordable housing is sited in healthy and vibrant neighborhoods, (2) the structure of the affordable housing does not change the quality or character of the neighborhood, (3) the management of affordable housing is responsive to problems and concerns, and (4) affordable housing is dispersed." (p. 23-24).

Popkin, Susan J., et al. "The Gautreaux Legacy: What Might Mixed-Income and Dispersal Strategies Mean for the Poorest Public Housing Tenants?" *Housing Policy Debate* 11.4 (2000): 911-42.

Authors look at Horner Revitalization Initiative (mixed-income development), and at Section 8 usage (both in Chicago). Conclude that the HRI success is shaky, especially for its original tenants; and that CHA residents have multiple, complex problems that make it challenging for them to transition successfully to the private market, i.e. criminal records, substance abuse, domestic violence, serious illness and disability, sudden death of family members, custody of relatives' children, etc. Also, lacked knowledge of private market (many had lived their whole lives in public housing); distressed at being asked to leave their communities and wary of CHA's past broken promises.

Concludes that "deconcentration achieved through mixed-income and dispersal strategies may create serious risks for many vulnerable families while offering benefits only for the least troubled households." (p. 933) Why? (1) they may not survive screening or private market; (2) unclear that they experience economic benefits (3) not clear that you can get middle-income families to mixed-income developments (4) opening up public housing to higher-income tenants limits the supply (it's easier/more profitable for housing authorities to serve the higher-income cohort)

powell, john a., and Marguerite L. Spenser. "Giving Them the Old "One-Two": Gentrification and the K.O. Of Impoverished Urban Dwellers of Color." *Howard Law Journal* 46.3 (2003): 433-90.

Distinguishes economic revitalization from gentrification: Revitalization allows residents to remain in neighborhoods and participate in its increasing fortunes. Gentrification, on the other hand, often leaves low-income residents to find their own affordable housing, which has often been severely constricted in the region. Gentrification therefore works together with concentrating poverty because displaced people are pushed further from opportunities (even ones on the rise in gentrifying areas). Therefore argues for gentrification monitoring similar to an environmental impact statement, an "assessment of the racial, economic, spatial and temporal status of the area to be impacted" (p. 482); push for fair housing act; homeownership programs; rent control; and other federal strategies.

Quercia, Roberto, and George Galster. "Threshold Effects and Neighborhood Change." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 20.2 (2000): 146-62.

Literature review on threshold effects intending to answer "Is there sufficient evidence to adopt thresholds as a working hypothesis in the development of theories of neighborhood dynamics and effective neighborhood revitalization efforts?" Finds evidence of threshold effects in neighborhood racial group composition, income group composition, social and economic conditions, and housing investment.

Identifies six distinct mechanisms through which neighborhood thresholds may be produced: (1) collective socialization; (2) collective efficacy; (3) gaming; (4) preference; (5) corner solution; (6) contagion models [mechanisms not mutually exclusive].

Collective socialization: (from classical sociology) -- a sufficiently powerful social group can influence others to conform to its customs, norms, and behaviors

Corner solution: from utility maximization models in neo-classical economics -- people make incremental changes until at some point, the incremental change no longer works and have to make “discontinuous” move; a different strategy.

Collective efficacy: capacity for collective action to monitor and supervise youths and protect the public order

Gaming: costs and benefits are uncertain, depending on number of other actors choosing alternatives; individual’s expected payoff of an alternative is based on the number or proportion of others who must make a decision before the given actor does.

Preference: actors in a residential environment will respond if the aggregate behavior of others raises an undesirable neighborhood attribute above the level they find tolerable

Contagion models: social behaviors are thought to be contagious, spread through peer influence; dependent upon residents’ risks of developing social problems and their susceptibility to peer influence

Implications of literature review: “But perhaps the overarching implication of our review relates to the spatial targeting of neighborhood initiatives. If thresholds were indeed a significant feature of neighborhood dynamics, then programmatic resources will not achieve the maximum positive social impacts if they are widely scattered across neighborhoods; rather, they must be targeted strategically.” (157)

“When it comes to neighborhood racial dynamics, the literature is definitive that, though threshold effects abound, there is no single, generalizable value for the tipping point; it all depends on the particular neighborhood and metropolitan-wide contexts.” (157)

Rubinowitz, Leonard S., and James E. Rosenbaum. *Crossing the Class and Color Lines: From Public Housing to White Suburbia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Gautreaux Assisted Housing Program starts w/ Supreme Ct. decision in 1976, ended in 1998. Specified that at least 75% of the families had to relocate to the suburbs

Ch. 6 “Safety First” -- #1 reason people moved from the city to the suburbs: crime/fear of crime/gangs/victimization. “These families left city environments where their lives and safety were threatened daily and moved to suburbs where gangs, muggings and gunfire were very rare. The dangers that suburban movers reported were less life-threatening and less common than the ones experienced in the city.” (p. 101)

Ch. 7 “Social Interactions” -- Social interaction in the suburbs: “Both Gautreaux participants and their new neighbors were able to interact normally and form friendships...most suburban movers received enough acceptance from their new communities to feel socially integrated.” (p. 126)

Ch. 8 “Schooling” -- “The suburban and city movers had very similar rates of behavior problems, similar grades, and similar class ranks. However, in this case, statistical insignificance may be substantively significant. Suburban movers entered schools with higher academic standards, higher behavior standards, and higher achievement standards. The fact that their relative standing was similar to that of the city movers is likely to reflect a higher level of performance.” (p. 160)

Ch. 9 “Education and Employment Outcomes” -- “The permanent disadvantage hypothesis suggests that suburban movers will do worse than city movers in school and in jobs...Despite these expected barriers, suburban Gautreaux youths’ academic and employment achievements were at least as good as their city counterparts, and often better.” (p. 170-171)

“Compared with city movers, suburban movers were more likely to be (1) in high school, (2) in a college track, (3) in a four-year college, (4) in a job, (5) in a job with benefits and (6) not outside of the education and employment systems.” (p. 171)

Bottom line: although not for everyone, and not everyone could be served, and although competes with other initiatives (i.e. central city revitalization), the Gautreaux program's results "supported the basic premise of the concept of 'geography of opportunity' -- people who move to better areas can improve their opportunities and attainments." (p. 189) "The studies... indicate that many of the benefits are intergenerational. "The early experiences of those children did not prevent them from benefiting from suburban moves in ways that may improve not only their own life chances but those of their children and future generations." (p. 189)

Sampson, Robert J., Jeffrey D. Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley. "Assessing "Neighborhood Effects": Social Processes and New Directions in Research." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 443-78.

This lit review concentrates on the neighborhood effects literature following Jencks & Mayer's critique (1989, 1990) that the literature was not looking at the dynamic social processes or mechanisms (such as collective socialization or institutional capacity) that shape well-being. Therefore, it concentrates on the explosion of work after 1990 that looks at "social capital."

Comes to the following set of conclusions:

- concentrated disadvantage is connected to the geographic isolation of African Americans;
- social problems come bundled together at the neighborhood level;
- these bundled problems are related to the concentrated disadvantage of isolated African Americans;
- place stratification is robust and emerges at multiple scales (so changing the units of analysis doesn't change much);
- the ecological concentration of poverty and the concentration of affluence appears to have increased significantly during recent decades

Summarizes results:

- Advances in research design and measurement;
- Disparate but converting measures of neighborhood mechanisms: (a) Social Ties / Interaction (b) Norms and Collective Efficacy (c) Institutional resources (d) routine activities;
- strongest evidence links neighborhood processes to crime;
- activation of social ties to achieve shared expectations for action may be critical;
- Concentrated poverty, disorder, and low neighborhood cohesion are linked to greater mental distress;
- concentrated poverty and structural characteristics still matter. Some social processes emerge mainly in environments with enough resources and residential stability [cites Sampson 1999];
- disorder -- mechanism or outcome?

Methodological challenges

- differential selection of individuals into communities;
- indirect pathways of effect;
- measurement error;
- simultaneity bias (what is causing what?)
- neighborhoods are much more heterogeneous internally and less monolithic than assumed

New directions:

- new approach to defining neighborhoods;
- collecting observational data;
- include trends in surrounding areas;
- how do neighborhood processes evolve over time and how do they interact with alleged outcomes;
- need to collect benchmark data to compare across communities

Smith, Robin E. Housing Choice for Hope VI Relocates -- Final Report: The Urban Institute Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2002.

From Ch. 6: The Relocation Experience

“While moving is a life changing experience for all relocatees, respondents who moved farther away from their developments were more likely to discuss increased opportunity as a by-product of their move. Some respondents who moved to new neighborhoods said improved job and school situations were a result of their new locations. These comments support the view that neighborhood choice can positively influence economic and educational opportunities for families using housing assistance. [P] However, few respondents targeted a new neighborhood to take advantage of increased opportunities. Neighborhood decisions were directly tied to the availability of housing and time constraints. Most respondents were more concerned about finding an available and acceptable unit in a place that met minimum community standards than in moving to a specific new neighborhood targeted for increased opportunity and amenities. This finding suggests that while more information about neighborhoods and increased search assistance are necessary, these additions may not dramatically alter housing choice decisions if housing is not available.” (p. 51)

Turner, Margery Austin, and Dolores Acevedo-Garcia. “Why Housing Mobility? The Research Evidence Today.” *PRRAC Newsletter* 2005.

Summary of neighborhood effects on people’s lives (6 causal mechanisms): (1) Local service quality (public and private services: schools, grocery stores, child care, after-school activities, parks); (2) Shared norms and social control; (3) Peer influences; (4) Social networks; (5) Crime and violence; (6) Job access

A Note of Caution: “individual and family characteristics interact with neighborhood environment and play a hugely important role in shaping outcomes” & the correlation between neighborhoods and characteristics “...does not necessarily mean that the neighborhood environment actually caused the problem” (p. 13) [i.e. you can’t prove causality] so studies should control for individual characteristics

How Does It All Add Up? “Rigorous social science research convincingly shows us that living in a severely distressed neighborhood undermines the health and well-being of both adults and children, and that moving to low-poverty areas is both feasible and beneficial.” (p. 16). Limitations: Not every family can use programs; not everyone who moves will necessarily benefit; impact on education depends on whether or not children change schools; employment and earnings effects may be indirect and take longer. Should be linking mobility programs to other forms of assistance

Turner, Margery Austin, et al. Discrimination in Metropolitan Housing Markets: National Results from Phase I HDS 2000: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2002.

HDS2000 finds that discrimination still persists in both rental and sales markets of large metropolitan areas nationwide, but that its incidence has generally declined since 1989. (p. iii). African Americans still face discrimination when they search for rental housing in metropolitan markets nationwide.(p. iii)

Wacquant, Loic J.D. “Three Pernicious Premises in the Study of the American Ghetto.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 21.341-353 (1997).

Critiques three assumptions/practices in studying racial segregation and urban poverty:

- dilution of ghetto to mean any urban area of widespread and intense poverty, which “obfuscates the racial basis and character of this poverty and divests the term of both historical meaning and sociological content” (341);
- ghetto’s social organization is understood through terms of lack and deficiency;
- tendency to exoticize the ghetto (highlight the most extreme behaviors)

Wacquant's correctives:

- “a ghetto is not simply a topographic entity or an aggregation of poor families and individuals but an institutional form, a historically determinate, spatially-based concatenation of mechanisms of ethnoracial closure and control (Wacquant, 1991)” (P. 343; italics in original). “Put differently, the ghetto combines and inscribes all four major ‘elementary forms’ of racial domination, namely, categorization, discrimination, segregation and exclusionary violence” (p. 343)
- “ground-level scrutiny reveals that, far from being disorganized, the ghetto is organized according to different principles, in response to a unique set of structural and strategic constraints that bear on the racialized enclaves of the city as on no other segment of America’s territory (Wacquant, 1994a). These constraints include (1) the unrelenting press of economic necessity and widespread material deprivation.(2) pervasive physical and social insecurity.(3) virulent racial antipathy conjoined with acute class prejudice.(4) symbolic taint and territorial stigmatization reinforced by (5) bureaucratic apathy and administrative ineptness.” (346-347)
- “Analysts of the nexus of race and poverty have thus devoted an inordinate amount of attention to the assumed ‘pathologies’ of ghetto residents.[P] One could show that many (if not most) of these categories function as thinly disguised instruments of indictment of the putatively abnormal conduct of ghetto dwellers” (348). & “even in the most extreme of circumstances, social life is patterned, regular, and endowed with a logic and meaning amenable to analytical elucidation.” (349)

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