ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLICATIONS
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BOOKS


This book is divided into four main sections: 1) "Access Issues and Points of Entry" explores commonalities and differences in individual, group-based, and community level recruitment strategies for individuals and groups from minority communities; 2) "Design/Implementation: Models and Measurement Issues" focuses on the usefulness of existing models of health behavior, research and the adequacy of current methods of assessment and measurement; 3) "Reconciling the Multiple Scientific and Community Needs" provides a perspective on the issues involved in the dynamic tension between community and scientific needs; and 4) "Support of Minority Training and Career Development in the Biomedical and Biobehavioral Sciences by the National Institutes of Health." These sections parallel the organization of the workshop presentations, with the first three sections including paper presentations and panel discussants, while the final section highlights NHLBI's commitment to funding minority research and training programs. In keeping with the objectives of the workshop, the three substantive sections focus on issues of access, models, and measurement in health behavior research, and ethical and practical issues in reconciling scientific and ethnic minority community needs. In order to fulfill the objectives of consensus building and broad scientific dissemination, the first two sections each include four separate Task Group reports, designed to incorporate the main points of the presentations and the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop participants.


This book highlights two factors that shape African American politics: racial interests and class interests. Dawson describes how the historical legacy of racial and economic oppression forged the social identity of African Americans. Dawson argues that African American politics and political behavior are different. Primarily using data from the 1984-88 NBES panel study, Dawson develops a framework for analyzing African Americans’ group interests to aid in predicting which social identities are politically salient and to predict the conditions under which one would be likely to see increasing African American political diversity. Part I presents basic theoretical and historical arguments. Part II turns to the empirical tests of the relative power of racial group interests and social status in predicting African American political behavior across a number of political domains. The major questions addressed in this book are why African Americans have remained politically homogeneous for so long in the face of increasing economic polarization, and whether we can expect more political diversity in black political behavior in the near future. The book concludes with a summary of the main findings and speculation on the future of African Americans politics and the politics of race and class.


This book examines the nature of black political independence and attachment to the major political parties using historical data and the 1984 NBES. The findings indicate a long history of solidarity and struggle within black America to play a meaningful role in electoral politics. The Jesse Jackson campaign, the 1984 elections, and the sentiments, attitudes and values of black Americans are viewed against the continuing dilemma of blacks' desire for full participation and the social, economic and political barriers that serve to thwart their legitimate objectives. The strong positive response of blacks to Jesse Jackson and their continuing support of the Democratic Party are analyzed in relationship to these historical trends and the lack of real political alternatives for an economically and politically disadvantaged electorate.

This book presents significant and timely data on eight topical areas as well as thought-provoking recommendations for eliminating racial disparities and promoting greater awareness of the complexities arising from America's new diversity. Beginning with a review of current demographic data and an analysis of public attitudes on race and other policy issues, the study addresses income and wealth, education, health, family structure, politics, and criminal justice. It finds that the increasing diversity within the African American population indicates both progress and continuing challenges in each area. The study discusses the potential of several models of intergroup collaboration and the pitfalls of competition as all sectors of society seek to obtain the benefits of America's growing prosperity. The present study delineates America's progress in the final decades of the 20th century. It challenges all citizens, as the 21st century begins amid unparalleled economic, demographic, and social changes, to complete the unfinished business of providing equal opportunity for every American.


This book describes and discusses findings from the NSBA and uses resource dependency along with coping and adaptation frameworks to examine the social, psychological, and structural status of African Americans and how these dimensions relate to the quality of neighborhood life, family life, family and friend relationships, religious involvement, work and retirement, physical and mental health outcomes, racial group identity, and political action. Since the data upon which these analyses are based are nationally representative of all adult black Americans, generalizations are possible to the entire black population in the United States. The main purpose of the book is to provide an empirical counterpoint to the numerous myths about the nature of the social and psychological realities of black life in this country. It is a unique book since, to our knowledge, it is the first that uses such data in a conceptually coherent and comprehensive manner to empirically explore such a wide swath of life circumstances of Americans of African decent.


This book presents current knowledge on the black aging process and explores where future research efforts should be directed. It consists of a collection of papers presented during a workshop, "Research on Aging Black Populations," held at the National Institutes of Health, September 25 and 26, 1986. The National Institute on Aging, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the Department of Health and Human Services' Minority Health Office served as co-sponsors. Contributors to this publication presented critical reviews and empirical research findings on the cultural, behavioral, economic, social, and biomedical aging processes among older blacks. Each of the 16 substantive chapters examines an important facet of aging among older black adults, showing the myriad ways in which blacks are both similar to, and unique from, their elderly counterparts in other racial and ethnic groups.


*Aging in Black America* empirically examines the status and life situations of elderly blacks in the United States. It builds upon the first volume in the series, *Life in Black America* (Jackson, 1991), and addresses the special circumstances and strengths of the black American elderly. Although much has been written about the current functioning and status of the black elderly, much of this writing has been speculative, impressionistic and, if empirical, based upon small and restricted samples of black Americans. The data for the individual chapters presented in this volume are from the NSBA. The book is divided into five sections, which reflect major substantive issues related to psychological and social dimensions of aging among black Americans. While many of these categories would undoubtedly be included in the study of aging in any population group, some of the chapters within these headings are specific to the life situation and circumstances of black Americans. Section 1 contains five chapters focusing on an examination of community, friend, and family resources. Section 2 (2 chapters) focuses on the nature and role of the church and religion in the lives of older blacks. Section 3 (three chapters) addresses the role of physical and emotional resources in the psychological and social lives of the black elderly. Section 4 (three chapters) turns to an examination of political participation and group identification. Section 5 (two chapters) focuses on the role and function of work and retirement. The final chapter summarizes the substantive chapters that have gone before within a life-course and cohort framework. The chapter ends with an assessment of directions for future research that may contribute to a better understanding of the social gerontology of the black American elderly.


The scientific study of race and inter-group relationships has been of enduring concern in Social Psychology. Ongoing research on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Western Europe and the United States provides a useful entree for expanding the empirical research (in different social, economic, and cultural contexts) and, hopefully, the conceptualizations of the nature of the problem. The first set of articles provides a summary of some of the current theoretical perspectives on racism and contains examples of research in the United States and Europe. The second set of articles addresses the response of oppressed outgroups to their unequal and differential treatment. These articles have as a common thread research on the inculcation of dominant group images on the race and self identity of subordinate group members.


Mental Health in Black America is the third in a series of empirical volumes based on the National Survey of Black Americans conducted in the early 1980's. This volume extends the prior work, researching mental health, coping and help seeking behavior. The focus is on important issues relevant to the social psychiatric epidemiology of African Americans before the Epidemiologic Catchment Area (ECA) study was conducted -- the social and psychological correlates of coping with serious personal problems, the distribution of psychological distress, and help seeking, including the use of specialty mental health care, general medical care and informal social support networks. The central question is whether there are group and individual differences in how stress and problems are conceptualized and, if so, how these differences influence help seeking behavior. Each chapter provides a concise but comprehensive overview of an important mental health issue facing African Americans. Such topics as gender differences, family support, marriage, alcohol abuse, hypertension, and stress denial are covered. Each chapter also includes multivariate analysis of the topic using data from the National Survey of Black Americans. The final chapter provides a summary of selected topics addressed in the individual chapters along with updates on these issues through the analysis of follow-up panel data collected on the original National Survey of Black Americans respondents over a thirteen year period.


Tate analyzes the voting behavior of Blacks in the 1984 and 1988 presidential elections using data from the NBES. The book integrates unique aspects of the Black experience as they shape and affect Black political behavior, showing that Black voting behavior is influenced by the political context. Jesse Jackson, the nation's first non-token Black presidential contender, significantly affected voting patterns among Blacks in 1984 and 1988. With no Black presidential contender in 1992, Black political behavior was quite different. The book also shows that political context encompasses more than the epiphenomena of the 1984 and 1988 elections. In the 1990's, Tate suggests, black organizations will continue to stress civil rights over economic development. In this, and in the friction
engendered by affirmative action, Tate advances an explanation for the slackening of black voting. Tate does not, however, see blacks abandoning the political game. Instead, she predicts their continued search for leaders who prefer the ballot to other kinds of protest, and for men and women who can deliver political programs of racial equality.


In 1984, the data collection for the NBES was undertaken, in the form of telephone interviews taken both before and after the Presidential election. This volume summarizes the data from the NBES survey and is designed to permit direct access to the study's basic findings for researchers, academicians, policy analysts, and students. A tabular format is used to allow analysts greater freedom in shaping their own conclusions. The sourcebook contains univariate and bivariate statistics that display the basic characteristics of the black electorate in 1984. In addition, both the pre-election and post-election questionnaires are included as appendices.


Over the past 20 yrs, African American families have undergone tremendous changes, both demographically and socially. During this time, most of the studies of Black families have focused on problems, such as out-of-wedlock births, single-parent families, and childhood poverty. This "problem" focus tends to offer a narrow, negative view and restricts the consideration of other important issues affecting families. This book moves away from that deficit perspective. It offers a wide range of issues, including maturation, mate selection, sexuality, procreation, infancy, adolescence, gender issues, young adulthood, cohabitation, parenting, grandparenting, and aging. Each article is grounded in empirical data, based on, but not limited to, the National Survey of Black Americans (1979-1980). The book is intended for professionals and students in ethnic and family studies, social work, psychology, research methods, and gerontology.


A workable vision of scientific practice has proven to be an elusive goal for professional psychology. Though outcome evaluation and the direct application of scientific findings are two notable examples of science’s influence, there remain great benefits to be had from the extension of specific scientific forms of thought directly into clinical practice. Unfortunately, despite organized psychology’s long-standing commitment to science, scientific methods are usually described in ways that discourage practitioners from incorporating them into their repertoire. To remedy the situation, the authors have written The Scientific Practice of Professional Psychology; a primer on the application of scientific logic to professional psychological practice. Their work introduces a major conceptual innovation: the local clinical scientific model. By demonstrating how scientific reliance on aggregate data can be
reconciled with the unique and immediate demands of the clinic, this model brings the ideal of the scientist-practitioner with reach. This book will be of interest to clinicians, researcher and students in clinical psychology, psychotherapy, counseling psychology, psychiatry, and philosophy of science, and social work.
AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES


This is the fourth volume of the Program for Research on Black Americans’ occasional report series. Articles include “Sex Role Identity and Depressive Symptoms Among African American Men by Diane R. Brown, Marital Strain and Depressive Symptoms Among African Americans by Verna M. Keith and Romney S. Norwood, Mate Availability and Marriage Among African Americans by K. Jill Kiecolt and Mark A. Fossett, Underemployment and Household Livelihood Strategies Among African Americans by Gloria Jones Johnson, Black American Adolescent Sexual Activity Pattern: Abstainers, Mothers and Those in Between by Velma McBride Murray, The Structure and


Perspectives is an occasional report comprised of reviews and summaries of work conducted by social and behavioral scholars involved in a broad range of research interests concerning the African American population. Articles published in this volume include "Black Intergroup Attitudes" by Michael C. Thornton, "Social Service Functions of the Contemporary Black Church" by Cleopatra Howard Caldwell, "Religion and Health" by Jeffrey S. Levin, "Immunization Coverage Among African-American Children" by Valire C. Copeland, "Race Differences in Adolescent Fathers" by Kenneth Christmon, "African-American Adolescent Fathers" by Kenneth Christmon, "The Multi-City Survey of Urban Equality" by Melvin L. Oliver, James H. Johnson and Lawrence Bobo.

Replicated prior evidence by Y. J. Lee et al (1993) that the respiratory stimulant doxapram (DOX) induces panic attacks and produces excessive hyperventilation in patients with panic disorder. 16 patients and 16 controls (aged 19-39 yrs) received DOX and placebo infusions while symptom, respiratory, and heart rate responses were monitored. DOX was a potent and specific panicogenic agent, inducing panic in 75% of patients and 12.5% of controls. Compared with controls, patients also showed a greater decrease in end tidal carbon dioxide (CO2) and greater increases in minute ventilation, respiratory frequency, and heart rate. The cognitive intervention attenuated the excessive hyperventilatory response of patients but did not fully normalize their breathing patterns. Psychological factors can modulate the appearance of ventilatory abnormalities in panic patients, but persistent respiratory disturbances were still seen.


Examined adrenocorticotrophic hormone and cortisol (COR) responses to doxapram (DX) to test the prediction that panic attacks provoked through a primarily respiratory mechanism should not activate the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis. Behavioral and ventilatory responses to DX were significantly modified by a psychological intervention designed to cognitively block panic. Epinephrine (EPI), norepinephrine (NE), growth hormone (GH), ACTH, and COR were studied in 16 patients with panic disorder and 16 controls (aged 19-39 yrs) given placebo and DX injections after receiving either standard instructions or a brief cognitive intervention. Ss with panic had elevated levels of EPI, ACTH, and COR. DX had little or no detectable effects on plasma NE, GH, ACTH, and COR. DX-induced panic attacks were not associated with elevations in NE, GH, ACTH, or COR.


Examined panel data from the National Survey of Black Americans with regard to the predictors of African American quality of life between 1980 and 1992. Ss consisted of 623 African Americans who lived in noninstitutionalized housing in the continental US. Objective measures (such as health, education, and income) indicate that the situation for African Americans has either stagnated or declined during this period. Regression analyses found: (a) measures of general life satisfaction, happiness, and family satisfaction to be interrelated across time; (b) global well-being measures of general life satisfaction and happiness to be the strongest predictors of each other; and (c) variation in general life satisfaction to be consistently accounted for by domain well-being measures of family satisfaction and health satisfaction. Implications for further research are discussed.


This study examines panel data from the National Survey of Black Americans with regard to the quality of life of African Americans between 1980 and 1992. Objective measures from current populations reports and census data (such as health, education, and income) indicate that the situation for African Americans has either stagnated or declined during this period. The present analyses show that African Americans’ report of general life satisfaction increased and there was a decline in happiness. There was no response bias that could account for the observed changes in well-being. Contrasts are drawn between those results and the existing well-being literature. Implications for further research are discussed.


This study examined age differences between 1979-80 and 1992 in the quality of life of African Americans using panel data from the National Survey of Black Americans. Of particular interest was the role of the hope dimension of personal efficacy in accounting for variance in general well-being, beyond that contributed by social demographic and economic indicators. Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that hope and family satisfaction in 1980 consistently accounted for significant amounts of variance in general life satisfaction in the 1992 fourth wave of data among all three cohorts. For older respondents increased frequency of contact with friends and family help were the
most important contributors to high satisfaction. Across waves in all age cohorts family satisfaction and contact with friends were most important in contributing to life satisfaction. Implications for further research on well-being among African Americans were discussed.


This project examines the relationship between hope, happiness, perceptions of how well respondents were able to care for their family and how they have done as parents among unmarried fathers who participated in the panel study of the National Survey of Black Americans 1980 – 1992. MANOVA analyses indicated that there were declines in mean levels of happiness, how well they provided for their families, and how they have done as parents. However, there was a significant increase in the level of hope among the African American single fathers. Hierarchical regression results indicate that hope was able to account for variance in happiness after perceptions of family provider and parenting were removed.


This article explores the role definitions that older women choose for themselves and the sociodemographic factors and activities that differentiate women who choose different labels. Of 864 black and white women from the 1986 ACL Survey, 197 defined themselves as both retired and homemaker; 363 called themselves homemakers only and 304 retired only. Marital status, having a retired spouse, hours of housework, education, and having been employed after age 51 significantly differentiated the groups. Retired/homemakers were similar to homemakers on the first three factors and similar to the retired on the remaining two. The forced classification of these in-between women into only one role may explain contradictory results in past comparisons of retired women and homemakers.


Changes in defense mechanisms after treatment of patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) were measured by using an established rating scale. Before and after 7-wk group behavior therapy, 17 patients (average age 35 yrs) with OCD were assessed with the Defense Style Questionnaire, Yale-Brown Obsessive Compulsive Scale, and Beck Depression Inventory. After behavior therapy the patients evidenced significant decreases in Yale-Brown Obsessive Compulsive Scale scores and significant increases in the use of more adaptive defense mechanisms. There were no significant changes in 3 maladaptive defense mechanism categories. The improvement in adaptive defenses was independently linked to improvement both in OCD and in depression. Personality as defined by defense mechanisms may be more amenable to brief behavioral treatment than previously thought.


Using the NSBA, a schema-based approach to belief systems is used to model an African American racial belief system. Cognitive schemata are shown to be useful in modeling, interpreting, and understanding African American group consciousness. As predicted, the content of the racial belief system is shown to be associated with the individual's degree of religiosity, socioeconomic status and exposure to black media. Respondents with a higher socioeconomic status were less supportive of black political autonomy and were more likely to feel more distant from both the black masses and the black elites than lesser status individuals. Religiosity, while not having a relationship with black autonomy, is shown to strengthen closeness to the black masses and closeness to the black elites. Black television, and to a much lesser degree, black print media had a consistent impact on this racial belief system. The complexity of the African American racial belief system and potential directions for future work are discussed.


This study investigates some key theoretical propositions derived from a synthesis of two related areas of research: the construction of social reality and cultivation analysis. A total of eight hypotheses were generated from the following propositions: (1) three broad construct categories (objective, symbolic, and subjective) constitute, to a
major degree, the construction of social reality; (2) indicators of subjective reality can be placed usefully on a close-remote continuum based on their distance from the everyday life experiences of the individual; and (3) the accumulation of television exposure has a dominant influence on the shaping of beliefs and interpretations of the world, the direction of the influence being contingent on the "bias" of the specific content consumed. The NSBA was used to test the hypotheses. Path analysis provided some support for the hypotheses.


Explores how race, ethnicity, and skin color influence life chances, using data from the 1980 National Survey of Black Americans (N = 2,107) and the 1979 National Chicano Survey (N = 991). Focus is on how education and personal income correlate with skin color, and whether the effects of skin color on economic status are consistent across race. Results reveal the following: (1) Models predict similarly for African Americans and for Mexican Americans; prediction is better for males. (2) African American education is highest for lighter-skinned, married males in urban areas outside the South, with strong race consciousness and highly educated mothers. (3) Mexican American education is highest with strong ethnic consciousness, high self-worth, low locus of control, and highly educated mothers. (4) African American income is higher for lighter-skinned, older, married, better educated mothers. (5) Mexican American income is highest for lighter-skinned, older, better educated, married males in the Southwest. (6) Ethnic identification is stronger with higher income across race. It is concluded that despite improved US race relations, skin color discrimination continues to limit the opportunities & achievements for some African Americans and Mexican Americans.


While racial stereotypes have long been appreciated for the integral role they play in the quality of interracial relations in the United States, much of the research in this area has all but ignored the part stereotypes play in explaining intragroup attitudes, especially among African Americans. This study examines the relationship between various social structural factors and black media on holding of both negative and positive stereotypes. Using the NSBA, 20 hypotheses were developed and evaluated for estimating the unknown coefficients in a set of linear structural equations (LISREL). We found that income, education, occupational status, religiosity, and place of socialization were important factors influencing the probability of holding positive and/or negative stereotypes. Exposure to the black print media mitigated against the holding of negative stereotypes, while both negative and positive stereotypes were encouraged by exposure to black television programming.


In the debate about the effects and causes of economic gains of the past few decades, some researchers argue that differing levels of socioeconomic success have led to an increasingly divergent set of world views among African Americans. In measuring these purported cleavages, research has highlighted objective measures of class position (e.g., income and education). There are few efforts to assess subjective elements of these developments. In this study, the differences in the factorial structure and mean differences of an African American racial belief system across income and education were assessed. Using the NSBA and employing structural equation modeling techniques, our findings supported the hypothesis that there is factorial invariance across educational and income categories for our African American racial belief system. On the other hand, there were mean differences across education for three of the five racial belief constructs, and mean differences across income for two of these constructs. Among African Americans, racial group membership appears to be a key organizing paradigm, even when class differences are controlled.


Ethnic minority populations show patterns of health, health care use, and mortality that differ from the overall U.S. population. Each of the broad groups of minorities (Asian, Hispanic, Native, and African Americans) has a unique background of sociocultural factors that influence these patterns. Thus, the larger social environment for ethnic populations, including political, environmental, historical, and economic factors, is a major variable in possible health outcomes. The individual sections in this panel report seek to identify such factors for each ethnic group and to suggest those Macrosocial influences that are most important for observed health effects.

This paper provides a review of the literature on hypertension in blacks, focusing on the dimensions of the disorder that might contribute to the excessive rates experienced by blacks. Four dimensions are addressed: biological factors, nutritional factors, psychological and behavioral factors, and social factors. Current knowledge within each area is reviewed, with emphasis on black-white differences and issues in need of clarification. Additionally, emerging research paradigms such as stress reactivity and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring are highlighted as attempts to integrate the various dimensions of hypertension in order to better understand this health problem facing blacks.


This cross national study examines the perception of reciprocity in support relationships and the degree to which reciprocity predicts life satisfaction. Comparisons of white and black American elderly from Southwestern France indicate possible cultural differences. Generally, reciprocal relationships are most positively related to life satisfaction when compared to both receiving more or receiving less support.


This paper examines the relationship of physical health and self-esteem using the NSBA. It is hypothesized that low self-esteem could play an important predisposing role in health problems, although the exact nature of these effects is unknown and severe confounding may exist due to reciprocal causation. A brief review of the literature indicates some support for a link between low self-esteem and poor health. The analyses on these national data are viewed as exploratory, an attempt to ascertain whether any link exists between self-esteem and three indices of reported health functioning (health problems, type of health problems and ill health). Sociodemographic controls include education, employment status, family income, age, race, marital status, and sex. The Multiple Classification Analyses reveal that all three measures are significantly and negatively related to self-esteem, although these effects are stronger in women than men. Difficulties of interpretation and clinical implications of the findings are discussed.


This article draws on data gathered in a multi-stage probability sample of 630 Black churches in two Northern regions of the United States to describe patterns of family-oriented community outreach programs. These findings are interpreted within the framework of the concepts privatistic and communal functions historically undertaken by Black churches, as formulated by C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya. Three sets of social factors are identified which predispose a local congregation toward active involvement in the community: The existence of a community crisis; the existence of a strong Black church; and the leadership of a strong Black minister.


This article focuses on the church as a social institution and examines how it interacts with and influences two other important social institutions in society -- the family and the school. This study uses a holistic perspective, recognizing that all three aggregations operate within the domain of the larger society as socializing agents and are shaped by their own historical foundations. This article discusses the church's role in assessing families in need and in supporting educational institutions. The data are based on an ongoing, nationwide, multi-year study of the family-oriented community outreach programs that Black churches sponsor to assist those in need. Preliminary finds are from a representative sample of 315 Black churches in the northeastern region of the country.

This study investigates provider role strain and adaptive cultural resources as predictors of global family satisfaction in black husbands/fathers in the NSBA (N=372). Multiple classification analysis reveals that provider role strain predictors have a significant negative effect on family satisfaction, with the harmful effect of objective difficulty being exacerbated by subjective reactions. In line with a role strain adaptation model, cultural resources have offsetting positive effects, with kinship bonds and religious belief emerging as especially powerful predictors. In support of a buffering hypothesis, kinship bond eliminates harmful effects of both husband and father role discouragement. However, kinship bond fails to mitigate the harmful effect of objective employment difficulty. Findings not only provide important insight into the social psychology of role strain and adaptation, but also have relevance for clinical practice and public policy.


This paper builds on the theory of learned helplessness and related literature to advance a discouragement-centered approach to the problem of unemployment among black youth. Although staggering, official statistics understate the problem of joblessness among young black adults in several ways. Official unemployment figures fail to include discouraged workers who have stopped looking for work because they believe no job is available, other potential workers who are not looking but would take a job if offered, and those who are involuntarily working part time and want a job with more hours. The majority of black youth perceive their discouragement as being caused primarily by labor-market barriers which is consistent with earlier research on black adults. Moreover, the findings reflect the fact that discouragement and related labor-market attributions reflect the reality of low job availability for black youth. In line with learned-helplessness theory, however, discouraged job-seekers are also found to be more likely than their nondiscouraged counterparts to blame lack of ability for their failure to get good jobs. The findings in this study go beyond the focus in the learned-helplessness literature on ability attributions and reveal that discouragement among job-seekers involves a complex of other attributional themes, including effort, racial bias, and age.


This brief article examines the role of job search discouragement in the mental health status of black Americans. Data from the NSBA indicates that among black Americans who are out of work, the problem of job search discouragement is even more severe than official unemployment.


In the past twenty years researchers have used several strategies to reduce resistance and promote the involvement and interest of minority groups in survey research. This article analyzes these strategies in relation to the principles of functional relevance and significant involvement. The incorporation of these principles is highlighted in the NSBA and TGFS.


This article reviews the 2nd edition of Reginald L. Jones' textbook, *Black Psychology*. The reviewer discusses the content of the new edition and compares it with that of the earlier one. Additionally, he notes both the strong points in Jones' new edition and those aspects that are particularly weak. Finally, the book is discussed in light of its role in defining the emerging discipline of black psychology. Jones' 2nd edition is more up-to-date in its treatment of educational, counseling and assessment issues, and issues related to the delivery of psychological services in black communities. Yet the 2nd edition has a few flaws, especially a serious need for more social psychological theorizing and research in areas such as motivation, family life, and economic effectiveness.


The dual labor market approach to black-on-black homicide focuses on the employment-related experiences of black males as the root cause of their high rate of homicide. The approach also aims to clarify the role of key social stresses, the social support system, and related alcohol, drug abuse, and mental health factors. Five propositions
regarding the research and intervention needs in this area are presented. These include the role of direct and indirect effects of the dual labor market, the direct role of alcohol and drugs, the role of law enforcement activities, and the role of the correctional system.


This study focuses on race-related socialization in order to extend past research which has demonstrated that a sense of personal control over the environment is critical to effective performance of black youth in educational settings. In contrast to underclass views, both a sense of personal efficacy and academic performance are enhanced by proactive orientations toward racial barriers transmitted by parents to children. Sixty-eight percent of black youth in the NSYBA report that their parents transmitted some message to them about their racial status. With only slight gender differences, parents emphasized either the importance of ethnic pride, self-development, racial barrier awareness, or egalitarianism. The inter-generational transmission of self-development orientations is associated with a greater sense of personal efficacy. In contrast, those whose parents emphasized racial barrier awareness received higher school grades, even when controlling for the effect of personal efficacy. The overall pattern of results suggests the manner in which black parents orient their children toward blocked opportunities is a significant element in their motivation, achievement, and prospects for upward mobility.


This article examines the affects of job search discouragement on social and psychological factors among black Americans. Data from the NSBA is used to address three central questions: How is hidden unemployment assessed and measured? How do discouraged workers interpret their economic situation? What is the relationship between job search discouragement and indices of psychological distress? The findings show that a significant proportion of jobless black Americans have become discouraged and have stopped looking for work. Generally, the findings indicate that discouraged, jobless workers are psychologically at risk, even if they are still actively engaged in looking for work. The implications of these findings for education, employment, and social mobility of black Americans are discussed.


This analysis represents the first national look at family and individual use of home remedies by African Americans. The purpose is to examine home remedy usage by African American individuals and their families and assess the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and home remedy usage for African American families and African American individuals. Using logistic regression, a secondary analysis of the National Survey on Black Americans (NSBA) data (N = 2107) was conducted to examine factors associated with home remedy use. Multivariate analysis indicated that parent’s education, importance of religion, living with a grandparent, and living in a rural area were associated with families’ use of home remedies. Age, gender, living with a grandparent, education, and geographic region were associated with individual home remedy use.


This article discusses the role of marital well-being and how it is affected by racial differences. Based on data from ACL (American’s Changing Lives), the findings indicate that blacks are significantly less likely to feel that their marriages are harmonious and are significantly less satisfied with their marriages. Other significant predictors are age (older people reported greater marital harmony), gender (men reported greater marital harmony and parental status), and the number of children at home (the larger the number of children at home the lower the degree of marital well-being). Three factors in understanding race differences were also examined: 1) quality of spousal emotional support; 2) in-home work demands; and 3) financial satisfaction. The significance between gender and marital well-being is also examined.


Data from the 1980 National Survey of Black Americans (N = 2,107 respondents [Rs]) are used to explore how
African Americans make sense of their labor market experience, testing hypotheses derived from Attribution theory. It is found that Rs' attributions about labor market success are not self-serving. The central factor in the type of attributions made is Rs’ level of self-esteem: those with high self-esteem reject both external rationales and talent or effort as reasons for their labor market status. It is concluded that race is a declining factor of significance in labor market outcomes.


Using data from the panel study (National Survey of Personal Health Practices and Consequences), the hypothesis that social relationships are more likely to avoid health-damaging behavior is studied. The results demonstrate that social relationships have an impact, both negative and positive, specific to particular health behaviors. The analysis demonstrated that people having spousal relationships are less likely to smoke, drink, and drink heavily. The employee relationship has limited but generally negative effects; employees are less likely to always wear seatbelts and are more likely to be current smokers and drinkers. Organizational membership, relationships with friends, and the loss of or a change in social relationships are also examined.


This paper explores the relationship of family and work roles to the psychological well-being of blacks. A theory of sex-specific social roles is developed and tested. Findings indicate more general measures of psychological well-being, life satisfaction and happiness are not affected by sex-specific social roles. Rather, marriage and parenting have a general affect on these well-being measures while sex-specific work-family roles have an important impact on satisfaction with family life. Among men, familial status and employment status produce different levels of satisfaction with family life. Regardless of familial status, employed women have significantly lower levels of family life satisfaction than women who are not employed. Household demands further exacerbate these patterns. Employed men who do most of the household work have particularly low levels of family life satisfaction.


This study looks at how African Americans make sense of their labor market experience. The ideas of attribution theory are examined and used to make predictions about African American responses to labor market experience. Using data from the NSBA, it was found that attributions about labor market success are not self-serving. The central factor in the type of attributions made is the individual’s level of self-esteem. People with high self-esteem reject both external rationales and talent or effort as reasons for their labor market status. The results indicate that, in the view of African Americans, race is a declining factor of significance in labor market outcomes.


This paper argues that the study of race differences in psychological distress may benefit from a consideration of differential exposure and responsiveness to stress. Previous literature has argued that blacks are more exposed to stress than whites, but there have been few attempts to examine the role of responsiveness to stress. Using two national datasets, this research finds that though whites are less exposed to stress than blacks, they are more responsive to stress. A mean decomposition shows that blacks would have much higher distress levels if they were as responsive to stress as whites. Directions for future research are discussed.


This paper considers the role of social mobility in hypertension among blacks, using NSBA data. No effects of intergenerational socioeconomic mobility were found and only minimal effects for geographic mobility, with those who moved more likely to experience hypertension. The implications for a theory of mobility effects on black health are discussed.

This study examines the relationship of family life satisfaction to the division of household work between married black adults. Some key findings: Women are nearly twice as likely as men to feel overburdened by household work. People who feel overburdened have lower levels of satisfaction with their family life. Interactions are found between family life satisfaction, the division of household work, gender and employment status. Men who perform most of the household chores are less satisfied with their family life, which is also true for employed people who do most of the household work. These findings are discussed in terms of Pleck's theory of the work-family role system.


While the relationship of marital and parental status to satisfaction has been studied extensively, the subjects of most of these studies have been primarily white; little is known about this relationship among blacks. Using data from the NSBA, this research finds that both marital and parental status have an important impact on levels of satisfaction among blacks. Generally, blacks who are divorced or separated have lower levels of satisfaction than those who are married. Important interactions are also found: marital status interacts with age, education, and rural residence to predict life satisfaction; parental status interacts with education; and marital status with social participation, health problems and income. The implications of these findings are discussed, and the need for more research is noted.


Research on professional help-seeking has consistently shown that people seeking help have sociocultural characteristics that differ from those who do not seek help. However, while race has been hypothesized to differentiate utilizers of professional help from non-utilizers, findings from previous studies are inconsistent. Some studies have shown that blacks are more likely to seek professional help, while other studies have shown the opposite. Additionally, previous studies have neglected to address the significance of varying cultural responses to psychological distress and types of problems which might differentially affect professional help-seeking patterns. Using data from two national surveys, findings from this research indicate that blacks were more likely than whites to seek help from mental health professionals, particularly for economic and physical health problems. Blacks seek help more often than whites from other sources of professional help, such as teachers, lawyers, social workers and emergency rooms. On the other hand, whites were more likely to seek help from medical sources for all types of problems, and from clergy members.


The race group constitution of direct socialization environments has been largely ignored in prior empirical studies of black Americans' racial group identity. Some have suggested that concordant racial socialization environments will have salutary effects on the development of racial group identity. The article investigates the effects of reported racial consonance or dissonance with prior and current social environments on level of racial group identity using NSBA data. Results of the analyses indicate that racial group identity is positively related to reports of being raised in concordant race group environments. The implications of these findings for future research and social policy are explored.


This study examines the relationship between anger expression and life stress using the NSBA. Recent research of mostly white subjects has shown that anger-hostility, one of the components of the Type A behavioral pattern, is an important predictor of health problems. Findings in this study indicate that anger-hostility is an important predictor of life stress, and that people with higher levels of age conflict are more likely to experience negative life events. Moreover, negative life events and anger are shown to be independent predictors of health problems among blacks. The implications of these results for future studies of the health of black Americans are discussed.

This paper explores the relationship between socio-demographic factors and racial group identification. Previous research suffers from important limitations which have led to much confusion in this area of research. Using data from the NSBA, the findings of this research indicate that racial group identification is strongest among older blacks and the least-educated blacks who live in urban areas. Additionally, significant interactions between education and region are found: highly educated blacks living outside the West have strong levels of racial group identification.


This paper examines race differences in the choice of social workers as mental health professionals using data from two national probability samples (Americans View their Mental Health and the NSBA). Overall, these results point out that help-seeking from social workers is a minority response. A small percentage of people consult social workers in times of personal distress, and other research has shown that a variety of other sources are consulted in time of distress. The most important finding is that blacks are more likely to consult social workers than whites. This finding holds when other factors are accounted for. The role of socio-demographic factors is minimal, with only age having any affect across race. At low levels of age, differences in the use of social workers by race are not as pronounced. Multivariate analysis also shows that family income is a significant factor for both blacks and whites. Problem type plays no role in race differences in the use of social workers. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications for social work training.


This paper briefly reviews the literature concerning two possible mechanisms, preference/dislike and stereotyping, by which skin tone bias may be expressed. Studies investigating the connection between skin tone bias and two outcomes, resource attainment and psychological and social functioning, were explored. This review reveals several aspects of skin tone bias in need of further empirical research.


Using an historical approach, this paper assesses the role of the American presidency in the pursuit of civil rights policy. The basic argument is that the driving forces in the passage of civil rights policies since Reconstruction have been external pressures on the presidency. Rather than being protagonists in the progression of civil rights, presidents are portrayed as political actors primarily interested in maintaining social order and attracting African-American votes. Rarely have presidents pushed for civil rights progress outside of that context.


Our major argument in this paper is that African American church culture encourages members to engage in political action even when the government is perceived as not being responsible. We maintain that such action is made possible because members are socialized to believe that they have a personal obligation to participate in collective action which will improve the overall spiritual and natural well-being of groups' members. NBES data is used to assess the influence of religious resources on political action. Findings indicate that, while religious guidance is related to church-based political action, membership in a politicalized church has an important causal effect on all forms of political action measured in this study. Membership in a national black organization and being a strong democrat are also associated with political action. The paper concludes by discussing the role of African American churches in black political mobilization.


The purpose of the present analyses are to investigate if attending churches with high levels of political discourse, activism in church outreach activities, membership in Black social change organizations, exposure to Black print media sources, and maintaining relatively high levels of common fate with other Black Americans predicts non-electoral involvement among Black Americans. Results of this investigation indicate that exposure to these group-based resources do in fact lead to non-electoral activism among Black Americans generally, and among college
and non-college trained Blacks specifically. These findings show that for both college and non-college trained Blacks, almost all of the group-based resource variables were significantly and positively associated with electoral participation. College and non-college-trained Blacks who attend churches with high levels of political discourse, are members of Black social change organizations, are active in their churches, and are exposed to Black print media sources were more likely to participate in electoral politics than college and non-college trained Blacks that were not exposed to these group-based resources. Feelings of common fate with other Blacks increased levels of political activity among the non-college trained, but not among the college trained.


It is my argument that a racialized group consciousness among Blacks has changed in the post-Civil Rights era as they were granted increased recognition and subsequent political freedom. Increased political freedom through the implementation of radical federal laws during the 1960s contributed to the perception among middle class Blacks that the mutual recognition fostered within the confines of the Black community was of lesser value than the need to be recognized and afforded the privileges of functioning within the broader mainstream American society. Thus, as political freedoms expanded, the Black community became increasingly fragmented along class lines, and the notion of a common racial group consciousness became increasingly difficult as the social and physical distance between these groups widened. This point is illustrated in my examination of the Black church and impact of the Civil Rights Movement on racial group identity and consciousness among Black Americans.


There are few studies that examine the relation between racial concentration, particularly being in all Black contexts, and psychological well-being. This paper examines, the nature and distribution of Black racial isolation and concentration. Furthermore, it addresses whether being in all Black contexts is linked to the psychological well-being of Black adults using cross-sectional data from the 1979-80 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Results indicate that exposure to all Black contexts was linked to high levels of life satisfaction and self-esteem.


This study examined African Americans’ racial label preferences at two time points using data collected in the 1971 and 1992 Detroit Area Study (DAS). Survey respondents were allowed to chose from the following racial labels: Black, Negro, Colored, Afro-American, African American or no preference/it makes no difference which label. At both time points, there were significant bivariate differences in age and education by preferred labels, but bivariate gender and income difference by preferred labels were not statistically significant. Racial label preference was associated with protest ideology and perceptions of whites’ discriminatory intent in 1971, and with perceptions of Whites’ discriminatory intent in 1992. In multivariate analyses, age, gender, protest ideology and the perceptions of Whites’ intent were significant predictors of emergent racial labels. Suggestions for future research on the relationship between institution inequality, self-designation, and identity were discussed.


This literature review begins by defining a hate crime, and discussing three categories of hate crime: thrill-seeking, reactive, and hate crimes perpetuated by people who feel they have a mission. The author then gives an overview of the conceptual complexities and data dilemmas that can be encountered when trying to identify a hate crime. Next, he discusses "Who Does What, When and Where", a section on who are the perpetrators and victims of hate crimes. The author then touches upon the consequences of hate crimes on racialized stress among African Americans. The implications of the research reviewed are then discussed.


This is a review of the book entitled Racialised Barriers: The Black Experience in the United States and England in the 1980s by Stephen Small. Authors Brown and Jackson recommend this book, and call it a well-organized
comparison of the experiences of black peoples in the United States and England in the 1980s, saying that Small achieves three objectives in his book. First, Small emphasizes the role of whites in the continuation of racial inequality, de-problematizing blacks, and point the finger at white society as the actors and institutions whose interests are opposed to blacks’ interests. Second, he uses racialisation theory in a coherent way. Third, he explores policies geared toward the accomplishment of good racialised relations and shows how racialised groups’ interests conflict over these goals.

Brown, T.N., Wallace, J.M., & Williams, D.R. (2001). Race-related correlates of young adults’ subjective well-being. Social Indicators Research, 53, 97-116. This study investigated how often young adults worry about race relations and whether they perceive that white/black relations have been deteriorating. We also explored the relationships between race-related worry and pessimism, and subjective well-being. This study addressed the distribution of race-related worry and pessimism, and their relationship to subjective well-being in national probability samples of high school seniors completing self-administered questionnaires in 1996 and 1997 (n = 4,514). Nearly one-third of high school seniors often worry about race relations, and about 20% perceive that contemporary white/black relations have been getting at least a little worse. Worrying often about race relations and perceiving that race relations have been getting worse were significantly associated with diminished levels of life satisfaction and happiness. The results confirm that race-related worry and pessimism were common, and that they impact youth’s affective and cognitive states.

Brown, T.N., Williams, D.R., Jackson, J.S., Neighbors, H.W., Torres, M., Sellers, S.L., & Brown, K.T. (2000). Being black and feeling blue: The mental health consequences of racial discrimination. Race & Society, 2(2), 117-131. We examined the association between racial discrimination and mental health using Wave 2 (1987-88) and Wave 3 (1988-89) panel data from the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Psychological distress and past year DSMIII-R depression were used as indicators of mental health status among our African-American respondents. In cross-sectional analysis, we found that the experience of racial discrimination was related to high psychological distress at Wave 2 and Wave 3. We also found that experience of racial discrimination was marginally related to a high likelihood of past year depression at Wave 2. In longitudinal analyses, we found that the experience of racial discrimination at Wave 2 to be predictive of Wave 3 psychological distress after adjusting for Wave 2 psychological distress and socio-demographic variables. In addition, we found that multiple experiences of racial discrimination (from Wave 2 to Wave 3) were associated with high distress at Wave 3. Multiple experiences of discrimination were not significantly associated with Wave 3 clinical depression. We also tested an alternative causal order in which Wave 2 mental health predicted Wave 3 racial discrimination. We found that self-perceived discrimination at Wave 3 was independent of Wave 2 psychological distress and clinical depression. We concluded with directions for a more comprehensive program of research on mental health and racialized stress.

Caldwell, C.H., Antonucci, T.C., & Jackson, J.S. (1998). Supportive/conflictual family relations and depressive symptomatology: Teenage mother and grandmother perspectives. Family Relations, 47(4), 395-402. The influences of supportive and conflictual mother-daughter relationships on depressive symptoms expressed by African American and White teenage mothers and grandmothers were examined. Interviews were conducted with 83 grandmother-teenage mother dyads to assess their individual perspectives of the quality of their relationship and their psychological well-being. Findings indicated that grandmothers assessed the mother-daughter relationship as more favorable than young mothers. Grandmothers, regardless of race, were more likely than teenage mothers to report less conflict around raising the young mothers’ babies. Although racial differences were found in the number of depressive symptoms expressed among grandmothers, this finding did not hold when controlling for socioeconomic status. Similarly, the inverse relationship found between supportive maternal relations and depressive symptoms at the bivariate level of analysis was no longer important for predicting depressive symptoms among teenage mothers in the presence of conflictual mother-daughter relationships. Implications of these and other findings for future social network research and family interventions are discussed.

Parental support and conflictual relationships in a sample of 48 Black and White adolescent mothers between the ages of 14 and 19 were examined. Adolescent mothers were interviewed when their babies were 3 months old. Most adolescent mothers reported close relationships with both their mothers and fathers before and after the births of their babies. The perception of a supportive relationship with the mother after the birth of a baby increased more than the perception of a supportive relationship with the father. Perceptions of conflict were much higher for mothers than for fathers, and less conflict with parents was reported by Black than by White adolescent mothers. Older White adolescent mothers rated their fathers as more supportive than did younger White mothers, but these differences did not exist among Black adolescent mothers. The effects of self-esteem and parental relationships on adolescent depressive symptomatology were also examined. Self-esteem and supportive relationships with fathers were both negatively associated with depressive symptomatology among adolescent mothers. These data highlight the need to consider multiple factors that contribute to the emotional adjustment and psychological well-being of adolescent mothers. Implications of findings for mental health service delivery are also discussed.


Despite numerous adversities, African American families have demonstrated phenomenal strength and resilience. However, given the retraction of economic and social support programs sponsored by federal, state and local governments, alternative institutional supports for families must be explored. The major contention of this paper is that the Black church is one such viable family support system. Various types of family support programs offered by 425 northern Black churches aimed at nurturing, enhancing and strengthening family functioning are described based on data from The Black Church Project. Results indicated that 7 out of 10 provided at least one family support program. Implications of study findings for enhancing African American family life are also provided.


Community-based research has emerged as a vital strategy for developing effective, culturally relevant health interventions. This article describes the strengths and challenges of building a collaborative research partnership based on equality between academic researchers, public health practitioners, and representatives from community-based organizations. The model of collaboration adopted for the Fathers and Sons Project is described and examples of model applications are discussed. Lessons learned in the form of strengths/benefits and potential pitfalls in developing a community-based intervention designed to enhance the health behaviors of African American nonresidential fathers and their sons are provided.


Given the connection between the black church and the civil rights strivings of African-American people, the role the church played during the Civil Rights Movement and its relationship to nonviolent social changes has been a subject of particular interest.


Black liberation theology often involves holding a black image of Christ. Here, it is examined whether this particular aspect of black liberation theology is related to racial empowerment, based on survey data from the 1993 National Black Politics Study (N = 1,206 African American adults). Analysis demonstrates that holding a black image of Christ is positively related to a desire for racial autonomy, but does not enhance racial solidarity, voting behavior, or a belief that churches should be involved in politics. Results indicate that only about 30% of respondents had a black image of Christ and highlight the need for the examination of cultural variations in established religious communities.


Black churches have had a leadership role in the effort to politically empower African Americans. However, they have not been significant sources of support for feminist causes. In fact, many womanist theologians accuse the
black church of being sexist and contributing to the oppression of black women. Still, some scholars have suggested that the context of equality and empowerment that many black churches create on racial issues might lead to a similar dynamic on gender issues as well. Here, data from the 1993 National Black Politics Study (N=1,205 adult African American respondents) indicate that blacks who attend highly political churches are more likely to be supportive of liberal gender issue positions.


Despite the close relationship between religion & the civil rights movement, many suggest that the nature of black Protestantism, especially its otherworldly orientation, depresses efforts to maximize African American political and social influence. Here, using 1993 cross-sectional survey data from 1,206 African American adults to examine different components of religiosity, it is found that no form of religiosity depresses racial empowerment, but varying aspects do have different effects. Organizational religiosity strongly predicts support for integrationist-oriented means to empowerment, while otherworldliness strongly predicts support for separatist-oriented means; religious guidance does not predict support for any aspect of empowerment. Results illustrate the multidimensional nature of religiosity and highlight the complexity of the relationship between religion and politics among blacks.


Data from the 1984 National Black Election Study (original N = 1,150 respondents) are used to analyze the impact of church attendance & political church membership on electoral & political participation and on the psychological components of action - consciousness, system responsiveness, and governmental trust. It is found that, while church attendance was not a very strong predictor of political involvement or of the differing components of motivation, going to a political church was an extremely influential indicator of both in the 1984 elections.


Replicated a previous study by the authors (1984) of decreased number (Bmax) of platelet alpha2-adrenoreceptors in panic disorder (PD), and examined whether adrenergic binding abnormalities might represent trait markers for either active panic or panic vulnerability in people at high risk. 60 panic patients and normal Ss had clonidine and yohimbine platelet-binding assays, symptom ratings, and measurement of lying and standing plasma epinephrine, norepinephrine (NEP), systolic and diastolic BP, and heart rate before treatment, after 2 mo of medication (fluoxetine, tricyclics, or alprazolam) and/or cognitive behavioral treatment, and after symptom remission while drug free. 18 relatives of both groups had 1 determination of all measures. There is a state-related decrease in binding, associated with symptom severity and NEP, in PD. Abnormal reactivity of NEP to standing might be a marker for increased likelihood of PD in individuals at risk.


This study examined whether psychological adjustment to widowhood is affected by three aspects of marital quality—warmth, conflict, and instrumental dependence—assessed prior to the loss. Widowhood was associated with elevated anxiety among those who were highly dependent on their spouses and lower levels of anxiety among those who were not dependent on their spouses. Levels of yearning were lower for widowhood persons whose relationships were conflicted at baseline and higher for those reporting high levels of marital closeness and dependence on their spouses. Women who relied on their husbands for instrumental support had significantly higher levels of yearning than men who depended on their wives.


This article examines referral exchange relationships between black churches and local community health agencies by examining whether organizational and clergy characteristics influence clergy in black churches to refer parishioners to, and receive referrals from, community mental health agencies. The purpose of the study was to
identify the typical characteristics of churches, and their clergy, that tend to participate in these exchanges. The most significant indicators in predicting the probability of church referrals are the extent of interorganizational links and the size of a church. The data do not, however, suggest a reflective relationship; organizational factors do not significantly predict whether a church receives client referrals from community agencies. We speculate that the lack of reciprocity in this pattern may be caused by a conflict in the levels of rationality within community agencies.


Race matters. It influences life experiences. However race is not a simple concept and it is not a single category. We first provide an overview of common racial identity theories to highlight the problems with handling race as a simple black-white dichotomy. In particular such an approach overlooks within-group heterogeneity, focusing on a subgroup of African Americans—young, low SES, darker skinned, men. The centrality of this image reifies what it means to be black but excludes African Americans who are women, middle class and so on. We provide an overview of the situation of African Americans, highlighting within-group diversity in everyday experiences related to gender, socioeconomic status, and physical attributes including skin tone. We argue that though often assumed to be a homogeneous social category, understanding the implications of race from an insider’s perspective requires that we view it as a heterogeneous category.


Research examining the relationships between religion and the health of individuals and populations has become increasingly visible in the social, behavioral, and health sciences. Systematic programs of research investigate religious phenomena within the context of coherent theoretical and conceptual frameworks that describe the causes and consequences of religious involvement for health outcomes. Recent research has validated the multidimensional aspects of religious involvement and investigated how religious factors operate through various biobehavioral and psychosocial constructs to affect health status through proposed mechanisms linking religion and health. Methodological and analytic advances in the field permit the development of more complex models of religion’s effects, in keeping with proposed theoretical explanations. Investigations of religion and health have ethical and practice implications that should be addressed by the lay public, health professionals, the research community, and the clergy. Future research directions point to promising new areas of investigation bridging the constructs of religion and health.


This article is a commentary on the Quinn article which addresses the diverse and varied impacts of race status, class, and gender of AIDS among African Americans.


This article focuses on how family relationships and social institutions promote the socio- psychological well-being of older black adults. The centrality of religious institutions in the lives of elderly blacks is also addressed. Further, demographics, aspects of aging, and specific roles of family members are explored to discern how older blacks meet the challenges engendered in an often poverty-stricken environment. A summary of related literature on these topics is presented and new directions for research suggested.


The causal relationships among social status and resource, health, and stress factors, and a single-item measure of subjective well-being (i.e., happiness) are examined in the NSBA (N=581 blacks aged 55 years and over). The results indicate that although social status and resource factors have a limited impact on happiness ratings, they are important in predicting intermediate factors related to health status, satisfaction and stress. Happiness is directly influenced by stress and reported satisfaction with health, while the effect of health disability is mediated by stress and health satisfaction. The findings suggest that certain groups of older blacks (i.e., relatively younger,
widowed or separated) may be at specific risk for diminished well-being. However, adverse health and life conditions, which are determined by status and resources, represent circumstances which further jeopardize the well-being of older black adults.


This special issue of *Health Education and Behavior* includes Practice notes: Strategies in health education and an introduction by Linda M. Chatters, Jeffrey S. Levin, and Christopher G. Ellison as well as the following articles: A The religion-health connection: Evidence, theory, and future directions” by Christopher G. Ellison and Jeffrey S. Levin, Religion’s role in promoting health and reducing risk among American youth” by John M. Wallace and Tyrone A. Forman, “Breast cancer screening adherence: Does church attendance matter?” by Sarah A. Fox, Kathryn Pitkin, Christopher Paul, Sally Carson, and Naihua Duan, “The African American minister as a source of help for serious personal crises: Bridge or barrier to mental health care?” by Harold W. Neighbors, Marc A. Musik, and David R. Williams, “Black churches as therapeutic systems: A group process perspective” by Mary B. McRae, Patricia M. Carey, and Roxanna Anderson-Scott, and “The development of faith community nursing programs as a response to changing Australian health policy” by Antonia van Loon.

**Chatters, L. M., & Jackson, J. S. (1982). Health and older blacks. *Quarterly Contact, National Center on Black Aged, 5*(1), 1,7-8.**

This preliminary, descriptive analysis provides a profile of the self-reported physical and mental health status of older black adults. This sample of older blacks exhibits prevalence rates for health conditions which are most commonly reported for older persons generally. Average impairments from health conditions reveal a relatively high level of restricted activity. Despite the presence of chronic conditions, multiple health problems, and moderate to high impairments, respondents indicate overwhelming satisfaction with their health. Information on mental health status indicates that half the sample have had a serious personal problem, but older blacks are generally positive in making overall evaluations of their life situations.


This special issue of *Health Education & Behavior* is devoted to broadly examining the interconnections among public health, health education, and faith-based communities. In addition to a focus on questions related to the practice of public health and health education within religious settings (e.g. program development, implementation, and evaluation), the articles in this issue examine a broad range of both substantive and methodological questions and concerns. These articles include contributions that address (1) various theoretical and conceptual issues and frameworks explaining the relationships between religious involvement and health; (2) substantive reviews of current research in the area; (3) individual empirical studies exploring the associations between religious involvement and health attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors; (4) evaluations of health education programs in faith communities; and (5) religious institutions and their contributions to the development of health policy. The articles comprising this issue are selective in their coverage of the field and provide different and complementary perspectives on the connections between religious involvement and health. It is hoped that this approach will appeal to a broad audience or researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and others from health education, public health, and related social and behavioral science disciplines.


This paper proposed and tested a measurement model of religiosity among older NSBA respondents (55 years of age and above). The model incorporates three correlated dimensions of religious involvement, termed organizational, nonorganizational, and subjective religiosity. Findings indicate that the proposed model provides a good fit to the data, is preferable to alternative models, and exhibits convergent validity with respect to exogenous or antecedent variables (age, gender, marital status, income, education, urbanicity, and region) known to predict religious involvement. In addition, these antecedents exhibit stronger effects on subjective religiosity than on the other two, more behavioral, dimensions of religiosity. Interpretation of these status-group differences in religiosity focuses on socialization experiences and social environmental factors which may promote a religious world view.

The nature, patterns and functions of religious involvement among African Americans has been a topic of interest since the early 1900’s. An extensive scholarly tradition in African American studies, anthropology, religious studies, and the sociology of religion all attest to the persistence of these themes. However, despite a rich legacy of scholarly work on the Black church and African American religious traditions, relatively few of these substantive topics have received focused and systematic attention. Directed research on religious involvement among African Americans is invaluable for clarifying a variety of issues bearing on religious involvement in this group, as well as identifying the individual, social, and community functions of religion.


This analysis investigates age differences in religious involvement among black adults and provides the opportunity to assess current models of aging and religiosity within a group who are highly involved in religious concerns. Seven diverse indicators of religious involvement, including organizational, non-organizational, and attitudinal measures, are examined. Age status is positively associated with both organizational religious behaviors and activities, as well as attitudinal measures of religious involvement. The persistence of these age relationships, in the presence of controls for demographic and health factors, indicates an independent and significant impact of age status on these measures. For women, age was positively associated with each of the religiosity measures; among men, requests for prayer from others was the only indicator for which age was not a significant predictor. The findings are discussed in relation to previous work on age and religious participation.


This study examines the distribution and attitudes of self-reported personal life problems (e.g., health, money, family) found among NSBA respondents aged 55 years and above (n=581). The majority of respondents indicate that they have experienced at least one such problem and identify problems in the areas of health and finances as the most significant. Multivariate findings for problem characteristics indicate that older people have fewer reported life problems. Women and persons with lower incomes report higher levels of distress from identified problems; men and persons with health problems experience longer problem duration. Demographic factors are unrelated to use of coping response, but there are significant problem type differences in coping strategy choice. These results suggest that life problems are a significant concern to older black adults and highlight the use of different coping strategies in response to these difficulties.


The study explores the relationships of sociodemographic, health, and family factors on informal helper choice among older NSBA respondents (55 years and above; N=581). Eight categories of helpers were examined: spouse, son, daughter, parents, brother, sister, friend, and neighbor. The "oldest" elderly, women, the unmarried, low income persons, those with little formal education, and Southerners are more likely to select non-family helpers. Low levels of health disability are associated with selecting spouse, son, and parents, while higher levels are related to choosing brother and neighbor. Respondents indicating that their families are not effectively close and those who feel you can count on friends (as opposed to relatives) are more likely to choose friends and neighbors as informal helpers.


The study examines the relationship of a group of sociodemographic, health and perceived family contact factors to the composition of the informal support network. The data is based on the analysis of older blacks (55 years and above) from the NSBA (N=581). Informal helper networks are categorized on the basis of the predominance of immediate family. Selecting a network comprised exclusively of immediate family is associated with being younger, married, rural residency, being an inhabitant of the North Central region, and having the belief that only relatives can be counted on in life. The adequacy of support provided by different types of helper networks (particularly for disadvantaged elderly) is discussed.

Demographic correlates of whether an extended family has incorporated a fictive kin relative was examined in the NSBA. Fictive kin are defined as persons who are treated like a relative but who are not related by blood or marriage. Two out of three respondents indicated there was someone in their family who was regarded as a fictive kin. Multivariate analysis revealed that gender, age, education, and region were all significantly associated with the probability that a family would incorporate fictive kin members. These findings are discussed in relation to previous work on fictive kin relationships.


The sociodemographic correlates of religious participation among African Americans are examined using data from seven national probability surveys. Dependent variables included indicators of organizational (i.e., religious service attendance), nonorganizational (e.g., frequency of prayer, frequency of reading religious materials, watching/listening to religious programming), and subjective religious participation. Regression analyses indicated that religious participation varies systematically by gender, age, region, and marital status. The findings are discussed in relations to research on religious participation among African Americans.


Number of informal helpers which are utilized during a serious personal problem is examined among NSBA respondents. Kin are more prevalent in the helper network than non-kin. Multivariate analysis indicates that network size is predicted by age, gender, income, familial contact, and type of problem. An interaction between age and the presence of a child substantiates the importance of adult children in maintaining the informal support networks of older adults. The discussion highlights the significance of the informal network in providing assistance during a personal crisis.


The idea of person-environment fit was explored for 164 African American college students in a predominantly White university. The relationships among African American students' demographic backgrounds, beliefs regarding race (racial ideology and race centrality), and their perceived fit in the college environment due to their ethnicity were examined. These factors were used to predict student organizational involvement in race-specific organizations and mainstream campus organizations. It was found that both the meaning of race (ideology) and the importance of race (centrality) were related to the extent to which students felt comfort in expressing their ethnicity and, subsequently, their social participation in ethnic group affirming activities. The findings suggest the importance of the students' perceptions of congruence between themselves and their educational environment.


Various authors have noted that interethnic group and intraethnic group racism are significant stressors for many African Americans. As such, intergroup and intragroup racism may play a role in the high rates of morbidity and mortality in this population. Yet, although scientific examinations of the effects of stress have proliferated, few researchers have explored the psychological, social, and physiological effects of perceived racism among African Americans. The purpose of this article was to outline a biopsychosocial model for perceived racism as a guide for future research. The first section of this article provides a brief overview of how racism has been conceptualized in the scientific literature. The second section reviews research exploring the existence of intergroup and intragroup racism. A contextual model for systematic studies of the biopsychosocial effects of perceived racism is then presented, along with recommendations for future research.

The participation in and the impact of social roles on the psychological and physical health of middle-aged and older black women are explored in this study. The results indicate that few middle-aged and older black women participate in the three roles of parent, spouse, and employee simultaneously. The importance of the employment role and other sociodemographic factors in understanding the well-being of middle-aged and older black women are also discussed.

Elevated rates of mortality for African-Americans compared to white, coupled with the persistence of high levels of racial residential segregation, have directed attention to the structural manifestations of racism as potentially important pathogens for health. Using national mortality and census data for 1990 and a measure of black social isolation from whites, we examine the association between residential segregation and mortality in 107 major U.S. cities. Our analyses revealed that black social isolation tended to predict higher rates of mortality for African-American males and females, although the strength of the association varied by cause of death. Socioeconomic deprivation explained a modes part of this association for black males but not for black females. Our analyses also found that a positive association between social isolation and mortality was more pronounced, for both blacks and whites, in cities that were also high on the index of dissimilarity. These findings highlight the need for research to identify the specific mechanisms and processes that link residential environments to adverse changes in health status.

A focus on the characteristics of the employment role that contribute to well-being and their differential relations across ethnicity and gender is lacking in the research on work and well-being. Whites and blacks at midlife, ages 40-64, were studied. The samples were drawn from two national surveys and included 186 white women, 202 white men, 254 black women and 169 black men. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to assess the relation of work commitment, job satisfaction, role stress, occupational status and personal income to perceived control, life satisfaction, and happiness. Marital status, age, and hours worked were included as control variables. Results indicate that job satisfaction is positively related to life satisfaction for all four groups and to happiness for white women and black men. Personal income is positively related to perceived control for black women and white men and to life satisfaction for white women. Occupational status is positively related to perceived control for white and black women; role stress is negatively related to life satisfaction among white men and to happiness among black women. Among the control variables, being married is positively related to well-being for all four race-sex groups.

Assesses the impact of interviewer race on political survey responses of African Americans, testing the hypothesis that African Americans throughout the US will be less forthright and present more moderate views when interviewed by white rather than African American researchers. Data are drawn from the 1984 National Black Election Study (N = 1,150 African Americans). Of the original interviewees, 872 were reinterviewed after the Nov 1984 elections, sometimes by a researcher of a different race than the original one. Significant differences were found in subject responses when interviewed by white vs. black researchers. It is concluded that African Americans who are interviewed by white researchers tend to give more accommodating responses than those interviewed by African American researchers.

The nature of race of interviewer effects is such that individuals bring to public opinion surveys their normal everyday levels of distrust & cautiousness of strangers, which are manifested in the measurement of their political attitudes. In statistical analyses using similarly affected questions, a correlated errors problem is likely to be created in which such measures may be artificially (& spuriously) related. As a result, substantive conclusions are likely to diverge from the true underlying relationships. Using the relationship between racial consciousness & support for Jesse Jackson to illustrate the consequences of ignoring this correlated errors problem, examined here is whether in the attempt to appear less threatening to white interviewers, African American respondents to the 1984 National
Black Election Study moderated their expressions of racial consciousness & support for Jesse Jackson, so that the observed relationship appeared weaker than it really was. Purging the artificial covariation between racial consciousness & support for Jesse Jackson created by the race of the interviewer increased the political relevance of racial consciousness.


The present study examines the impact of early desegregation experience in the school setting on selected outcomes in later life. Specifically, it examines the extent to which Blacks who have been educated in desegregated elementary and secondary schools are more likely as adults than their counterparts from segregated schools: 1) to attend predominantly white colleges; 2) to work in desegregated settings; 3) to live in racially mixed neighborhoods; 4) to have cross-racial friendships; 5) to have better jobs; 6) to earn higher incomes; 7) to not lower their sense of positive racial identity and self-esteem. This analysis employs data from the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA), a national probability household survey of 2,107 Black Americans, who are 18 years of age and older. NSBA was conducted over a period of seven months n 1979 and 1980. The analyses uses the technique of multiple regression, which permits an assessment of the effects of school desegregation at the elementary, middle and secondary levels on the dependent variables, while controlling for a number of variables. The findings tend to support the general hypothesis that elementary-secondary school desegregation has positive benefits in terms of its impact on important outcomes in adulthood. The most powerful effect of school desegregation is in fostering the perpetuation of desegregation in other areas later in life.... Only in the area of its impact on racial identity and self-esteem is there evidence that school desegregation has a significant negative effect.


Building on previous work, a schema-based approach to belief systems is used to model an African-American racial belief system. This belief system is used with socioeconomic status, exposure to black media, and religious guidance as a predictor of individual African American political participation. LISREL measurement and causal model are used to estimate the theoretical model, using NSBA data. As predicted, the various cognitive schemata of the racial-identity belief system are shown to predict political participation. Further, religious guidance is shown to be a stronger predictor of some forms of political participation than socioeconomic status. Overall, socioeconomic status and religious guidance are shown to be the strongest predictors of political participation. Respondents with a higher socioeconomic status and/or with a higher degree of religious guidance in their lives are more likely to participate in the political process.


This study examines the social structural processes and arrangements related to racial group identification for a national sample of black American adults. The argument is made that primary socialization experiences, particularly parental messages concerning the meaning of being black, are important in shaping racial identity. The findings support this prediction; further, they suggest that adult relations with family, friends, and community are important in fostering a sense of group identity. Findings also suggest that integration into mainstream society, as reflected in interracial contact and adult socioeconomic attainment, is associated with less in-group attachment but more positive black group evaluation. Adult SES and interracial contact bolster black group evaluation. Collectively, these findings support a multidimensional conceptualization of black identity.


There is a long and illustrious tradition of social science research on African American religion. Leading scholars—including W.E.B. DuBois, Charles S. Johnson, E. Franklin Frazier, and others—devoted considerable attention to the social role of black churches in various sociohistorical and community studies produced prior to the civil rights movement. Beginning in the 1950’s, a number of studies focused on the roles of African American churches and pastors in civil rights activism. After the mid-1970’s, however, research on African American religion waned for a time. Fortunately, we are now witnessing a resurgence of interest in this topic, and while valuable scholarship in the broad sociohistorical tradition continues, much of the renewed attention can be traced to the availability of data from the 1979-80 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Prior to the collection and subsequent public
release of these data, the major sources of systematic data on African Americans were community surveys (e.g., the Detroit Area Survey) and general population surveys, which often contained small unrepresentative samples of African Americans (e.g., the NORC General Social Survey). The NSBA has opened the door to a richer understanding of the prominence of religious institutions, practices, and beliefs in the individual and collective lives of African Americans.


This study focuses on the relationships between the religious involvement of black Americans and two important dimensions of self-perception: self-esteem and personal mastery. It is argued that participation in church communities may foster positive self-perceptions through the interpersonal supportiveness and positive reflected appraisals of coreligionists. Private devotional activities may also be linked with positive self-regard via processes of religious role-taking. Analyses of data from the NSBA lend credence to these arguments with regard to self-esteem but not personal mastery. In addition, the findings suggest that public religious participation buffers the negative influence of physical unattractiveness on self-esteem, while private religious devotion buffers the negative impact of chronic illness on self-esteem. The results confirm current wisdom regarding the social determinants of self-perceptions, and they shed new light on the contemporary psychosocial role of religious life among black Americans. Several directions for further inquiry are also discussed.


Thus study explores the relationships between religiosity and interpersonal friendliness and cooperation using data from the NSBA. Results indicate that respondents who engage in frequent devotional activities (e.g., prayer, bible study) are reported to be more open, less suspicious, and more enjoyable to interview than their less-religious counterparts in post-hoc ratings by NSBA interviewers. In addition, respondents for whom religion serves as an important source of moral guidance are also viewed as friendlier, more interested, and more open than those for whom this aspect of religion is less salient. Other aspects of respondent religiosity (e.g., church participation) are unrelated to these post-hoc interviewer assessments. Findings are discussed in terms of (1) religious role-taking processes and (2) the internalization of religious norms concerning interpersonal kindness and empathy, although several alternative explanations are also considered. A number of implications and directions for future research are identified.


Using data on adult males from the NSBA, this study shows that blacks with military backgrounds, particularly combat veterans, express lower levels of racial identification and separatist sentiment than do non-veterans, and are more likely to engage in high-initiative political activity. The possible influence of selection effects is discussed, along with several directions for future research.


Using data from the NSBA, this study investigates the relationships between religious involvement and two sets of racial orientation: identification (feelings of closeness and commonality of interests among blacks) and separatism (support for cultural and institutional distance from whites). Both public religious participation and private religious devotion are strong positive predictors of racial identification, controlling for sociodemographic factors. However, the positive effects of devotion on identification are diminished sharply among blacks over 60 years of age. In addition, members of traditional black denominations (i.e., Baptists and Methodists) express substantially stronger black identity than do their unaffiliated counterparts. In contrast to models of racial identification, religious involvement bears little consistent relationship to separatism. Relatively strong separatist sentiments are found among frequent churchgoers ages 30-59 and adherents of nontraditional religions (e.g., Muslims). In general, these results cast doubt on the arguments of some critics of the black church, who claim that religion undermines collective identification. Mainstream black religious culture appears to encourage inclusive, but not exclusive, racial solidarity.

This study examines the relationships among kinship bonds, friendships, and the subjective well-being of black adults. In analyses controlling for a wide range of demographic covariates, number of friends is positively related to happiness among all blacks. The frequency of contact with friends and the availability of close friends are also positively related to happiness, but these relationships become negative with age. Friendship factors are not associated with global life satisfaction. Subjective family closeness predicts happiness among all blacks and life satisfaction among older blacks only. The proximity of extended family members is negatively related to satisfaction. The implications of these findings are discussed with regard to interactionist theory and future research on social relationships.


This research examines three sets of hypotheses regarding the effects of religious commitment on life satisfaction. Further, given evidence of historical geographical differences in black culture and social structure, this study explores the regional specificity of religious influences on life satisfaction. Religious participation contributes to subjective well-being only among non-southern blacks, while private religiosity is unrelated to well-being in any analysis. There are also denominational effects: non-southern members of traditional black denomination (i.e., Baptists and Methodists) and southern Catholics report particularly high levels of life satisfaction. In addition, the effects of religion on life satisfaction are contingent upon age for non-southerners only. This study concludes with a discussion of directions for future research on religion and mental health.


Two competing approaches to the study of black social and political participation -- the compensatory and ethnic community perspectives -- have dominated attempts to explain the relatively high levels of collective involvement within the black population. One of the main limitations of research in this area has been its weak treatment of the meaning and measurement of compensatory theory. The erroneous belief that blacks had disproportionately low self-esteem was widely held at the time that this theory developed. Unlike most previous researchers, we use a measure of low self-esteem to operationalize compensatory behavior. In contrast to the equivocal findings of several previous studies, our results are clear: The ethnic community approach receives strong support, while the compensatory approach is not supported.


This study explores contemporary regional variations in African American religious life. Building on historical and ethnographic research on the Black church, the authors contrast the religious environments that have traditionally prevailed in the Black communities of the rural South and urban non-South. Regional variations in the social role of religious institutions, the availability of alternative lifestyles and secular opportunities for status and resources, and the social norms and community expectations regarding church involvement are emphasized. A series of hypotheses regarding patterns and correlates of church participation are tested using data from the National Survey of Black Americans. Findings indicate that historical regional variations in African American religious life persist. The results suggest that the rural southern Black church retains its traditional semi-involuntary character. A discussion on the broader theoretical implications of this issue for future research in the sociology of religion is included.


Using data from NSBA and the General Social Survey (GSS), this study tests hypotheses distilled from two competing perspectives on black religious mobility. Some analysts during the 1960s predicted that the rise of economic ambition and political militancy among blacks would foster discontent with the "otherworldly" black mainline churches. These researchers projected high levels of switching and burgeoning apostasy. There are, however, reasons to anticipate much more stable patterns of black religious affiliation. Recent research stresses that social embeddedness, cultural solidarity, and personal spirituality are more important influences on black

There has been little research done on the social and situational antecedents of prayer as an important coping behavior for African Americans. This study develops a series of theoretical arguments linking four sets of factors—religiosity, problem domain, social and psychological resources, and social location—to religious coping. Relevant hypotheses are then tested using data from a large national probability sample of African Americans. Findings confirm the general importance of religious coping among African Americans. Further, while multiple dimensions of religiosity are important predictors of the use of prayer in coping, this practice is most likely among persons dealing with health problems or bereavement, persons with low general personal mastery, and females. A number of promising directions for further research on religious coping are discussed.


The current investigation examines the influence of Alex Haley's *Roots* (aired January, 1977) on African Americans using data from the NSBA. The viewing patterns and the respondents' reactions to the program are examined by two demographic variables (urbanicity and region) and four respondent variables (gender, age, education, and income). The findings reveal a number of consistent trends. The patterns of heaviest viewership and positive evaluations (i.e., among the younger, more highly educated, and urban subsample) are consistent with literature suggesting higher levels of black consciousness in these population subgroups.


The study objectives were to (1) design, (2) implement and (3) evaluate a multi-step educational program as an integral component of a healthcare system's activities to improve medication use quality and control drug costs. Design and implementation of the educational program were based upon established principles of changing prescriber behavior. Two classes of oral medications, antihistamines and antibiotics, were targeted. A before-after nonequivalent comparison group design with 2 comparison groups was used for evaluation. Medication claims data from the same time period one year previously were used as historical controls. Prescribing rates, net savings and prescribers' attitudes were assessed. It was found that prescribing trends in the treatment group but not comparison groups generally reflected changes consistent with the educational message. A net savings of $84 was achieved in the antihistamine program. A net loss of ($2722) was seen in the antibiotic program. Over 75 percent of prescribers agreed or strongly agreed that the educational program was an appropriate mechanism to optimize medication use. Level of exposure and practice years affected perceived knowledge gains. The group counter-detailing DUR educational program was effective in improving prescribing rates. Prescribing rate changes and economic impacts differed by therapeutic category. The entire program was well accepted among prescribers including physicians and nurse practitioners.


The purpose of this research was to determine: (1) the frequency of risky behaviors (alcohol and other drug use, smoking cigarettes, smokeless tobacco use, and unprotected intercourse); (2) the perception of general risks and diabetes-related risks from risky behaviors; (3) if perception of risk is related to engaging in risky behaviors; and (4) if perception of general risks and diabetes-related risks are influenced by age, gender, or race in adolescents with insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM). Decreasing risky behaviors in youth with IDDM is important because of their increased vulnerability to specific disease related physiologic and pathologic changes. A descriptive, cross-sectional design was used. Data on risky behavior and perception of risk were obtained by self-report during a regularly scheduled clinic visit. One hundred and fifty-five adolescents between ages of 10-20 years participated. Correlational and student's t-test analyses were used to test relationships and group differences (age, race, gender). Thirty-nine percent of the sample reported alcohol use, 34% reported smoking cigarettes, 8% reported smokeless tobacco use, 10% reported drug use, and 29% reported unprotected intercourse. Perception of risk to peers from these behaviors was significantly higher ($t = 8.1, df 153; p < .001) than risk to self. Females reported
significantly lower ($t = 3.08$, df 52; $p < .002$) risk to self than males. There was no difference in perception of risk between youth who reported participating in risky behaviors ($N = 38\%$) and those who did not ($62\%$). Not surprisingly, the frequency of risky behavior increased with age ($F = 15.46$; $p < .000$). Compared to community samples of middle-school children, our sample had lower rates for most risky behaviors. As with community samples, the physical risks were known and perceived to be higher for peers than self. Perception of risk was not related to self-reports of risky behaviors. The lower rate of risky behaviors might reflect the success of educational efforts directed toward diabetes management or may be due to later initiation of behaviors, especially if personal social development is delayed. Additional research is indicated in order to understand the timing and trajectory of risky behavior and whether or not perception of risk deters youth with IDDM from engaging in risky behavior.


This paper documents the relative significance of the mental health research industry and the structure of the funding process at NIMH, and examines the extent to which Black scholars are involved in this industry. Major consideration is given to policy implications of assessments of the impact of this industry on black communities.


A review of health data identifies four major trends in the elderly population: a younger black group that is more morbid than an older black group, an alternating pattern of black morbid and robust age groups, a black disadvantage in health and functioning that is greater in race comparisons involving the black morbid and less in comparisons involving the black robust age groups, and a black health detriment that seems to narrow at age 85. The trends suggest that age and health are more strongly related in the white elderly than in the black elderly population. These trends are compatible with the more rapid growth of blacks aged 85 and over than any other group of the elderly, the adverse mortality selection processes, and the racial mortality crossover. Issues for new research that will explain these four trends are discussed.


This research examines race differences in the structure and measurement of six self-reports of health that are widely used in studies of elderly persons. Second-order confirmatory factor analysis (LISREL) revealed race differences only in the validity of subjective interpretations of health state and in the measurement error of a chronic conditions indicator. No race differences were found in the form of the four-factor model of self-reported health. Results, interpreted within a cognitive illness-labeling framework, have implications for future race-comparative health research.


This research examines causal patterns among factors related to subjective retirement among older black persons. Analysis of the NSBA using covariance structures (LISREL) suggests a process in which self-defined retirement is discouraged by perceptions of a discontinuous work life and economic and psychological need for the disabled-worker role.


This article discusses reasons for improving the quality and increasing the quantity of minority aging research. Extant theoretical formulations and methodological problems are addressed, as are strategies for developing a core body of knowledge.


Current procedural definitions may exclude a new type of black retiree -- the “unretired-retired” -- from major retirement research today. The research on older blacks in the NSBA finds four factors which contribute
significantly to this unretired-retired status of black Americans: an indistinct line between lifetime and old age work patterns, a realization that one must work from time to time well into old age, the receipt of income from other than private retirement pension sources, and the greater benefits of identifying oneself as disabled than retired.

Blacks in every age group today are confronted with their own set of critical social problems, problems that, if not attended to effectively, will have serious consequences for the black family both in the near future and well beyond. This essay concerns itself with these specific social problems and their impact on black children, teenagers, the middle-aged, and elderly, as well as with the implications they pose for our society as a whole.

This article examines two specific coping practices -- prayer and seeking help from family and friends -- to which black Americans reportedly resort when times are difficult. Blacks in middle and later life turn to prayer more often than do whites of similar years. Blacks use their informal networks differently from whites, and the patterns of prayer and network use are changing. The adaptive values of these two strategies, then, may make blacks’ entry into old age more transition than crisis. To assess use of the informal network and use of prayer as coping responses to distress, and to determine the persistence of these strategies from 1957 to 1976, respondents in both years of the Americans View Their Mental Health surveys (1957, 1976) were asked how they handled matters that were bothering or worrying them. They were also asked if they talked the problem over with anyone and, if so, with whom.

This study uses the Panel Study of Income Dynamics to examine work patterns, and factors related to those patterns, among older black female heads of households over a six-year period. The older black women are compared to their black male and white male and female counterparts. The black females are found to be the most likely to exhibit disadvantaged work patterns: They have been with their employers the shortest time, and have worked the fewest years, weeks per year, and hours per week. They lost their positions in the continuity of work, hierarchically, as they aged, to older white women. Black women who are older, better educated, receive transfer income, and live in areas of high unemployment experience the most discontinuous patterns. Surprisingly, poor health is not related to interrupted work. These “working poor” appear financially unable to leave the labor force. Several stereotypes of the older black female head of household are dispelled.

This study analyzes and contrasts the labor force experiences of black and white men and women over a six year period using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics data.

This article makes several speculations on the future of minority elderly based on the current experiences of minorities in three closely related areas—health, work, and retirement. If the present looks bleak, it can only signal a grim future if younger and middle-aged minorities continue to have limited access to quality health care, good education, and effective job-training programs. First, minority-nonminority group disparities in health and in work disability are discussed. Second, differences in the labor force experiences of minorities and nonminorities are examined. Differences in retirement experiences are identified next, followed by suggestions for new research on and interventions into the health, work, and retirement lives of minorities across the lifespan. We focus on African, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Mexican Americans, and we recognize the need for analyzing Native Americans, on whom data and research are sparse.


A representative sample of older blacks is difficult and expensive to assemble using standard sampling methods. This paper presents a cost-effective method developed to sample older blacks by telephone using existing information from previous surveys as a basis. Asking black respondents between the ages of 18 and 54 from a national survey and others in their households for referrals to parents or grandparents yielded approximately one older black per black respondent in the original survey.


This article has two goals: First, we describe a theoretical framework for research that attempts to identify similar themes and patterns across the reported experiences of historically stigmatized groups (which we call cross-group discrimination research). Specifically, we show how Adam's (1978) concept of inferiorization applies to psychology's discrimination literature and we delineate its theoretical properties; inferiorization is a function of the confluence of stigma, context, and associated cultural myths. Second, we designed a self-report measure of inferiorization and applied it to college student samples of African Americans, White women, gay men and lesbians, people with disabilities, and, as a control, a White male comparison group (total N = 263). Findings show that stigmatizable people tend to report more frequent inferiorizing events than generally non-stigmatizable people. Deviations from this pattern were explained by the contextual and stigma-related specificity of inferiorization and the presence or absence of associated cultural myths. Inferiorization advances empirical, cross-group discrimination research by describing a general social process while remaining sensitive to the experiences of specific groups and to the contextual nature of stigmatization.


Examines the saliency of class location for African Americans using Mario Barrera's (1979) model of multiracial-ethnic capitalist societies. Data from a subsample of 1,199 employed respondents to the 1979/80 National Survey of Black Americans are drawn on to test hypotheses linking class location to two important consequences of the life chances of members of the African-American minority: self-perception and racial group identification. Erik Olin Wright's (1985) exploitation-based model of the class structure of advanced capitalist society is employed to measure class location. The results reveal that class location is a significant predictor of both self-perceptions & levels of racial group identification among African Americans.


This paper has four objectives. First, to understand the need to develop a community-based HIV/AIDS prevention model with adolescents. Second, to define community. Third, to identify key components for developing a community-based HIV/AIDS prevention model with adolescents. Finally, to identify diverse strategies for implementing a community-based HIV/AIDS prevention model with adolescents.


This paper reviews and critiques the published research on adolescent female’s alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. Whenever possible, gender and ethnic differences will be highlighted as well as class or other
environmental factors. However, the review is made difficult by the dearth of research on African-American, Latina, Native American and Asian-American adolescent girls and attendant gender, ethnic, and class issues. Usually, researchers reporting from national data sets (e.g., Monitoring the Future, National Household Survey) report on what they assume to be biology (male vs. female, black vs. white) and finally to consider the intersections of several important social constructions: gender, ethnicity, and class. The purpose, is to highlight important research findings including gender, ethnicity, and class data. Overall goals include advancing the understanding of drug abuse by adolescent females and moving nurses closer to developing innovative prevention programs that are gender and ethnically sensitive.


The problem of gaining a better understanding of the use and misuse of alcohol by adolescents is addressed in this article. A health-promotion model and approach for examining health behaviors in this targeted group is proposed. The examination of the relationship between specific variables such as personal, demographic and biological characteristics, health-related factors and behavior-specific factors which directly or indirectly affect adolescent behavior or between clusters of these variables or risk factors is suggested. This research strategy offers a more holistic perspective, providing a method of examining adolescent health that includes protective as well as risk factors. This approach also facilitates the creation of new programs to help adolescents in a variety of settings, such as schools, churches, and homes.


The number of adolescent females between the ages of 13 and 19 who are contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) is rising at an alarming rate. Although the issue of STDs has been overshadowed by continued public debate over adolescent pregnancy and childbearing, it demands attention. Particularly concerning is the fact that STDs increase the likelihood of transmitting HIV (N.E. MacDonald et al., 1990). To offset the growing incidences of STDs among female adolescents, gender-specific interventions are needed. Following is a description of the theoretical underpinnings that informed and guided the development of a gender-specific intervention titled Girl Talk. A two-stage creation and review process was used to design this 2.5-hr, four-session intervention. An overview of the quasi-experimental design that compared a nonequivalent comparison and two intervention groups (peer led and adult led) is presented. Baseline characteristics of the three groups are reported. Also described is how participant feedback and a design content analysis are used to evaluate the appropriateness of the intervention for adolescent females.


The effects of actual and anticipated unemployment on the mental health of the workers were studied during the large-scale shut down of automobile plants in 1987. Three groups were formed: already laid off, anticipating layoff, and workers in non-closing plants. Results revealed a pattern of interaction between unemployment and demographic variables, showing differential vulnerability to job loss. Less educated blacks were especially affected; follow-up analyses showed that their more distressed mental health could not be attributed entirely to other, prior stressors.


This study explores the stress and coping mechanisms that result from unemployment. Workers at 4 closing and 12 non-closing General Motors plants were interviewed at three different intervals – 3 months before the closing, 1 year after, and 2 years after. Tested were 1) effects of unemployment on symptoms of depression, anxiety, and somatization; 2) linkages between depression and subsequent unemployment, controlling for workers' gender, race, marital status, age, education, prior income, and seniority; and 3) the relationship between workers' coping decisions and subsequent depression. The findings for these 3 broad issues were that depression was the longest lasting of the three and most regularly linked to the unemployment; unemployment is associated with
depression and that depression is associated with subsequent unemployment; and the subsequent depression level was based on whether the worker got what he wanted (a job, not having a job, or losing a job that he didn't like), not the particular coping choice.


This article assesses the impact of childhood interracial contact and parental socialization on adult black identity. The investigation goes beyond previous work by testing hypotheses about the process by which these two factors operate, as well as differentiating between black and person-of-color identities. Evidence is found to support claims that interracial contact in childhood weakens adult feelings of closeness to other blacks. Mixed support for the impact of parental socialization emerges once a more precise definition of identity is employed. With respect to process, insufficient support is found for the claim that childhood factors affect closeness through black culture and outgroup orientation. The article concludes by outlining arguments regarding the merits of black identity and calling for research to throw more light on this controversy.


Overall, this investigation finds the correlates and predictors of sex role attitudes of black women and men to be different. More relationships are found between the socioeconomic variables included in these analyses and the sex role attitudes of black women than black men. However, except for sex, none of the background variables in these analyses, either alone or with other predictors, explain more than a very modest proportion of the variance in these sex role attitudes. Sex role norms and behavior for blacks are confounded by the unique experience of being black in America and by the influence of the larger white society. It is possible that the large amount of support for egalitarianism among blacks is a consequence of blacks' unique experience in this country, whereas differences found among sub-groups speak of influences from the broader society.


This paper uses data from the NSBA to examine African Americans' reactions to being underemployed. It tests predictions derived from relative deprivation theory that the underemployed will be less likely than their adequately employed counterparts to participate in conventional political activities, but more likely to be supportive of protest activities and more likely to drop out of the political system. The results indicate that there are differences between the underemployed and those with adequate skill utilization; moreover, there are significant differences among those with different types of underemployment. The modes of political expression that these different groups use, however, do not conform to predictions from relative deprivation theory.


Age differences in productive contributions through both paid and unpaid work are examined in commensurate terms. Data are from a nationwide household survey of 3,617 adults age 25 and older conducted in 1986. Older Americans participate in many unpaid productive activities at levels that are comparable to those reached by middle-aged and younger Americans; these activities include volunteer work in organizations, informal help to others, and housework. Relatively few older Americans spend any time participating in paid work and unpaid rearing of children. Largely because of the cessation of paid work and child care, older Americans spend less time overall in productive activities. Women and men spend about equal time in productive activities, but women spend more of it in unpaid work and less of it in paid work. The difficulties with using paid work as the major indicator for describing productivity across the life span are discussed.


This article provides a description of how the household sample was designed and selected for the National Survey of Black Americans.

Tested the hypothesis that drinking alcohol reduces social phobic anxiety. 40 treatment-seeking individuals (aged 21-60yrs) with social phobia were asked to give two impromptu speeches. 20 Ss received a placebo alcoholic drink before both speeches, and 20 Ss received a placebo before the first speech, followed by a moderate dose of alcohol before the second speech. Subjective anxiety ratings, heart rate, and cognition related to social anxiety were used as measures of anxiety. Repeated measures analyses of variance yielded no significant differences in anxiety (subjective, physiological, cognitive) between the alcohol and placebo groups. Current and past drinking habits did not significantly alter the effect of alcohol on anxiety. The belief that one received alcohol was significantly related to levels of subjective anxiety and negative cognitions. Alcohol does not directly reduce social phobic anxiety. The belief that one received alcohol may reduce social anxiety.


The goals of this study were to estimate prospective mortality risks of city residence, specify how these risks vary by population subgroup, and explore possible explanations. Data were derived from a probability sample of 3617 adults in the coterminal United States and analyzed via cross-tabular and Cox proportional hazards methods. After adjustment for baseline sociodemographic and health variables, city residents had a mortality hazard rate ratio of 1.62 (95% confidence interval = 1.21, 2.18) relative to rural/small-town residents; suburbanites had an intermediate but not significantly elevated hazard rate ratio. This urban mortality risk was significant among men (hazard rate ratio: 2.25), especially non-Black men, but not among women. Among Black men, and to some degree Black women, suburban residence carried the greatest risk. All risks were most evident for those younger than 65 years. This study concluded that the mortality risk of city residence, at least among men, rivals that of major psychosocial risk factors such as race, low income, smoking, and social isolation and merits comparable attention in research and policy.


This study examines the determinants of personal self-esteem, racial self-esteem, and personal efficacy in the NSBA. The findings show that the three dimensions are interrelated and each is anchored in interpersonal relations with family and friends. However, the three dimensions are produced by fundamentally different processes. Personal self-esteem is most strongly influenced by microsocial relations with family, friends, and community, while personal efficacy is generated through experiences in social statutes embedded in macrosocial systems of social inequality. The chapter concludes black self-esteem is insulated from systems of racial inequality, while personal efficacy is not, and suggest that this explains why black Americans have relatively high self-esteem but low personal efficacy. The belief that racial discrimination, rather than individual failure, accounts for low achievement among blacks is irrelevant to personal self-esteem and personal efficacy. In contract, racial self-esteem is produced by a combination of education, interracial contact, and ideological processes.


Using data from the NSBA, the authors found that blacks with lighter skin have higher socioeconomic status, have spouses higher in socioeconomic status, and have lower black consciousness than those with dark skin. Only the correlations of skin color with black consciousness variables are eliminated when controlled for respondent's age, gender, and current and background socioeconomic status. The findings also suggest that the impact of skin color on socioeconomic status among black Americans to be as great as the impact of race (black-white) on socioeconomic status in American society. We detect little evidence that the association between skin color and socioeconomic status changed during the 30-year period between 1950 and 1980. The association between skin color and life chances appears to be an aspect of black life in America that persists in spite of many social, political, and cultural changes that have affected black Americans in the present century.

This study examines Black families’ reliance on secondary wage earners in Atlanta, Georgia during the early twentieth century (1900 and 1936). In periods of economic prosperity and decline, two-parent Black families routinely relied on the employment of mothers and children to supplement the family income. Mothers, children, and extended kin had different positions within the Black family economy, and families’ reliance on these other breadwinners was affected by diverse, albeit, complementary factors. As suggested by family economic and developmental models, the employment of mothers and children was affected by the economic needs and demands associated with the family life cycle. Central was the impact of mothers’ and children’s characteristics on each others’ employment. The presence of working relatives in extended family households was affected by the age of relatives, household size, and to a limited degree the ages of the host families’ children. However, it is argued that the model examined was less useful for explaining the wage earning of extended kin.


This article examines Black young adult parents’ reliance on grandmothers for parenting support. The sample of 487 parents, 18 to 34 years old, was drawn from the National Survey of Black Americans. Parents most often nominated grandmothers as the person they could count on for child care assistance and parental guidance. Mothers and fathers did not differ in their overall nominations of grandmothers. However, mothers were more likely than fathers to rely on grandmothers for both child care assistance and parenting advice. Fathers were more likely than mothers to rely on grandmothers for child care assistance only. Factors affecting parents’ reliance on grandmothers for parenting support varied by gender. For mothers, family closeness, the number of generations in multigenerational family lineages, residence in the rural South, and family proximity were related to increased reliance on grandmothers for parenting support. Among fathers, being employed and family proximity increased their reliance on grandmothers.


This article explores family strategies in two-parent African American households in Atlanta, Georgia during 1900 and 1936. Examined is the relationship between patterns in extended-family living arrangements, boarding, and the employment of secondary wage earners (wives and offspring of the male head). More than one in three households included non-nuclear family members and the majority relied on multiple sources of income. During the Depression, families were less likely to have supplemental income, primarily due to the decline in employment of secondary wage earners. The major area of employment for African American women continued to be domestic in nature, but there was a significant decrease in the amount of in-home laundry work. Bringing others into the household, either extended kin or boarders, also had an impact on both economic strategies and the employment status of mothers’ and children. Both mothers and offspring played a critical role in the family economy and were tied together. The findings illustrate the complexity and interdependency of how families adapted to the increased economic hardship of the Depression and the changes in the occupational structure.


This article is concerned with knowing how African American men defined manhood. Using a conceptualization methodology, the authors attempted to represent a collective interpretation of the meaning of manhood that could incorporate both commonalities and diversity between men and the relationship between ideas across various dimensions. The conceptualization map consists of three central areas: identity and the development of self, connections to family, and spirituality and humanism. There are a multitude of components within each area. The most significant differences were between young men (under 25) and respondents over 30 years of age. In the last few years, Manhood training programs for African American male youth have focused on areas that parallel the constructs identified in this study. In an important sense, manhood, if appropriately developed, is seen as a source of inner strength that can be used to negotiate racism and economic oppression.


This article explores the meaning of manhood as articulated by African American men. Conceptualization and Q-sort methods are used to examine 1) men’s construction of manhood and 2) men’s ratings of the importance of
selected attributes to being a man. Manhood emerged as a multidimensional construct with four major domains and 15 distinct clusters of ideas.


This study explores the community-specific patterns of urban African American children's living arrangements and the variations that occur as children develop. Household information was gathered from mothers or mother surrogates during the target child's first grade year (1966-67) and during adolescence (1975-76). Living arrangements were diverse and fluid, with transitions in household composition and family structure were common. Changes in parents' marital status and the entrances and exits of extended in were major sources of transition and the course of children's living arrangements was related to family type during the first grade.


Examines domain-specific variations in child care and parenting arrangements in a community-defined sample of 757 Black and White urban families. Children lived in a variety of family types (parenting systems ranged from parenting alone to multiple caregivers). The residential status of additional caregivers varied. The effects of family type, income, and child gender on the likelihood of caregivers sharing child care and parenting activities varied by type of activity. Findings demonstrate the potential for parenting isolation and the degree to which primary caregivers, Black and White, go without support in key areas of child care and parenting. However, with whom primary caregivers shared child care and parenting responsibilities also illustrates how both Black and White urban families are often embedded in multigenerational family systems and how they draw on the parenting support of relatives and nonrelatives.


Research on the intersection of race and gender suggests that, for African Americans, racial inequality is more salient than gender inequality. However, theoretical perspectives on the multiplicative effects of status positions and outsider within models suggest that minority group membership can be a catalyst for the development of feminist attitudes. This article examines three issues central to feminism: (1) recognition and critique of gender inequality; (2) egalitarian gender roles, and (3) political activism for the rights of women. The authors found that support for feminist ideology was common for both African American women and men, although the level of support varied depending on the issue and by gender. The authors found partial support for the race saliency hypothesis, but there was also evidence of the multiplicative effects of status positions on African Americans' feminist attitudes.


Examines stratification among African American women by skin color on indices such as education, income, and spousal status, addressing how racial and colonial ideologies situate whiteness and blackness as symbolic representations in relation to one another and the subsequent systems of discrimination that develop from those ideologies. Infusing the concept of constructed notions of beauty into this racial paradigm further elaborates this process for African American women. It is hypothesized that light-skinned women would have higher educational attainment, higher personal incomes, and would be more likely to marry high-status husbands than would darker-skinned women. Even when controlling for background variables, 1979/80 National Survey of Black Americans data (N = 2, 107 adult interviews) confirm all three of the hypotheses, & the significance of skin color, particularly the privileging of lightness, is demonstrated.


This study seeks to advance our understanding of the complexities of race by taking a comparative look at how skin color, ethnic identity and racial discrimination operate in the lives of African Americans and Mexican Americans. The data used were from two national probability samples including the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) and the National Chicano Survey (NCS). The findings indicate consistently across—and
within-race and gender groups, dark skin incurs a learning and earnings penalty.


Class differences in racial attitudes among blacks were examined using the 1979-1980 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). The authors examined two perspectives - class realignment and ethnic competition - as possible explanations for attitudinal differences between ethnic competition perspective which predicts a more critical attitude among middle- than lower-class black toward the stratification system. However, no significant class differences between classes with respect to political action were found. In general, the results provide qualified support for Wilson’s class polarization thesis.


Tested various models of the effects of positive and negative exchanges on positive and negative affect using structural equation modeling. Based on a probability sample of 718 middle-aged and older adults (aged 50-95 yrs), the relationships between social exchanges and psychological well-being were examined both within the total sample and within subgroups of individuals who had experienced few vs. many life events. Within the general population, the Domain Specific Model resulted in the best fit. That is, positive exchanges were associated with positive affect, and negative exchanges were associated with negative affect. However, among the subgroup that had experienced more life events, there was a significantly stronger relationship between negative exchanges and negative affect. These findings suggest that to understand the effects of social exchanges, it is important to consider the context of life events.


The two-stage rejection rule telephone sample design described by Waksberg (1978) is modified to improve the efficiency of telephone surveys of the U.S. Black population. Experimental tests of sample design alternatives demonstrate that: a) use of rough stratification based on telephone exchange names and states; b) use of larger cluster definitions (200 and 400 consecutive numbers) at the first stage; and c) rejection rules based on racial status of the household combine to offer improvements in the relative precision of a sample, given fixed resources. Cost and error models are examined to simulate design alternatives.


The Council of the Gerontological Society of America established the Task Force on Minority Issues in Gerontology to address three major goals related to improved research and theory in aging and human development: 1) increasing the quantity and quality research on race and ethnic issues; 2) increasing the number of racial/ethnic minority researchers; and 3) increasing the participation of racial/ethnic members in the activities and governance of the Gerontological Society of America. This editorial was written to heighten the awareness among readers and contributors to the Journal of why and how meeting these three major objectives may contribute to better theory and research on psychological processes related to aging and human development.


This article stresses several aspects of research on the mental health problems of black Americans. Mental health and mental illness of American blacks have to be understood within the historical, political, social, and economic context of their lives. The environment provides a rich contextual background for understanding mental health and mental illness in black population groups. For example, poverty has immediate effects on the nature of current functioning, but it also serves to curtail the types of life experiences needed for adequate growth and development of families and children. There is a need for more epidemiological research upon the nature, extent, and distribution of both psychological distress and discrete mental illness disorders. It is also clear, however, that research on race and mental health must not stop with the investigation of exposure to stress. The author further
calls for more research on the practical policy issues of access to, and utilization of, specific professional help sources, particularly the specialty mental health sector.


This review of the 1985 Handbooks of Aging stresses the growing emphasis on the inter-relationship of biological, psychological, and social aging. The Handbooks are reviewed in the context of four major themes: population aging; age, cohort, period, and generational influences; social, psychological, and biological inter-relatedness; and social, cultural, and familial influences on aging. It was concluded that the Handbooks made a significant contribution to our knowledge of aging processes. Notable progress has been made since the publication of the first edition, and it is suggested that the publication of the third edition will see even further scientific progress within the themes noted in this review.


Previous research in white aged populations has often been derived from disengagement, activity, or personality theories. The relevance, however, of any of these conceptual frameworks to the black aged is problematic because of their development in white samples and the lack of empirical data documenting their applicability to non-whites. The lack of systematic empirical research on black aged, and particularly on the determinants of life satisfaction, provided the major impetus for the study. Interview schedules were individually administered to 102 non-institutionalized retired men and women residing in a large urban area. A multiple regression analysis reveals a number of factors related to life satisfaction. The results are supportive of previous studies in white samples but are sufficiently distinct to raise questions regarding the applicability of those prior findings to black aged.


This article examined the relationships between the experiences and perception of racism and the physical and mental health status of African Americans. The study was based upon thirteen year, four wave, national panel data (n=623) from the NSBA. Personal experiences of racism were found to have both adverse and salubrious immediate and cumulative effects on the physical and mental well-being of African Americans. The authors suggest future research on possible factors contributing to the relationship between racism and health status among African Americans.


The study examines mental health status of the black elderly in the NSBA. Previous studies of mental health and illness in this population have been either geographically limited or based upon small national samples that have not permitted reasonable investigation of important demographic differences. Traditional measures of well-being are used in an attempt to explore the multi-dimensional nature of the mental health concept in the black elderly. The findings of the analyses indicate a great deal of heterogeneity among the black elderly as well as significant relationships between global measures of well-being and measures of psychological distress. The implications of these findings for a multi-dimensional concept of mental health in black Americans are discussed.


Participation in the Detroit Area Study (DAS) provided the opportunity to examine the assumption of external validity as it relates to sampling concerns. The were two different experimental situations which each respondent participated in is described followed by a discussion of what can be accomplished from the results of this study.

For better or for worse “race” has perhaps been the most ongoing significant factor in the history of American society. This importance is reflected in doctrines, laws, policies, ideologies, relationships, and daily lives. The legacy of its overarching place in society is illustrated by the significant inequalities along racial lines that continue to plague this country. This review examines the economic, social, community, educational, health, and political circumstances that characterize current differentials between Blacks and Whites as the nation begins to experience unparalleled increases in racial and ethnic diversity. Questions such as “Who is an American?” are addressed, as well as three visions for future race relationships in the US.


The National Panel Survey of Black Americans (NPSBA) and the Three-Generation National Survey of Black American Families, both national household probability samples of African Americans are the only available datasets of their kind. Both stem from that National survey of Black Americans (NSBA) which surveyed a sample of 2,107 self-identified Black American adults. The methodological issues, samples, survey content, findings and availability through ICPSR distribution are presented and discussed.


Limited research has been done examining racial differences in mental health status and help seeking behavior. Studies on racial differences in the prevalence of psychiatric disorders have resulted in a pattern of discrepant findings. This is due in part to the lack of a truly national sample on which to base comparisons. This study used data from the NPSBA to examine the mental health, stress, and coping strategies of young, midlife, younger-old and oldest old African Americans in 1980 and again in 1987. Differences in problem severity were examined in the light of the individual's gender, income, marital status, and the types of problem experienced. Sources of help sought for problems were also examined in these same contexts. The results indicated a great deal of personal distress in the black population. Moreover, there appears to be an increased level and prevalence of mental distress over the last decade. Younger black males showed the most notable increase in problem severity. Relationships among factors such as income, age, and marital status and mental health and help seeking are more complex than suggested in previous studies. The severity of the problem did not influence the use of help from informal sources, but having a more serious problem increased the likelihood that an individual will seek help from professional sources.


The nature of kin-based support networks and the operation of demographic and family network characteristics as determinants of specific assistance types (i.e., financial, emotional, child care) are explored in the NSBA among single and married African American mothers. Special attention is given to the role of marital status in the operation of kin support networks by focusing on the diversity within the single category (i.e., never married, divorced/separated, widowed). Region, age, household structure, proximity to family and kin affinity all emerged as significant predictors of assistance from extended kin. Significant contrasts were found between never married and married mothers (financial assistance), as well as never married and widowed mothers (emotional assistance). Interaction effects between marital status and poverty ratio, as well as between marital status and proximity of immediate family were found. These and other findings are discussed with regard to marital status distinctions in understanding family-based support.


The study examined the relationship between symptoms of psychiatric morbidity and health problems using the NSBA. Subjects experiencing a high level of psychiatric symptomatology had a significantly higher number of health problems and reported a lower level of satisfaction with their overall health than blacks with low levels of psychiatric symptoms or those who never experienced emotional problems. These relationships persisted after controlling for age, gender, socioeconomic factors, and traditional risk factors for health problems. Prospective psychiatric epidemiologic studies, utilizing better measures of psychological distress and objective health outcome
measures, are needed to clarify the relationship between psychiatric difficulties and health problems among black Americans.


This study examines the relationship between anger expression, other psychosocial measures, and health problems in the NSBA. Subjects indicating a high level of outwardly expressed anger during a period in which they experienced a severe personal problem have a significantly higher number of health problems than their counterparts who express low and moderate levels of anger. Anger expression also significantly interacts with a measure of life strain (employment status) to predict health problems. Unemployed blacks are more likely to have a higher number of health problems if anger is expressed outwardly at a high level. The relationship is found to be independent of age, gender, urbanicity, smoking, and drinking problems. The overall pattern of the findings suggests that blacks who are at increased risk for health problems may be identified by how often anger is experienced and expressed during periods of emotional distress.


To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the THE BLACK COLLEGIAN Magazine we present a profile of the United States’ African American population over the last 30 years. This article extends a 1996 report for THE BLACK COLLEGIAN by Tania Mann, entitled “Profile of African Americans, 1970-1995.” The present article provides an overview of the significant trends and markers of the African American population over the last three decades of the 20th century. This work draws heavily from recent research by the authors on race relations in American society and the position of African Americans in a diversifying nation, particularly the book published by the National Policy Association, New Directions: African Americans in a Diversifying Nation.


This study examines the relationship between underemployment, underpayment, attributions, and self-esteem among black men. The data for the study were available from black males sampled in the NSBA. The sample consisted of 794 males, 500 of whom were currently employed full time. Because secondary data were used, this is an objective, not subjective assessment of the relationships between underemployment, underpayment, attributions, and self-esteem. The result showed that underemployment and underpayment did not lower the self-esteem of black men. In addition, the attributional effects of underemployment and underpayment on self-esteem were not significant, but in the expected directions. Future studies should measure the self-esteem of men and women, both blacks and whites, and should relate it to their employment status and their subjective feelings of underemployment.


The focus of the study is on the importance of reference group comparisons in understanding the effects of underemployment and underpayment on psychosocial functioning. The sample includes currently employed full-and part-time black and white males. Underemployment and underpayment indices were created for black men by applying the black and white male regression estimates. The research lends considerable support to the importance of reference group comparisons in assessing the psychosocial functioning outcomes of underemployment and underpayment. The downward comparison theory presented by Wills (1981) seems to provide a unified and meaningful way of organizing the research findings.


The study focuses on how underemployment and underpayment differentially affect happiness as a function of family roles. The sample includes currently employed full (40 hrs a week) and part-time (+ 20 hrs) black males (N=500) and white males (N=606). The white sample was taken from data collected in the American View Their Mental Health Study. The black sample was taken from data collected in the NSBA. These two surveys offer complimentary perspectives and multiple indicators of relevant variables. The research lends considerable support
to the potential importance of social support particularly the support of a spouse as a buffer to underemployment and underpayment among working black and white men.

The author examines the relationship between underemployment, underpayment, and psychosocial stress for 500 currently employed full and part-time black males. Data used was collected from the NSBA. Although the effects of underemployment and underpayment on psychosocial stress were not significant, in general, the relationships were in the hypothesized directions. More specifically, the findings point to the contention that the basic problem underlying inconsistency effects is conflicting expectations.

Although the labor utilization framework has been used to analyze the effects of demographic composition on underemployment, it has not separated the effects for Black males and females. This paper used a modified version of the labor utilization framework to measure the types of underemployment for Black males and females. The sample was taken from data collected in the NSBA. The results reveal that a larger percentage of Black females compared to Black males are unemployed or discouraged, underemployed by low hours, and underemployed by low income. More importantly, mismatch underemployment was the most prevalent underemployment type for both males and females. Consequently, the level of educational attainment may not be the key variable as is noted in determining the pattern of labor force utilization of Blacks.

This article examines the findings of Barnett, Armstrong, and Casper (1999), “Evidence of increasing coronary heart disease mortality among black men of lower social class”. It is a reasonable hypothesis that the poorer coronary heart disease mortality trends among male African-Americans in North Carolina reflect the cumulative effects of lower and worsening economic position during the period 1984-1993. While drawing the links between these population health changes and socioeconomic factors is not necessarily easy, there is considerable evidence to suggest their existence. This article addresses these widening disparities in coronary heart disease mortality by social class, as well as the economic vulnerability of African American men.

Data from the NSBA are used to examine the effects of skin-tone variations of 2,107 blacks on educational attainment, occupation, and income, net of such antecedent factors as parental socioeconomic status and such contemporaneous factors as sex, region of residence, urbanicity, age, and marital status. The findings are that not only does complexion have significant net effects on stratification outcomes, but it is also a more consequential predictor of occupation and income than such background characteristics as parents’ socioeconomic status. Results are consistent with an interpretation that suggests that the continuing disadvantage that darker blacks experience is due to persisting discrimination against them in the contemporary United States.

Because men and women differ with regard to independent and interdependent self-construals, we propose that downward comparisons are more likely to lower women’s achievement-related self-evaluations compared to men’s. We also hypothesize that gendered self-schemas provide men with advantages in the processing of self-related dispositional information and women with advantages in the processing of self-related social-contextual information. To the extent that a downward social comparison presents a potential threat to the self, men and women differ in how effectively they can fend off the implications of different types of comparisons. Our results show that women are more likely than men to develop negative self-views following downward comparison (Study 1 n=59). This effect is driven by the culturally normative focus on dispositional information in social comparisons (Study 2 n=244). When explicitly asked to focus on contextual information, the pattern of findings is reversed for men and women. Further, women are less confident about their achievements when focused on dispositional as compared with contextual information (Study 3 n=92).

Carried out an evaluation of the prevalence, distribution, and mental health correlates of perceived discrimination among socially disadvantaged people based on the results of large-scale national survey. Participants were randomly selected and interviewed by telephone. Eligible age range was 25-74 years. Results show that perceived discrimination is common, with 33.5% reporting exposure to major lifetime discrimination and 60.9% reporting exposure to day-to-day discrimination. Even though perceived discrimination explains only a small part of the observed associations between disadvantaged social status and mental health problems (depression, anxiety, and distress), given its high prevalence, wide distribution, and strong associations with mental health, perceived discrimination needs to be treated seriously in studies of stress and mental health.


A body of research has developed which purports to show that the well-established relationship between race and psychological distress is due entirely to social class. This paper demonstrates that this view is incorrect; while most prior research has assumed that the effects of race and social class are additive, our analysis shows that they are actually interactive. The form of interaction is such that the true effect of race is suppressed and the true effect of social class is magnified in a model that fails to take the interaction into consideration. An analysis of eight different epidemiologic surveys documents this result and shows that race differences in psychological distress are particularly pronounced among people with low incomes. Such results call for renewed interest in the effect of race on mental health.


This study investigates the long-term effects of childhood family structure on self-esteem (self-confidence and self-deprecation), personal efficacy, and life satisfaction in black adults, using data from the NSBA. Respondents from various family types (e.g., single-parent, mother-headed families) are compared, taking into account whether other adults also were present in the family. Childhood family structure has no significant long-term effects on the four aspects of well-being considered. Personal efficacy, however, is partly shaped in childhood by mother's education. In addition, consistent with other studies, the four dimensions of well-being are influenced by different aspects of adult experience.


The purpose of this paper is to present findings from a series of focus groups that were designed to explore the content domain of negative interaction in the church. Altogether, eight focus groups consisting of sixty-three older adults were conducted. The results suggest that unpleasant encounters in church settings are a significant source of concern and distress for elderly people. A three-part scheme is devised to classify types of negative interaction in the church. Also, data are provided on the coping responses used by older adults when negative interaction arises in their place of worship. The implications of these results for research on negative interaction and health-related outcomes are discussed.


The study used the NSBA to determine whether religious involvement helps to reduce the negative impact of stressful life events. The major outcome measures were self-esteem and feelings of personal control. Three models of the stress process were evaluated empirically: the suppressor, moderator, and distress-deterrent models. The data provided support for the distress-deterrent model only. The findings from this model indicated that although life stress tended to erode feelings of self-worth and mastery, these negative effects were offset or counterbalanced by increased religious involvement.

Increasing social inequalities in health in the United States and elsewhere, coupled with growing inequities in income and wealth, have refocused attention on social class as a key determinant of population health. Routinely analyzing using conceptually coherent and consistent measures of socioeconomic position in US public health research and surveillance, however, remains rare. This review discusses concepts and methodologies concerning, and guidelines for measuring, social class and other aspects of socioeconomic position (e.g. income, poverty, deprivation, wealth, education). These data should be collected at the individual, household, and neighborhood level, to characterize both childhood and adult socioeconomic position; fluctuations in economic resources during these time periods also merit consideration. Guidelines for linking census-based socioeconomic measures and health data are presented, as are recommendations for analyses involving social class, race/ethnicity, and gender. Suggestions for research on socioeconomic measures are provided, to aid monitoring steps toward social equity in health.


Pharmaceutical prices in the United States are under evaluation as policy makers decide how to reduce health care expenditures and public subsidy of the pharmaceutical industry. Furthermore, evidence of higher drug prices in the United States, compared with those in other countries, fuels the prescription drug price debate. These issues are not new to the public forum and much can be learned from prior debates and policies. This paper begins by reviewing the pricing debate with the Kefauver hearings on monopolies held during the late 1950s and early 1960s and continues with the current price debate. Government reports and academic studies are discussed, addressing the methodological differences and their implications to policy makers. Finally, the literature review includes foreign government prescription drug programs with their respective prescription drug expenditures. Evidence provided by academics about the pricing practices of the drug manufacturers indicates product quality and price information would force firms to compete on the price level, thus reducing pharmaceutical product pricing to the "true" market price.


A prominent hypothesis regarding social inequalities in mortality is that the elevated risk among the socioeconomically disadvantaged is largely due to the higher prevalence of health risk behaviors among those with lower levels of education and income. The objective of this study is to investigate the degree to which 4 behavioral risk factors (cigarette smoking alcohol drinking, sedentary lifestyle, and relative body weight) explain the observed association between socioeconomic characteristics and all-cause mortality. This study used a longitudinal survey design. It investigated the impact of education, income, and health behaviors on the risk of dying within the next 7.5 years. The participants included a nationally representative sample of 3617 adult women and men participating in the Americans’ Changing Lives survey. Educational differences in mortality were explained in full by the strong association between education and income. Controlling for age, sex, race, urbanicity, and education, the hazard rate ratio of mortality was 3.22 for those in the lowest-income group and 2.34 for those in the middle-income group. When health risk behaviors were considered, the risk of dying was still significantly elevated for the lowest-income group and the middle-income group. Although reducing the prevalence of health risk behaviors in low-income populations is an important public health goal, socioeconomic differences in mortality are due to a wider array of factors and therefore, would persist even with improved health behaviors among the disadvantaged.


This paper presents a model of social factors affecting infant mortality and presents evidence that differences in the socio-environmental conditions in which black and white Americans live are in large part responsible for a two-to-one ratio in infant mortality.

This paper tests the hypothesis, that the National Death Index (NDI) might be less accurate for determining vital status for members of ethnic and racial minority groups than for whites, using the NPSBA. To test the specificity of the NDI, information was submitted on 157 randomly selected respondents from the NPSBA who were known to be living as of 1992 and also on 153 known deceased respondents. The NDI was found to be highly sensitive and accurate, however specificity in vital status would have been markedly better if social security numbers were provided.


The effect of extreme social isolation and use of community-based senior services on longevity was examined in a national sample of African American elderly women (aged 55-96 yrs). Consistent with previous research on the social integration/mortality link, African American elderly women who were extremely socially isolated were hypothesized to have a higher 5-yr mortality rate. It was also hypothesized that use of community senior services would be negatively associated with 5-yr mortality. Results of logistic regression analysis controlling for age, education, income, and health status found that extremely socially isolated African American elderly women were three times more likely than the nonisolated women to die within the 5-yr period from the initial survey. Use of community senior services did not have a relationship on mortality.


This study reports on the use of a single-item self-rating of subjective health as a screen for high levels of psychological distress in three age cohorts of adults using data from the National Survey of Black Americans. Among respondents who report ever having experienced a serious personal problem, subjective health exhibits poor sensitivity and very low poor positive values in all three age cohorts, in relation to scores on an eight-item psychological symptom checklist. However, satisfactory levels of specificity and extremely high negative predictive values (nearly 100%) as well as provocative age differences in these findings, underscore the complexity of the relationship between subjective health and psychological distress in African Americans.


Examined the impact of religious involvement on health status and psychological well-being using data on older adults from 3 national probability surveys: the Myth and Reality of Aging (2,797 Ss), the Quality of American Life (1,209 Ss), and Americans' Changing Lives (1,669 Ss) studies. Constructs are measured by single items and indices that vary across data sets. A proposed theoretical model specifies direct effects of religiosity on health and well-being and indirect effects on well-being through health. Analyses consist of structural-equation modeling of confirmed measurement models using weighted least squares estimation in LISREL 8.03. The model is analyzed first as specified and then rerun controlling for the effects of 6 exogenous constructs: age, gender, race, marital status, education, and geographical region. Findings reveal excellent overall fit in all 3 samples and the presence of statistically significant religious effects, notably positive net effects of organizational religiosity, in all 3 samples. These results build on those of prior studies based mostly on samples limited regionally or methodologically or to particular racial or ethnic groups.


Using data from NSBA, this study tests a theoretical linking religiosity, health status, and life satisfaction. Findings reveal statistically significant effects for organizational religiosity on both health and life satisfaction, for non-organizational religiosity on health, and for subjective religiosity on life satisfaction. Analysis of structural invariance reveals a good fit for the range of adult age groups, 30 - 55. After controlling for the effects of several sociodemographic correlates of religiosity, health, and well-being, organizational religiosity maintains a strong, significant effect on life satisfaction. These findings suggest that the association between religion and well-being is consistent over the life course and not simply an artifact of the confounding measures of organizational religiosity and health status.

This panel study explores the effects of eight measures of religious involvement on three indicators of well-being in a national probability sample of African Americans. Religious measures include religious attendance, church membership, church activity, reading religious books, listening to religious TV/radio, prayer, asking for prayer, and subjective religiosity. Well-being indicators include single-item measures of life satisfaction and happiness, and a 10-item version of the RAND Mental Health Index (MHI), a scale assessing psychological distress. Using data from multiple waves of the National Survey of Black Americans, religious effects on well-being are examined both cross-sectionally at each wave and longitudinally across waves. Findings reveal strong, statistically significant, and consistent religious effects on seven sociodemographic variables. Longitudinal religious effects on well-being are present bivariately, but disappear after controlling for the effects of baseline well-being, lagged religious involvement, and health. The meaning and interpretation of contemporaneous as opposed to longitudinal religious effects on well-being are discussed.


This study examines differences by age cohort in the frequency of prayer, racial and gender variation in prayer, and religious and sociodemographic correlates of prayer. Analyses are conducted across four age cohorts (18-30, 31-40, 41-60, > 61) using data from the 1988 National Opinion Research Center (NORC) General Social Survey (N = 1,481). Findings reveal that prayer is frequently practiced at all ages, but more frequently in successively older cohorts. In addition, females and, to a lesser extent, African Americans pray more frequently than males and Whites, respectively. Further, hierarchical multiple regression analyses reveal statistically significant associations across age cohorts between prayer and key measures of religious behavior, feeling, belief, and experience.


Gender differences are examined in over a dozen religious indicators using data from the NSBA. While both genders manifest moderate to high levels of religiosity according to measures of organizational, nonorganizational, and subjective religiosity, Black women significantly exceed Black men in levels of religiosity. This consistent gender difference is found within each of seven age groups, and withstands controlling for the effects of education, marital status, employment status, region, urbanicity, and satisfaction with health.


Using data form NSBA, this article describes the confirmation and validation of a multidimensional measure of religious involvement of African American adults. The three-dimensional measurement model comprising organizational, nonorganizational, and subjective religiosity is developed using confirmatory analysis. With the traditional unidimensional model of religious involvement used in the past, the diversity of African American life, as well as that of other ethnic minorities, has been overlooked. The presumption of heterogeneity in both patterns of religious involvement and in forms of religious expression by researchers may inadvertently rule out the possibility of individual components. This multi-dimensional model is compared to alternative one-and two-dimensional models and provides theoretical and empirical advantages over models in which the variety and forms of involvement are left largely undifferentiated.


This paper presents findings on racial and gender differences in religiosity among older adults using data from four national surveys. These include the second Quality of American Life study, the Myth and Reality of Aging study, wave one of Americans’ Changing Lives, and the 1987 sample of the General Social Survey. These four data sources collectively include a broad range of items which tap the constructs of organizational, nonorganizational, and subjective religiosity. In all four studies, and for most indicators, results revealed significant racial and gender differences which consistently withstood controlling for sociodemographic effects, including age, education, marital status, family income, region, urbanicity, and subjective health.

This article uses the NSBA in a secondary analysis of the use of support networks as a possible survival strategy adopted by African-American women with children. This study examines the following: to what extent do African-American mothers use support networks to reduce their role strain, how does the perception of support influence reports of role strain, is there a relationship between the number of children and reports of economic, household maintenance, and parental role strain, and what other demographic factors may contribute to role strain.


This paper reports the findings from a study on perceptions of parental role strain as reported by 592 African-American others of minor-aged children. The research focused on the extent to which utilization of traditional African-American networks would alter role strain reports. The availability of supportive current partners, number of minor children living in the home, availability of relations in the same state, and residence in the Northeastern section of the United States were each significantly related to the respondents' role strain reports. The author analyzes the findings in terms of their individual, local, and national implications for prevention.


There are many theories that attempt to explain out-group hatred. What forms the catalyst for turning apprehension into hatred for out-groups is an under-explored question in the literature. According to Realistic Group Conflict Theory (RGCT), groups that are in competition develop prejudicial attitudes towards each other. This paper examined the role of group conflicts and perceived threats in the relationship between natives and immigrants in Germany and the Netherlands. The ethnic composition of each country, the migration patterns of immigrants, and native perceptions of immigrants as potential threats to their well-being, are critical elements in understanding current policy attitudes toward immigrant out-groups. Ordinary Least Squares regression analyses were conducted on large probability samples of native populations from Germany and the Netherlands. These analyses revealed that in each country perceived numerical threat and threats to citizenship entitlements, posed by immigrants, were associated with greater endorsement of harsh immigration policies. The contributions of the media, government policies, and perceived threat of immigrants to model of group conflict are discussed.


Research examining the relationship between social support and psychological well-being has largely ignored the negative side of social interactions. However, empirical evidence suggests that negative interactions can potentially be more harmful than social support is helpful. This article critically reviews the literature investigating the relationship between social support and negative social interactions and their simultaneous effect on psychological well-being. A review of 28 studies revealed that there are conceptual, theoretical, and methodological limitations associated with this body of research. In order to unravel some of these limitations, studies are grouped according to three conceptual models: the additive effects model, the moderator model, and the domain-specific model. Finally, the article discusses directions social work practice research should take to tackle and fully appreciate the complexities of the relationship between social support and psychological well-being.


A long history of theory and research has documented the relationship between poverty and mental health (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1965; Dressler, 1985; Liem & Liem, 1978; Pearlin & Johnson, 1977; Srole, Langner, Michael, Opler, & Rennie, 1962). Research findings indicate that adults who are poor have more mental health problems than their economically advantaged counterparts. Given strong empirical evidence for the poverty-mental health association, researchers have gone on to investigate the nature of the association. Several deficits and threats to health inherent in poverty have been identified, including stressful, unRewarding, and demoralizing work for the working poor, lack of the necessities and amenities of life, and isolation from information and support (Buck, 1986). It has also been suggested that economically disadvantaged families often live in neighborhoods...
marked by high crime rates, inadequate housing, and a proportion of births to teenage mothers (Jargowsky, 1997; McLoyd, 1990; Wilson, 1996). Ultimately, poor people, by virtue of their circumstances, are exposed and more vulnerable to stressors while also lacking the necessary resources to manage them.


The authors studied weighting adjustments for the National Comorbidity Survey (1990-1992), a large-scale national epidemiologic investigation of the prevalence, risk-factors, and consequences of psychiatric morbidity and comorbidity in the United States. Weighting adjustments for differential selection with households, new construction, unit nonresponse, and poststratification were examined separately and in combination. Specific issues addressed included the magnitude of the bias incurred from ignoring the weights, the added variance from weighting and how well this was predicted by simple formulae, and the performance of methods for trimming the weights. Weights had quite modes effects on point estimates of prevalences but resulted in major increases in variance unless trimmed. The weights after trimming and poststratification appeared to work well. It is suggested that the added variance from weighting be carefully monitored in similar surveys. Alternative to the use of trimming for controlling variance are worth exploring.


This article examines the diversity in intergenerational family and social support patterns that affect care giving of older African Americans, American Indians, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and persons of Hispanic origins. It should be noted, however, that much of the literature available to date has focused on African Americans and Hispanics, America’s largest racial and ethnic minority populations.


The main determinants of rehospitalization of elderly people were studied with a longitudinal sample of 264 persons older than 60 years at a Midwestern, urban, university affiliated hospital. Path analysis was applied to survey data collected for this study. Seventeen percent of subjects were readmitted within 30 days of discharge. Controlling for health and socioeconomic factors, the main determinant of readmission was the discharge placement; those placed back into the community for care in the home were more likely to be rehospitalized than those discharged to institutions. Contrary to predictions in the literature and the authors’ expectations, patient involvement in discharge planning had no discernible effect on placement decisions and subsequent hospitalization. The implications of these findings for discharge planning by social workers are discussed.


Religion plays a major role in the lives of African Americans, specifically among African American women. The pervasiveness of findings regarding the importance of religion and church in the lives of African American women has unfortunately obscured the experiences of other African American women who report decidedly lower levels of religious involvement. This study attempts to broaden the scope of our understanding of African American women’s religious lives by focusing on the attitudes and practices of this group of women through quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data used from a study of African American women’s religious and spiritual experiences were used to provide a context for the interpretation of findings from the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). The findings suggest two important points. First, that low levels of formal religious behaviors are associated with substantial levels of subjective religiosity and private prayer. Second, qualitative research can and does enhance our understanding of the meanings and practices that are associated with religiousness.


This multi-method study explored the relationship between gender, spirituality, spiritual well-being, and several indices of religiosity including religious participation and religious motivation. Different patterns of relationships
among these indices emerged for men and women. For men Spiritual Well-being was related to the presence and influence of church-oriented socializing agents as well as to the belief in God's power to influence the course of events. Mean scores on measures of the importance of religion, current religious participation, religious motivation, as well as spiritual well-being were not significantly different for men and women.


This article outlines an integrative, dynamic approach to stress and is, in part, a response to emergent debates within social science research and practice that suggest that African Americans are currently experiencing the reverberating psychological effects of slavery and oppression. It is the product of the work of an African-American mental health think tank situated at the Community Mental Health Council, Chicago, Illinois. We suggest the need to attend to biopsychosocial, environmental, and cultural factors that inform both exposure and responses to stress. Finally, consideration is given to matters of resiliency.


Religiosity and spirituality are defining features of African American life. However, within psychology, research on African American religiosity and spirituality has proceeded without benefit of a conceptual framework. This paper labors toward a framework that examines the roles of religion and spirituality in the development and maintenance of social relationships. We reviewed empirical research on the role of religion and spirituality in the lives of African American with an eye toward illuminating the affective, cognitive and behavioral mechanisms through which religion and spirituality shape individual, family and communal relationships across the developmental span. Future directions for quantitative and qualitative research on African American religious and spiritual life are suggested.


Examined gay men's and lesbians' disclosure of sexual orientation to immediate and distant kin. Questionnaires assessing disclosure and demographic backgrounds were completed by 506 African American lesbians and 673 gay men (all Ss aged 18-70 yrs), recruited nationally. Results indicate that most had disclosed their sexual orientation to immediate family (i.e., mothers, fathers and siblings) but fewer to other relatives. There was a clear preference for disclosure to females in the immediate family. Significant positive predictors of disclosure for both immediate and more distant family members were being older and reporting initiating homosexual sexual activity at a younger age. Self-reported HIV infection among men predicted immediate family awareness of the individual's homosexuality, but not awareness by the extended family. Apparently over time, individuals disclose homosexuality to those within the close family network. Results are discussed within the context of African American family networks.


Previous research has not systematically examined the relationship of perceived race-based discriminations to labor force participation or job-related stresses/problems experienced by African American women. This study investigated the relative contributions of perceived race-based discriminations and sociodemographic characteristics to employment status and job stress in a national probability sample (NSBA) of Black women in the United States. Logit and polychotomous logistic regression analyses revealed that Black women's current employment status was best explained by sociodemographic measures. In contrast, the combination of perceived discrimination and sociodemographic differentially affect patterns of employment status and perceived job stress in the work environment of Black women. Implications of these findings for the health of African American women are discussed.

Unique substantive and methodological issues are involved in conducting survey research on sexual and HIV-risk related behaviors among Americans of African descent. Problem conceptualization, sampling, design of instruments, mode of data collection, interviewer/respondent characteristics, community resistance, and data analysis and interpretation are discussed. The lack of survey research on sensitive health issues is noted. Possible methods for addressing these issues are drawn from the authors' experiences conducting national research on the general and at risk black community populations. It is concluded that attention to these issues can substantially improve the quality of research on AIDS related behaviors in black communities. Finally, it is suggested that behavioral theories and sophisticated methodological and analytic approaches, sensitive to the special cultural dimensions of racial/ethnic life in the United States, would contribute substantially to the scientific armaments needed to successfully meet the challenge of the AIDS epidemic.


The aim of this study was to examine relationships between income and mortality, focusing on the predictive utility of single-year and multiyear measures of income, the shape of the income gradient in mortality, trends in this gradient over time, the impact of income change on mortality, and the joint effects of income and age, race, and sex on mortality risk. Data were taken from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics for the years 1968 through 1989. Fourteen 10-year panels were constructed in which predictors were measured over the first 5 years and vital status over the subsequent 5 years. The panels were pooled and logistic regression was used in the analysis. Income level was found to be a strong predictor of mortality, especially for persons under the age of 65 years. Persistent low income was particularly consequential for mortality. Income instability was also important among middle-income individuals. Single-year and multiyear income measures had comparable predictive power. All effects persisted after adjustment for education and initial health status. The issues of low income and income instability should be addressed in population health policy.


Despite considerable evidence documenting a strong and persistent relationship between socioeconomic position and mortality, recent research suggests that this association may be weaker among women. In our examination of gender differences in the socioeconomic gradient in mortality, we argue that this inconsistency arises from the failure to consider the ways in which gender is a fundamental constituent of socioeconomic position. The data used are from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics. Respondents including all household heads and their partners, aged 29 years and older in 1972 (N = 5,665; 56% female), were followed until 1991, death, or attrition. Discrete time event history analysis was used to examine the predictors of death between 1972 and 1991. Of the key socioeconomic predictors, years of education was measured at baseline, while earned income was a time-varying covariate. We find no gender differences in the effect of respondent' own socioeconomic positions on their mortality risk. However, increasing spousal income raises men's odds of dying, while the opposite is true for women. Our results raise questions about the prevailing view that the socioeconomic gradient in mortality is weaker among women. Moreover, gender difference in the effects of spousal earning on mortality risk suggest that their labor market rewards have fundamentally different meanings for women and men.


Policy changes as well as improved treatment and rehabilitation practices mean that more women with mental illness are carrying out parenting roles. However, mental health services have only given limited attention to parenting problems and benefits for clients with psychiatric disabilities. Previous research has focused more on mothers' clinical characteristics, and less on the social and economic contexts in which parenting occurs. The present report involves a target, primarily minority sample of women with serious mental illness who are mothers and who are being served in the public mental-health system of a large urban area. We sought to collect more comprehensive information to better understand their situations and improve service provisions. The women in the study report experiencing severe financial strains and health problems, even when compared with other low-income urban-based populations. Many also have experienced crises, loss of significant others, assaults, and other negative life events that are very stressful, along with a high number of chronic hassles. They do have resources available to them, through interpersonal supports, religion, and mental-health services. The discussion focuses on implications for micro- and macro-practice to improve these women's lives, their parenting, and the potential
outcomes of their children.


This paper presents an explanation for black educational underachievement. Termed the Conditioned Failure Model, it consists of five major dimensions: social inferences, expectations, causal judgments, sentiment, and behavioral effects. The model casts the concept of teacher expectancy (expectations) as a mediator between cultural evaluations (social inferences) and causal attributions (causal judgments). The Conditioned Failure Model proposes that since teachers’ expectancies are often negative with regard to the ability of black students, it seems likely that successful academic performance by these children will generally not be attributed to their ability, while poor performance will. Further, the model contends that a violation of teachers’ expectations cause cognitive tension, which may result in a dislike for students or a devaluation of students’ work (sentiment). To the extent that positive sentiments manifest themselves in rewards, it is proposed that black students will be rewarded for failure and punished for success. What is produced is a “vicious cycle” that results in a general mitigation of student aspirations and consequent poor scholastic performance (behavioral effects).


As more and more data sets become longitudinal, researchers, and manuscript reviewers, are becoming increasingly sensitive to issues of sample attrition. This study explores the sample selection issues within the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Attrition models were established to provide a substantive example using data from the fourth wave of the NSBA. Distress is used to show estimates that are unadjusted for attrition compared to those that are adjusted using two different methods. The analysis revealed three important findings. First, the attrition in the NSBA over the four waves is nonrandom. Second, the inclusion of interviewer observations is important for the prediction of attrition. And finally, even though the attrition is non-random, once it is taken into consideration, the coefficient estimates change very little. Moreover, socioeconomic status, gender, and urban residence were all factors that predicted attrition.


A national survey investigated the long-term effects of World War II internment on family communication, ethnic preference, confidence in personal rights, and attitudes to redress among third-generation Japanese Americans (sansei) who were infants or young children during incarceration. Findings were compared to those for noninterned sansei with and without parents who had been interned. Differences between interned and noninterned sansei were found primarily in family communication and distance.


No psychiatric epidemiologic study has had more impact on African American mental research than the NIMH Epidemiologic Catchment Area (ECA) Program. Before this ground-breaking investigation, most psychiatric epidemiologic studies of African American mental health were focused on psychological distress with very little interest in the distribution of discrete mental disorders. Very soon after the dissemination of the ECA results, it was no longer enough to focus on group differences in average levels of distress in community surveys. Rather, the task became one of calculating the prevalence of discrete disorders like depression, schizophrenia and anxiety disorders.


Although improving the mental health status of African Americans is an important goal, it is not clear that this can be accomplished by increasing access to professional services. There is a need for more and better epidemiologic research which looks beyond variables commonly associated with stressful social conditions; such as racism, oppression and poor economic conditions. Three bodies of knowledge relevant to black mental health are addressed: the need for an epidemiologic knowledge base for prevention; coping capacity and vulnerability to stress; risk factor identification. The paper concludes that before the prevention of psychopathology in black
populations can be achieved, a number of measurement, theoretical and policy issues must be addressed. Specific directions for future research are outlined.


This paper arrives at a position about what is feasible with respect to the prevention of psychopathology in black Americans. The paper is based on a firm belief in the potential benefits of a public health approach to mental illness prevention in the black community. The public health approach seeks to develop methods for reducing the negative consequences of stress for groups of blacks before they experience elevated levels of distress. The attraction of the public health approach is its emphasis on early intervention with groups rather than individuals. Preventive interventions must, however, be based on sound epidemiologic knowledge about the distribution and course of the specific morbidity outcomes we want to eliminate. At this stage in the development of a prevention strategy for Blacks, the need for better epidemiologic research is more evident than the need for preventive intervention programs.


In 1977, the National Institute of Mental Health funded the NSBA, which was an omnibus that explored numerous issues relevant to black quality of life. One topic that has received much attention is where blacks go for help during periods of crisis. This article provides a brief summary of NSBA findings on the use of informal help, professional help, and insurance coverage. Suggestions for future research directions for those interested in the help-seeking behavior of black Americans are provided.


This paper outlines a research strategy for the primary prevention of psychopathology among black Americans. It argues that the basic philosophical tenets of the Community Mental Health Movement should be embraced as an integral part of this prevention strategy. The paper also argues that mental health prevention programs must be informed by sound epidemiologic research. More importantly, this epidemiologic research must be linked with empirical findings from social psychological and sociological research on black Americans. This latter research, while not specifically focused upon prevention in mental health, does contain valuable information concerning potentially modifiable risk factors appropriate for understanding the development of mental health problems among blacks. As such, this literature has important implications for the design of programs and policies aimed at preventing psychopathology in black Americans. Furthermore, because of the psychosocial and sociological emphasis of this literature, the research strategy outlined provides an opportunity to improve other, non-medical aspects of black American life.


This paper examines how sociodemographic factors (income, education, employment status, age, gender, insurance coverage, and place of residence) are related to the use of hospital emergency rooms for serious personal problems in the NSBA. Bivariate analyses indicated that low income, unemployed, and older respondents were most likely to use the emergency room. Gender, education, insurance coverage, and place of residence were not related to emergency room use. Multivariate analyses revealed that the relationship of age to utilization could be explained by the high prevalence of physical health complaints among the old. The poor and unemployed remained significantly more likely (than the non-poor and those with jobs) to use the emergency room when all other predictors were taken into account. The implications of these findings for health services delivery to the urban black poor and the general illness behavior of black Americans are discussed.


Most epidemiologic studies of race and mental health are conducted on regional data sets which contain very small numbers of black respondents. As a result, the amount of data compiled on risk groups within the black population is limited. This paper argues that better information on risk groups can be gathered from special surveys of minority
group populations. Data from the NSBA and paper extends prior work on these data by exploring the relation
between three socioeconomic status indicators and psychologic distress for different problem situations with an
eight-item symptom checklist. Regression analyses revealed that personal income, family income, and a poverty
index were all negatively related to distress -- but only among respondents who indicated that they were upset
because of an economic or physical health problem. These three indicators were positively related to distress
among those with an emotional adjustment problem. The implications of these findings for psychiatric epidemiology
and preventive intervention programs are discussed.

and mental health services. Community Mental Health Journal, 21(3), 156-166.

This article explores the use of health and mental health services for serious personal problems in the NSBA. The
results indicate low usage of the mental health sector in response to problems. Only 9% of the respondents, who
sought professional help, contacted a community mental health center, psychiatrist or psychologist. Mental health
usage was low even among respondents who felt their problem brought them to the point of a nervous breakdown
and among respondents who conceptualized their distress in “emotional” terms. The traditional health care sector
(doctors, hospitals) and ministers were used more often by blacks in distress. When the use of professional help
only is considered, there appeared to be a large pocket of unmet need in the black community. When the use of
informal help is taken into consideration, however, the percentage of respondents who did not receive help was
considerably lower. The implications of these findings for professional service delivery are discussed.


Despite extensive research, the epidemiologic literature is confusing and inconclusive in its assessment of how
various forms of psychiatric morbidity are distributed within the black population. This article reviews empirical
studies comparing rates of psychiatric morbidity between blacks and whites, focusing on findings from two types of
epidemiologic research: treatment rate studies and community surveys. Two major conclusions are reached. The
first is that no definitive conclusions can be drawn about black mental health status on the basis of treatment rate
studies. The second is that community surveys, while methodologically superior to treatment rate studies, still fall
short of answering important questions pertaining to black mental health status. It is argued that more
epidemiologic research on representative all-black samples, discrete psychiatric disorders, and the
validity/reliability of the NIMH's Diagnostic Interview Schedule is needed in order to adequately address issues of
black mental health.

American Journal of Community Psychology, 12(5), 551-566.

Previous findings on black utilization have been largely obtained from racial comparison studies. Little attention has
been paid to sociodemographic differences or the social psychological processes that affect help seeking behavior
within the black group. The study analyzed data obtained from the NSBA. A multidimensional contingency table
analysis revealed that problems experienced by the lower income group were more serious than those experienced
by the upper income group. Low income respondents were also more likely to state that their personal
distress was caused by a physical health problem. Income was not, however, related to the decision to seek
professional help. The implications of these findings for understanding black illness behavior and the
underutilization of services was discussed.


The impetus for designing ethnic minority groups as "special populations" arose during the 1960s. As a result, it is
widely accepted that increasing access to mental health services among ethnic minorities is a fundamental goal of
the mental health service delivery system. The goal is made even more important by the implicit assumption that
because of inattention to cultural differences, traditional forms of mental health services delivery have not done an
adequate job of meeting the needs of minorities. Thus, the fundamental question is whether cultural differences
made a difference. The purpose of this review is to answer this question by investigating the empirical evidence on
a number of indicators; including, treatment outcome, under-utilization of services, and duration in treatment. Three
approaches to increasing access for minorities are discussed: enhancing cultural sensitivity among majority
therapists by retraining them to be more culturally knowledgeable, hiring more ethnic minority therapists, and setting up alternative of parallel services targeted to specific ethnic groups. An alternative approach embraces a public health model, which views social problems in the environment as important antecedents of psychological difficulty among minorities. More research is needed in the areas of epidemiology, documentation of under-utilization, and the impact of culturally-specific intervention on increasing use, decreasing premature termination and outcome. A set of recommendations for improving mental health service delivery to ethnic minorities is proposed.


This paper is an encouragement to African Americans, regardless of income, to take personal responsibility for their health. This review discusses each side of the individual versus societal responsibility issue and provides a rationale for integrating these two perspectives. It argues that the tradition of community-based self-help among African Americans is a mechanism for personal empowerment that can lead to collective action. There are important implications for the improvement of African American health. Effective health behavior change strategies with black populations will require an integration of personal responsibility and advocacy for social systems change. The formation of effective self-help community-based coalition partnerships is a viable strategy for the development of systematic changes to address the health disparity problem. Affiliations with self-help organizations and community coalitions for health empowerment is offered as a strategy for community infrastructure development with potential for improving quality of life.


This paper provides baseline data on sex differences in the use of professional help for serious personal problems in the NSBA. Bivariate analyses revealed that women had higher levels of psychological distress and were significantly more likely to seek professional help. They were also more likely to utilize physicians and social service agencies. The relationship of gender to these help seeking measures remained significant even when the effects of problem severity and differential problem definition were taken into account. Controlling for income, however, eliminated the sex differences for social services use - but not physician use. The implications of these findings for the use of mental health utilization statistics to make inferences about sex differences in mental health status among blacks were discussed. Future research directions for explaining the propensity to use physicians among black females and the apparent under-use of professional services among black males were also discussed.


This article examines perceived barriers to the utilization of medical care among the uninsured in the NSBA. Uninsured respondents were more likely to feel that it was difficult for them to receive medical care, and that they needed more care than they were obtaining. The uninsured in comparison with insured respondents were less likely to utilize private, office-based physicians. Insurance coverage, however, made no difference in hospital emergency room use for health care. The results suggest that blacks are at a severe disadvantage in obtaining needed health care.


Comprehensive data on risk groups within the black population are lacking because of the small number of black Americans usually sampled in national health surveys. Health policy, planning, and service delivery can be substantially improved by having data that reveal the specific health concerns of blacks within these different risk groups. This paper describes the demographic characteristics of the uninsured in the NSBA. The poor, farmers, unemployed, young and pre-retired were the most likely to be uninsured. Persons living in the South and in rural locations were almost more likely to be uninsured than blacks in the North and in urban areas.

A more comprehensive understanding of black help-seeking behavior would come from an approach which, unlike most studies in this area, describes both users and nonusers of formal helping services, and examines the benefits derived from the interpersonal relationships that comprise black friend-and-kin based networks. These analyses focus on four patterns of informal and formal help use in the NSBA. The findings indicated that most people use informal help only, or they use informal and professional help together. In addition, gender, age, income, and problem-type were significantly related to the different patterns of illness behavior.


Despite the fact that blacks are disproportionately exposed to social conditions considered to be antecedents of psychiatric disorder, epidemiologic studies have not conclusively demonstrated that blacks exhibit higher rates of mental illness than whites. The study considers not only rates of psychological distress, but also the stressors that blacks face and the various coping strategies used to adapt to those stressors. The data were obtained from the NSBA. The information on mental health and coping was collected within the context of a single stressful personal problem. The analysis indicates that prayer was an extremely important coping response used by blacks especially among those making less than $10,000, above the age of 55 and women. The informal social network was used quite extensively as a means of coping with problems. This was true for all sociodemographic groups studies. The young (18-34) were less likely than those age 35 and above to seek professional help, while women were more likely than men to seek formal assistance. Income was not related to professional help sources, hospital emergency rooms, private physicians and ministers were used most frequently.


This article reviews the research on external (social system) and internal (personal) attributions to mental health outcomes for African Americans. Although many blacks have aspirations that they are unable to achieve, the motivational and mental health consequences of this situation are unclear. Demonstrated is that the psychiatric-epidemiological and the race-conscious literatures lead to opposite predictions about the relationship of external attributions (fatalism and system blame) to mental health.


Research on race and diagnosis initially focused on black-white differences in depression and schizophrenia. Statistics showing a higher treated prevalence of schizophrenia and a lower prevalence of depression for blacks seemed to support the claim that blacks did not suffer from depression. Others argued, however, that clinicians were misdiagnosing depression in blacks. This article reviews empirical studies of racial differences in individual symptoms and summarizes the evidence on misdiagnosis. It argues that more attention must be paid to resolving two contradictory assumptions made by researchers working in the area of race and diagnostic inference: blacks and whites exhibit symptomatology similarly but diagnosticians mistakenly assume they are different; and blacks and whites display psychopathology in different ways but diagnosticians are unaware of or insensitive to such cultural differences. The article concludes with suggested research directions and a discussion of critical research issues.


Most epidemiologic studies of race and psychological distress are conducted on data sets containing few black respondents. As a result, the amount of data on risk groups within the black population is limited. Furthermore, epidemiologic information is usually confined to demographic correlates of distress only, without exploring variables which might link race and socioeconomic status to psycho-logical distress. This paper explores how help seeking and receipt of financial assistance impact upon psychological distress among blacks with economic problems. Results revealed that while 89% seek outside help, only 21% are successful in obtaining financial assistance. Regression analyses revealed that receipt of financial assistance does not eliminate the negative relationship between socioeconomic status and distress. Results did show that the ability to obtain money decreases distress by reducing the severity of the economic problem. The implications for how psychiatric epidemiology can be used as a basis for public health-related interventions among blacks were discussed.

Using data from the National Survey of Black Americans, this article explores the role of African American ministers in the help seeking of African Americans for serious emotional problems. The authors explore which demographic characteristics and psychosocial factors are related to contacting Black clergy for help, whether certain types and severity of personal problems increase the likelihood of clergy contact, and whether those who go to ministers are also likely to seek help from other professional help sources. Results indicate that women are more likely than men to seek help from ministers. People with economic problems are less likely to contact clergy, while those with death or bereavement problems are more likely to seek help from the clergy. Regardless of the type or severity of the problem, those who contact clergy first are less likely to seek help from other professionals. It is recommended that African American clergy and mental health professionals engage in a mutual exchange of information to increase access to professional care among African Americans with serious personal problems.


This paper explores demographic variations in the use of social service agencies by adult black Americans. Only 14 percent of the respondents who sought professional help contacted a social service agency. Bivariate results indicate that low-income, low-educated, and older respondents are more likely to use social services. Persons with economic problems are also more prone to use social services. Multivariate analyses revealed that low-income respondents are more than twice as likely to use social services regardless of education, age, gender, or problem type. The implications of these results with respect to how blacks utilize professional help are discussed.


This study is a primary data collection that varied patient race and diagnosis and used two diagnostic interviewing conditions: one clinician-structured (phase one) and the other a semi-structured diagnostic instrument (phase two). Four basic research questions are addressed: What is the relationship between race and the hospital diagnosis? How is race related to diagnosis in both research interviewing conditions? Why does diagnostic concordance between the hospital diagnosis and the research diagnosis vary by research interviewing condition? Is diagnostic concordance between the hospital and research diagnosis influenced by patient race? A total of 291 patients completed an interview during phase one, while 665 patients completed an interview during phase two. Blacks were more likely to receive a hospital diagnosis of schizophrenia and less likely to be diagnosed with mood disorder. Patient race was similarly related to the research diagnoses produced in the clinician-structured research condition (phase one). Although less pronounced, a higher percentage of African Americans than whites received a diagnosis of schizophrenia using the semi-structured DSM-III-R Symptom Checklist (phase two). The black-white distribution for mood disorders showed that whites were more likely than blacks to be diagnosed with mood disorder.


The Michigan Department of Corrections has been mandated to make certain improvements in the delivery of services to prisoners with serious mental disorders. The study's purpose was to conduct a psychiatric epidemiologic study of the Michigan prison system. Two surveys were conducted, each using a different methodology for assessing the mental health status of the respondents. The first and larger survey used professional (but non-clinically trained) survey research interviewers, employing the Diagnostic Interview Schedule. While the DIS is certainly the most sophisticated technique for DSM-III case-detection in a survey approach, it does not make judgments about level of functioning or specific treatment needs. Because the study called for decisions about levels of treatment, the Michigan State clinical follow-up was added. Interviews in the second survey used the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-III-R. Based upon the results of these surveys, treatments recommendations were made in the form of percentages of inmates requiring a particular level of treatment.

Comments on the book of E. Sober and D. S. Wilson, *Unto others: The evolution and psychology of unselfish behavior*, which discusses evolutionary and psychological altruism. Human altruism and morality are shaped by genes because individuals with altruistic and moral capacities have a fitness advantage in the areas of sexual selection, social selection, and the advantages of a capacity for commitment, cooperation, and kin selection. Ironically, morality may be a metaphor so powerful that it inhibits careful thinking precisely because our brains are wired by natural selection to see the world in terms of good and evil.


Comments on the article of B. Skyrms, “Game theory, rationality and evolution of the social contract”, which compares rational choice and evolutionary game theories. The logic and direction of Skyrms's argument is compelling, but an additional factor in explaining economic and political behavior is commitment strategies. An individual can influence others by announcing his or her commitment to a future act that would not be in his or her best interests. Such strategies are inherently paradoxical because the maximum payoff comes from not having to follow through on the commitment, and this is made more likely by expensive signaling of commitments to outlandish threats and promises whose plausibility declines with magnitude. Nonetheless, the fitness benefits of subjective commitment are substantial and may well have shaped human capacities for revenge and spite, as well as deep attachment and genuine morality.


It seems likely that low mood and related negative affects were shaped to help organism cope with unpropitious situations. Some negative and passive aspects of depression may be useful because they inhibit dangerous or wasteful actions in situations characterized by committed pursuit of an unreachable goal, temptations to challenge authority, insufficient internal reserves to allow action without damage, or lack of a viable life strategy. However, it is essential to emphasize that many depressions are clearly disease states: some caused by dysregulations of negative affect and others by brain defects unrelated to mood.


In this book review, Nesse comments on *The Nature of Grief*, by John Archer. Nesse found the book to be logically-ordered, clear, and sensitive, but with one central problem. After questioning whether grief is an adaptation or an epiphenomenon, Archer concludes confidently that grief is a maladaptation. Nesse acknowledges that Archer could be correct, but feels Archer should not be so confident in his position. Nesse addresses several of Archer’s views on the usefulness of grief, and comments on Archer’s position that grief is the cost of commitment.


While enormous progress has been made in unraveling the proximate physiological mechanisms that account for anxiety, stress, and low mood, these states continue to give rise to considerable conceptual confusion. This is, in part, because proximate studies have neither been adequately distinguished from, nor integrated with, evolutionary explanations for the adaptive functions of anxiety, stress, and mood. A complete biological explanation that incorporates both proximate and evolutionary explanations will be of great value to better define the border between normal and pathological, to help to explain why pathological anxiety and depression are so common, and to provide a much-needed basis for sensible decisions about when different pharmacological manipulations are likely to be helpful or harmful. Ideally, evolutionary considerations should provide a conceptual framework within which the biological significance of the proximate mechanisms can be better understood, and the proximate findings should provide tests of evolutionary hypotheses. Studies at the interface between evolutionary and proximate explanations will be difficult, but important to better understand individual differences in vulnerability and the etiology of diseases that result from dysregulation of anxiety and mood.


Most cultures have norms that specify the correct attitude towards hope and despair. This article describes ways to
think about hope and despair outside of these norms. It suggests that hope at the individual level is fundamentally conservative, but hope at the social level deeply threatens those at the top.


Understanding emotional disorders requires understanding the evolutionary origins and functions of normal emotions. They are special states, shaped by natural selection to adjust various aspects of the organism in ways that have tended to give a selective advantage in the face of the adaptive challenges characteristic of a particular kind of situation. They are designed to maximize reproductive success, not happiness. Negative emotions such as anxiety and low mood are not disorders, but, like the capacity for pain, evolved defenses. Excessive anxiety or low mood is abnormal, but we will not have confidence about what is excessive until we understand their functions better than we do. Emotional disorders arise often from social emotions because of the conflicts inherent in social life, and because of the strategic advantages of demonstrating commitments to follow through on threats and promises. An evolutionary understanding of individuals in terms of their relationship strategies and the social emotions offers great promise for psychotherapists.


Pure psychoactive drugs and direct routes of administration are evolutionarily novel features of our environment. They are inherently pathogenic because they bypass adaptive information processing systems and act directly on ancient brain mechanisms that control emotion and behavior. Drugs that induce positive emotions give a false signal of a fitness benefit. This signal hijacks incentive mechanisms of "liking" and "wanting," and can result in continued use of drugs that no longer bring pleasure. Drugs that block negative emotions can impair useful defenses, although there are several reasons why their use is often safe nonetheless. A deeper understanding of the evolutionary origins and functions of the emotions and their neural mechanisms is needed as a basis for decisions about the use of psychoactive drugs.


If natural selection is so powerful that it can shape bodies so perfect in so many respects, then why are our bodies also full of so many flaws and design oversights that leave us vulnerable to thousands of diseases? Despite the simplicity of the principle of natural selection, it remains the focus of many misunderstandings. In particular, contrary to the beliefs of many, the path of natural selection has no goal, no direction, and follows no plan. This article explores our competition with other organisms, our bodily defenses, our capacities for suffering, and the trade-offs between function and disease-fighting capabilities within our bodies. Path dependence, random events, and senescence are also addressed, as well as implications of natural selection research.


The human body is a bundle of contradictions. These incongruities make sense only when we investigate the evolution of the body’s strengths and vulnerabilities. Evolutionary biology is the scientific foundation for all medicine. This article discusses evolutionary issues that effect the human body. The first is discomforting conditions, such pain, fever, cough, vomiting and anxiety which are actually evolved defenses. Second, conflicts with other organisms put humans at risk. Conflicts with bacteria can cause problems because bacteria evolve quickly and can easily become immune to medications we use to combat them. Conflict with other humans also can place humans at health risk. Third, environmental issues can effect human health. For example, in American culture humans have ready access to high fat, high salt, high sugar foods. Our bodies have not adjusted to this environment. Fourth, there are some human traits that are both helpful and harmful to people. Some genes put people at risk for some illness but protect from other illnesses. This article gives evidence that the evolutionary viewpoint provides a connection between the states of disease and normal functioning and can integrate disparate avenues of medical research as well as suggest fresh and important areas of inquiry.

The authors argue that there is no branch of medicine that cannot benefit substantially from an evolutionary approach in its research and sometimes, its current clinical practice. They present four reasons why a Darwinian approach to studying disease may be worth revisiting. First, some of the most important evolutionary ideas, notably the weakness of group selection and the power of kin selection, were formulated rather recently. Second, some well-established distinctions, especially that between proximate and evolutionary causation, are only now becoming widely appreciated. Third, the reflex rejection of functional questions as teleological or speculative is fading as the medical profession incorporates more young doctors whose undergraduate education showed them how evolutionary hypotheses can be formulated and tested. Finally, previous attempts to explain the evolution of disease have failed for the good reason that disease is not a direct product of selection. The authors then recommend that both medical school courses and undergraduate biology courses touch upon proximate causation issues.


This is a review of the book Family and Human Development, which is described as a highly readable yet complex exposition of culture from the non-Western side of the world. This review describes the book, discusses its key contributions, and notes its limitations.


Information is normally collected to monitor a situation, communicate about it, and gain expertise over time. Yet, current information collection and handling practices in social service settings leads to problems in agencies' ability to competently perform these functions. We propose a conceptual framework to improve this situation. Focus is on bringing expertise to the front line; meeting information needs at all agency levels; and meeting reporting requirements to the state and federal government. As an example of the way the framework is used, we present the Integrated Information for Foster Care and Adoption (IIF-FCA) implemented in child welfare agencies in Michigan. The paper discusses costs and benefits associated with the IIF-FCA.


A growing literature in cultural and cross cultural psychology is premised on an individualism-collectivism contrast in which Western societies, particularly Euro-Americans, are assumed to demarcate cultural individualism. We reviewed evidence from Euro-American individualism in four basic psychological domains: self-concept, well-being, information processing, and relationality. Results from cross-national studies highlight attitudes and behavior consistent with high Euro-American individualism. However, when individualism and collectivism are assessed, Euro-American rate themselves lower in collectivism but not necessarily higher in individualism than East Asians and ethnic minority Americans. We highlight benefits of utilizing a cultural perspective including both individualism and collectivism as overarching frames for all research in each of the four basic psychological domains studied, whether or not cultural difference is a focal research concern.


Schooling, critical to the transition to adulthood, is particularly problematic for urban and minority youths. To explore predictors of school persistence the authors propose a socially contextualized model of the self. Strategies to attain achievement related possible selves were differentially predicted for White and Black university students. For Whites, individualism, the Protestant work ethic, and "balance" in possible selves predicted generation of more achievement-related strategies. For Blacks, collectivism, ethnic identity, and low endorsement of individualism tended to predict strategy generation. In middle school, performance was predicted by “gendered African American identity schema,” particularly for females, and the effects of social context appeared gendered. Balance in achievement-related possible selves predicted school achievement, especially for African American males.

William James, one of the founders of modern psychology, laid the groundwork for the study of self-concept by noting the self is both content—what one knows about one's self and also process—cognition, motivation, attentional processes. Since this early work, it has been clear that both aspects of the self are critical. That is, what I know about myself provides answers to key existential questions—"who am I?" and "where do I belong?" But also, the self is a cognitive structure that mediates and organizes everyday experience, regulates affect and channels motivation. Therefore, making sense of self-concept provides a tool for making sense of everyday choices. Adolescence is a critical phase in the process of self-making because it is a time during which youth create an outline of the self they will become as adults. Further, choices made during adolescence are likely to have important consequences for the future—dropping out of school increases the likelihood of unemployment, delinquency and early, unwanted pregnancy; staying in school improves labor market participation and future earnings.


In the past few decades, de-institutionalization and community-based rehabilitation and support programs have increased the chance that individuals with serious mental disorders will be parents. To provide direction for intervention and future research, we review the literature on direct and indirect or context-based effects of maternal mental illness on parenting, focusing on research published since 1980.


The interplay between individualist and collectivist orientations, ethnic identity, and beliefs about stereotypes was explored among Asian Americans. The authors proposed four components of Asian American Identity: feelings of interdependence with family, a sense of connectedness to heritage and tradition, a belief that achievement would reflect well on one's family and group generally, and an awareness of structural barriers and racism. A sample of 162 Asian American university students perceived stereotypes about Asian Americans as focusing primarily on school achievement and secondarily on social attributes. Although rarely engaging in strategies to avoid being academically labeled, students engaged in strategies to avoid labeling in other domains. Students varied in their valuation of the model minority label, with those high in Asian American Identity, collectivism, and work ethic more likely to view the label positively.


Implications of cultural accommodation-hybridization were explored within the framework of individualism-collectivism. Individualism highlights the personal and centralizes individuals as the unit of analyses, whereas collectivism highlights the social and contextualizes individuals as parts of connected social units. In 2 experiments, the ways in which individualism, collectivism, and identity salience influence social obligation to diverse others was explored. The authors varied the personal goal interrupted (achievement-pleasure), the target (individual-group), and focus (in-group-larger society) of social obligation within subjects. The authors hypothesized that collectivism would increase obligation to the in-group when identity was made salient; that individualism alone would dampen social obligation; and that cultural accommodation-hybridization (being high in both individualism and collectivism) would increase obligation to larger society.


The literature on stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination has typically focused on the ways dominant groups negatively view and respond to minority groups. We suggest an insider’s perspective to focus attention on the stereotyped or stigmatized in-group’s responses, experiences, and beliefs and the paradox of both being an active constructor of one’s everyday reality and an involuntary target of negative attitudes, behaviors and beliefs that shape this reality. We propose that an insider’s perspective affords a view of stigmatized groups as actively seeking to make sense of their social world and attain positive outcomes, not simply avoid negative outcomes. In this sense, an insider’s perspective acknowledges that stigmatized groups are not simply victims or passive recipients of stereotyping but rather actively attempting to construct a buffering life space.

This study examines the influence of demographic, socioeconomic, familial and religious variables on life satisfaction among a national probability sample of 2,107 Black Americans. Findings from regression analyses show familial relationships, education, religion, age, and employment status were significant predictors of life satisfaction for the pooled sample. In addition to age and familial variables, employment status was a predictor of life satisfaction for females and religiosity and education were predictors of satisfaction for males. The general findings show that there are similarities and differences in what produces life satisfaction.


This article asserts that social institutions, especially religious institutions, have had an impact on different aspects of African American Life (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). If this assertion is correct, then differences in the demographic and familial characteristics of African American males should influence religious participation. Data for this study are taken from the NSBA. Three measures of familial factors were assessed in this study. The first familial factor was family contact; the second, family closeness; the third, family satisfaction. The dependent variable, religious participation was measured by 1) frequency of attending services, importance of church attendance, frequency of participation in religious activities. The findings indicate that both demographic and familial factors were significant predictors of African American men’s involvement in religious activities. Among the demographic variables, being married, achieving higher levels of education, living in rural communities, and being older were strong determinants of religious participation. Among the family variables, respondents maintaining the most frequent contact with their family members participated in religious activities most often.


Examined, in a community-defined epidemiological sample, the co-residence of grandparents with grandchildren, the types of family structures the grandparents lived in, the extent to which they took on parenting roles, and possible factors related to their involvement, including age, employment status, family structure, and grandchild gender. 123 such households were identified in the sample, a co-residence rate of 16% which exceeded the national average. Grandmothers ranged from 41-86 yrs. Six types of family households with grandmothers were identified, and their frequency varied by race. Neither grandmother age nor employment was associated with grandmothers’ parenting involvement, although family structure was. Grandmothers who were the sole parent (21%) or co-parent with a grandfather (6.5%) were most involved in child care and had the fewest number of helpers. Grandmothers living with single mothers (41%) were the next most involved, while grandmothers in mother/father households (9%) were least involved.


This article reports the frequency of black grandmothers' coresidence in households, with first-grade children, their patterns of involvement in parenting, and the degree to which family structure and employment affected the grandmothers' parenting, and the degree to which which family structure and employment affected the grandmothers' parenting involvement in a 1966/1967 community-defined population. Coresidence between grandmothers' and their target first-grade grandchildren was found in 10% of the households. The 130 grandmothers' parenting involvement was substantial, second only to mother involvement, and was characterized by 2 parenting activity patterns: control and punishment, and support and punishment. The degree of grandmothers' parenting involvement differed by family structure, with grandmothers in mother-absent homes most likely to be involved. Grandmothers' employment did not moderate their engagement in parenting behaviors. These findings are consistent with previous reports of significant parenting involvement by black extended family members. Because their examination was not limited to black families with adolescent mothers their findings show that black grandmothers reside in, and are important parenting agents in a variety of family structures, not exclusively those with teenage mothers. Also, in contrast to previous reports, neither employment nor age affected the grandmothers’ involvement with their grandchildren.

Examines associations between different family structures and ratings of aggressive behavior (AB) in a defined community population of 1,002 Ss (4th graders in eastern Baltimore, MD). Teacher-rated AB was determined with the Authority Acceptance scale of the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaption--Revised (L. Werthen-A-Larsson et al., 1991); the authority acceptance subscale of the Parent Observation of Child Adaption served as a measure for parent-rated AB. Consistent with previous research, children in mother-alone households were 2 to 3 times more likely to be in the top third of AB ratings by teachers when compared with children in mother-father families when all income levels were combined.


This paper comments positively on “Scholarship in Psychology: A Paradigm for the 21st Century” (Task Force on Defining Scholarship in Psychology, 1998) and further expands that vision of scholarship. Giving high priority to social responsibility, it criticizes overly narrow scholarship, including its effects on the discipline, and examines the economics of scholarship and criteria for evaluation. Emphasis on applied research and the integration of knowledge is encouraged, along with the application of psychology and scholarship of pedagogy and teaching. A broader, flexible, more grounded vision of scholarship and a modification of the culture of academic psychology is required.


One of the most serious criticisms of research on the contact hypotheses is the contention that selection bias operates to promote interaction between whites and blacks who are already relatively unprejudiced toward one another. Accordingly, attempts to infer the effect of interracial contact on racial attitudes must recognize and correct for this potential source of bias. Endogenous switching regression models are used to estimate potential source of bias. Endogenous switching regression models are used to estimate the effect of close interracial friendship on selected racial attitude variables while accounting for possible selectivity bias. Each model implies a distinct assumption about the process generating interracial contact and racial attitudes. Therefore, we cannot reject the conventional models used in research on the contact hypothesis that treat interracial contact as an exogenous variable affecting racial attitudes. However, our results show the usefulness of a switching regressions approach to reveal the contingent nature of the contact hypothesis.


This article describes and evaluates a procedure for multiply imputing missing values for a relatively complex data structure when the data are missing at random. The imputations are obtained by fitting a sequence of regression models and drawing values from the corresponding predictive distributions. The types of regression models used are linear, logistic, Poisson, generalized logit or a mixture of these depending on the type of variable being imputed. Two additional common features in the imputation process are incorporated: restriction to a relevant subpopulation for some variables and logical bounds or constraints for the imputed values. The restrictions involve subsetting the sample individuals that satisfy certain criteria while fitting the regression models. The bounds involve drawing values from the truncated predictive distribution. The development of this method was partly motivated by the analysis of two data sets which are used as illustrations. The sampling properties of inferences from the imputed data sets created using the sequential regression method are evaluated through simulated data sets.


This article focuses on the Black Church and its relevance to the contemporary social issue of HIV/AIDS which is confronting Black families. Proposed is an interdisciplinary approach which builds on the conceptual model of the Black Church Family Project as an alternative to the traditional study of the Black church, its leadership and membership. Discussed are traditional sociological and psychological treatments of the Black church and suggestions are made for ways to move toward an integrative approach that capitalizes on both perspectives. A more integrative approach should enhance our knowledge-base and improve churches’ ability to develop family
support programs that are more responsive to the needs of Black families affected by contemporary issues such as HIV/AIDS.


The authors provide a conceptual foundation for the use of a research approach in exploring program and policy issues associated with empowering poor, young, non-custodial African American fathers. A post-positivist, ecological, Afrocentric, bicultural research perspective, using the case study method, is proposed as the most effective means of understanding this population and developing appropriate interventions.


This research examines the relationships between racial consciousness or identity, system blame, and religiosity for African Americans, with a particular focus on the effects of church-based education and activism on racial-group consciousness. This is achieved by clarifying religiosity to include both the civic messages communicated and the political activism promoted by religious organizations. Data from the 1984 National Black Election Study are used to examine the connections between various demographic factors, religiosity, religious messages, and several measures of racial identity. Findings indicate that two different messages are presented at places of worship: one communicating civic awareness and the other promoting political activity. Greater exposure to the former tends to produce higher levels of racial identity, while exposure to the latter leads to greater perceptions of power imbalance among groups. Such feelings of racial and power imbalance lead to a greater tendency to blame the governmental system for outcome inequities. Finally, these factors seem to operate slightly differently for men and women.


Conflictual relationships and negative sentiments between black Americans and law enforcement agencies and personnel are long standing concerns in the United States. In the last half of the 20th century, research on the negativity, distribution, and sources of black Americans' attitudes about the police has been an important facet of efforts to theoretically understand these problems and of policy efforts to improve relationships between black Americans and the police. Assumptions about the negativity and the distribution of black Americans’ attitudes have been primarily derived from cross-racial studies comparing black and white Americans’ attitudes. This paper examines black Americans’ attitudes about the police using a large national survey of black Americans to evaluate theoretical and policy assumptions offered by previous studies about the nature, distribution, and sources of black Americans’ attitudes. The paper finds that those assumptions overstate the negativity of black Americans’ attitudes about the police and the importance of social status and racial discrimination in the distribution of those attitudes.


In the past decade, racial/ethnic discrepancy in health status has drawn increased attention from academics, policy makers and planners, service providers as well as community advocates. While the field has witnessed a growth in research projects and intervention programs, the gap in health status among racial/ethnic groups persists, which suggests that future research should incorporate a focus on one neglected area, i.e., the health implications of discrimination. Using the National Survey of Functional Health (N=1,659), a nationally representative sample of English-speaking persons 18 years and older living in non-institutional arrangements within the Unites States, we analyzed how self-perceived unfairness (discrimination due to racial identity or to low socioeconomic status (SES)) was linked to self-assessed health status. The study found that racial and class discrimination were rather pervasive in the US. Experiences of discrimination tended to have a strong, negative impact on health and account for some racial/ethnic differences in health status. The study also revealed a complex relationship between experiences of discrimination and social class, suggesting that future research should focus on specifying the social distribution of discrimination and assessing its subsequent impact on health.

The relationship between social ties, stage of disease, and survival was analyzed in a population-based sample of 525 black and 486 white women with newly diagnosed breast cancer. There were significant differences between the two race groups in reported social ties. Using logistic regression to adjust for the effects of age, race, study area, education, and the presence of symptoms, there was little or no evidence for an association between individual network measures of social ties and stage of disease. The data suggest that functional rather than structural measures of social relationships may be important in influencing disease prognosis.


This analysis was designed to evaluate the association between coping strategies and breast cancer survival among Black and White women in a large population-based study. A total of 442 Black and 402 White US women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer during 1985-1986 and actively followed for survival through 1994 were administered a modified Folkman and Lazarus Ways of Coping questionnaire. Coping strategies were characterized via factor analysis of the responses. Hazard ratios associated with coping strategies were estimated using Cox proportional hazards models, with adjustment for age, race, tumor stage, study location, tumor hormone responsiveness, comorbidity, health insurance status, smoking, relative body weight, and alcohol consumption. Emotion-focused coping strategies were significantly associated with survival. Expression of emotion was associated with better survival (hazard ratio = 0.6; 95% confidence interval; 0.4, 0.9). When it was considered jointly with the presence or absence of perceived emotional support, women reporting low levels of both emotional expression and perceived emotional support experienced poorer survival than women reporting high levels of both (hazard ratio = 2.5; 95% confidence interval; 1.7, 3.7). Similar risk relations were evident for Blacks and Whites and for patients with early and late stage disease. These results suggest that the opportunity for emotional expression may help improve survival among patients with invasive breast cancer.


The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity was used to examine the relationship between racial identity and personal self-esteem (PSE) in a sample of African American college students (n = 173) and a sample of African American high school students (n = 72). Racial identity was assessed using the Centrality and Regard scales of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity, whereas the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to assess PSE. Four predictions were tested: (a) racial centrality is weakly but positively related to PSE; (b) private regard is moderately related to PSE; (c) public regard is unrelated to PSE; and (d) racial centrality moderates the relationship between private regard and PSE. Multiple regression analysis found that racial centrality and public racial regard were unrelated to PSE in both samples. Private regard was positively related to PSE in the college sample. Racial centrality moderated the relationship between private regard and PSE in both samples, such that the relationship was significant for those with high levels of centrality but nonsignificant for those with low levels.


The Black Church Family Project surveyed 635 Northern Black churches, 320 in the North Central and 315 in the Northeastern United States, regarding the existence of family-oriented community outreach programs. Two-thirds of these churches were found to engage in a wide variety of outreach programs. One hundred and seventy-six churches reported having at least one program directed at adolescent members of the community. This paper focuses on problems related to adolescent sexuality, including pregnancy, out-of-wedlock births, homosexuality, and sexually-transmitted diseases. Relatively few churches reported being actively engaged in these types of programs. One reason is the church’s historical reticence regarding sexual issues. However, the omnipresence of the church, community linkages, its history of service, and the traditional religiosity of Black youth provide opportunities for the church to involve Black youth in programs which address sexual behavior.

Six hundred and thirty-five Northern black churches were surveyed regarding the offering of youth support programs. Of these, 176 reported having at least one program directed at adolescent nonmembers of the church, primarily from low-income homes. The most common programs consisted of Christian fellowships, ministry, counseling, group discussions, rap sessions, seminars, and workshops. Sports activities were second in frequency. Least common were AIDS and youth health-related services. It appears the greatest interest in youth programs is in churches that are Methodist, older, middle-class, large in membership, owned or mortgaged, and with more paid clergy and staff. Characteristic of youth-oriented pastors are discussed. Generally, it was found that some of the most prominent issues facing black adolescents are not being adequately addressed by black churches. Suggestions for improving this situation are made as well as citations of promising programs.


Physicians view enhancing patient hopefulness as a critical aspect of cancer treatment, yet little is known about how the circumstances of the initial disclosure of a cancer diagnosis affects this important psychosocial variable. The authors examined the extent to which various forms of physician disclosure of a cancer diagnosis are seen by patients as more or less hopeful and as favorable or unfavorable. Statements describing various circumstances of diagnostic disclosure were generated from interviews with 10 physicians and 10 patients with cancer. Fifty-seven statements were rated on two bipolar rating scales describing hopefulness and favorability by an additional 56 patients with recent onset of cancer. To determine if overall emotional adjustment to the illness affected these rating, scores on the Mental Adjustment Scale were also obtained. Results revealed that patients had clear ideas about which procedures were most and least hopeful and favorable or unfavorable, that the rating demonstrated clear factorial validity suggesting broad areas of diagnostic disclosure procedure where physicians may make efforts to enhance hope, and that ratings of hopefulness and favorability were related to overall emotional adjustment to the illness. There was consensus among patients that certain procedures enhanced hopefulness and certain procedures reduced it. Physicians would do well to attend carefully to this aspect of treatment and continually seek patient input concerning their preferences for the conduct of the treatment relationship.


This article examines the cumulative effects of multiple stressors on women’s health, by race and area of residence. Specifically, we examine socioeconomic status, experiences of unfair treatment and acute life events by race and residential location, and their cumulative effects on the health status of African American and white women living within the city of Detroit and in the surrounding metropolitan area. African American women, regardless of whether they live inside or outside the city, report more frequent encounters with everyday unfair treatment than white women. African American women who live in the city report a greater number of acute life events than white women who live outside the city. Regression analyses used to examine the cumulative effects of exposure to these stressors by race and area of residence show that: (1) socioeconomic status, everyday experiences with unfair treatment and acute life events each make a significant contribution to differences in health status; and (2) the contribution of each of these variables to explaining variations in health status varies by area of residence. We suggest that differences in socioeconomic status, exposure to unfair treatment or discrimination and experiences of acute life events make significant contributions to racial differences in women’s health status.


Why do racial differences in many indicators of mental and emotional well-being show inconsistent patterns? We propose that mental and emotion well-being are influenced by aspects of the social context, including experiences of unfair treatment and the concentration of households with incomes below the poverty level, and that differential exposure to these factors influences racial differences in mental well-being. We analyze the reporting of psychological distress and life satisfaction in a multistage area probability sample of 1,139 African American and white residents of the Detroit metropolitan area aged 18 and older. Both psychological distress and life satisfaction are significantly associated with exposure to unfair treatment and with the proportion of households in the census block group that were below the poverty level. Racial differences in psychological distress and life satisfaction were eliminated or reversed once differentials in the percent of households living below the poverty line and exposure to unfair treatment were accounted for. These findings contribute to a growing body of evidence that “race” effects operate through multiple pathways that include race-based residential segregation and its attendant economic
disinvestments at the community level, and interpersonal experiences of unfair treatment.


An experiment was conducted to determine if receiving help that cannot be directly reciprocated produces an aversive motivational state in the recipient. Behavioral measures of amount of help given by the recipient were assessed. Also, a questionnaire was also completed by the recipient.


The study focuses on the relationship between racial identity and academic achievement for African American college students. The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) was used to assess the relationship between racial centrality, racial ideology, and academic performance. Two hundred forty-eight participants were recruited from a predominantly Black college and a predominantly White college and administered the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) to assess their racial ideology and racial centrality. Participants also were asked to report their cumulative grade point averages (GPA). Consistent with the MMRI, racial centrality moderate the relationship between racial ideology and academic performance such that assimilation and nationalist ideologies were negatively associated with GPA and a minority ideology was positively associated with GPA for students who scored high on racial centrality. Racial ideology was not a significant predictor of GPA for participants who scored low on racial centrality.


Historically, sports, along with entertainment, has been one of the few avenues of upward mobility in American society in which African Americans might hope to be judged on their ability instead of their skin color. Although African American males are under-represented in just about every traditional venue for upward socioeconomic mobility in our society (such as education), they are significantly over-represented in professional football, baseball, basketball, and boxing. This review explores intercollegiate athletics among African American males.


Investigated whether African American male college student-athletes unrealistically focus their career goals on professional athletics to the detriment of their academic pursuits. The study considered the professional athletic aspirations of 610 African American male student-athletes from 42 NCAA Division I universities using the concept of goal discrepancy to identify individuals whose professional athletic aspirations were inconsistent with their current status as 1st team members of their football or basketball programs. The results found only 5% of the sample to be goal discrepant and that among goal discrepant student-athletes, the majority were underclassmen. Institutional characteristics, such as intensity of the athletic program and segregation of athletes from nonathletic students, were stronger predictors of goal discrepancy than personal characteristics, such as SES or precollege academic preparation. Results are discussed in relation to social policy that influences access to educational opportunity for African Americans.


Provides a descriptive analysis of 4 areas of African American women student athletes' college life experiences: academic performance; alienation and abuse; perceived social advantage as the result of athletics; and life satisfaction. Multivariate comparisons were made between the 4 areas of college life experiences of 154 African American women student athletes and 793 White women student athletes, 250 African American women nonathletes, and 628 African American men student athletes from a national sample of 39 NCAA Division I universities. Overall, African American women student athletes are performing adequately academically, integrating socially within the university, perceiving some social advantage as the result of being athletes, and are fairly satisfied with their life. Their experiences seem most consistent with African American women nonathletes. Results are discussed in the context of potential policy recommendations as well as the need for more research on this particular population.

This study presents preliminary evidence regarding the reliability and validity of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). The MIBI is a paper and pencil measure consisting of 7 subscales representing the three stable dimensions of African American racial identity proposed by the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) -- Centrality, Ideology, and Regard. Four hundred seventy-four African American college students from a predominately African American university (n=185) and a predominately white university (n=289) participated in a study to assess the construct and predictive validity of the MIBI subscales. As the result of factor analysis, a revised 51-item scale was developed. The Public Regard subscale was dropped because of poor internal consistency. Descriptive statistics for the revised MIBI is provided for the entire sample, as well as by school. Interscale correlations found relationships that were consistent with predictions from the MMRI. The revised MIBI was also related to race related behaviors such as intra- and inter-racial contract and enrollment in Black Studies courses. In sum, the results suggest that the MIBI is both a reliable and valid measure of African American racial identity in a college sample.


Research on African American racial identity has utilized 2 distinct approaches. The mainstream approach has focused on universal properties associated with ethnic and racial identities. In contrast, the underground approach has focused on documenting the qualitative meaning of being African American, with an emphasis on the unique cultural and historical experiences of African Americans. The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) represents a synthesis of the strengths of these two approaches. The underlying assumptions associated with the model are explored. The model proposes 4 dimensions of African American racial identity: salience, centrality, regard, and ideology. A description of these dimensions is provided along with a discussion of how they interact to influence behavior at the level of the event. We argue that the MMRI has the potential to make contributions to traditional research objectives of both approaches, as well as to provide the impetus to explore new questions.


Research indicates that social mobility affects the mental and physical health of black Americans (Alston & Knapp 1974; Isaacs 1984; Parker & Kleiner 1966; Sellers 2000). A few researchers have also explored factors that might buffer or exacerbate the effects of mobility on well-being (Isaacs 1984; Parker & Kleiner 1966). The current study continues this line of inquiry and examines the hypothesis that the moderating effects differ by gender. Guided by the integration of a life course perspective and the stress paradigm, this study examined associations of psychological distress, race-related factors, and intergenerational occupational social mobility among black American men and women. Based on data from the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA), support for the hypothesis was found. Upwardly mobile black men who experienced racial discrimination reported significantly higher levels of psychological distress; no significant relationships were found for black women. The opposite pattern was found for perceptions of discriminatory intent. No associations were found for black men, while black women who felt that whites wanted to keep blacks down reported higher levels of distress. Patterns for racial composition of the workplace also differed by gender. For nonmobile black men, a mostly white work environment was associated with higher levels of distress. For black women, the composition of the workplace appeared to exacerbate the stress of mobility but had little impact on the distress of downwardly and nonmobile women.


Goal-striving stress refers to the discrepancy between aspirations and achievements, hard work and accomplishment, options and opportunities, and perhaps provides a pathway linking social structure and mental health. Although a number of scholars have speculated about the relationship between blocked opportunities and psychopathology, few studies have empirically examined associations between striving efforts and mental health among black Americans. In addition, existing studies have often used community samples, considered a single
aspect of mental health, or were unable to operationalize goal-striving stress in a more nuanced fashion. This study examines the influence of goal-striving stress on the mental health of a national sample of black Americans.


Examined how racial factors influence college women's perceptions of sexual harassment. Specifically, the authors examined whether 46 Black and 89 White women (aged 17-34yrs) would perceive unsolicited sexual behavior between a Black woman and Black man different from such behavior between a Black woman and a White man. The data suggest that sexual harassment between Black women and men is trivialized compared to sexual behavior between Black women and White men. The findings are interpreted with regard to the necessity of studying sexual harassment for women of color.


Using the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity as a conceptual framework, the present research investigated the stable and situational properties of African American racial identity. Study 1 illustrated that although individuals' racial identity remains the same across situations relative to individuals, the situation can influence certain dimensions of one's racial identity in a sample of African American undergraduate students. Study 2 demonstrated that racial identity can influence the perceptions of ambiguous events. The findings are discussed with respect to how the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity is a racial identity model for African Americans that addresses the structural processes of racial identity without disregard for the qualitative meaning of what it means to be African American in this society. Implications for research on identity in general and African American racial identity are also discussed.


Following an initial assessment of how private religious consumption operates, data from a 1979/80 national survey are drawn on to investigate private religious behavior among 2,107 African Americans to see if these activities respond to preferences & social contexts in the same way as public religious expressions. Findings indicate that individuals' religious preferences are not as important for predicting prayer, watching religious TV & listening to religious radio broadcasts, or reading religious literature in the rural South. It is concluded that the semi-involuntary nature of religious behavior for African Americans in the South - especially the rural South - extends to private religious actions. Further, in contrast to both the decline of denominationalism thesis and speculation about the monolithic nature of the black church, it is shown that denominational ties do influence private religious behavior.


This study explores the hypothesis -- popular in the 1960s -- that growing impatience with traditional theologies and organizational styles of major black denominations would prompt blacks (1) to join more progressive, this-worldly religious groups, or (2) to abandon organized religion altogether. This racial and political explanation of apostasy and religious switching from the black mainline is juxtaposed with alternative hypotheses drawn from studies of denominational switching in the general population. Multinomial logit regression techniques are used to analyze data from the NSBA. Results lend qualified support to the racial and political hypothesis and provide equally strong support to generational and network explanations of change in black denominational preferences. We discuss several promising directions for future research and data collection.


Although socioeconomic status (SES) has long been recognized as a principal determinant of health, one factor yet to be considered in the context of SES and health is the role of sleep. Individuals of lower socioeconomic status have been found more likely to experience sleep disorders, and sleep disturbances have been associated with poorer health. The amount of sleep people get has been found to mediate the relationship between stress-related
intrusive thoughts and natural killer cell levels. However, sleep has yet to be examined as a potential mediator of the impact of socioeconomic status on physical and mental health. This study tested the following three hypotheses. First, participants of higher socioeconomic status will report better psychological health. Second, participants of higher socioeconomic status will report better physical health. Third, the relationship between participants’ socioeconomic status and their health will be mediated by either their quantity of quality of sleep.


Depression is highly prevalent in welfare recipients, and is associated with failure to move from welfare to work. This paper examines the relationship between social and environmental factors in a large, community-based sample of mothers who currently or recently received welfare benefits. Specific and modifiable risk factors related to poverty, gender, and race were found to predict major depression beyond traditional risk factors. Research and practice implications are discussed.


Labels play an important role in defining groups and individuals who belong to groups. This has been especially true for racial and ethnic groups in general and for Blacks in particular. Over the past century the standard term for Blacks has shifted from "colored" to "negro" to "Black" and now perhaps to "African American". The changes can be seen as attempts by Blacks to redefine themselves and to gain respect and standing in a society that has held them to be subordinate and inferior. This study utilized data from several sources including, NSBA, 1969 Gallup, 1974 Roper, 1982 General Social Survey, national Opinion Research Center, 1989 New York Times, 1989 ABC/Washington Post, 1990 NBC/Wall Street Journal, 1991 Gallup, 1991 Los Angeles Times.


This paper presents research concerning the relationship between media and public spheres through an investigation of an African-American owned and operated talk radio station in Chicago, IL. The paper concludes that, contrary to some scholars’ pessimistic view of commercial media’s role in the decline of the public sphere, the radio station portrayed here is an integral and useful institution for the Black public sphere in Chicago. The study reveals how African American community members and listeners use the station as a public forum wherein traditional political concerns as well as identity politics are aired and discussed. Furthermore, the paper argues that it is precisely because the station is owned and operated by Blacks, the station is able to draw and sustain a substantial and loyal audience. Because they trust the station to "talk-their-talk," community members are enthusiastic about participating in the station’s discursive activities, and are even willing to make personal financial contributions when advertising revenue is low.


The local clinical scientist brings the attitudes and knowledge of the scientist to bear on the problems that must be addressed by the clinician in the consulting room. The problems of inadequate generalizability are reduced by a recognition of the value of local observations and solutions to problems. However, these observations and solutions benefit by the scientific attitude of the clinician and are subjected to the same need for verifiability that greets all scientific enterprises. The clinical setting is viewed as analogous to a scientific laboratory, and, by doing so, the scientist-practitioner model is enacted.


This study examines the relationship between two measures of economic stress—welfare status and perceived financial stress and the emotional and behavioral problems of children. The longitudinal data used came from the National Survey of Children. Two hypotheses were tested. the first predicts that economic stress will adversely affect children's emotional and behavioral problems. Among children who experienced either one of these economic stresses at least once between 1976 and 1981, levels of depressive symptoms, impulsive behavior, and
antisocial behavior were higher when compared to those who were unaffected by economic stress. The second hypothesis predicts that the presence of economic stress at both data points will have a more adverse impact than if experienced at only one time point. Results provide only limited support of this idea.


This article outlines the history of blacks' relationship with the Democratic party from the New Deal era to the emergence of Jesse Jackson as a presidential contender in 1984. Then, utilizing data from the 1984-88 NBES panel, it examines the impact of Jackson's candidacies on black loyalty to the Democratic party and-on black turnout in the 1984 and 1988 presidential elections. Finally, the implications of a third Jackson bid for the Democratic party's nomination and the extent of blacks' support for the party in 1992 and beyond are discussed.


Using data from a longitudinal telephone study of voting-eligible black Americans I explore the political context of black voter turnout in the 1984 and 1988 presidential elections and reexamine the attitudinal and demographic variables associated with black electoral participation. Jesse Jackson supporters were more likely to vote in the 1984 presidential election, while black opposition to Reagan was also linked to black voter turnout in 1984. Nonetheless, blacks who preferred Jackson to other primary contenders in the 1988 nominating contest were less likely to vote in the presidential election. Finally, while education, political interest, partisanship, and age were generally associated with black voter participation, race identification had a less consistent effect. Instead, church membership and involvement in black political organizations serve as alternative, community-based resources that promote black participation. This research underscores the importance of both political context and group-based political resources in stimulating the black vote.


The substantive and methodological implications of the level of familial involvement among two groups of black adults, who reported on the NSBA that they did not receive assistance from their extended families, are examined. The dependent variable contracts individuals who have never received assistance (support-deficient) with those who report that they have never needed assistance (self-reliant). The findings indicated that self-reliant reported significantly higher levels of familial involvement, interacted with family members on a more frequent basis, felt affectively closer to family members, and were more satisfied with family life.


Demographic correlates of two measures of religious non-involvement were investigated: absence of a current religious affiliation, and failure to attend religious services in adulthood. The findings indicate few blacks (only one out of ten) report a complete absence of all overt religious involvement. Multivariate analysis indicated that gender, marital status, age, education, income, and region were all important predictors of religious non-involvement. Women, older respondents, and Southerners indicated greater religious involvement than their counterparts. The findings for age differences, in conjunction with those for marital status, suggest that a life-cycle approach may be appropriate for understanding religious involvement among blacks. Younger, never married blacks were less likely than their counterparts to be involved in organized religion, whereas older widowed blacks were more likely. Respondents with lower levels of income and education were more likely to be non-attenders than their counterparts. In addition, a substantial number of blacks who were not involved in organized religious activities, nonetheless indicated that they prayed on a frequent basis and characterized themselves as fairly religious.


This article investigates structural determinants of three indicators of religious participation: religious service attendance, church membership and frequency of other religious activities. Multivariate analyses indicated that religious participation varied by gender, marital status, age, education, urbanicity, and region. Collectively, the
findings demonstrated the centrality and importance of religion in addition to illustrating the degree of heterogeneity of religious participation among black Americans.


This paper presents a multivariate examination of the absolute probability of receiving support (contrasting those who received help vs. those who didn't) from extended family members. Logit analysis indicated that among the demographic factors, income and age were the only variables that had a significant relationship with the probability of receiving support. An inverse association between age and support prompted the speculation that other variables might influence this relationship. An interaction term combining age and whether a respondent had a child was created and included in the analysis. The interaction term was significant. This interaction was reflected in a three-way tabular analysis of age, receiving support, and the presence of children. Across all respondents (both those who had and did not have children), the relationship between age and support was negative. Among the family variables, having an available pool of relatives, frequent interaction with family members, and close familial relationships were pre-requisites for receiving support. Finally, although age is negatively associated with receiving support, the presence of a child significantly increases the probability of older blacks receiving support from family members. This finding substantiates the importance of adult children in the informal social support networks of elderly blacks.


The results indicate elderly blacks display a high degree of religious involvement. They attend religious services on a frequent basis, are likely to be official members of a church or other place of worship, and describe themselves as being religious. Elderly women attended religious services more frequently, were more likely to be church members, and reported a higher degree of religiosity than did elderly men. In comparison to married persons, divorced and widowed respondents attended religious services less frequently and reported lower levels of subjective religiosity. Divorced respondents were also less likely to be church members. Elderly blacks who reside in rural areas were more involved in church activities than their urban counterparts. In addition, age was positively associated with the degree of subjective religiosity. Collectively these findings suggest that religion and the church are salient aspects of the lives of elderly blacks.


Using the elderly subsample of the NSBA data, this study examines the correlates of the frequency with which the black elderly received support from their extended family members. The descriptive findings indicate that the family is extensively involved in the informal social support networks of the black elderly. Regression analysis indicated that proximity of relatives and family contact were the only two family variables that had significant relationships with support. Further regression analyses were performed examining the effects of the family, demographic and availability factors on support for respondents who have children as well as for those who are childless. Collectively, the findings indicate a hierarchy of preferred support resources which is supportive of Cantor's (1979) hierarchical-compensatory model of kin and non-kin sources of support. The results reported here not only serve to clarify the relationships between important family and sociodemographic factors on support, but also give an indication of the complexity of those relationships (i.e., having children and proximity of relatives).


The correlates of three characteristics of familial networks (i.e., residential proximity, family affection, and family contact) were examined among older black Americans in the NSBA. Overall, the findings indicated high levels of interaction and strong emotional bonds between older black adults and their extended families. While the oldest respondents were less likely to reside near immediate family and other relatives, there were no age differences in levels of contact and emotional closeness. Having an adult child and proximity of relatives facilitated the emotional and social integration of older black adults in family networks.

This study investigated rates of participation in non-organizational religious activities of elderly black adults. Four indicators of participation were examined: reading religious materials, watching or listening to religious programs, prayer, and requests for prayer. Demographic, religious denomination, and health disability factors influenced participation in these behaviors. The findings were discussed for their implications for the development of a multi-dimensional conceptualization of religiosity.


Socio-demographic and religious factors were examined as predictors of the receipt of support from church members among the NSBA. Among the religious variables, church attendance, church membership, subjective religiosity, and religious affiliation were all significantly related to the receipt of support. Demographic differences were apparent with men and younger respondents being more likely, while divorced respondents were less likely to receive support. Having a higher income and residency in rural areas were associated with never needing assistance from church members versus simply never receiving aid. The discussion focuses on further areas of investigation for church-based support networks and their interface with family and friend networks.


Demographic correlates of education, income, and poverty were examined among elderly black adults in the NSBA (N=581). Multivariate analyses indicated that gender, marital status, age, employment status, urbanicity, and region were all important predictors of these measures of socio-economic status. The discussion highlights both demographic differences and the overall depressed socio-economic status level of elderly blacks.


This analysis examines the role of church members as providers of support to elderly blacks. Three indicators of support were utilized: frequency, amount and type of support received from church members. Frequency of church attendance as a form of public commitment was a critical indicator of both receiving assistance and the amount of assistance received. The subjective importance of attending religious services was also positively associated with the frequency of receiving support. Among the demographic factors, there was an interaction between age and the presence of adult children; among elderly persons with children, as age increased, the frequency of assistance from church members also increased; however, among childless elderly increases in age were associated with dramatic decreases in the frequency of support. Based on the findings, the church appeared to be a more integral component of the support networks of elderly blacks than has been previously thought.


This article examines whether elderly blacks received concomitant support from family, friends, and church members, and if so the type of support received. The results indicate the type of support received by elderly blacks may not be governed by hierarchical or task-specific constraints. In this sample there is a considerable amount of overlap in the type of support provided. While these data indicate a general tendency to receive a particular type of assistance from one support group, other groups may provide this support as well. Although respondents were more likely to receive total support from their family, over 5% of the respondents who received assistance from their friends and church members reported that they received total support from these sources. Thus, for certain groups of elderly blacks, friends and church members may be of greater importance than has been previously thought.


The present analysis provides a profile of the demographic structure and family relationships among a national sample of three-generation Black American families. This analysis is based on data from the Three Generation Family Study, a lineage based, national probability sample of Black three-generation families. The findings indicated that across all three generations, respondents interacted with family members on a frequent basis, displayed a high degree of familial affection, and were fairly frequent recipients of informal assistance from extended kin. The grandparent generation (G1) consistently reported the highest levels of familial closeness and
satisfaction (G2), followed by the parent generation, and lastly, the child generation (G3). Respondents in the child generation were the most likely to indicate that they received informal assistance from extended family members. These and other findings are discussed in relation to modifications in the generational age structure of American families and the practice implications of these changes.


This study investigated race differences in religious involvement across several national probability samples. It employed various measures of religious involvement, and controlled for key sociodemographic variables. The findings reveal that African Americans exhibit higher levels of religious participation than do whites regardless of sample or measures.


Demographic correlates of familial and non-familial sources of emergency assistance among black were examined with data from a national probability sample (Panel Study of Income Dynamics—1982). Both family and non-kin were found to be important sources of emergency assistance. Eight out of ten black respondents indicated that there was a relative or friend who would help them out during a serious emergency. Nominations to the emergency helper network indicated that parents and siblings were most frequently identified as helpers, followed by non-kin, children, and in-laws. Racial differences in the helper network demonstrate that blacks were less likely than whites and Hispanics to mention in-laws, but more likely to mention siblings, and aunts/uncles. Multivariate analyses reveals age, gender, marital status, and urban-rural differences in the source of emergency assistance. Age was a significant predictor for selecting parents, children, and non-kin as sources of assistance; younger respondents were more likely to choose parents and older respondents had a higher likelihood of choosing children and non-kin. Gender differences indicated than men were less likely to receive help from children but more likely to receive assistance from in-laws. Several marital status differences were exhibited. In addition, respondents who resided in urban areas were more likely to use children as a source of assistance. The findings highlighted the critical importance of the parent-child bond across the life-course. The article concludes with a discussion of the practice implications of the findings.


The literature on black families from the past decade is reviewed. An overview of topics and issues of importance to black families considers black families in relation to their age, gender, and family roles; substantive issues of relevance to black American families, including social support and psychological well-being; and an examination of recent demographic trends in black family structure. The conclusion provides comments on research on black families and recommendations for future efforts.


A small, but growing literature recognizes the varied roles that clergy play in identifying and addressing mental health needs within their congregations. Although these concerns have not been studied extensively, a few investigations attempt systematic examination of these questions. This critical review examines this research, highlighting available information concerning these processes and identifying those areas and issues where additional information is needed. Topics addressed include client characteristics and factors associated with the use of ministers for personal problems, the role of ministers in mental health delivery, factors related to the development of church-base programs and service delivery systems, and models that link churches and formal service agencies. A concluding section describes barriers and constraints that mitigate against effective partnerships between churches, formal service agencies, and the broader practice of social work.


This paper investigates the impact of demographic factors and social psychological family variables on the frequency of informal support. Those with relatively lower incomes and with fewer years of education were less
likely to receive frequent support from family members than their counterparts. These results challenge the assumption that "need" is an important factor for support, and that social support has unusual prominence among lower income black Americans. The more advantaged respondents were more likely than disadvantaged persons to receive family support on a frequent basis. The relationships between the family variables and the receipt of support speak to the importance of the quality of kin relations and frequency of interaction as arbiters of informal support transactions. The findings of important demographic differences in the receipt of support indicate that the family support networks of black Americans are more diverse than previously thought. Further, the receipt of support from family members is related to qualitative and affiliative aspects of kin relations.


Data from the NSBA are used to study how black adult males assess their performance as family providers. Multivariate analysis of the responses of a subsample of 771 black males reveals age and personal income are significantly related to the assessment of provider role performance. Specifically, as black men age, and as their personal incomes increase, they are more likely to perceive themselves as being good providers for their families.


The purpose of the present analysis is to investigate findings from two surveys that have some relevance to the Million Man March. The major source of information for this article comes from a survey conducted by Ronald Lester and Associates for the Washington Post. Sixty-two black interviewers positioned around the Washington Mall and various subway stations conducted the interviews. This survey had a sample size of 1,047 randomly selected participants of the Million Man March. This article will also present information from a national survey of the black population which questioned respondents about their attitudes towards the March. All of the survey findings presented in this article were reported in the October 17, 1995 edition of the Washington Post.


This review of the literature presents a brief review of the data on the social and economic status of elderly Black adults. It reviews population trends, economic indicators of income, poverty, and net worth, and trends in work, retirement, and education. It reveals that extremely low levels of income, education and high levels of poverty exist among elderly Black Americans. Although elderly Blacks have been able to rely on strong informal support networks of family, friends, and church members, these networks are no substitute for governmental programs which provide an adequate income and access to quality medical care. The political reality in 1995 suggests that older Blacks will have to endure the Republican assault on the poor by coping with even more severe cuts in critical programs.


Demographic correlates of subjective religiosity are examined using data from five large national probability samples (i.e., American Changing Lives, n=3,617; General Social Survey, n=26,265; Monitoring the Future, n=16,843; National Black Election Survey, n=1,151; and National Survey of Black Americans, n=2,107). In analyses of data involving both Black and White respondents, race emerges as a strong and consistent predictor of various indicators of subjective religiosity with Black Americans, indicating that they had significantly higher levels of subjective religiosity than Whites. Analyses using African American respondents only indicate that subjective religious involvement varies systematically by gender, age, religion, and marital status. The findings are discussed in relation to research on religious participation among African Americans and future research and theory concerning the meaning of religion within discrete subgroups of this population.


Personal evaluations of the encounter with social service agencies were investigated using the NSBA. Respondents indicated that social services were good sources of assistance in helping them cope with a stressful...
episode. Friends and relatives were found to be important sources of referral. Analysis of preferences of the race of practitioner indicates this is an area deserving further study.


The black elderly, like the black population as a whole, are over represented in the lower economic strata -- a result of being both old and black. It is important to realize that the black elderly are survivors. They are constantly coping with poverty, unemployment, low levels of education and inadequate housing. This article explores those factors which when combined reinforce the lower socioeconomic status of the black elderly. This article presents a demographic profile of the black elderly, examining their population size, regional distribution, and marital and family status. Their income and poverty levels are reexamined, and the proportion of income derived from Social Security and private pensions is highlighted. The employment needs and occupational status of the black elderly are analyzed, with emphasis on unemployment and labor force dropout rates. The level of formal education of the black elderly is also examined as well as the relationships between education and income and occupation. In addition, the paper assesses the housing adequacy and health status of the black elderly.


This article examines several issues associated with transracial adoption. While white parents are capable of establishing a strong sense of self-esteem in their adoptive Black children, it is unclear whether these parents can foster strong racial group identities in Black children. The authors suggest that future research examining the impact of transracial adoption on African American children would benefit from refined concepts of racial socialization and racial group identity. Practice alternatives, such as family preservation and surrogate parenting are also discussed.


This investigation reveals both the positive and multifaceted functions of religious institutions in black communities. The majority of respondents (82.2%) indicate the church has helped the condition of blacks in America, 4.9% reported that the church hurts, and 12.1% reported the church has made no difference. Multivariate analyses indicate older respondents, those who resided in the South (vs. Northeast), women, and persons with more years of formal education tended to have a more positive appraisal of the church’s socio-historical role than their counterparts. Respondents, who evaluate the church’s influence as being positive, reported a number of primary ways the church has helped the condition of blacks, including spiritual assistance, having a sustaining and strengthening influence, giving personal assistance, and providing guidelines for moral behavior. Respondents who indicate that the church has not made any difference and those who indicate that it has hurt the condition of American blacks presented some of the following conditions: the church and religion were not able to reach and change people, people do not want to be helped and are not interested in the church or religion, and churches and ministers are too profit seeking. The findings of this article reinforce demographic heterogeneity in perceptions of the role of the church as well as the multidimensional nature of religion and religious institutions in black communities.


The advertisements for the drugs chlorpropamide (Diabinese) and diazepam (Valium), before and after patent expiration were studied to evaluate information content, emotional appeals, and rational appeals. Results demonstrated that prior to patent expiration, there was greater use of comparisons to therapeutic equivalents and a significantly greater number of references to research results. After patent expiration, there was a much higher number of advertisements that focused on competition between the brand and generic products. A significantly higher proportion of appeals differentiating the products from competitors’ products was found after patent expiration.

Health care providers often fail to realize the extent to which folk medical beliefs and practices permeate the lives of their patients and influence behavior with respect to illness. The use of nontraditional medical practices has become increasingly popular as demonstrated by the recent establishment of the National Institutes of Health, Office of Alternative Medicine. This agency’s directive is to facilitate the evaluation of alternative therapies currently being used by Americans and to establish an information clearinghouse. The purpose of this literature review is to offer information on African American’s use of home remedies. This review is segmented by discussion of the definition of home remedies, self-care and home remedies, prevalence of home remedy use, and factors influencing home remedy use. The review concludes with areas of concern and recommendations for future research.


Growing disparities in life expectancy and health status of Black Americans compared with Whites threaten the well-being, economics productivity, and social progress of our society as we approach the 21st century. In 1990, the Secretary of Health and Human Services presented to the nation Health People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives. This article focuses on results obtained from a survey of 635 Black churches in the northern United States which identified eight characteristics associated with community health outreach programs: congregation size, denomination, church age, economic class of membership, ownership of church, number of paid clergy, presence of other paid staff and education level of the minister. Results may be used by public health professionals and policy makers to enlist Black churches as an integral component for delivery of health promotion and disease prevention services needed to achieve the Year 2000 health objectives for all Americans.


The issues to recruiting African American psychiatric inpatients are discussed in the context of a study on the influence of ethnicity on psychiatric diagnosis. Ethnically diverse psychiatric residents interviewed 960 Black and White inpatients in two urban psychiatric hospitals. Despite the obstacles cited in the literature about recruiting and retaining African Americans into research, 78% of this sample were African Americans. In addition, interview completion and refusal rates did not differ by patient ethnicity. Results suggest that matching interviewer and patient ethnicity did not influence African Americans’ likelihood of participating or of refusing an interview. This article summarizes a number of guidelines that others may find useful in conducting clinical research with African Americans, ranging from the formation of academic-public liaisons to interviewer training.


During the 1980’s, about ten million legal immigrants came to the United States, a figure second only to the previous high recorded in the first decade of this century. These newcomers were notable for their place of origin, because 80% came from Asia and Latin America. More than three quarters of them settled in just six states; more than one half settled in eight metropolitan areas, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, and Houston. Furthermore, for every ten immigrants who settled in urban America, 9 residents left for areas with fewer foreign nationals; most who fled were White. Along with a natural population increase, immigrants concentrating in increasingly non-White urban areas have escalated interaction among ethnic minorities and begun to transform the racial balance in America’s cities and in the nation.


Sociodemographic correlates of patterns of racial socialization were examined using data from the NSBA. Multivariate analysis reveals gender, age, marital status, region, and racial composition of neighborhood predicted whether or not black parents imparted racial socialization messages to their children. Black parents envision racial socialization as involving several components, including messages regarding their experience as minority group members, themes emphasizing individual character and goals, and information related to black cultural heritage. The findings highlighted the critical importance of sociodemographic and environmental influences on the
socialization process as it occurs across the life-course. Implications for future research on racial socialization are discussed.


The influence of religion on intergroup attitudes remains little understood. Depravation models suggest that religion acts to hinder positive race relations, while the ethnic community approach intimates that it may work to neutralize normally antagonistic feelings. Social, demographic and religious correlates of black adult racial attitudes were examined using National Study of Black American data. Multivariate analyses revealed important determinant of positive attitudes. In contrast, among women subjective religiosity was crucial in explaining positive feelings toward Asian and Hispanic Americans, American Indians, West Indians and black Africans. The results lend support to the ethnic community model.


Perceptions of closeness to blacks in Africa was examined among the NSBA. The majority of respondents reported holding a strong affinity with blacks in Africa. Gender, age, income, education, working status, and urbanicity were all significantly associated with the degree of closeness to black Africans. In particular, males, older respondents, those who had higher levels of socio-economic status and rural dwellers indicated a greater degree of closeness to Africans than their counterparts. The article concludes with a discussion of the importance of investigating the nature of inter-group boundaries.


This paper investigates black Americans attitudes toward Asian Americans. In particular, socio-demographic factors that influence feelings of closeness toward Asian Americans are analyzed among the NSBA. In particular, this analysis investigates structural correlates of the perceived closeness of blacks toward Asian Americans. A full set of demographic, socio-economic status, regional, and residential factors were utilized as independent variables. The study found that blacks generally do not indicate feeling close to Asian Americans, although the attitudes of various subpopulations varied. Men indicated feeling closer to Asian Americans than did women. Age was positively associated with the dependent variable with older respondents reporting a high degree of perceived closeness to their younger counterparts. Respondents employed in the primary sector indicated feeling less close to Asian Americans than did their counterparts.


This article investigates the influence of sociodemographic factors on the choice of racial labels among adult Black Americans. Through three surveys we analyzed the preference for Colored, Negro, Black, Afro-American, or African American: the 1971 and 1992 Detroit Area Studies and the 1979-1980 National Survey of Black Americans. No label was universally accepted nor was any determinant consistently significant. Age was the best predictor of label preference, and though less so, so too were social class, region, and gender.


Using National Study of Black America data for 2,107 respondents (aged 18-101 yrs), the present study highlighted various components of group identification among adult Black Americans. Structural equation modeling revealed 3 dimensions to identity (masses, elites, and rebels) variously associated with a set of sociodemographic and residential variables. Ss who were older, married, less educated, and living in the South and in rural areas were most likely to identify with the masses. Older, rural, less educated, and married people also felt close to elites, as did those with low incomes. Finally, the young males, those with low incomes, and not from the South felt close to rebels. The results support the description of at least 3 reference groups within what is typically called Black group identity.


Data from the 1980 National Survey of Black Americans are used to examine the factorial structure of subjective well-being (SWB) among black Americans. A multiple indicator structural equation model that includes 17 items (observed indicators) & 4 first-order factors is proposed to account for the dimensionality of SWB encompassing strain, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Analysis of covariance structures, or LISREL, is used to evaluate 3 alternative measurement models of SWB. Findings reveal that the 4-factor model was not supported by the data. However, a 3-factor model was empirically supported and consistently replicated across 2 randomly divided subsamples. Results suggest that SWB among black Americans tends to be multidimensional.


This study examines the structural relationships among sociodemographic characteristics, health status, stress, psychological resources, and subjective well-being (SWB) among the Black elderly. A structural equation model of SWB was evaluated using data from the 1979-1980 NSBA. The results revealed that poor subjective health status was predictive of lower levels of personal efficacy and SWB. Stressful life events tended to depress subjective assessment of health and had negative effects on self-esteem and SWB. Marital status and age had positive effects on SWB. Chronic health conditions and other demographic variables, however, had indirect effects on SWB.


Recent evidence suggests that memory narratives are fallible cognitive and social constructions. Yet, the clinical literature lacks specific frameworks for guiding clinicians' inquiry into such narratives. This paper proposes one such framework that focuses on interpersonal memories. The model, which is based on Gibson’s theory of perception as applied to the interpersonal domain, seeks a detailed database from which higher level clinical inferences can be derived. Case material is used to illustrate its application. The model is discussed in relation to recent research and controversy about psychotherapeutic memory, and a stance clinicians might take toward memory phenomena.


Evidence exists that African Americans are diagnosed with schizophrenia at higher rates than are Non-African Americans. This paper examines the diagnosis of schizophrenia in 292 psychiatric inpatients from two urban hospitals located in a largely African American community. We focused on the face-to-face diagnostic interview and symptom attributions about patient condition as indicated on a post-interview free response questionnaire. We examined proportions of African American and Non-African American patients receiving particular attributions and, given particular attributions for African American and Non-African American patients, the probability of schizophrenia diagnosis. Results showed differences between groups in rates of psychotic symptom attributions (e.g. hallucinations, paranoid/suspicious). However, these differences did not necessarily correspond to differences
in diagnosis. Rather, a variety of attributions, which did not differ in rate of mention between groups, corresponded with higher rates of schizophrenia for African American patients and lower rates for Non-African Americans. Attritions of negative symptoms showed the largest differences between African American and Non-African American patients in rates of schizophrenia diagnosis while thought disorder equalized rates of the diagnosis between the two groups of patients. Logistic regression analyses confirm that different aggregate decision models were applied to patients of different races. Overall results raise questions about the extent to which symptom attributions, as opposed to other nonempirical diagnostic policies, can account for diagnostic differences between races.


Data from the NSBA were analyzed to determine the extent of and the structural correlates of marriage, romantic involvement, and preference for romantic involvement. Two of every three respondents, who did not have a main romantic involvement, indicated that they did not desire to have a significant involvement at this time. A significantly higher percentage of men than women indicated they were: married, romantically involved, and desirous of romantic involvement. There is a curvilinear relationship between age and the three dependent variables. The middle-aged group displayed the highest percentage of respondents who were married, romantically involved, and desirous of a relationship. In contrast, older respondents had the lowest percentages in all relationship categories. Conducted and interpreted with a mate availability framework, the study's findings, based on logistic regression analysis, led to the following conclusions: marriage among blacks is in large part a function of male economic readiness and "traditionality"; a differential marital opportunity structure translates into fewer marital options for less economically equipped males, older women, and the less educated; the decline in marriage among blacks does not signal a decline in romantic involvement, but a change in the environmental supports for marriage.


This article draws upon previous research (Tucker and Taylor, 1989) which explores why there has been such a sharp decline in marriage in the last 30 years among black Americans. Unlike most research in this area which is based on census and other large scale demographic data sets and only examine the correlates of marriage, this work examines both marriage and romantic involvement. This paper is also unique in that it includes both survey and focus group analysis. In particular, this study examined the extent and structural correlates of marriage, romantic involvement, and preference for romantic involvement among older adults in a national sample of African Americans. Multivariate analysis indicated that gender, age, education, income, and urban residence were important predictors of marriage and romantic involvement. In particular, men and younger respondents were likely than women and older respondents to be married, have a romantic involvement, or be desirous of a romantic involvement. The effects of the decreased probability of marriage for future cohorts of older African American women on their supportive networks, living arrangements, and income adequacy are discussed.


In order to assess the issue of inequity in exposure to environmental hazards, researchers must identify subgroups whose exposure is disproportionately greater than the average exposure experienced by the remainder of the population. The general population is a complex mixture of subgroups, therefore large efforts are needed to collect data that will enable researchers to determine comprehensively which subgroups are highly exposed and which subgroups have disproportionately greater health effects as a result of exposures to environmental hazards. Addressing environmental equity requires explicit comparisons between groups, and racial and ethnic contrasts will be prominent. It is often difficult to identify the underlying mechanisms that produce particular patterns of results. However, researchers and policy makers must understand the dynamics that may have produced a particular pattern of results so they can separate those factors that are amenable to change from those that are not.


Although there is a growing literature on racial/ethnic differences in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among adolescents, relatively little is known about the social epidemiology of drug use within the African American youth
population. The purpose of this paper is to begin to address this knowledge gap. Data from the Monitoring the Future Project are used to examine empirically the prevalence, trends, and sociodemographic correlates of drug use among nationally representative samples of African American 8th, 10th, and 12th graders (approximate N=25,000). It is found that alcohol is the drum most widely used by African American youth, followed by tobacco, and marijuana. By 12th grade, seven in ten African American secondary students have used alcohol, less than half have smoked cigarettes, a quarter have used marijuana, and less than two percent have used cocaine. Trend data indicate that although alcohol use has been relatively stable over time, cigarette and marijuana use are increasing. Gender and family structure are significant sociodemographic correlates of drug use, with use being, on average, higher among males than females, and among students who do not live with either of their parents than those who live with at least one of their parents. The relationships between drug use and socioeconomic status, urbanicity, and region vary depending on students' grade level and the specific drug in question. These findings provide an important empirical baseline for future research on the epidemiology and etiology of drug use among African American young people.


Using data from the NSBA in 1990, this study explores the levels and determinants of feminism among black women. The results show strong support for feminism among black women, particularly among younger, well-educated women who have experienced sex discrimination and who have close women friends. This analysis finds that most black women favor collaboration with white women in attacking sexism and place equal emphasis on eradicating sexism and racism. Better educated black women, and those with high levels of black identification, are more likely to favor emphasizing combating racism over combating sexism.


This paper reviews the assessment of racial and ethnic identification in the major data collection systems of the US Department of Health and Human Services. It evaluates the quality of the available data and outlines recommendations for improving the collection of racial data and enhancing our understanding of the role of race in health. Special attention is also given to the role of socioeconomic status in understanding racial differences in health and the assessment of racial status in data systems in the UK.


One of the dramatic changes in the distribution of the US population in the past 50 years was the mass movement of African-Americans from rural areas of the South to urban communities in the South and large industrial cities in the North. Today, the African-American population is overwhelmingly urban and is very vulnerable in terms of health. African-Americans now disproportionately reside in severely impoverished areas of the old industrial cities of the Northeast and Midwest that are characterized by high levels of unemployment, welfare dependency, violent crime, educational deficiencies, and teenaged pregnancy. Among persons residing in concentrated poverty in US metropolitan areas, 67% are black, 20% Hispanic, and 12% white. Any comprehensive and effective urban health agenda must address the situation of the black population. Accordingly, this paper uses race as a lens to discuss the role of the social environment in the health of urban populations. It first describes the magnitude of and trends in black-white differences in health status. It then discusses what “race” represents and outlines the multiple ways in which social factors linked to race can affect health status.


In this article, the author introduces the following article, “Can we monitor socioeconomic inequalities in health?” A survey of health departments’ data collection and reporting practices by Krieger et al. He explains how race data has been used as a proxy for socioeconomic status (SES) data, and discusses how this has led to misunderstandings of the relationships between race, SES and health. Recommendations are made that: current standards of practice regarding the collection of SES data be reviewed and updated, state-collected SES data be utilized in health reports, and geocoding be utilized in order to gain a better understanding of how neighborhood socioeconomic variables are associated with health status.

This paper examines the scientific consensus on the conceptualization of race, identifies why health researchers should analyze racial differences in morbidity and mortality and provides guidelines for future health research that includes race. This is achieved by examining scientific dictionaries and reviewing the social science, public health, and medical literature on the role of race in health. First, this paper reviews the evidence suggesting that race is more of a social category than a biological one. Variation in genotypic characteristics exists, but race does not capture it. Second, since racial categories have historically represented and continue to reflect the creation of social, economic, and political disadvantage that is consequential for well-being, it is important to continue to study racial differences in health. Finally, the paper outlines directions for a more deliberate and thoughtful examination of the role of race in health. Race is typically used in a mechanical and uncritical manner as a proxy for unmeasured biological, socioeconomic, and/or sociocultural factors. Future research should explore how clearly delineated environmental demands combine with genetic susceptibilities as well as with specific behavioral and physiological responses to increase the risk of illness of groups differentially exposed to psychosocial adversity.


This article considers the ways in which race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES) relate to each other and combine to affect racial variations in health status. The author reviews a number of methodological issues concerning the assessment of race in the United States that importantly affect the quality of the available data on racial differences in health. These issues include the discrepancy between self-identification and observer-reported race, changing racial classification categories and racial identification, the difficulties in categorizing persons of mixed racial parentage, and census undercount.


This is the introduction to the sixth volume of *Ethnicity and Disease* and discusses the importance and need for additional, in-depth research on how racism affects health.


This study examines the ways in which race/ethnicity has been conceptualized and used in the health services research literature, using all articles published in HSR from 1966-1990. The principal finding is that race/ethnicity is widely used in the health services literature to stratify or adjust results and to describe the sample or population that was studied. Race is ill-defined and was frequently employed in a routine and uncritical manner to represent ill-defined social and cultural factors. The conclusion reached is that gaining a more accurate understanding of racial/ethnic differences in patterns of health service utilization will require efforts to quantify and catalog the specific social and cultural factors that are differently distributed by racial and ethnic status.


This article discusses, from the social structure and personality perspective, the literature on the relationship between socio-economic status (SES) and physical health status. Considered are several lines of evidence that point to social and psychological factors as prime candidates for a central role in the explanation of socio-economic disparities in health. Examined are the traditional and more innovative explanations of the associations between SES and health such as inadequate medical care, the psychosocial perspective of how social structures influence patterned responses of social groups and the psychosocial factors that account for some portion of the association between SES and health status. Suggested are directions for study, or a research agenda, that can increase the understanding of these determinants.


This article reviews recent studies of socioeconomic status (SES) and racial differences in health. It traces patterns of the social distribution of disease over time and describes the evidence for both a widening SES differential in
health status and an increasing racial gap in health between blacks and whites due, in part, to the worsening health status of the African American population. Also described are variations in health status within and between other racial populations. The interactions between SES and race are examined. Explored is the link between health inequalities and socioeconomic inequality both by examining the nature of the SES gradient and by identifying the determinants of the magnitude of SES disparities over time. The ways in which major social structure and processes such as racism, acculturation, work, migration, and childhood SES produce inequalities in health are considered. Also discussed is the ways in which other intervening factors and resources are constrained by social structure. Measurement issues are addressed and implications for health policy and future research are described.


Historically, Black (or African-American) churches have played a central role as a center of religious and political life and also as a provider of human services and a healing community. This paper examined the extent to which African-American churches in one Northeastern urban environment are involved in the delivery of health and human service programs in their communities. It also explores how comfortable Black clergy are in referring their parishioners to the formal mental health system and identifies the actual level of referrals. In addition, the analyses considered the individual and organizational characteristics that predict variations in the levels of support services and the likelihood of referral. Our analyses revealed that African-American churches deliver a broad range of services to the community. More than two-thirds of the clergy feel comfortable in making a referral to a mental health agency or professional and more than half have actually made a referral. Both service delivery and referral levels varied by several clergy and congregational characteristics. The implications of these findings for research and health policy are considered.


This commentary considers the implications of the assessment of racial/ethnic status for monitoring the health of African Americans and other Black populations in the United States. It argues that because racial disparities in health and other social indicators persist undiminished, the continued assessment of race is essential. However, efforts must be made to ensure that racial data are of the highest quality. This will require uniform assessment of racial status that includes identifiers for subgroups of the Black population. Research also indicates that the health of multiracial persons varies by maternal race. Thus, efforts to monitor multiracial status should assess the race of both parents. More attention should also be given to analysis and interpretation of racial data and to the collection of additional data that capture characteristics linked to race (such as socioeconomic factors and racism) that may adversely affect health.


This paper uses data from a probability sample of a major metropolitan area in the United States to examine the extent to which racial prejudice predicts variation in whites’ support for both government efforts to help blacks through social and economic initiatives, in general, and through affirmative action programs in employment, in particular. We utilize multiple measures of traditional and contemporary prejudice and assess their separate and combined effects on racial policies. We also examine the relative contribution of racial prejudice, individual and group self-interests, and stratification beliefs to the support of race-related policies. We found that all three classes of variables predict whites’ support of racial policies but racial prejudice is the most important. Moreover, the contemporary forms of prejudice are most consequential in predicting levels of support for social policies designed to reduce racial inequality.


Examined is the relationship between the variable of religion and health status, by exploring the effect of religious attendance and affiliation on psychological distress. Used was a 1967, longitudinal community study of 720 adults. The Gurin, et al. symptom checklist scale was utilized to measure psychological distress. The findings indicate that religion may be a potent coping mechanism for adjusting to the stress of life. It is concluded that religious attendance and religious affiliation, the most commonly used measures, are not the only factors that should be
considered when determining religious commitment. Increasing the understanding of the association between religion and health requires efforts to comprehensively evaluate religion and identify the critical dimensions that link religious commitment and health.


This article discusses the problem of health status being directly related to racial or ethnic minority groups and their associated social categories. There exists more variations within the races than between them and a more accurate data-gathering model for understanding the relationship between race and health is proposed. Covered topics include the limits of biological differences between racial groups, the role racism plays in health status, race and SES, the importance of multiple vulnerability and the significance of cultural variation, an assessment of risk factors and resources and societal factors as determinants of health status.


Racial disparities in medical care should be understood within the context of racial inequities in societal institutions. Systematic discrimination is not the aberrant behavior of a few but is often supported by institutional policies and unconscious bias based on negative stereotypes. Effectively addressing disparities in the quality of care requires improved data systems, increased regulatory vigilance, and new initiatives to appropriately train medical professionals and recruit more providers from disadvantaged minority backgrounds. Identifying and implementing effective strategies to eliminate racial inequalities in health status and medical care should be made a national priority.


Examined is the association between marital status and psychiatric disorder for African Americans and explores to what extent these patterns differ from those of Whites. Their analysis documents, from community-based probability samples, that marital status predicts variations in the prevalence of psychiatric disorders in the African American population. Also shown, were distinctive patterns to the distribution of psychiatric disorders across race. The findings determined that, for Blacks of both sexes and white males, all forms of marital dissolution are associated with an increased risk of psychiatric illness—the strongest being for White males. For white females, the marital categories of separation/ divorce is most strongly linked to a higher risk for disorder. Across the board, males have a higher risk of disorder, except for depression. Directions for further research are outlined.


This article examines the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and (current) six-month and life-time rates of psychiatric disorders among blacks and whites. Overall, SES is inversely related to psychiatric disorders for both racial groups and the association is weaker for black males than for white males. There is some variation among specific disorders, with the strongest relationship with SES occurring for alcohol abuse. The six-month rate depression is unrelated to SES among blacks but inversely related for whites. Lower-SES white males have higher rates of psychiatric illness than their black peers. Lower-SES black females have higher rates of substance abuse disorders than their white counterparts. These findings emphasize the need for future research efforts to identify the mechanisms and processes that link social stratification to disease.


This article examines the extent to which racial differences in socio-economic status (SES), social class and acute and chronic indicators of perceived discrimination, as well as general measures of stress can account for black-white differences in self-reported measures of physical and mental health. The observed racial differences in health were markedly reduces when adjusted for education and especially income. However, both perceived discrimination and more traditional measures of stress are related to health and play an incremental role in accounting for differences between the races in health status. These findings underscore the need for research
efforts to identify the complex ways in which economic and non-economic forms of discrimination relate to each other and combine with socio-economic position and other risk factors and resources to affect health.


This paper provides an overview of United States-based research on the ways in which racism can affect mental health. It describes changes in racial attitudes over time, the persistence of negative racial stereotypes and the ways in which negative beliefs were incorporated into societal policies and institutions. It then reviews the available scientific evidence that suggests that racism can adversely affect mental health status in at least three ways. First, racism in societal institutions can lead to truncated socioeconomic mobility, differential access to desirable resources, and poor living conditions that can adversely affect mental health. Second, experiences of discrimination can induce physiological and psychological reactions that can lead to adverse changes in mental health status. Third, in race-conscious societies, the acceptance of negative cultural stereotypes can lead to unfavorable self-evaluations that have deleterious effects on psychological well-being. Research directions are outlined.


In order to clarify the relationship between the black family and educational achievement, this study investigates background, social psychological, and institutional factors believed to have critical influence on the educational attainment of young black men and women. This study used data from three datasets and found that the pattern of courses taken in high school was the strongest predictor of educational attainment, followed by parental status, age, and counselor helpfulness.


This study addresses neglected issues in research on Black men: personal resources, stress levels and stress coping. Stress-related outcomes are examined in relation to the male’s structural, social and psychological resources based on data from the NSBA. Identification of factors related to problem severity provide insight into the types of resources that are important in helping black men cope with stress. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of the findings from the research and suggestions for future directions.


National survey data collected 1980-1984 are used to examine the multiple influences of peers, counselors, families, educational preparation, and aspirations on the postsecondary attainment of African-American males (N=1,213). The inadequacies in the current paradigm for addressing the issues of resilience, persistence, and attainment among African-American youth are also discussed. Unemployment and fatherhood are utilized as mediating variables to explain attainment within the population. The findings indicate that family socioeconomic status, father's influence, peers, grades, and postsecondary educational plans have a positive effect on postsecondary attainment. Fatherhood & enlistment in the armed services are negative predictors. The results also demonstrate that those students who are more academically prepared (i.e., those with generally higher grade point averages) have a wider variety of options available to them, indicating that along with other direct programmatic interventions, the nurturance of belief in self in young African-American men is critical to their resilience & persistence.


Based upon epidemiological surveys, adverse childhood events are proposed to be risk factors for adult depressive and anxiety disorders. However, the extent to which these events are seen in clinical patient populations is less clear. We examined the prevalence of a number of proposed risk factors for depression in 650 patients with mood and anxiety disorders at the time of presentation for treatment in an outpatient subspecialty clinic. Emotional abuse, physical abuse, or sexual abuse (childhood adversity) was found in approximately 35% of patients with major depression and panic disorder, was more common in women than men, and was associated with an earlier
onset of symptoms. Childhood adversity was also strongly associated with marital discord/divorce, and psychopathology in a parent, suggesting family discord predisposes to childhood abuse. Furthermore, the association of childhood abuse with parental mental illness suggests that genetic and environmental factors are difficult to separate as etiological factors in vulnerability.


Increased cardiovascular reactivity has been proposed to be a critical mediator in the development of hypertension and cardiovascular disease. The personality factors associated with cardiovascular reactivity are still subject to debate. The studies reported here were undertaken to examine the relationship between trait anxiety and cardiovascular stress reactivity in a community-based sample (Tecumseh). All studies were carried out in an outpatient setting. Cardiovascular reactivity to isometric handgrip and mental arithmetic was assessed and recorded by automatic blood pressure monitoring in 832 subjects aged 19-41 years. Spielberger trait and state anxiety measures were collected immediately before the stressors were applied. No differences in baseline heart rate, systolic or diastolic blood pressure was observed across anxiety categories. There was a clear negative correlation between trait anxiety and cardiovascular reactivity to mental arithmetic. The pattern was less clear in response to isometric handgrip.

This chapter presents a program of research and understanding of the African American belief system. Included is 1) an investigation of the various dimensions of an African American racial belief system in terms of its measurement properties and structural invariances across select demographic measures and 2) the explanatory constructs of the derived dimensions of this belief system.


This chapter examines the role of race and ethnicity in health psychology. An example of blacks and hypertension is used as a model for the need to consider interactions between risk factors, physiology, and social and cultural factors in the conceptualization and design of research. Notable among the review is the fact that blacks and other ethnic minorities have higher incidence and prevalence rates for several diseases and illnesses. In addition, differences exist in health behaviors and rates of mortality, and health care utilization. Hypertension among blacks is used to explore the biological, social, and psychological underpinnings of health among racial and ethnic groups. Future research directions are discussed.


In this chapter the authors have attempted to suggest some of the many factors affecting social relationships and social supports in the case of minority elderly. The author begins by reviewing the status of Hispanic, Asian American, African American, and American Indian families and discussing how minority families are changing. Definitions of social support are then used as a vehicle to discuss what can be done to better assist the family to meet the needs of its older family members. Research and service needs are identified.


Understanding environmental factors, life events and coping abilities in the lives of older people is best accomplished by applying a life-span developmental perspective. The life-span framework allows one to incorporate information about individual experiences, the successes an individual has had in coping with these experiences, and the people who have or have not been helpful in aiding the individual to achieve these successes. The research suggests that an individual's ability to cope with specific environmental conditions and life events is best understood through a consideration of the resources and experiences available to that person. There is also reason to believe that individuals develop coping styles over their lifetime which can be seen to be generally successful and adaptive while others develop coping styles which are generally not successful or maladaptive. However, as research clearly demonstrates, individual coping and adaptation competency can be improved through informal and professional intervention at all points in the individual life-course.


This article discusses the social development of the adolescent within the framework of individual, family, school, and community interaction and development. This social development is viewed as a confluence of experiences which are highly similar to and evolve from previous childhood experiences. Although adolescents are best known for their needs to be autonomous from the influences of their childhood, most data suggest a continuity between childhood and adolescent life. The research on this stage of development is quite lacking; further research is expected to highlight the similarities between adolescence and other developmental stages.

Over the last fifteen years enormous progress has been made in the area of social support. The chapter highlights the inter- and intra- individual life-span developmental aspects of social support, beginning with a theoretical discussion of these issues, the continuing with a limited empirical investigation of them. Three very diverse data sources are used: two national American datasets (one of white Americans over 50, the other of black Americans over 18); and very preliminary data from a study still in progress of people over 65 in the Bordeaux region of France. For both blacks and whites, a set of meaningful predictors of reciprocal supportive family relationships were found. In whites, negative deviations from reciprocity seemed to be clearly related to the possession of valued social and economic resources. Need, as conceptualized as functional disability, did not play a significant role in the nature of reciprocal relationships among whites. For blacks, the most important predictor of reciprocity was disability: increased physical limitations were clearly linked to increased reciprocity of supportive relationships.


This chapter explores the role of life-course reciprocity of social support on successful aging and effective functioning. The Social Support Bank is used as an organizing concept within an exchange theory framework. The authors hypothesize that individuals maintain a cognitive accounting scheme of supports received and supports given. The theoretical framework of this model is expanded upon in the chapter. Data on respondents fifty years of age and older, from three national studies -- Social Supports of the Elderly, the NSBA and the TGFS -- are used to examine the nature of reciprocated support in different age groups. Tentative support for the importance of reciprocity and the Social Support Bank notion is found. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of reciprocity and exchange more generally in successful aging.


This chapter reviews the literature on social support and aging with particular reference to aging and health. Special attention is focused on data related to social support and immune functioning and major unresolved issues in the field. A major problem identified is the lack of knowledge and specificity regarding the mechanism of social support effects. A model of one possible mechanism of social support effectiveness, the support/efficacy framework, is presented and supporting literature and findings discussed. Based upon this model, the practical, clinical aspects of social support are discussed. The chapter concludes with a section on the clinical implications of social support interventions in recovery from acute health conditions, and the maintenance of health regimens in individuals with chronic health problems.


This chapter examines age, gender, and race differences in individual productivity across the adult life span. Analyses are conducted on the first Wave of the ACL. The general conclusion reached based upon correlational and regression analyses is that people of all ages, including older people, engage in productive activities and they derive psychological well-being from this participation. The individual's personal psychological interpretation of these activities, that is whether or not they found them enjoyable, contributes significantly to their overall well-being and quality of life. These findings lend support to the conclusion that although there are age, gender, and race differences in activities, people continue to be individually productive across the life-span. The fact that enjoyment of these activities is significant suggests that future research should be sensitive to how age, gender, and race contribute to the experience and interpretation of activities as enjoyable and how this may contribute to individual productivity.

Benbenishty, R., & Oyserman, D. (1996). How can integrated information systems (IIIF) be a support? In P. J. Pecora, W. R. Seelig, F. A. Zirps, & S. M. Davis (Eds.), Quality improvement and evaluation in child and
Quality improvement depends to a large extent on systematic monitoring of an agency’s processes, performance, outcomes and careful analysis of the information collected. The effective handling of information is therefore essential to most quality improvement efforts in social service agencies. Agencies need information about their clients, interventions, and outcomes (see Chapter 2). Timely and accurate information are essential for decision making and planning on all levels (see Chapters 6 and 7). In order to assess what they should change and where they stand in the quality improvement process, agencies need to gather, store, process, retrieve, and analyze information. These are not easy tasks. Child and family service agencies need new ways to handle them. This chapter discusses the information needs of child and family service agencies and problems that might be encountered in meeting these needs. It offers a conceptual framework that will help you address your information needs and promote quality improvement by designing and implementing an integrated information system. Information technology can support clinical practice, administration, and evaluation of the agency.


This chapter is concerned with the importance of the Church and how it affects and influences the African community. A secondary analysis of the NSBA was utilized to show how males and females view the importance of Church and various types of religious activities. The findings were that religious expression has a positive influence on the lives and belief systems of both men and women. The Church’s role in community service and the various styles of response to social conditions is examined, as are the results of a study on Black Churches in the Northeast region of the United States.


Using a secondary analysis of data from the NSBA, this chapter discusses the functions and characteristics of marriage and married-couple families within the African-American population. Detailed are the six positive functions of marriage—raising children, companionship, love life, safety, housework and financial security. Findings show that there is a higher level of egalitarian relations than what exists in American families as a whole. These activities were evaluated from the perspective of gender variations, variation of family types, racial socialization, double consciousness, African heritage, and racial solidarity. Satisfaction with life, with family and with self-worth is broken down by selected characteristics, such as sex, marital status, family structure and married by gender. Relatively high levels of satisfaction were found in this data group. Three dimensions of role relations—a personal assessment of how well they perform family roles, of who performs the housework, and of who gets more out of the relationship, are examined. Findings affirm that married couple families tend to have more positive feelings of personal happiness, satisfaction with life and self-esteem.


The basic premise of this paper is that race, class and gender interact with the family provider role in a rather complex manner to place black males at alarming risks for an array of psychosocial maladies. The differential incidence and prevalence of psychosocial problems among black males can be better understood within the context of the tenacious and escalating problems they face as family providers. This paper emphasizes a cognitive adaptive approach, building on expectancy-value theory and focusing on situational and cognitive aspects of role-strain which are crucial to adaptive coping.


The chapter focuses on naturally occurring expectancies among black Americans. This research should: 1) be conducted with due regard to theoretical issues and complexities; 2) address conceptual and measurement problems related to the influence of pressing racial inequalities; and 3) utilize multivariate analysis and longitudinal designs to control for competing hypotheses. The theoretical underpinnings of expectancy measures included in
the NSBA are discussed. Emphasis is placed on the general theoretical relevance of three interrelated research questions and related measurement considerations. The importance of these questions for making studies of naturally occurring expectancies more responsive to the unique circumstances of black populations is also highlighted. These provide a framework to discuss expectancy measurement, which emphasizes underlying conceptual distinctions and descriptive estimates of expectancies in the national sample. A brief review of initial studies which employ expectancy measures, ongoing research, as well as theoretical and practical implications is discussed.


This chapter addresses the family roles of Black husbands/fathers who remain with their families. The psychological model focuses on structured economic marginality experienced by black fathers as the major precursor of provider role strain.


The number of jobless African Americans is growing. The severity of joblessness for blacks, when compared to whites, has already been documented: black workers are more frequently displaced from jobs during economic recession, are jobless for longer periods, become more discouraged in job search, drop out of the labor force more often, and experience greater economic hardship as a result of joblessness. This chapter first highlights the critical issues and perspectives on black joblessness, then discusses findings from the NSBA based on a unique set of objective and subjective indicators. Analyses focus on both the officially unemployed and the hidden unemployed -- those who want and need a job but do not actively look for one. Building on dual labor market paradigms, national data are presented to explore the nature, contributing factors, and consequences of both official and hidden unemployment among black workers. Descriptive analyses explore the relation of intergenerational background, employment history, and job search experience to black joblessness. The economic and social psychological consequences of joblessness are also explored. Comparative analysis helps to identify specific variables that differentiate the hidden unemployed from the not-interested-in-working, the officially unemployed, and the employed.


Beginning in the 20th century, Industrial/ Organizational psychology has emerged as a scientific field to help solve behavioral problems in work, school, government, and organizations within increasingly complex societies. This chapter outlines the scope of I/O psychology, reviews major trends in this expanding, and highlights specific issues that must be addressed to make this field more relevant to the special organizational problems of African-Americans. Within a triple quandary conceptual framework, critical issues related to significant involvement, cultural sensitivity and functional relevance are discussed as major challenges to organizational psychology. Future research, theory and practice need to address these special issues facing the African-American population and related social psychological factors that influence organizational effectiveness.


Racial inequalities in work organizations are essentially historical, stubbornly resist change, and have differential effects on the work life of black workers. In the present chapter, findings from the National Study of Black Americans are presented to better clarify the diversity of work life of black Americans. Going beyond white-black comparisons on objective indicators, this chapter emphasizes the growing diversity in African-American work life with a social psychological consideration of both objective and subjective indicators. Census occupation codes are grouped into secondary and primary job categories according to theoretical criteria emerging from dual labor market paradigms. Data are analyzed according to age, gender, racial segregation while growing up, and work history; subjective indicators, such as job satisfaction, perceived work role marginality, and perceived racial discrimination in the workplace.

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a very challenging period, especially in technologically advanced urban areas. Because of chronic joblessness, this "youth" transitional period is a special psychosocial challenge for black youth. Job search discouragement faced by black youth is non-normative and has far-reaching developmental consequences. This chapter presents findings on gender differences in both objective and subjective aspects of chronic job search strain in the NSBA and formulates a life span role strain-adaptation model to highlight pivotal developmental antecedents and consequences. Regardless of gender, black youth often experience several episodes of chronic joblessness and discouragement in the school-to-work transition. Early difficulty in student roles represent a major precursor of chronic youth joblessness which, in turn, increase risk for family and elderly role strains during later adult years. Ongoing research, related theoretical issues, and practical implications are also considered.


This chapter critically evaluates major research perspectives in the literature on black men as a basis for formulating a more integrative adult development approach. An exhaustive review of existing literature is not attempted. Rather, the focus is on the classification, analysis, and synthesis of research perspectives which characterize our current knowledge on black men in America. Four approaches to research in this area -- pathology, oppression, ethnicity, and coping -- are examined according to how they differ in emphasis on maladaptive-adaptive and internal-external dimensions of the black male experience.


This chapter reviews relevant literature and develops a role strain-adaptation model to guide future research, theory development and public policy. This model specifies how psychosocial consequences of reindustrialization are mediated by a sequelae of provider role strains which ripple from displaced fathers to working mothers to unemployment teenage children. Guided by preliminary findings, future research directions extrapolated from the model focus on how harmful consequences of the intrafamilial role strains depend on objective difficulties and informal coping processes. Implications of the role strain-adaptation model for theory development as well as long and short run public policy are presented.


Guided by theory and research which suggest that subjective reactions to chronic family role strains produce greater psychological distress than life events such as job loss, the study investigates: (1) the manner in which objective employment difficulties combine with more subjective dimensions of provider role strain to threaten psychological well-being, and (2) the degree to which informal coping resources are mobilized to offset the deleterious effects of provider role strain. Multivariate analysis of a national sample of black husband-fathers reveals that perceived difficulty in meeting the needs of one's wife is even more distressful than actual job loss, and that subjective religious commitment operates as a relatively more powerful coping resource than cohesive families. Within a broader stress-adaptation framework, however, a set of five informal coping resources fails to fully offset the more powerful negative effect of provider role strain on life happiness.


In this chapter, Dr. Broman argues that black coping capacity is the understudied factor that ameliorates the impact of stress on African American mental health. Despite this promising line of reasoning, there are few empirical investigations focused explicitly on how African Americans cope with blocked opportunities and disappointments. Broman examines the different coping strategies used to deal with personal problems. His results show that blacks
use a variety of strategies depending on the type of personal problem and on characteristics such as gender and social status. A strong argument is made for additional studies of how blacks cope with stress. Also represented is a testimony to the unique contribution of African American culture to the dynamics of survival.


The focus of this chapter is on whether married black men and women cope with stress differently than do blacks whose marriages have fallen apart. The author also answers the question of whether getting married has any advantage over never marrying--a lifestyle choice that has increasingly become a viable alternative for African American women. The major objective of Brown's analysis is to explore the relationship between marital status and psychiatric symptoms among adult African Americans. The results show that, although marriage may be better for mental health than being separated or divorced, marriage is not any better than having never been married.


This chapter briefly highlights the complexity of studying race, ethnicity, and cultural influences, specifically as these three constructs relate to the sociology of mental health. We argue that race, ethnicity, and culture influence mental health status in three important ways. First, the reliable assessment of mental health is hindered by an inadequate sampling of racial and ethnic groups. Assessment is also influenced by ignorance concerning cultural influences. Second, race and ethnicity are social statuses that can be associated with stressful experiences among subordinate groups. For example, conflicting cultural influences, experiences of discrimination, and immigration are often associated with, and directly related to, adverse mental health outcomes. Third and finally, predictors of mental health outcomes can vary in important ways depending upon race, ethnicity, and cultural influences. For example, some ethnic groups may have a more collectivist versus individualist orientation that may buffer the impact of a social stress.


This chapter reviews empirical research on the psychological, social, and material importance of skin tone in the lives of African Americans. The possible relationships between skin tone and dimensions of racial identity are explored. Included is a discussion of critical new directions for research on tone and racial identity and other significant psychological aspects of African American life.


The central thesis of this chapter is that black elected officials are both descriptive and political representatives of the African-American electorate. Unfortunately, political cynicism and alienation are eroding the trust that African-American voters have in the political system. Support among the majority of black and white voters in Michigan for Proposition B in the fall 1992 election is an indication of political discontent. Advocates seek to limit the number of terms that the Governor and members of the U.S. Congress and the Michigan General Assembly can serve.


Black Americans are a socioeconomically disadvantaged but politically active group. Although blacks have limited personal resources (e.g., income, education) when compared to whites, group-based resources and political mobilization strategies motivate them to participate in the political process. This political mobilization affects different generations of black Americans in varying degrees. Socialization generation and personal resources help to create what the author views as two black electorates -- voters and those who would vote if there was a black political party. This chapter empirically investigates how resource availability affects the decision to vote and the call for the creation of a black party. Voting behavior and black party support are examined by several variables, including racial common fate identification, generation membership (New Deal, before Brown vs. Topeka, Civil
Rights, and Post-Civil-Rights). Older black Americans tend to be more active voters, while younger blacks and the poor tend to support the formation of a black political more strongly.


This chapter builds on the findings of Drs. Smith and Thornton in examining voting behavior, one of the major social participatory variables in previous study of the elderly, but one that has not been thoroughly addressed among black Americans. Political participation is viewed as a valuable activity on the part of the black elderly, and their concern is with what factors (particularly group identification and social and economic status) relate to positive participation in the electoral process. Using data from the NSBA, the major outcome variables of interest are voting and other political activities, such as campaigning and contacting public officials. The results provide support for the thesis that one effect of severe racial socialization conditions among this cohort of elderly blacks results in the formation of a strong sense of group solidarity that translates into active political participation.


This paper establishes how the Black church and religious beliefs promote political activism within the Black community, and specifically, among Black women. The approach used is both theoretical and empirical. Since ordinary political behavior is, in essence, no different from insurgent activities, we begin by providing a brief overview of the history of women's participation in civil right struggle. Then, we outline how religious guidance and African American church organizations serve as critical resources for mobilization as well as highlight the significance of gender in this church-based mobilization process. We show how religiosity, group identification, and membership in a politically active church influence the political actions of Black women and men using data from the 1984 NBES, a national telephone survey of voting-eligible Black Americans.


This chapter briefly highlights the complexity of studying race, ethnicity, and cultural influences, specifically as these three constructs relate to the sociology of mental health. The authors argue that race, ethnicity, and culture influence mental health status in three important ways -- assessment, social statuses, and predictors. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the implications of these issues for the study of mental health within a sociological framework, and thus to be directive for researchers in the mental health field. The authors begin by defining the concepts of race, ethnicity, culture, and cultural differences. They discuss how a more precise understanding of race, ethnicity and culture could add to our knowledge of mental health in terms of assessment, social statuses, and predictors. They then briefly review what is currently known about the distribution of mental health outcomes across several racial and ethnic populations. This chapter concludes with a suggested research plan for the next millennium, a period that will see phenomenal changes in racial, ethnic and cultural diversity in the United States.


This chapter examines patterns of outpatient mental health services utilization in a sample of 450 Black women who participated in Wave 4 of the National Survey of Black Americans (Jackson, 1991). It is a follow-up study of the mental health symptoms and service utilization patterns among Black women (Mays, Caldwell, & Jackson, 1996) based on Wave 1 data. The original chapter identified demographic, sociocultural, and social support correlates of different patterns of mental health services used by Black women. The current chapter extends this work by describing in more detail, characteristics of Black women who specifically sought assistance from ministers in addition to private therapists and community Mental health Centers for a variety of personal problems. The author also predicts which Black women are most likely to seek assistance from outpatient mental health resources with emphasis on the influences of religious orientation on utilization behaviors.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the history of community-based voluntary associations developed by African American women for African American women. Three types of institutional supports (churches, fraternal organizations, and professional mentorships) that are potentially available to assist African American women are then explored. Suggestions are then made for future research and implications for linking formal and informal institutional support networks for African American women.


This chapter addresses help-seeking behavior and focuses on black women, exploring the combined use of informal and professional help. Dr. Caldwell argues that because it is impossible for professional helpers to service all blacks in need of assistance, it is necessary to distinguish among those who truly require professional help and those who will be fine with help from family, friends, and neighbors. Caldwell’s analysis, "Predisposing, Enabling, and Need Factors Related to Patterns of Help Seeking Among Black Women" will aid efforts designed to augment mental health services by identifying additional community supports. This chapter also highlights personal characteristics of black women who will benefit most by using informal help alone compared to those who need a combination of informal and professional help.


The perspective of this chapter is that the birth of a baby to an adolescent is a family event which creates economic, social, and psychological consequences for all the family members. First presented is an historical overview of childbirth trends and social norms for adolescents followed by an examination of racial differences in adolescent birth rates. Examined next are the intergenerational family support relationships of adolescent mothers and from the finding, a model of how family relations may influence the psychological well-being of adolescent parents is proposed. Included is a description and findings of the authors’ ongoing study of family transitions to early childbearing and empirical studies focusing on the psychological well-being of adolescent fathers. They conclude with a discussion of directions for future research and suggest ways in which adolescent parents’ emotional health may be improved through family-centered interventions sensitive to gender, unique developmental position and cultural circumstances.


This chapter reviews the relevant literature on topics related to the development and effective implementation of Black church-based health and social service programs for older African American adults. Addressed are the basic issues concerning the nature of Black religious involvement, organizational traits, and factors affecting the operation of Black churches and the relationship of the church to the African American community as well as society as a whole. Data from the Black Church Family Project is used to explore these questions among a sample of northern Black churches.


This chapter discusses the role of the network of Black churches as a family support system and their intervention programs which provide a source of positive influence in meeting the challenge of achieving parity between African American families and White families, by the twenty-first century. Topics covered include the historical nature of their social service role, a conceptual model and a description of these family projects, types of outreach programs currently in place, service gaps that may not be addressed and suggestions for expanding the Black Churches’ social service presence.
This chapter focuses on the notion that one's perception of self-competence as a parent is often entrenched in societal norms. For African Americans, the development of a sense of parental self-competence may be impeded by the fact that American standards for parenting are based on cultural values that may differ from their own. The authors argue that a solid base of social support often enables parents to gain a sense of competence. It is suggested that such support is crucial for the African American parent's sense of efficacy. Building on extant research, the investigators attempt to reveal a relationship among social support (in particular, social support in the areas of child-rearing advice and encouragement), a sense of self-competence, and predicting parenting behavior. A national sample of 562 women was accrued for participation in the study. Subject recruitment was circumscribed to women ranging in age from 18-45, as they were expected to be in the midst of child-rearing activities. Analysis centered on the variables of self-competence, age, education, income, marital status, number of children, self-esteem, and of course, the source, type, and quality of child-rearing support received. Results indicate that some African American mothers may feel more competent without child-rearing social support.

Continual attention to the development and the refinement of culturally-sensitive methods is needed in social science research conducted in African American communities. The complexity of life for African Americans dictate the need for a broad array of methodological approaches to conduct quality social science research. This same complexity makes the involvement of the Black researchers imperative. Examples are given of methods used in the PRBA over the last 20 years to collect reliable and valid culturally-relevant data. Research designs that are sensitive to cultural factors and heterogeneity among African Americans are described. Sampling approaches and designs used in a number of national and regional community surveys conducted by PRBA are highlighted. Field techniques introduced by the PRBA to minimize interviewer and respondent biases when conducting cross-section surveys and multi-generation family, qualitative, and clinical diagnosis studies are used as examples.

Although many of the basic techniques for telephone sampling are the same as those used for many other sample design problems, there are several unique features of the frames used for telephone sample selection that have stimulated the development of sample designs specific to telephone surveys. This chapter discusses the frames and basic designs employed in telephone household sampling, contrasts the relative efficiencies of several alternative designs, and compares telephone sampling designs based on cost, variance, implementation, and bias considerations.

This chapter focuses in how functional disability and self-reported physical health problems influence perceived stress and the well-being of the elderly. Using data from the NSBA, it finds that good health and the absence of health disability serve as resources that moderate the psychological functioning and personal well-being perceptions of the elderly.

The objectives of this chapter are to: (a) present information contained in the NSBA that is relevant to the health status of American blacks, and (b) provide data on subgroup differences in health within the NSBA sample as defined by age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The chapter begins with a brief section profiling the health status of blacks in general, as defined by age, gender, and socioeconomic status. Next, the chapter provides a description of the health measures included within the NSBA dataset. Basic profiles of health are presented for the sample as a whole, and also among identified age, sex, and socioeconomic subgroups. Additionally, regression analyses of selected health indicators are conducted using an expanded set of demographic factors (region, urbanicity, and marital status, in addition to those listed above) as predictors. These variables prove to be strong predictors of various aspects of health status and health resource use among black Americans.


A long tradition of research has examined the nature of subjective well-being (SWB) evaluations among older populations. Relatively little is known about these processes among the elderly of minority groups. Research on SWB among minority elderly, and older black adults in particular, has been predominated by a concern with simple racial group comparisons. Little attention has focused on the possible mechanisms which underlie observed differences in well-being. The consideration of SWB among minority elderly has highlighted several important influences on these processes. In particular, the impact of social status position on aging, cultural values and traits, and life-span conceptions of adaptation are important themes in theorizing on older black and minority adults. This chapter discusses these contributions to SWB theory and suggests further areas of investigation.


The chapter focuses on the theoretical models which underpin the use of subjective well-being (SWB)/quality of life (QOL) measures and their relevance to the experiences of black Americans. A life-span orientation to understanding these processes is used as a pivotal organizing theme. A background of SWB research and of the various explanatory models of well-being is provided, followed by an examination of trends in SWB for blacks and whites and overall racial differences in SWB. A collection of studies of well-being, which are based on the NSBA, allows the investigation of the effects of social status factors on reports of life quality. Age status is also granted special notice due to the observed age differences in these perceptions and the possibility that age and age cohort effects may moderate the relationship between socioeconomic resources and well-being. The chapter concludes with a discussion of current models of SWB and areas requiring further theoretical work and investigation.


This chapter adopts a selective approach in addressing several key issues related to the concepts and methods employed in extant research on intergenerational support within African-American families. First, the contributions of ethnographic and survey research approaches to understanding diverse conception of family and supportive relations among African Americans are explored. Second, the authors establish ethnographic work on intergenerational support within the context of demographic profiles of African American families, as well as studies employing survey research approaches. Third the authors consider the implications of diversity in family structure and the organization of assistance exchanges for the methodological procedures customarily employed in studies of intergenerational support. The authors conclude with an examination of various strategies for the synthesis of qualitative and quantitative approaches and concrete ways these can be employed to increase the understanding of support exchanges within multi-generation families.

The nature and functions of contextual factors (e.g., denomination/religious preference, race/culture) are central themes in theory and research on religious involvement, physical and mental health, and their relationships to one another. Despite the prominence of these concerns, however, direct and systematic evidence as to the nature and effects of contextual factors on religion-health relationships has been lacking and/or inconsistent. Significant differences in current conceptual definitions and interpretations of contextual factors, as well as their proposed methods of operation, make it difficult to assess their overall importance for religion-health relationships. Conceptual, methodological, and analytic limitations in extant research linking religion to health, hinders the development of a comprehensive understanding of the significance of contextual factors for these relationships. This chapter discusses the distinctive meanings and functions of contextual factors and their significance for religion-health associations. Research findings pertinent to several contextual factors are reviewed. Recommendations for integrating different perspectives on contextual factors are discussed.


This article reviews current empirical research on religious involvement among African Americans, focusing on sociodemographic diversity in patterns of religious attitudes and behaviors, as well as distinctive features of religious concerns for Blacks. The article begins with a brief review of conceptual work by Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) addressing the nature of the Black church and religious traditions. Following this, an overview of research findings bearing on various aspects of religious involvement is presented.


This chapter examines the intergenerational exchanges and functions of family networks. It examines how structural characteristics relate to family functions and perceived exchanges among parents and their adult children. The analysis uses data from the NSBA and provides a great deal of support for prior research, but also reveals important gender and marital role differences in the giving and receipt of intergenerational assistance.


This chapter provides a review and summary of religious involvement among African Americans and, specifically, older persons. Extant models of black religious expression are explored, as are a number of assumptions concerning religiosity among blacks. The Dialectical Model of African American religion (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990) serves as an organizing framework for understanding black religious expression. The chapter describes research findings in the areas of black church black religious involvement, concentrating on patterns and components of religiosity, sociodemographic predictors of religious involvement, and major social and health correlates and outcomes of religious involvement. Finally, an agenda for future research that considers several of the current conceptual, methodological, and analytic limitations in this area is discussed. Of particular importance are issues bearing on the conceptualization of African American religious experience as a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon, as well as the continued development and articulation of models of the antecedents and consequences of religious involvement among blacks.


This chapter focuses on the social integration of older black adults within the contexts of family, friends, and church. After a review of the evidence regarding the integration of older blacks in these settings, research on the well-being consequences of participation in these networks is presented. Methodological limitations of previous work is examined, and evidence regarding the social integration within the spheres of family, church and peers is reviewed. Finally, selected trends in the aging population in regards to potential effects on integration and support is discussed.


Intercollegiate athletics continues to provide an avenue towards education for significant numbers of African American males. Over the past 15 years, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has been engaged in a movement to reform intercollegiate athletics. There has been some debate regarding the implications of the current focus of the reform effort for African American male student-athletes. The present chapter begins with a brief history of the reform movement, its current focus, and the consequences to-date of reform legislation. Next, the chapter evaluates the merits of the underlying assumption of the reform movement that the academic problems of student-athletes are primarily due to a lack of academic motivation as the result of an over-emphasis on athletics over education. As a result of this analysis, an alternative explanation that emphasizes the role of social structure on African American student-athletes’ academic performance is proposed. The chapter conclude with recommendations for the NCAA and individual institutions that are designed to improve student-athletes’ academic performance without the resultant adverse impact of the current reform legislation.


This chapter examines those variables from the NSBA dataset that are related to the current work status of the black elderly. The analyses address the nature of the work that the black elderly are involved in and how work status relates to sociodemographic and socioeconomic status variables. It discusses some of the barriers to full productive participation and concludes that work constitutes an important and often untapped resource for the black elderly, providing meaningful personal and group productive roles.


In this paper we examine the extent to which residential segregation can account for the black-white adult mortality disparity. Unlike previous studies of all-cause mortality, we used cities as the unit of analysis instead of standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs) which increased our sample size considerably when compared to previous studies. The present analyses show an association between racial residential segregation and the black-white mortality disparity for ages 15-44 for men and women, even after SES factors are taken into account. Our findings here, although modest, point to the importance of understanding neighborhood effects on health status. Our future research plan is discussed.


In this chapter the authors use a systematic coding of the behaviors of interviewers and respondents, complemented by a medical record check, to examine the implications of these behaviors for the accuracy of responses in a standardized health interview. The objective of the research is to examine empirical data from a survey about events and behaviors in order to assess the importance of standardization, the consequences of its breakdown, and the behavior of respondents. Findings from this inquiry can improve our understanding of the results of interaction coding for pretests and assist in the design of optimal interviewing procedures. A brief review of the rationale for the standardized interview and the role of interaction in the interview process provides a framework for our inquiry.


This chapter uses the NSBA dataset to provide a descriptive account of the physical health status and functioning of older black Americans. It conceptualizes conditions of individual life mastery, such as locus of control and life satisfaction, among different age groups as independent variables affecting and influencing perceived health status, including both doctor-reported illnesses as well as self-assessments of health. It reports widespread, serious chronic conditions, significant numbers who perceive barriers to health care, and somewhat paradoxically high levels of health satisfaction.

Explores the relationships between religious involvement and subjective assessments of the quality of family life among 18-65 yr old and older African Americans. After briefly outlining several theoretical links between aspects of public and private religious involvement and the perceived quality of family life, this issue is explored using data from the National Survey of Black Americans (1979-1980). Via a series of multivariate logistic regression models, the net effects of religious variables and covariates on 3 indicators of the subjective quality of family life are estimated: (a) positive evaluations of performance in family roles (i.e., as provider, spouse, parent); (b) perceptions of family closeness; and (c) satisfaction with family life. The concluding section discusses the implications of these findings and suggests several important directions for future data collection and analysis. Findings indicate that church participation and perceived importance of religious socialization are significantly associated with family role performance, subjective family closeness, and satisfaction with family life.


This chapter examines the important implications of gender roles and intimate relationships among older black Americans. Noted here is the paucity of research on intimate relationships among African Americans generally, but especially among those in their older decades. Using the NSBA dataset, the authors attempt to address many of the myths and negative stereotypes that are held about black intimacy and sex roles within their examination of the division of labor within the context and functioning of the family, as well as how gender may impact upon the types of exchanges and intimate resources available in older age for black Americans.


A growing body of research has found that verbal and non-verbal hostilities in public spaces is an increasingly important feature of contemporary life in the United States. The present article reviews prior studies of discrimination. Noting that past research has not:(1) examined the nature and extent of discrimination for both African Americans and whites; (2) used multiple indicators of discrimination; and (3) used broad-based population samples, the present study uses all three approaches to consider the levels, types, and social distribution of discrimination in a large probability sample of both African Americans and whites. Not surprisingly, we found that African Americans report experiencing higher levels of discrimination that whites. Seventy percent of African Americans compared to 36 percent of whites report experiencing at least one discriminatory event in their lifetime. Approximately 32 percent of African Americans compared to 12 percent of whites report experiencing at least one discriminatory event in the past year. This finding varied little by social setting or sociodemographic characteristics. Our multivariate analysis revealed that while both gender and age were related to reports of discrimination for African Americans and whites, income and education were only associated with reports of discrimination among African Americans.


Positive mental health is a psychological orientation towards life experiences with attributes of inner strength, resiliency, optimism and a capacity for mastery. This chapter focuses on the psychological strengths in black America which form this foundation of positive mental health. Descriptions, hypotheses and speculations are offered about domains of positive mental health in blacks. There is a deliberate intent to shift thinking from the pervasive orientation of pathological explanations of behavior where normality is considered to be the absence of abnormality. Evolving models of positive mental health among blacks must be responsive to both internal and external sources of stress and satisfactions and provide description and a theoretical accounting of their interrelationships.

This chapter presents research findings on middle-aged black Americans and interprets the findings within a population aging framework. Work, retirement, and physical and mental health are discussed.


This chapter explores the retirement status of the black elderly, using the NSBA dataset. It examines the patterns of retirement and the major socioeconomic and social status variables that are related to the retirement decision and individual assessment of the quality of retirement. The findings indicate that the lifetime work experiences of black Americans affect self-definitions of retirement, leading to a unique experience of what has traditionally been studied as part of the retirement decision, event, and process.


This chapter presents a global picture of the retirement experiences of black Americans. Reviewing the literature, the author presents a basic framework of retirement as a dynamic phenomenon. Next, using data from the NSBA, the author turns to an analysis of certain issues facing retired black Americans within a general model of retirement as event, social role, and trigger of subsequent life events. The sample of black elderly (aged 55 and over) is divided into three comparison groups in which the different past and current work experiences of subgroups of the black population differentially impacts their experiences of retirement; these subgroups are workers (working 20 hours or more a week), the retired (working less than 20 hours a week and considering themselves retired), and the nonretired (also working less than 20 hours a week but for reasons other than retirement). A portrait of these subgroups is presented, and the consequences of retirement for black Americans (e.g., financial, health, morale) are discussed. Finally, the author discusses methodological issues important for further research on black retirement.


Among the many changes we have seen in the past several decades, none are more impressive than those that have taken place in the American family. Even more dramatic are changes in the minority family. Some of these changes, if not ameliorated, will have profound and adverse effects on the welfare of the minority groups: Black, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics and Native Americans. This paper focuses, however, on the more disadvantaged of these groups. First, the changing characteristics of the minority elderly will be presented. Next, information on the changing structure and resources of minority families will be discussed. Finally, some approaches to problems that are common to disadvantaged minority family members will be offered. These will be issues of importance for policy, programs and research.


The welfare of the black family is a major influence on black adult development and aging. At the same time, dominant social trends, such as the aging of our society, affect the well-being of the black family. What, then, lies ahead for the black family of the future? This chapter concerns itself with specific social problems that influence blacks as well as with the implications they pose for our society as a whole. Identifying the more critical social problems by summarizing census data and findings from the NSBA and other major national studies provide a useful starting point. Possible solutions to the problems facing black families, as well as reasons why these solutions might not be forthcoming, are presented. Speculation is made concerning how present failures might affect the future economic, social, physical, and psychological welfare of the black family.


This chapter presents research findings on blacks at several life stages, emphasizing cultural variations in the aging experience. The esteem for and status of the black elderly in American society are analyzed within modernization theory.

This research explores keeping the generational contact between the Black oldest-old and their younger family members. Contrasts and parallels between Korean and American society are drawn.


The chapter summarizes work, retirement and disability research based on the NSBA. The findings indicate that a new type of black retiree group is emerging. These are the “unretired-retired”, older individuals who are not working but identify themselves as disabled rather than retired. Their special lifetime work experiences complicate their self-definitions of retirement. Current procedural definitions of retirement exclude the unretired-retired from the major retirement research today and, accordingly, from the policy which stems from that research. The chapter closes with a discussion of new research and policy which will improve the work and retirement experiences of older black Americans.


This chapter discusses recent findings from the NSBA which indicate that the special lifetime work experiences of black Americans complicate their self-definitions of retirement. Because these definitions might exclude a large number of blacks from the major retirement research today, the work, retirement and role literatures as they pertain to understanding the meaning of retirement for blacks are reviewed. The chapter closes with recommendations for retirement research and policy that would benefit older black and other disadvantaged minorities.


This monograph includes a report of the proceedings of the conference, “Blacks in an Aging Society”. The main objective of the conference was to begin to identify issues and problems that might be unique to black Americans over the coming decades as a result of the changing age structure in our society. The aging of the population will not only affect major American institutions; the greatly increased number of elderly seems bound to escalate competition among subgroups of the population for resources and social programs that are already being rationed and curtailed. The problems that confront various age groups of black Americans could be slow in resolution for several reasons. Because the social problems of blacks brought about by the aging of our society are bound to have many dimensions, a multidisciplinary approach is taken in defining the issues.


What is in store for the black family of the future? Blacks in every age group today are confronted with their own set of critical social problems, problems that, if not attended to effectively, will have serious consequences for the black family both in the near future and well beyond. This chapter concerns itself with these specific social problems and their impact on black children, teenagers, the middle-aged, and elderly, as well as with the implications they pose for our society as a whole. The more critical social problems are identified by summarizing census data and the findings of research based on the NSBA and on other major national studies.


An analysis of national data collected in 1957 and 1976 reveals that older black Americans’ use of their informal support networks and prayer in times of distress is distinct from that of older white Americans. Black-white disparities in income, education, and widowhood are large and appear to widen from middle to late life. Blacks, in coping with distress, draw from a more varied pool of informal helpers than whites, both in middle and late life, and are more versatile in substituting these helpers one for another as they approach old age. Whites, in contrast, are more likely to limit help seeking to spouses in middle life and to replace spouses with a single family member as they approach old age. Blacks are much more likely than whites to respond to worries with prayer, but prayer, as a
coping reaction among blacks, declined between 1957 and 1976. The role of the special help-seeking model of older blacks in their adaptation to old age is discussed.


The study examines in older black and white, male and female heads of households from a national sample, over a six year period, differences in work and retirement patterns and the factors that are related to these patterns. The main focus is on the patterns of the black females. The black women are the most likely and the white men the least likely of the four groups to: exhibit discontinuous work patterns; retire before age 62; and remain continuously retired. Larger amounts of transfer income, higher levels of education, advancing age and high local rates of unemployment are the factors significantly related to irregular work patterns for the black females, but not for the white males. Early retirement is best predicted by the availability of a pension other than social security for blacks, but by poor health for whites. Overall, older black female heads of households experience a larger mass of non-work years and appear less in control of their work experiences than any of the other groups. The data also indicate that a group of older black women, although in poor health, are still in the work force, financially unable to retire.


This chapter describes the health, functioning, and informal supports of the black oldest old and recommends new directions for research on this population. It examines differences in health and functioning in three age groups of older blacks, as these differences appear associated with differences in informal support. To begin to gain insight into the disproportionate institutionalization of the races, age differences in health and functioning between blacks and whites will also be discussed. First, the health and functioning of the black oldest old (individuals aged 80 and over) are described by comparing them to the black young - (aged 65 to 74) and old-old (aged 75 to 79). Next, race-by-age differences in health and functioning are discussed; and then family and social supports of the black oldest old are described. The data for our analyses are drawn from two national probability samples, the NSBA and the TGFS.


This chapter examines the relation between physical functioning and informal support in the cohort of black elderly (individuals aged 65 and over), and explores the findings with a view to new research that will inform health policy in a subsample of 734 noninstitutionalized black men and women aged 65 to 101. First, the physical health, functioning, and informal support of older blacks are described. Next, the determinants of effective functioning are identified; then the relationships between informal support and physical functioning are analyzed. The article concludes with recommendations for new health research on the black elderly. The data are drawn from the NSBA and the TGFS.


This chapter addresses the mental health status, emotional resources, and help-seeking behavior of older blacks using analysis on the NSBA dataset. The authors’ overarching concern is in describing the current mental health status of the black elderly and how psychological conditions are related to other major status dimensions, such as age, income, education, and gender. It concludes with an examination of how mental health status and major status dimensions are related to seeking help from professionals and non-professionals in reaction to significant personal problems. The findings provide an important descriptive profile of how help-seeking behavior is differentiated among a variety of statuses and role behaviors of the black elderly.

This Appendix to the book discusses several methodological challenges and resulting solutions generated by a national telephone survey of black Americans. A pilot study in 1984 served as the main vehicle for addressing those issues—screening for blacks, rate of eligibility, population non-coverage, non-response, and rater-of-interviewer effects.


This chapter examines the antecedents and correlates of several health problems currently affecting minorities adolescent females. The authors approach the health status and health behaviors by incorporating a perspective that highlights how gender, race, social class, and environment interact to influence health outcomes.


The relationship between role strain, coping resource, and psychological well-being among working black mothers was investigated. The data were collected from the NSBA and analysis was conducted on the data of a subsample of 374 respondents who were working mothers with children under 18 years of age living in the home. Role strain and coping resources were viewed as multidimensional with the effects of various indices combining in an additive manner on psychological well-being. The data were analyzed using Multiple Classification Analysis. There were significant relationships between the psychological well-being measures and the models of role strain and coping resources.


On April 18-19, 1988 a major conference, entitled A Search for Understanding, was held in Detroit, Michigan. The purpose was to evaluate current knowledge and to develop new research strategies. This record is intended to be a living document addressing the pressing needs and problems in mental health services for blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities.


The author examines the general norms, values, and attitudes of black men and women surrounding familial roles, conjugal living, and the institution of marriage. The author intends to get a better understanding of how the disjuncture between structural opportunity and family norms can lead to the trends in family formation currently observed among black Americans. Using data from the NSBA, indicators of sex role norms, values of conjugal living, and the efficacy of marriage are discussed in terms of the total population and by their relationship to gender, two life-cycle indicators (age and marital status) and an indicator of socioeconomic status (education). The results show that marriage is still highly valued among black Americans, although black men and women differ on their reasons for getting married. Black men are more likely to marry for socio-emotional reasons (e.g., love, children), while women's reasons are more instrumental (e.g., financial security).


The structure of the American family, and especially that of the African American family, is changing drastically; in particular, the number of households headed by single women or composed of older blacks living along has increased sharply. As sources of formal support for these households are threatened by cutbacks, informal sources of support become very important. This chapter addresses the support systems of these households in the context of describing black family structures and extended family behavior in the NSBA. These “at-risk” households are compared to other households in terms of availability of social support from the family. The household composition and kin networks of black Americans are described by age of the designated household head, family/household
income, region, and degree of urban development of place of residence. The family networks of these households are also described by household composition and other demographic variables. Age and subjective closeness were found to be the most important variables influencing familial support, followed in importance by type of household of residence and the frequency of contact with relatives.


Much of the research on black extended kin networks has been qualitative in nature. In an effort to expand knowledge of black extended kin systems, this chapter presents an empirical assessment of four aspects of black extended kin systems: geographical propinquity of kin, subjective closeness of kin, frequency of interaction with kin, and frequency of aid received from kin. These analyses are based on data from a large national sample of black American adults (NSBA), which allowed assessment of extended kin networks among various subgroups as well as an examination of the relationship between various aspects of black extended kin systems. In sum, the chapter substantiated claims in lore and literature about the general nature of black extended kin systems, yet contributing to the debunking of the myth of the monolithic black family.


This manuscript discusses the research design used for the National Survey of Black Americans.


This work evaluates existing measures of social support. It suggest directions for their future use, and proposes the development of new measures as needed. Social relationships as measures of support and social network measures of support are examined, as well as measures of social support in terms of the functional content of relationships.


This paper seeks to elucidate what we already know and need yet to learn about reducing socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health. We first provide a brief overview of the nature of both socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health and how they are related to each other. Second, we assess current understanding of the pathways or mechanisms by which the socioeconomic and racial/ethnic status of individuals affects their health and the implications of this understanding for reducing socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health. Third, we explore what is known about how and why communities and societies come to be stratified both socioeconomically and in terms of race/ethnicity, and how these communal and societal patterns of socioeconomic and racial/ethnic stratification affect the socioeconomic and racial/ethnic status of individuals and their health. Finally, we conclude with an assessment of what we know and need to know about how to reduce socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health and, hence, to improve population health.


This chapter examines the link between socioeconomic status (SES) and cardiovascular disease (CVD). The authors concentrate on the relationship between various psychosocial factors and SES that may help explain the SES-CVD relationship. They discuss the following psychosocial factors: type A behavior and anger/hostility, lack of social relationships and supports, lack of personal efficacy/control, depression/negative affect, and acute and chronic stress. Evidence that psychosocial risk factors help explain the SES-CVD relationship are explored, as well as spurious associations between SES and CVD. Future research is suggested and policy implications are reviewed.

In this chapter, the author argues that the prevalence of research on female-headed households must be added to through the study of residential patterns across adulthood and gender. The chapter examines variations in the living arrangements of African American adults according to age, gender, and family status. The study relies on the total sample (N = 2,107) from the National Survey of Black Americans. The subjects are divided into five groups based on their current living arrangements. The aforementioned variables of age, gender, and family status are then applied to discerning whether or not a relationship exists among these variables and differing marital and childbearing histories.


The aim of this chapter is three-fold. First, to review the lines of research that have been central points of inquiry in studies of African American grandparenthood. These research foci include (1) symbolic meaning and role expectations of grandparenthood, (2) grandparenthood in family context (i.e., family lineage, kinship systems, and living arrangements), and (3) the parenting, economic, and social support provided by grandparents. The chapter concludes with a discussion of directions for future research on African American grandparenthood.


The primary goal of this compilation about American blacks is to identify recent works containing a fairly comprehensive view of theoretical and methodological developments, major research findings and issues, and good bibliographies. Primarily edited volumes, the authors include most of the leading writers and researchers in the field. These disciplinary and multidisciplinary works focus largely on social, psychological, and health conditions and processes, and public policies.


In prior works, empirical support has been provided for how the different indicators of productive involvement (behavioral, psychological, and social) influence individual social and psychological consequences within the contexts of the three different types of economic networks. In this work, a descriptive examination of changes over the period 1989 to 1994 using three waves of panel data from a national longitudinal study of the American adult population, American Changing Lives, is provided. My purpose is to compare and contrast by race, gender, age, and education how patterns of productive activities within and between these different economic networks change over this near-decade period.


This chapter proposes that productive activities, those that generate valued goods and services and affect patterns of productive participation in economic networks are qualitatively and possibly quantitatively distinct. They can be assessed by at least three different characteristics: traditional count of hours of participation, the resulting psychological benefits, and the attribution of potential benefits to others. Examined is whether age, gender, socioeconomic status and ethnic (racial) groups influence the antecedents and consequences of productive activities within three. Proposed is a framework of productive activities built upon work in social gerontology. This chapter presents a description of a life-course network model of productive economic activities, provides empirical support for the existence of three economic networks and their empirical indicators, demonstrates that the antecedents of participation differ by type of economic network and by significant demographic subgroups and examines how the different indicators of productive involvement influence individual social and psychological consequences within the contexts of the economic networks.

This chapter outlines a general theoretical and research framework for studying health over the individual life course. The framework encompasses consideration of the continuities and discontinuities over the life course and focuses on important developmental and aging related processes, cohort influences, and period events needed to understand physical and psychological health at different points in the individual life span.


The chapter introduces the NSBA and three additional waves of longitudinal data as well as the National Three Generation Family Study and the Reinterview Questionnaire. The studies encompass social, economic, and psychological dimensions of African American life including neighborhood, family, religion, friendship, mental health, health, employment, racial group identity, and inter-generational relationships. Besides describing the sample and measure development, the chapter introduces four chapters in the book, which provide examples of the types of conceptual and theoretical approaches developed to analyze the original cross-sectional data from the NSBA.


The author comments on the preceding chapter, “Marital Behavior and Expectations” by Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan. Special attention is paid to Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan’s emphasis on the need to move beyond economic factors that influence marriage, and on to psycho-social variables. Jackson suggests that future research should explore the effect of the following factors on marriage: individual behavior, ethnic and cultural factors, individual schemas, and the familial context. It is also suggested that research on marriage should include comparisons across cultures as well as comparisons to never-married persons.


Research demonstrates that African Americans span the same spectrum of structural circumstances, psychological statuses and social beliefs as the millions of other Americans of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. But the unique social history and nature of their group and individual development and aging experiences, all serve to place vast numbers of Americans of African descent from cradle to grave at disproportionate risk for physical, social, and psychological harm. This harm is represented in the continuing, alarming population statistics—an increasing gap in mortality, disintegrating neighborhoods, growth of women and children in poverty, joblessness, and unemployment. As discussed in the chapter, the life experiences for a majority of Africans can be predicted with unerring accuracy. It is in our power as a nation to intervene and ameliorate these conditions.


In this introduction, Dr. Jackson discusses the purpose of The Workshop on Health Behavior Research in Minority Populations: Access, Design, and Implementation, and provides an overview of the findings. The Proceedings is divided into four main sections, which parallel the organization of the workshop presentations. The first three sections each include paper presentations and panel discussants, and a final section highlights NHLBI's commitment to funding minority research and training programs. In keeping with the objectives of the workshop, the three substantive sections focus on issues of access, models, and measurement in health behavior research, and ethical and practical issues in reconciling scientific and ethnic minority community needs. In order to fulfill the objectives of consensus building and broad scientific dissemination, the first two sections each include four separate Task Group reports, designed to incorporate the main points of the presentations and agreed upon conclusions and recommendations of the workshop participants.

This chapter summarizes the perspectives and results reported in the main body of the book and in other work based on the NSBA. The findings in this book provide support for an evolving individual and group life-course framework for interpreting and understanding the reactions and responses of Americans of African descent to their continued unequal status. The analyses in the main chapters of the book provide unassailable evidence that the status and position of different segments of the black population in the larger opportunity structure are linked in explicable and predictable ways to differential levels of social, psychological, and health outcomes. The author notes where the present understanding of black Americans has reached and what areas remain to be explored.


The NSBA is the basis for this volume -- the first in a set of books dealing with African Americans. Before NSBA, social research on African Americans was usually restricted to limited, nonrepresentative samples of blacks and often used poorly conceived, culturally-insensitive methods and instruments. This national probability sample of adult blacks allows quality research on many aspects of African American life, including family and community life, racial identity, religion, and political attitudes and participation. In addition to describing NSBA, the author describes the numerous other studies conducted by the Program for Research on Black Americans. Finally, the author presents a brief overview of the other chapters in the book.


This chapter reviews literature regarding the mental health research activities and the training of students of African-American descent. Greater attention in mental health research needs to be focused on developing theoretical models and collecting quality data relevant to the life circumstances of African-Americans. Improved conceptualization and empirical research are needed to improve the quality of theory and research, but also to provide more appropriate and useful training models for black students. Current training investigations lack both adequate numbers of black students and academic and professional trainers, but also are dominated by irrelevant curricula, heavily influenced by euro-centric models and approaches. Changes in research approaches and models should have synergistic effects in improving the quality of training for all mental health scientists and professionals and making the field more attractive for African American students. The chapter concludes with a discussion of a needed public policy focus which could have a positive benefit on the quantity and quality of research on racial and ethnic populations, improved training, and greater benefits for meeting the mental health needs of racial and ethnic minority populations.


This chapter provides an overview of the methodological procedures and approaches used in conducting the NSBA. The development of the questionnaire and the meticulous procedures used to achieve cultural sensitivity are discussed, and the procedures designed to ensure a representative national sample are described. Finally, the quality control methods and coding schemes devised to guarantee high quality interviews and meaningful interpretations of the open- and close-ended material are discussed. In addition to its methodological emphasis, the chapter also provides a brief summary of the major substantive themes of the sections of the questionnaire.


The focus on racial and ethnic minority aging populations assumes that there is sufficient variability in the aging process between these populations and whites, as well as within racial ethnic populations, to warrant serious scientific attention. Racial ethnic minorities may experience a very different process of development and aging and that differences within racial minority groups may be accounted for better by different sets of variables than those that explain between race group differences. This paper reviews research that examines aging in four major groups of minority elderly -- blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. Research concerning life-course
continuities and discontinuities of racial ethnic minorities and the health of aging minorities is emphasized. Finally, this paper places the future needs of research on racial ethnic aging populations in four categories: more refined theory and conceptualizations, greater quantity and quality of research, more disciplinary integration and cooperation, and more training and research funding.


Derived from a speech delivered at the symposium "Diversity: A Prerequisite for Excellence," this article concerns the University of Michigan community and what can be done to solve the problems of ethnic racial communities in this country. The author comments upon the current status of blacks in political, social, and economic arenas. Then, he summarizes perceptions of racial progress among blacks using data from national studies of the Program for Research on Black Americans. Finally, he discusses what he feels the University of Michigan could and should be doing to insure population diversity and the provision of educational, training, and employment opportunities for minority group members.


This volume builds upon years of research on older blacks that, for the most part, has not treated race as an important independent variable but instead as a nuisance factor to be ignored or experimentally controlled. When race has been included as an independent variable, its use has been most often restricted to fairly simple race comparisons. This type of comparative race research on poor samples, without adequate controls for such variables as socioeconomic status, and in the absence of reasonable theories of race differences, has resulted in a set of uninterpretable findings. These types of research findings are becoming of less value as research scientists have become more sophisticated in their understanding of the role of race and cultural variables in the study of adult development and aging. The research and writings on black older populations are notable for the many problems of conceptualization, planning, execution, and interpretation. Four consistent, overarching themes in the areas of theory and conceptualization, the quantity of research on older black adults, disciplinary integration, and training and research funding emerged regarding future directions of research on black aging populations.


Both the demographic and health status data for older blacks suggests that they are in a disadvantaged position relative to older whites. The data, however, point to tremendous variability among blacks on these same dimensions. Not all older blacks reside in the inner city, are in poverty, have low education, are female, spouseless or disabled. Major concerns of this chapter and book are what this variation among the older black populations may portend for: 1) theories of black aging and human development; 2) health related research on aging black populations; and 3) the implications for the more practical issues of improved health and effective functioning for individual blacks across the life course.


This chapter examines methodological problems in survey research on black and other ethnic and racial older adult populations. The basic survey process is susceptible to several potential errors; it is not a well understood or frequently researched topic, and the role of cultural and racial factors has been largely ignored. The potential for error in sample surveys of black and minority elderly is magnified by aging, cultural and cohort factors. The problems that challenge social scientists, however, in conducting research on minority and black aging populations have not received the same scrutiny as the general aging population. This chapter considers how previously identified sources of error, as well as sources of error unique to racial and ethnic minorities in planning and conducting survey research, may contribute to difficulties in research in these groups. This chapter draws heavily upon survey research experiences in conducting the NSBA, the TGFS, and the NBES. The material reviewed seeks to sensitize researchers to problems that can be addressed in the design, execution, analysis and interpretation stages of sample surveys that include black and other minority elderly respondents. A comparatively smaller body of research on Hispanics is also cited.

Methodological problems in survey research on aging black populations have not been the topic of previous rigorous investigation. Including informal questionnaire studies conducted on conveniently available local samples, survey research methods are probably the most commonly used data collection techniques in the social sciences on black adults, particularly in certain disciplines. The survey research process is susceptible to several potential errors, which are magnified by aging, cultural and cohort factors, both between and within different racial groups. The extensive use of survey research procedures on black and other racial minorities and the capability of survey methods to generate large amounts of scientific and policy relevant data make it an important methodological area of investigation. This chapter reviews possible sources of error in planning and conducting survey research on aging black population groups. It also sensitizes researchers to problems that can be addressed in the design, execution, analysis and interpretation stages of sample surveys.


This chapter provides a brief review of the current status of research on social gerontology and black aging adults. The lack of theoretical integration and several unresolved issues are discussed. Reviews of the research in socioeconomic and health factors, family and social support, psychological well-being, and work and retirement are presented. It is concluded that research on social gerontology and blacks should be included within the empirical investigation of ethnicity and cultural factors in aging more generally.


This chapter discusses the benefits that psychology can play in the advocating legislation in the public welfare as well as academic interest. Included is a discussion of academic and professional psychology and several models that could be applied to the role of psychologist in the legislative, policy-making process.


The major approaches to the study of life-span human development -- cross-sequential, longitudinal and cohort trend designs, using true experiments, quasi-experiments, and historical analysis -- are reviewed in relation to their use of survey methodology. Particular problems are identified and discussed in sampling, field methods and coding. Brief mention is made of problems with previous attempts to develop general design for conducting research on development. This proposed survey design provides for representative sampling of lineages, analysis of cohort differences over time and for separate but related panels, including aggregate panels of families. Of particular importance is the potential that this multi-generation lineage panel (MGLP) survey design has for combining traditional psychological life-span research interests in individual development with growing interests of other disciplines (notably sociology and economics) in life cycle, life course and cohort influences on individuals, groups and society. The various merits and deficiencies of the MGLP design in studying human development are noted.


The authors review key conceptual and methodological issues important in understanding the nature of social support in the health and effective functioning of the elderly. Of particular concern are the directions future research may take to inform clinical and public policy decisions, illuminating the nature and function of social support within an interpersonal, social relationship framework. After a brief review of research suggesting a relationship between social support and health and effective functioning of the elderly, the authors examine some of the mechanisms that may contribute to our understanding of how social supportive behaviors affect health and effective functioning. Special attention is given to literature on control, personal efficacy, and related motivational constructs, since this
work forms a theoretical framework for the interpersonal attribution model proposed by the authors. Finally, the clinical and public policy implications of the role of social support in the lives of the elderly are explored.


This chapter discusses the possible influences of racial, ethnic, and cultural factors on social and psychological aging processes, especially those related to mental illness and mental health. The authors suggest that the development of universal models of aging is best accomplished by first understanding the ways in which ethnicity, culture, and race contribute to the aging process. The authors propose an Ethnic Research Matrix that takes as its defining elements: ethnicity, national origin, racial group membership, gender, social and economic statuses, age, and acculturation and mental health outcomes. This matrix is proposed as a conceptual and methodological framework for organizing, directing, and interpreting the nature of, and interactions among, the effects of ethnic and other contextual factors on aging related mental health outcomes within a life-course perspective.


This chapter explores how life course, labor force participation, economic network involvement, and social support processes within different ethnic, cultural, and racial groups affect what is termed aging productively. The authors propose a life course economic network framework to facilitate new approaches to the study of gender, socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic factors related to aging productively. The authors place the relationship of individual productivity and well-being within a proposed economic network model. The chapter emphasizes the importance of an individual's early experiences with the labor force as influencing later opportunities and type and level of productive activities. The model is important in providing independent assessments of productive activities separate from their predicted affects on individual well-being. Additionally, the framework presented provides a conceptual and theoretical life course approach to the empirical study of racial, ethnic, and cultural influences on the relationships of opportunity structure factors to processes and behaviors related to productively. These networks serve an important facilitating role, by providing a context for engaging in activities that are of value to the community and to themselves.


This chapter explores the influences of racial, ethnic, and cultural factors on biological/health, social, and psychological aging processes. Literature related to selected indicators of these interrelated aging processes is critically reviewed. A life-span perspective, the consideration of historical and cohort factors that affect the life situations of ethnic racial minority group individuals, provides the context for this review. The development of universal models of aging is best accomplished by first understanding the ways in which ethnicity, culture, and race contribute to the aging process. Although these issues are explored generically, sensitivity to the issues under consideration leads us to acknowledge that all cultural, racial, and ethnic minority influences are not the same. This chapter focuses on racial and ethnic minority groups, specifically the black elderly.


This paper is divided into two theoretically-oriented parts. The first reviews the general social network and social support literatures. Life span continuity and change and the convoy model of social relationships provide the conceptual framework for this review. The second focuses on the role of social support and social relationships in the maintenance of productive activity through adult life. Consistent with the long history of work in social gerontology, productive activities play a major role in coping with stress. This section speculates on how social relationships and social networks influence and are influenced by participation in the economic network. Of particular interest is how these relationships aid the older adult in maintaining a productive life and contribute to successful coping with stress. The influence of the relationship between social support and participation in productive economic networks transcending age and sociocultural variations are examined.
Much of the prior research in social gerontology has focused upon the variables related to reported adjustment or life satisfaction during the aging period. The few previous studies of the correlates of life satisfaction in the black elderly have produced conflicting results, and the overall lack of research on this population contributes to an inability to clearly explicate the important social and psychological variables concerning satisfaction or adjustment. The study sampled 102 black retired adults in non-institutional residences. The authors utilize multiple regression analyses to examine the determinants of self-reported adjustment and life satisfaction, containing as predictors: personality, activity, attitudinal, background, health, and life perception factors. The results suggest a perceived difference between life satisfaction and present life adjustment as operationalized in research. The non-overlapping correlations and important predictors for the two measures, and the relative lack (or insignificance) of relationships previously found important in the majority population, indicate somewhat different model(s) when considering life satisfaction of life adjustment in black aged populations.

In this chapter, we address commonalities and differences in the relationships among dominant group members' racial attitudes and out-group rejection across four member states of the European Union (EU) (France, Great Britain, Germany, The Netherlands) and the US. We also address the nature of inequality, racism, and injustice by examining dominant group attitudes and the potential linkages to subordinate group responses. The remainder of the chapter is divided into 4 sections. In the first, we present arguments for the importance of studying contemporary prejudice, racism, and discrimination in Western Europe and the US. In the second, we briefly discuss commonalities among intergroup-relations theories that are relevant to this examination. We are interested in pointing out the possible commonalities across these different theoretical accounts. In the next section, we describe empirical analyses and findings on our studies of out-group rejection among dominant group members across nation-states in the EU and the US. And finally, we offer conclusions and possible directions for future research.
and demographic relationships to well-being is explored. The results of the overall analyses reveal no effect of socioeconomic factors on reported well-being. As in previous studies, the variables that show a consistent relationship are those closely related to the quality of living arrangements and interpersonal relationships. Education emerges as an important predictor only in the young group. Overall, however, the effects of social and demographic factors are very slight.


This final chapter summarizes the substantive chapters of the book within a life course and cohort framework. It draws conclusions regarding psychological and social dimensions of aging - pointing out the major areas where the data support previous speculations, as well as major diversions, and how new cohorts of the black elderly and current future period events may influence the conclusions that are drawn. Finally, it ends with an assessment of directions for future research that may contribute to a better understanding of social gerontology of the black American elderly.


This chapter explores the premise that the lifetime labor force experiences of black Americans have both negative and positive effects on the retirement process. Retirement status for many blacks, while characterized by relatively low socioeconomic conditions, provides a stability of income and relief from the exigencies of life in an unfavorable labor market. The economic, labor force, and retirement literatures related to blacks are also reviewed. An analysis of the first full national probability sample of the black elderly reveals that many blacks must work well into old age because of poor early work experiences and inadequate resources for retirement. These data suggest that past and present work conditions may even affect the manner in which retirement is subjectively defined and experienced. Older black workers, although better off financially, are less well off psychologically than are black retirees. Retired blacks report greater feelings of global well-being, personal control, and sense of life accomplishment. The implication of the findings for research and policy are discussed.


Methodological problems are greatly increased when conducting three generation family lineage research. These problems include: misinterpretation of cross-sectional data; lack of concern with age and cohort overlap between lineages; insufficient attention to the appropriate unit of analysis; and, the use of analytic strategies which do not fully utilize the potential of the three lineage design. Underlying these problems is a lack of concern with sampling and sample representativeness that affects both external and internal validity. The Family Network Sampling Procedure (FNSP) was used in the NTGFS. Nearly 53% of the adult black respondents were members of eligible families in this study. A total of 510 complete three generation family lineage triads were obtained. The quality of the sampling procedure and the final sample are addressed through analyses of these data. The nature of these methods and their applicability to future three generation research projects are discussed.


This chapter investigates and explores the role of community stressors and perceived economic stress on dominant group prejudice, subordinate group economic stress and well-being outcomes. The Reverberation Theory of Stress and Racism conceptualizes stress and racism as mutually inter-related phenomena and points to their combined reciprocal relationship with (social, psychological and physical) health outcomes. The relationships and interrelationships among stress, racism and health within racially and ethnically hierarchically structured societies are explored.

This chapter uses 1530 respondents from the TGFS dataset to explore the inter-relationships among different features of family environments among three generation lineages. Notably, the authors are concerned with how family context factors, such as family proximity, family contact, family satisfaction, and family closeness, influence exchange environments among three generation black American lineage families. It is hypothesized that multigenerational families form several distinct environmental contexts that influence other features of family social, political, and economic environments, while simultaneously having important effects on individual functioning. This framework is termed the Family Environment Context Model (FECM). Because the triads were obtained through probability selection procedures, it is assumed that each triad represents a random sample of all possible three generation lineages for each family. Nested hierarchical Ordinary Least Squares regression models were used in the analyses to ascertain the individual and joint contributions of selected average family environment factors to the family exchange environment.


This is a summarization of the major points of the Bengtson and Murray chapter. 1) They explicitly recognize the existence of a social contract among generations and place the meaning of this contract within a life-course framework. (2) They define the meaning of major terms that have caused confusion in intergenerational justice discussion. (3) They discuss the issue of the meaning of generational conflict in the context of class, race, and gender considerations. (4) They recognize the existence of a macro- and micro-, or family lineage, environment, and attempt to note their interconnections. (5) They review data from a recent AARP survey, and finally (6) they explicitly attempt to connect the existence of the cross-cohort social contract to public policy and the political agenda.


This chapter discusses discrimination against immigrant groups in France, Great Britain, Netherlands, and West Germany in the context of social, political, and economic factors. Europeans argue that in Europe, ethnic groups are not discriminated against because they are different, but because they are not citizens. Tensions in many European nations are rising around a reported loss of cultural identity, and this has led to a call for a change to immigration policies. As changes in the European economy and demographics continue to change, due to increasing membership in the United Market, these tensions may increase. The authors use the Euro-Barometer, a supplemental survey within the European Omnibus Survey that provides a regular monitoring of social and political attitudes of the publics within the EEC, to explore whether pluralistic ignorance may contribute to negative views by dominant groups towards government intervention on behalf of racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants. The multivariate findings suggest that pluralistic ignorance may add a significant proportion of variation to policy options held by dominant groups over and beyond that accounted for by prejudice and affective antipathies. Policy implications are discussed.


and


Family and environmental influences have been largely ignored in previous empirical work on personal and group identity development in blacks. The major research on group identification and self and group attitudes is reviewed in this chapter. The important role of the family and socialization environment is stressed, and the possible nature of their effects on the development of group identification of black Americans is discussed. Explanations for the lack of an observed relationship between group and personal identity are presented. It is suggested that a negative or neutral relationship between black group identification and traditional measures of self-esteem may be the result of the pivotal role of the family in inculcating a strong and positive sense of black identity. Analyses on data from the NSBA reveal that personal identity is weakly related to racial group identity and not related to group consciousness. Possible reasons for why a strong sense of black group identity is not strongly related to measures of self that stress individual achievement, individual striving, and a sense of personal achievement are discussed.

This chapter explores the nature and interrelationships among ingroup and intergroup orientations and particularly whether collective commitments to the ingroup derive more from ingroup or intergroup aspects of group identity. Specifically, this chapter has three primary aims: (a) to examine the extent to which black identity includes both ingroup and intergroup elements; (b) to explore the implications of both these aspects of identity for the political mobilization of black Americans, particularly whether collective commitments derive more from ingroup or intergroup aspects of identity; and, (c) to explore the antecedents of these two aspects of identity in the socialization messages imparted by parents on what it means to be black and how to deal with the white world. Using data from the NSBA, factor analysis of seven items involving identification with blacks and feelings toward whites suggests that positive ingroup orientations do not seem to imply rejection of the outgroup on the personal level but do imply some outgroup antagonism on the ideological level. The analysis conducted suggests that ingroup and outgroup orientations are separate components of racial identity and that they have different implications for the development of political consciousness among African Americans. The findings indicate that ingroup and outgroup socialization messages are differentially related to the strength of racial identification and consciousness in black adults.


Key indicators of African American mental health over the volatile period of the 1980’s are discussed. Analyses are based on the NSBA that followed the original 1980 NSBA respondents and interviewed a substantial number of them on three additional occasions—1987, 1988 to 1989, and finally in 1992. The purpose in this chapter is to explore the important themes in the main sections of the book. Thus, we examine the individual changes over the 13-year period from 1980 to 1992 in sources of positive life well-being, the distribution and nature of physical and mental health difficulties and life dissatisfactions, and the nature of the coping resources employed by African Americans. An overriding concern is the manner in which African Americans’ emotional and psychological life may have shifted in response to the press and stressors engendered through a period of adverse economic, political, and social circumstances.


Race group comparisons have been a major focus of sociodemographic research on psychological distress. These studies describe differences between racial groups but reveal little about sociodemographic correlates of distress within the black population. The study analyzes data obtained from a large national probability sample of the black adult population. Mental health status and coping data were collected within the context of a single, stressful, personal problem. Regression analyses are conducted on a weighted symptom checklist measure of psychological distress. Significant independent effects are found for education, age, employment status, gender, marital status, and residential region. Further analyses reveal a significant interaction effect for age and marital status. These results have different implications for psychological functioning of blacks than the race comparison findings of previous community surveys.


An understanding of the mental health problems and needs of black and other minority group members continues to be hampered by a lack of empirical research. Even when data do exist, problems of cultural insensitivity, small sample sizes, and inadequate representation of relevant substantive domains make the adequacy and generalizability of the results questionable. The NSBA addresses some of the major deficiencies in previous research on mental health functioning and help-seeking among black Americans. The nature of serious personal problems reported in the NSBA, the individual coping strategies employed, and the use of informal supports and professional resources are explored. The chapter concludes with suggestions for improving mental health.
professional training and service delivery with a particular focus on important social and cultural factors identified in the empirical results.


This chapter focuses on the conceptual framework for understanding the health of adolescents of color in the U.S. The authors briefly outline the life-course framework of race and ethnic influences on physical and psychological health in adolescence, arguing for the importance of historical and cohort factors that influences the life trajectories of ethnic and racial minority populations. They then identify promising definitions and conceptualizations of the concepts of race, ethnicity, and culture in the research as they relate to adolescent health. Two areas of sociohistorical context, structural lag and birth cohort, are examined in relation to the health of adolescents of color. The authors suggest that to develop effective health-promotion programs, policies, and research agendas, practitioners must conceptualize and assess the health outcomes of racial and ethnic groups at multiple levels and across the life-course.


This chapter outlines a multi-dimensional life-course framework to help in clarifying the psychological mechanisms that may contribute to poor physical and psychological health outcomes among African Americans. Included is a suggested framework which clarifies major health issues at each life-stage and how it might help in designing programs that help in promoting health among African Americans.


This chapter discusses the uniqueness of Aging in Black America. First, each chapter in the volume is based upon empirical analyses of data from the NSBA, providing more expansive findings. Secondly, the findings presented have the potential to add to our knowledge and understanding of the situation of black elderly, as well as to debunk many of the myths that have developed about the situation of this ethnic and racial minority population. This chapter reflects the authors approach and attempt to emphasize those positive aspects of life among older black Americans that contribute to coping capacity and other adaptive behaviors that make the lives of older blacks productive and worthwhile. Additionally, the book's five sections are introduced in this chapter, all reflecting major substantive issues related to psychological and social dimensions of aging among black Americans.


The chapter presents examples of methods used in the NSBA to collect reliable, valid, and therefore, useful data. The concepts and questions used in these surveys were developed through interactions with individuals from diverse black communities and were extensively pretested to insure cultural sensitivity. Additional field approaches were also introduced to minimize bias from interviewer and respondent characteristics. Special consideration was given to life-style and cultural factors that affect the quality and meaningfulness of collected data in black communities.


The purpose of this chapter was to develop a preliminary macro-community model of intergroup conflict, stress, racism and psychological health among dominant and subordinate ethnic and racial groups. In social psychological models dominant group attitudes and behaviors and subordinate group responses should be inextricably linked.
Yet, theoretical approaches to intergroup research have lacked clear articulation and conceptualization of these linkages. We have proposed a conceptual approach that views the perception of threat to the dominant group as the major underlying characteristic of intergroup conflict models. Based upon recent writing and analyses we argue that the perception of threat should be interpreted in a social stress theoretical framework. The proposed model of stress and racism should add to our understanding of dominant, hegemonic models of intergroup interaction and conflict. Further, we believe that this approach can explain community level tensions and conflict, as well as individual poor psychological functioning and mental distress outcomes of racism. Secondary data from Western Europe and national and regional studies in the United States were used to empirically test the hypothesized relationships. Support was found for the major proposed linkages among stress, racism, and psychological well-being. The implications for macro-community models of intergroup conflict for ameliorating group differences and reducing individual racism, stress and stress-related disorders were discussed. It was concluded that more attention needs to be addressed to the development of community-level interventions that consider macro-community sources of ethnic and racial group conflict.


Research has found that African Americans now suffer more adverse health consequences from heavy alcohol consumption than do whites, and epidemiologic studies indicate that there are age differences in alcohol use and abuse between African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. Various speculations have been made regarding the reason for these age differences. The purpose of this chapter is to outline a general theoretical and research framework for studying alcohol use and abuse over the individual life course. This framework encompasses consideration of the continuities and discontinuities over the individual life course and focuses on important developmental and aging-related processes, cohort influences, and period events needed to understand physical and psychological health at different points in the individual lifespan. New life-course models help to organize what has been more a set of assumptions than an organized theory with the power to generate testable predictions.


The authors analyze telephone survey data from 2,398 nonwhite and white nonproxy respondents aged 25 to 96 from the 1994 third wave of the Americans Changing Lives Study (ACL) (Herzog et al., 1989; House, Lepkowski, Kinney, Mero, Kessler, & Herzog, 1994). First, they examine the nature of perceived racial or ethnic discrimination and its distribution by important structural factors (race-ethnicity and socioeconomic indicators), as well as the distribution of potential psychosocial buffers. Second, they define perceived discrimination as a critical life event and stressor, or source of personal stress deriving from the environment, and examine its influence on physical and psychological health independent of contributing structural factors. Finally, they examine the role of four psychosocial coping resources in reducing the impact of perceived discrimination: emotional support and self-efficacy from the stress process literature; as well as the importance of religious beliefs and a disposition to act in response to discrimination.


Using data from the NSBA, this chapter examines the structural and functional dimensions of an important citadel of the black elderly, neighborhoods, and neighboring. Behavioral and perceptual neighboring form two separate dimensions, the former related to social support received and the latter related to reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation.


Within this chapter, the researchers take an insightful approach to furthering our understanding of single mothers. Initially, the investigators contend that past research has not been comprehensive in defining the single mother. While attention has been given to ethnic and racial differences within the population, few studies have focused on past marital status or current living conditions. Consequently, the researchers set out to provide a record of how
single mothers view the assistance that they receive from others, especially from familial sources. Included in this work are distinctions within the realms of past marital status (divorced, separated, widowed, never married, and a comparison group of married women), education level (less than high school education, high school education, and more than a high school education), the emotional, social, and financial well-being of single mothers of varying ages, and living arrangements (with family, alone, with unrelated persons).


This chapter investigates the relationship between self-esteem and locus of control. The authors predict that, in a sample of 1440 black students in a Midwestern inner city high school, there will be a positive relationship between self-esteem and internal personal control, but no significant relationship between self-esteem and control ideology. Analyses reveal a small but significant correspondence between self-esteem and locus of control. Control ideology is not significantly related to self-esteem in the total sample, but males do show a positive relationship between internal control ideology orientation and feelings of self-worth, a finding that may be attributed to societal sex roles.


This chapter reviews the literature on behavioral (psychosocial and physiological) factors that play a role in the pathogenesis of essential hypertension in black Americans. Three major areas are considered: socioecological stress; personality and emotional factors with particular attention to suppressed anger; and sympathetic nervous system activity. Literature in these three areas are summarized as it relates to elevated blood pressure and hypertension in black adolescents and adults. Suggestions are offered for future research directed at the interactive influence of stress, personality, and sympathetic nervous system activity on the regulation of blood pressure are offered.


Drs. Johnson and Gant examine the relationship between hypertension and the expression of black anger toward those responsible for igniting those feelings. The authors predict that hypertension is highest among those African Americans (male and female) who hold their feelings of rage inside rather than let them out. The chapter shows support for a relationship between hypertension and anger. The authors also reveal some surprising results with respect to gender and urbanicity which they speculate may be due to the self-report method of measurement used in the NSBA.


This chapter addresses some mortality, health, social, and mental health characteristics of the black elderly and the implications of these factors for policy-making, planning, and social services. Information comes from literature on several datasets, including the NSBA. Although life expectancy for blacks over 75 years old is longer than for their white counterparts, their health status is much worse, including poor quality of received health care. Furthermore, older blacks tend to have lower socioeconomic status than older whites, a major consequence of which is a binding to deteriorating inner-city housing and environmental conditions. For many blacks, the retirement years are often the happiest and most secure of their lives and the amount of social support that this group receives is reexamined. The authors, using the findings reported in the literature, suggest possible changes in policy and service delivery.


In this chapter, the authors conclude that it is rare for any African American to reach adulthood without having experienced at least one significant stressful life problem. To their surprise, however, a sizable percentage of the NSBA sample reported never having been seriously upset by a personal problem. Chapter 5 provides an
exploration of those African Americans who claim to have no problems. The authors ask the provocative question, “Are these people incredibly lucky, highly efficacious in their coping capacity—or are they living in a perpetual state of denial?”


This first half of this chapter discusses research on the psychosocial determinants of illness. The second half explores the research on the psychosocial determinants of illness definition and response. Each part presents an historical overview, discussion of recent developments, and proposals for future directions.


The authors briefly review the major orientations and empirical results, discuss the implications for our understanding of minority mental health, and reflect on certain promising future directions of research. The authors concentrate on psychiatric epidemiology, primarily the distribution of mental health both within and between different minority populations with an eye toward uncovering the social and cultural determinants of psychopathology. Much of the research reviewed focuses on black-white differences in mental health or the correlates of mental health, with little attention devoted to differences between minority groups. The study looks at what is currently known about the distribution of mental health problems among three groups: whites, blacks, and Americans of Mexican heritage. The results of this review of epidemiologic evidence indicate that although members of the two minority groups examined do seem to experience more mental health problems than do whites, this high level can be explained by their generally lower socioeconomic status.


This chapter examines the “race factor” and the health of African Americans from different perspectives. Following a brief overview of the health status of African Americans and a review of work on their health, the authors address the conceptual meaning and empirical application of the race variable in public health research, including a critical discussion of race and racism in epidemiological research. The limitations of socioeconomic status as a theoretical and empirical variable in health research will be examined, as well as the current debate about race versus social class as the key predictor of health beliefs, behavior, and status. Finally the authors look critically at the epidemiological and social science research on blacks and the challenges facing black community-based health initiatives and intervention research. The discussion is applicable to other minorities and other multiracial societies, but refers specifically to African Americans.


Throughout America and the rest of the world, new employees learn how to function in their environment from their older and more senior colleagues. The growing heterogeneity of workforces makes it reasonable to wonder about the dynamics of socialization in today’s organizations. The main portion of this chapter reports on a study of Black workers conducted in spring and fall, 1994 in London, England. The authors asked respondents who worked for White or for Black supervisors in groups of varying racial composition about their perceptions of racism and about their job satisfaction. In this chapter they describe the method and the findings of this study. The authors then explore some of the implications of these findings for the developmental relationships of Britons of color.

In this chapter the authors consider the sociopolitical and health conditions that are likely to intensify the impact of AIDS in Vietnam. Then they present findings from a survey of women regarding their attitudes and beliefs about AIDS. Finally, they explore the levels of knowledge regarding their attitudes and beliefs about HIV in their research population and identify social factors associated with variations in AIDS information.


This pamphlet is the tenth in the American Statistical Association series What is a Survey? It provides a brief history of telephone surveys, emphasizes the innovations made over time, and discusses the issues facing the future of telephone surveys. This series is written primarily for the general public, with an overall goal of improving survey literacy among individuals who participate in surveys or use survey results. The series is designed to promote a better understanding of what is involved in carrying out sample surveys – especially those aspects that have to be taken into account in evaluating the results of surveys.


The purpose of this chapter is to examine the nature of survey interview recording error, comparing recording errors and behavior between paper and pencil and computer assisted interviewing modes of data recording. The first section presents a model for the survey data recording process to enumerate factors that may affect recording accuracy. The second and third sections describe the design and findings of an experimental study comparing recording by mode. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings and their implications for improved design of survey data collection activities.


This chapter provides an overview of research on the influence of religious involvement on psychiatric and mental health outcomes by summarizing existing empirical findings and recent theoretical developments in the field. First, empirical findings from studies of religious effects on mental health outcomes are briefly reviewed. This section includes summaries both of clinical and epidemiological studies and of social and gerontological research. Second, several salutogenic mechanisms or pathways are proposed as possible explanations for religious effects on mental health, including health-related behavior, social support, positive emotions, health beliefs or personality styles and optimism and hope. Third, midrange theoretical models are proposed as ways to understand the interrelation of these potential mediating factors with religion and mental and physical health. This discussion focuses on five distinct specifications, termed suppressor, distress-deterrent, prevention, moderator, and health effects models. Finally, implications of these findings and theories for researchers and clinicians are discussed.


Despite hundreds of published studies reporting significant religious effects on health-related variables, the existence of a sizable literature in the area of public health remains largely unrecognized. Moreover, when acknowledged, it is generally thought that religion has a minimal impact on population health and that the effect is deleterious. This article demonstrates that these assumptions are inaccurate. The following areas of research are reviewed: the impact of religious involvement on physical health, mental health, psychological well-being in older adults, and health behavior and health care utilization. In addition, descriptions or evaluations of public health interventions drawing on religious sources are provided.


This chapter tested a specific conceptual model for the relationships among religious involvement, life stress, and psychological well-being among African American women. The pattern of findings for the effects of exogenous factors on stress, religious involvement, and psychological well-being are largely consistent with previous research.
The analysis found that among African American women, those who were older, married, had higher levels of education, and who resided in the south were more involved in religious pursuits than their counterparts. Older women and those with higher levels of education experienced fewer life stressors and were no different from younger and less educated women with respect to psychological well-being. Black women who were married reported fewer life stressors and overall higher levels of well-being than did unmarried women. Finally, although southern women experienced fewer stressors than African American women in other areas, there were no significant regional differences in reported well-being.


This chapter highlights variations between older blacks and whites in the State of Michigan through the use of the most current (1990) U.S. Bureau of the Census data. Differences will first be distinguished by examining various demographic characteristics, including population size, age distribution, gender differences, and life expectancy. Next, socioeconomic characteristics, including income and levels of educational attainment, marital status, living arrangements, and selected disability factors is considered. This information, especially in times of scarce resources, is necessary to apprize policymakers, program planners, and the public of the current status of older black adults. Finally, the chapter offers several recommendations.


The development of social gerontology during the middle and latter part of the 20th century has taken place without special attention to racial or ethnic groups. Concern with the larger disadvantaged populations is consistent with the social problems orientation of much gerontological research. However, the broader field of aging is increasingly adopting a scientific approach with more sophisticated theory and methodological techniques being developed or applied. Development of theory and application of sophisticated methodology to the study of aging among ethnic and minority populations has lagged behind broader developments in the field, which is still dominated by applied problem oriented studies. This chapter provides an overview of the field of ethnicity and aging with special attention to conceptual and theoretical development and an overview of special methodological issues in the field. Since research on ethnic or racial groups represents a special type of cross-cultural research, we draw parallels with cross-national research, both in the theoretical as well as the methodological discussion. Particular attention is given to heterogeneity between groups as well as within groups.


Although psychologists recognize that religiosity and spirituality are defining features of African American life, within mainstream psychology the corpus of empirical work on African American religiosity and spirituality remains relatively sparse. Some scholars have examine the ways in which religion and spirituality influence specific social and psychological outcomes (E.G., psychological well-being and physical health outcomes). However, many fundamental questions about the religious and spiritual lives of African American people remain to be examined. The goal of this chapter is to synthesize the literatures of various disciplines that have bearing on African American religious and spiritual life in the effort to outline answers to three fundamental questions: 1) How are religiosity and spirituality defined? 2) How have religiousness and spirituality been measured in research on African Americans? and 3) What are the functions of religiosity and spirituality in the lives of African Americans?


This nation is inundated with myths about the practices of rootwork and voodoo. This chapter addresses those myths by placing conversation about these practices within the context of spirituality. The chapter begins with a discussion about the rifts between "spirituality" and psychology. An example of the use of spirituality within a psychotherapy setting is provided. Next, the work discusses rootwork and voodoo as forces of empowerment that have implications for the assessment and treatment of clients suffering from spiritual disease. Finally the chapter summarizes the requirements for effective work with psychotherapy clients who utilize rootwork and voodoo, and examines how effective psychotherapy with this client population can allow questions about the client's understandings of the healing enterprise.

The authors offer an insightful clinical perspective on how and why black women use the mental health services for help with problems, exploring African American women’s use of community mental health centers and private psychotherapists while focusing on ethnic group consciousness, religiosity, and cultural resources in the use of mental health services. It examines the implications of treatment once black women make contact with the professional therapist. This chapter demonstrates the need to know more about African American women’s use of mental health resources to design clinical services that are gender sensitive and culturally specific.


The analysis of community effects using data from the NSBA adds a slightly more ominous but ever-present dimension of life for the black elderly, crime and perceived safety within black neighborhoods. The focus is on an analysis of the ways community structure and social interaction and integration impact upon the black elderly. It presents of criminal activity and community influence as major determinants of the quality of life within the immediate environment of the black elderly and specifically examines the way perceptions of neighborhood quality of life and social integration influence individual aspects of life, primarily self-esteem and life satisfaction.


This chapter begins with a brief description of recent changes in life expectancy at birth and age-adjusted death rates for leading causes of disease. It then turns to selected macroeconomic developments in the U.S., particularly the striking increase in inequality in the distribution of household income over the past 25 years. This is followed by an analysis of the dynamics of household income using data from the Panel Study for Income Dynamics (PSID), a longitudinal, nationally representative sample of U.S. households. Finally, this chapter examines the links between these dynamic measures of household income and mortality.


This paper begins with a brief sketch of recent patterns of life expectancy at birth and age-adjusted death rates for leading causes of disease in the United States. We then turn to selected macroeconomic developments in the U.S., focusing on evidence of a striking increase in inequality in the distribution of household income over the past 25 years. This is followed by a consideration of the dynamic aspects of household income using data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), a longitudinally, nationally representative sample of adults and children living in U.S. households. In addition to examining household average income levels, income trends (growth and decline of income) and income stability are investigated. In a final analysis, we examine the links between these dynamic measures of household income and mortality.


The authors explore the role that neighborhoods play in the overall quality of life among Americans of African descent. To be sure, neighborhood involvement may not only be an important source of psychological well-being, but also a critical instrument for community empowerment and a major socio-political resource in the national struggle against racial inequalities, drugs, and crime. The chapter presents empirical findings from the NSBA. The findings reveal that over one third of all African Americans have access to some type of neighborhood organization with about two out of five are actually involved. As expected, demographic and social embedding characteristics were significant predictors of involvement in these neighborhood organizations. The demographic characteristics that were the strongest predictors of involvement were home ownership, age, and education. The community embedding characteristics that were the strongest predictors of involvement were visiting neighbors, and the
feelings about the neighborhood. The findings provide accurate national data on involvement in neighborhood organizations among African American adults, a more externally valid basis to explore critical predictors of organizational involvement, and a basis to monitor future changes in neighborhood organizations within African American Communities.


This paper argues that variation exists in the sexual behavior of African-American females living in high-poverty urban neighborhoods, and several influences in the familial and community environments contribute to this variation. Controlling for background factors, within this population of disadvantaged youth household structure is significantly associated with sexual debut and pregnancy, with married families emerging as an important protective factor in delayed first intercourse and pregnancy, and single parent households a significant risk factor for sexual outcomes. Living in cohabitating household is also correlated with early sexual debut. Strong parent-child relationships are directly associated with delayed sexual debut, and decrease the influence of peers on the odds of pregnancy experience. Perceptions of high neighbor social support and community cohesion are not directly associated with the transition to first intercourse, but are correlated with decreased odds of experiencing a pregnancy. The odds of pregnancy are higher for teenagers whose adult social networks contain fewer working adults. The implications for this study are discussed and recommendations are made for further research.


This chapter investigates the role political socialization played in the origins and outcomes of the modern Civil Rights Movement. The literature on political socialization was reviewed, as it relates to black Americans. The chapter discusses major conceptual issues in research on black political socialization, describes the political choices available to blacks in the pre-Civil Rights Movement era, describes the emergence of the Southern Civil Rights Movement, outlines the shift to more "revolutionary" protest politics, and examines the impact of the black political movements of the sixties on the larger group and individual levels. The chapter suggests political socialization research needs to examine the relationship between organizational and psychological group resources; to place more emphasis on both the orderly and disorderly aspects of the political process as they relate to blacks; and to examine the cross-fertilization role of black political process on other social and political movements, e.g. women, migrant farm workers, and students; political attitudes and behaviors within the black community.


Research indicates that women with serious mental illness are likely to have children and have parenting responsibilities, yet mental health services have generally ignored their parenting needs. This work identifies the parenting risks and strengths these women display, as well as the opportunities available to psychologists to play a key role in improving mother and child outcomes.


In this chapter, we will review the most recent literature concerning women with long-term, severe mental illness. The review has been organized to cover the same major topics earlier identified by Test and Berlin (1981) regarding role functioning. We will begin with a summary of gender differences in the target population on demographics and clinical characteristics. We end our review with a discussion of ways to improve both the treatment and knowledge bases.

In this chapter, we review the most recent literature concerning women with long-term, severe mental illness (SMI), using M. A. Test and S. B. Berlin's topics as an organizing framework. We begin with a summary of gender differences in demographics and clinical characteristics, and then move on to discuss problems in major areas of life functioning: instrumental roles; interpersonal roles, including social, sexual, marital, and family roles; and physical health, including medications. We then review the literature on 2 major problem areas for women with SMI: substance abuse and victimization. Finally, we end with some implications for mental health administrators and practitioners, framed from a public health perspective.


This chapter revisits the Conditioned Failure Model (CFM), a framework for understanding the comparatively lower scholastic performance of students of African American descent. Ten years have passed since the Conditioned Failure Model was conceptualized. The model casts the "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Teacher expectancy) in an attributional framework, as a mediator between societal stereotypes (social inferences) and causal attributions (teacher judgments). Over the prior ten years research findings on the cognitive basis for stereotyping and intergroup relations have proliferated. Consistent with the model, this body of research reveals that normal cognitive functioning leads to informational distortions which result in stereotyping and the development of ethnocentrism. Furthermore, these cognitive distortions result in discriminatory behavior toward subordinate outgroup members. While the research directly relevant to the CFM remains limited, our assessment of this literature suggests that the five main components (social inference, teacher expectancies, causal attributions, teacher sentiments, and behavioral effects) and their inter-relationships, provide a reasonable account of academic failure among minority, and particularly African American, children.


Murray and Peacock's chapter is entitled, "A Model Free Approach to the Study of Subjective Well-Being." The authors show that the large amount of information gathered in the National Survey of Black Americans allows for a more in-depth exploration usually not possible with typically small data sets on blacks. While they admit that "ransacking" large data sets is cumbersome, time consuming, and costly, Murray and Peacock present an efficient data analysis procedure using a sophisticated statistical technique, Automatic Interaction Detector, as a way of empirically searching data to identify an initial set of predictors to explain subjective well-being among African Americans. They show that stress is important in explaining subjective well-being and that African Americans 55 years and older are more satisfied with their lives. Family closeness and the number of helpers living in one's neighborhood are also found to be important predictors of subjective well-being.


Family stress theories have traditionally examined how families react to and manage stressful events and misfortunes, such as the death of a family member. Because such knowledge is already established, this chapter focuses on how middle-aged black Americans manage or resolve stressful life events in order to function in everyday life. A subsample of cases (N=1456) from the NSBA was examined. Three questions are used in this chapter as the basis for the preliminary analyses of stress and coping: Is there a difference in the salient type of stress experienced by black men and black women?; Do middle-aged black men and women experience the same incidence of different types of stress?; and What techniques do middle-aged black Americans use in stress resolution? The results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the type or incidence of stress experienced by middle-aged men and women. Furthermore, direct action appears to be used most often to deal with stress, followed by resignation.


This chapter describes how one goes about revising a research manuscript once it has been submitted for publication. It begins with a discussion of journal reviewer comments and how an author might respond to such comments. Next, the chapter illustrates various decision points in the rewriting process. Finally, concrete suggestions are made for resubmitting the paper for further review.

This chapter explains the methodological approach used by the NSBA in collecting help-seeking information. A major impetus for the methodological approach taken in this section of the questionnaire came from work in social psychiatric epidemiology. One popular area of investigation in psychiatric epidemiology has been the comparison of mental illness rates between blacks and whites. Due to the fact that the construct of mental illness is difficult to measure, racial difference studies have used admission to treatment operational definition of psychiatric morbidity (Fischer, 1969). This is problematic because one cannot simply equate treated prevalence with total prevalence. Such a position overlooks the influence of non-medical, social factors that can affect the decision to use professional resources. Thus, this section of the NSBA questionnaire focused on social processes that affect the seeking of outside help from professional and nonprofessional resources.


After viewing the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) data, the author recognized that new means of defining problems, especially what constitutes a problem and subsequent distress for African Americans, are necessary. Consequently, the author investigates five types of problems: those related to physical health, interpersonal difficulties, emotional adjustment, the death of a loved one, and economic difficulty. Results indicate that individuals will exhibit differential help-seeking behaviors contingent upon the source of distress that they encounter, that African American men and women differ in what they commonly define as a problematic life event, and that the degree and form of concern/distress is often related to income, as well as to marital status. Additionally, the author attempts to create a better understand of a paradox discovered within the NSBA data: that respondents, when confronted with a serious problem, often sought the aid of family and friends. Ironically, the same family members and friends who formed the foundation of social support were frequently the sources of problems in the form of interpersonal conflict.


The author uses the NSBA to investigate mental health issues through the use of a stress and adaptation perspective. The author was interested in coping responses of 1,324 respondents, who reported experiencing a serious personal problem. A little less than half of the respondents with a problem sought some form of professional help. The findings were discussed in two sections. The first focused on the decision to seek professional help; the second focused on respondents who sought professional help, specifically, how the demographic and social psychological variables relate to the use of four professional help resources, in particular medical organizations, physicians, human service organizations, and ministers. In each section, the bivariate relationships of problem severity and problem type to utilization were discussed. Then the sections reported the bivariate associations between four socio-demographic variables (family income, education, gender, and age) and the use of help. Finally, the multivariate relationships among the variables were explored.


This chapter discusses the importance of obtaining a diagnostic perspective on psychopathology in attempting to unravel the need and unmet need in African Americans. Data, including that from NSBA, has shown that when need is defined from a professional viewpoint, substantial numbers of African American are not obtaining the professional help they need. Gender, age and education were prominent defining characteristics of people with depressive symptoms. One of the primary interests is in the relationship between demographic characteristics and seeking medical attention for depressive symptoms. Females, people with the highest income, and those between the ages of 41 and 60 were the most likely to have contacted a physician about their symptoms. High school graduates are the group least likely to have contacted a physician about their depressive symptoms. While African Americans may be more likely to seek professional help now than they were in the 50's and 60's, they are not using such services as much as their need indicates that they should. There are substantial barriers that must be overcome and there is a need to stimulate demand among African Americans just as it is necessary to educate the entire public about the benefits of professional help for emotional problems.

This chapter addresses the implications of various combinations of self and system responsibility for the cause and modification of disadvantaged status among black Americans. The underlying assumption is that attributions employed to understand racial oppression have important implications for how black Americans choose to cope with discrimination. It is argued that self help organizations are useful for blacks in overcoming the assumption of a simple and direct relationship between causal attributions of blame for disadvantaged and attributions about who has responsibility to work toward changing this condition. Through the use of self help principles, it should be possible for blacks to develop a view which, while placing blame on systemic factors, nevertheless places the responsibility for solving those problems on the shoulders of the victims themselves. Such a perspective is not only consistent with the philosophy of black self help, but is also an excellent route to black empowerment.


This chapter, written by the books editors, gives an overview of the purpose and features of the book in whole. Also explained is the structure of the book, which contains individual chapters which each stand on their own.


Reliance upon a treatment mode of mental health intervention only is not enough to meet the needs of hard-to-reach ethnic minorities. As a result, there is a need to move toward a public health model with an emphasis on the prevention of serious emotional difficulties through early intervention with groups rather than individuals. In order to develop and implement a public health model of prevention with blacks, however, the epidemiologic knowledge upon which to base those prevention efforts must be obtained. This chapter reviews some of the most recent research on the epidemiology of mental disorder in black Americans. In the past few years, a number of research projects have begun work on several important areas, including the etiologic processes and important risk factors, as well as the designing of intervention programs based on etiologic and risk factor information for the black population. The chapter is organized into four sections. First, the methodologic problem of classification in psychiatric epidemiologic research on blacks is reviewed. Next, the discussion focuses on the prevalence of discrete disorders and the epidemiology of depressive symptomatology. Third, stress and social support as important risk factors are investigated. The chapter concludes by looking at the black family as a setting for intervention programs.


The finding that Whites are more likely than African Americans to receive a diagnosis of mood disorder and that Blacks are more likely than Whites to be diagnosed with schizophrenia has been interpreted as evidence of misdiagnosis. DSM-III was seen as a solution to this problem because it made the much more criteria explicit, thereby guiding clinicians to make more “accurate” diagnoses of African Americans by impeding the intrusion of racial stereotyping (ethnocentrism) on the diagnostic process. Thus while DSM-III implied that clinicians should treat Black and White patients similarly, the implication of equal applicability of diagnostic criteria across race was challenged because it contradicted empirical evidence that African Americans differed significantly from the middle-class European American patients upon which the DSM field trials were based. The data needed to demonstrate the misdiagnosis of African Americans is elusive due to the absence of a gold standard. Instead, the field must rely upon instances of diagnostic concordance and informed clinical opinion to gain an understanding of why clinicians implementing a similar set of diagnostic criteria often come to different diagnostic conclusions. This paper reviews the literature on misdiagnosis to provide a basis for inspecting of the role of clinical judgment as influenced by the cultural recommendations contained within DSM-IV. The paper argues that more studies that focus upon the manner in which clinicians experienced in working with African American patients implement DSM criteria within the patient’s sociocultural context are needed. A serious consideration of culture underscores the importance of clinical
judgment but to be culturally sensitive, clinicians must make cultural adjustments in the manner in which the DSM criteria are implemented. Furthermore, truly embracing cultural relativity presents clinicians with a difficult challenge because there are positive and negative implications for generalizations made about patients based on racial/ethnic group membership. As a result, subjective clinical judgment should not be overly restricted because that would eliminate the application of those skills necessary for considering cultural context. These issues underscore the importance of developing training programs that reduce the influence of ethnocentric bias while simultaneously maximizing the appropriate use of the contextual information necessary to employ DSM-IV's cultural formulation. Permitting clinician discretion in diagnostic decision making appears to provide the best opportunity to solve the problem of misdiagnosis.


It seems the printing press has changed the world more than any other invention in the past two millennia. This could be because text is so special. It has a unique relationship to the design of the human mind, and has played a central role in developing our minds and cultures. It is the third wave of the biggest innovation – the one that started with the coevolution of language, thought, and speech. Printing transformed writing into the first mass medium, and the world has never been the same since. V-mail and vid-mail are also discussed as being the next logical steps in the progression of human communication.


New evolutionary perspectives on basic mechanisms are leading to substantial discoveries in established areas of medical research, such as virulence, senescence, and genetic variation. Equally important is the potential for integrating multiple causes of specific diseases provided by an evolutionary approach. The benefits of this approach will be delayed, however, if its initial applications are poorly done. This chapter outlines how evolutionary hypotheses about specific diseases can be formulated and tested. First, we list several distinctions that are essential to defining the objects of explanation and the kinds of explanations proposed, and second, an outline of how hypotheses about vulnerability to diseases can be formulated and the kinds of evidence that can be used to test them.


This chapter shows how hypotheses can be formulated and tested about how natural selection can give rise to vulnerabilities that result in specific mental disorders. Several major psychiatric disorders are considered in terms of eight kinds of vulnerabilities. This illustrates that each kind of vulnerability requires substantially different kinds of hypotheses and tests. Second, it outlines what we do not know about the origins of mental disorder, a sort of ‘encyclopedia of ignorance’. Instead of providing a review of contributions to evolutionary psychiatry, this chapter focuses on specific psycho-pathological syndromes, the evolutionary origins of our vulnerabilities to these disorders, and, for each kind of vulnerability, the kinds of hypotheses and studies that are especially likely to advance our knowledge.


Evolutionary explanations for the vulnerabilities that make us susceptible to disease fall into just a few categories. This chapter will examine the categories that proved appropriate for Darwinian medicine, including novel environmental factors that change faster than our bodies can evolve, design trade-offs that offer an advantage overall but leave us vulnerable to disease, and limitations on what natural selection can do because of its stochastic nature. Defenses, such as capacity for pain, nausea, fever, anxiety, and sadness are also extensively examined.


This chapter shows how hypotheses can be formulated and tested about how natural selection can give rise to vulnerabilities that result in specific mental disorders. Several major psychiatric disorders are considered in terms
of the eight kinds of vulnerabilities outlined in Chapter 2. This exercise is useful on two counts. First, it illustrates the main point of Chapter 2 - that each kind of vulnerability requires substantially different kinds of hypotheses and tests. Second, it outlines what we do not know about the origins of mental disorder, a sort of "encyclopedia of ignorance". This chapter focuses on specific psychopathological syndromes, the evolutionary origins of our vulnerabilities to these disorders, and, for each kind of vulnerability the kinds of hypotheses and studies that are especially likely to advance our knowledge.


Explanations of disease, and most programs of medical research, tend to emphasize a single cause, while most diseases result from multiple environmental factors interacting with several sources of vulnerability. An evolutionary approach fosters clear thinking about the complex origins of disease. Evolutionary biology is providing new insights into the specific mechanisms of disease, including host-pathogen contests, genetic variation, and senescence. It also offers a framework for understanding why the body is vulnerable to specific diseases. This chapter outlines how evolutionary hypotheses about specific diseases can be formulated and tested. The chapter proceeds in two steps. First, we list several distinctions that are essential to defining the objects of explanation and the kinds of explanations proposed, and second, an outline of how hypotheses about vulnerability to diseases can be formulated and the kinds of evidence that can be used to test them.


This chapter focuses on quality of life and provides a transition from the positive side of African American mental health to the more negative—how problem drinking exacerbates a host of physical and mental health problems. Dr. Obot contributes to the implications of alcohol abuse among African Americans by presenting epidemiologic data on the breadth of health and social problems that negatively affect the life of the drinker, the immediate family, and society. Obot's analysis comprehensively describes those African Americans who drink too much and the medical and social consequences of problem drinking.


In this chapter, we concentrate on a longitudinal study of marriage, the University of Michigan's Early Years of Marriage Project, because of its unique focus on the social context of marriage. The primary objective of this longitudinal study was to get a better understanding of the marital processes and determinants of marital quality and stability among African American couples and White couples. Which ones survive? Which are resilient to stress? Given differences in marital cultures and in the contexts of marriage in the Black and White communities, we anticipated that the explanatory factors affecting marital quality and stability would differ for Blacks and Whites. Thus, this chapter does not focus as much on the universal dynamics of marriage as it does on ways in which marital quality and stability depend on the social context of marriage. One context is of particular importance: How does being African American in American society affect the way marriage progresses, especially in contrast to being members of the dominant White society?


Being human means being conscious of having a self and the nature of the self is central to what it means to be human (Lewis, 1990). The self has been correlated with an array of life situations and life outcomes and is considered a psychological resource - self-concepts differ not only in content but in their effectiveness. Self-concepts differ in complexity (Linville, 1987), organization of positive and negative self-relevant information (Showers et al, 1998), and the extent that they promote persistent striving versus disengagement, sense of general contentment or incipient despair. Various conceptualizations as a dependent, independent, mediator, and moderator construct, the self-concept has emerged as one of the most studied areas of psychology. The focus of this chapter will be to integrate the main themes highlighted in self-concept research within a broader cultural and contextual perspective. In order to do so, the author will highlight themes in the social development of self-concept, its context, structure and organization briefly and then turn to ways that a socio-cultural frame illuminates new issues and guides hypotheses testing.

The interplay between personal and social identities in the life space of urban and minority youths is explored with a focus on the impact of social identity, particularly African American identity (AAID) on central concerns of adolescence—developing a plausible vision of the future, obtaining positive school outcomes and reducing vulnerability to depression. AAID is posited to reduce risk of depression and improve school outcomes both directly and by increasing likelihood of having balanced possible selves. Overall, results supported hypotheses: AAID predicts school outcomes, directly for females and via balance possible selves for males. Possible selves in turn, predicts school outcomes especially for males. Over time, AAID predicts possible selves, depression, study habits and grades. The talk is based primarily on a series of studies currently under editorial review. The full manuscript is available upon request (Oyserman, Sanchez-Burks, & Harrison).


In this chapter, we first describe the individualism and collectivism as cultural frames, emphasizing the collectivist roots of racial and ethnic identity. We then discuss the social representation of race and ethnicity and how this representation influences racial and ethnic identity for African Americans. We explain how racial and ethnic identity can function to moderate the risk of individualistic cultural frames for minority group members, buffer individuals from racism, and motivate minority group members to achieve their goals. We propose that this resiliency-promoting function is most likely to happen when ethnic or racial identity is chronically or situationally salient and when this identity includes 3 components: a sense of connectedness to other African Americans, an awareness of racism or structural barriers, and achievement as centrally connected to being an African American.


Focuses on the social representations of selfhood. It is suggested that although making a self appears to be an individual and individualizing pursuit, it is also a collective and collectivizing one. The chapter outlines the role of social representations in framing and undergirding the self, provides an example of variation in social representations of selfhood, discusses how individuals come to terms with multiple or conflicting social representations of selfhood, and sketches some consequences of a social representational approach to the self. The authors argue that social representations are critical to the process of framing, developing, and maintaining a sense of self.


This chapter discusses identity formation as a continuous process intricately linking past experience and present occurrences. Central to the purpose of the chapter is the argument that, at each stage of life, one’s identity is the result of both personal and cultural factors. Particular attention is paid to the relationship between social cognition and self-concept among adolescents.


Outgroup prejudice has been a major area for social psychological applications. Yet European social psychology has not widely studied prejudice against the continent’s new minorities. These groups provide a useful comparison with which to test generalizations concerning prejudice derived largely on African-Americans. This chapter advances two interrelated hypotheses: (1) The universality hypothesis predicts that social psychological factors operate in similar ways across the nations and target groups though the macro-contexts vary widely; (2) the mediation hypotheses predicts that key social psychological predictors of prejudice serve as critical mediators of the effects of prejudice on social factors. We test these hypotheses and more specific phenomena with analyses of the rich data of the 1988 European Barometer 30 survey. We find considerable support for both hypotheses. There are remarkable consistencies, with some distinct features, in phenomena that operate across nations and
outgroups. The chapter highlights the comparable operation of psychological processes acting as proximal causes of prejudice and mediators for social factors operating as distal causes.


Dr. Phillips examines the role that stress and housing quality play in explaining neighborhood satisfaction among African Americans. Her chapter answers the question of whether objective, physical residential characteristics, perceptions of neighborhood services, and the location of one’s residence explain housing quality and neighborhood satisfaction. Phillips finds that the important correlates of neighborhood satisfaction differ for men and women. Women are more concerned than men about safety and crime as major neighborhood problems. Overall, neighborhood satisfaction increases because of the maintenance and improvement of residential conditions, which can be facilitated by participating in neighborhood groups.


The author discusses several issues: some fundamental factors which shape how racial issues affect partisan politics; the possible locations of partisan change among black voters and compare them with 1984 survey data from the NBES. The concepts of partisan identification and electoral alignments and black political alignments and spin off scenarios with likely results in public policy along with the Democratic and Republican parties’ incentives to attract black voters, the benefits for blacks of continued alliance with one party in a competitive two party system, the possibility of a shift in partisan identification among black voters, the rewards of some combination of a third party independent candidacy option, and the varying policy impacts for these partisan alternatives are discussed.


The author looks at a national sample of black women, including both married and single mothers, and asks what are the factors that lead these women to make their political voices heard through regular voting. He finds that single mothers are much less likely to vote than married mothers, and also that single mothers fail to show the age trend seen in most other groups, including married African-American mothers--that is, and increasing tendency to vote as they grow older. In light of the demands on single mothers and their relative lack of resources, these results may not be especially surprising. What is more surprising is that many plausible explanations for differences in the two groups’ trajectories of voting across age do not account for the differences. The analyses the author uses to explore this puzzle provides and example of a statistical approach that allows one to assess alternative explanations for different age-related patterns rather than mean differences between groups. These analyses shed light on the question of single and married mothers’ political participation, indication the importance of income and some realistic expectation of increasing income with age. Data was obtained from the 1979-1980 National Survey of Black Americans. Subjects were 252 married and 322 single mothers aged 22 or older.


This chapter critiques the Cross nigrescence theory and the Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (RIAS), a paper and pencil measurement of attitudes associated with various stages of nigrescence. The authors reply to Stokes, Murray, Chavez and Peacock’s (1998) critique, and analyze Cross’ revisions. The analysis of nigrescence theory focuses primarily on the evolution of William Cross’ conceptualization of nigrescence. Meanwhile, the authors discussion of the operationalization of nigrescence focuses primarily on the pioneering contributions of Janet Helms, Thomas Parham and their colleagues in developing the RIAS. Modifications of nigrescence theory are suggested.


This article reviews NCAA policy changes regarding scholarships for student athletes and discusses how these changes have effected African American male student-athletes. It discusses the validity of the argument made by
the NCAA that too many student athletes place too much emphasis on athletics and not enough emphasis on academics. Then a structural barrier argument is made to explain the differences between the academic performance of African American collegiate athletes and white collegiate athletes.


This chapter presents a model of African American racial identity that attempts to provide a heuristic for understanding the ways in which African Americans define themselves in terms of race. The model is based on many of the concepts already found in both the social identity and racial identity literatures. It organizes these ideas in such a manner as to facilitate a systematic method in which we may; (1) examine the influence of race in the manner that African Americans define themselves; (2) observe the way that identity develops across the life span; (3) make predictions about the way in which racial identity influences the way that African Americans' perceive and interact with their environments.


This chapter addresses the influence of cultural and ethnic factors on health among minority group older persons. Because of the existence of more extensive national data, we focus primarily on Hispanic American, African American, and American Indian elderly. The chapter is divided into 4 sections. In the first section, we briefly describe some of the major demographic characteristics of the 3 cultural groups. In the second, we present recent data on the physical and mental health status of these elderly. In the third section, we address caregiving. The objective of this section is to frame the discussion of caregiving in an ethnic and cultural context, furthering the development of culturally sensitive care for minority elderly. We conclude with specific recommendations for researchers, policymakers, and health care providers.


This chapter continues and expands on the structural and functional themes presented in Dr. Taylor's chapter. The analysis using data from the NSBA examines how the church in the context of other institutions and status positions functions to provide supportive networks and useful roles for older individuals. Her results provide both support for prior findings as well as a lack of support for others.


The aim of this chapter is to show how and evolutionary approach can aid understanding of non-infectious and degenerative disease, and to point to areas or ignorance requiring further research. First the authors discuss the mechanisms causing senescence (the decline with age of precisely that property, adaptedness, that we expect natural selection to increase) and describing theories that have been proposed to explain their evolution. Then the authors discuss the causes of differences between individuals, and the relative roles of environmental and genetic factors. Finally, they discuss three groups of diseases - the reproductive cancers of women, mental disorders, and coronary heart disease and some disorders associated with it.


This chapter examines the nature of group identification among the black elderly. It attempts to document the distribution of varying measures of race identifications and how they relate to education, income, and gender among the black elderly, using data from the NSBA. It concludes that the current cohort of black elderly constitute a very heterogeneous group differing widely on the relationship of the major status variables to multiple assessments of group identification.

This chapter examines the role and nature of the church among older black Americans using data from the NSBA. This structural analysis documents church attendance patterns and the functioning and nature of the black church and religious observance. The findings support those reported in many previous smaller and less comprehensive research studies. It concludes that religious institutions play a critical role in the life of older blacks, but that a considerable amount of religious participation and attitudinal heterogeneity exists in the nature of how these roles are executed. It suggests that religiosity is multidimensional in its structure and its functional relationships in reducing stress, improving well-being, and facilitating instrumental support.


The chapter reviews recent research on kin and non-kin informal social support networks of elderly blacks. A theoretical model of familial support is proposed and provides the organizing framework of the chapter. Embedded in the model of familial support is a series of relationships familial (i.e., living arrangements/household composition, proximity of relatives and immediate family, and family closeness) and socio-demographic (i.e., gender, age, marital status, socio-economic status, urbanicity/region, and health factors) predictors of assistance. For each of the relationships a brief review of the literature is presented. Across the issues presented in the chapter, specific attention is given to reviewing literature which examines: 1) general differences among the aged; 2) racial differences across the life-course; 3) racial differences among the elderly; 4) differences among the general black population; and 5) differences evident among elderly blacks. Research on non-kin sources of support is reviewed with particular emphasis placed on friendship networks and church members as providers of assistance.


Black elderly tend to be lower on social indicators related to health status (i.e. income, education, and housing) and have lower health status than white elderly, evidenced by a number of indicators of health status (i.e. bed disability days, restricted activity days, and lowered life expectancy). Data on health care utilization indicates that black elderly tend to utilize private physicians and hospitals to a lesser degree than white elderly. Also, Medicare and Medicaid fail to adequately meet the needs of this group. Data from both the Medicaid and Medicare programs indicate the black elderly receive lower benefits per person enrolled. Specific policy recommendations aimed at promoting full participation of the elderly poor in federal health care programs are addressed. They are: 1) elimination of Medicare co-insurance payments, 2) alleviating non-financial barriers (e.g. transportation and discrimination) to medical care and, 3) emphasis on preventive (e.g. home health care and optional services such as eyeglasses and hearing aids) vs. institutional care.


Empirical research on the religious experience of blacks is needed in order to gain a better appreciation of the nature of black religious experiences and the role of religion and black churches in the lives of individuals and communities. This chapter specifically investigates attitudes towards religion and the nature and extent of religious behaviors and involvement as reported by black Americans. The chapter is divided into five sections which address different aspects of religious experience: (a) a profile of religious affiliation, (b) rates of participation and involvement in religious services and activities (e.g., frequency of attendance, church membership, frequency of prayer, subjective religiosity), (c) perceptions of the socio-historical role of the black church, (d) the role of church members in the informal social support networks of black Americans, and (e) religion and mental health among blacks.


This chapter reviews recent research on familial and non-familial (i.e., friends, neighbors and church members) sources of informal social support to black Americans. Issues examined in this chapter focus upon both support
exchanges and important predictors of support networks such as household composition and kinship interaction. For each of the issues presented in the chapter, specific attention is placed upon reviewing literature which examines both racial differences and sub-group differences among blacks. In addition, emphasis is given literature which investigates support networks of elderly blacks.


The introduction allows the reader to understand how the research reported in the volume differs from previous investigations. It is explained that previous research is fraught with a "problem focus," as well as a homogenized view, of black families. While recognizing the risks facing black families, the contributing authors focus on the strengths and resources that might serve as protective factors against those risks. The contributors to the volume question the assumptions of what is normative for families across cultural groups, and they offer new paradigms and models for understanding the nature of black families. Using the National Survey of Black Americans data set, the authors take an empirical approach toward the following tasks: examining black families within the current context of demographic profiles and trends that affect basic family structure and function, using a perspective that explores specific factors that serve to protect families, as well as identifying those factors that constitute risks to effective family functioning and well-being, and giving special attention to the important substantive issues that have been ignored in the black family literature.


The authors expand upon their previous gerontological research on family support by focusing on the informal networks of younger and middle-aged blacks. This chapter also explores the use of informal help in a comprehensive fashion by actually differentiating the importance of family as opposed to friends and neighbors as sources of help in response to a serious personal problem. The findings reinforce the importance of the black family in providing the first line of assistance, especially for health problems. The authors caution about the possible over reliance on family helpers for health problems and provide evidence that people are more likely to use nonkin helpers for interpersonal problems.


Initially, the chapter tracks the historical development of research on the black family's composition and adaptability. In particular, emphasis is directed toward a recognition of black families as entities existing within a specific social and economic climate. Subsequently, the authors posit that researchers must heretofore build on existing knowledge of family structure and supportive networks. The authors argue that family and support development is continuous over time, and that it is necessary to take a longitudinal approach in assessing such development. Utilizing data from the National Survey of Black Americans Panel Survey, the authors view the changes in self-report information submitted by subjects. The data reflect self-reports of family interaction, family support, family closeness, family satisfaction, friendship interaction, presence of a best friend, and church support. Separate analyses were conducted in accordance with two data sets of varying composition. First, subject reports were compared from a wave of data collection occurring in 1980 and a wave of data collection occurring in 1987. Second, subject reports were compared from the 1980 data collection and a wave of data collected in 1992. In addition, the authors compared the reports of subjects who remained as responders over the years of data collection to the reports of subjects who were lost to attrition. This was done in an attempt to understand how attrition may affect results.


Initially, the chapter provides a review of current literature on the familial roles of African American men. Recognition is given to the movement towards studying the coping strategies, support systems, and father-child interactions of black men. In addition, the roles of provider, spouse, and parent are explored in detail. The authors add to the extant research by offering the design and results of their own study. A sample of 797 black men was drawn from the National Survey of Black Americans. The study's independent variables include perceptions of the
spousal role, perceptions of the parental role, and overall satisfaction with family life. Independent variables include age, marital status, education, poverty status, urbanicity, number of children, region, employment status, and occupational status. Results indicate that family issues, relating to being a provider, a spouse, and a parent, are of great concern to black men.


This chapter addresses the structure of the family and gender and friendship roles of the black elderly. The purpose is to provide a description of family structure nationally and the extent of attachment of black elderly within these different types of family patterns using data from the NSBA dataset. Most importantly, the chapter reveals that older black Americans are both major contributors to the family and family life as well as major beneficiaries of the resources within the family.


This chapter discusses the degree of religious participation of black adults, the informal helping networks of members of black churches, and strategies of using churches as outlets for social service delivery. The chapter presents a case example of the programs and services provided by one large inner-city black church. It indicates that black adults exhibit a high degree of religious participation and that church members are an integral component of black adults informal social support networks. These factors combine to make churches a conducive mechanism for providing social services. Church-based program can supplement the formal social service system by filling existing gaps and rendering services in a personalized and culturally sensitive manner. Consequently, church-based programs can be a crucial source of assistance because they are in a unique position to provide services to those who are reluctant to seek help from large formal institutions.


This chapter centers on the importance of informal ties, particularly whether family and friends have assisted black Americans in finding employment. The authors attempt to augment our base of knowledge concerning this issue through the study of four independent variable groups: family variables (family closeness and proximity of relatives), friendship variables (size of friendship network and having a white friend), racial composition (of present neighborhood and of job), and demographics (age, gender, education, income, occupational status, marital status, region, and urbanicity). Results indicate that black Americans often receive aid and information from family and friends in learning about and acquiring employment. Subjects report a greater reliance on friendship networks than on family support in finding employment, indicating that informal support networks operate differently in providing job search assistance than in providing advice, companionship, and financial assistance, which are usually attended to by family members. The limits of the use of informal support networks in gaining employment are also explored.


Building on Drs. Smith and Thornton and Drs. Taylor and Thornton's chapters, this chapter focuses the attention narrowly on how one historically important participatory dimension, religiosity, relates to political participation, notably voting. Using data from the NSBA, the results indicate that religiosity plays a significant role in political participation, independently of the effects of status position. Particularly important are the effects of church attendance and church membership in leading to increased participation, in comparison to the weaker effects of more devotional aspects of religious expression.

Early research that examined the informal support needs of elderly Black Americans (Taylor et al., 1990) indicated that older persons relied to a great extent on family and friends for assistance. Current portraits of support needs suggest that the elderly continue to depend upon informal social support networks for assistance in emergency situations, as well as for help with the tasks of daily life. This chapter, and outgrowth of an earlier effort by Taylor (1998) on aging and supportive networks of Black Americans, reviews research developments in the field for the last ten years. The chapter highlights findings in four specific areas: 1) marriage and romantic relationships, 2) extended family and non-kin as source of informal social support, 3) caregiving and older Blacks, and 4) grandparenthood experiences among Blacks. The chapter concludes with a discussion of future directions for research in this field, one of them being a consideration of the topic of negative support.


This chapter broadly reviews a number of demographic trends that are associated with black family patterns and structure and is organized into five separate sections that are concerned with children and their well-being (topics include living arrangements, foster care, poverty, child abuse, and exposure to violence), adolescents (topics include sexuality, contraceptive practices, pregnancy, abortion, and childbearing and its consequences), adult reproductive behavior (topics include sexuality, contraceptive behaviors, abortion, and fetal loss), changes in family structure (topics include non-marital childbearing, female-headed families, and single-father families), and marriage patterns (topics include marriage, separation, divorce, remarriage, cohabitation, widowhood, and interracial marriage).


In order to document the problems and successes associated with the mental health treatment of African Americans, focus groups were conducted with senior African American and non-African American clinicians experienced in treating African American patients. Eight focus groups were conducted blocked on race and gender (two groups per cell in the design) and comprised of a median of 6 professionals each (range 4 to 9). Clinicians represented a diverse array of backgrounds and clinical approaches. Trained facilitators who were themselves experienced clinicians and of the same race and gender as participants conducted the groups. Groups explored themes, issues, and strategies associated with the problematic and successful treatment of African Americans in three domains of mental health treatment: diagnosis, maintenance of rapport and treatment. In general, clinicians emphasized the need for careful attention to the social and historical conditions surrounding African American culture and lifestyles to achieve the goals of psychological treatment. There was widespread agreement that developing and maintaining rapport is a key issue in working with African Americans, and that formal psychiatric diagnosis presents a number of problems and is not always conducive to successful treatment. Clinicians discussed a number of issues and strategies they use in their work with African Americans. Similarities and differences in emphasis among the groups are discussed. Input from expert clinicians provides important information for improving mental health services for African Americans.


The local clinical scientist model is pragmatic: Local scientific practice requires openness to new possibilities, a flexible commitment to specific theories in making clinical judgments, a willingness to entertain truly alternative formulations based on evidence, and a willingness to investigate the consequences of different views both backward and forward in time (e.g., working with a clinical case to avoid the overt implications of an apparent pathology long enough to allow some other narrative, say a personal theory of the client, to emerge). This paper will discuss some current thinking about this model, drawing on material from a forthcoming book on scientific training for the professional psychologist. In light of the focus on standards, the emphasis of the paper will be on the image of the local clinical scientist in action, and on the kinds of observations required in training to verify that students are implementing the model.
Psychological science is a systematic mode of inquiry involving problem identification and the acquisition, organization, and interpretation of information pertaining to psychological phenomena. It strives to make that information consensually verifiable, replicable, and universally communicable. Professional psychologists systematically acquire and organize information about psychological phenomena, and often engage in the general practice of science. Nonetheless, it is recognized that, because of the particular conditions that frequently limit inquiry in the local contexts of professional psychological practice (e.g., nonrepeatability of phenomena in time, privacy, etc), the scientific goals of consensual verifiability, replicability, and universal communicability are attainable more in principle than in practice. Despite these practical realities, we endorse a view of the professional psychologist as a local clinical scientist: an investigator of local psychological phenomena who engages in the rigorous, critical, and disciplined thought engendered in striving toward scientific goals. Therefore, research training in professional psychology should be viewed as an essential tool for developing and enhancing critical thinking in students, and it should be integrated throughout the curriculum. All of our graduates are expected to function as local clinical scientist: some of our graduates may engage more directly in the application of research methodology in roles such as program evaluator. The application or diffusion of research results into practice is an important process that should be enhanced and encouraged through research training.

Despite adverse factors, many inner city black students manage to attain some degree of academic proficiency. The authors examine the factors that distinguish students with relatively high academic interest or motivation from those with little interest or motivation. There are two important aspects of this motivation: expected occupation and reported desire to drop out of school. Previous research in the area suggests that factors potentially related to these aspects can be grouped into three general categories: school, family, and personality/behavioral variables. The study focuses on these groupings as possible predictors of desire to drop out of school and educational expectations among the sample of inner city black students. The sample consisted of 1440 black students in a Midwestern inner city high school. Combinations of three or four variables were found to predict the expected status level of occupation and the reported desire to drop out in the majority of the students. However, male and female students were found to be influenced by different factors. Concerning job expectation, girls were found to be much more influenced by their parents and families than were boys. However, the reverse is true concerning the decision to drop out of school; familial factors influenced boys much more than girls. No socioeconomic indices were found to be associated with either job expectancy or the student's desire to drop out; parental education and economic status appeared to be more important.

The chapter begins by pointing to empirical evidence offered by previous research, specifically that black men and women now marry later and less, are more likely to divorce, and are more likely to have nonmarital births than in previous time periods. Similarly, black women, in comparison to women of other ethnicities, are less likely to remarry after divorce or widowhood. Consequently, a greater proportion of black Americans are single compared to rates of singlehood for blacks in previous time periods, as well as compared to current rates of singlehood among other ethnicities. As a result, African Americans perceive being single as a more normative experience than do members of other ethnic groups. While the rate of marriage among blacks may be down, research indicates that blacks are not reluctant to enter into relationships and that romantic involvement is high among African Americans. The authors add to the existing research by conducting a study with a sample of 1,210 subjects. The selected subjects reported, on the National Survey of Black Americans, that they have never been married, they are divorced, they are separated, or they are widowed. The subjects were asked whether they have a main romantic relationship and whether they want to have a main romantic relationship. Analyses were conducted according to how the variables of gender, marital status, and age influenced reports of main romantic relationship activities and desires. Results indicate significant effects among the three variables and whether or not subjects have or desire to have a main romantic relationship.

This chapter proposes to begin to bridge the gap between research on religion (i.e., attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors concerning things spiritual) and research on adolescent health outcomes. The first section describes the epidemiology of religion among American youth. The second section discusses the relative neglect of religion by researchers interested in adolescent health. The third section reviews, selectively, empirical research on the relationship between religion and the two potentially health-compromising behaviors in which American youth are most likely to engage—precocious sexual involvement and the use of licit and illicit drugs. In the fourth section is a discussion of the problems and limitations in the extent research on religion and adolescent health outcomes. The chapter concludes with the discussion of a conceptual framework designed to guide future research on the relationship between religion and adolescent health.


Dr. Washington demonstrates that despite much media attention, the role that police officers play in responding to the problems of African Americans has not received the amount of empirical investigation it deserves. Chapter 12 quantitatively and qualitatively investigates the use of police assistance as a help resource during stressful situations. The chapter operates under the premise that some African Americans in distress request assistance from the police—only after exhausting other available help resources. In addition, many of the requests for police assistance do not directly involve matters of law enforcement. Washington’s insights challenge many of the attitudes and beliefs held regarding the role of law enforcement in the lives of African Americans.


The study investigates the manner in which psychosocial and cultural parenting characteristics influence one dimension of positive identity development—personal efficacy; and whether economic, structural, and social conditions cause significant variation in parental influence. Multivariate analyses of the NSBY revealed that parental strictness and race-related socialization that emphasizes blocked opportunities were powerful predictors of the youths’ personal efficacy. Parental influence did not significantly vary by family structure. Parental strictness tended to vary under conditions of economic strain and when youth attended supportive schools. However, it was concluded that, in general, parental influence tends to operate through a process that is not entirely dependent upon traditional structural and demographic factors.


This paper examines social conditions linked to the lives of minority group members and the larger social context within which mental health problems emerge. We will systematically examine the extent to which racial categorization and stratification predicts variations in experiences of stress and mental health functioning. One of the most critical issues in the study of the mental health of minority population in the United States is the identification of the extent to which minority status itself is a predictor of increased risk for mental health problems (Vega & Rumbaut, 1991). Such research is contingent on an enhanced understand of what race is and a delineation of the specific factors linked to race that influence health status. Health researchers should avoid reifying the terms race and ethnicity (Williams, 1997). These categories themselves are not the cause of variations in health status. They are descriptive labels that reflect variations in risk factors that could lead to ill health. Thus, studies of minority health status must be premised on a clear understanding of what racial and ethnic labels measure.


This chapter documents that there is a complex but persistent pattern of racial differences in health. On virtually all indicators of physical health status at least one racial minority population experiences worse health status than the
Caucasian population. These differences should not be ignored for at least two reasons. First, some evidence suggests that because of the economic links tying various communities together, health problems that initially are more prevalent in minority communities eventually spread to other areas and populations (Wallace & Wallace, 1997). If unaddressed, the health problems of minority populations will eventually become the health problems of the larger society. Second, given current patterns of population growth, the health problems of minority populations may soon become the statistical norm. The Bureau of the Census’ 1997 estimate of the population indicates that minority populations comprised 27% of the U.S. population and an even higher proportion in the most populous states. Minorities were 49% of California, 44% of Texas, 34% of New York, and 31% of Florida. Given current demographic trends, minority racial groups will increasingly become a larger share of the U.S. population. Thus, taking action to improve the health and social conditions of marginalized population groups is investing in our mutual future and is likely to have positive health consequences for the entire society.


It is well documented that population health is affected by a broad range of economic factors, including economic growth, instability, and inequality. This chapter outlines the challenges facing the African American population by making comparisons to the White population within the United States. The U.S. has made major investments in improving the economic circumstances and health status of economically vulnerable groups in the past 50 years. However, the health of the African American population is the visible tip of an iceberg that reflects factors that are increasing risks throughout the population as a whole. Although it has been argued that policies must be sensitive to the tip of the iceberg, policies are needed that also serve to improve the average health of the entire population.


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Current guidelines require federal agencies to report statistics for four racial groups (American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and Pacific Islander, black, and white) and one ethnic category (Hispanic origin). Although almost nine out of ten persons in Kansas are white, all of the major racial/ethnic categories are represented in the population of Kansas. These racial categories importantly predict variations in health status, but they mask important patterns of variations for subgroups of these populations and for specific health conditions. This paper examines mortality rates, health trends over time, race and socioeconomic status, poverty rates, institutional racism, beliefs about inferiority, discrimination, social structure, and future directions for studying race and health in Kansas and across other populations.


Higher disease rates for blacks compared to whites are pervasive and persistent over time, with the racial gap in mortality widening in recent years for multiple causes of death. Other racial/ethnic minority populations also have elevated disease risk for some health conditions. This paper considers the complex ways in which race and SES combine to affect health. SES accounts for much of the observed racial disparities in health. Nonetheless, racial differences often persist even at "equivalent" levels of SES. Racism is an added burden for nondominant populations. Individual and institutional discrimination, along with the stigma of inferiority, can adversely affect health by restricting socioeconomic opportunities and mobility. Racism can also directly affect health in multiple ways. Residence in poor neighborhoods, racial bias in medical care, the stress of experiences of discrimination and the acceptance of the societal stigma of inferiority can have deleterious consequences for health.

This chapter discusses the uneven distribution of health in the American population. Although the health status of both Blacks and Whites have improved in the last century there is a gap between the two groups. These racial disparities are discussed.


The study of African American mental health has had a long and, at times, disturbing history in the United States. This article reviews the gaps and paradoxes in our knowledge of the mental health status of the African American population. The first section discusses early studies of mental illness. Second, studies of psychological distress are reviewed. The third section covers population-based studies of psychiatric disorders. Finally, data quality questions are examined.


This chapter focuses primarily on the measurement of religion in studies of religious commitment and health, but it also discusses other methodological issues relevant to the analysis of data from large survey samples. It will review and evaluate existing measures of religion as used in broad-based epidemiologic studies. It will describe limitations of current measurement approaches as well as propose the development of new measures as necessary. This chapter highlights the importance of placing the assessment of religion in health research into this larger theoretically informed context of efforts to measure religion in all its complexity. What is needed for the field to move forward is well-designed empirical research that evaluates theoretical ideas about the relation between religion and health. This is necessary to provide confidence in both the theory and the measures employed.


This chapter examines lifestyle behaviors, social structures and processes of African Americans and the impact they have on health and mortality rates.


In recent years there has been a dramatic expansion of information technology into all areas of American life. However, all groups within our society do not have equal access to these new technologies. Moreover, failure to fully participate in this technological revolution does not only reflect consumer preferences. This chapter considers the role of race in the proliferation of information technologies. It reviews the available evidence that suggest that African Americans are less likely than their white counterparts to utilize a broad range of technological products. It considers the role that socioeconomic variations across race might play in accounting for these differences and gives considerable attention to lessons that can be learned from the literature on racial variations in medical technology. It argues that the findings in this area have implications for both understand racial differences in information technology and developing effective interventions to reduce the magnitude of these differences.


This is a review and summation of the health needs discusses throughout the chapters found in Health Issues for Women of Color: A Cultural Diversity Perspective.

This chapter is a critical evaluation of the available data on the mental health status of the African American population. It traces the evolution of the understanding of the mental health status of the African American population, highlighting the important trends and developments. Presented is a chronological overview of the major findings from the early psychiatric epidemiology studies, population-based studies of psychological distress, and the more recent studies of psychiatric disorders in community samples. Included is a critical discussion of Catchment Area Study (ECA). The authors conclude that the most important need in future research on the mental health of African Americans is careful, considered attention to what race means and why race, social, economic, political, and cultural forces and racial discrimination are related to health status.


Williams and Harris-Reid provide an overview of the mental health status for several minority populations, and they evaluate the available evidence of racial variations in mental health. Because of different research methodologies and varying criteria for identifying both mental disorders and minority status, it is difficult to generalize about these mental health differences. Studies that assess the mental health of African Americans find few differences between blacks and whites. The mental health picture for Hispanics is more complicated, though their rates of disorder tend to be than that of whites. Given the small size and diversity of the Asian-American population, there is little conclusive data on their mental health. Finally, little is known about the mental health status of American Indians. Hence, despite decades of research, we lack a clear picture of the mental health status of major minority populations. Research must overcome problems of inadequate coverage of the minority population and find ways to capture the considerable heterogeneity of minority groups. A second group of problems concerns limitation on the measurement of mental health status among minorities. Finally, culture affects the manifestation of mental health problems, because cultures emphasize different emotions and standards for acceptable expression and emotion. Culture also affects the interpretation of symptoms of disorder. Research must identify the ways in which social, economic, political and cultural factors have impacts on the health status of minority groups. Racism and migration experiences are also critical to mental health, and need further investigation. Students should discuss why there is so little available data about minority mental health. Does this provide further evidence of racism?


This chapter assesses stress as a risk factor in morbidity and mortality and highlights some of the important issues and problems that could, upon resolution, help to advance this area. Among included topics presented are discussions on stress, stress and disease, life events and stress, the social context of stress, psychosocial modifiers, control, and coping. Also covered are neglected areas of importance, such as the positive effects of stress. Psychosocial modifiers or variables which can affect health by themselves, compensate or counteract the impact of stress, and moderate the relationship between health and stress are also included.


This chapter reviews that literature on the link between socioeconomic status (SES) and health among African American elderly. The first section reviews the large differences between whites and African Americans in socioeconomic characteristics. Next, the implications of the racial differences in SES for the health of black elderly are explored and the nonequivalence of SES indicators for blacks and whites is discussed. The third section reviews data regarding the racial differences in medical care among the elderly. Finally, directions for future research on both racial differences in health, and the impact of SES are discussed.


This chapter considers the role that socioeconomic status (SES) plays in racial and ethnic variations in health status in the United States. The Office of Management and Budget’s standard for federal statistics recognizes four racial
groups (black, white, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Asian/Pacific/Pacific Islander) and one ethnic category (Hispanic). However, because this directive is without scientific basis, because the distinctions between race and ethnicity are unclear in health research, we treat all of these categories as racial groups. The first major point of discussion is the consideration of the data on the magnitude of racial differences in health and argue that these variations must be understood within the context of the well-documented association between SES and health. Next the authors show that there is a strong relationship between race and SES with SES variations accounting for a large part of racial differences in health status. The complexities of the association between race and SES are discussed. They show that SES shapes the distribution of risk factors and resources that affect health, including health attitudes and behavior. Directions for research and interventions are also addressed.


This paper analyzes data from a probability sample of a large metropolitan area in the United States to examine the extent to which multiple indicators of both acute and chronic discrimination are linked to mental and physical health status for African Americans and whites. We will assess how these indicators of discrimination, considered singly and in combination with measures of psychological status and other stressful life experiences, will affect health status. Finally, we will assess the extent to which the impact of perception of discrimination varies based on the type and nature of the response.


Examined a range of data quality issues related to the usage of the concept of race in research. In particular, the authors assessed potential problems and pitfalls that are linked to the meaning and the application of the concept. The ultimate aim is to critically evaluate the quality of race-based data with an eye to outlining areas for improvement. The chapter proceeds first by examining some general measurement issues in research and race as an analytic category. Next, several concerns are advanced about the quality of existing data on race through examples from census analyses and the general research literature. Recommendations for improving race-related data are interspersed.


One of the basic challenges in longitudinal research is the re-interview of original respondents. Using the procedure developed on the National Panel Survey of Black Americans this paper focuses on the nonresponse rate from the National Black Election Panel Study (Jackson, 1984), a telephone survey of a national probability sample of African Americans. The author discusses nine sources of longitudinal nonresponse believed to operate in some combination for both refusals and noncontacted households societal and population level, survey design study, which includes salience, interviewer characteristics, demographics, employment, financial resources, social connectedness and affective states and presents a framework for a theory of longitudinal nonresponse. Included is a discussion of how this framework can be used to tract more effectively some of the individuals or subgroups that are at risk for nonresponse or noncontact.
Over the years there have been numerous telephone studies seeking the opinions of populations that include African Americans. This current paper examines the possible bias that characteristics of the interviewing staff introduce into the responses of African Americans. Data presented are from three studies of Black Americans covering nine years. The interviewing staffs of these studies have consisted of both white and African American interviewers and in one case, only African American interviewers. Examining the data from the 1984 pre-election and post-election waves of the National Black Election Survey and the National Black Politics Survey of 1993 we found such a bias. This bias is associated with the race the respondent perceives the interviewer to be rather than the actual race of the interviewer. Biased responses to questions that deal with general race deference, hopefulness about integration policies and black autonomy issues show robust effects. The differences in the responses of African American respondents when they perceive that they are being interviewed by a white interviewer remain stable across research organizations, item format, response scales, and the nine year period. Multivariate analyses of the strength and extent of the effects are presented. The authors will cover the implications this has for telephone survey research among African Americans and other populations that may be affected by perceptions associated with an interviewer's characteristics.


The growing number of panel studies in the field of social research and the need for quality longitudinal data about minority populations makes it increasingly important to understand the factors associated with whether a respondent will participate in consecutive waves. The analyses presented are from the first full national probability sample of African Americans and its three-wave panel. These data were first collected in 1979-1980 by the Program for Research on Black Americans at the University of Michigan. The original sample size of 2,107 respondents and the large number of measures collected allow for wide variety in the range of measures used to predict nonresponse for each panel year. They reveal some interesting patterns in nonresponse behavior. The questions these analyses address are: what items are important to include in the first year of a panel study in order to arrive at stable nonresponse weights for future study years?; what groups of demographic, content-related, and interest-related variables are useful in adjusting for nonresponse once the survey is completed?; and, are patterns of nonresponse consistent from wave to wave in a minority population?


In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in research focusing on the health consequences of socioeconomic status, with a heavy emphasis on physical health outcomes (Kaplan & Lynch, 1997). This growth in research attention to the SES-health linkage is driven in part by the growing awareness, across a range of scientific disciplines, of the ubiquity and robustness of the association between SES and health and by the increasing recognition that SES differences in health in both the U.S. and Europe appear to be widening as economic inequalities in society widen (Williams & Collins, 1995; Krieger, Williams, & Moss, 1997). This chapter provides a brief overview of early studies that assess the association between socioeconomic position and psychiatric disorders from two large population-based studies in the United States. Finally, we consider some of the major unresolved issues in research on SES and mental illness.